



News Release

For immediate release

CWB MUST COOPERATE FULLY WITH AUDITOR GENERAL - RITZ

OTTAWA, Ontario, February 26, 2009 – Today Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz issued a formal letter to the Canadian Wheat Board asking them to allow the Auditor General to conduct a full audit of all operations. Minister Ritz made the announcement during his speech to the Canadian Federation of Agriculture in response to the CWB's loss of nearly \$130 million.

"Despite record prices in the marketplace, the CWB lost nearly \$130 million in farmers' money over the past two years," said Minister Ritz, who also serves as Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board. "That's money that comes directly out of farmers' pockets."

"The Canadian Wheat Board must open all of its books and fully cooperate with the Auditor General to make sure she's able to do a complete and thorough job."

The Office of the Auditor General must receive a formal request from the CWB in order to conduct an audit. While the CWB has indicated some willingness to cooperate with the Auditor General, federal auditors must be given access to all of the CWB's books and operations.

"There cannot be any half-measures," said Minister Ritz. "The Canadian Wheat Board must not limit the scope of the Auditor General's investigation in any way."

"I look forward to getting quick confirmation from the board that they will agree and ask the Auditor General to conduct a full audit."

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