

Media Release

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CONSERVATION AND AGRICULTURE GROUPS COME TOGETHER FOR CANADA'S WETLANDS

Oak Hammock Marsh, MB – In the spirit of sustainability between conservation and agriculture and to celebrate World Wetlands Day on February 2, Canadian Fertilizer Institute (CFI), CropLife Canada, Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC), and Soil Conservation Council of Canada (SCCC) have joined together for a shared policy position that Canada can and must do more to protect our country's wetlands in agricultural landscapes.

This is a unique collaboration between conservation and the agricultural industry and is perfectly timed with this year's World Wetlands Day theme of "*Wetlands and Agriculture: Partners for Growth.*"

"Recent research conducted by Ducks Unlimited Canada clearly illustrates the importance of stewarding our water resources such as wetlands for values beyond the ones that immediately come to mind like drinking water, the production of crops, and wildlife habitat," says DUC CEO Greg Siekaniec. "Canadian wetlands provide a first and last line of defense against unintended runoff of agricultural inputs and a sink for greenhouse gasses."

This new partnership between CFI, CropLife Canada, DUC, and SCCC will no doubt put Canada's wetlands top of mind through this joint statement of support.

"Our partners recognize that markets are demanding more food and fibre," says Lorne Hepworth, CropLife Canada President and CEO. "This growth cannot occur at the expense of further loss of wetlands, which provide important environmental benefits. Instead, we must look to innovations to improve agriculture. Products such as GM crops, pesticides, and crop varieties derived from modern plant breeding will all help Canadian farmers increase their productivity without further loss of wetlands."

Wetland loss has dramatically accelerated in parts of Canada in response to increased commodity prices and land values. We have lost over 70 per cent of our wetlands in settled parts of Canada and that number far exceeds over 90 per cent in some developed areas.

"By following the 4R Nutrient Stewardship Best Management Practices farmers can reduce crop nutrient runoff," says Roger Larson, President of CFI. "Maintaining wetlands on the agricultural landscape is a natural way farmers mitigate the impacts of agricultural inputs on the environment. In many cases, wetlands are able to reduce the impact of agricultural inputs by avoiding leakage into larger bodies of water."

"Just as zero tillage has dramatically reduced soil erosion, stopping wetland drainage will dramatically reduce agricultural impacts on our water resources," says Don McCabe, President of SCCC. "Protecting wetlands will not only help preserve our soil, they will also protect the quality of our rivers, lakes and drinking water supplies."



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Ducks Unlimited Canada
Conserving Canada's Wetlands



With this shared belief in the need to further protect Canada's important water resources the partners pledge to work together to find solutions to better protect wetlands in agricultural landscapes.

With wetlands and agriculture being so closely linked, conservation agriculture holds the key to healthy landscapes and profitable farming systems. With an overall theme of sustainability, the sixth World Congress on Conservation Agriculture is being held in Winnipeg, MB June 22-25, 2014. As supporters of conservation agriculture, CFI, CropLife Canada, DUC, and SCCC invite you to discover why sustainable agriculture is good for all Canadians. This is the first time this event is being held in North America.

February 2 is World Wetlands Day. This day marks the date of the adoption of the Convention on Wetlands on February 2, 1971, in the Iranian city of Ramsar. Each year since 1997, the Ramsar Secretariat has provided materials so that government agencies, non-governmental organizations, conservation organizations, and groups of citizens can help raise the public awareness about the importance of wetlands. (www.ramsar.org)

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About Canadian Fertilizer Institute:

The Canadian Fertilizer Institute (CFI) is an industry association that represents manufacturers, wholesale and retail distributors of nitrogen, phosphate and potash fertilizers. Canada's fertilizer industry plays an essential role in ensuring that world food needs can be met economically and sustainably. Canada supplies approximately 12 per cent of the world's fertilizer materials. We are the world's largest exporters of potash and elemental sulphur. As well, our industry contributes over \$12 billion annually to the Canadian economy. Learn more at www.cfi.ca.

About CropLife Canada:

CropLife Canada is the trade association representing the Canadian developers, manufacturers and distributors of pest control products and plant biotechnology. Learn more at www.croplife.ca.

About Ducks Unlimited Canada:

Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC) is the leader in wetland conservation. A registered charity, DUC partners with government, industry, non-profit organizations and landowners to conserve wetlands that are critical to waterfowl, wildlife and the environment. Learn more at www.ducks.ca.

About Soil Conservation Council of Canada:

The Soil Conservation Council of Canada is the face and voice of soil conservation in Canada. It is a national, non-governmental, independent organization, formed in 1987, to provide a non-partisan public forum to speak and act at the national level for soil conservation. Learn more at www.soilcc.ca.

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