

PERPETUATING OLD MYTHS, FABRICATING NEW ONES

Strengthening the grain supply chain requires collaboration not provocation

For too long, full responsibility for challenges in the performance of the complex and multi-faceted Western Canadian grain supply chain has mistakenly been heaped upon a single component of that supply chain: the railroad.

It is a myth earnestly perpetuated by parties who stand to gain financially and politically from it in the short term, while ignoring opportunities to improve the supply chain now for the benefit of all Canadians in the long term.

I was dismayed to see four pages of sponsored misinformation and opinion recently foisted upon the public that claimed rail service is to blame for any and all ills that might afflict the grain supply chain at any given moment, regardless of global supply and demand dynamics, port and elevator schedules, or weather.

The propaganda relied heavily on inaccurate and misleading data provided by the AG Transport Coalition (ATC), a group of agricultural associations funded in-part by an investment program paid for by Canadian taxpayers.

According to the ATC, railroads are supplying less than 50 percent of cars ordered by grain shippers yet a recent ATC report misrepresented CP's performance by a full 50 percent. Further, the ATC's tally of CP's unfilled hopper car orders exceeded reality by a whopping 72 percent.

The fact is CP is working collaboratively with its customers to develop innovative solutions that drive efficiency to grain transportation. CP moved record amounts of Canadian grain last year and is on course to move record amounts again this year. Grain and oilseed farm incomes are at record highs and we are proud to be part of the chain that connects farmers to their markets.

We have said before that the economic prosperity of the Canadian agricultural sector is central to the prosperity of the entire nation, and CP believes an efficient and fluid 24/7 supply chain is a key to the prosperity of all. But every link in that chain – from the elevator to the port – must operate on a 24/7 basis for the system to perform at its best.

CP recognizes that more work needs to be done to enhance Canadian farmers' access to key foreign markets, and this work requires collaboration and innovation, not recrimination. Progress need not come at the expense of the truth.



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