

# *Gramineae Seed Farm*

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September 25, 2006

Honourable Chuck Strahl  
Minister of Agriculture  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6

## **RE: Canadian Wheat Board**

Dear Minister:

I am contacting you to express my dismay with your party's actions toward the CWB.

*"Let us never forget that the cultivation of the earth is the most important labor of man. Man may be civilized in some degree without great progress in manufactures and with little commerce with his distant neighbors. But without the cultivation of the earth, he is, in all countries, a savage. Until he gives up the chase and fixes himself in some place, and seeks a living from the earth, he is a roaming barbarian. When tillage begins, other arts follow. The farmers, therefore, are the founders of civilization."*

**Daniel Webster**

In my view the Canadian Government and its citizens have lost an understanding of this basic axiom. Why are you catering USA commercial interests? Are we not a sovereign nation adhering to our own laws? **Section 47.1 of the Canadian Wheat Board Act expressly forbids the Minister to change the act without a prior referendum in support of such changes by the growers.** Your effort to introduce Bill C- 300 is a deliberate action to circumvent the rule of democracy inherent in Section 47.1. I consider this action disrespectful of Canadian farmers and democracy.

My family has produced cereals in the BC Peace River since 1928. It is interesting to note that oats, which were under the CWB Act and were removed in order to enjoy the free market, were at their lowest price earlier this year\*. Other open market crops such as canola and peas are suffering depression era pricing. Soooo what would change for wheat and barley if they are unilaterally legislated into the so-called free market arena?

In the writer's opinion for over the past 50 years there has been a strategy deliberate or otherwise to extract the wealth from the rural agricultural community and redirect into the urban commercial complex. It has been exceptionally successful. This sometimes is referred to as the **Canadian cheap food policy**. This policy is difficult to define however some of the factors are provided as examples:

1. PATENT LAWS – A non-competition period of 21 years for the manufacturers of herbicides and other pesticides plus the recent patenting of genetic materials. Talk about a perfect vehicle for funneling wealth from the farmer to the urban commercial community! Who else could get such a deal?!!!!
2. TRANSPORTATION – a TOTAL MONOPOLY HAS BEEN DEVELOPED. All effective competition has been derailed by the elimination of the Crow Rate and most recently the sale of BC Rail. The Competition Review Board is absolutely ineffective.
3. TAXES – The effort to give corporate bodies tax benefits to the detriment of proprietorships has unbalanced and marginalized individual initiative. (One Canadian Food processor generates more profit than ALL of the Canadian farmers.)
4. TRADE RULES – The ineffectiveness of the NAFTA in dealing with the BSE (cattle) crisis and the soft wood fiasco demonstrate the negative consequences of entering into these agreements.
5. OTHER – Some of the other factors that are contributing to erosion of Canadian agriculture are: Loss of public research dollar, Expropriation of surface use for the benefit of for-profit petroleum companies and the cost of safe food policies being placed solely on the shoulders of the Canadian farmers.

Canadian farm economy is dying from a series of subtle Government policies changes, in other words, 'the death from 1000 cuts'.

Your party was given the mandate to govern Canada, but was not given the mandate to 'dismantle' the Canadian Wheat Board. I will predict that if your party is successful in emasculating the CWB that the producer groups along the Canada/USA border will attempt to flood the USA with grain products. This action will result in a USA trade embargo which will further injure all Canadian grain producers.

Your Government needs to rejuvenate Canadian agriculture, rather than emasculate it further. The strong Canadian economy has prospered at the expense of rural Canada. The current social and economic security enjoyed by all Canadians will eventually fade away if agriculture is allowed to wither on the vine.

An honest and respectful response to this request would be appreciated.

Yours truly,

Arthur A. Hadland

cc Jay Hill, MP – Peace River North  
Stephen Harper, Prime Minister  
Jack Layton, Federal NDP Leader  
Bill Graham, Acting Leader, Liberal Party  
K. Goodings, Chair Peace River Regional District  
Honourable Pat Bell, BC Minister of Agriculture  
Blair Lekstrom, MLA, Peace River South  
Honourable Richard Neufeld, MLA, Peace River North  
Val Roddick, Chair Agriculture Committee

\* see attached price list