



**HOUSE OF COMMONS**

**HARPER GOVERNMENT SUPPORTS MARKETING FREEDOM FOR FARMERS**

**November 30, 2011**

OTTAWA — The Honourable Lynne Yelich, Minister of State for Western Economic Diversification and Member of Parliament for Blackstrap, was pleased to stand with the government and pass through the House of Commons legislation to provide marketing freedom to Western Canadian wheat and barley farmers.

“It is unfortunate that 120 opposition Members voted against the interests of Western Canadian grain farmers,” said Minister Yelich. “They should have voted for marketing freedom to give our grain farmers every opportunity that other grain farmers across the country enjoy.”

Farmers from across the prairies, including Blackstrap, travelled to Ottawa to show their support for Bill C-18 and the Conservative government. Following the historic vote, the farmers who were jailed over wheat exports became very emotional as they thanked Prime Minister Harper for keeping his promise to end the single desk.

As soon as the Legislation receives Royal Assent, farmers, grain companies and the Canadian Wheat Board will be able to forward contract for delivery after August 1st, 2012. As of August 1st, 2012 every farmer in Western Canada will have the choice to sell all their grain as they so choose. For farmers who wish to continue selling to the Canadian Wheat Board, they will have the freedom to do so. Farmers in the entire value chain need clarity and certainty as they begin to plan this upcoming crop year. The sooner they have it the better we will all be.

“This act is about giving Western farmers the right to do what they want with the crop they paid to plant, spent months to grow, and worked tirelessly to harvest,” said Yelich.

Our government knows that Canadian grain farmers have what it takes to succeed in an open market, as demonstrated by the staggering growth in recent years of the canola and pulses industries. Marketing freedom will unleash the true economic potential and entrepreneurial energy of the Western Canadian grain sector.

“An open market will attract investment, encourage innovation, create value-added jobs, and build a stronger economy”, said Minister Yelich. “I am pleased to have participated in this historic moment for Western Canadian grain farmers.”

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**For more information:**

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