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national farmers union
In Union Is Strength

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**SECRET TEXT OF CANADA-EU TRADE DEAL RELEASED:
THE AGREEMENT MAY BE THE LARGEST SINGLE ISSUE ON FARM-POLICY HORIZON**

OTTAWA, Ont.—NFU President Terry Boehm was in Ottawa Monday to participate in the release of a draft text of the Canada-EU Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA). The NFU is a partner in the newly-formed Trade Justice Network, the group that released the text. Boehm also spoke at a well-attended evening meeting in Ottawa dealing with the CETA.

"We now have in-hand a proposed agreement that would reshape Canadian agriculture: reducing farm support program spending; radically rewriting the laws that govern farmers' seed saving and re-use; and probably in the future, opening another front in the attacks against the Canadian Wheat Board and supply management," said NFU President Boehm.

As an example of the Agreement's impacts on farmers, Boehm pointed to proposed changes governing seeds. Through the agreement, the European Union (EU) is aggressively pushing Canada to adopt a stringent and farmer-binding version of Plant Breeders Rights (PBR). That version of PBR, known as "UPOV '91" would effectively extinguish farmers' rights to save and re-use seeds. Worse, the Agreement would give farm-crushing enforcement powers to any corporation that asserted a farmer had infringed the company's intellectual property rights (IPR).

"Farmers know how much power Monsanto and other companies wield when it comes to enforcing their rights with regard to seeds that contain patented genes. The UPOV '91 requirement and other provisions within the CETA would give seed companies enforcement and confiscation powers pertaining to all other seeds—those that do not contain patented genes—that exceed even the powers that companies possess for their gene-patented varieties," said Boehm.

As an example, CETA/UPOV would give PBR holders control over who can "condition" seed—giving seed companies a veto power over independent seed cleaners. "If farmers can't get their farm-saved seeds cleaned, farmers can't save and re-use seed," said Boehm.

As another example, CETA/UPOV includes Intellectual Property "protections" that will give seed companies the power to seize crops, farm property, and seeding and harvest equipment, and freeze bank accounts if companies suspect infringement by a farmer. CETA's IPR Chapter states: "In the case of infringement committed on a commercial scale . . . the judicial authorities may order the precautionary seizure of the movable and immovable property of the alleged infringer, including blocking his/her bank accounts and other assets."

"The costs of the CETA are unbearably high," concluded Boehm, "but the offsetting benefits are almost nonexistent. Canadian farmers who produce GM crops are going to be very disappointed if they think that EU markets will open up for their crops as a result of the CETA, because the Agreement says all European GM regulations are exempted from its provisions. Similarly, cattle producers have nothing to gain. The WTO has already ruled Europe's ban on Canadian beef illegal; but the EU accepted the ruling and chose to pay the fine rather than accept our meat. As a 'market access agreement,' the CETA fails miserably."

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