



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NFU Urges All MPs to Vote In Favour of Bill C-474 Tomorrow

Saskatoon, SK – The NFU is urging all MPs to vote in favour of Bill C-474 in the House of Commons in Ottawa tomorrow. Bill C-474 would require that an examination of potential harm to export markets be undertaken before the sale of any new genetically modified seed is allowed.

“Canadians have consistently seen any initiative related to the increased scrutiny of biotechnology defeated in the House of Commons, as we saw with the debate over the labelling of food for the content of GM material. Now we have a simple little bill that asks that an analysis of market harm for new GM crops. This little step is entirely reasonable and would prevent farmers from taking the hit if major markets reject GM crops. Last year’s Triffid flax contamination incident is a perfect example of the harm that farmers suffer when GM contamination takes place in markets that don’t accept it” said NFU President Terry Boehm. “Farmers cannot afford to carry major market losses” he continued.

With the NDP and Bloc Quebecois set to support the bill and the Conservatives set to oppose, the Liberals are the swing vote. Yet, they appear ready to join the Conservatives in defeating it tomorrow.

“The Liberals are stating that the bill does not do what it was intended to do, and that the problem is with the bill itself. But, the fact is they have had ample opportunity to hear testimony for and against the bill and, importantly, to suggest changes or propose solutions. Moreover, the bill could pass as is. It is up to the government to define the details of implementation, not the bill itself. The legislation is enabling and the actual mechanism and process for assessing market harm would be developed through the regulatory process” stated NFU Vice-President Colleen Ross. “The Liberals have made the choice of inaction and coalescing with industry and government” concluded Ross.

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