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## New Farming Board Game Has Roots Deep in the Canadian Prairie

**Mississauga, Ontario – Nov 24, 2008 (Mansion House Games)** Christmas shoppers looking for something different this year could be forgiven for thinking that the only new board games available these days are yet more “-opoly” variations. But this year, a Canadian game inventor is out to change that. His unique new game, “**Sodbusters**”, allows players to relive the adventure of settling and farming the prairie, and is now available in Peavey Mart and selected Home Hardware stores throughout Western Canada.

“Just about everyone has one or two ‘-opoly’ games already kicking around the house,” notes Randal Heide, designer of **Sodbusters**. “But how often are they played? Who isn’t tired of games where all you do is roll the dice and move around the board on a track?”

Enter **Sodbusters**, which was not only designed in Canada but produced by a Canadian artist and a Canadian manufacturer. “When I sat down to design a game based on farming,” says Heide, “I focused on the essence of the profession: acquiring land and deciding what to raise on it. So that’s what you do in **Sodbusters** – no moving around a board hoping to land on a lucky space.”

Although Heide grew up in Ontario and never lived on a farm himself, he has prairie roots and dreamed for years of making a prairie-farming themed game. “My dad was born in Hepburn, Saskatchewan, his dad broke virgin prairie up there, and I still have cousins farming in the area,” says Heide. “My mother was raised on a dust bowl farm in Oklahoma, and her ancestors were recruited by the Santa Fe Railway to emigrate from the Ukraine to Kansas in the 1870’s. My wife was raised on a farm in South Dakota – she even went to a one-room country school.”

The early design of **Sodbusters** was a complicated simulation of modern-day farming, and a bit too realistic, says Heide. To make it simpler and more fun, he streamlined it, dropping complexities such as irrigation and crop insurance. That’s when the idea of an historic setting emerged and **Sodbusters** acquired its turn-of-the-20<sup>th</sup>-century look and feel. “I never tire of looking at the box cover,” says Heide. “It’s a beautiful piece of art.”

Although **Sodbusters** was only available online this summer, Heide’s hard work paid off when the two Western Canada retail chains decided to offer the game this fall. More information about **Sodbusters** is available at [www.sodbusters-game.com](http://www.sodbusters-game.com).

*Randal Heide is available for interview through Mansion House at the address below.*



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