GW sale off, talk beet cut

The Sale of Great Western Sugar Co. is off.

Great Western United (GWU) stockholders and debentureholders overwhelmingly voted the sale of the sugar company to growers down Monday.

Meanwhile, members of the Great Western Producers Cooperative (GWPC) were threatening retaliation and Robert Owen, GWPC president, said the growers would not give up their efforts to buy the company.

Locally, beet growers talked of cutting their beet acreage and in some instances quitting raising beets completely.

A prominent area beet grower, who asked that his name not be used because of possible litigation with GWU, said members of the grower's board of directors will meet "probably Sunday" in Denver to plan their next course of action.

"We had all our requirements met," the grower said, "commitments on the required acreage and the finances arranged."

He added that a lot of growers are expressing strong resentment at GWU's failure to sell and added "it would not be too much of a hardship to phase out beets, especially with the strong prices being shown by other crops."

Of major concern to growers is the $5 million they have invested to buy the sugar company.

"The half million earnest money we put up for a down payment we will get back," he said.

Beet harvest opens

Gottlieb and Willy Fink, farming on the west edge of Lovell, unload a hopper full of beets into the waiting truck. Although the 24-year old IH digger is still running fine, the newest machines have now done away with the old chain method of elevating beets, using an auger instead.