

WILD ROSE



NEWS

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THE BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S REPORT THE YEAR IN REVIEW By Neil Wagstaff

Wild Rose has now existed as a new Alberta Farm Organization for 3 years. Even after 3 years many farmers unfortunately still do not know what Wild Rose is, or what it does. Despite this, it has gained outstanding recognition from government, politicians, media and the ag industry as the organization that represents the best interests of all farmers and ranchers in Alberta.

The membership of Wild Rose is very widespread and diverse, both by geography and by commodity. Nearly every community in Alberta has a Wild Rose member! Nearly every agricultural commodity that you can imagine has a producer who is a Wild Rose

member. The membership has continued to slowly grow. When looking at our membership numbers, we have to keep in mind that our memberships are sold to farm units, not individuals. Many of our memberships represent family enterprises that often have 2, 3 or 4 families as part of the farm operation. With this in mind, a conservative estimate of the number of farm families we represent would easily be in excess of 1500. If we were to count spouses and grown children who are often very involved in the

farm operation the number of farmers we actually represent with our current membership is probably in excess of 3000.

This is the strong base from which Wild Rose can operate with credibility.

One of the aims of Wild Rose is to give producers the opportunity to help develop agricultural policy. I will now highlight some of the activities, and initiatives, which your organization was involved with during the past year.

'If we were to count spouses and grown children who are often very involved in the farm operation the number of farmers we actually represent with our current membership is probably in excess of

World Trade Agreements

President Alan Holt met with Franz Fischler, Commissioner of the European Union, International Trade/Commodity Prices. His position is similar to our Federal Minister of Agriculture and he is the most influential agricultural policy maker in Europe.

Board members attended meetings regarding the WTO (World Trade Organization) and trade agreements.

Safety Nets

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Year in Review – Cont'd

Wild Rose is a member of the Alberta Safety Net Coalition. This group advises both levels of government on Crop Insurance, NISA and FIDP policy.

We are also a participant of the National Safety Net Committee.

Defending Special Status of Farmers

Farm Truck Licensing – We were successful in mounting a campaign to reverse the Alberta government's initiative that would have ultimately forced all large farm trucks to carry commercial licenses, and burn commercial fuel. All farm trucks were to also have been inspected on a regular basis. Inspection intervals are still under discussion.

Information and Learning

- ⇒ CIGI Courses – Wild Rose has recommended 12 members for participation in a week long course on the Canadian Grain Industry put on by the Canadian International Grains Institute.
- ⇒ Internet Web Site was developed – We are on the Internet with our own Web site. www.wrap.ab.ca. (on-going development)
- ⇒ Newsletters – Wild Rose News was published quarterly
- ⇒ Press Releases – were issued on many matters during the year
- ⇒ Toll-free number introduced (1-877-451-5912)

Media Interviews

When issues of a general nature arise, Wild Rose is usually contacted because we are involved in all aspects of agriculture. Members of the Board, Regional Directors and staff have conducted numerous news media interviews throughout the year.

Lobbying and Dialogue

CFA Membership- Wild Rose rejoined the CFA (Canadian Federation of Agriculture) this summer as an Associate Member. This entitles us to send a delegate to the annual and summer meetings of CFA, have policy input, and receive current information on national issues.

Reviews, Hearings, Inquiries

- ⇒ We had two meetings with Judge Willard Estey, and presented our views on grain transportation.
- ⇒ We gave a presentation to the Tax Review Committee,

chaired by Richard Marz. We also assisted other farm groups with their presentations.

- ⇒ We are presently involved in a review of the Canada Grain Commission.
- ⇒ As a registered intervenor to the Canadian Transport Agency in the CWB level of service complaint against CN and CP, Wild Rose was there supporting Alberta farmers when others, such as the Alberta Government and various other commodity organizations refused to do so.

Ag Forum

We continue to participate in the Ag Forum, which meets about four times per year. Interest is still strong, with about 18 organizations attending on a regular basis.

Canadian Wheat Board

- ⇒ Gave recommendations on the development of Bill C-4 regulations.
- ⇒ Provided considerable input into the election process, although not all our suggestions were implemented. We developed support for the use of a delegate body structure to elect the CWB Board of Directors and when it became obvious that the delegate body approach was not being accepted, we encouraged the use of a preferential ballot to elect the Directors.
- ⇒ Made a presentation at the Senate Agricultural Committee Hearings regarding Bill C-4.
- ⇒ Wild Rose was 1 of 8 organizations who acted as scrutineers for the CWB elections.
- ⇒ Wild Rose hosted 15 CWB (Canadian Wheat Board) Candidates Forums throughout the province.
- ⇒ Communicated with the CWB on a regular basis on issues such as grain prices and transportation.

Services performed

- ⇒ Wild Rose continued to administer the AIMS (Agriculture Input Monitoring System) program for the provincial government. 18 farmers throughout the province monitor major farm input and expense items on a monthly basis.
- ⇒ We helped allocate about \$42M of federal money to Alberta under the CAIP (Canadian Agriculture Infrastructure Program) over the last two years.
- ⇒ Income Tax Service continues to be provided to Wild Rose members.
- ⇒ Responded to a wide variety of inquiries, questions etc. from producers seeking help.

Year in Review – Cont'd

Representation on Other Organizations

Wild Rose is involved with the following organizations on an ongoing basis:

- ⇒ The Co-operators – 2 delegates
- ⇒ AFAC (Alberta Farm Animal Care Association) – 1 Board Member
- ⇒ Western Grains Research Foundation – 1 Board Member
- ⇒ CASA (Clean Air Strategic Alliance) – 1 Member
- ⇒ AAMD&C (Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties) Fraternal Membership
- ⇒ Alberta Surface Rights Federation – representative
- ⇒ Farmer's Rail Car Coalition – representative

All this has been done on a budget of about \$130,000 and with a full time staff of only two people.

Areas of Concern

Farm Apathy

Producers need to be more involved in decisions that affect our industry. There seems to be a prevailing attitude to let someone else do this type of work. Besides Wild Rose, there are a number of other organizations, commissions, etc. actively working to represent farmers. Some of these organizations are being run by a very few individuals and have drifted away from their organizations fundamental purpose for existing. Producers need to get more involved in farm organizations and to take charge of where their organizations are going.

Properly representing our Membership

One of the aims of Wild Rose is to give producers the opportunity to help develop agricultural policy . An ongoing challenge for the Board is how to get adequate input and feedback from producers on emerging issues, often on short notice. We are hoping that the establishment of our Internet Web Site and our recently announced toll-free number will be ways by which communications can be improved in the future.

Membership Growth

Although the membership has continued to slowly grow, we seem to be losing members from retirement, death, etc. at nearly the same rate as we gain new members.

If Wild Rose is going to be able to continue to do all the things that the current membership expects it to do, Wild Rose needs to have more members. We cannot forget that the main source of funding for Wild Roses' operation still comes from producer memberships.

Wild Rose has become well recognized as Alberta's general farmer organization and it would be a shame if it were to start to flounder because of a lack of farmer membership growth.

Now call the office Toll-free

at

1-877-451-5912

Or visit us on the web

at

www.wrap.ab.ca

or

email at wrap@planet.eon.net

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

BY ALAN HOLT

Greetings once again fellow producers.

Although you will find other information in this newsletter about our recent convention, I will focus on this important event from a President's perspective.

Despite typically cold weather, attendance was certainly the best we have had in many years. Unlike our predecessor organization, where the majority of delegates were funded by other organizations, all attendees except for Board and Regional Directors, paid their own way. Everyone I spoke to said they got very good value for their registration and travel costs. Well over 100 Wild Rose members registered, so with speakers, guests and media, I think we had close to 200 people in total.

This was the first time our meeting moved out of Edmonton to Red Deer. As a result from feedback from our members, I am certain we will be back to Red Deer for next year's convention. You can mark your calendars now for January 13-14, 2000.

Most of the success of this year's meeting was due to the efforts of our executive director, Rod Scarlett. Rod worked countless hours, (many for which he didn't get paid) getting sponsors (26 in all) and arranging for speakers, which were of the highest quality. All names were readily recognized by farmers – Jack Wilkinson, Canadian Federation of Agriculture; Adrian Measner, Executive Director of Marketing, Canadian Wheat Board; Charlie Swanson, President of AGRICORE; Dean Lien, Farmers' Advocate; Ed Knash, Vice-President, Alberta Treasury Branch; Albert Schatzke, Commissioner, Canadian Grain Commission; Jack Hayden, President, Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties; Shawn Smith, Vice-President, Railink Invest-

ments Ltd.; Elaine McCoy, President, MacLeod Institute for Environmental Analysis; Norman Ward, Former President, Western Stock Growers' Association; Terry Murray, Former Chairman, Farm Business Management Council, Nithi Govindasamy, Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development; Richard Stamp, Chairman, Alberta Seed Potato Growers' Association; Terry Hockaday, President, Meristem Information Resources Ltd.

To get people with such busy schedules to travel from as far as Ontario, most at their own expense, was a tremendous feat in cajoling and public relations. Thank you, Rod.

Jack Wilkinson's two presentations were, as always, very interesting and educational. Those present learned a lot about what we can expect from government and our industry in the future. Your executive had an opportunity to meet with Jack on an informal basis, and as a result we were better prepared to advise both levels of government on how to administer the new farm crisis money that government has committed.

It is interesting to note that despite our early invitations to the Alberta government, not one representative was at our convention. To me, this means they want to continue with their own agenda, with complete disregard for input from the people they are supposed to represent. They overlooked an excellent opportunity to get feedback from producers of all commodities, located in all areas of the province.

I commend my six fellow board members for allowing their names to stand. Considering the low compensation these people receive for having to

leave their own farms, it can undoubtedly be considered volunteering.

The new board members are: Jerry Bauer, Keith Degenhardt, Robert Filkohazy, Alan Holt, Elaine Jones, Terry Murray and Neil Wagstaff. This board then elected their executive from within. Thanks for their confidence shown in me by electing me for a third term as President. Neil Wagstaff remains as 1st Vice-President and Keith Degenhardt was elected 2nd Vice-President. Thank you to Paul Thibodeau and Dennis Herman for their long commitment to our organization. These two individuals did not run for re-election.

I look forward to representing you, our members, in the upcoming year. I have no doubt I will be kept very busy again serving you on a wide variety of issues. It appears money again will be a limiting factor in Wild Rose activities.

YOU CAN HELP!

If every member sold one membership to a neighbor, I would have no difficulty explaining how that would be the best return on any investment that farmers made in the year.

We value feedback from our members, so please don't hesitate to call the office or myself, if you have any concerns or advice.

Sincerely yours,

Alan Holt

THE FARMER'S VOICE IN RESEARCH

A SPECIAL REPORT FOR WILD ROSE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCERS

A key factor in keeping Canada competitive in world markets is the technology and knowledge to stay at the leading edge. That's why farmers around the world are taking a stronger role in research.

In Western Canada, a major organization for farmer-funded crops research is Western Grains Research Foundation (WGRF). The Foundation provides direct funding to research that benefits farmer. It also provides a voice for farmers within research programs.

Wild Rose Agricultural Producers is one of 18 agricultural organizations that make up the Foundation. Like Wild Rose, WGRF is funded and directed by a broad base of farmers representing all major crop commodities.

Wild Rose, and formerly Unifarm, are long-time members of the Foundation. The Wild Rose representative, Keith Degenhardt of Hughenden, Alberta, is a mixed farmer with a background in ag research. Prior to Keith, Dale Evanson served on the Foundation.

Degenhardt and other farmer Board members direct the Foundation's two major funding sources for crops research. The Foundation administers the Wheat and Barley Check-off Fund, which has provided nearly \$3 million annually to wheat and barley breeding programs, and the Endowment Fund, which has provided nearly \$1 million annually for various crops research.

As a member of WGRF, this special report is designed specifically for Wild Rose Agricultural Producers. It includes highlights of recent progress and activities, along with information on core Foundation operations.

Check-off Fund progress

The Wheat and Barley Check-Off Fund supports wheat and barley variety development. Though it was started just four years ago, it has doubled Western Canada's breeding effort for those grains and is already having an impact on the release of superior new varieties.

The Check-off Fund began at producers' request in the 1993/94 crop year to provide consistent funding to breeding programs, partly in response to dramatic cutbacks in public research funding. Since breeding is a long-term process that can't be turned on and off from year to year, the producers sought to provide long-term funding to help ensure the availability of new varieties.

The source of this fund is a producer check-off, set at \$0.20/

tonne for wheat and \$0.40/tonne for barley. The check-off is deducted only from the Canadian Wheat Board final payment to producers. (The exceptions are in Alberta, where barley and soft white spring wheat are covered by provincial check-offs.)

In 1998, Check-off funds played a part in the release of five new wheat varieties and one new barley variety. That adds to the four new wheat varieties and three new barley varieties released in 1997. Seed for these varieties is expected to become commercially available in the next one to three years. Here are attributes of some of the registered varieties:

- ⇒ Superior two-row hulless barley
- ⇒ Two-row malting barley that outperforms Harrington
- ⇒ Rust-resistant, high-yielding, early-maturing HRSW
- ⇒ Durum with superior agronomics
- ⇒ Winter wheat with improved yield and milling quality
- ⇒ First semi-dwarf CWRS wheat
- ⇒ CWR winter wheat adapted to southern and central Alberta
- ⇒ Leaf and stem rust-resistant winter wheat

Endowment Fund progress

The Foundation's longest running funding source is the Endowment Fund, which funds various research for a broad range of crops. This fund is building on 15 years of progress, with over \$15 million allocated to over 170 projects since its inception.

The Endowment Fund began in 1983 when the Canadian government turned over a \$9 million surplus from the old Prairie Farm Emergency Fund for farmers to use as a nest egg for research funding. Annual interest from that is allocated to various crops research that is deemed to bring the most value to producers.

In 1998, funding was approved for nine new crop research projects to begin in 1999. The most three-year projects range from improving wheat quality to reducing diseases in special crops. Here are the new projects:

- ⇒ Reducing pre-harvest sprouting in CPS white wheat and malting barley.
- ⇒ Developing double haploid technology for lentils.
- ⇒ Finding genes for sprouting resistance in CPS wheat.
- ⇒ Improving the use of manure in cropping systems.
- ⇒ Improving gluten strength for durum wheat.
- ⇒ Developing flea beetle resistance in canola.
- ⇒ Improving the genetics of fall rye.
- ⇒ Developing wheat midge resistance in durum wheat.
- ⇒ Planning a control strategy for fusarium wilt in field peas.

Two recent examples of progress from completed projects include the development of genetic resistance to fusarium head blight and wheat midge. Those resistance sources are now in breeding programs, where they will be incorporated into new varieties.

Matching grants

Matching grants often add value to farmer dollars in both Foundation funds. The one with by far the biggest impact for the Foundation is Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Matching Investment Initiative (MII), which has matched over \$2 million annually to WGRF funds in recent years. The matching MII funds go to additional research that complements the Foundation intention. Here are some recent examples of MII-supported wheat and barley projects:

- ⇒ Milling and quality advantages of hard white wheat in value-added products of the milling and baking industries.
- ⇒ Identification of molecular (DNA) markers for selection of desirable end use performance in wheat.
- ⇒ Inheritance traits and molecular (DNA) markers for Grade Protection Attributes of wheat.
- ⇒ Development of doubled haploid technology to accelerate barley breeding and germplasm development.
- ⇒ Determination of, and screening for, nutritive value and associated effects in feed, forage, malting, and hullless barley in a breeding program.
- ⇒ Fertilizer and manure effects on weed management and wheat production in conservation tillage systems.

Recent Foundation activity

The Foundation funds and activities are directed by producer representatives on WGRF Board. Those representatives make all funding decisions, with advice from leading researchers, marketers and producers on the front line of the grain industry. They also direct the Foundation's organizational goals, which include administrative efficiency, and sustainable, fair and equitable funding. Here is a summary of recent Foundation activity:

Preparing for potential industry changes.

The Foundation has long prepared for potential industry changes that could affect the Check-off mechanism and funding levels.

One potential challenge is the domestic market. Though the Check-off is deducted from CWB final payments as a very cost-effective collection mechanism, one drawback is that it fails to capture all of the market, particularly feed barley and feed wheat. Another potential challenge is changes that could result from the new CWB structure.

The Foundation regularly examines the security of its funding as part of an ongoing review process, and will examine it again during the five-year formal review of the Wheat and Barley Check-off program, slated for 1999. In addition, last year the Foundation commissioned an independent study of check-offs around the world to help producers make well-informed decisions on the Check-off's future direction.

As added financial security, the Foundation keeps a reserve fund for the Check-off. This helps maintain consistent research in the face of unforeseeable problems, such as severe drought, that could threaten funding levels.

Looking into the new CWB structure.

Since the Check-off is deducted from CWB final payments to producers, any change to Wheat Board operations may affect that funding source. One part of the legislation that could affect the Foundation is a provision that allows the Wheat Board to make some final payments to producers at the time of delivery, bypassing the Check-off.

Though changes relevant to the Check-off are unlikely for at least a year, the Foundation is following the situation closely. The Foundation regularly corresponds with CWB officials and other advisors so that if and when changes do occur, the organization will be ready for them.

Check-off review slated.

Next year is mid-term report card time for the Wheat and Barley Check-off. The Foundation has 10-year agreements with breeding institutions that outline breeding targets and funding commitments. To ensure those agreements remain on track, a formal review is required before the end of the fifth year, which is 1999. The Foundation has commissioned an independent review team that will report to the Board over the year. Any program adjustments necessary will be negotiated with breeding institutions.

The five-year review is part of a regular process to ensure research dollars do what they're intended. In addition to five-year agreements that outline how the Check-off funding is to be used, researchers are required to give producers annual progress reports. Those reports are carefully reviewed to ensure the projects are on track.

THE FARMER'S VOICE IN RESEARCH – CONT'D

Patent declaration requested. With patent and licensing issues becoming more common, the WGRF Endowment Fund Advisory Committee has requested that researchers applying for funding declare the potential use of any outside patents in their research.

Pulse growers join. Western Canada's 20,000 prairie pulse growers are the newest members of the Foundation. Pulse growers' association in all three prairie provinces joined in May under the banner "Western Canada Pulse Growers Association" to become the Foundation's 18th member organization. Board representation will rotate every three years among Saskatchewan Pulse Growers Board, Alberta Pulse Growers Commission and Manitoba Pulse Growers Association.

Looking into tax credit. Funding research that has public good value is generally considered eligible for tax credit by most businesses, but how that applies to associations and funding organizations is unclear. Along with several other research funding groups, the Foundation is pursuing the matter with Revenue Canada. Action is expected in the next six months.

Maintaining low administrative costs. In 1998, the Foundation continued to keep administrative costs below 10 percent – well within the standards of similar organizations. Keeping costs low is part of an overall effort to ensure the most dollars go to research. Foundation financial statements are audited by an independent accounting firm and made available to WGRF member organizations.

Communicating with farmers

Another key component of Foundation activities is communications. The sheer size of the Foundation's grass-roots representation makes communication not only very challenging, but also very important. As a farmer funded and directed organization, the existence of WGRF is based on farmer support, and it can't expect that support without being fully accountable.

The logic was shared by producers who requested the Check-off. They felt strongly that since they were directly paying for the research, they should have full access to information on progress. As a result, the legislation and associated agreements that set-up the Check-off called for a substantial communications effort.

Since then, the Foundation has developed a strategy to get information to the farm community on how WGRF money is spent and the progress and results it produces. The strategy is based on providing continuous information while keeping costs low.

WGRF distributes most of its information to member organizations, media, extension and others who deal directly with farmers. That includes an Annual Report of overall progress, along with regular Industry Report newsletters, research reports on completed projects and various other information releases. In addition, a special Annual Report for producers is included in the CWB newsletter Grain Matters, which is mailed to all permit book holders.

All of this information is available on the Foundation's new Web site at www.westerngrains.com along with core information on the organization and its funding sources. The site is updated regularly and

producers are encouraged to visit.

Contact us

Most importantly, the Foundation welcomes input from farmers on any aspect of the organization. **Wild Rose Agricultural Producers are encouraged to talk to Keith Degenhardt, the Wild Rose representative on the WGRF Board,** and contact the Foundation directly with questions, comments or suggestions at any time.

Western Grains Research Foundation
118 Veterinary Road, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, S7N 2R2
Phone: 306 975-0060
Fax: 306 975-3766
Web site: www.westerngrains.com

Coming Events

February 3-5, 1999
Agrifuture Farm Technology Expo
Red Deer, Alta
Contact: Russ Evans
1-800-251-6846

March 24-27, 1999
Northlands Farm @ Ranch Show
Edmonton, Alta.

March 19-21
Smoky River Agricultural Trade Show
Falher, Alta.
Contact: SARDA @ 837-2211

WILD ROSE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCERS RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT THE ANNUAL CONVENTION - 1999

1. **Refundable Check-off**
BE IT RESOLVED that Wild Rose Agricultural Producers continue to press the Alberta government for a refundable check-off for a general farm organization.

2. **Financial Compensation for Farm Income**
WHEREAS farm incomes are being drastically reduced due mainly to the subsidies of the European Union and the United States of America which is allowable under the WTO Agreement.

BE IT RESOLVED that Wild Rose Agricultural Producers lobby the federal government which is signatory to the WTO Agreement, for financial compensation to offset the drastic reduction of farm income.

3. **NISA**
WHEREAS the Net Income Stabilization Account (NISA) point of sale guidelines state that grain sales eligible for NISA are to be "net sales" after freight and elevation are deducted from gross grain sales delivered to the elevator;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Wild Rose Agricultural Producers lobby the Federal Government and the National NISA Committee, to not exclude freight and elevation expenses in the calculation of eligible net sales.

4. **Farm Property Assessment**
WHEREAS farmland is no longer an appropriate method of raising taxes for educational funding;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Wild Rose Agricultural Producers lobby the Provincial Government to remove the Education Tax from land used for agricultural purposes.

5. **Taxation**
WHEREAS farm incomes are cyclical and can vary a lot from year to year and that one of the biggest farm income problems is often uneven cash flows from year to year;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Wild Rose Agricultural Producers lobby the Federal Government and Revenue Canada to re-introduce a five year block averaging provision for farmers filing farm income tax.

7. **Farm Income Disaster Program - Negative Margin**
WHEREAS disasters can often create a negative margin;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Wild Rose Agricultural Producers lobby the Provincial Government and the Department of Agriculture to include negative margins in calculating FIDP payments.

8. **Farm Income Disaster Program – De-couple NISA**
WHEREAS not all farms are participating in NISA, and such participation can affect the fairness of the FIDP program;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Wild Rose Agricultural Producers lobby the Provincial Government and the Department of Agriculture to de-couple NISA from FIDP.

9. **Farm Income Crisis**
WHEREAS agricultural producers in general are experiencing record low prices for various commodities; and

RESOLUTIONS – CONT'D

WHEREAS the Provincial Government should recognize the need for both short-term and long-term strategies;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Wild Rose Agricultural Producers lobby the provincial government to reduce its taxes on farm fuel and farm fertilizer.

10. **Terminator Gene**

WHEREAS the legislation enacting Plant Breeder's Rights was written as not only protection for plant breeders, but to ensure the right of Canadian producers to reproduce seed grown on their own farm;

AND WHEREAS the only purpose of the terminator gene technology is to make it necessary to purchase new seed each year, thereby taking away Canadian producers' right to reproduce their own seed;

AND WHEREAS this terminator gene technology would be a continual massive financial burden to Canadian growers, but it would be devastating to third world countries;

BE IT RESOLVED that Wild Rose Agricultural Producers lobby the Federal Government to maintain legislation to ensure the right of Canadian producers to reproduce their own seed grown on their own farm.

11. **Increase Funding of the Canadian Grain Commission**

WHEREAS the Federal Government through the Canadian Grain Commission is promoting a user pay policy for the funding of the CGC; and

WHEREAS the farmer is going to pay no matter who is sent the bill; and

WHEREAS all Canadians benefit from the export and domestic use of quality controlled grain;

BE IT RESOLVED that Wild Rose Agricultural Producers lobby the federal government to increase the funding of the Canadian Grain Commission.

12. **Surface Rights**

WHEREAS the Provincial Government through the Surface Rights Board has set up a provision to compensate land owners for lease rent where the operator has gone bankrupt or otherwise stopped paying rent (known as section 39); and

WHEREAS the payments are made from the Department of Agriculture which registered a deficit from these payments in 1997 of \$900,000 and any monies collected go into General Revenue;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that compensation payments under Section 39 of the Surface Rights Act go to the Department of Agriculture.

13. **Taxation – Market Value vs. Productive Value**

WHEREAS the tax assessment proposal of market value is highly controversial and could quite conceivably lead to much higher tax rates;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the tax assessment be based on production value of the farm land.

14. **Estey Report**

BE IT RESOLVED that Wild Rose Agricultural Producers support the new CWB Board of Directors in making the decision as to how the grain transportation freight rate cap is handled not the recommendation of the Estey report.

15. **Control of Grain Destined for Port**

RESOLUTIONS – CONT'D

BE IT RESOLVED that Wild Rose Agricultural Producers support the new CWB Board of Directors making the final decision as to where the CWB takes control of grain destined for export, not the recommendation of the Estey report.

Proposed Regulatory Framework for Livestock Feeding Operations in Alberta Now Available

In January of 1988, the Minister of Agriculture requested that a process to examine the way the livestock industry is regulated be initiated. Since that time the following activities have taken place:

- ◆ A discussion paper and questionnaire was released and open houses hosted across the province
- ◆ Results of the questionnaire were circulated
- ◆ A Stakeholders Advisory group was formed
- ◆ Advisory group develops a proposed framework for a new regulatory system

The proposed framework is now open to further public consultation and input. Highlights include:

The proposed framework requires producers who are planning to build new confined feeding operations or expand existing ones, to obtain both provincial and municipal authorizations and follow established operating standards.

The Province will set the environmental siting requirements, construction standards and the standard for manure storage and use. Municipal governments will retain responsibility for determining whether a proposed development is acceptable

through the municipal planning process.

Two Provincial authorization mechanisms are being proposed. They are registrations and approvals. Approvals will be issued for large operations and operations proposing to build in environmentally sensitive locations, such as flood plains and over shallow potable groundwater supplies. The approval process will allow people who are potentially affected by the operation to participate in the process.

The Proposed Framework outlines in greater detail the

- ◆ Authorization process
- ◆ Operating requirement
- ◆ Public Involvement
- ◆ Changes to Terms and Conditions in Approvals and the Standard Document
- ◆ Compliance and Enforcement

Your comments on this proposed framework are welcome. For more information call:

Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development
Policy Secretariat At 422-2070 (Outside of Edmonton, first dial the Government of Alberta toll-free number, 310-000

CWB ELECTION POST MORTEM

BY NEIL WAGSTAFF

Being 1 of the 8 scrutineers during the counting of the ballots has given me an opportunity to gain some insight into the election process that I feel needs to be shared with fellow producers.

COUNTING OF THE BALLOTS

The counting of the ballots is one aspect of the election that I would like to keep separate from the rest of the election process. **As I observed the ballot count first hand, I can assure producers that all the procedures followed were well organized and done in a manner to assure the integrity of a democratic vote.**

THE NUMBER ON THE ENVELOPE

This number seemed to cause a lot of producers concern. After observing the process first hand, I can assure producers that there was no way in which anyone would have been able to in anyway identify how any producer had voted.

The number that was on the outside of the envelope, that the ballot was returned in, was used to sort the ballots into their appropriate district. This number was also used as a control when producers asked for a new ballot when there was something wrong with their first ballot.

OPENING OF THE BALLOT ENVELOPES

Fifty people (mostly university students) had been hired for what turned out to be one long day.

After the ballots were sorted by region, the ballot envelopes were mechanically opened starting with region #1. The students then removed the ballot papers from the envelopes. They were instructed to look at each ballot to determine if the ballot was valid. At this point the envelopes were separated from the ballots.

ADJUDICATING UNUSUAL BALLOTS

If there was any reason that the ballot appeared to not be filled out exactly as the instructions had stated or if there was any extra markings or enclosures with the ballot; such a ballot was then directed to what was called the adjudication stream. This was where the scrutineers did a great amount of their work.

The scrutineers had previously agreed that they would do every thing possible to permit as many ballots as possible to be counted, even if there were discrepancies in how a ballot was filled out. **If the voters' intent was clear, then such a**

ballot was not spoiled.

As various discrepancies began to emerge, all the scrutineers along with the Chief Electoral Officer from KPMG would meet to make decisions as to how such a ballot would be dealt with. These decisions were recorded and any future ballots with similar discrepancies were treated the same. Four students were assigned to what was called the adjudication tables and they in turn applied the scrutineers decisions to future ballots. At least 2 scrutineers had to be at this table at all times to verify any decision they made. In the end over 2200 ballots passed through this adjudication process and only 188 were declared spoiled.

HOW THE BALLOTS WERE COUNTED

The ballots were manually counted into bundles of 100. Then they were put into sealed boxes. The next day these boxes were opened at a computer data entry business. Data entry operators entered the preferential vote on each ballot. Separate operators entered each pile of 100 ballots twice and a computer verified the data entered. The data entered had to be exactly the same upon each entry of 100 ballots or else that pile had to be re-entered. This system insured that there was no likelihood of data entry error.

When all the ballots were entered, the data was taken to a separate computer system to be tabulated. This is the step where a computer programming error occurred which unfortunately meant that a recount had to be conducted after the error was corrected. Such a problem should now never occur in any future preferential ballot counted by computer.

Despite this computer program difficulty, KPMG should be commended for the manner by which they organized the counting of the ballots.

OTHER PROBLEMS WITH THE ELECTION PROCESS

An election will be held again in all of the even numbered districts in the fall of 2000. **There were a number of problems with how this election was conducted that need to be corrected before another election is held.**

The following are some fundamental problems that I have observed:

Problems with ballots

The ballots that were issued were based upon the names that were in permit books during the past 2 years. This generated a

CWB ELECTION POST MORTEM – CONT'D

lot of duplicate ballots and also missed a lot of people who should have been entitled to vote.

One thing that this election strongly brought to my attention is the inconsistency by which peoples names are or are not listed in producers permit books.

There were a tremendous number of ladies who are actively involved in a farm operation who did not get a ballot and should have been entitled to such. If the spouse of a producer has a valid economic interest in the grain produced on their farm, I feel that spouse should be listed on a permit book.

There were a lot of people who received more than one ballot. In a lot of cases this occurred where an individuals name was on more than one permit book and their name was spelled differently or initials were used instead of a full name.

There were a lot of producers who did not receive a ballot who thought they should have. There are many farm business relationships with more than one individual, where all of the parties were not issued ballots. This makes me think that many family groups farming together; whether they are formalized as a corporation, partnership, or loosely operating as sole proprietors; need to review how they have individuals listed on their permit books.

Who should be eligible to vote?

This is a very important issue that needs to be resolved. There is some divergent opinion among farmers as to who should be eligible to vote. Prior to the election, Wild Rose took the position that only those producers who are listed as a Suffix A on a CWB permit, should be entitled to vote. I feel we should reconsider this position.

How important is it that crop share landlords and other interested parties be given the right to vote?

Ballots not received

Many people who claimed they did not receive a ballot were, in fact, mailed ballots. I believe that many producers received a ballot, but because the envelope had the appearance of being junk mail, it was discarded.

Timing of election

This year we were fortunate to have had an early harvest or else fall work would have interfered far more than it did with the election process. The whole process was far too rushed

which created a lot of the ballot problems and did not provide an ample amount of time for campaigning and voting. I feel that the time of the vote should be moved to late November, early December or even into January or February.

Voters list

In the future the manner by which ballots are issued needs to be significantly improved.

A list of eligible voters needs to be developed well in advance of an election and made public. This way producers can determine if they are on the list; whether they are included in the correct district; and would help to avoid follies such as having people who are dead for a long period of time being sent a ballot.

Other changes needed?

I am sure there were other problems that I have overlooked. If you have suggestions for changes, please call the Wild Rose office so we can forward these to the CWB, as the new Board of Directors needs to begin addressing these issues as soon as possible.

**Call: 1-800-506- CARE (2273)
Animal Care Alert Line**

**If you have concerns regarding the
care of livestock;**

**If you are experiencing
management problems**

WILD ROSE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCERS' SUBMISSION ON THE DISCUSSION PAPER ON FARM PROPERTY ASSESSMENT AND TAXATION – Nov. 1998

Like all Albertans, farmers and ranchers would like to see a fair and equitable taxation system. It is important to remember however, that the services available in urban municipalities should in no way be equated with the services available in rural municipalities. In addition, the rural landowner is in no way compensated for land stewardship, soil and wildlife conservation, or riparian conservation and enhancement. In most instances, he is expected to adopt these practices at his own expenses. Urban Albertans expect as much.

Certainly, on the surface, the basis for this discussion paper is twofold:

- 1) to alleviate urban Albertan's concern over the inequality that may exist in education tax allocations
- 2) to allow municipalities the opportunity to access more revenue as the province downloads services particularly as it relates to roads and road improvements.

With regards to the first point, the reason for the province equalizing the educational tax was to maintain equity of educational funding and opportunity. The simplest solution would be for the province to institute an education tax that is not tied in with property taxes. Certainly, we believe the provincial government could be more creative than just introducing higher taxes for rural Albertans to solve this perceived problem.

With regards to the second point, the blame lays squarely on the shoulders of the federal and provincial governments. Each year Canadians spend over \$5 billion in federal fuel taxes and Ottawa spends only 5% in the provinces on highways. To the province's credit, it spends over 100% of their share of the fuel tax on highway development.

Compounding this is the trend towards elevator rationalization, which has had a dramatic affect on the tax base of numerous rural towns and villages with no provincial plan as to how this revenue would be replaced.

In reviewing the Discussion Paper, Wild Rose was hard pressed to see how it fell in line with the Department of Municipal Affairs "Land Use Policies" developed in November of 1996. The goal for agriculture was "To contribute to the maintenance and diversification of Alberta's agricultural industry." This document does neither.

Definitions

While there are a number of concerns our Association would like to draw to the Committee's attention, I will only be able to focus on a few of our major concerns given the time constraints. In general, the Discussion Paper proposes to give municipalities control over property taxes with vague guidelines attached. The problems begin with the definition of farming operations and primary agricultural commodities. On the one hand the government, through the department of Agriculture Food and Rural Development is actively supporting value adding as a method to help producers maintain higher returns. Now, through the Department of Municipal Affairs, it wants to introduce a tax structure to penalize those who wish to add value to their products. It appears the left hand does not know what the right hand is doing.

Under the proposed definition, cutting your hay and stacking it would allow the hay to be considered a primary agricultural commodity, but baling it would add value to the product by packaging the commodity and would exclude it from the definition. Similarly, a combine with a cleaner, any producer with a grain dryer, any potato grower who washes the potato or any berry grower who cleans the berry

would similarly be punished by adding value to the produce.

Instead of recognizing the future in agriculture, the proposed definitions will discourage growth opportunities for rural Albertans.

Valuation of Farmland for Property Assessment

Perhaps the most appalling of all statements in the discussion paper appears on page 12 where it states: "*It should be noted that there will be increases in farmland assessments due to updated base rates that reflect the stronger commodity prices and record low interest rates that the agricultural industry has recently experienced.*" I would be hard pressed to name more than one or two specialized commodities that experienced real price growth over the last ten years. For example, grain prices are at an all-time record low in real dollars, hog prices are down at least 25% from last year alone, cattle prices are down, similarly so too are prices for chicken, turkey, and lamb, and milk prices are down 4% from last year. What has increased is input prices, transportation costs, machinery costs, and a myriad of other expenses. In addition both provincial and federal government support for the agricultural producer has dwindled significantly.

Possibly there will be areas of the province where the assessment values may increase, but so long as there is not an attempt to change the present rating schedules based on practices, yields and prices, updating the productive value system should not have an adverse affect on the general farm populations' property assessments.

Intensive versus Extensive Agricultural Operations

To begin with, there should be abso-

FARM PROPERTY ASSESSMENT AND TAXATION – CONT'D

lutely no consideration given to the idea of taxing buildings related to the operation of the farm. Each option outlined in the discussion paper calls for more taxes of one sort or another. Aside from the basic premise being an affront to rural Albertans, a farming operation is a farming operation no matter where it is located; what size it is; or what commodity is produced. To penalize an agricultural producer for fulfilling a niche in the production chain is unfair. Consider the difficulties the province is experiencing today in determining what constitutes an intensive livestock operation. To allow municipalities to determine their own guidelines will only exacerbate the problems.

The Department of Agriculture, Food & Rural Development has been strongly encouraging the expansion of hog operations across the province, and now the rules are going to be changed. Feedlots, dairy farms, chicken and turkey production will all be adversely affected if any of these options outlined are selected.

In November of 1996, pursuant to Section 622 of the Municipal Government Act the Department of Municipal Affairs issued a Land Use Policies document. Under Section 6.1-Agriculture, Policy # 4 reads “ Mu-

nicipalities are encouraged to minimize conflicts between intensive agricultural operations and incompatible land uses through the use of reciprocal setback distances and other mitigative measures.” In no way does this recommendation adhere to this policy directive.

Assessment of Land Not Used for Farming Operations

Certainly, non-agricultural land needs to be assessed differently than farmland. Caution should be taken, however, to promote conservation of non-developed land through a lower tax rate or by the provision of tax credits. The preservation of natural land areas is something all Albertans share in and there should be incentives to promote this type of land use. The proposed changes could discourage the preservation of natural land areas.

Farm Residential Tax Exemption

Property tax is not an appropriate or fair method of raising education tax revenue, especially as it relates to

farmland. If the Government is not prepared to introduce a revised educational tax scheme, then there are ways to alter the present tax structure.

One recommendation could be to exempt farmland from the education levy. Essentially, this would put more emphasis on residential property resulting in a fairer, more equalized method of raising educational revenue.

Business Tax on Farming Operations

Wild Rose Agricultural Producers certainly does not object to municipalities applying business taxes on legitimate business operations. In fact, we would go so far as to say that each and every farmer and rancher in the Province runs a small business. There are, however, fine lines between a commercial business operation and primary agricultural production. Value adding may represent one method of determining business relationship, but as pointed out earlier there are enormous problems with the proposed definitions of farming and agricultural production. Applying business taxes to a producer who runs a side business such as welding or mechanics is quite legitimate. Taxing a feedlot operation because it surpasses a certain number of cattle per square acre is not. Just because a certain form of agricultural operation places

FARM PROPERTY ASSESSMENT AND TAXATION – CONT'D

more pressure on a municipality's infrastructure does not give it legitimacy to call it a business nor does it give the province the right to place limits on where and why a producer operates.

Once again, we must return to the fact that Albertans in general pay enough taxes to federal, provincial and municipal governments. Each level has been downloaded upon by the other and the buck continually gets passed on down. This trend has got to stop.

Tax Rate Subclasses for Farm Property

Finally we get to probably the most threatening recommendation that is proposed in this discussion paper. One of the cornerstones in a democracy is being treated with some degree of equality. This committee has proposed to do away with provincial standards that recognize fairness and equality. By setting the groundwork for municipalities to treat individual farm operations differently it allows for neighbors to be treated differently than neighbors. Hog producers could be taxed differently than chicken producers, cow-calf operators could be taxed differently than feeder operations, canola cropland could be taxed differently than sugar beets. There is no limit to which a municipal council may take this and could therefore, legitimately force specific types of agricultural production out of their jurisdiction. In fact, municipal councils could force a tax-rate structure that could ensure that no further hog barns or feedlots would be built in Alberta.

We recommend that any changes made have province wide standards in order to maintain equity between municipalities and agricultural operations in different municipalities.

In summation there are four points which Wild Rose would like to clarify. Firstly, education tax should be distributed fairly among all Albertans and tying it to property taxes does not necessary achieve this goal. Secondly, the definition of an agricultural operation and primary agricultural products needs to be re-evaluated. Thirdly, throughout the discussion paper is an underlying objective to raise taxes for rural Albertans, a fundamentally flawed approach. Finally, if changes are necessary, and we believe that a majority of the proposals are not, then the province should shoulder its burden of responsibility and apply provincial standards to ensure fairness and equitability.



YES! I wish to join Wild Rose Agricultural Producers

Name: _____ Spouse: _____
Address: _____ Town: _____
Postal Code: _____ Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

I enclose - Membership fee :	Producer	\$ _____	(\$107.00)
	3 - Year	\$ _____	(\$288.90)
	Associate	\$ _____	(\$ 53.50)

Wild Rose Agricultural Producers, 14815 - 119 Avenue, Edmonton, AB, T5L 4W2
Telephone: 780-451-5912 Fax: 780-453-2669 E-Mail: wrap@planet.eon.net

WILD ROSE SEMINAR – PREPARING FOR THE NEW MILLENNIUM AND BEYOND

Ed Knash, Vice-President, Alberta Treasury Branch “Farm Financing for the Future”.

Rapid changes in the farming and agri-business industry. Challenge is to find a banker who truly understands the industry. Rural customers use branches – agencies – cash machines – telephone – internet and these must be on a cost effective basis. In the future credit will become a mobile service and simplified for small loans. Commodity prices will become more volatile. Agri-banking needs to understand and be committed to agriculture.

Charlie Swanson, President, Agricore “Changing Times in the Grain Business”

Change is a matter of survival for the Canadian grain industry. Rationalization of delivery points and rail services, mergers in the industry, multi-nationals moving in and state trading agencies face an uncertain future. Agricore organized in response to the above. Farm income crisis – farm income in Alberta down 35 percent from 1997 to 1996. Income for 1998 will be even lower. European farmers guaranteed \$8.15/bu. In October of 1998. Europe and U.S. have increased wheat production while Canadian farmers have cut back in response to market conditions.

Albert Schatzke – Commissioner, Canadian Grain Commission – “Changes in the Commission”

Outlined the recent review of the CGC. Commission provides quality assurance for Canadian grain. Commission has funding problems – revenue presently based on volume of exports which have dropped 20 percent in last 3 years. Commission has a number of proposals that it will discuss with the industry and with producers.

International Trade and the WTO (Panel Discussion)

Nithi Govindasamy, Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development

The last round of WTO talks resulted in some reduction of subsidies, but they are still too high. Canada must continue to press for reductions in subsidies that affect production.

Richard Stamp, Chairman, Alberta Seed Potato Growers' Association

Our biggest problem as producers is our cost of production. We must supply a high quality product that meets the needs of our customers.

Terry Hockaday, President, Meristem Information Resources Ltd.

There is a big challenge in getting the message of the importance of international trade across to the public. We must communicate with high quality information.

Terry Murray, Former Chairman, Farm Business Management Council – “Leadership and Vision”

Inspirational speaker that encouraged us to display leadership and vision and to get beyond the independence stage. Leadership is the most important requirement in agriculture today.

Jack Hayden, President, Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties – “Municipal Partnerships”

Agriculture is the foundation this province was built on and is very important in the Alberta economy. Key issues facing Counties and Municipalities include – farmland assessment. Unfair to assess farmland at market value. Land use planning needs to remain at local level. Railway abandonment and relocation of delivery points has large impact on roads. AAMDC is advocating the removal of education tax from farmland and proposing that farm residences be taxed at market

WILD ROSE SEMINAR – PREPARING FOR THE NEW MILLENNIUM AND BEYOND

value like in a urban area.

Shawn Smith, Vice President, Railink Investments Ltd. “Rail Transportation and Agriculture”

Outlined the history of Railink and its rapid growth. Short-line regional railways can be a viable operation. There must be enough volume on the line to be economic.

Norman Ward, Former President, Western Stock Growers’ Association – “Information and Stewardship in Agriculture”

Spoke on the environmental and stewardship issues facing agriculture. Predicted that in the future, grain farmers will put land into forage and ranchers will graze that forage – feedlots want yearlings instead of calves. Consumers will want food that was produced in an environmentally friendly manner. Internet can be an important source of information.

Elaine McCoy, President, MacLeod Institute for Environmental Analysis – “Biotechnology – Farming for the Future”

Described how biotech was being used to improve crops and livestock and to produce drugs and foods that improved human health. Pharmaceuticals and Nutraceuticals.

Jack Wilkinson, President, Canadian Federation of Agriculture

Canada does have a viable farm organization structure. We are leaders in risk management,, crop insurance and disaster programs. A strong farm lobby and strong leadership is very important. Organize, organize and work with other groups on the issues that affect us all.

IMPORTANT NOTICE TO PAST MEMBERS!!!!!!

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO READ OUR NEWSLETTER. AS A PAST MEMBER OF OUR ORGANIZATION, YOU HAVE RECEIVED A COMPLIMENTARY COPY OF THIS ISSUE. YOUR SUPPORT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO US.

PLEASE FILL OUT THE MEMBERSHIP FORM IN THIS NEWSLETTER AND HELP ENSURE AGRICULTURE HAS A VOICE! NOW’S THE TIME!

GRAIN HANDLING AND TRANSPORTATION REVIEW — THE ESTEY REPORT

Last month Justice Willard Estey released his eagerly awaited final report on grain transportation and handling. If each of the 15 recommendations is adopted, it will have far-reaching implications on farm operations across western Canada. Wild Rose Agricultural Producers made two previous submissions to Justice Estey, and some of these recommendations have been addressed in the report and some have not. Briefly summarized, the recommendations are as follows:

Recommendation 1 The Ports and Waterways

The Port of Prince Rupert must be more functional and should be further developed. Failure to develop this port may result in Western Canadian reliance on Pacific port facilities in the United States. Also, the Port of Churchill needs a national plan to achieve reasonable success as a port facility.

Recommendation 2 Management Information Systems

The review made no specific recommendations with respect to management information systems.

Recommendation 3 Cleaning of Grain

The review recommended that, where possible, grain be cleaned on the prairies to avoid the cost of transporting dockage and to relieve congestion at the ports.

Recommendation 4 Producer-Loaded Cars

The idea of producer loaded cars should be encouraged and the right of the farmer to order and load Producer Cars should be retained in the law.

Recommendation 5 Car Allocation

The right of first refusal of the railways to buy these cars should be removed or allowed to expire before the sale of the government owned hopper cars is undertaken. However, the review does state that they should be disposed of to anyone in or outside the grain transportation business for fair market value and conditional that the cars remain available to the Western Canada grain industry.

Recommendation 6 Car Allocation

The present CAPG system be discontinued and replaced by a system that is completely controlled by the railroad. Cars supplied by the railways should be allocated on the basis of conditions published by the railways. An appointee of the federal Minister of Transport would act as a referee to handle complaints between the shipper (the farmer) and the railway.

Recommendation 7 The Rail Rate Cap

The present rate cap would be repealed and a system proposed by CP Rail would be adopted. Any benefits (or presumably increased expenditures) would be passed on to the farmer who is acting as the shipper.

Recommendation 8 Competition Between Railways

The intent is to open up the Canadian Rail System to competition by and between all competent railway operators, including short-line railways.

Recommendation 9 Final Offer Arbitration

The general principle of final offer that is currently being used by the Canadian Transportation Agency would be followed with a few new criteria. The Federal Government would also appoint a pool of arbitrators to deal with complaints between the shipper and the railways.

Recommendation 10 Branch Line Abandonment

The present provisions of the CTA would be revised to bind parties to both the spirit and the intent of the statute. Communities affected by abandonment may purchase the line or may be financially compensated for the loss.

Recommendation 11 Truck and Road Repair

Both federal and provincial governments would apply some part of the considerable fuel tax collections to the construction, maintenance and repair of the municipal grid roads and secondary provincial highways.

Recommendation 12 The Harvest Quota

The Harvest Quota would be eliminated. The Board would contract with buyers for grains early in the year so that the Board would call in grain and the initial payment can be paid to the farmer. In the absence of such sales, the farmer should be granted a loan from the current Cash Advance System administered by the Board.

Recommendation 13 Contract Calls

- a) The system of marketing Board grain be based on the concept that no grain moves from the farm unless and until a contract has been entered into by the Board with a foreign or domestic buyer
- b) The farmer as owner, or grain company appointed by the farmer, be deemed to be the shipper of grain transported by rail to market
- c) Time limits for the farmer's response to the calling in of grain be shortened.

Recommendation 14 Principal Role of the Board

It is recommended that the Board perform a regulatory and administrative role. Apart from marketing and sales, it is recommended that the Board have no operational or commercial role in handling and transportation of grain. Further, once the contract of the sale of Board grain is entered into between the buyer and the Board as vendor, the right and obligation to perform the vendor's role under the contract be passed over to the grain companies through an auction process.

GRAIN HANDLING AND TRANSPORTATION REVIEW – THE ESTEY REPORT – CONT'D

Recommendation 15 Review of Efficiency Gains

A review by appropriate authority, after the end of the crop year 2000/2001, of the productivity gains actually achieved be conducted.

Wild Rose Agricultural Producers endorse a number of the recommendations. A concern, however arises when dealing with Board matters in the Estey Report. Farmers recently participated in a democratic election to determine a Board of Directors to the Canadian Wheat Board and it should be those elected representatives who should determine the role and function of the CWB. In some respects, the Estey Report

usurps the recently completed election by proposing to redefine the function of the Board of Directors before they have had an opportunity to review the CWB themselves.

Members are encouraged to contact the federal government and obtain a copy of the Estey Report and provide feedback by early February. You are also encouraged to contact the office with any comments or suggestions pertaining to the report.

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