

News Release

Partners in Innovation Support PBR Amendments at Committee

Ottawa, Friday October 10, 2014 – Partners in Innovation delivered a strong message of support for amendments to Canada’s Plant Breeders’ Rights (PBR) legislation when representatives met with the House of Commons Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food.

Partners in Innovation is a coalition of 20 provincial, regional and national organizations representing the vast majority of farmers and most of the crop production in Canada. Coalition members represent producers and value chains in grains, oilseeds, pulse crops and fruits and vegetables in all provinces. They have joined together to support amendments to Plant Breeders’ Rights as proposed in Bill C-18, the Agricultural Growth Act.

Mark Brock, a corn and soybean producer from Ontario underscored the breadth of support for the proposed amendments: “All of the participants in the coalition couldn’t be here for this presentation but from coast to coast and from crop to crop they have provided strong reasons for supporting PBR amendments. We need these amendments to ensure that farmers have access to new and improved varieties developed in Canada and internationally.” According to Mr. Brock, “We just have to look at the exciting new developments that have happened since the legislation was introduced; from the sod turning on a new cereal research centre in western Canada to the announcements of partnerships between Canadian companies and international breeders, all predicated on updated PBR legislation; to see the gains that we stand to make.”

David Jones, from the potato and horticultural sectors, spoke about the importance of PBR amendments to his industry and addressed the common misconceptions of the proposed amendments. Mr. Jones made it clear that: “Plant Breeders’ Rights are not patents; The legislation will not automatically implement end point royalties; Whether it is called a farmers’ privilege or anything else, the important thing is that the ability for farmers to save, produce, reproduce and condition seed is entrenched in this legislation and cannot be taken away without a legislative change; Public sector plant breeders will benefit from amended PBR; 48% of the varieties protected by PBR are from public institutions and; History shows that Plant Breeders’ Rights have not accelerated seed price increases. “

Partners in Innovation was very pleased to have the opportunity to meet with the Standing Committee and urges all parties to support these important amendments in order to benefit Canadian farmers and the agriculture industry.

You can find the speaking notes on the [Partners in Innovation website](#).

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