

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – WEDNESDAY JUNE 23, 2010

Spring session of Parliament delivers mixed results for farmers

With the adjournment of the House of Commons for the summer, the Grain Growers of Canada see noted progress as having been made on a number of files, such as trade liberalization with Colombia and the EU, as well as the introduction of a bill to improve democracy for Canadian Wheat Board director elections.

“Gains in the area of trade liberalization and market access have particularly been remarkable. After an enormous consultation period, the Canada-Colombia Free Trade Agreement was passed; a big win for Canadian pulse, wheat and barley farmers,” said Doug Robertson, President of the Grain Growers of Canada.

There is also good progress being made on the EU-Canada Free Trade Agreement. With a large market of 500 million people, the European Union is a huge potential market for Canadian farmers and food processors.

“The EU-Canada trade talks launched by the government are the largest trade opportunity Canada has had since NAFTA and that will likely be the case for several years to come,” explained Robertson. “It is extremely important to maintain Canada’s competitiveness by improving access into our largest markets.”

The Grain Growers are reviewing the AG Committee’s report on competitiveness and are looking forward to their report on Canadian Young Farmers.

The Grain Growers are concerned, however, with the advance of a private members bill that mandates the conduction of full market acceptance studies during the approval process of GMO traits. This is a significant departure from science-based regulations and threatens innovation in the agriculture sector.

“I am confident that both the Conservatives and Liberals will recognize this bill as a threat to Canadian farmers, put partisanship aside and let it go down to defeat. We will be appearing at committee, and we are optimistic the voice of Canadian farmers will resonate,” said Robertson.

The Grain Growers of Canada represent over 80,000 successful farmers through its membership organizations who grow wheat, oats, barley, canola, corn, peas, lentils and triticale.

-30-

For more information:

Doug Robertson, President - Grain Growers of Canada, 403-819-8372

Richard Phillips, Executive Director – Grain Growers of Canada, 613-875-1795