

NEWS RELEASE

Farmer and Value Chain Organizations Encourage Support for Bill C-18

Ottawa, Monday March 3, 2014 - The Partners in Innovation, a coalition of 12 farmer and value chain organizations welcomes the beginning of Second Reading debate in the House of Commons on Bill C-18, the Canadian Agricultural Growth Act.

Bill C-18 contains long awaited amendments to Canada's Plant Breeders' Rights Act to bring it into compliance with the most recent international convention of the Union for the Protection of New Plant Varieties (UPOV 1991). Canada is one of only two developed country UPOV members whose legislation does not comply with UPOV 1991. This puts Canadian breeders and farmers at a competitive disadvantage. The amendments contained in Bill C-18 will give Canadian breeders the intellectual property protection tools that are comparable to those used by breeders around the world. It will give both public and private sector plant breeders the confidence and ability to invest in developing improved varieties that deliver higher yields and better agronomics, opening new markets for Canadian innovations and giving Canadian farmers access to genetics and varieties developed internationally. This is critical for the future of our farmers and our agricultural industry's ability to compete in the global market.

The *Partners in Innovation* commend Minister Ritz and the government for taking the steps needed to strengthen Plant Breeders' Rights in Canada, and encourages all Members of Parliament to support the legislation in the interests of Canadian farmers and the industries that depend on them.

The Partners in Innovation are:

- Barley Council of Canada
- Alberta Barley Commission
- Canadian Horticultural Council
- Canadian Ornamental Horticulture Alliance
- Canadian Potato Council
- Canadian Seed Trade Association
- Fédération des Producteurs de Cultures Commerciales du Québec
- Grain Farmers of Ontario
- Grain Growers of Canada
- Manitoba Pulse Growers Association
- The Prairie Oat Growers Association
- Western Canadian Wheat Growers Association

For Information:

Keith Kuhl, President, Canadian Horticultural Council, Tel. : 613-226-4880

Gary Stanford, President, Grain Growers of Canada, Tel. : 613-233-9954

Peter Entz, President, Canadian Seed Trade Association, Tel. : 204-934-5964

