

GRAIN GROWERS
OF CANADA



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DE GRAINS DU CANADA

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Western Barley
Growers Association

Western Canadian
Wheat Growers
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For Immediate Release:

**Grain Growers Pleased to see Parental
Benefits Extended to Farm Families**

(Toronto, Tuesday, November 3, 2009) – Today’s announcement by the Government of Canada to extend EI benefits such as maternity and other care leaves to farmers is very welcome.

“70% of all farms in Canada have off-farm income,” said Richard Phillips, Executive Director of the Grain Growers. “In many cases families have made a conscious decision to enter the workforce to be able to access benefits that many Canadians take for granted.”

“Basic things like maternity, paternity, parental care and compassionate leave are important for everyone’s quality of life.”

“If the spouse or partner in one family works off farm, they have had access to the financial support provided by these programs, while the next family is on their own, even though both family members have worked full time contributing to the farm.”

“Programs like these can be a critical decision factor for young families debating whether to take over the family farm or work elsewhere. Parents today are more active in sharing parental duties and this could allow access to hire replacement labour for a period of time.”

The Canadian Government announced today that EI benefits will be made available to farmers, small business owners and other self-employed trades people.

“This could be the difference as whether one member of the family has to seek off farm employment because now families will have a choice,” said Phillips. “With over 200,000 farms in Canada, if even 10% of them choose to take advantage of these programs, this could help ensure another 20,000 more young families staying on the land.”

“This has huge potential for quality of life in rural Canada.”

The Grain Growers of Canada represent over 80,000 farmers from across Canada through its 14 commodity organizations.

For more info on the Grain Growers, please visit www.ggc-pgc.ca.

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