



For Immediate Release

NEW LEGISLATION TO INCREASE PLANT BREEDER'S RIGHTS

GUELPH, ON (December 16, 2013) - A new Act has been introduced to improve Plant Breeders' Rights in Canada.

Bill C-18, the Canadian Agricultural Growth Act, has been presented and given first reading in the House of Commons. The bill contains amendments to 8 different pieces of legislation, including updates to Canada's Plant Breeders' Rights Act which will modernize the Act and harmonize it with the 1991 convention of the International Union for the Protection of New Plant Varieties (UPOV '91).

The new act will give both public and private sector plant breeders the ability and confidence to continue to develop new seed varieties needed to improve yields and keep Canada competitive on the world market. The act will also encourage new product development and research.

"Our farmer-members need access to the best hybrids and seed varieties to continue to meet the changing demands of consumers," says Henry Van Ankum, Chair at Grain Farmers of Ontario. "The new act will safeguard plant breeders' work on developing new seeds needed to meet these demands and will encourage further research."

UPOV '91 also contains a clause which will allow farmers to save their own seed for their own farm operation when the variety is not covered by contract law.

The legislation was introduced by Canadian Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Gerry Ritz yesterday. According to Minister Ritz, the new bill will "deliver new tools and better services to help Canada's farmers grow their businesses, and is designed to make it easier for industry to meet government requirements while also reducing administrative costs and improving program delivery efficiencies."

Grain Farmers of Ontario

Grain Farmers of Ontario is the province's largest commodity organization, representing Ontario's 28,000 corn, soybean and wheat farmers. The crops they grow cover 5 million acres of farm land across the province, generate over \$2.5 billion in farm gate receipts, result in over \$9 billion in economic output and are responsible for over 40,000 jobs in the province.

- 30 -

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