



A PUBLICATION OF THE NATIONAL FARMERS UNION, 2717 WENTZ AVENUE, SASKATOON, SK S7K 4B6
 PHONE: 306-652-9465 * FAX: 306-664-6226 * E-MAIL: NFU@NFU.CA
 PRINTED AT ST. PETER'S PRESS, MUESTER, SK

union farmer monthly

Seed Saver Campaign Kit Inside

This issue of the *Union Farmer* contains information on the NFU's Seed Saver campaign, copies of NFU Seeds Fact Sheets, and the NFU's petition to Parliament. Please read these materials and the article below and learn how you can participate in this campaign. **See Campaign Kit material beginning on page 5.**

Farmers' rights to their seeds under attack: NFU launches major campaign

Monsanto and other seed giants are pressuring the federal government to change Canada's laws to force farmers to pay royalties every time we save and re-use our own seeds on our own farms. And the government looks set to implement this corporate plan.

The NFU is launching a major, multi-year campaign to protect farmers' rights to save, re-use, select, exchange, and sell their seeds. See the notice above for details of an important strategy workshop that will take place the morning of the NFU Convention. And see the rest of this article for details of the NFU's campaign. — nfu —

Important strategy workshop on farmers' rights to save, re-use, and exchange seeds

The NFU is asking its members to attend a morning workshop on November 18 to discuss the NFU's Seed Saver Campaign (Convention convenes in the afternoon on that day). Similar workshops will be held at other locations across Canada. At these workshops, NFU members and officials will discuss campaign actions and the timelines. **THE SEED SAVER CAMPAIGN STRATEGY WORKSHOP WILL**

BE HELD:

**Thursday, November 18, 2004,
 9:30 AM, Quality Hotel, Saskatoon
 —Room to be posted**

IMPORTANT EVENTS

NFU 35th Annual Convention, November 18-20, 2004

**Quality Hotel, Downtown Saskatoon
 Special Presentation by**

Dr. David Suzuki

See page 3 for more details

Inside this issue:

Via Campesina demands "land, food, dignity and life"	2
NFU reiterates call to get animal protein out of livestock feed	3
NFU leaders meet with NDP Leader	4
NFU Seeds Fact Sheet #1	5
NFU Seeds Fact Sheet #2	7
NFU Seeds Fact Sheet #3	9
NFU Seeds Fact Sheet #4	11
NFU Seeds Fact Sheet #5	13
Petition	15

Vía Campesina demands “land, food, dignity and life”

by Annette Aurélie Desmarais*

The well-known anarchist, Peter Kropotkin, writing at the turn of the 20th Century, presciently argued that after all is said and done “the question of bread” is the preeminent social question. The situation remains the same today. Whether resistance movements are fighting privatization of the commons, the imposition of genetically-modified organisms in food crops, industry’s forays into nanotechnology and attempts to expand the use of food irradiation, or negotiations of trade agreements -- all are deeply connected to agriculture and those who produce and eat food.

This represents an important political moment for an international peasant movement like the Vía Campesina. And the Vía Campesina is not letting opportunities slip by. Under the banner “Let’s organize the struggle: land, food, dignity and life” over 400 participants from seventy countries gathered together for the IV International Conference of the Vía Campesina held in Itaici, Brazil in mid-June, 2004. They were there to analyze the current global context, to strengthen resistance strategies and to critically examine the internal dynamics of the movement.

The Vía Campesina Conference consolidated positions and future action plans on seven key issues: food sovereignty and trade liberalization, biodiversity and genetic resources, agrarian reform, gender, sustainable peasant agriculture, human rights, and migration. Work in the area of human rights, for example, includes presenting a Charter of Peasant Rights to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights. With the integration of the USA-based Border Farmer Workers Project which is working closely with organizations from other continents, the Vía Campesina will certainly be paying a lot more attention to migration and the rights of migrant farm workers.

However, one of the most critical issues on the Vía Campesina Conference agenda was access to land. After all, a landless peasant cannot grow food to bring to market or worry about seeds and a small farmer needs secure land tenure. Based on the negative experiences of some countries with the World Bank’s market-assisted agrarian reform process and on-going human rights abuses related to land struggles, the Vía Campesina voiced the urgent and desperate need for alternatives. As a result it will expand and strengthen the Global Campaign for Agrarian Reform that it launched with the Germany-based Foodfirst Information and Action Network (FIAN).

Putting into practice its commitment to gender equality, the Vía Campesina’s IV Conference was preceded by the Second International Women’s Assembly. For the past four years the Vía Campesina has guaranteed gender parity in its leadership by restructuring and expanding the International Coordinating Commission to include one man and one woman from each of its regions. But, as the delegates to the Second Women’s Assembly emphasized, it is not enough to have formal gender parity. Given that around the world agricultural politics remains a male-dominated field, much work still needs to be done to ensure that gender equality becomes an everyday practice at all levels, in all events and all aspects of the Vía Campesina.

The Vía Campesina is also acutely aware of the importance of the youth to maintaining vibrant peasant and rural cultures and agricultural practices. In efforts to increase the participation and representation of youth, the Vía Campesina held its First International Youth Assembly that brought together 92 representatives from 35 countries. The youth filled the conference with imagination, creativity, energy, song and dance, thus effectively breaking through language barriers. But, their political message was also clearly heard: the youth want to stay on the land, they want to produce food, they are convinced that ‘another agriculture is possible’, and through the Vía Campesina they will organize internationally to make this happen.

Since its inception in 1993, the Vía Campesina has experienced rapid expansion. Africa is now formally integrated as the eighth region of the Vía Campesina and it includes organizations from Mali, Mozambique, Senegal, Madagascar and South Africa. Now in its eleventh year, the Vía Campesina just seems to keep getting stronger as it is firmly establishing roots throughout Asia, where the majority of the world’s peasants live. The Fourth International Conference integrated another forty-one organizations into the movement, over half of these were Asian peasant organizations. No doubt, the Vía Campesina’s presence in Asia will be strengthened considerably over the next three years since the new Operational Secretariat of the Vía Campesina will soon be moved to Jakarta,

(continued on page 3...)

NFU reiterates call to get animal protein out of livestock feed

October 1 news reports stated that, in rare cases, cattle may still be eating feed that contains rendered cattle. This inadvertent feeding may create a small but significant risk of spreading Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE). The NFU responded to these reports by reiterating its call for a total ban on feeding animal protein.

“We must stop feeding animal protein to livestock. The risk is too great. And today’s revelations confirm that it is extremely difficult to keep animal-based feed intended for one species of animal out of the feed-trough of another species,” said NFU Livestock Committee Chair Don Mills.

In November 2003, NFU members at their national Convention passed a policy resolution calling on the federal government to ban “all animal by-products from all animal feeds for all animals destined for human consumption.”

Several years ago, the European Union—in order to control the spread of BSE and to head off the potential introduction of other diseases—banned animal protein from livestock feed.

“It is in the interests of human and animal health to ban all animal-sourced protein from all livestock feed, as the EU has done. We must move beyond half-measures and hope, and we must implement effective controls,” concluded Mills.

— nfu —



NFU 35th Annual Convention

November 18th to 20th, 2004

Quality Hotel, Downtown Saskatoon

Seeds of Hope, Seeds of Division

Learn how valuable genetic resources are being privatized and patented for the benefit of large seed companies at the expense of farmers in particular and society in general. **Don't miss the opportunity to hear:**

Dr. David Suzuki speaking on

Biotechnology: The Ethical Dilemma

Friday, November 19th, 2004—2:30 PM

Call 306-652-9465 or visit www.nfu.ca for details

(Via Campesina, from page 2)

Indonesia. The Via Campesina, an international movement that emerged just over one decade ago, now embraces 142 organizations of peasants, small and medium-scale farmers, rural women, farm workers and indigenous peoples from 56 countries.

Marx predicted that peasants would disappear. The masters of globalization expect them to succumb to commercialized large farms. Clearly, peasants are stubbornly refusing to go away.

— nfu —

* Annette Aurélie Desmarais now teaches in the Department of Justice Studies at the University of Regina. Annette recently completed her doctoral research on the Via Campesina and remains involved in the NFU's international work.

NFU leaders meet with NDP Leader

Federal NDP Leader Jack Layton met with NFU President Stewart Wells, Vice-President Terry Boehm, and Saskatchewan Board Member Martha Robbins on September 15 at the NFU office.

The NFU raised several issues with the NDP leader including the farm income crisis, farmers' rights to save seeds, funding for agricultural policy research in Canada, and the threat posed by the World Trade Organization (WTO) talks to supply management and the Canadian Wheat Board (CWB).

Layton was very interested to hear the NFU's views and seemingly sincere in his wish to work with family farmers to gain a better deal in the Canadian agri-food economy.

— nfu —

Our Foundation—A Self-Help Agency

The National Farmers Foundation was created by the NFU as a fully tax-exempt charitable agency which operates at arms-length and outside the formal structure of the NFU itself. It enables donors to help support special projects that are intended to advance the interests of farm families and rural communities across Canada. Since being granted full tax-exempt status for donations in 1997, the N.F.F. has been able to financially support a number of member-driven initiatives across Canada. Our greatest limitations to doing more is, of course, the amount received in donations. We encourage all members who have not until now included the National Farmers Foundation among your choices for a charitable donation to do so this year—the 35th Anniversary of the NFU.

We gratefully acknowledge donations received since our last report to September 30, the close of our fiscal year, from the following donors:

DONATIONS: Marion Stephenson, Unity, SK; Gerald Friebe, Calgary, AB; Victoria Inskip, Victoria, BC; Trent Brady, Toronto, ON; R.E. Wall, Calgary, AB; Sr. Catherine Fairbairn, Ottawa, ON; Sisters of Service, Toronto, ON; Peter Garstang, Toronto, ON; Charles Bryant, Coaldale, AB; Susan Jelinek, Dollard-Des-Ormeaux, PQ; Betty Grannan, Galiano, BC; Bruce A. Chan, Toronto, ON; Frank Cushing, Victoria, BC; Dr. L.E. Sweet, Selkirk, MB; James Winger, Caledonia, ON; James Simpson, St. Catherines, ON; Pusch Bros., Windthorst, SK; Shirley Courtis, Mount Royal, PQ; Eric O. Smith, Ottawa, ON; Marilyn Reid, Conception Bay, NL; K.C. Angus, Kemptville, ON; Harry Moore, Winnipeg, MB; Emmie Oddie, Regina, SK; Cecil Muldrew, Winnipeg, MB; Anne J. Gammell, Calgary, AB; Ted Millward, Winnipeg, MB; Helen Reynolds, Winnipeg, MB; George Piercy, Parry Sound, ON; Brydon Gombay, Toronto, ON; Robert Young, Fredericton, NB; Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul, Kingston, ON; Urban Laughlin, Summerside, PE; Vada Wooley, Regina, SK; Victor Wellish, Willowdale, ON; Sidney Soban, Thornhill, ON.

MEMORIAL DONATIONS IN MEMORY OF: Leo McIsaac from Urban Laughlin, Summerside, PE; Gaston Ternier from Gil and Marcella Pedersen, Cut Knife, SK; Vivien L. Hoffard from M.G. Hoffard, Swan River, MB; Olaf Turnbull from Stuart Thiesson, Saskatoon, SK; Douglas Lelond from Margaret Elder, Oak Lake, MB; George Cold from Grace Richards, Unity, SK; Brett Bingham from Marcella Pedersen, Cut Knife, SK; Grace Wright from Marcella Pedersen, Cut Knife, SK; Adrian Van Ekris from Urban Laughlin, Summerside, PE; Irmgard Jurke from Marcella and Gil Pedersen, Cut Knife, SK; Alex Masse from Urban Laughlin, Summerside, PE; Kris Davenport from Ruby Miller, Saskatoon, SK.

We urge you to add your name to our list of donors!

Your tax-exempt donations should be sent to:

National Farmers Union, 2717 Wentz Avenue, Saskatoon, SK S7K 4B6

NFU SEED SAVER CAMPAIGN MATERIAL ON FOLLOWING PAGES....

(NFU feed and bedding program, from page 1)

The NFU letter to members asked them to contact the NFU office if they *need* or *have* the following:

- potential feed or bedding (ditches, straw, non-viable crops, accessible wetlands); “If you have hay or straw, even if you don’t have haying equipment, please contact the NFU. Others may be able to cut and bale for you,” said the NFU letter;
- bales of feed or bedding to sell or give away;
- equipment and can cut or bale in your area;
- a truck that can haul bales or haying equipment; or
- unused pasture.

The letter also invited members to donate money to the program

The NFU will leave it to individual members to make any final deals regarding sales or transfers of feed or bedding. Staff will provide lists to all interested members. The NFU cannot ensure that all those who need feed or bedding will receive all they require, but by working together, we can significantly increase the amount of feed and bedding available. And NFU members, collectively, can make a significant contribution to reducing the hardship to other members.

If you have feed, bedding, or equipment, please fax the details to the NFU National Office. Fax: (306) 664-6226. Thank you. — nfu —

NISA wrong way to distribute aid

“Using the NISA program to distribute \$600 million in ad hoc funding will result in extreme inequities in support, the largest farms getting the bulk of the money, and most of the money being sent to farmers outside of the drought zone,” said NFU Vice-President Fred Tait in an August 22 news release.

“The government has chosen to give as much aid, or more, to farmers with good crops yields to those with crop failures; as much to those with surplus cattle feed as to those with none,” said Tait.

Using NISA to distribute funds also has the perverse effect of giving the least aid to the farmers that need the most. “Those who’ve had two or three years of poor crops and low revenues over the past five years will also have low eligible net sales and, thus, will receive smaller federal payments. Using NISA has the intolerable effect of starving the needy and feeding the full,” said Tait.

In October 2001, 2% of NISA participants (2,281 farmers) controlled 21% of NISA funds—nearly \$652 million. Their average account balances were \$285,000 each. “The NISA program pays out its benefits extremely inequitably and it is not only blind to need, but decreases support as need increases,” said Tait.

Tait noted that paying out the money through the NISA program would also put a great deal of money in the hands of corporate-controlled hog barns. “This payment amounts to a 4.25% revenue bonus to corporate hog producers,” said Tait.

Tait concluded: “Some aid is better than none. The federal government, however, has wasted an opportunity to help the maximum number of farm families. By using the NISA program to distribute aid, it will pay a large amount of the money to a few farmers. What is needed is capped, targeted aid that reaches those suffering with drought and those who need it most. The proposed NISA allocation scheme perpetuates a pattern of directing federal aid money away from those most in need.” — nfu —

(*NFU Convention, from page 1*)

and public relations firms (Aaron Freeman); and the growing intrusion of corporate power into universities and research institutes (Claire Polster). This panel is designed to help NFU members, citizens, and activists better understand the forces shaping Canadian public policy and the increasingly undemocratic conduits and mechanisms of power.

Our Convention will also feature a panel on corporate livestock production (Fred Tait, John Ikerd, and Lisa Bechtold) and a panel on genetically-modified (GM) crops and food (Lucy Sharratt, Devlin Kuyek, and Rene Van Acker) with a focus on GM wheat.

Members at the Convention will discuss a wide range of issues such as: responses to the drought, international trade policy, the new NFU Feed and Bedding Exchange, helping youth enter farming, food safety, and the employment contributions of women and youth on family farms.

This year's Convention takes place in downtown Saskatoon at the Quality Hotel (see box below for more details). The Quality Hotel is a modern hotel across the street from Saskatoon's largest shopping plaza and surrounded by theatres, restaurants, and other attractions.

NFU 33rd Annual Convention

November 21st to 23rd, 2002

Quality Hotel, Saskatoon

*Here's everything you need to know to make
your travel plans — BOOK NOW!!*

Convention Registration:

Thursday, November 21st — 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM

Convention Convenes:

Thursday, November 21st — 1:00 PM

Convention Hotel Info.:

Quality Hotel

90—22nd Street East, Saskatoon, SK S7K 3X6

Toll-free reservations 1-800-668-4442

Smoking and non-smoking standard double rooms are available at the rate of **\$75.00 per room per night plus applicable taxes**. Registered guests are also provided with a pass for the heated underground parking lot, and may enter and exit as many times as required during the day.

NFU delegates and visitors MUST identify themselves as being part of the NFU Convention in order to receive the above rate. The above rate will apply to reservations received by the release date of October 19th, 2002. At that time the hotel will release the remaining portions of our block booking and will be resold on a first-come, first-serve basis. The hotel will continue to accept reservations beyond the release date, according to availability, at the above rate.

Speakers at the NFU Convention

John Ikerd is Professor Emeritus of Agricultural Economics at the University of Missouri, Columbia. He has written extensively on the economics of corporate hog production and the effects on communities, the environment, and the family farm. He is the author of "Top ten reasons for rural communities to be concerned about large-scale, corporate hog operations."

Murray Dobbin has been a journalist, broadcaster, author, and activist for over thirty years. He has been involved with the movement of First Nations people, the anti-nuclear movement, and anti-Apartheid and international solidarity movements. Most recently, he has focused on the struggle against corporate globalization and so-called free trade. His latest book is called "The Myth of the Good Corporate Citizen - Democracy under the rule of Big Business."

Fred Tait is a farmer and Vice-President of the NFU and President of Hogwatch Manitoba. Under his leadership, Hogwatch has become a leading North American organization in opposing vertically-integrated, factory farm production of hogs. He is a Board member of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives-Manitoba Branch.

Aaron Freeman is a writer and advocate on corporate accountability and government ethics issues. His bi-weekly column, "Money and Influence," runs in the *Hill Times*, Canada's Parliamentary newspaper. He is a past associate editor of the Washington-based *Multinational Monitor*.

Lucy Sharratt is a researcher on biotechnology and corporate activities at the Polaris Institute in Ottawa. She is past coordinator of the Safe Food, Sustainable Agriculture Campaign at the Sierra Club of Canada and has been researching and campaigning against genetic engineering since 1995 when she was active in the fight against Bovine Growth Hormone.

Devlin Kuyek has worked with the Pesticide Action Network and is the author of "The Real Board of Directors: The Construction of Biotechnology Policy in Canada, 1980-2002" and "Lords of Poison: The Pesticide Cartel".

Claire Polster is Associate Professor of Sociology and Social Studies at the University of Regina. She has written extensively on corporate influence with universities, including "From Public Resource to Industry's Instrument: Redefining and Reshaping the Production of Knowledge in Canada's Universities."

Rene Van Acker is Associate Professor of Crop Management and Weed Science at the University of Manitoba. He is an outspoken critic of corporate and government plans to introduce genetically-modified wheat.

Barry Wilson is the Ottawa Correspondent for the Western Producer. He is the author of several books, including: "Farming the System: How Politicians and Producers Shape Canadian Agricultural Policy."

Lisa Bechtold lives on a fourth generation family farm in Foremost, Alberta. She is the founder and President of Citizens Advocating Public Health and Environmental Responsibility (C.A.P.E.R.), a grassroots organization dedicated to opposing factory farming in the Foremost area. She is a Consultant with the GRACE Factory Farm Project.

Wheat Growers block aid to livestock producers

In mid-August, the Western Canadian Wheat Growers Association (WCWGA) effectively blocked efforts by the Canadian Wheat Board (CWB) to organize drought assistance to desperate western farmers. The CWB convened a meeting of farm organizations to discuss how it could use its CWB-administered hopper cars returning from port to haul feed and screenings pellets back to prairie farmers. The Wheat Growers raised numerous objections and worked to undermine support for the CWB plan.

NFU Vice-President Fred Tait, who represented the NFU at the talks, said that the potential of this plan is even more significant than the hay being moved by rail because the feed value of the pellets is much higher than that of hay. He said that this type of assistance over the next eight months would allow many farmers to overwinter livestock on a combination of straw and feed pellets—reducing the need for increasingly-unaffordable hay.

In blocking this attempt to ship feed pellets, the Wheat Growers proved that they were willing to sacrifice livestock farmers' interests in the Wheat Growers' ideological war against the CWB. In the larger battle over CWB marketing, this is equally true: the Wheat Growers have no qualms against hurting farmers if it also means hurting the CWB.

— nfu —

The NFU Store

Thinking of a gift? Think of the NFU!

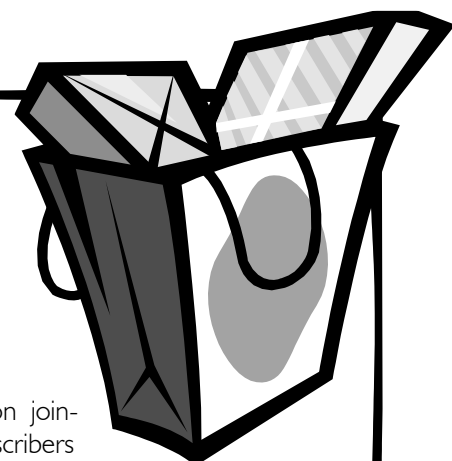
Union Farmer gift subscriptions might be just the thing for a neighbor who is vacillating on joining the NFU, a family member away from home, or a friend or relative in the city. Subscribers get 10 to 12 issues of the *Union Farmer Monthly* and four issues of the *Quarterly* magazine.

An NFU t-shirt also makes a great gift to yourself or someone special. The uni-sex t-shirts are forest green with the NFU logo on front – sizes L, X-Large, XX-Large. The women's t-shirts are grey v-necks with black piping – sized Medium.

NEW – NFU PENS! Elegant, practical and easy to hold due to its rubber grip. Two-tone burgundy and gold with black rubber grip. Gold imprinting on the barrel comes in two styles. Style #1 commemorates the 100th anniversary of the voluntary farm union movement stating "The Territorial Grain Growers Assoc. to the NFU – 1901 to 2001 – 100 Years of Farm Activism". Style #2 simply states our name, phone and website. ALSO NEW – 100th Anniversary lapel pins stating "TGGGA 1901 – 2001 NFU, 100 Years of Progress, Voluntary Movement"

NFU Pens (indicate style #1 or #2)	\$ 4.00 ea or 3 for \$10 (plus
\$2.00 S&H)	
Union Farmer Gift Subscriptions	\$25.00
T-shirts (men's & women's)	\$15.00 (plus \$2.00 S&H)
NFU Lapel Pin, 25 & 30 Year Member Pins	\$ 5.00 (plus \$1.00 S&H)
NFU 100th Anniversary Pins	\$ 5.00 (plus \$1.00 S&H)

To order, call the National Office at (306) 652-9465, or fax (306) 664-6226,



A CONTRIBUTION TO THE
NATIONAL FARMERS FOUNDATION
 IS AN INVESTMENT IN THE
FUTURE

THE NATIONAL FARMERS FOUNDATION NOW HAS FULL CHARITABLE STATUS
 AND CAN ISSUE TAX-EXEMPT RECEIPTS FOR ALL DONATIONS MADE ON A DIRECT
 PERSONAL BASIS, IN MEMORIUM TO OTHERS OR AS BEQUESTS IN WILLS.

EDUCATION AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT
 ARE BADLY NEEDED TO SUPPORT THE FUTURE OF
 RURAL COMMUNITIES.

Tax-Exempt Memorial Donations may be sent to:

National Farmers Foundation
2717 Wentz Avenue
Saskatoon, SK S7K 4B6

YES! I want to help develop farm leadership and preserve the rural community!

Here is my tax exempt gift to the National Farmers Foundation: \$ _____

Name: _____

(please print clearly)

Address: _____ Postal Code: _____

Make cheques payable to: National Farmers Foundation OR use your credit card

VISA **Mastercard** **Card No.:** _____ - _____ - _____ - _____

Expiry Date: ____ / ____ **Signature:** _____

Use this section for Tribute Gifts. Send an acknowledgement to:

Name: _____

(please print clearly)

Address: _____ Postal Code: _____

This donation is made in memory of: _____

Memorial Name (please print)

How far would you go to save a buck?

Some things can't be watered down.

And, we wouldn't dream of watering down your farm news.

With Farmers' Independent Weekly you get what you pay for. That means you get all the facts, not just the "corporate spin." Let's face it, anyone can supply you with information but it takes depth of knowledge to put that information in perspective.

We believe your success is a measure of our value. That's why we're committed to providing you with information in a way that merits your trust and confidence, helps you farm, and enriches your life and your community.

**FARMERS'
INDEPENDENT
WEEKLY**

www.fiwonline.com

One year \$57.00 Two years \$102.60
Prices include PST & GST

To subscribe call 1-877-742-4307 or send cheque or money order to
Farmers' Independent Weekly P.O. Box 1846, Station Main, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 3R1

Corporations (and government) building more hog mega-barns

Big Sky Farms Inc. proposes a \$32 million, 5,000 sow, 120,000-hog-per-year mega-barn complex—a breeder-farrowing barn, a nursery-weanling barn, and three feeder-finisher barns—for Porcupine Plain, Saskatchewan.

When completed in 2003, this will be the second of two 5,000-sow complexes for Big Sky (the first is at Rama, Saskatchewan). Big Sky currently has seven other mega-barn complexes operating in Saskatchewan. Big Sky's production is estimated at over 500,000 market hogs per year.

Big Sky has big plans. "We want to be producing 2 million hogs per year by 2008," said CEO Florian Possberg. (Saskatchewan's total production is about 2 million hogs per year.) In 1997, Possberg said: "I've been hearing the world demand for pork increases by about 30 million hogs per year. The potential is immense.... If we double, triple, quadruple or even increase production tenfold it's not going to flood the market." Following his remarks, prices plummeted in 1998/99 due to alleged oversupply and prices are moving downward now for the same reason.

Big Sky has ties to Smithfield Foods, Inc. "the largest hog producer and pork processor in the world." (Smithfield website). Smithfield has purchased nearly 100% of the stock in Schneider Corporation (formerly one of the largest Canadian-owned meat processors). Schneider owns 54% of Saskatoon-based Mitchell's Gourmet Foods Inc. Mitchell's is a major pork processor with 2000 sales of \$297 million. Through its wholly-owned Schneider subsidiary, Smithfield controls Mitchell's and owns the majority of its stock.

Mitchell's, in turn, has a strategic alliance with Big Sky. In January 1999, Mitchell's announced that they had given Big Sky \$5 million to finance a 2,500-sow barn that was then under construction. Big Sky, in turn, committed to selling at least 85 percent of its pigs to Mitchell's/Smithfield. The

deal lasts until 2008. It is unclear whether Mitchell's/Smithfield has given additional money to Big Sky.

Along with Smithfield/Mitchell's, the Saskatchewan government has also been eagerly investing in Big Sky. In July, 2000, Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan bought a 40% share of the company for \$15 million. Big Sky also received a \$500,000 equity investment and a \$1.5 million loan from the Saskatchewan Opportunities Corporation (SOCO) to fund construction of 2,400 sow mega-barn complexes at Humboldt, Kelvington, and Preeceville, Sask. Crown Life/Haro Financial Corporation—which has been the recipient of significant investments from Saskatchewan Crown Investments Corporation—also has an investment in Big Sky. One industry-watcher believes that the majority of money that has been put into Big Sky has come from the Saskatchewan government. In one of its reports, the Fraser Institute lists Big Sky as a "Crown Corporation."

Since 1988, corporate and government policies have driven 2/3 of Canada's family farm hog producers out of production. Currently, newspapers are reporting that the hog industry is in "crisis" with "overproduction" driving down prices. It is thus interesting to see the Saskatchewan government teaming up with the world's biggest packer/producer to build huge hog barn complexes and dramatically increase production. Like the government/industry moves to terminate single-desk selling in several provinces, the result of this latest public/corporate policy is predictable—the loss of family farms and growing corporate stranglehold on this sector of agriculture. — nfu —

NFU supports unionized grain workers

NFU Women's President Shannon Storey flew out to Vancouver on Labour Day Monday to participate in a news conference called by locked-out grain handlers. Storey said that grain companies—short on volume and burdened by large debts resulting from their ill-conceived “consolidation” of the elevator system—were trying to cut costs by locking out workers. Companies have also raised elevator tariffs to farmers (see story elsewhere in this issue). Storey said that grain companies were abusing farmers and workers alike.

Grain movement through Vancouver terminals ceased Aug. 25 after the British Columbia Terminal Elevator Operators locked out approximately 600 members of the Grain Workers Union (GWU). The grain companies involved in the lock-out include Agricore United, Cascadia Terminal, James Richardson International Limited, Pacific Elevators and Saskatchewan Wheat Pool.

The GWU contract expired December 31, 2000. The main issues in the dispute involve scheduling and recalls from layoffs. Wages are not an issue. — nfu —

CGC reminds producers: deferred payment for grain deliveries is risky

The Canadian Grain Commission (CGC) reminds grain producers that if they accept deferred payment for their grain deliveries, they may put their eligibility for compensation from the CGC at risk if a cheque or cash purchase ticket is not honored by the bank.

By law, there is a 30-day time limit from the date a cheque or cash purchase ticket is given to a producer to make a claim if the cheque or cash purchase ticket is not honored by the bank.

Under the Canada Grain Act, grain companies licensed by the CGC post security to cover what they owe producers. Producers' payments are protected for 90 days from the date they deliver their grain to a licensee. If a company refuses or fails to pay them in that time period, they have the right to make a claim against security. If producers wait more than 90 days from the date of delivery, they are not covered. — nfu —

Lentil basis

A member recently sent a copy of a grain cheque to the NFU office. It showed a basis figure for lentils of **\$143.29/tonne!**

The basis is the total package of deductions—handling, transportation, bagging, risk premium, profit, etc.—that the company takes off the market price to determine the farmer's net price.

The basis on a tonne of wheat is currently about \$52/tonne (Alberta) to \$60/tonne (Saskatchewan). This wheat basis includes about \$5/tonne for CWB costs and zero for risk premiums or profits. The grain industry tells us that we will be better off without the CWB. Perhaps the grain companies would like to try a “trial” dual market in lentils.

Elevator charges up again: the benefits of efficiency?

“Grain companies toppled and burned wooden elevators and told farmers that this destruction would create a more efficient system and save farmers money. Government deregulation paved the way for elevator closure and rail abandonment,” said NFU Board member Terry Boehm in an August 26 news release. He continued: “As elevator charges rise again, farmers are asking corporate and government leaders: Where are the savings?”

Taking wheat as an example, many companies’ tariffs for “receiving, elevating, and loading out” are higher when compared to a year ago.

- Agricore United in Manitoba raised tariffs 10.9%: \$11.00/tonne last August vs. \$12.20 this year.
- Saskatchewan Wheat Pool also raised tariffs: up 8.2% or 88¢ per tonne.
- Cargill raised tariffs 1.8% in Alberta and 4.7% in Saskatchewan.

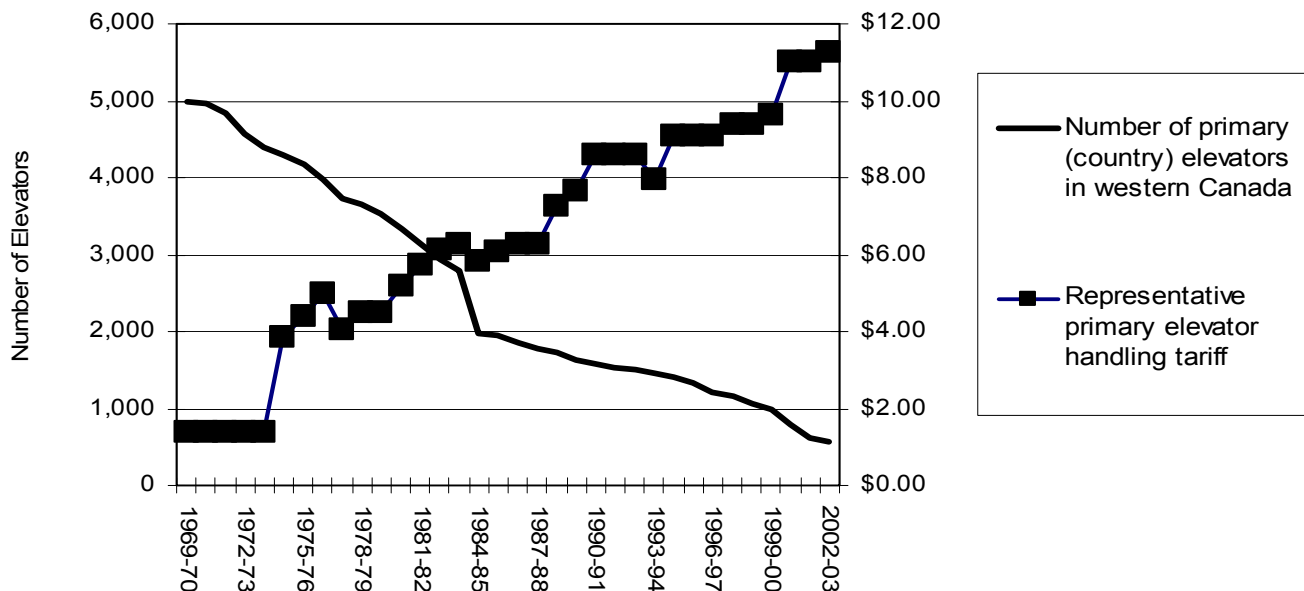
Agricore United, Sask. Wheat Pool, and Cargill handle 75% of the western crop.

Tariffs for “removal of dockage” are also up: Cargill up 11.5%; Sask. Wheat Pool up 8.2%; and Agricore United up approximately 7%. Storage charges also rose at many elevators, with charges at some Agricore United elevators up 90%.

Grain companies have slashed the number of elevators in western Canada. In 1970, western Canada had 4,984 elevators. Today, fewer than 600 remain. This huge restructuring, however, has not yielded savings. Farmers now pay over eight times as much as they did 30 years ago, despite the “consolidation” of 88% of the elevator network. *Grain companies handling tariffs rose at twice the rate of inflation* despite the fact that average per-elevator grain throughput increased twelve-fold.

“This year’s tariff increases come near the end of the most rapid and dramatic consolidation of the elevator network in history—the network has been cut nearly in half in just five years. These tariff increases prove, again, that there will be no savings for farmers. We will pay more for trucking and to fix shattered roads, and then we will pay more at the elevator for increased handling tariffs,” said Boehm. — nfu —

Number of Country Elevators and Level of Tariffs: 1969-2003



Boss Lubricants

NFU Special Pricing
Effective January 1, 2001

<u>Product</u>	<u>205L Drum</u>	<u>115L</u>	<u>20L Pail</u>	<u>4X4L</u>
Boss BXHD 15W40	1.45/L	1.52/L	1.72/L	1.84/L
Boss BXHD 10W30	1.45/L	1.52/L	1.72/L	1.84/L
Boss BXHD 10W	1.40/L	1.47/L	1.67/L	—
Boss BXHD 30W	1.40/L	1.47/L	1.67/L	1.79/L
Boss BXHD 40W	1.45/L	1.52/L	1.72/L	—
Boss BXHD 50W	1.45/L	1.52/L	1.72/L	—
Boss UTF (Trans Gear Hyd)	1.39/L	1.46/L	1.66/L	1.78/L
Boss Hyd 68	1.28/L	1.35/L	1.55/L	—
Boss Hyd 46	1.23/L	1.30/L	1.50/L	—
Boss Hyd (AW) 32	1.18/L	1.25/L	1.45/L	—
Boss HVI 36 (all season)	1.34/L	1.41/L	1.61/L	—
Boss 80W90 GL-5	1.69/L	1.76/L	1.96/L	2.12/L
Boss Solvent	0.93/L	1.00/L	1.20/L	—
Boss ATF Dex 111	1.43/L	1.50/L	1.70/L	1.82/L
Boss UTF Light	1.49/L	1.56/L	1.76/L	—
Boss 80W90 Tacky	1.79/L	1.86/L	2.06/L	—

Boss Big Blue Ultra #2 (multi-purpose grease) — 10 X 14 oz @ \$2.46 (\$24.60) — 40 X 14 oz @ \$2.40 (\$96.00)

Boss Red Tax Premium #1 or #2 grease — 10 X 14 oz @ \$2.58 (\$25.80) — 40 X 14 oz @ \$2.52 (\$100.80)

All drums are subject to a \$45.00 drum deposit or drum exchanged in good condition. All applicable taxes are extra.

To order products from Boss, call

1-800-979-9959 (Saskatchewan)

Or

1-800-662-7118 (Alberta)

CWB election rules and dates

Canadian Wheat Board elected Directors in Districts 1 (Art Macklin), 3 (Larry Hill), 5 (John Clair), 7 (Michael Halyk), and 9 (Bill Nicholson) will face elections this fall. All except John Clair have said that they will stand for re-election.

The important dates for the CWB elections are:

September 3, 2002

- Election period begins and nominations open.

September 6, 2002

- Preliminary Voters list available to registered candidates on CD ROM and available for viewing at Meyers Norris Penny offices
- Voter Eligibility Confirmation mailed to each actual producer in Districts 1, 3, 5, 7, and 9 to confirm voter eligibility.
- District Verification to be mailed to each actual producer in Districts 2, 4, 6, 8, and 10 to confirm non-voting district assignment.

October 15, 2002

- Deadline for changes to the Voters List

October 25, 2002

- Nominations close at 12:00 noon CST

November 3, 2002

- Voter's packages to be mailed to each eligible voter.

November 21, 2002

- Deadline for Statutory Declarations.

December 5, 2002

- End of official election period
- Postmark deadline for completed ballots.

December 14 – 15, 2002

- Ballots tabulated, and results announced.

December 31, 2002

- Elected Directors take office

Changes to the election rules:

The Canadian Government has amended the "Regulations Respecting the Election of Directors of the Canadian Wheat Board." Some of the changes are positive, including:

- The definition of "third party intervener" is changed to include groups as well as individuals;
- All election advertising must now display the name of the sponsoring individual or group; and
- Third Party Intervenors must disclose funding sources.

The amendments, however, leave several shortcomings in the regulations unrepaired. These shortcomings include:

- Grain companies could still give money to organizations which could then pass the money on to candidates. While the candidate would have to name the donor organization, no one would be required to report the grain company donation.
- The amended regulations would limit only "advertising" by third-parties. The NFU recommended that this be changed to include *all* third-party expenditures related to the elections: polling, logistical support, fundraising, etc.
- The amended regulations would leave investigation and enforcement in the hands of the "election coordinator." In past elections, the election coordinator has been an accounting firm. Such a firm has no legal investigative powers. Further, a private, for-profit corporation has a *disincentive* to investigate or to following up irregularities because any additional work will diminish that corporation's profits.
- The amended regulations do not adequately specify penalties (Section 68 of the CWB Act contains no minimum penalties for those convicted of breaching the Act or its regulations). Without explicit penalties or effective investigation and enforcement measures, spending limits will fail to curb improper election spending.

"Even with the amendments, the CWB election regulations will be insufficient to deal with the complex funding schemes employed by candidates and organizations intent on weakening the CWB," NFU President Stewart Wells told the federal government. The NFU has reiterated its long-standing request that CWB elections be conducted by Elections Canada.

"Please act immediately: to place the upcoming CWB elections under the authority of Elections Canada; to place clear, enforceable limits on third-party election spending; and to ensure that corporate money does not subvert these elections and rob farmers of their CWB marketing advantage," said Wells.

— nfu —