



Farm Saved Seed Royalties: What you need to know

The corporate seed industry is lobbying the federal government to bring in new regulations under Canada's *Plant Breeders Rights Act* to set up a system that would force farmers who plant newer varieties to pay a royalty every year even when planting farm-saved seed.

Plant Breeders' Rights (PBR) is a type of "intellectual property" similar to a patent, where the developers of new plant varieties claim ownership over the variety. Countries can recognize this type of ownership by creating laws that define PBRs and give PBR-holders authority over seed and propagating material (such as tubers and cuttings) that, among other things, requires farmers to ask permission and pay royalties before planting them. When Bill C-18 was passed, Canada's *Plant Breeders Rights Act* was changed to conform with UPOV '91 and any new plant variety registered after February 27, 2015 is subject to its provisions.¹

When farmers buy varieties that were brought in under Canada's previous PBR legislation (based on the UPOV '78 regime), a royalty must be paid on the initial seed purchase, but farmers have the right to freely save seed from the first year's crop for planting subsequent crops. Varieties that have been on the market for over 18 years are no longer subject to PBRs, so they are in the public domain, meaning there are no restrictions on their use.

Canada's new PBR Act gives plant breeders who register a new variety (PBR holders) the exclusive right to produce and reproduce seed, condition (clean and treat), sell, stock (store), export or import seed and to authorize any of these uses of seed for a period of 25 years for trees and vines, and for 20 years for all other plants. PBR holders are entitled to demand a royalty payment when authorizing a farmer's use of the seed.

The PBR Act provides an exception called the "farmers' privilege", which allows farmers who purchase a new variety (and pay a royalty

on the initial seed purchase) to stock, condition, produce and reproduce seed for use on their own holdings in subsequent years. This "farmers' privilege" means farmers can use farm-saved seed to grow the next crop without asking permission or paying another royalty to the variety's PBR holder. This exemption is fragile, however, because the farmers' privilege can be taken away in whole or in part, simply by changing the Regulations under the PBR Act.

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) has started consultations, trying to get farmers to accept the elimination of farmers' privilege for cereal crops by claiming additional royalty payments to seed companies are needed to fund private investment in plant breeding. AAFC is asking farmers to choose between two options for farm-saved seed royalty systems: *End Point Royalties* or *Trailing Contracts*. Any farm-saved seed royalty system would start by using the government's regulatory power to restrict farmers' privilege, which would force farmers to buy seed every year or pay the seed company additional royalties in return for permission to plant farm-saved seed.

If "farmers' privilege" is eliminated by regulatory change, farmers would need to ask the seed company's permission to use farm-saved seed. Permission would be granted on the condition of paying a royalty – either on the seed planted each year (the Trailing Contract option) or on the crop produced from farm-saved seed (the End Point Royalty

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¹ The UPOV system of plant variety protection came into being with the adoption of the International Convention for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants by a Diplomatic Conference in Paris on December 2, 1961. This was the point at which there was recognition of the intellectual property rights of plant breeders in their varieties on an international basis.

(Farm Saved Seed Royalties, from page 1)

option). Or the company could just say “no”, forcing farmers who wish to use that variety to buy new seed every year. The corporate seed industry is now calling on the federal government to bring in regulations that would remove the farmers’ privilege – starting with wheat, and later adding other cereal crops, pulse crops, and other crop kinds. The CFIA’s Plant Breeders Rights Advisory Committee is also discussing complete elimination of farmers’ privilege for new varieties of fruit, vegetables and ornamental plants when PBR Act regulations are changed.

According to a study commissioned by the Seed Synergy lobby group, the seed industry expects to collect over \$100 million of dollars every year through these compulsory payments.² The money would go to seed companies such as Bayer, Syngenta, BASF, DowDupont and Limagrain.

The Seed Synergy group is calling for an “industry-led, government-enabled” seed regulatory system. Already, AAFC is enabling the seed companies by framing the seed royalty issue as a necessary to promote greater private sector investment in plant breeding. However, private monopoly control of seed to extract payment from farmers will not guarantee the money will be spent on plant breeding.

We have many ways to fund plant breeding in Canada – including public funding and farmer check-offs or levies. There are low-cost breeding methods that are accessible and already being used by farmers, but our PBR Act does not allow unaccredited farmers to register varieties they develop. Public breeding has also proven to be more economical and has delivered better results than private sector breeding. From 1981 through 2013 wheat yields increased faster than canola yields, with average public investment in wheat breeding of \$25 million per year, and average private investment in canola breeding of \$80 million per year.³

Canadian agriculture will need new varieties as our farms face changing economic and climatic conditions. We need to ensure our plant breeding system will respond to the real problems on our farms, and not be driven by multinational seed and chemical companies’ desire to increase their sales and profitability. Integrated seed and agrochemical corporations are susceptible to conflicts of interest, such as not pursuing an insect or disease-resistant line that could reduce demand for insecticide or fungicides.

The NFU calls for keeping farmers’ right to freely save and use our own seed, and for public funding and farmer-controlled check-off funding to support plant breeding. We oppose any regulation to take away or restrict the “farmers’ privilege” under the *Plant Breeders Rights Act*.

Farmers and others will have the opportunity to make their views known at AAFC information sessions held at farm meetings over the winter and spring as well as through an online consultation process.

² *Canada’s Seed System: Economic Impact Assessment and Risk Analysis*, by JRG Consulting Group, March 2018 <https://bit.ly/2QXQKlt>

³ *Crop Yield and Production Trends in Western Canada*, by R.J. Graf March 2013, page 22. <http://www.pgdc.ca/pdfs/wrt/Crop%20Yield%20Trends%20FINAL.pdf>

TAKE ACTION!

CONTACT:

YOUR MP:

find their info at ourcommons.ca/Parliamentarians/en/members

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Letters to MPs do not need a stamp when mailed to House of Commons, Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

WRITE LETTERS to your local paper, comment on social media – hashtag **#SaveOurSeed**

PHONE IN to radio call-in shows.

SUBSCRIBE TO THE NFU SOS ACTION GROUP to get info and updates by email - <http://eepurl.com/dt7s0n>

LEARN MORE at nfu.ca/campaigns/save-our-seed/

End Point Royalties would require farmers to pay a royalty on their harvested crop (a per-tonne royalty) if they grow a newer variety. A system would be set up to collect the royalty money when crops are sold and send it to the PBR holders.

Trailing Contracts with a standard minimum royalty rate would be mandatory for seed purchases of UPOV '91 varieties. They would dictate whether, and under what conditions, the buyer could use farm-saved seed. Farmers would have to send royalty payments to the company every year if they planted farm-saved seed. To enforce the contract requirements, a comprehensive data collection system owned by the PBR holders would be set up to track farm-saved seed users.

Royalties are payments that owners of intellectual property such as Plant Breeders Rights holders are legally entitled to demand as a condition of access to the property. Currently farmers pay a royalty to the owner when purchasing new seed of PBR-protected varieties and gene-patented genetically modified seed. Patent owners and Plant Breeders Rights holders may set the royalty rate and can spend the money as they wish.

Check-offs (levies) are per-tonne payments made to commodity groups when farmers sell commercial crops. Commodity groups are provincially incorporated and have farmer-elected directors who decide how to spend the check-off money on research into new varieties, agronomic practices, to promote international marketing and carry out education in support of the commodity.

Public Plant Breeding is done at public institutions such as Agriculture Canada research stations and universities. Funding is provided by governments and farmer check-off organizations. Public plant breeders can be PBR holders entitled to collect royalties. Most varieties of cereals, pulses and minor crops such as mustard and flax have been developed by public plant breeders.

Gene patents are another form of intellectual property. Canada does not allow patents on higher life forms but it is legal to patent a gene sequence that is inserted into a genetically modified plant. Gene patented GMO seed, such as canola, corn and soy, is covered by patent law, which allows the seed company to charge a royalty (often called a "Technology Use Fee") and prohibit farmers from saving and planting seed from the crop.

Utility Patents are a form of intellectual property used in the USA for plant varieties. Utility patent holders can prohibit others from using or selling the seed, and can prohibit breeders from using the genetic material. These patents are in effect for 20 years. Farmers who purchase seed from American catalogues may see this term.

Infringement occurs when someone uses PBR-protected or gene-patented seed without the company's permission or paying a royalty. The company can sue the farmer and obtain a court order to enforce payment for damages and compensation to the PBR holder, seize the seed and stop any future use of the seed by the farmer.

Seed Synergy is an umbrella lobby group made up of the Canadian Seed Growers Association, Canadian Seed Trade Association, Canadian Seed Institute, Commercial Seed Analysts Association of Canada, Canadian Plant Technology Agency, and CropLife Canada.

Why the NFU is in court supporting federal jurisdiction over greenhouse gas pollution pricing

Since 2002 when NFU members passed a resolution urging Canada to ratify the Kyoto Accord, we have been officially calling for meaningful, fair and effective national and international action to address climate change, and for policies that allow farmers to manage and adapt to climate change impacts. Numerous NFU position statements, policy briefs and presentations have both highlighted the need to address climate change and provided good ideas for solutions that work for farmers and the food system. Our 2015 National Convention, *Agriculture in a Changing Climate*, had workshops, panels, resolutions and debates that highlighted climate change impacts and pointed to ways we can improve our prospects by working together.

In 2018 the Saskatchewan government announced it would challenge the federal government's authority to create a national greenhouse gas reduction plan using a baseline, revenue-neutral greenhouse gas emission pricing system. If successful, Saskatchewan's action would make it impossible for Canada to implement an effective national greenhouse gas reduction program, or perhaps any national climate change mitigation policy. Thus, NFU members voted strongly in favour of a 2018 National Convention resolution empowering the NFU Board to apply to the courts as an intervenor in support of the federal government's authority. The [application](#), done in collaboration with several citizens groups, succeeded.

The NFU's intervention in support of federal jurisdiction is not an endorsement of the current federal government's greenhouse gas emission pricing measures. Rather, the NFU recognizes that a national framework needs to be created through the principles of co-operative federalism, and this requires federal leadership and enforcement powers. Co-operative federalism means provinces can tailor programs according to their own needs and context within national parameters and standards. Equitable results cannot be achieved if individual provinces are allowed to opt out, free-riding or unfairly undermining others' efforts. An effective, coherent national program is needed for Canada's greenhouse gas reduction efforts to be recognized inter-nationally as a valid commitment under the Paris Accord.

In late December 2018, the NFU submitted a sworn statement to the Saskatchewan Court of Appeal outlining the negative impacts climate change is already having on farmers, and why a national approach as proposed in (but not limited to) the *Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act* (GGPPA) is needed.

Some of the key points in the affidavit are:

- Farmers will be hit hard in terms of water security, infrastructure damage, drought, erosion, wild fires, and other weather-related events caused by Climate Change.
- Farming is a source of GHG emissions, but also has practices that can sequester GHGs. Reducing emissions is not about rewarding industry for the status quo, it's about changing best practices to facilitate new reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.
- A strategic price on pollution could have farmers pay fees based on emissions related to their operations, and receive refunds based on the relative size and production of their farms, rewarding farmers with below-average emissions, and inducing those with above-average emissions for their farm size to change their practices.
- A low-emission food system will be a low-input food system, which can increase net incomes
- A national strategy is needed to tackle the mitigation of Climate Change and that the Federal *Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act* is an important part of that strategy.

The full statement is posted on the NFU website page, [Greenhouse Gas Act Constitutional Case](#).

The *Constitutional Questions Act Reference re: Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act* will be heard starting 10 am February 13 and February 14 in Courtroom 7, Saskatchewan Court of Appeal, 2425 Victoria Ave., Regina, SK.

Larry Kowalchuk is the lawyer for the interveners. The groups working together on the intervention are:

- *Climate Justice Saskatoon (CJS)*
- *National Farmers Union (NFU)*
- *Saskatchewan Coalition for Sustainable Development (SCSD)*
- *Saskatchewan Council for International Cooperation (SCIC)*
- *Saskatchewan Electric Vehicle Club (SaskEV)*
- *The Council of Canadians: Prairie and Northwest Territories Region*
- *The Council of Canadians: Regina Chapter (COC: Regina)*
- *The Council of Canadians: Saskatoon Chapter (COC: Saskatoon)*
- *The New Brunswick AntiShale Gas Alliance (NBASGA)*
- *Youth of the Earth (YOTE)*

To find out more about the court case and the NFU's involvement, please visit: <https://www.nfu.ca/campaigns/climate-change/greenhouse-gas-act-constitutional-case/>.

NFU supports rapid phase out of neonicotinoid insecticides

In November, 2018 the NFU submitted comments to the Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) regarding its proposed decision for a five-year phase out all agricultural uses of the neonicotinoid insecticides, Clothianidin and Thiamethoxam, based on their unacceptable risk to aquatic invertebrates. The PMRA has already recommended a phase out of the third neonicotinoid, Imidacloprid. Final decisions are still pending. Read the NFU's full brief below.

Clothianidin and Thiamethoxam are neonicotinoid insecticides currently approved for use as seed treatment and/or foliar spray on many agricultural crops in Canada. The proposed Special Review decision would phase out all outdoor agricultural uses over five years. The decision is based on review of current scientific evidence showing these insecticides have unacceptable impacts on aquatic invertebrates and the wildlife (including birds) that depend on aquatic ecosystems. The PMRA has also determined that a mitigation that would permit these insecticides under certain circumstances is not feasible.

The duration of the phase out period is based on *Regulatory Directive DIR2018-01, Policy on Cancellations and Amendments Following Re-evaluation and Special Review*. A three-year phase out is standard, allowing companies one year to wind down manufacturing, the following year for retailers to sell off inventories, and a final year to allow those applying it to use up their stocks. The Minister of Health may extend the phase-out time “if no suitable alternatives to the use of the pesticide exist, so long as the human health and environmental risks, as well as value of the product, are considered to be acceptable until the effective date of the amendment or cancellation” or it can be shortened “when risks of concern are considered to be imminent and serious.”ⁱ (emphasis added)

The NFU supports phasing out Clothianidin and Thiamethoxam, but on a faster timeline. During the phase-out period the use of Clothianidin and Thiamethoxam restrictions should be tightened. Prophylactic use (routine seed treatment or spraying regardless of degree of pest pressure) should no longer be allowed, with the onus on the user to prove need before purchase. Seed free of neonicotinoid coatings must be made available for all crops immediately at prices at or below the price of treated seed.

Since the public consultation period started, a major study that documented greater than expected impacts of climate change on insect life was published in *Proceedings*

of the National Academy of Sciences (see *Climate-driven declines in arthropod abundance restructure a rainforest food web*, by Bradford C. Lister and Andres Garcia).ⁱⁱ The authors summarize their findings as follows:

Arthropods, invertebrates including insects that have external skeletons, are declining at an alarming rate. While the tropics harbor the majority of arthropod species, little is known about trends in their abundance. We compared arthropod biomass in Puerto Rico's Luquillo rainforest with data taken during the 1970s and found that biomass had fallen 10 to 60 times. Our analyses revealed synchronous declines in the lizards, frogs, and birds that eat arthropods. Over the past 30 years, forest temperatures have risen 2.0 °C, and our study indicates that climate warming is the driving force behind the collapse of the forest's food web. If supported by further research, the impact of climate change on tropical ecosystems may be much greater than currently anticipated. (emphasis added)

While some may say a tropical study is irrelevant to Canada, many migratory birds affected by aquatic habitat degradation here also winter in the tropics.

Other recent studies have shown drastic reductions in insect populations in temperate zones. For example, in 2017 the scientific journal *PLoS ONE* published a long-term study conducted in protected wildlife areas in Germany. In the article's summary the author's say:

*Our analysis estimates a seasonal decline of 76%, and mid-summer decline of 82% in flying insect biomass over the 27 years of study. We show that this decline is apparent regardless of habitat type, while changes in weather, land use, and habitat characteristics cannot explain this overall decline. This yet unrecognized loss of insect biomass must be taken into account in evaluating declines in abundance of species depending on insects as a food source, and ecosystem functioning in the European landscape.*ⁱⁱⁱ

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(NFU supports rapid phase out..., from page 5)

We urge the PMRA to consider the potential for catastrophic synergistic effects on ecosystems when the unsustainable use of neonicotinoid insecticides is coupled with mounting losses of insect populations due to climate stress and other unknown factors.

The previously documented harm done to aquatic ecosystems already reviewed by the PMRA warrants decisive action. The publication of new scientific research showing the vulnerability of insect populations worldwide justifies an expedited phase-out to Clothianidin and Thiamethoxam in Canada.

The NFU advocates for a one-year phase out of Clothianidin and Thiamethoxam on cereal crops, as their negative ecosystem impacts outweigh their negligible contribution to pest control.

Clothianidin and/or Thiamethoxam are approved for use on cereals for control of wireworms, European chafer and/or aphid. Alberta Agriculture notes that “Neonicotinoids are also completely ineffective on neonate larvae. As a result, wireworm infestations appear to be on the rise in western Canada.” Agronomic practices such as increased seeding rate, improved seeding practices, crop rotation and inter-cropping are recommended to manage wireworm issues instead. European chafer is a grub that affects lawns and turf farms, but not a significant pest of cereal crops. Aphid infestations on cereals tend to be sporadic, and can be kept below an economic threshold by natural enemies such as lady beetles and parasitic wasps.^{iv} Neonicotinoid seed treatment on cereal crops has little, if any benefit, and thus there is no need for a phase-out period.

For all other crops, the three year phase-out schedule should be adopted. A five-year phase out is only to be considered if there are no suitable alternatives to the use of the pesticide, and only if the risks to human health and the environment are considered to be acceptable. As the PMRA has concluded, and as the studies cited above amplify, the environmental risks of continued use of Clothianidin and Thiamethoxam are unacceptable. The NFU asserts suitable alternatives are already available, and these can be improved and more widely adopted with proper public support and education.

In the administration of the *Pest Control Products Act*, the Minister of Health’s primary objective is to prevent unacceptable risks to individuals and the environment

from the use of pest control products. When considering “suitable alternatives to the use of the pesticide” being phased out as a result of a Special Review, the PMRA must go beyond the concept of alternative chemical products. If a new synthetic insecticide replaces neonicotinoids, it too will have negative impacts on ecosystems and will put selection pressure on pest species to evolve resistance. The NFU urges Health Canada to recognize and promote agronomic alternatives to the use of chemical pesticides and to support agricultural research, education and public policy measures to reduce pesticide use in Canadian agriculture.

Some of the alternatives to neonicotinoids that can be further developed and expanded include:

Public plant breeding

- Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada plant breeders have developed a variety of canola with leaf hairs that inhibit feeding by flea beetles.
- Wheat Midge Tolerant wheat is an important public breeding success story. It incorporates an in-crop refuge of susceptible plants that ensures insects do not evolve strategies to overcome the tolerance traits.
- Breeding for reduced glucosinolate content in canola would make the crop less attractive to flea beetles. Glucosinolate content increases with nitrogen and sulfur fertilizer use, so breeding for reduced-input production would provide a double win – lower pest pressure and reduced GHG emissions from production.

Agroecological production methods

- When the weak link in life cycle of the insect pest is understood, farmers can manage production methods to limit its ability to damage the crop.
- Biodiverse strips planted along at field edges attract pests away from crops and harbour natural predators.
- Plant crop mixtures (intercropping, cover cropping) to provide greater diversity of habitat within agro-ecosystems, avoiding a monoculture “banquet” for pests and encouraging natural predators

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Biological controls

- Strategies to encourage populations of natural predators and/or diseases of pest insects when infestations are expected.

Increased seeding rates

- Offset seedling losses with heavier seeding rates.

More complex crop rotations

- Avoiding short rotations where the same crop is grown year after year or in two-year rotations will reduce pest populations.
- More complex crop rotations require marketing efforts to ensure biologically valuable cropping systems are supported by sales that provide fair returns to farmers.

The companies selling Clothianidin are Bayer and Sumitomo; Syngenta is the only company selling Thiamethoxam. All three are powerful multinational corporations with headquarters outside of Canada. In 1962 Rachel Carson published *Silent Spring*, warning of not only the devastating impacts of pesticides on the natural world, but of the damage done to democracies when wealthy, self-interested corporations have too much influence over government decisions. Her counsel is still relevant today.

The NFU appreciates the PMRA's dedication and the unprecedented amount of work done by staff carrying out independent research and reviewing peer-reviewed scientific literature. We commend the PMRA for standing up to pressure from vested interests. We look forward to a final decision that will protect the health of Canada's aquatic ecosystems and ensure that future generations of Canadian farm families will be able to produce the food we need and to also enjoy the pleasure of a summer's day loud with the hum of many insects and ringing with bird song.

ⁱ Regulatory Directive DIR2018-01, Policy on Cancellations and Amendments Following Re-evaluation and Special Review <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/consumer-product-safety/reports-publications/pesticides-pest-management/policies-guidelines/regulatory-directive/2018/dir2018-01-policy-cancellations-amendments.html>

ⁱⁱ *Climate-driven declines in arthropod abundance restructure a rainforest food web* by Bradford C. Lister, Andres Garcia. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences Oct 2018, 115 (44) E10397-E10406; DOI: 10.1073/pnas.1722477115 <http://www.pnas.org/content/115/44/E10397>

ⁱⁱⁱ *More than 75 percent decline over 27 years in total flying insect biomass in protected areas.* by Hallmann CA, Sorg M, Jongejans E, Siepel H, Hofland N, Schwan H, et al. (2017) PLoS ONE 12(10): e0185809. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0185809>

^{iv} *Wireworm*, Alberta Agriculture and Forestry. [https://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/agdex14740](https://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/agdex14740)

^v *Aphids On Cereals*, Manitoba Agriculture <https://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/crops/insects/print,aphids-on-cereals.html>



NFU member Bryan Dale, Broadfork Farm, River Hebert, Nova Scotia.

New NAFTA Update

On the eve of the formal signing ceremony for the new NAFTA (aka USMCA), the National Farmers Union sent the following letter to the Prime Minister. All three countries did sign the agreement on November 30. It does not go into effect until each country ratifies it. In the USA Democrats now have a majority in the House of Representatives, and may re-open negotiations. It is likely that CUSMA (as Canada is calling the agreement) will be debated in Parliament in mid-March.

November 29, 2018

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau P.C., M.P.,
Prime Minister of Canada
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Dear Prime Minister,

Re: NFU urges Canada to not sign new NAFTA agreement on November 30, 2018

The National Farmers Union (NFU) urges Canada not to sign the new NAFTA agreement in Buenos Aires on November 30 as planned. It has recently come to light that the published text contains clauses regarding dairy tariff-setting authority that differ from what Canadian negotiators agreed upon. Also, we have heard that Canada did not agree with naming the agreement "USMCA". Signing a trade agreement is a significant act, which sets in motion commitments that will affect the future of Canada, including the livelihoods of our farmers and the ability of young people to become farmers. The fact that a final negotiated text of this agreement may not exist or has not been made public is a very serious matter.

In addition to our grave concern that an unapproved version or unpublished final document could be signed, the NFU is concerned about the impacts on farmers and the food system of the new NAFTA, or United States-Mexico-Canada-Agreement (USMCA). It would severely damage our supply management system, which is the envy of struggling dairy farmers in the United States and around the world. The agreement would also compromise the quality control system that is the foundation of Canada's international reputation for premium quality grain exports, and it would allow undue corporate influence over our seed registration system. With the USMCA's ongoing renegotiation process starting in year six, we believe the dynamics of such talks could accelerate the destruction of our supply management, grain grading and seed registration systems.

In addition, we are concerned about the paragraph that commits Canada to work with the USA and Mexico at the WTO to undermine agriculture programs in other countries. USMCA Article 3.3: International Cooperation says "The Parties shall work together in the World Trade Organization to promote increased transparency and to improve and further develop multilateral disciplines on the three pillars of agricultural trade (domestic support, export competition and market access) with the objective of substantial progressive reductions in agriculture support and protection resulting in fundamental reform." Article 3.3 indicates that by signing the USMCA, Canada will attack other countries' domestic supports in pursuit of fundamental reform that puts markets and competition before livelihoods and community.

Therefore we urge you to not authorize the signing of the new NAFTA/USCMA on November 30 in Buenos Aires.

Sincerely,

*Katie Ward, President
National Farmers Union*

cc: Hon. Chrystia Freeland, Minister of Foreign Affairs