



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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National Farmers Union Launches Campaign Against Canada–EU Trade Agreement

SASKATOON, Sask.— “Today, the National Farmers Union is launching a national campaign against the threat to the democratic rights of farmers and citizens posed by the proposed Canada – European Union (EU) Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA). The NFU’s campaign objective is to inform farmers and citizens of what is being bargained away, and to have the agreement scrapped”, said Terry Boehm, President of the National Farmers Union.

The National Farmers Union obtained a draft of the secret text of the agreement this spring. The fifth round of negotiations will occur in Ottawa next week, and the Canadian Government has announced that it will ratify the deal in 2011. Canadians are largely unaware of the agreement and what is being ceded to the demands of the European Union. Canada has very little to gain in the agreement as European Union tariffs average only 2%.

Canadian farmers will lose a great deal and be subject to draconian intellectual property rights enforcement measures. CETA could virtually eliminate the age-old practice of farmer’s saving, reusing, exchanging, and selling seed from their crops. **“Using farm saved seed could cost you and your farm. The farmer’s land, equipment, and crops can be seized for an alleged infringement of intellectual property rights attached to plant varieties owned by global seed corporations such as Monsanto, Bayer and Syngenta”**, said Boehm. “Canada’s dairy, poultry, and egg supply management will also be at risk”, added Boehm.

“The National Farmers Union has joined social justice organizations to raise the alarm over the inability, under CETA, of our elected governments to favour locally procured goods and services. All levels of government including municipalities and our cities will be prohibited from giving preference to local food and locally owned businesses and services. Product and food safety will be at risk as Canadian standards cannot exceed international technical standards. Imported products and food cannot be inspected until after a problem has occurred. Canada must accept any of the European Union’s 27 member countries’ certificates. If one province or territory accepts a European Union product, all provinces and territories are banned from refusing the product”, said Boehm.

One only has to look at the results of Canada's slavish support of liberalized global trade over the last twenty years, to see the results. Canada's farmers have tripled exports, but farm debt has tripled as well reaching \$64 billion. Moreover, realized net farm income from the markets has been negative since 2002.

"Today, the National Farmers Union calls on all farmers and citizens to stop this march over the next cliff, by informing their elected officials at all levels, that the losses under CETA, a global corporate bill of rights, will not be tolerated", concluded National Farmers Union President, Terry Boehm.

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Please refer to the National Farmers Union website nfu.ca for CETA Facts and copy of the draft CETA agreement.