

Supply

tonnes. We do not buy any wheat from the U.S. A little bit comes into southern Ontario, but very little.

Why would the U.S. buy from us if it is the biggest? The U.S. was our fifth largest customer last year. If oilseeds are included, it is fourth largest customer. That says something about the quality of the product we produce. It does not buy from us because it likes us or because we happen to be neighbours. It buys from us because it likes quality of product and the way we perform on contracts and deliver.

For someone to suggest that the Canadian Wheat Board is under threat because of the free trade agreement does not make any sense based on past performance. I would argue that the other way around. It will be more difficult for the Americans to use Section 22 of their ag adjustment legislation, which lets them shut the border literally on 24 hours' notice, with the free trade agreement, than it was previously. It gives the Wheat Board a better chance to sell into a high-priced market.

Second, we are doing our very best to deal with what is going on internationally. In my view, the Europeans amount to international bandits when it comes to agricultural products. They have stolen our markets with subsidies.

Everyone talks about the Americans. The hon. member talked about the U.S. and the president increasing their Export Enhancement Program. I said the Americans are the largest exporters. They export between 80 and 90 million tonnes of all grains per year. They are likely to spend less than \$500 million this year, and perhaps considerably less. They have more appropriated, but they may not spend it all. They have \$500 million of export subsidy to export over 80 million tonnes.

The Europeans will export about 30 million tonnes and they will spend about \$3.5 billion. We have every right to be angry with the Americans. We send them notes to let them know we are unhappy every time they do those things. But, if one is angry with the Americans on what they do with their Export Enhancement Program, we should be 15 times as angry with the Europeans because that is how much worse the Europeans are. That is why

we have to get a resolution to this at the GATT process. That is why we are putting so much emphasis on what is going on internationally.

Our Prime Minister has not given western farmers and Canadian farmers the finger and told them to sell their own wheat. He has been leading the charge at discussions to get some of these things resolved internationally. That is a measure of leadership: to take one's responsibilities seriously and to do something about it. When one thinks about how high some of these subsidies are and how reliant we are on exports for markets, the international market is very, very important to us. For example, in the hon. member's province, producers have to export over 80 per cent of the wheat they grow. So, the second thing we are doing is negotiating as toughly as we can internationally.

Third, we have been supporting our farmers through this difficult time. The hon. member mentioned the money we have spent. They can say it was spent wisely. It is not an easy task to distribute 200,000 cheques and we admit the program was not perfect. But, by and large, it was a well-run program. We got a lot of money to producers when they needed it. We have been doing that.

Another thing that is going on is an over-all review of agricultural policy in the country. It is interesting to note how we are doing it. The Minister of Agriculture is not doing it himself, or with the bureaucrats of the department. The producers and the industry itself are involved. We have seven task forces in place involving approximately 200 people: producers, processors, university professors, people who have been involved in the industry and have a stake in the industry. They are the ones who are doing the review. The part of the review that is the furthest advanced is the one on safety-nets. That is what we want to get at as quickly as we can.

Our record on agriculture is a good one, and I say that as a farmer. We are taking advantage of our strong points as far as selling to keep our markets. We are negotiating to have fairer and more even access to international markets because we do not believe that might is right when it comes to international trade in agriculture.