

Weber Commodities Ltd.

Gerry Ritz named Agriculture Minister and Minister of the Canadian Wheat Board



Gerry Ritz was first elected to the House of Commons in 1997. He was re-elected in 2000 and 2004. During the course of his career, Mr. Ritz has run his own farming operation, owned and operated a general contracting business, and co-owned a weekly newspaper.

Mr. Ritz served as the Chair of the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-food. He has also served as the Critic for Agriculture and Agri-Food and for Public Works and Government Services. Mr. Ritz also held the position of Deputy Whip and Question Period Coordinator for the Official Opposition. He was Chair of the Subcommittee on the Estimates Process and a member of the standing committees on Finance and on Transport, the Subcommittee on Private Members' Business and the Liaison Committee.

Prior to entering Parliament, Mr. Ritz worked as constituency coordinator for former Saskatchewan MP, Elwin Hermanson. As a parliamentarian, Mr. Ritz has served as Agriculture critic, Public Works and Government Operations critic and Question Period coordinator. Gerry Ritz and his wife, Judy, have two adult children. Mr. Ritz enjoys outdoor sports and tinkering with machinery.

Quotable Quotes:

The Hon. **Gerry Ritz**, P.C., MP for Battlefords-Lloydminster is pleased that Western barley producers' voices have been heard and that marketing choice can be a reality this year. "Through this plebiscite, Western farmers have clearly indicated they want the freedom to market their own product like farmers in other regions of the country," says Ritz. ([MARCH 28](#))

Hon. **Gerry Ritz**, P.C., M.P., for Battlefords-Lloydminster commended his government's decision today to table back-to-work legislation to end the crippling Canadian National Railway strike. "I am very pleased. This is terrific news for the country and Battlefords-Lloydminster," says Ritz. The legislation was introduced today after mediation failed to produce an agreement for the 2,800 CN employees who have been on strike for nearly two weeks, while rail cars backed up and ports filled with waiting ships. "We had to act. Farmers and businesses that rely on the railway are suffering significantly because of this strike," says Ritz. ([FEBRUARY 23](#))

Battlefords-Lloydminster MP **Gerry Ritz** questions why some opposition MP's in Ottawa are getting so hysterical about the Canadian Wheat Board when they have absolutely no concept of how it works, or how reforms might benefit western farmers. "Malpeque MP Wayne Easter might know a lot about PEI potatoes but he's got a lot to learn about our grain industry and he doesn't seem willing to listen," said Ritz who chairs the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-food. "Wayne has a few gullible people convinced that marketing choice will put farmers out of business and as usual he has it completely backwards." ([October 19, 2006](#))

Gerry Ritz thinks Prairie grain farmers need to move up the value chain to earn a sustainable income from farming. Ritz is a Conservative MP for the Saskatchewan riding of Battlefords-Lloydminster and Chair of the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food. "Combinations of factors have resulted in a long-term decline in returns for Canadian grain farmers," notes Ritz. "Many of those factors we don't control, and they don't look to be going away, so I have to ask the question: What options do we have as policymakers to improve the prospects of earning a sustainable income from grain farming? One option is to create more favourable conditions for farmers to participate in the wealth created from the value added to their grain once it leaves the field." ([CHOICE MATTERS](#))

Earlier this week, **Conservative MP Gerry Ritz** (Battlefords-Lloydminster) was debating a bill in the House of Commons that would allow farmers to sell their wheat and barley to "an association or firm engaged in the processing of grain if a majority interest in the association or firm is held by the producer or producers based in Canada." Bill 300 is a private member's bill and traditionally most of that end up dying on the order paper. ([June 26, 2006](#))