

GRAIN GROWERS  
OF CANADA



LES PRODUCTEURS  
DE GRAINS DU CANADA

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**Members:**

Alberta Barley  
Commission

Alberta Grain  
Commission

Alberta Oat Rye &  
Triticale Association

Alberta Pulse Growers

Alberta Winter Wheat  
Producers Commission

Atlantic Grains Council

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Producers Association

Canadian Canola  
Growers Association

Manitoba Corn Growers  
Association

Prairie Oat Growers  
Association

Western Barley  
Growers Association

Western Canadian  
Wheat Growers  
Association

Hon. Michael Ignatieff  
Leader of the Liberal Party of Canada  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

May 25, 2010

**RE: Modernizing the Canadian Wheat Board Elections**

Dear Hon. Michael Ignatieff,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Grain Growers of Canada, who represent over 80,000 successful farmers through its membership organizations who grow wheat, oats, barley, canola, corn, peas, lentils and triticale.

We are urging you to accept and expedite legislation that would modernize the Canadian Wheat Board director elections. The legislation, which would create a voters list of people who produce at least 40 tonnes of grain, will bring a new degree of fairness and legitimacy to the CWB.

To put this in perspective, 40 acres of land in the prairies will normally produce 40 tonnes. When the West was settled, homesteaders were given 160 acres, so in essence, one need only farm today approximately 1/4 of the land our grandparents did with horse and plow, to qualify for a ballot.

This proposed change is an excellent step in easing concerns from all sides about the fairness of voters list. It will also set a reasonably low standard so that anyone who produces grain for a living will have an opportunity to vote.

This is not a partisan issue. The Canadian Wheat Board, the Grain Growers of Canada and other major stakeholders feel strongly that this is the best way to proceed.

Some concerns have been expressed about the legislation to the effect that it is anti-democratic as it will limit the votes list and include those that produce non-CWB grains. These concerns are not warranted. By limiting the voters list to 40 tonnes of production we would be better representing farmers that actually make their living on the farm.

Further, farmers today do not grow the same crop year-after-year on the same land. Canola, flax and pulse producers especially must use cereal grains like wheat and barley in our rotations. Your uncle Vladimir would have been well aware of the need to break insect and disease cycle through good agronomic practices like crop rotation.

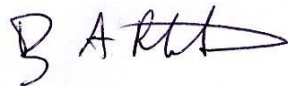
Finally, those other crops the opponents refer to, are actually listed in the Canadian Wheat Board Act, so unless these grains are removed it would be unfair to deny the farmers who produce those crops, a vote, given the CWB has jurisdiction over them.

This legislation is fair for farmers and so it needs to be approved for the upcoming fall elections, meaning it will need to go through the House of Commons and the Senate quickly. If this bill is stalled, CWB director elections may once again be the subject of controversy. Nobody will benefit from this.

We hope we can count on you and the Liberal Party of Canada to ensure this important legislation is passed quickly. This is an urgent issue for the farmers we represent and we ask you to treat it as such.

Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions or concerns about this bill or any other issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D Robertson". The signature is stylized with a large initial "D" and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Doug Robertson,  
President  
Grain Growers of Canada