



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Canadian International Grains Institute announces new board and funding model**

***Three provincial wheat commissions and seven grain companies/handlers become core funders, new board will oversee Cigi's future direction***

WINNIPEG – The Canadian International Grains Institute is pleased to announce its new board of directors, signalling the beginning of a new funding model and board structure for the organization.

Comprising five representatives from the provincial wheat commissions in Western Canada and five representatives from the grain handlers/exporter sector, the board was elected at Cigi's Annual General Meeting on June 29, 2017. The new board officers and directors are:

*Chair:* Kevin Bender, Alberta Wheat Commission

*Vice Chair:* Brent Watchorn, Richardson International Limited

*Secretary:* Jim Smolik, Cargill Canada

*Directors:* Drew Baker, Manitoba Wheat and Barley Growers Association; Harvey Brooks, Saskatchewan Wheat Development Commission; Bill Gehl, Saskatchewan Wheat Development Commission; Trent Rude, Viterra; Jean-Marc Ruest, Richardson International Limited; Gary Stanford, Alberta Wheat Commission; Ward Weisensel, G3 Canada Limited.

The board structure reflects a new funding formula for Cigi which will see the three wheat commissions and seven grain exporters/handlers provide core funding to Cigi totalling \$7.7 million over the next two years. The Alberta Wheat Commission, Saskatchewan Wheat Development Commission and the Manitoba Wheat and Barley Growers Association will fund Cigi through their respective single wheat check-offs, taking the place of the farmer check-off funding Cigi received through the Western Canadian Deduction, which sunsets on July 31, 2017. The grain companies funding Cigi are: Viterra; Richardson International Limited; Cargill Canada; Parrish and Heimbecker, Limited; Paterson Grain; G3 Canada Limited; and Inland Terminal Association of Canada.

"Today's announcement represents the culmination of months of consultations involving the value chain," said JoAnne Buth, Cigi CEO. "We are extremely pleased that the provincial wheat commissions and the grain companies and handlers developed a consensus on a sustainable funding and governance model for Cigi. This is an important milestone in Cigi's 45-year history and we look forward to working with the new board to ensure Cigi remains a strong asset to the Canadian grain industry."

Board chair Kevin Bender said the board of directors is eager to begin its work. "As new board members and funders, we are excited about our role in supporting and shaping Cigi's future. It's an organization with a long and distinguished history of working on behalf of farmers and industry to promote and demonstrate the quality and functionality of Canadian grain in international markets."



Bender also acknowledged the outgoing board members and chair Murdoch MacKay for their efforts on behalf of Cigi. “Through their foresight and determination they succeeded in guiding Cigi through a period of significant industry change and have provided the new board with a solid foundation to build upon.”

Three members from Cigi’s previous board of directors – Murdoch MacKay; Henry Van Ankum, Farmer, Alma, Ontario; and Lawrence Yakielashek, FarmLink Marketing Solutions will sit on the board as observers to provide continuity during the transition. Retiring from the Cigi board are Randy Johner, Farmer, Estevan, Saskatchewan and Jim Wilson, Farmer, Darlingford, Manitoba.

**About Cigi:** Cigi is an independent not-for-profit market development institute created in 1972. Cigi’s mission is to increase utilization of Canadian grain and field crops through superior knowledge, technical expertise, industry leadership and collaboration, innovative processing solutions and targeted training to customers around the world. More than 45,000 people from 115 countries have participated in Cigi programs and seminars.

In addition to its core funders, Cigi also receives funding from the federal government through Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada’s AgriMarketing and AgriInnovation programs. Pulse activities are funded through AAFC’s Canadian Agricultural Adaptation Program, Pulse Canada, Alberta Innovates Bio Solutions, Saskatchewan Pulse Growers, Manitoba Pulse and Soybean Growers, Agri-Food Research and Development Initiative (Manitoba Agriculture) and Warburtons.

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**Photo caption: Cigi Board of Directors (l-r)**

*Back row:* Gary Stanford, Trent Rude, Jean-Marc Ruest, Harvey Brooks, Kevin Bender.

*Front row:* Brent Watchorn, JoAnne Buth (Cigi CEO), Drew Baker, Bill Gehl, Jim Smolik.

*Missing:* Ward Weisensel.

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