



MEDIA RELEASE

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For immediate release

April 25, 2011

Federal election candidates asked to consider agricultural issues

Sherwood Park – Engaging federal election candidates in a dialogue about agricultural issues needed to happen, according to Wild Rose Agricultural Producers (WRAP).

WRAP approached the candidates for the Conservative, Liberal, NDP and Green Parties throughout the province to focus attention on some of the challenges facing the agricultural industry.

“Consumers increasingly want to know who produced their food, where it was grown or raised, and what production practices the farmer uses. That includes urban consumers,” said Humphrey Banack, WRAP President. “So it was important to get all the candidates thinking about our industry, not just those in rural ridings.”

“The issues we put forward – maintaining Canada’s environmental sustainability, rail transportation and food safety – don’t just impact the Canadian agricultural sector, they impact all Canadians,” continued Banack.

Alberta voters are being encouraged to see how, or if, their candidates responded by visiting the Wild Rose Agricultural Producers website at www.wrap.ab.ca.

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Backgrounder: Election 2011 – Agricultural Issues

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Wild Rose Agricultural Producers is Alberta's largest producer funded general farm organization. Whenever decisions are being made that affect the province's agricultural industry, we're there, providing an effective voice for Alberta's farmers.

Backgrounder

Election 2011 – Agricultural Issues

What three questions were the candidates asked?

1. There is continual pressure on all of society to improve ecological practices. Farmers provide numerous environmental benefits to both rural and urban communities, including reducing greenhouse gases through carbon sequestration, fostering biodiversity, and maintaining healthy soil. What policies does the [Party Name] have in place that would help maintain and enhance current on-farm practices to improve the environment for everyone?
2. The loss/closing of rural short-line railways creates an additional cost to farmers and negatively impacts rural communities. What support will the [Party Name] provide to farmers, producers and communities that are in the process of purchasing these lines through New Generation Co-ops or other methods?
3. On-farm food safety programs are vital for consumer confidence in agricultural products. These initiatives, which benefit the public good, carry a large capital cost for individual farmers. Do you think government support and public funds should be directed to mitigating these costs?

How many candidates were contacted and how many responded?

The survey was sent out between April 13 and 15 to the Alberta candidates for the Conservative, Liberal, NDP and Green Parties who were officially registered with Elections Canada as of April 9, 2011. In total, the number of potential respondents was 83.

Political Affiliation	Surveys Sent	Responses Received
Conservative Party of Canada	24	0
Green Party of Canada	18	8
Liberal Party of Canada	17	5
New Democratic Party of Canada	24	13

* Includes all responses received as of midnight April 22, 2011

How can I learn what the candidates had to say?

To find out how candidates across the province responded to the questions in the survey, go to www.wrap.ab.ca.