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NDP Vows to Reverse the Damage to Canadian Wheat Board after the Next Federal Election

OTTAWA – NDP Leader, Jack Layton says his Party is unequivocally committed to reversing the damaging changes that have been inflicted on the Canadian Wheat Board (CWB) by the Harper government.

“Immediately after the next federal election, the NDP will introduce legislation ensuring that control of the CWB is handed back to farmers and any Directors they subsequently elect”, promised Layton. “Clearly the Canadian Wheat Board Act needs strengthening to prevent ideologically driven governments from interfering with the marketing system that the vast majority of Western grain farmers have repeatedly expressed their desire to retain”.

According to Layton, the Conservatives have shown contempt for farm families by tampering with CWB Directors elections while they were underway denying ballots to thousands of farmers, gagged the CWB from defending single-desk marketing, fired qualified directors and replaced them with people dedicated to dismantling the Board. President and CEO, Adrian Measner, is soon to be replaced by open-market advocate, Glen Findlay who has stated publicly that he cannot explain in detail how the Board can operate successfully in an open market.

The Canadian Wheat Board Act was legislated in the 1930’s and was designed to provide market power to farmers who were being exploited by giant grain companies”, stated Layton. “The Harper Conservatives are now creating the same conditions for farmer exploitation that existed before the Act”.

“I would like Western grain farmers to know that this assault can end and the damage reversed following the election of a different government. It is imperative as well that farmers stay engaged in the upcoming plebiscite campaigns”, stated Layton. “The NDP will continue to support the rights of farmers to determine their marketing future.