

Between farmers, GW

# Beet purity spurring

## GW chief attacks release by growers

# new battle

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A report on the results of purity tests conducted by Great Western Sugar Company of Denver on sugar beet crops this fall was released to Scottsbluff,

Neb. growers last Thursday and has prompted a strongly-worded rebuke from company officials.

The purity tests are being conducted by a joint committee of growers and processors, and

are designed to settle company claims that declining sugar purity merits lower payments to the sugar beet farmer for his crop. Results of the testing were compiled earlier this month, but have not been released to the press at this time.

The reprimand stems from a meeting of Scottsbluff area growers last Thursday when leaders of the growers organization allegedly released purity test results to farmers, something GW officials say is in

violation of an earlier agreement.

"Vern Palsler and Kish Otsuka, widely-known leaders of area sugar beet growers, violated an agreement with this company," GW president Jack Powell said in a news release Saturday.

"Release of the purity committee's report to the annual meeting of Palsler's Nebraska beet growers in Scottsbluff Thursday was a base disregard of an agreement

between the company and the grower leaders on Wednesday evening," Powell said.

"In the Wednesday agreement, on which we issued a joint news release, Otsuka as a designated spokesman of Rocky Mountain area beet growers agreed with us that the contents of the report would not be made public until after a meeting between growers and the company set for Jan. 4. This was intended to allow for full study of the report by all parties," Powell said.

Several Goodland area beet growers were present at the meeting in Denver Wednesday night. One countered Powell's charge by saying the growers must know the results of the report in order to give their representatives guidance in dealing with GW.

"All the officers and heads of the company know the results of the report," the grower said, wishing to go unnamed. "We need an informed grower to tell us what to do with the purity test results." He added that

results probably were just released to growers, not the press.

Powell was especially critical of Palsler's action at the Scottsbluff meeting.

"That Palsler permitted Robert Owens' appearance to disclose and discuss the report with Scottsbluff growers is beyond comprehension," the sugar company executive said.

"Owen was a member of the purity committee. He had a role naming members. Only time can assess the damage he may have done by his premature and apparently biased discussion with growers who have had no opportunity to study the report. Most growers want to do the right thing on a purity matter.

They recognize that the entire sugar beet industry — growers and processors — is in deep trouble. Cooperation, not division is needed now if we are going to pull things out," Powell concluded.

