

WESTERN CANADIAN CEREAL GROWERS SPEAK ON MARKETING CHOICES

Wheat Growers are Divided Between Current Marketing System (48%) and a Dual Market System (46%) - Barley Growers Prefer a Dual Market System (56%) - Neither Would Choose an Open Market without the CWB (6% and 10%)

In The Absence of A Dual Market System, Wheat Growers Prefer the Status Quo (64%) While Barley Growers Prefer an Open Market without the CWB (53%)



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Winnipeg, MB – The Canadian Wheat Board (CWB) monopoly has been the focus of a long-running debate in western Canada. The Cereal Trends Watch, prepared by Ipsos-Reid's Agribusiness, Food and Animal Health Division shows that Prairie wheat growers are divided in their opinions on wheat marketing. Barley growers, on the other hand, indicate a preference for changing the current barley marketing system.

Ipsos-Reid asked wheat and barley growers what their preferences are for marketing their wheat and barley crop. When given the choice between the current system, a dual system and an open market with no CWB, Wheat growers are evenly split between their preference for the current marketing system (48%) or a dual market (46%). On the other hand, a majority (56%) of Barley growers would choose a dual market. Few Wheat (6%) or Barley (10%) growers would chose an open market without the CWB.



However, if the choice of a dual market is removed, most (64%) Wheat growers would opt for the current marketing system as opposed to an open market without the CWB (27%). The opposite is true of Barley growers where in the absence of a dual market, a majority (53%) would choose an open market without the CWB compared with four-in-ten (37%) who would choose the current system.

*These results are part of the findings of the Cereal Trends Watch study conducted by **Ipsos-Reid Agribusiness, Food and Animal Health** between August 4th and August 23rd, 2004. Telephone interviews were completed with a representative randomly selected sample of 534 wheat and 383 barley growers with at least 160 acres seeded to wheat and/or barley in 2004. With a sample of 534, the results are considered accurate to within ± 4.2 percentage points, 19 times out of 20. With a sample of 383, the results are considered accurate to within ± 5.0 percentage points, 19 times out of 20. The margin of error will be larger within regions and for other sub-groupings of the survey population. These data were weighted to ensure the sample's regional and farm size compositions reflect the actual distribution of Western Canadian cereal growers reporting at least 160 acres seeded to wheat and/or barley on the 2001 Census of Agriculture.*

Wheat Growers are Divided Between Current Marketing System (48%) and a Dual Market System (46%) - Barley Growers Prefer a Dual Market System (56%) - Neither Would Choose an Open Market without the CWB (6% and 10%)

Wheat Growers

When faced with the choices of status quo, a dual market or an open market without the CWB for wheat marketing, only about one in twenty wheat growers prefer a completely open market without the CWB (6%). However, wheat grower opinion is fairly equal on whether the status quo (48%) or a dual market (46%) is preferred for wheat marketing.

Some regional differences of opinion include:

- Saskatchewan's wheat growers are equally divided on whether the status quo (48%) or a dual market (46%) is preferred. Very few wheat growers in Saskatchewan (5%) would prefer a completely open market without the CWB.
- Manitoba's growers strongly support the status quo (65%) over both a dual market (34%) and an open market without the CWB (2%).
- Alberta's growers lean towards a dual market (dual market, 50%; status quo, 38%). When given the three choices, about one in ten Alberta growers would prefer a completely open market without the CWB (11%).

Barley Growers

The story among barley growers is slightly different with the largest number (56%) opting for the dual system over the current system (32%) or an open market without the CWB for barley marketing (10%). Regionally, opinions are less divided on barley marketing preferences than preferences for wheat marketing.

- Alberta's barley growers show the strongest support for a completely open market without the CWB (17%). Nevertheless, more than half prefer a dual market (55%) and one quarter prefer the status quo (26%).

- Almost six in ten Saskatchewan barley growers prefer a dual market (59%) versus one-third support for the status quo (34%). Only about one in twenty growers prefer a completely open market without the CWB (6%).
- Manitoba's growers are divided, with 47% support for a dual market and 44% support for the status quo. Less than one in ten support a completely open market without the CWB (8%).

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Wheat Growers

When the dual market choice is removed from the question, only then does some consensus begin to emerge among wheat growers. When faced with the option of either the status quo or an open market without the CWB, almost two thirds of wheat growers would prefer the status quo (64%) to a completely open market without the CWB (27%).

There is also more consensus among the provinces:

- In Alberta, where opposition to the CWB has been very vocal, half of the wheat growers prefer the status quo (52%) to a completely open market for wheat without the CWB (38%).
- Manitoba wheat growers most strongly prefer the current marketing system (85%) to an open market without the CWB (14%).
- Saskatchewan also prefers the current marketing system to an open market without the CWB (status quo, 64%; open market, 26%).

Barley Growers

When faced with the options of the current barley marketing system or an open market system without the CWB, more than half of barley growers prefer a completely open market



system without the CWB (53%). Less than four in ten would choose the status quo (37%) and about one in ten would choose neither option (9%).

- Support for an open marketing system without the CWB is strongest in Alberta (62%). One quarter of Alberta barley growers would choose the status quo marketing system (25%) and about one in eight would not choose either option (13%).
- Saskatchewan's barley growers are fairly equal in their support for the current marketing system (42%) and an open market without the CWB (49%), though support for an open market is slightly higher. Fewer than one in ten barley growers would choose neither option (8%).
- Manitoba's barley growers are also fairly equal in their support for the current marketing system (50%) and an open market without the CWB (46%), though support for the current system is slightly higher.

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