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**NFU PRESIDENT PROTESTS CETA NEGOTIATIONS IN BRUSSELS**

**Saskatoon, Sask.** — National Farmers Union (NFU) President Terry Boehm has joined the coalition of organizations called the Trade Justice Network in protesting the latest round of Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) negotiations taking place in Brussels this week. "I will be making our concerns heard to politicians in Brussels as well as working with other organizations opposed to the deal from Canada and Europe," stated Boehm. "This deal has been flying under the radar of most people mainly due to the semi-secret nature of the negotiations, but now people have come to understand the scope of the deal and its negative implications," continued Boehm.

The NFU has been sounding the alarm bell about this deal since it received a leaked draft text of the agreement in the spring of 2010. It has since obtained a copy of the text from the last round of negotiations in October. "The Europeans have steadfastly maintained a position calling for the most extreme and offensive intellectual property enforcement tools ever seen. The corporate-dominated European Commission is calling for court-sanctioned seizure of property and freezing of bank accounts for *alleged* infringement of a patent. Any farmer unfortunate enough to be accused of having a patented gene in his/her crop or seed, could see their farm, equipment, grain, and crops seized even before they had their day in court. We cannot allow this to happen to our farmers or to any other citizen. This would create such a state of fear in our communities that farmers would be forced to accept corporate conditions to avoid having all of their life's work seized," explained Boehm.

This deal, for the first time, reaches right down to the municipal level in the area of local procurement. CETA would disallow governments, schools, hospitals, universities, and public utilities from favouring local suppliers or businesses for contracts over relatively small thresholds. "This would seriously jeopardize local food systems and any other initiative that would maintain local businesses. The NFU and its allies say no thanks Mr. Harper, this deal is not our vision of Canada," concluded Boehm.

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