

Opposition claims US FTA threatens wheat single desk

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ABC Rural

The Federal Opposition claims the Government has sold out grain growers in the US free trade agreement, which leaves the wheat industry's single desk open to negotiation.

The single desk held by AWB Limited gives it a monopoly on bulk exports of wheat from Australia.

And Labor claims the Federal Agriculture Minister has admitted to state governments, he expects a 'difficult debate' over its future.

James Martin has the story.

"Labor says the Government has agreed to work with the United States to end so called 'state trading enterprises', which includes the single desk.

"Labor's Gavan O'Connor says Warren Truss is now 'slinking' away from claims he made before the election, that the single desk was safe."

"I think the wheat growers need to understand the position the Howard Government and this minister have put their single desk in."

"Labor says Mr Truss told last week's Primary Industry Ministerial Council meeting the US is seeking significant reform to bodies like the single desk, but he flatly denies it's at risk.

"The Government has indicated it stands by the single desk; there is nothing in the free trade agreement with the United States or for that matter any other free trade agreements that will in anyway put at risk the future of our single desk."

This is a transcript from the ABC National Rural News that is broadcast daily to all states on ABC Regional Radio's Country Hour and in the city on [ABC News Radio](#).