Carbon hits the east-west divide

BY ROBIN BOOKER
SASKATOON NEWSROOM

Carbon depletion versus sequestration may be why Ottawa isn’t recognizing prairie efforts

Canadian east versus west politics likely factors into why the federal government isn’t talking about the sequestration of carbon in prairie soil. Information compiled by Agriculture Canada shows soil organic carbon is increasing in western Canadian cropland with the reduction of tillage and implementation of direct seeding, while cropland in Ontario, Quebec and the Maritimes continues to lose soil organic carbon, largely because of the higher dependence on tillage, said Mario Tenuta of the Soil Ecology Laboratory at the University of Manitoba. “Myview (Prime Minister) Justin Trudeau and you said, ‘let’s give these folks in Gravelbourg, (Sask.), some carbon credits,’ fantastic. At the same time, somebody down in Hamburg, Ont., is going to have to lose their credits, in other words pay for their loss. He’s (Trudeau) smart enough to realize that he’s not going to go there,” Tenuta said during his presentation at a Saskatchewan Soil Conservation Association meeting in Saskatoon.

“That’s a political nuclear bomb. That’s why we aren’t hearing much at a national level.”

The federal government announced in 2016 it’s implementing a minimum nationwide carbon price starting at $10 per tonne in 2018 and increasing to $50 per tonne by 2022. It will apply where there is no provincial carbon pricing program in place, such as Saskatchewan.

SEE CARBON VXATION, PAGE 3

Richardson unhappy with agronomic duplication

Grain company pulls out of canola council

BY SEAN PRATT
SASKATOON NEWSROOM

Canada’s largest agribusiness has pulled its funding from three of the country’s national oilseed organizations. Richardson International is no longer funding the Canola Council of Canada, the Flax Council of Canada and Soy Canada.

“We don’t think we got the value out of it,” said Jean-Marc Ruest, Richardson’s senior vice-president of corporate affairs.

The company was spending more than $1 million a year funding the three organizations.

Richardson had been discussing its concerns over mandate, structure and governance with the organizations for two years and didn’t get the response it was hoping for.

“We’ve now discussed it long enough, and we feel strongly enough to say that we can’t continue down this path anymore,” said Ruest.

SEE RICHARDSON, PAGE 4

Richardson
Looking Back: We remember a time when the cows had names. See page 22. | HATHAWAY FAMILY PHOTO

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CORRECTIONS

Contrary to what was said in a story on page 20 of the Jan. 18 issue, the MacKenzie Art Gallery does not offer appraisals as a service to the public.

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VIDEOS

BIG CANOLA CROP
Florian Hagmann describes how he achieved a 100-bushel per acre canola yield.

BARLEY MARKET
Peter Watts describes why Canadian malting barley is sought after in China.

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**2018 CANOLA**
THE CARBON VEXATION CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Provinces have the ability to design the carbon pricing scheme to allow farmers to grow crops. But this would be a difficult task in Saskatchewan.

Saskatchewan Environment Minister Ernie Eves has the power to order the provincial government to make a payment to farmers who agree to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions.

Eames said the government is considering the possibility of paying farmers for carbon sequestered on their land. He said he is interested in the idea of paying farmers for carbon sequestered on their land.

However, there is no premium paid for the amount of greenhouse gas emissions from farming.

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However, there is no premium paid for the amount of greenhouse gas emissions from farming.
RICHARDSON UNHAPPY

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

He said other grain and life science companies have expressed similar concerns.

Jim Everson, president of the canola council, said all of the council’s other funders continue to support the organization.

Exporters such as Richardson spent $2.2 million funding the canola council in 2016, crushed paid $1.96 million, grower groups $3.54 million and life science companies $520,000. The numbers for 2017 are not yet available.

Everson said the 2018 budget has been reduced to reflect the new funding reality.

The outcome for the flax council was worse. It closed its Winnipeg office and fired its staff.

One of Richardson’s concerns surrounds the canola council’s extensive work on agronomy when the private sector already has their own agronomists working in the countryside.

“If there is an element of duplication that should be looked at,” said Ruest.

“Saying that they can do something doesn’t necessarily mean that they should be doing something.”

The canola council spent $4.7 million on its agronomy research program in 2016.

Ed Rempel, director of Manitoba Canola Growers, said he is disappointed with Richardson’s decision and doesn’t buy the company line about the council duplicating agronomy services.

“Here’s the counter to that. Their agronomists are generalists. Our agronomists are specialists. Big difference,” he said. “We spend a lot of time and money developing those people into canola experts. We don’t want generalists. ”

Rempel also wonders why a big grain company can’t afford to spend slightly more than $1 million on those efforts.

Another pet peeve of Richardson is why the canola council devotes so much of its resources to market development for a well-established, 23 million-acre crop that is known around the world.

The council spent $4.7 million on market development and market access in 2016. It is by far the biggest expenditure for the organization.

Everson said the council intends to review its strategic priorities this year.

Ruest said Richardson hasn’t shut the door on funding the council in the future if certain changes are made.

“If ultimately they decide that they want to reconsider and reform, we’ll be happy to take a look at it at that point,” he said.

Another thing Richardson wants to see is the formation of one national canola council that is a collaborative effort that the council undertakes, suggesting that private providers can provide agronomy assistance to farmers and that marketing promotion isn’t vital because canola is such a big crop now.

The news of the Richardson pullout came hours before the Manitoba Canola Growers Association session at Manitoba Ag Days, and while it was not an official topic, it was certainly a subject of discussion and chatter inside the sprawling Keystone Centre complex.

MCGA president Charles Fossay said he hopes other grain companies don’t follow Richardson’s lead and that the present review of the CCC’s activities and mandate could perhaps reverse the move.

“What do we have to do to get you to come back?” said Fossay.

However, he said funders of the provincial farmer organization will also have to assess how to under-take agronomy research and outreach if the CCC is pressured to reduce its agronomy efforts.

“This is going to force us into really looking at what the canola council has to do as a value chain organization,” said Fossay.

Independent agronomic research and knowledge transfer are vital for farmers, so perhaps the farmer organizations would need to pick up more of the role outside of the council.

CCC president Jim Everson said the organization is conducting a review of what it does, and most of its members seem happy with it.

“The council is having a good look in 2018 at those issues,” he said.

“What role does the industry need the association to play?”

Rumours of Richardson’s threat to quit has floated around the industry for months, and its unhappiness was not news to the CCC’s core funders. Its 2018 budget appears to acknowledge that there might be a funding decline, something only verified by Richardson to the council “just recently.”

“We’re pulling back a little bit on the market development side to address our budget requirements going into 2018,” said Everson.

“We will press on, and we’re very optimistic about where we’re going.”

Parker Armstrong removes the twine from a round bale before feeding cattle on a cold day west of Cayley, Alta., Jan. 12. MIKE STURK PHOTO
There has been pressure from companies such as Richardson for the council to merge with other oilseed associations, and efforts at that sort or merger or collaboration have not yet been able to proceed.

“I feel instead of completely pulling out, they should of put in a date of Jan. 1, 2019, to allow further discussion,” said Porozni. It remains to be seen whether Richardson’s withdrawal is an isolated event or a sign of a deeper divide between commercial members and farmers or among commercial players. There are rumours that at least one more grain company has threatened to leave.

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Soy Canada confident it can weather Richardson’s withdrawal

BY ROBERT ARNASON
BRANDON BUREAU

Richardson International’s decision to withdraw from the Canola Council of Canada wasn’t a surprise, considering that it’s been rumoured for a couple of months. Richardson also pulled funding from Soy Canada, a group representing soybean growers, processors and exporters. The value chain organization deals with market access issues, helps co-ordinate research and supports market development.

Ron Davidson, Soy Canada executive director, said the withdrawal is worrisome but it won’t have a huge impact on the organization’s budget.

Soy Canada’s funding model caps the contribution of a seed company, exporter or processor at $25,000. The canola council, on the other hand, charges levies of 23 cents for every tonne of canola exported and 23 cents per tonne of canola crushed. In 2017, canola crushers and exporters contributed about $4 million to the council’s budget.

Richardson, one of the largest players in Canada’s grain industry, was likely paying levies of $750,000 to $1 million to the canola council.

Losing one funder may be manageable, but it’s not a small matter for Soy Canada, Davidson said.

“If someone decides to no longer be a member, of course it’s a concern to us,” he said. “Our objective is to ensure that what we are doing is valued by members.”

Richardson had been pushing Soy Canada, the canola council and the Flax Council of Canada to restructure their mandates and form a joint oilseed council to increase efficiency and avoid duplication.

The private firm pulled funding when the discussions reached a dead end.

Davidson said soy, canola and flax may have separate organizations but they do collaborate and cooperate on common goals.

“I think the perception that everybody is working in silos isn’t accurate,” he said. “We already do work, a lot, with other organizations.”

For instance, groups representing canola, soy, pork, wheat and beef work together through the Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance as part of a joint effort around international trade.

The unwillingness to form a national oilseed council may have influenced Richardson’s decision, but it probably wasn’t the biggest factor, Davidson said.

“My perception ... the fact that there isn’t one organization, doing everything, isn’t the deal-breaker. It’s a matter of getting value for their investment.”

Davidson is convinced Soy Canada does provide value in a number of ways, such as promoting the Canadian brand and the advantages of Canadian soybeans to foreign buyers.

“We are, in our case, competing with some pretty big competitors out there — the United States, Argentina, Brazil,” he said. “They have very active and forceful promotional (bodies).”

robert.arnason@producer.com

Canola growers credit the Canola Council of Canada with boosting awareness of Canadian canola in foreign markets and helping farmers produce the kinds of crops that work for them and their buyers. | FILE PHOTO

What’s your take? Join us at www.producer.com or follow us on social media.
The proposal is to offer a federal subsidy for growing canola and sunflowers as a way to expand the habitat for bees.

American industry lays plan to increase canola acres

The proposal is to offer a federal subsidy for growing canola and sunflowers as a way to expand the habitat for bees.
Tidal wave of available market advice not to be feared

HEDGE ROW

ED WHITE

Who do you listen to for marketing and hedging advice? How do you pick whom you listen to? There’s no shortage of people trying to tell you how to sell your crop and how to protect yourself against losing the value of your crop during a bear market or missing out on the gains of a bull market.

Farmers can get a host of free markets newsletters shot out regularly by brokerage houses and traders, and there are lots of newsletters you can subscribe to for a bit of money.

You can hire advisers to make your decisions for you or suggest decisions you might want to make. But how do you figure out who to listen to and who to tune out? I was thinking about this as I was attending a market outlook session at Manitoba Ag Days, along with a few hundred farmers.

It was one of three outlooks I attended that day. I also attended one the next day, and the week before at St Jean Farm Days I’d spoken with two other analysts who were giving market outlook and economics sessions.

Ag Days seemed like an analytical jamboree. Over here was Dustin Gabor of Grain Shark at the Manitoba Canola Growers meeting giving a technical outlook for the canola market, while in a nearby hallway at his firm’s booth, David Drozd of AgChieve was chatting with a gaggle of farmers wanting his technical take on grain prices.

Also in attendance was Bruce Burnett, the chief markets and crop conditions analyst with Glacier FarmMedia’s MarketsFarm, talking to farmers in one of the teeming passageways of the convention centre about the coming crop season and markets.

There’s no shortage of market advice. Who should farmers listen to?

There are many market outlooks you can, read as many analyses as you can and enjoy it all. Make it a pleasure. For me, all this diversity of analysts is fun because I love following market complexities and enjoy grappling with different takes on the same issue or idea. But I imagine it must be confusing, particularly analyst or adviser to stand why you’re leaving it to a specialist or adviser to make your own choices, or underestimating for those not personally interested in market complexities, because of my native interests, I don’t find it bewildering to come across conflicting interpretations of the markets. I understand the underlying issues enough to enjoy grappling with different takes on the same issue or idea.

But I imagine it must be confusing for those not personally interested in market complexities. I don’t find it bewildering to come across conflicting interpretations of the markets. I understand the underlying issues enough to enjoy grappling with different takes on the same issue or idea.

For those who just like hearing bullish or bearish predictions, there’s no point paying a bunch for intensive one-on-one advice. There’s no point paying a bunch for intensive one-on-one advice. The worst thing most producers could do would be to attend one markets outlook session, regardless of who it is, and just because it fits their schedule, and take that presentation as gospel.

But best of all would be to catch as many market outlooks you can, read as many analyses as you can and enjoy it all. Make it a pleasure.

For me, all this diversity of analysts is fun because I love following market complexities and enjoy grappling with different takes on the same issue or idea. But I imagine it must be confusing, particularly analyst or adviser to stand why you’re leaving it to a particular analyst or adviser to make the calls for you. There’s lots of choice out there. Take advantage of it.

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Canola is being eyed in the United States as a pollinator habitat. | FILE PHOTO

MARKETS

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Canola is being eyed in the United States as a pollinator habitat.

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CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE
For the first time since the days of the tsars, Russia this year will be the world’s largest wheat exporter at an expected 35 million tonnes. It will likely export a total of more than 45 million tonnes of grain once corn and barley are added in. Infrastructure constraints pose a limit to its exports in the near term, but new infrastructure investment, from domestic sources and likely China, could make it an even more formidable competitor in the future.

Two bumper crops in a row have given Russia ample surpluses while a weak currency and close proximity to major buyers in North Africa and the Middle East make it hard to compete against. It has the grain to export even more, but its rail and port systems are at maximum capacity. Russia’s wheat exports are expected to top the second largest exporter, the European Union, by eight million tonnes, and the United States, the number three exporter, by about 8.5 million tonnes.

Canada is expected to export about 22 million tonnes.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union and Russia’s re-emergence as a grain exporter, its production and international sales were initially inconsistent. But since about 2010 it has had mostly good luck with weather, and improved seed stock and production methods have greatly improved yields. Russian wheat quality has also improved, and millers around the world have improved technology to be able to use a wider range of wheat quality. As a result, the country’s grain production and exports have rapidly risen.

The export market is key for Russian grain farmers. Producing feedgrains for the domestic livestock industry is limited. Russia’s hog and cattle industries are relatively small, and consumer demand for red meat is limited because of relatively low incomes. For perspective, Russia’s population of 144 million is four times bigger than Canada’s, but its three million tonnes of pork production is only 30 percent more than Canada’s.

It produces only 1.3 million tonnes of beef.

While the weather will not always cooperate to produce bumper crops, Russia’s grain industry is gearing up to further expand its export capacity.

The Black Sea-Mediterranean system is by far its major outlet because of its proximity to its major wheat producing regions. Only a small fraction of its wheat is grown in northern areas served by Baltic ports. As well, Russia’s Pacific port is about 7,000 kilometres from the closest wheat producing area. Russia in the past could use some of Ukraine’s port capacity, but the current tensions between the two countries rule that out.

The Black Sea ports, which are currently the border that have similar climate and soil but few people, are investing to produce crops in an area of Russia, in Siberia north of Kazakhstan, that grows much of the country’s corn and soybeans, giving that grain exporter better rail transportation links to Kazakhstan, giving that grain exporter better rail access to western China.

If those ventures are successful, Russia’s influence on the grain trade could become even greater.

Contact D’Arce McMillan by emailing newsroom@producer.com.
**CAMPAX REPORT**

The January cattle on feed report for Alberta-Saskatchewan showed inventories at 927,255 head, eight percent more than last year at this time. This number is in line with the five year average, but this is the fourth smallest January inventory since reporting began in 2000. However, January placements were the smallest since reporting began with 11,544 put on feed, but it was a slightly better than 2016. Heifer placements in December were strong, particularly among those that are at the highest pound category. Heifers as a percent of total placements were 48 percent for December, compared to the five year average of slightly less than 49 percent.

**ALBERTA FEEDERS LOWER**

Alberta feeder prices were lower across the board this week with $69.04 per hundredweight for steers and $5.39 per cwt. for heifers because of softer outside buying interest and limited feed availability. Lethbridge barley for January to March trade has delivered around $209 per tonne and has added to those shrinking feeding margins.

**ALBERTA FED PRICES UP**

Alberta fed prices continue to hold a slight premium over both the Ontario and Nebraska markets, trading $6 per cwt. higher than last year, while Ontario prices are $7 per cwt. lower. The western Canadian fed market has spent the last three weeks averaging in the mid-$46 per cwt. Early placed yearlings are making money for feedlots, where profits for heifers because of soft outside buying interest and limited feed availability. Lethbridge barley for January to March trade has delivered around $209 per tonne and has added to those shrinking feeding margins.

**STRONG BASIS**

Cash to futures basis levels have averaged +1.93 for the first three weeks in January, and cash to cash basis levels have averaged around +1.59, the strongest levels ever seen in January.

**SLAUGHTER VOLUMES UP**

Canadian weekly fed slaughter volumes totalled 46,425 head, up 28 percent for the same week last year. This has resulted in more than 40 million pounds of beef, the largest weekly production volume since January 2011. High feed costs and reduced slaughter rates at all three western Canadian plants were reported because of maintenance issues or hour reductions.

**COW PRICES DOWN**

Slaughter cow prices slipped $1 per cwt. with dressed bids down $2 per cwt. Bids were reported at $181-$186 per cwt. delivered. With ample supplies, prices are expected to trend lower next week. Alberta calf prices continue to be at a significant premium to U.S. cattle cow prices.

Western Canadian non-fed slaughter for the week ending Jan. 13 was 25 percent larger than the week previous at slightly more than 9,000 head.

Exports of cows and bulls to the United States are generally trending downward.

**CATTLE SLAUGHTER UP**

Total Canadian cattle slaughter in 2017 at federally and provincially inspected plants reached nearly three million head, up seven percent from 2016 and eight percent over the five year average. This was the largest annual slaughter since 2011.

Federally inspected slaughter capacity expanded to 66,600 head per week with the opening of Harmony Feed in Alberta. Utilization levels improved from an average of 80 percent in 2016 to 82 percent in 2017.

Utilization rates are expected to improve even more in 2018. Western Canadian steer slaughter reached 2.25 million head, up seven percent from 2016 and 10 percent more than the five year average. This represents 75 percent of the Canadian kill.

Slaughter remains relatively stable, but there is wide variation among heifers, cows and bulls. Heifer slaughter went up 11 percent, cows were up 14 percent and the bull kill increased by 15 percent, all higher than the five year average.

Cow marketings are expected to go up, and exports from this category are going down.

This cattle market information is selected from the weekly report from Canfax, a division of the Canadian Cattlemen's Association. More market information, analysis and statistics are available by becoming a Canfax subscriber by calling 403-275-5110 or at www.canfax.ca.

**WP LIVESTOCK REPORT**

**HOGS RISE**

The U.S. national live price average for barrows and gilts was US$54.33 per hundredweight Jan. 19, up from US$53.97 Jan. 12.

U.S. hogs averaged $69.36 on a carcass basis Jan. 19, down from $69.45 Jan. 12.

The U.S. pork cutout was $81.44 per cwt. Jan. 19, up from $78.81 Jan. 12.

The estimated U.S. weekly slaughter to Jan. 20 was 23.38 million, down from 2.45 million the previous week. Slaughter was 2.36 million last year at the same time.

In Canada, the Signature Five price was C$154.33 per 100 kilograms Jan. 20, up from C$152.20 the previous week. On a per hundredweight basis, the price was $72.27, up from $69.04.

**BISON STEADY**

The Canadian Bison Association said Grade A bulls in the desirable weight range sold at prices up to C$36 per pound; hot hanging weight. U.S. buyers are offering US$4.50 more on returning buyers before exchange rates, quality and export costs.

Grade A heifers sold up to C$36. U.S. buyers are offering US$4.50.

Animals outside the desired specifications may be discounted.

**LAMBS STEADY TO LOWER**

Ontario Stockyards Inc. reported that 1,016 sheep and lambs and 53 goats sold Jan. 19. New crop lambs sold steady, and heavy lambs traded actively at $5-$7 per cwt. lower. Sheep sold steady at 5 per cwt. lower.

**NEW**

**CDC Norseman The king of oats.**

**India still needs pulses: AGT**

WINNipeg — Even though the pulse crop trade with India hasn’t been rosy lately, the head of a Canadian pulse shipping and processing company believes the tide will soon change.

“We’re going to buy again this year,” said Murad Al-Katib, president of AGT Food and Ingredients.

“We’ll have to see what level, but we think the recoveries are going to start slowly.”

In the last few months of 2017, India imposed tariffs on pulses imports into the country as a way to support local farmers and drive up domestic prices. The first in November saw a 50 percent import tariff applied to peas. In December, a 30 percent tariff was placed on imports of lentils and chickpeas.

As well in October, Canada didn’t receive an extension on an exemption for fumigation of pulses before arrival in India. However, in early January an exemption was applied to all countries importing to India.

Al-Katib is pleased to see fumigation fees even for all countries, because he hadn’t been impressed when there were non-tariff trade penalties against Canada.

“People say they’re going to do it. We think at the end of the day this will get resolved over time because the long-term fundamentals state clearly India will continue to be a net importer of pulses,” he said.

India has previously said it plans to become self-sufficient for pulses, but Al-Katib doesn’t believe that is feasible. India consumes 24 million tonnes of pulses a year, and consumption is growing at a rate of at least one million tonnes per year.

However, over the course of five years, India hasn’t produced more than 18 to 19 million tonnes of pulses per year. Currently, even with the tariffs and fumigation fees in place, AGT is still exporting pulses to India. Its shipping whole grain peas, red lentils and green lentils. The company has its own facility in India.

“The duties in India are known, the fumigation is now a level playing for everybody, the five times penalty equates to about $12 per tonne. This is not a disaster in our supply chain,” he said.

January and February usually aren’t a robust import time of year for India, Al-Katib said. The Indian harvest is in March, so the busy import season usually starts after. Once India knows how big the pulse harvest is, Al-Katib believes India will import more pulses.
Richardson pulling out of oilseed councils regrettable

Richardson International’s decision to withdraw from the three oilseed councils — canola, flax and soybeans — is regrettable. 

Aside from the Winnipeg-based grain company’s participation in establishing the canola council, it’s withdrawing about $1 million in funding, most of which went to the Canola Council of Canada.

It is hoped that other grain companies do not follow suit.

Richardson’s actions are important in the industry. It’s the largest agri-business in Canada and a significant worldwide player with more than 2,500 employees. So when the company makes a decision like this, it’s important to reflect on why, and how it can be avoided in the future.

Richardson has been after the canola council, the Flax Council of Canada and Soy Canada for some time to combine their organizations, arguing the company is not getting its money’s worth for its investment. The company says the organizations are duplicating their services and competing for agronomic services.

However, as we all know too well in Canadian agriculture, despite some overlapping membership among various groups, there is not a great deal of desire to be joined at the hip to one another. (Certainly, oilseeds are not alone in this.

Crop councils typically fund research, industry governance is so fractured that former federal Agriculture Minister Lyle Vanclief once compared trying to get groups together to “herding cats.”

So the three oilseed councils’ refusal to bow to Richardson’s insistence that they merge is a reflection of the entire industry. 

Crop councils typically fund research, have advisors, represent the industry and provide agronomy services, the advocate for political policy, help with market groups together to “herding cats.”

For their part, Canada and Mexico are said to be frustrated by the lack of counterproposals and text put forward by its fellow NAFTA members thus far.

For their part, Canada and Mexico continue to try and keep the U.S. at the negotiating table. The sixth round of NAFTA talks are scheduled for Jan. 21-29 with leading ministers from all three countries set to meet at the end of the round. 

Then there’s the Trans-Pacific Partnership, now renamed the Comprehensive and Progressive Trans-Pacific Partnership or the CPTPP (Say that five times fast.)

Unfortunately, the flax council is shutting its Winnipeg office, and while production of soy is largely focused in Ontario and Quebec, canola dominates the Prairies. The soy council wants to double production by 2027, and since canola and soy are somewhat competitors in oilseed markets, there is some understandable reluctance to embrace each other’s governance.

It’s not just Richardson’s funds that will be missed. The soy council says contributions by industry members often draw as much as 30 times more money from many other sources combined.

The canola council issued a statement acknowledging that it is reviewing its priorities “to ensure it fully-aligns with changing industry needs.”

Other farm organizations would do well to follow suit. The industry is changing, whether it’s for the better remains to be seen.

There is an argument that while Richardson was unhappy, membership in these councils and acknowledgment of the fractured nature of the industry was a corporate responsibility — a relatively mild one at that.

Still, it’s a grain company’s prerogative to do this.

Other farm organizations would do well to follow suit.

The value of providing an agronomy service to farmers, often for free, that is independent of grain companies, is important, especially with increasing consolidation in the industry.

In the case of canola, flax and soy, there are indeed differences that would make consolidation into one organization tricky.

Canolain the Colaics, with more than 18 million tonnes of annual production.

The council has a stated goal of increasing that to 26 million tonnes by 2025 through improvements to yield and genetics. That is an aggressive goal, and one that will take a great deal of commitment and energy.

Compare that with soy, with 7.1 million tonnes of production annually, and flax, with slightly more than 500,000 tonnes, and you see their point. They feel their marketing and other efforts would be subordinate to canola.

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Canada’s trade prospects becoming increasingly precarious

Richardson International’s decision to withdraw from the three oilseed councils — canola, flax and soybeans — is regrettable.

Aside from the Winnipeg-based grain company’s participation in establishing the canola council, it’s withdrawing about $1 million in funding, most of which went to the Canola Council of Canada.

It is hoped that other grain companies do not follow suit.

Richardson’s actions are important in the industry. It’s the largest agri-business in Canada and a significant worldwide player with more than 2,500 employees. So when the company makes a decision like this, it’s important to reflect on why, and how it can be avoided in the future.

Richardson has been after the canola council, the Flax Council of Canada and Soy Canada for some time to combine their organizations, arguing the company is not getting its money’s worth for its investment. The company says the organizations are duplicating their services and competing for agronomic services.

However, as we all know too well in Canadian agriculture, despite some overlapping membership among various groups, there is not a great deal of desire to be joined at the hip to one another. (Certainly, oilseeds are not alone in this.

Crop councils typically fund research, industry governance is so fractured that former federal Agriculture Minister Lyle Vanclief once compared trying to get groups together to “herding cats.”

So the three oilseed councils’ refusal to bow to Richardson’s insistence that they merge is a reflection of the entire industry. 

Crop councils typically fund research, have advisors, represent the industry and provide agronomy services, the advocate for political policy, help with market groups together to “herding cats.”

For their part, Canada and Mexico are said to be frustrated by the lack of counterproposals and text put forward by its fellow NAFTA members thus far.

For their part, Canada and Mexico continue to try and keep the U.S. at the negotiating table. The sixth round of NAFTA talks are scheduled for Jan. 21-29 with leading ministers from all three countries set to meet at the end of the round. 

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Site C decision rewards renegades

By Jan Slomp

When British Columbia’s new government was sworn in last spring, many people hoped for a reevaluation of respect for treaty rights and First Nation communities. When the Site C power project came up for debate, the B.C. Utilities Commission report on the construction plans of Site C was encouraging. When the report was issued in October, there were even more reasons to cancel this ill-conceived project.

The Site C dam is a large-scale, earth-fill, hydroelectric dam in its early stages on the Peace River near Fort St. John in northeastern B.C. The reason the NDP government of B.C. Premier John Horgan is using to continue the construction of the project is flawed. Cancelling construction of the Site C dam, the hope is, would allow for an internal schedule to recover the costs already incurred on Site C.

These payments would affect B.C.’s budget very marginally and it would save B.C. residents in an open-ended jigsaw puzzle. With the NDP government wanting to shut down Site C, B.C. Hydro’s net earnings would be equity would allow for an internal schedule to recover the costs already incurred on Site C. A new government was set for ignoring proper process.

The previous Christie Clark Liberal government did all it could to push the Site C project past the so-called point of no return. Ignoring First Nation’s rights, neglecting the importance of prime agricultural land, and a general lack of proper planning and procedure is unforgivable and reckless with projects of this magnitude. Clark should be held personally accountable for such incompetence in handling the public trust.

What is worse is that with the new government’s decision to proceed, it is rewarded and a precedent is set for ignoring proper process. The microclimates and rich alluvial soils in the soon-to-be-flooded Peace Valley would allow B.C. to easily become self-sufficient in fruit and vegetable production. This agricultural potential should be considered an important renewable resource, but instead it is destroyed and considered only a marginal cost to Site C. Canada is increasingly becoming a raw resource supplier at the expense of need value-added and community-based economic development. Steady growth in Canadian agricultural commodity exports is heralded as a success. What we don’t hear is that food imports are growing even faster. The process of export and import growth not only drives up greenhouse gas emissions, but also makes Canada more vulnerable and less able to feed itself. Rural Canadian communities fought in this process are seeing economic decline as a result of losing the economic benefits of value-added production, processing and distribution.

The electricity produced at Site C will keep having government intervention unattactive for decades. However, B.C. Hydro in a provincially owned crown corporation, with net earnings that contribute to the annual provincial budget. If the Horgan government wanted to shut down Site C, his equity would allow for an internal schedule to recover the costs already incurred on Site C.

The Site C dam, locks British Columbia out of this attractive new era of renewable electricity generation and community-based economic drivers. The B.C. government should take another look at the big picture and reverse its ill-considered Site C decision.

Jan Slomp farms at Courtenay, B.C. and is the National Farmers Union’s first vice-president (policy).
ADM-Bunge rumour part of larger consolidation story

BY BRIAN CROSS
SASKATCHEWAN EDITOR

Corporate consolidation has significantly reshaped the Canadian grain handling industry over the past decade or two. Rumours that Archer Daniels Midland is pursuing a takeover of Bunge Ltd., suggest that further consolidation may be in the works, a development that has some grain industry observers wondering how primary producers might be affected.

Brian Hayward, a former grain industry executive, said he was “surprised and not surprised” when he learned that ADM may be pursuing a takeover of Bunge.

Hayward, the former chief executive officer at Agricore United, said companies that have complementary assets and are seeking to do more at a lower cost will continue to look at “combinations that make sense.”

That’s particularly true in a global grain handling sector that’s characterized by declining commodity values, tightening margins and a global surplus of major grains.

“Bigger is what’s required today,” Hayward said.

“Conditions are difficult for traders, so the way to be more effective is really just to have economies of scale.”

News of a potential takeover emerged late last week when the Wall Street Journal published a story citing unnamed sources who claimed that ADM had approached Bunge about a takeover.

So far neither company has issued an official statement about the rumoured takeover.

“As a general rule, we do not comment on rumours or speculation,” ADM’s media relations spokesperson, Jackie Anderson, said in a Jan. 22 email.

ADM, based in Chicago, is a global commodities trader and processor that operates in 160 countries.

In Canada, the company sources, stores, transports and processes crops including wheat and oilseeds at 72 facilities.

Canadian operations include wheat mills and bakery mix plants, oilseed crushing plants and refineries, grain elevators and processing plants that make animal feed and feed ingredients.

ADM’s western Canadian wheat mills are located at Calgary, Medicine Hat and Winnipeg.

The company also owns oilseed processing facilities at Windsor, Ont., and Lloydminster, Alta.

Canola for the Lloydminster crush plant is sourced through primary elevators located at Watson, Sask., and Carberry, Man.

The company’s other western Canadian assets include a feed blending plant and phosphate distribution terminal at Lethbridge.

Bunge, a publicly traded company based at White Plains, New York, operates in approximately 40 countries and has a market capitalization of US$9.79 billion, compared to ADM’s market cap of US$22.64 billion.

In Canada, Bunge’s assets include an oilseed crush plant and refineries at Altona, Man., Hamilton, Ont., Russell, Man., and Nipawin, Sask.

Bunge Canada is also a joint venture partner in G3 Global Grains Group, along with SALIC Canada, a wholly owned subsidiary of the Saudi Agricultural and Land Investment Company (SALIC).

Through the G3 joint venture, Bunge Canada owns equity in a western Canadian elevator network with Manitoba locations at Alexander, Portage la Prairie and St. Adolphe, as well as Saskatchewan locations at Colonsay, Plent, Leader, Dodsland, Pasqua, Luseland and Kindersley.

Bunge-owned export terminals are located in Canada at Thunder Bay and Hamilton, Ont., as well as Trois Rivières, Que., and Quebec City.

If officials declined to comment on the rumoured ADM-Bunge merger, saying only that G3 “does not comment on market rumors related to its shareholders.”

Various farm groups contacted by The Western Producer also declined to comment on how a potential merger might impact Canadian grain and oilseed producers.

The National Farmers Union was one of the few farm organizations that offered a comment, suggesting mergers between any grain handling companies reduces competition and ultimately leaves growers with fewer opportunities to market their grain.

NFU vice-president Cam Goff said Bunge and ADM have a relatively small footprint in Western Canada compared to companies such as Viterra and Cargill.

Nonetheless, replacing two global commodities traders with one larger, consolidated entity would do nothing to benefit farmers.

“It just removes one more (competitor) … one more possible outlet for Canadian grain,” said Goff, who farms near Hanley, Sask.

“Today is heading toward more and more mergers and acquisitions between companies. Consumers and the people who sell commodities — like farmers — are the ones who lose in the end.”

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BRIAN HAYWARD
GRAIN INDUSTRY OBSERVER

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BY ED WHITE
WINNIPEG BUREAU

BRANDON — If you’re willing to work for it, you can get huge canola yields, says a Saskatchewan farmer who averaged more than 70 bushels per acre in 2017.

“The most yield potential (comes from) doing that extra work, that extra labour, that extra pass,” said Florian Hagmann, a Birch Hills farmer who spoke to farmers at Manitoba Ag Days.

“If you can have the good seed placement and the good fertilizer placement and the right ingredient at the right time, that’s the key to success.”

Hagmann has yielded more than 100 bu. per acre by weight and more than 90 bu. per acre across an entire quarter more than once and has seen his average yields grow as he refines his actions. He has recorded the 100 plus results only on test fields, but the average yields on his 4,500 acres of canola are more than 70 bu.

He farms about 10,000 acres altogether, growing canola on either a one-in-two or one-in-three rotation, depending on the field.

Focus on fertilizer

Hagmann said he favours split nitrogen application and avoids fall application. “I don’t do it all at seeding time.” By placing the fertilizer near enough but not too near the seed, and following up with in-crop foliar applications as the crop can use it, he can build better crops and avoid nutrient loss and plant damage.

“The fertilizer placement is really important,” he said. “It’s a little bit harder work … but in the end it pays.”

He always selects varieties with high genetic yield potential, conducts soil tests so that he knows what’s under the surface and uses an effective insecticide treatment. He’s not fussy about machinery. “I use no fancy new equipment,” said Hagmann, who farms with a 30-year-old Flexi-Coil air seeder.

“The equipment will give you just a small part (of the yield).” Hagmann said the escalating cost of farmland and the difficulty in expanding means farmers will need to concentrate on boosting per acre yields rather than just trying to farm more and more acres.

Florian Hagmann

PRODUCER

Record canola crop in Man.

BY ED WHITE
WINNIPEG BUREAU

BRANDON — Sometimes everything just adds up right. That seems to be what gave Manitoba a “surprising and pleasant shock” in canola yields in 2016. The western Prairies didn’t do as astoundingly, but some good fortune allowed the crops to yield much better than most feared during the drought.

Manitoba farmers harvested 3.1 million tonnes, Statistics Canada found, with a 44 bushel per acre yield. Manitoba crop insurance estimated a 47 bu. average.

“That was extremely shocking to me,” Angela Brackenreed, an agronomist with the Canola Council of Canada, said at Manitoba Ag Days. “That’s far and away a new record for Manitoba.”

The rest of the Prairies weren’t so fortunate, but still managed to pull off a good crop of 21.3 million tonnes with a 41 bu. per acre average.

Brackenreed said numerous agronomists have crawled through the data to figure out why canola fared so well during a hot and very dry summer when at times the crop seemed imperilled.

Manitoba has faced many wet years in the past decade, and that has kept the water table close to the surface. Crop roots were able to directly access the water table in some places last summer.

“That is how we were able to sustain our crop’s growth, not something we can normally rely on,” said Brackenreed.

Manitoba also had a great combination of factors that reduced stress on the crop. Heat stress during the day was countered by lower-than-average nighttime temperatures.

The dryness appears to have kept a lid on the severity of sclerotinia and blackleg, it appears that pest insects also didn’t do well in the dryness, while beneficials and fungi did.

The conditions that produced the 2017 miracle aren’t likely to prevail this year, Brackenreed said.
Alta. farm group changes membership fees

Commodity group fees will drop at the Alberta Federation of Agriculture while producers will pay more

BY JEREMY SIMES
EDMONTON BUREAU

NSRK1, Alta. — The Alberta Federation of Agriculture is hoping to rebuild itself as it continues to face declining membership and little revenue.

One way the organization hopes to grow is by rejigging its fee structure. Members voted Jan. 18 to generally decrease membership fees for commodity groups at its annual general meeting in Nisku, Alta.

The change means commodity groups can join the AFA at a set price of $500. Before this, commodity groups were required to pay $125 to $7,500. The larger the commodity groups were required to pay the price of $500. Before this, commodity groups at its future. Members voted Jan. 18 to thing is more members, more value.

However, its membership has been declining ever since the majority of commodity groups left the organization. The only commodity group that’s still a member is the Alberta Beekeepers Commission.

The organization has never been able to launch a check-off program or receive assured annual funding from the Alberta government. However, while commodity groups will now see smaller fees, farmers and ranchers will be required to pay slightly more at $150 annually. Before, they were required to pay $125.

Still, it’s going to take a lot more than changing fees to get more producers to join the organization. At the AFA’s annual meeting, board members acknowledged they poorly communicated with members. They hope to turn that around by further promoting the federation’s online media and emailed newsletters, as well as by reaching out to younger farmers and ranchers.

“We can really show them (young producers) what’s going on politically in agriculture”, said ADA president Lynn Jacobson.

He pointed to an event held at the organization’s annual meeting where members were able to collaborate with Lakeland College students.

“Young producers could really gain a lot by being part of organizations like ours”, he said.

“People are interested in agriculture and where our food comes from, so we can fill that role and become a trusted source of information.”

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Agri-food corridor pushed for between Calgary and Olds

BY BARBARA DUCKWORTH
CALGARY BUREAU

An agreement has been signed to develop a world class agri-food corridor between Calgary and Olds.

“The Calgary-Olds Smart Agri-Food Corridor is a great first step that southern Alberta is recognized as a leader. It will help us develop our ecosystem and help incubate entrepreneurial companies and people,” said Mary Moran, head of Calgary Economic Development.

The development authority and Olds College signed a memorandum of understanding Jan. 17. The Calgary-Olds Smart Agri-Food Corridor is designed to position the 100-kilometre long region into an area that attracts agriculture entrepreneurs and start-up companies as well as research and technology development.

It is also hoped the region can attract major funds from the federal government’s proposed Smart Agri-Food Supercluster, which aims to use efficient and powerful data to create better collaboration within agriculture. The Smart Agri-Food Supercluster secretariat is housed at Olds College with partners from across Canada representing academia, growers and government.

Olds College offers expertise and physical space to budding entrepreneurs who can grow as independent businesses, said college president Stuart Cullum.

The college works with 50 to 60 companies a year to build their businesses. It also co-operates with SAIT Polytechnic, University of Calgary, Mount Royal University and Bow Valley College in Calgary.

Keith Driver of Driver Projects in Calgary is a local entrepreneur who builds and invests in agriculture projects. He and his partners are preparing to launch projects such as an indoor shrimp farm, a manure pelleting business for fertilizer, insect-based protein and animal feed plants. He has worked with Olds College and SAIT to develop some of the ventures.

About $60 million worth of investment has flowed through this company to develop new and unique agriculture businesses.

“Agriculture has been built on innovation and is primed for innovation,” he said.

Olds College straddles the town of Olds, and Mountainview County.

The county did not sign the agreement, but Reeve Bruce Beattie said the agri-business vision is in alignment with the college ambitions.

The county recently allocated $500,000 over five years to support the Werkund Growth Centre at the college. The centre is developing smart agriculture programs, which the county favours.

Businesses may have ambitions to locate in rural municipalities, but they must fit in with local development plans, said Beattie.

“We identified that corridor along Highway Two and 2A for potential development. At the same time, we are trying to meet our commitment to preservation of agricultural land,” he said.

Being north of a major city like Calgary with big business ambitions can be a challenge for nearby rural municipalities who want to control development and protect agricultural land.

“If there is going to be development, let’s keep it in a concentrated area and more preferably where it is not the good quality land,” he said.

Rural municipalities can benefit if agribusinesses want to locate nearby, but the payback can be slow.

“We have got to diversify. We have seen our revenue from the oil sector gradually dropping, and we have to replace that if people want to have the same services in the future,” he said.

“We will work with any proposal that comes along, but we are going to take those considerations into account. We are not going to approve something because it looks like it might generate some revenue for the county,”

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What’s your take? Join us at www.producer.com or follow us on social media.
B.C. seeks input on livestock water use rules

The regulations are meant to clarify livestock water use and development on crown range and private land.

**B.C. GRAZING**
- Summer water needs of livestock grazing on interior British Columbia rangeland are less than one percent of average summer precipitation.
- There are about 21 million hectares of crown rangeland and five million hectares of private range land in B.C.
- More than 95 percent of livestock grazing in B.C. are cattle. The rest are sheep, goats and horses.
- B.C. has about 200,000 head of cattle on more than 4,000 ranches.

*Source: B.C. environment ministry*

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**Agribition contributes $74 million to Sask. economy**

*BY KAREN BRIERE*

A study conducted after the most recent Canadian Western Agribition has found that the show contributes nearly $74 million to the Saskatchewan economy.

Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food did the economic impact study, which also found a $44.5 million economic boost to the City of Regina.

Both those figures are up significantly from the 2015 study. Then, the impacts were $56.2 million to the province and $28.9 million to the city.

Agribition chief executive officer Chris Lane said the show has grown, which in turn increases the demand for labour, professional services and resources.

“Agribition employs nearly 700 people annually and indirectly creates work for over 1,800 people in the province,” he said in a news release.

Attendance at the 2017 show was 126,500, and more than 5,000 were from outside Saskatchewan.

Visitors spent about $56.5 million on meals, retail spending, transportation and entertainment.

Full financial results of the 2017 show will be available at the annual general meeting April 5.

**Agribition chief executive officer Chris Lane said the show has grown, which in turn increases the demand for labour, professional services and resources.**

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Canada’s hemp industry may have an oversupply of hempseed — again. Canadian hemp acreage topped 130,000 in 2017, a record for the sector and 30,000 more than the previous high.

Last January, industry leaders were hoping that strong demand from South Korea for hempseed would continue in 2017 and into 2018. But that didn’t happen. “From about this time last year in through March, the interest and the orders (from Korea) really started to decline,” said Jeff Kostuik, director of operations for Central Canada with Hemp Production Services, which contracts hemp acres and provides agronomic support.

That put us into a situation where we went back to our producers and asked if they would reduce some of their acres.” Some hemp growers heard the message to cut acres but many others didn’t, resulting in the acreage jump last spring. Yields were average in 2017 and with acres up significantly, Canada likely has an excess of hempseed. “We’re in a situation where there is more hemp that is available than really what’s in line to be processed,” Kostuik said.

The situation may be similar to 2015, when Canada’s hemp industry was coping with a glut of hempseed. Yields were higher than expected for a couple of years and hempseed was sitting in bins, either on farms or at processing plants.

South Korea saved the day in late 2015 and 2016, becoming a major buyer of Canadian hempseed, seemingly overnight. Hempseed and hemp food were suddenly a hot commodity in the country as Koreans started eating hemp as a replacement for fish oil.

But about a year ago a new player entered the Korean market – China. “What South Korea did is wake up the sleeping giant of China,” Kostuik said.

China had previously grown hemp almost entirely for the fibre and not the seed. When the market for hempseed boomed in South Korea, the Chinese took advantage of the opportunity.

As well, the Chinese are now selling into the United States, the most important market for Canadian hempseed and hemp food. The excess of hempseed in Canada, combined with the emergence of China as a competitor in the global market, means Western Canadian acres will likely drop this year.

Prices attached to hemp production contractions may also decline. Prices were 70 to 80 cents per lb. last year for conventional hempseed. While prices and acreage could drop, one company may contract as much hempseed as it did in 2017.

Manitoba Harvest operates hemp processing plants in Winnipeg and Ste. Agathe, Man. It produces and sells its own line of hemp foods. Last winter the company was contracting acres based on robust demand for hempseed but altered those plans when the Korean market collapsed.

“Our own particular system, we pulled back our contracting a year ago and we’re fortunate that we did,” said Clarence Shwaluk, Manitoba Harvest’s director of farm operations. “(So) our supply is looking OK.” The company will likely contract about 40,000 acres this year, similar to 2017. “Maybe slightly less, but still about on par with last year,” Shwaluk said.

Canada’s hemp trade will need to find new markets for last year’s crop. One possibility is Australia, which legalized the importation of hemp food products last fall. Kostuik said another possibility is India, which is always looking for new sources of plant protein.

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Residents fail to stop Alberta hog expansion

Neighbours worry about the effects on water and odour if a farm expands by 4,100 pigs in Lac Ste. Anne County

BY JEREMY SIMES
EDMONTON BUREAU

Despite concerns from more than a dozen neighbours and the county government, a hog producer in north-central Alberta has been given the go-ahead to expand his operation.

The Natural Resources Conservation Board, an arm’s-length government organization that deals with agriculture disputes in Alberta, has allowed Jurgen Preugschas, president of Pigs R Us, to expand his operation by 4,100 head.

The ruling means Preugschas can build a feeder barn and wash bay, as well as dig a four-metre manure storage pit on his farm near Mayerthorpe, Alta.

However, 14 residents and the local government, Lac Ste. Anne County, were opposed to the expansion, and are dissatisfied by the ruling.

Their main concerns included the possibility of water being contaminated, odours and the location of the barn site.

“We’re not anti-farming,” Hannah Madsen, one of the people who raised concerns, said during an interview earlier this month. “It’s just that we have concerns about our long-term health of our water. We drink well water, and we need to know if going to be safe to drink.”

As well, concerns were raised about where Pigs R Us will be injecting manure. For instance, it’ll be spread about 100 metres from a neighbouring property.

While Preugschas acknowledged this concern, he said the manure will be spread there only about once every four years.

“We’ll talk to them before we spread, and we’ll leave a buffer zone,” he said during an interview. “It’s very regulated. We can’t over-spread year after year so we don’t have environmental problems, and we keep track of it every year to make sure we don’t overload.”

However, those who raised concerns still take issue with the expansion.

In the board’s ruling documents, Lac Ste. Anne County argued the board should overturn the approval based on Pigs R Us’s “failure to adequately consider a number of issues raised by residents” and by the company’s “history of non-compliance.”

Preugschas said he isn’t sure what the county is referring to regarding the non-compliance issue.

“Previously, the county gave this area the OK for intensive livestock, so I have no idea why they requested a review,” he said.

The board understood odour will affect neighbouring residents of the barn, it said the effects will be “trivial.”

As well, the board said it can’t control where operators spread, as long as the spreading activity is on their land or on lands that they have secured through signed agreements with neighbours.

As for drainage, the board said it was satisfied with an assessment that stated the risk of leeching is low.

Preugschas said the ruling shows that evidence wins in the end.

“This proves the system does work and that emotion cannot override evidence when you scientifically follow the rules,” he said. “It used to be that emotions would win, but now that has changed.”

Still, neighbours opposed to the site feel the board didn’t listen to their concerns.

“It’s really frustrating to feel like no one is listening,” Madsen said. “I guess we’re going to have to wait and see. Fingers crossed that nothing goes wrong.”

jeremy.simes@producer.com
CHICKEN VEGETABLE SOUP

This soup mimics a Moroccan chicken dish but has fewer ingredients. | JOHNNY MIROSOVSKY PHOTO

For those who may find bagel melts too filling, try this cheesy beef side.

BAGEL MELTS

In a restaurant, you are always served a side of bread or crackers with a soup entree. These melts are satisfying with soup or on their own for a casual meal.

4 bagels or English muffins, whole grain preferably, split in half 4 1/2 c. mayonnaise or ranch dressing 125 mL 1/2 c. (125 mL) rinsed chick peas for salt and pepper. Serve immediately.

The noodles are tender. Stir in the

This chicken vegetable soup mimics a Moroccan chicken dish but has fewer ingredients. | JOHNNY MIROSOVSKY PHOTO

This warm beverage has become a staple at our house. The warm milk helps to promote relaxation and warmth. I have a small Breville frother in my kitchen that I recommend if you often make warm lattes. I also like to use Tazo’s prepared chai tea recipe with milk in my frother. The at-home taste is just as good as lattes served in a gourmet coffee shop.

In the mornings, we also add collagen protein to the milk before frothing. If you would like to prepare your own chai mix, here is an excellent recipe.

CHAI TEA LATTE

Frozen fruit contains nearly the same nutrients as fresh and is more economical when most fruits are out of season in Canada. Just watch for no added sugars on the label because is better to adjust the sugar yourself based on your own tastes.

This is basically baked fruit with a bit of topping. It tastes like pie. Enjoy it with creamy ice cream or whipped cream.

CHEESY HAMBERGER WRAPS

For those who may find bagel melts too filling, try this cheesy beef side.

2 lb. ground beef 450 g 4 slices of finely chopped bacon 1 small onion, finely chopped 3/4 c. grated cheese of your choice (I like Tex-Mex mix) 175 mL 1 pkg. refrigerated crescent roll packs 1-235 g pkg.

Preheat the oven to 400 F (200 C). In a skillet, brown the meat and onion, drain extra liquid and stir in the cheese until thoroughly combined. Set aside.

On a baking sheet, roll out the dough into a 14 X 7 inch rectangle. Spread the meat mixture onto the dough. Roll up the dough gently with your hands. Hold firmly and seal any perforations. Place seam side down on a baking pan and bake for 20 minutes or until lightly browned. Slice into pieces. Serves four.


BAKED FRUIT PUDDING

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To make the latte:
In a saucepan, bring the milk, maple syrup, and pinch of cinnamon to a slight boil, stirring often to prevent sticking and burning. Once the milk has small bubbles, remove from heat. Using a hand frother, blend the milk until it’s bubbly. Pour 1/2 c. (250 ml.) of that tea in a cup. Slowly add the warm, frothy milk to the tea. Sprinkle the top of the chai latte with extra pinch of cinnamon, if desired.

If using a small appliance frother, add all of the ingredients to the bever-
age container and run a frothing cycle. The ingredients will be heated in the appliance, which eliminates the need to preheat the milk. Serve immediately. If you want a dairy-free option, try using coconut, almond or soy milk, but they will be difficult but still very satisfying. Serves four. Source: www.livesimply.me.

It is the time of year that our immune systems can become compromised due to cold viruses. Here are some tips to overcome those viruses:
• Try to consciously book about an hour of down time each day. Call it your reset, which is a preven-
tive measure for good health.
• Washing your hands regularly can be effective against germs. As well, wash door knobs, tele-
phones, electronic remotes, taps and eating surfaces, anywhere that everyone in the household or office shares contact. Just use good soap and water, nothing fancy.
• Along with probiotics and vita-
min D, don’t forget to up your fibre intake to aid your body in cleansing. Do this by incorpo-
rating more fruits, vegetables, nuts and grains, in a form that is as unprocessed as possible. Be sure to check labels for fibre amounts on processed foods and aim for items with at least two to three grams or more fibre.
• By increasing your consump-
tion of fresh fruits and vegeta-
bles, you will also be getting enough vitamin C in your diet, which is important to good health. As well, increasing fibre aids in weight loss.
• Consume more zinc, which is a mineral that aids in cell renewal. Oysters are the best food choice, but are not everyone’s favourite snack. Other ways to get zinc are to consume animal proteins, beans, seeds, nuts, legumes, whole grains and fortified, high-
fibre breakfast cereals.
• This is a great time of year to commit to boosting your protein intake to keep your body strong. I have tried many sources of pro-
tein supplements, all had good and bad points. I have trouble selling many of them to my fam-
ily in such things as smoothies because they can always pick out the gritty texture and taste of the protein supplement.

Recently, I have been enjoying a collagen powder supplement, a protein that supports our body’s structure and the health of our skin. It dissolves quickly in hot and cold liquid and has no taste. Top-
rated brands are Bulletproof Upgraded Collagen and Vital Pro-
teins (Collagen). It’s a great dietary boost for those who do not get enough protein in their diets, available in health food stores and online.
On the Farm | Disease and a search for suitable land are challenges for this producer, who married into the business

Every crop comes with challenges. For wheat, quality is always a worry because low-protein or high-fusarium wheat will be discounted at the elevator.

Soybeans can be stressful because a frost in late August or early September could dramatically cut yields.

But those issues are small compared to the challenges of growing ginseng in Canada. After harvesting ginseng on a particular field, a farmer can’t use that land, ever, to grow another ginseng crop.

“There’s actually a thing called the replant disease…. Ginseng can’t be grown on the same ground again,” said Tom Winter, a ginseng grower in Norfolk County, south of Brantford, Ont.

“One of the problems of ginseng is that you’re always looking for land. Once you harvested the crop you’re looking for another farm… or land to rent or to buy.”

In Winter’s case, he lives on a farm near Vanessa, Ont., but along with his father-in-law and brother-in-law, they own or rent farmland at 10 separate locations in the region north of Lake Erie so they can grow ginseng.

“It’s not farming out your back door anymore. I actually have to commute, some days, to work,” he said, explaining that one of the farms they own is 45 minutes away, close to Lake Erie.

Unfortunately, replant disease is not something that goes away. Ontario’s agriculture ministry says it is a poorly understood issue that prevents ginseng cultivation on the same land, even 40 or 50 years later, because of soil borne diseases in the second crop.

The long commutes and the constant scramble for new plots of land may be tiresome, but Winter is dedicated to ginseng and the broader industry in Ontario.

He’s a director with the Ontario Ginseng Growers Association, which represents about 160 producers. Most of the growers are in Norfolk County and other counties south of Brantford.

Ontario’s ginseng sector generates a sizable amount of income despite its small size.

In 2016, Canada exported 2.63 million kg of ginseng, worth nearly $240 million, almost entirely to China and other Asian countries. In Asian medicine, ginseng has been used for more than 2,000 years to boost energy and promote wellness, says the Ontario Ginseng Growers’ website.

Ontario is the largest producer in the world of North American ginseng, which is distinct from Asian ginseng:

**GROWING GINSENG:**

- It usually takes four years for ginseng plants to reach maturity, so only about 25 percent of acres are harvested each year.
- In 2017, Ontario growers had about 8,000 acres in cultivation, counting plots in year one, two, three and four.
- In Ontario, ginseng production has only been successful on sandy to sandy loam soil. Production is mainly in Norfolk, Brant and Oxford counties.
- Ginseng grown on sandy soil yields 2,400 pounds per acre to more than 3,000 lb. per acre, depending on the experience of the grower.
- Prices in the fall of 2017 were $30 to $40 per lb. From 2000-15, the average price, adjusted for inflation, was $23 per lb.
- Starting a ginseng farm is expensive. It costs about $72,000 to grow an acre of ginseng, not including the cost of equipment, such as tractors and sprayers. About half the costs derive from building the shade structure for the plants.

Sources: Toronto Star, Brantford Expositor, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture

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varieties. North American ginseng has a reputation for a sweeter taste and superior quality.

Thanks to those attributes, ginseng is a valuable crop for Ontario and exports to Asia have been happening for hundreds of years.

The first ginseng crop in Ontario was cultivated in the 1890s near Waterford but wild ginseng was exported much earlier from the region.

In the 1700s, Europeans discovered wild ginseng in the forests of eastern North America. First Nations people reportedly used ginseng for centuries before the arrival of Europeans, but the newcomers turned it into an industry. Entrepreneurs dug up the roots from forests in southern Ontario and Quebec and then shipped them overseas and established a lucrative export market in China.

“It was actually the first commodity traded between China and Canada,” Winter said.

Now 34, Winter has been growing ginseng or helping grow ginseng for about 15 years. He started in his late teens but wasn’t born into ginseng farming.

He married into the business. He grew up in the town of Delhi in an area known as Ontario’s tobacco belt. Starting at the age of 12, Winter worked on a tobacco farm in the summer months.

“Taking the tobacco slat, which had the tobacco leaves sewn on it, and I would actually pick it off the conveyor belt and shake it. Shake all the sand out of it.”

In his teens, Winter had other summer jobs at the farm, such as hand-picking tobacco.

“As a 13- or 14-year-old, you could make $4,000 to $5,000 a summer.”

Around that time, in the mid-1990s, Winter met his future wife, Hannah.

She grew up on a farm near Delhi, operated by her dad, Doug Bradley, who started growing ginseng in the 1980s.

Tom and Hannah became friends in middle school, remained friends in high school and ended up going to college.

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Tom and Hannah became friends in middle school, remained friends in high school and ended up going to college. After high school I kind of followed her, up to college and university,” Winter said with a laugh. “It was (mostly) to be with her. In North Bay, they became more than friends.

By 2002, they were a couple.

Winter began working on the Bradley ginseng farm that year and a few years later, Hannah and Tom got married.

They now have two girls, Cate and Claire, who are eight and six. Hannah grew up on a farm and knowing what experience what she did…. I like that idea of my daughters growing up on a farm and knowing what hard work is.”

Winter enjoys growing ginseng but there are also other things happening on the farm. With his father-in-law and brother-in-law, Matt Bradley, he also grows soybeans and rye. The straw from the rye is used as bedding for the ginseng plants.

Winter is also trying to diversify the operation beyond crops. He and Matt have built a new barn and are now raising broiler chickens.

For most producers, moving forward with new projects is part of the appeal of farming. But so is the farm life.

Hannah grew up on a farm and Winter wants that same kind of life for his kids.

“I (saw) how happy a childhood she had and I want my daughters to experience what she did…. I like that idea of my daughters growing up on a farm and knowing what hard work is”

robert.arnason@producer.com

Tom and Cate check ginseng harvest equipment stored in the drive shed for the winter.

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- Reduces the susceptibility of crops and pastures to frost damage.

Only 1 Week Left to Save!
My dad loved to tell a well-worn story that went like this: “Old Dandelion came up behind and sniffed the back of your head. Out came her long tongue and licked up the back of your hood. You were only about two feet tall and your little body was so stiff, packed into your snowsuit, you tipped over into the snow. Dandelion just stood there looking at you. I stood you up again. It was the funniest thing I ever saw.”

Dad only kept six or eight cows and they became like big sisters. We walked among them, pushing them around and they always moved for us. When one had a calf, we were happy but we knew some had their grumpy side and stayed out of their way.

We knew which ones would hide in the pasture while giving birth and who would go to the edge of the herd near the barn. Sometimes a new mother came in, finished her feed and then remembered her new calf hidden in the pasture. The panic-stricken mom would lumber out the gate, bag swinging, knees creaking, calling frantically. If she didn’t find it by herself, we’d have to help her. If we found it first, we’d start pushing it toward home and call the mother. She’d shamble up, sniff it all over while grunting to it. We’d have to keep pushing them home before the calf started sucking or the trip would take forever.

Star and Dandelion had collars with a bell so we could tell where they were in the pasture or whether they were coming in at end of day. They came in by themselves. If they were late, we’d stand at the pasture gate and call, “Come on!” Pretty soon we’d see them sauntering through the trees, heads and tails swinging, taking their time.

Dad milked one or two cows for family use and these old girls were especially tame. Milking time for me holds especially happy memories. I would sit on the extra milking stool and talk to Dad with a cat on my knee. Most often he replied with “Mmmm”, “Yup” or a chuckle. Sometimes I’d brush the cows, making fancy designs in their sides. Their calves stayed in the loose box during milking and I’d visit them, talking to them and putting my fingers in their mouth to see if they’d suck.

One day, this routine was altered, causing a great upset for the milk cow, Liz. Dad was going to be away at milking time the next day and asked my sister, Marilyn, then 11 years old, to milk her. Mom, not knowing of Marilyn’s already accumulated experience with milking alongside Dad, exploded. She vehemently lectured Dad, saying Marilyn was only a little girl, too young to milk a great big cow. She then announced that she would milk Liz. Dad shrugged and said no more, but everyone knew Mom didn’t know the first thing about milking.

Liz was tethered to a stake to eat grass between the buildings. The next evening, Mom marched out with the pail. Marilyn followed, feeling displaced from an opportunity to take charge. Mom got a milking stool and placed it beside Liz, who gazed suspiciously at this person she’d never seen before who was trying to do something completely foreign of her routine. She walked away from the stall, and asked my sister to take charge. Marilyn shrugged and said no more, but everyone knew Mom didn’t know the first thing about milking.

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The cows would gather around the hay wagon in the winter. Mom handed the pail to Marilyn. “You put her in the barn,” she said and marched back to the house. Marilyn led Liz to the barn, milked her and put her back on the tether. No more was ever said about a young girl being too small to milk a cow.

If Liz had had a calf when Mom tried to milk her, Mom would have seen a lot more action. Liz was a very protective mother, becoming quite aggressive when she had a baby in her care. On one occasion I decided to see Liz’s newborn calf. The pair were in the loose box and I climbed the side, peeping over the top with one elbow poking through the boards to hold me there. Liz and I stared at each other. Then I turned my head to look at the calf. In a flash, she swung her head and bumped my elbow, hanging it against the board above. I was impressed by her speed and precise aim. She swung her big head, hitting my elbow without bumping her nose on the boards. We had a staring match for another minute before I retreated, having gained new respect for her abilities and a throbbing elbow.

One day I was playing in the living room and saw Dad walking past the window with Dandelion pacing alongside. I dashed to the window for a closer look at such an unusual sight. Mom told me he was taking Dandelion to the stock yards. I’m sure it was the first time she’d ever worn a halter, but that didn’t matter. She trusted Dad and would go anywhere with him. They strolled down the lane, just two friends going for a walk. We only lived a quarter of a mile from the yards and Dad knew that walking her would be easier on her than loading her in a truck, something she had never done. He was making her last walk as gentle as possible. As with all things, times changed. We kids grew up, moved away and the cows got older still. Dad didn’t need milk cows and the markets changed. He sold the cows and went into feeder steers. One weekend I came home to find the barnyard silent of the ringing bells and low conversations of the old mothers. Later, the pasture changed to cultivated field and eight bright-eyed youngsters appeared under a new red shelter in the barnyard. I accepted this as the normal course of events in farming, but I’ll always remember the cozier days of a truly family farm.

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watched this dance before finally asking, “why don’t you put her in the barn?”

Mom handed the pail to Marilyn. “You put her in the barn,” she said and marched back to the house. Marilyn led Liz to the barn, milked her and put her back on the tether. No more was ever said about a young girl being too small to milk a cow.

The cows would gather around the hay wagon in the winter. | HATHAWAY FAMILY PHOTOS

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Writer changes how we view the outdoors

PRAIRIE CHAPTERS

CHRISTALEE FROESE

The landscape will look different after reading this book.

An everyday sky will suddenly glow with colour and dance for joy. A frozen slough will emerge from the final chapter of One Last Cast with a greater appreciation for nature, wonder at its offerings and care and concern for its wellbeing.

In stories that are touching and sentimental, Masterman takes readers into the foothills of the Rocky Mountains in Alberta. He places you firmly beside him in the hull of his boat with a faithful hunting dog on high alert. He tells of the shots fired, the kills collected and the fish caught. But more importantly, he tells of what he has passed through to get his bounty.

One Last Cast: Reflections of an Outdoor Life is written by Bruce Masterman and published by Rocky Mountain Books Ltd. (2017). It is available at rmbooks.com and in bookstores.

Overcoming benzodiazepine addiction requires professional help

HEALTH CLINIC

CLARE ROWSON, MD

Q: My sister was staying with me and I noticed her taking some pills, so I asked her what they were. She said they were lorazepam for anxiety. She confessed that she has been taking them for more than a year and has tried to stop taking them several times, but each time she gets so shaky and anxious that she has to start taking them again. Is she addicted to these pills and how can she get off them safely? She looks good and seems healthy otherwise.

A: You do not specify exactly how many tablets of lorazepam — trade name Ativan — your sister takes a day, but it could be as much as 10 times the prescribed dose. Tranquilizers of this type, known as benzodiazepines, are often addictive if taken for any length of time, even as little as four weeks. About four out of 10 people who take these drugs for more than six weeks will become addicted. The usual dose of Ativan is one to two milligrams a day, but dependent people may take 10 times as much. Some people take it to help them sleep but it is usually prescribed for anxiety or panic disorder. According to the Royal College of Psychiatrists, it is not a good plan to prescribe any type of benzodiazepines for more than four weeks straight, and it should not be prescribed at all if effective alternatives are available.

The half-life of lorazepam is 10 to 20 hours even in normal doses. You can tell if someone is addicted if they need more and more pills to achieve the same effect they had when they first started taking the pills. They feel acutely anxious when they miss a dose and spend much of their time trying to ensure that their supply does not run out. They may resort to lying to get more medications prescribed, and like psychotics, they will be secretive about the amount they are taking. Withdrawal symptoms from benzodiazepines include sleeplessness, tremor or shaking in the limbs, acute anxiety and confusion. There can be irritability and light-headedness or dizziness and a nasty metallic taste in the mouth. Some people have a feeling of electric shocks in the arms and legs, blurred vision and even epileptic seizures.

I suggest that you ask your sister to see her doctor for a referral to a psychiatrist, who can then supervise her very gradual withdrawal from the drug and suggest alternative treatments for her anxiety. Treatment usually involves switching the shorter acting benzodiazepine drug for a longer acting one. She may even need admission to hospital in case she has seizures. These can be theoretically fatal in rare cases if not treated immediately.

If you are hunting averse, as I am, you will come away with a deeper appreciation for the hunt and the reasons for its acceptance. You will see a gentler side of hunting and great care for the environment that supports it.

Masterman’s short stories, some of which appeared in his Calgary Herald column during his 21-year career at the daily newspaper, are heartfelt and humble. Those that speak lovingly of his wife and two daughters ring with a sweetness so palpable that he becomes just Dad in most of his scenes, versus author and journalism professor.

The highlight of the book is a lengthy story entitled, “A Special Time and Place.” In it, Masterman stands on a dock with his teenaged daughter, Sarah, headed to a magical place where the writer spent a wondrous summer more than three decades earlier.

Flying into Elbow Lake in northern Manitoba, Masterman recounts his first fishing camp job, the one he embraced in 1970 at the age of 17. We meet the camp’s fatherly statesman, a bachelor farmer named Henry Bradley from Manitoba’s Swan River area, who served as a guide to hunters and fishers when he wasn’t seeding or harvesting his crops.

Henry takes on a larger-than-life role in Masterman’s early outdoor education, being the mentor that brought nature into clearer focus for the would-be writer.

“The education didn’t end at fishing. Henry had a passion for the place, for the forest and the wildlife that lived there. He would point out and identify passing waterfowl and reverently describe the moose, caribou and wolves that lived in the region. Carefully rolling a cigarette with one hand, he spoke of the need to look after wildlife to ensure its future. I absorbed every word.”

Once Masterman recounts his disciple days with Bradley, the rest of the book makes sense as you see how he acquired his reverence for the wilderness.

“Into the Light” is another story that stays with the reader long after One Last Cast has closed. Its honest look into the author’s struggle with depression is comforting. While the writing is about days of darkness, it is not dark.

“I prescribe myself generous regular doses of the outdoors when ever I’m feeling down. Being in nature helps level out my emotional peaks and valleys,” he writes.

You’ll want to have this book on your shelf. It has the ability to take the foggy mist off of any given day and put a shiny veneer on all you see, do and experience in the outdoors.

One Last Cast: Reflections of an Outdoor Life is written by Bruce Masterman and published by Rocky Mountain Books Ltd. (2017). It is available at rmbooks.com and in bookstores.
Canada taps into Chinese barley demand

Global demand for top quality malting barley continues to grow, especially in China. Watts said China’s import demand for malting barley is about three million tonnes annually. Most years, China will import about 600,000 tonnes of high-quality malting barley from Canada. The vast majority of China’s imports come from nearby Australia, which can supply barley at a lower cost based on its proximity to the Chinese market.

Last year, however, Australian barley production dropped significantly, falling to roughly eight million tonnes in 2017 from 13.4 million the year before. Poor harvest weather in some parts of the Australian production area further complicated Aussie export programs and elevated prices for Australian malt barley.

In that environment, Canadian malting barley became more competitive, resulting in a larger-than-normal export program. In his presentation, Watts listed Canadian exports to China at 833,000 tonnes in 2016-17 and 1.2 million tonnes in 2017-18. “Exports to China this year will meet our one million tonnes minimum … and we may reach somewhere in the neighbourhood of 1.2 million tonnes,” he said.

Canadian growers should also be mindful that China generally prefers malting barley with relatively high protein levels. Unlike Canadian malsters and brewers, who prefer barley in the range of 10 to 11.5 percent protein, the Chinese brewing industry prefers barley with a minimum protein content of 11.5 percent.

Unlike Canadian malsters and brewers, who prefer barley in the range of 10 to 11.5 percent protein, the Chinese brewing industry prefers barley with a minimum protein content of 11.5 percent. “They would actually prefer 12.5 or even 13 percent, so we’ve actually brought a bit of diversity in Canada because we’ve got a domestic market that’s looking for lower protein content in the 10 to 11.5 range and an export market that’s looking for higher protein,” Watts said.

The take-home message for Canadian barley growers: “If you don’t have a contract with a domestic malting company or a grain company that specifies protein content … your grain is probably going to go into the export market, which is China,” Watts said. “So don’t be shy on the nitrogen and don’t be so shy to push up the protein content.”

As it stands, Canada is in an excellent position to meet unfilled Chinese demand over the near term. Canadian growers harvested an excellent malting crop last fall with outstanding storability and little risk of germination loss. “We had a great malting barley crop in 2017. Western Canada this year. About 85 percent at least of the western Canadian malting barley crop meets malting specs,” he said.

Although some of that material will be sold into domestic feed markets, any that’s in storage may find a market with grain companies hoping to ship to China.

“China (celebrates) their New Year in about a month,” Watts said. “Typically, when they come back after their New Year, they evaluate their situation and that’s when we’ll see if they come back into the market.”

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Annual barley plantings in Western Canada continued their downward trend in 2017, slipping to roughly 5.44 million acres — the crop’s smallest seeded acreage in more than a decade. Nonetheless, there is cause for optimism, according to the head of the Canadian Malting Barley Technical Centre.

Despite reduced acreage and relatively tight margins, global demand for top quality malting barley continues to grow, especially in China, said CMBTC general manager Peter Watts.

“China is the world’s largest market for malting barley by far and actually got a bit of a dichotomy in the Chinese demand over the near term. Canadian demand over the near term. Canadian growers harvested an excellent malting crop last fall with outstanding storability and little risk of germination loss. “We had a great malting barley crop in Western Canada this year. About 85 percent at least of the western Canadian malting barley crop meets malting specs,” he said.

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brian.cross@producer.com

Visit us online at www.producer.com to see a video about this story.
Let’s call this meeting to order.

Four bald eagles sit in a farmer’s field south of High River, Alta., on a cold -26 C day in mid-January.

Courtney Walkeden, AAg Agronomist
Saskatoon Co-op
Saskatoon, SK

Courtney provides growers with the tools they may need to grow a successful and profitable farm business. This includes providing fertilizer, recommending and selling seed and crop inputs that are best suited towards their farm needs.

“Being registered as an agronomist (Ag) offers the ability to be an advocate of agriculture and the environment by ensuring the actions I carry out, and recommendations I make work towards a more sustainable future for farmers and the soils they depend on.”

Courtney grew up Weyburn, SK. She received a BSA with a major in Environmental Science and a minor in Soil Science from the University of Saskatchewan. Previous to joining Saskatoon Co-op in 2017 she worked with Federated Co-op.

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Dwayne Summach, MSc, PAg
Regional Livestock Specialist
SK Ministry of Agriculture
Kindersley, SK

Dwayne provides information and advice to livestock producers. He works with producers towards improving livestock nutrition, livestock handling, and management. Dwayne is most interested in livestock nutrition and provides knowledge and advice to industry on this topic.

“A professional agrologist (PAg) designation is proof of a commitment to ethics, practice standards and continuing education to provide the public with trust in the profession.”

Dwayne was raised on a mixed farm near Asquith, SK. He received a BSA in animal science and an MSc in ruminant nutrition from the University of Saskatchewan. Dwayne is the President-Elect of the Saskatchewan Institute of Agrologists.

The Alberta government is extending the consultation period on new farm safety rules.

The Alberta Agriculture Minister Oneil Carlier said Jan. 15 that farmers, ranchers, local governments and industry groups now have until Feb. 26 to weigh in.

“We had a few individuals and municipalities that were looking for a little bit more time,” Carlier said. “The collaboration with this has been fruitful, and we’re continuing to work with our stakeholders as we all take the time to get this right.”

The new safety rules fall under the Occupational Health and Safety code and would apply to farms and ranches that employ paid workers.

Changes could result in farms being required to modify old equipment, as well as possibly needing safety manuals, first-aid kits and fire extinguishers on hand when accidents happen.

Kent Erickson, chair of AgSafe Alberta, an organization that’s been tasked with developing and delivering farm safety management tools and programs, said he’s glad the government has decided to extend the consultations.

“There just wasn’t enough time for the farming community to get a good analysis of this,” Erickson said. “This additional six weeks give us that opportunity, and we’ll be reaching out to get some feedback from producers.”

Erickson said of the 144 recommendations, 20 to 40 of them still need to be hashed out.

He said the recommendation that farmers be required to upgrade old equipment shouldn’t be needed.

For example, his 1978-built tractor has been slightly modified to be usable. But, according to the recommended changes, he said his tractor wouldn’t be up to standards so he would have to replace it.

A new tractor could cost him $40,000 to $80,000, he said.

“We obviously want more safety on farms and we want to save lives and injuries, but if regulations are a financial burden and not really going to enhance safety, then we need to address that.”

Other contentious recommendations include the possibility of farmers being required to install seat belts on equipment, and needing special permits if, for example, they want rollover bars to get into tight-fitting chicken or turkey barns.

That said, Erickson added that there are good recommendations coming out that do enhance safety, like having first-aid kits and fire extinguishers close by.

“Simple things like that save lives and injuries,” he said. “Just having simple conversations about how to safely clean a bin and things like that are good and won’t cost much money.”

Farmers and ranchers interested in weighing in on the safety changes can do so at www.alberta.ca/farm-and-ranch.aspx.

jeremy.simes@producer.com

Royal Bank boss worries NAFTA may be scrapped

TORONTO (Reuters) — Royal Bank of Canada chief executive officer Dave McKay said he believes there is now a greater chance that the North American Free Trade Agreement could be scrapped.

“I think the probabilities are increasing that you’ll have some type of dynamic where there is an announcement of a scrapping of NAFTA,” he said at a conference hosted by RBC in Toronto.

Canadian bankers have expressed concern about the progress of talks to rework the trade agreement and how renegotiations could hamper the ability of clients to do business with customers in the United States and Mexico.

McKay said he agreed with other business leaders and the Canadian government that no deal would be better than a bad deal.

“We don’t want to be stuck long-term with a deal that hurts our economy,” he said at the 2018 Canadian Bank CEO Conference. The bosses of Canada’s biggest banks were all speaking at the event, which covered themes such as technology and Canada’s housing markets as well as the banks’ international expansion plans and the potential impact of trade negotiations.
Germany sees no timetable for ending glyphosate

BERLIN, Germany (Reuters) — German Agriculture Minister Christian Schmidt says he can see no set date for an end to the use of the controversial herbicide glyphosate in Germany.

Schmidt caused international controversy and a major row in Germany’s government coalition in November by unexpectedly backing an European Commission proposal to permit use of glyphosate for the next five years despite a heated debate over whether it causes cancer.

Schmidt’s vote effectively allowed the extension in glyphosate use in the face of opposition from France and the centre-left Social Democrats (SPD) in Germany’s government coalition.

A provisional blueprint for talks for a new government coalition in Germany agreed in January to systematically and significantly limit glyphosate use with the aim of entirely ending use as quickly as possible.

Environment Minister Barbara Hendricks, a member of the SPD, has called for an end to glyphosate use in the current four-year term of government.

But Schmidt said at a recent Green Week trade fair that he could see no exact date for an end to glyphosate use in Germany.

He said alternatives to glyphosate might be found if they could involve new forms of herbicides or new methods of farming.

The association of German farmers called for glyphosate use to continue. The farming association president Joachim Rukwied said glyphosate opponents were undertaking “a campaign of fear”.

Rukwied said opponents of glyphosate had failed to show scientific cause for concern. A ban would cause a massive competitive disadvantage to German farmers, who would face the extra costs of controllable ploughing to control weeds, he said.

Almost all soybean aphids that arrive on the Prairies are blown in from the United States, South Dakota and southern Minnesota. The aphids are common there and begin moving by wind. Some years they make it to Mani- toba. Some years they don’t.

Lange said that’s one reason he suggests scouting, and spraying rather than paying for treated seed.

“Have not had two consecutive years where we’ve had widespread economic problems,” said Lange.

Since 2001, there have been only four years of bad infestations, two years of “moderate pressure”, and the rest were not a problem. By his math, a farmer bought treated seed every year for 1,000 acres he would have spent $112,000, but if he only sprayed when there was a problem it would have cost him $64,000.

Gavloski agreed. “On average, you’re probably bet- ter off just doing scouting and foliar spraying if needed,” said Gavloski.

BY ED WHITE

ST JEAN BAPTISTE, Man. — Eastern prairie farmers have enjoyed falling in love with soybeans. But that romance has hit some roadblocks along some clingy friends that aren’t as easy to like, such as soybean aphids.

“The more soybeans we grow, the more problems we may have with root rots and other pests,” said Emile Rukwied, a soybean specialist with Manitoba Agriculture, at St. Jean Farm Days.

Soybean aphids were a major scourge last summer, and for many growers it was their first time tangling with the tiny, but busy bug.

Soybeans are expected to soon reach three million seeded acres in Manitoba. In a decade, it has gone from being a tiny acreage curiosity to Manitoba’s second largest crop. It grew on 2.3 million acres in 2017, well ahead of spring wheat’s 2.1 million, but still behind 3.1 million acres for canola.

That meant that many farmers bet against soybean aphids last summer and suffered as a result, and weren’t sure how to deal with them.

Lange and Manitoba Agriculture bug specialist John Gavloski briefed Red River Valley farmers on soy identification and management during the farm show.

There’s math involved: if a plant has more than 250 aphids upon it, and the number is increasing, a farmer should spray, hoping to hit the infestation before it hits the point of economic-to-control damage at 670 bugs.

That’s because aphids can double their population in a couple days, and if it takes a few days to get a crop sprayed after deciding to do it, a lot of damage can occur.

However, a farmer should not spray when bug counts are beneath that threshold, or with a declining infestation, because many natural aphid predators, such as ladybugs, would be killed. Natural predators can break infestations if there are enough of them at the right time.

The aphids are only a concern at certain stages of the soybean’s life. There are hundreds of types of aphids in Canada, so farmers need to figure out if they have soybean aphids in their crop. Government agriculture departments have identification guides, as do compa- nies that supply agricultural solutions.

Farmers might sometimes notice a “honeydew” sheen on their crops when aphids are present. It’s not such a sweet thing. The aphids suck a lot of sap from the plants during the day.

“They’re constantly excreting out this sugary sap out their back end,” said Gavloski.

Forty percent of western Canadian farmers, soybean aphids should probably be a chronic problem. Their over-wintering eggs die at -34°C, but the only way to survive that happens virtually every winter, so only a handful protected by shelter or snow are likely to survive.

In a decade soybeans have gone from a tiny acreage novelty in Manitoba to the province’s second largest crop.

Soybean’s rapid growth brings new pest worries

Soybean aphids were a major scourge in Manitoba last summer, and for many growers it was their first introduction four years of bad infestations, two years of “moderate pressure”, and the rest were not a problem. By his math, a farmer bought treated seed every year for 1,000 acres he would have spent $112,000, but if he only sprayed when there was a problem it would have cost him $64,000.

Gavloski agreed. “On average, you’re probably better off just doing scouting and foliar spraying if needed,” said Gavloski.

Alphism, a new pest that was a hot topic last summer, but was only really a problem for a few farmers.

Lange said even with the new pest’s spread, the most likely end result is the same. Soybean aphids, and the rest of the soybean world, are definitive pests that need to be controlled, and that happens virtually every winter, so only a handful protected by shelter or snow are likely to survive.
Here come the calves

It’s calving season on the MacMillan Colony near Cayley, Alta. These photos were taken Jan. 15 as colony members found themselves in the middle of the action. | MIKE STURK PHOTOS

TOP: Randy, left, Paul and Matthew Entz move cattle from pasture to corrals.

ABOVE LEFT: Johann Waldner checks pregnant heifers for any that are ready to calve.

ABOVE RIGHT: Waldner ear tags a new calf, keeping a wary eye out for its protective mother.

LEFT: Looking like an orchestra’s conductor, Matthew Entz sorts cattle into a chute where they will be vaccinated for scours and then taken into another corral close to the barn where they will calve.
Steady to lower durum market expected in West

Challenges include larger-than-expected production, a seasonal slow-down in demand and country-of-origin labelling in Italy

WINNIPEG (CNS Canada) — Larger-than-expected production, a seasonal slow-down in demand, and looming Italian country-of-origin labelling regulations are all overhanging the Canadian durum market, with steady to lower prices anticipated over the next few months.

Italian COOL regulations are set to come into effect in mid-February. The regulations will require pasta makers in the country to segregate foreign durum, which will add costs and may cut into demand for some Canadian grain. Italy is a major buyer of Canadian durum.

“There’s no doubt that there’s a negative perception for Canadian durum, but the quality, especially this year is phenomenal, and a lot of mills in Italy rely on Canadian durum,” said Jerry Klassen, manager of the Canadian office of Swiss-based GAP SA Grains and Products in Winnipeg. “I think we’re still in a wait and see mode how this will play out,” he said, adding, “Canadian durum has a fairly good reputation in Italy and Europe and general.”

Concerns over glyphosate residue on Canadian durum have hurt that reputation somewhat and were a factor in the regulations.

“(However), last year, it was so dry, I think you’d be hard pressed to find any farmer who used glyphosate on his durum,” said Klassen.

He added that glyphosate is not an optimal desiccant for durum and is rarely, if ever, used for that purpose.

Total Canadian durum exports to all destinations to date of 1.67 million tonnes compare with the 1.78 million tonnes exported during the same period in 2017-18, according to the latest data from the Canadian Grain Commission.

Durum prices are currently in the $270 to $275 per tonne range in southern Saskatchewan, according to the latest Price and Data Quotes (PDQ) data. That compares with prices above $300 in August when the industry was concerned over drought conditions in Canada and the northern United States.

“We had a very strong North American durum market with the drier conditions in Canada and the U.S.,” said Klassen.

The market rationed demand at the time, but the yields beat expectations and left Canada with about a million more tonnes of durum than originally expected.

“Right now we’re feeling the effects of the rationing of demand in the first half of the year when we lost demand, and you never get it back,” said Klassen.

“Now the market has gone from rationing demand to a time it needs to encourage demand,” said Klassen.

“The only way to do that is through lower prices.”

As a result, “the market will be hard pressed to go higher,” said Klassen, pointing to increased competition in the world and the fact that the seasonal nature of the durum market means that much of the demand is already covered for the year.

“At the same time, the farmer is selling about 180,000 tonnes a week, which seems sufficient to meet the exports we do have on track,” said Klassen.

He thought farmers were probably selling a bit more durum than they would otherwise due to poor prices for other crops, especially pulses.

While farmers are selling enough durum to meet the demand, “we can’t underestimate the power of the farmer to hold back on sales,” said Klassen. Farmers grew a good quality crop in 2017 and will be prone to storing on farm for better prices.

Looking ahead to the new crop year, the trade is factoring in about a 15 percent increase in durum at the expense of specialty crops, according to Klassen.

Canada seeded 5.21 million acres of durum in 2017, harvesting a 4.96 million tonne crop.
International prices for a basket of food commodities rose by 8.2 per cent in 2017, according to the United Nations’ Food and Agriculture Organization Food Price Index.

The FAO Food Price Index averaged 174.6 points in 2017, which was up by 8.2 percent from the previous year and the highest annual average since 2014. However, it was still well below the record high of 229.9 points hit in 2011.

On a monthly basis, the Index averaged 169.9 points in December 2017, which was down by 5.8 points from November and compares with the 170.3 reading in December 2016. The FAO Food Price Index covers five commodity groups: cereals, vegetable oil, meat, dairy, and sugar. Only the sugar price index was down on the year.

The Cereal Price Index averaged 151.6 points in 2017, which was up a modest 3.2 percent from the previous year.

The FAO said slow sales and ample supplies were weighing on wheat prices in late 2016, but that was countered by increases in rice and corn.

The Vegetable Oil Index was up by about three percent on the year, to average roughly 169 points in 2017. However, vegetable oil prices were declining over the latter half of the year, with large palm oil supplies and upward revisions to the size of Canada’s canola crop cited as contributing to the weakness.

The Meat Price Index averaged 170 points in 2017, which was up by about three percent on the year, to average roughly 169 points in 2017. However, vegetable oil prices were declining over the latter half of the year, with large palm oil supplies and upward revisions to the size of Canada’s canola crop cited as contributing to the weakness.

The Meat Price Index averaged 170 points in 2017, which was up nine percent from 2016, but still 4.7 percent below the previous five-year average.

Large increases in butter prices sent the Dairy Price Index up by 31.5 percent on the year to 202.2 points. Meanwhile, a bumper sugar cane harvest in Brazil contributed to the Sugar Price Index declining 11.2 percent in 2017, to an average of 227.3 points.
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30x60 $13,550
30x72' $15,895
30x96 $20,500

Includes materials & labor

FENCE POSTS

1x6" x 8" Rough Spruce $29
3.25" x6' Rd Treated Post $49
3.25" x7' Rd Treated Post $59
4.25" x6' Rd Treated Post $69
4.25" x7' Rd Treated Post $99
5.25" x7' Rd Treated Post $109
5.25" x8' Rd Treated Post $139

VENETIAN RED PEARL/BLACK

FORESTER 2016

3,6R NAVIGATION, LEATHER, HEATED SEATS, SUNROOF, POWER TAILGATE, DUAL CLIMATE CONTROL

32,995

FORESTER 2016

LEATHER HEATED, DUAL CLIMATE CONTROL, SUNROOF

28,995

FORESTER 2015

LEATHER HEATED, EYESIGHT TECHNOLOGY, CLOTH HEATED SEATS, POWER TAILGATE, DUAL CLIMATE CONTROL

29,995

FORESTER 2014

SATIN WHITE/BLACK

34,495

FORESTER 2013

LEATHER HEATED, NAVIGATION, DUAL CLIMATE CONTROL, SUNROOF

35,995

LEGACY 2017

GRAPHITE GREY/OFF BLACK

41,120

LEGACY 2016

SOLD

LEATHER HEATED, DUAL CLIMATE CONTROL, SUNROOF, NAVIGATION

35,995

LEGACY 2015

LEATHER HEATED, NAVIGATION, DUAL CLIMATE CONTROL, SUNROOF

34,995

IMPREZA 2016

CRYSTAL WHITE/BLACK

44,120

IMPREZA 2015

SOLD

CLOTH HEATED SEATS, POWER TAILGATE, DUAL CLIMATE CONTROL

29,995

IMPREZA 2014

SOLD

SHADOW BLACK METALLIC/BLACK

32,995

LEGACY 2012

GRAPHITE GREY/OFF BLACK

41,548

LEGACY 2011

SOLD

LEATHER HEATED, DUAL CLIMATE CONTROL, SUNROOF, NAVIGATION

35,995

OUTBACK 2015

SOLD

LEATHER HEATED NAVIGATION, DUAL CLIMATE CONTROL, SUNROOF

28,995

OUTBACK 2014

SOLD

LEATHER HEATED NAVIGATION, DUAL CLIMATE CONTROL, SUNROOF

29,495

OUTBACK 2013

SATIN WHITE/BLACK

34,995

OUTBACK 2012

SOLD

LEATHER HEATED, DUAL CLIMATE CONTROL, SUNROOF, NAVIGATION

35,995

LEGACY 2011

SOLD

LEATHER HEATED, DUAL CLIMATE CONTROL, SUNROOF, NAVIGATION

35,995

LEGACY 2010

SOLD

LEATHER HEATED, DUAL CLIMATE CONTROL, SUNROOF, NAVIGATION

35,995

XV 2016

CRYSTAL WHITE/BLACK

33,995

XV 2015

SOLD

CRUISE CONTROL, SUNROOF

25,495

XV 2014

SOLD

LEATHER HEATED, DUAL CLIMATE CONTROL, SUNROOF, NAVIGATION

34,995

FORESTER 2016

SOLD

LEATHER HEATED NAVIGATION, DUAL CLIMATE CONTROL, SUNROOF

28,995

FORESTER 2015

SOLD

LEATHER HEATED, NAVIGATION, DUAL CLIMATE CONTROL, SUNROOF

29,495

FORESTER 2014

SOLD

LEATHER HEATED, NAVIGATION, DUAL CLIMATE CONTROL, SUNROOF

28,995

OUTBACK 2014

SOLD

LEATHER HEATED NAVIGATION, DUAL CLIMATE CONTROL, SUNROOF

29,495

OUTBACK 2013

SOLD

LEATHER HEATED NAVIGATION, DUAL CLIMATE CONTROL, SUNROOF

28,995

OUTBACK 2012

SOLD

LEATHER HEATED NAVIGATION, DUAL CLIMATE CONTROL, SUNROOF

29,495

OUTBACK 2011

SOLD

LEATHER HEATED NAVIGATION, DUAL CLIMATE CONTROL, SUNROOF

30,495

OUTBACK 2010

SOLD

LEATHER HEATED NAVIGATION, DUAL CLIMATE CONTROL, SUNROOF

34,995

IMPREZA 2014

SOLD

CLOTH HEATED SEATS, POWER TAILGATE, DUAL CLIMATE CONTROL

25,995

IMPREZA 2013

SOLD

CLOTH HEATED SEATS, POWER TAILGATE, DUAL CLIMATE CONTROL

25,995

IMPREZA 2012

SOLD

CLOTH HEATED SEATS, NAVIGATION, DUAL CLIMATE CONTROL

25,995

IMPREZA 2011

SOLD

CLOTH HEATED SEATS, NAVIGATION, DUAL CLIMATE CONTROL

25,995

IMPREZA 2010

SOLD

CLOTH HEATED SEATS, NAVIGATION, DUAL CLIMATE CONTROL

25,995

IMPREZA 2009

SOLD

CLOTH HEATED SEATS, NAVIGATION, DUAL CLIMATE CONTROL

25,995

IMPREZA 2008

SOLD

CLOTH HEATED SEATS, NAVIGATION, DUAL CLIMATE CONTROL

25,995

IMPREZA 2007

SOLD

CLOTH HEATED SEATS, NAVIGATION, DUAL CLIMATE CONTROL

25,995

IMPREZA 2006

SOLD

CLOTH HEATED SEATS, NAVIGATION, DUAL CLIMATE CONTROL

25,995

IMPREZA 2005

SOLD

CLOTH HEATED SEATS, NAVIGATION, DUAL CLIMATE CONTROL

25,995

IMPREZA 2004

SOLD

CLOTH HEATED SEATS, NAVIGATION, DUAL CLIMATE CONTROL

25,995

IMPREZA 2003

SOLD

CLOTH HEATED SEATS, NAVIGATION, DUAL CLIMATE CONTROL

25,995

IMPREZA 2002

SOLD

CLOTH HEATED SEATS, NAVIGATION, DUAL CLIMATE CONTROL

25,995

IMPREZA 2001

SOLD

CLOTH HEATED SEATS, NAVIGATION, DUAL CLIMATE CONTROL

25,995

IMPREZA 2000

SOLD

CLOTH HEATED SEATS, NAVIGATION, DUAL CLIMATE CONTROL

25,995

LEONE 1993

SOLD

CLOTH HEATED SEATS, NAVIGATION, DUAL CLIMATE CONTROL

25,995

FORESTER 1999

SOLD

LEATHER HEATED, NAVIGATION, DUAL CLIMATE CONTROL

25,995

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We build it like we own it
2016 Case IH 9240 620 Duals, Lux Cab, Lat Tilt w/Rocktrap, AccuGuide, 50 FT Folding. Magnumchopper, HID Lights. Stk: 022940 (SC) ...................................................... $490,000
2016 Case IH 8240 520 Duals, Lat Tilt, Rocktrap, Ext Wear Rotor, Standard Chopper, Deluxe Cab, Leather Seat, Pro 700, AccuGuide Ready. Stk: 022117 (SC) ....... $405,000
2014 Case IH 8230 900 Singles, Lat Tilt, Deluxe Cab, GPS, Folding Auger, Pivot Spout, Hydra Fold Hopper Cover, 865 Engine & 640 Rotor Hrs.. Stk: 025289 (SC) ................. $335,000
2013 Case IH 9230 620 Duals, Lux Cab, Lat Tilt w/Rocktrap, AccuGuide, Hyd Grain Tank Cover, Magnumchopper, HID Lights. Stk: 021990 (ES) ......................................... $350,000
2012 Case IH 9120 620 Duals, HID Lights, Magnum Fine Chopper, AccuGuide, Pro600 Monitor, 24 Ft Auger. Stk: 023485 (PA) .......................................................... $275,000
2012 Case IH 7230 520 Duals, Lat Tilt, Ext Wear Rotor, HID Folding Cover, Std Chopper, HID Lights, AccuGuide, Air Compressor. Stk: 021503 (PA) ...................................... $295,000
2009 Case IH 7120 520 Duals, HID Lights, AccuGuide, Deluxe Fine Cut Chopper, 3016 Header /w SwathMaster Pickup. Stk: 020688 (LL) ............................................... $189,000
2006 Gleaner R65 Pickup Header, 90 Singles, Single Spreader, 500 Hrs on Reman Engine. Stk: 026973 (ME) ........................................................................................................... $92,500
2006 Challenger 9400 620 Duals, Power Fold Hopper, MAV Cab, Small Grain Rotor, Auto Steer, Leather, PHIS PU Header. Stk: 026655 (SA) ................................................................. $245,000
2012 MF 9560 520 Duals, MAV Cab, Power Fold Hopper, Auto Steer, MF 4200 PU Header. Stk: 026657 (SA) .......................................................... $270,000

2017 Case IH Steiger 620 Quadtread Lux Cab, PTO, Twin Flow Hyd, 36” Tracks, 6 Remotes, Pro 700, AccuGuide, HID Lights. Stk: 025032 (ME) ................................................ $489,000
2015 Case IH Steiger 540 800 Duals, AccuGuide, 6 Remotes, PTO, HID Lights, 8 Hyd Pumps, Weight Pkg. Stk: 016410A (LL) ......................................................... $429,000
2016 Case IH Steiger 580 Quadtrack Lux Cab, LED Lights, Pro 700, AccuGuide, 2 Hyd Pumps, 6 Remotes, PTO, 36” Tracks, Tow Cable. Stk: 022922 (SC) ...................................... $565,000
2016 Case IH Steiger 500 520 Triples, Deluxe Cab, HID Lights, AccuGuide, Pro 700, 4 Remotes, Hi-Cap Hyd, 342 hours. Stk: 023022 (SC) ........................................................ $380,000
2016 Case IH Steiger 420 520 Triples, Deluxe Cab, HID Lights, Pro 700, AccuGuide, 4 Remotes, High Capacity Hyd, PTO. Stk: 023173 (SC) ............................................... $379,000
2015 Case IH Patriot 4440 120 FT, 380s & 725s, AIM Pro, Div HID Lights, Pro 700, AccuGuide, Fenders. Stk: 019436 (ME) ................................................................. $488,000
2009 Case IH Patriot 4420 120 FT, AIM, Norac AccuBoom, Ag Leader Monitor, AutoPilot, Ssc. Control. Stk: 020576 (ES) ................................................................. $199,500
2013 Case IH Patriot 4430 120 FT, Lux Cab, Active Size, Viper Pro Monitor, Smartrax, 380s & 650s. Stk: 020317 (ES) ................................................................. $315,000
2012 Case IH Steiger 600 Quadtrac 36” Tracks, Lux Cab, HID Lights, 6 Remotes, 113 GPM Hyd, AccuGuide. Stk: 024150 (SA) ................................................................. $389,000
2014 Case IH Steiger 550 Quadtrac 36" Tracks, Lux Cab; 113 GPM Hyd, 6 Remotes, PTO, Raven Smartrax. Stk: 023776 (PA) ................................................................. $460,000
2012 Case IH Steiger 600 Quadtrac 36" Tracks, Lux Cab, HID Lights, 6 Remotes, 113 GPM Hyd, AccuGuide. Stk: 024150 (SA) ................................................................. $389,000

2020 New Holland SP3000 100 FT, Auto Steer, 3 Sets Of Tires, Crop Dividers, 2000 Hrs. Stk: 025182 (SC) ................................................................. $213,000
2000 Apache AS1010 100 FT, 1000 Gallon Tank, AutoSteer, Swath Pro, AutoBoom, 2 Sets of Tires, Crop Dividers. Stk: 021959 (ME) ......................................................... $213,000
2000 John Deere 4830 100 FT, 1000 Gallon Tank, AutoSteer, Swath Pro, AutoBoom, 2 Sets of Tires. Stk: 021412 (ME) ................................................................. $155,500
2013 Case IH 3330 100 FT, 380 & 650 Tires, Active Susp, Front Fill, Command, Deluxe HID Lighting, AccuBoom, AutoBoom. Stk: 022510 (SA) ........................................ $249,900
2014 Case IH 4430 120 FT, Lux Cab, Active Susp, HID Lights, AutoBoom, AccuBoom, ViperPro Monitor, AIM Pro, 380s & 620s, Raven Smartrax Steering. Stk: 023711 (PA) ....... $380,000
2013 Case IH 4430 100 FT, Deluxe Cab, AIM: Pro 700, 372 Receiver, 2 Sets of Tires, HID Lights, AutoBoom, AccuBoom. Stk: 024776 (SC) ......................................................... $305,000
2011 CaseIH4420 120FT, DixCab, 380s & 650s, HIDLight, AirComp, ViperPro, Smartrax Auto Steer, AutoBoom, AccuBoom, Crop Dividers, Fan Reverses. Stk: 021959 (ME) ................................................. $213,000
2009 Case IH 4420 100 FT, AIM, 1200 Gallon, Norac Boom Height Control, Sectional Control, AutoPilot, 380s & 520s, Ag Leader Monitor. Stk: 020576 (ES) ........................................ $199,500
2013 Case IH 4400 100 FT, 380 & 650 Tires, Active Susp, Front Fill, Command, Deluxe HID Lighting, AccuBoom, AutoBoom. Stk: 022510 (SA) ........................................ $249,900
2000 Case IH SPX2130 78 FT, Auto Steer, 2 Sets of Tires, 660 Gallons. Stk: 024745 (SA) .......................................................................................................................... $69,900
2014 Case IH 4530 Floator 70 FT, Lux Cab, Power Mirrors, Deluxe HID Lights, Fenders, Double 6” Auger 50 CF, Viper 4 Monitor, 1550 Hours. Stk: 024242 (SC) .................................................................................................................. $320,000
2011 Case IH 3320 100 FT, Dix Cab, Active Susp, HID Lights, Pro 600, AccuGuide, Fenders, AccuBoom, AutoBoom. Stk: 028123A (LL) ................................................ $229,000
2013 John Deere 4430 100 FT, 1000 Gallon Tank, AutoSteer, Swath Pro, AutoBoom, 2 Sets Of Tires, Crop Dividers. Stk: 021520 (SA) ................................................................. $215,000
2009 Apache AS1010 100 FT, 1000 Gal, Raven Control & GPS, 5 Way Nozzle Boobies, 1800 Hrs. Stk: 026632 (SC) ................................................................. $190,000
1998 RoGator 854 100 FT, 800 Gal SS Tank, Ez-Guide Auto Steer, Rate Controller, Rinse Tank. Stk: 023420 (LL) ................................................................. $49,000

* Finance Terms: D.A.C. Certain conditions apply. Offer subject to change and cancellation at any time.
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2017 RAM 1500 CREW CAB HEMI
863737
$25,788
Stk# 1776816, B/W $151, MSRP $43,040
Derrick
EDMONTON, AB
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DEMO 2017 NEW HOLLAND T5105
871338
$Call
Electro-Command Transmission, 835 TL Front End Loader, 4WD, Cab Air/Heat, 3 PT Hitch, Joysticks, Rear Weights, 34” Rubber, Grapple, Bucket.
RIMBEY IMPLEMENTS LTD.
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2015 NEW HOLLAND T7.260
843300
$169,000
1750 Hrs., PS, 3 PT, 4 HYD
Linden
Agri-Centre Ltd.
403-546-3814

2013 MASSEY FERGUSON 7616
834137
$Call
c/w 2012 MF 968 Loader, Deluxe, Instructor Seat, 2JS Control Spool Valves, PFA Fr Axle, Auto A/C, Rear Wheel Weight, Loader Provision
NAICAM, SK
306-874-2011

2014 JOHN DEERE 9560R
195110
$330,000
2154 Hrs 560 HP 18/6 Powershift, GS3 Command Center, Hi-Flow Hyd system
BROWNLEE, SK
306-759-2002

2015 JOHN DEERE B320R
836792
$376,900
1895 Hrs., 50K IVT W/ LHR, MFWD w/ Suspension, 10 In. Command Center Display
PONOKA, AB
1-888-831-8189

2012 MASSEY FERGUSON 1652
871641
$29,500
819 hrs, JXF30801, Differential Lock, Diesel, Loader, PTO: 540, ROPS, 3 Pt Hitch, Synchro
ST. PAUL, AB
780-645-4422

2015 NEW HOLLAND 340S
871443
$Call
2 to Choose From! Brand New With Full Warranty
LETHBRIDGE, AB
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JOHN DEERE 450C
871547
$12,900
Crawler Loader
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2013 MACKON FDF 35 air drill, transport, pea auger, AHHC, tilt. For JD, 2013 MACDON FD75 with air systems. Call CIH FLEX PLATFORMS:
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2003 NH/HB 94C with deposit. We also have header trans-
ers including free delivery in spring
30'; 8000 25' - 30'; 8200 35'. After season
jitney, MD. Call Gary at 204-326-7000.

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Spray Bryant
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SEEDMASTER P6000 20' W
60' spacing, mid row shank banding, double
306-697-2856, Grenfell, SK.

1-888-905-7010, Swift Current,
SK. www.redheadequipment.ca

SEEDMASTER P6100 120'
360' spacing, mid row shank banding, double
306-690-8105, Moose Jaw, SK.

SEEDMASTER P6200 240'
720', 720', spacing, mid row shank banding, double
306-690-8105, Moose Jaw, SK.

SEEDMASTER P6300 360'
1440', 1440', spacing, mid row shank banding, double
306-690-8105, Moose Jaw, SK.

2011 JOHN DEERE 4940, 850/55R42, $270,000

2009 JOHN DEERE 4940, 850/55R42, $225,000

2010 BOURGAULT 3310 66' 12" spacing
Capstan NH3 kit, sectional control,
MRS, 6550 tank, X20 monitor, duals, bag
2011 BOURGAULT 3310, 74', 12" spacings,
Capstan NH3 kit, sectional control, MRS,
6550 tank, X20 monitor, duals, shedded,
500 SeedHawk tank, sec. control, shedded,
6600 3PTH, used very little,
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**Air Drills**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4250</td>
<td>12’’ 450 lbs, 12’ space, square, single shoot, black steel packers, new hoses, excellent cond.</td>
<td>$1,350</td>
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**Air Seeders**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Price</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4253</td>
<td>Prep Your Seed Bed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4286</td>
<td>John Deere</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Request a Quote**

888 596-1840

thunderstruckag.com

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**Landscape**

**Nursery/Gardening Supplies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Price</th>
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<tr>
<td>Nursery</td>
<td>Sold out</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplies</td>
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**LIVESTOCK**

**Bison/Buffalo**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Price</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5001</td>
<td>Buying finished bison</td>
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**Buying for processing**

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<th>Model</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4725</td>
<td>Generators buy direct!</td>
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**Cattle**

**Auction Sales**

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<th>Model</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5005</td>
<td>Large dispersal, bred heifers</td>
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**Fencing**

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<th>Description</th>
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<td>4400</td>
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**Irrigation Equipment**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4890</td>
<td>Western irrigation</td>
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**LIVESTOCK**

**Heritage**

**Housing**

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**Tractors**

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**Utility Trailers**

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**Vermeer**

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**Western Irrigation**

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<td>C1040</td>
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**Western Irrigation**

**C1040**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C1040</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Black Angus Bulls

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Breed</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black Angus</td>
<td>2 yrs</td>
<td>Quality Black Angus bulls for sale</td>
<td>$3500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Contact:** Rob Garner

### Charolais Bulls

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Breed</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Price</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Charolais</td>
<td>2 yrs</td>
<td>High performance Charolais bulls available</td>
<td>$4500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Contact:** Davidsongelbvieh.com

### Hereford Bulls

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Breed</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hereford</td>
<td>2 yrs</td>
<td>High-quality Hereford bulls available</td>
<td>$3500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Contact:** LV Ranch, Forestburg, AB. 780-853-2223

### Cattle Vendors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Breed</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cattle Vendors</td>
<td>2 yrs</td>
<td>Complete line of cattle handling and feeding equipment</td>
<td>$3500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Contact:** DBM Angus Farms

### Livestock Auctions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Breed</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Price</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Livestock Auctions</td>
<td>2 yrs</td>
<td>Complete line of cattle handling and feeding equipment</td>
<td>$3500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Contact:** NORDAL LIMOUSIN & ANGUS

### Specialty Cattle

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Breed</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Price</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Specialty Cattle</td>
<td>2 yrs</td>
<td>Complete line of cattle handling and feeding equipment</td>
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</table>

**Contact:** Elks

### Antiques

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<tr>
<th>Breed</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Antiques</td>
<td>2 yrs</td>
<td>Complete line of cattle handling and feeding equipment</td>
<td>$3500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Contact:** ANTIQUES

### Sheep/Goat Sale

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<tr>
<th>Breed</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Price</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sheep/Goat</td>
<td>2 yrs</td>
<td>Complete line of cattle handling and feeding equipment</td>
<td>$3500</td>
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**Contact:** SHEEP/GOAT SALE

### Other Sales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Breed</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Other Sales</td>
<td>2 yrs</td>
<td>Complete line of cattle handling and feeding equipment</td>
<td>$3500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Contact:** OTHER SALES

### Additional Information

- For more information, please visit the websites provided in the document.
- Contact details for specific vendors are also available within the document.
FARMLAND WANTED

FOR RENT BY TENDER: RM of Nipawin, SK. February 14-15, 2018!

VERIFIED: RM of Nipawin, SK.

We are pleased to announce the following recent sales

MOODSWICH 15 acres – owned by GHM Company Farm Ltd.

DINSMORE 159 acres – owned by Lori & David Tryyki

CILENTO 160 acres – owned by Arthur, Donald & Ronald Chernick &

LORRAINE 70 acres – owned by Ina Ward as P.O.A. for Robert Whitridge

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LANCEY JOHNSON 506-568-4222

WANTED: 100 acres or more of level, good quality grazing land, preferably with a small, dry creek or water body. Looking for property in Weyburn, SK.

BEAVER VALLEY 40 acres – owned by Peter & Anna Kremenich

FARM NO 2 19 acres – owned by Tom Neufeld

DILLS 130 acres – owned by Tom Neufeld

This property is situated in the Beaver Valley.

For more information contact Tom Neufeld at 306-788-3625 or Tom@SaskFarmland.com

For all our listings use www.Lanerealty.com or phone Lancy Johnson 506-568-4222

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Lane Realty – See our featured listings on the Agri-Visions Farm Trade Show.
SAKatchewan

MANITOBA

208 ACRES FARM on Drifting River, 200 feet of river frontage, nicely treed and enclose house, 114 on titled. River frontage in 3 different places. 100% improved with cottonwood. For sale or lease. Sale $120,000.00. Contact: 306-677-3263.

AGRICULTURAL LAND FOR SALE BY TENDER

RM of North Battleford No. 437

Having received instructions from the registered owner, the undersigned offers the following agricultural land situated in the RM of North Battleford No. 437 for sale by Tender:

SE 31-43-15 W3 (160 acres) - Taxable Assessment $131,305

All tenders to be accompanied by a deposit in the form of a certified cheque or bank draft for 5% of ten tender. Owners reserve the right to reject highest, any or all tenders.

Minimum Bid: $15,000.00

For more information contact: Stacey Hiebert 204-371-5930

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Alex Morrow (306) 834-8780
Anne Morrow (306) 435-6517
Wade Berlin (306) 641-4667
Dallas Pike (306) 500-1407
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Two of these are supposed to be yellow. One is not.

Lever disease can turn a child's skin yellow and turn his body against him. Every year, thousands of Canadian children from infants to teens are diagnosed with lever disease. Jundice is often a early warning sign.

To find out more, call 1-800-563-5483 or visit www.liver.ca
FARM & RANCH WANTED: Graze Lease Manager/Contractor. Box 414, 780-572-1142, e-mail: mail@melbern.ca. Experienced lease manager is required to assist with the purchase of an existing lease of 6,000 acres located 8 miles south Porcupine Plain, SK., 500 McAlpine Rd., Box 7014, Yorkton, SK. Apply by fax: 604-591-1053 or by email to: hilberthoney@gmail.com

**FARM & RANCH WANTED**

1- Full-time Dairy Herdserson, permanent position, duties monitoring cattle health, AI & breeding. Experience preferred, but will train. Applicants required to have 3 years’ experience in AIN. Also required to be a member of the Livestock Service Program. 355-550-3891, 15215 43 Ave., Red Deer, AB.

2-líne time Dairy HERDSPERSON, permanent position, duties monitoring cattle health, AI & breeding. Experience preferred, but will train. Applicants required to be a member of the Livestock Service Program. 355-550-3891, 15215 43 Ave., Red Deer, AB.

FULL-Time Dairy HERDSPERSON, permanent position, duties monitoring cattle health, AI & breeding. Experience preferred, but will train. Applicants required to be a member of the Livestock Service Program. 355-550-3891, 15215 43 Ave., Red Deer, AB.


GRASSLAND Livestock Manager & Farm PhpStorm required on large grazed and livestock operation in the Edmonton area. MB. Interested. Opportunities are available for: 1- Farm Workers, Competitive salaries, housing and other benefits are available. Call or text: Stones @ 204-805-1197, or email: sowa.manning@gmail.com

COOKING FOR PEOPLE in interested in working in Southwest of Manitoba. Areas: Ski, 640 acres homekeeping skills, willing to train. 2 positions available. Wages depending on qualifications. 403-761-2566, Steinbach, MB.

FARM MANAGER required for livestock operation. Duties include: operating, maintaining feeding & watering equipment. Skilled farm employee. Phone 250-394-4623, Alexis Creek, BC. Call 250-394-4623, Alexis Creek, BC. Email: calseeds@sasktel.net

FARM MANAGER required for mixed farm operation, machinery handling and cash crop farming. Including: alfalfa, field peas, canola, corn, wheat, barley, flax, canola and corn. (6) Positions. Salary: $17-$24 per hour. Apply to: Farmland, Box 284, Pierson, MB. R0M 1S0. Phone: 701-756-6954. Fax: 701-756-6954. Email: farmrecruitment@edgetransport.com

FARM MANAGER (NOC 8431): HILBERT HONEY CO. LTD is now accepting applications for the 2018 season. Must have clean BC driver license and Class 1 is an asset. Duties in- clude: colony manipulations and assessment, hive health and colonies. Valid driver’s license required. Duties in- clude: colony manipulations and assessment, hive health and colonies. Successful candidates upon receipt of resume. Email: mail@melbern.ca. Call or text 306-786-6600, Yorkton, SK.

FARM MANAGER WANTED in Southern Alberta–premium location to fill caretaker role. Livestock, livestock handling, and general production. Good opportunity in couple with farm background. COMMERCED June 2018, please submit resume to: brenneman@403-631-7912.

HELP WANTED 8024

CRUCIBLE HONEY is looking for a new Location Manager for our farm in Osoyoos, BC. Must have a valid driver’s license. Duties include: Delivery and sales, Marketing, and general farm tasks. Wages: $17-$20 per hour. Apply to: Crucible Honey, 3854-4th Avenue, Osoyoos, BC. R0C 1X0. Email: cruciblehoney@gmail.com

HELP WANTED: Caretaker/Farmhand. Southern Alberta–premium location to fill caretaker role. Livestock, livestock handling, and general production. Good opportunity in couple with farm background. COMMERCED June 2018, please submit resume to: brenneman@403-631-7912.

HELP WANTED: Caretaker/Farmhand. Southern Alberta–premium location to fill caretaker role. Livestock, livestock handling, and general production. Good opportunity in couple with farm background. COMMERCED June 2018, please submit resume to: brenneman@403-631-7912.

FULL-TIME FARM LABOURER HELP WANTED: Grazing lease,帮手 grazing lease with a proven system in the southern Alberta area. Ongoing hours, 50-70 hours per week, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday to Friday. Duties include:牧羊, sheep shearing, and other farm tasks. Wages: $15-$18 per hour. Apply to: Hilbert Honey Co., Ltd, Box 284, Pierson, MB. R0M 1S0. 701-756-6954. Email: farmrecruitment@edgetransport.com

HELP WANTED 8024

SEEDS OF CANADA: AGRICULTURAL SEEDS

USA 45.858.34.36 Fax 306-584-3771

WASHINGTON FARM MANAGER/ FARMHAND.

WASHINGTON FARM MANAGER/ FARMHAND: Experienced, permanent, full-time position required. Farm located in the Yakima Valley, WA. Position requires 3 years’ experience in the agricultural industry, with a focus on greenhouse production. Duties include: Colony manipulations and assessment, hive health, and colonies. Successful candidates upon receipt of resume. Email: mail@melbern.ca. Call or text 306-786-6600, Yorkton, SK.

EXPERIENCED CLASS 1 DRIVERS wanted to haul livestock or gravel. Health plan and dental insurance provided. Wages start at $12.00 per hour. Apply by fax: 604-591-1053 or by email to: hilberthoney@gmail.com

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enjoying the great outdoors

The residents of Souris, Man., took advantage of nice weather Jan. 7 to participate in a variety of activities, whether it be sledding, ice fishing or going for a scooter ride. | JEANETTE GREAVES PHOTOS
INTERLOPER

Canadian beef farmers could be out millions of dollars in new exports if Canada is shut out of the Trans Pacific Partnership.

Beef exports have been growing significantly to Japan and other parts of Asia. Allowing other competitors such as Mexico and New Zealand better access to that market through the TPP means “we would effectively be knocked out of the Japanese markets, other than some commodity beef,” says Dennis Laycraft, executive vice-president of the Canadian Cattlemen’s Association.

“I’d say we’re entering into, I’ll say, over the next four weeks, the most critical period decades for trade, with what happens with TPP and what’s likely to happen in the (North American Free Trade Agreement),” he says.

Laycraft was one of several speakers at the Beef Industry Convention in London, Ont., to lay out the potential losses to the Ontario and Canadian cattle sectors if the TPP isn’t signed by Canada.

TPP member states were expect- ed to meet Jan. 22-23, when they hoped to move ahead with the deal. Laycraft says there are $200 million worth of opportunities if Canada is outside of the TPP.

TPP member states were expect- ed to meet Jan. 22-23, when they hoped to move ahead with the deal. Laycraft says there are $200 million worth of opportunities if Canada is outside of the TPP.

Canada has not committed fully to the TPP, since the United States withdrew, but other countries are moving ahead with it.

Laycraft said he understands the federal cabinet is split on whether or not to continue with the TPP deal.

The challenge for Canada is that it is renegotiating NAFTA at the same time as it is having to make a decision on TPP. There are concerns over auto sector provisions in the TPP and the dairy sector is concerned because the agriculture parts of the deal haven’t been opened up and renegotiated since the U.S. left the deal. The Canadian dairy sector was satisfied with giving up 3.25 percent more access to TPP deal mem-

TPP called critical to continued beef growth

Producers say the vitally important Japanese market would be threatened by a failure to reach a new trade deal.

American’s free trade deal with Japan has meant significant gains for Australian meat with a 27.2 per-

Agreements.

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Americans. It’s important that countries go and find some cre-

atives solutions,” he says.

If American President Donald Trump pulled the U.S. out of NAFTA, then some American industries would take the U.S. administration to court because there’s no clear legal opinion over whether the president can unilat-

eraly take the country out of NAFTA. And even if the Ameri-

cans pulled out, they would like continue to negotiate.

Laycraft says their legal opinion is that if NAFTA was killed, then trade rules would follow the Canada-U.S. Trade Agreement that preceded NAFTA, but he didn’t rule out the Americans terminating both agreements.

Laycraft says that the NAFTA renegotiations are reaching a criti
cal period, when the major areas of conflict need to be sorted out.

“Very difficult topics have been put on the table on purpose by the
Dairy companies joining forces

The partnership between three firms that provide services to dairy farms is in response to declining farm numbers.

A partnership among Canadian dairy service providers should help position Canadian producers to take advantage of changing technology and make the sector more efficient, the groups say.

The number of Canadian dairy farmers continues to drop and the need for more efficient services is growing as the price of milk declines. Technology is challenging traditional business models in dairy services, but also providing new opportunities.

The three partners include CanWest DHI, Valacta, its dairy herd management services counterpart in Quebec and the Maritimes, and the Canadian Dairy Network, which provides genetic evaluation for Canadian dairy cattle. Together they employ 500 people across the country.

CanWest DHI delegates are scheduled to meet Jan. 20 in Alliston, Ont., to approve bylaw changes needed to create the new partnership.

At CanWest DHI’s final annual meeting recently in Toronto, representatives of all three farmer-run organizations talked about the benefits of the partnership. Each organization continues to have external funding from government and legacy funds that require each to continue. But there will be one board of directors and staff for the new organization.

Harold Kress, a CanWest DHI board member, outlined the details of the deal at the meeting. There are several pressures that led to the creation of the new partnership, says Kress. They included:

- Consolidation in the industry, including fewer and larger dairy farms.
- The next generation on the farm is reconsidering traditional services. Technology allows for the collecting of copious data on farms that used to be collected by herd management services organizations like Valacta and CanWest DHI. However, those organizations have expanded into other services for farmers.
- Genetic evaluation is coming from artificial insemination and other companies due to the increased availability of genomic testing.
- Industry organizations are supported by fewer farms. “For every partnership involved in the dairy industry, the funds come out of the bulk tank.”
- Kress and other speakers say there are numerous benefits to the partnership, including:
  - Risk management
  - Product and service innovation through the sharing of data and expertise

Neil Petreny, general manager of CanWest DHI, pointed to artificial intelligence and machine learning, sensor technology and growing international partnerships as areas where the organization could expand.

The Valacta Centre of Expertise set up to research and deliver productivity and profitability information for farmers, a partnership of Valacta, the Quebec government and McGill University, which will be made into a national centre.

The organization will have nine directors, two from Ontario, one from Western Canada, three from Quebec, one from Semo, one from Holstein Canada and one from Dairy Farmers of Canada. All of those board members have to be farmers, although two external directors can be added who are non-farmers.

The partnership will actually be among four entities, because CanWest DHI still includes the separate Ontario and western organizations.

The organizations already work together. For example, CanWest DHI and Valacta have shared software for almost 20 years.

“It’s a pleasure to be part of a group of people with a tremendous clear vision of where we need to go,” says Norm MacNaughton, president of CDN.

Pierre Lampron, president of Valacta, who is also the president of Dairy Farmers of Canada, says he kept his job as the president of Valacta to see the partnership through.

“I’ve been very enthusiastic about the partnership developing over the last year.”

The partnership is expected to be in operation in October.

The number of Canadian dairy farmers continues to drop and the need for more efficient services is growing as the price of milk declines.
CHICAGO, Ill. (Reuters) — An oversupply in world corn markets may force many American corn growers to sell specialty white corn, which normally earns a premium over yellow, at a loss this year.

White corn, which makes up roughly one percent of the 14.6 billion bushel United States corn harvest, can command a premium of as much as US$1 per bu. over yellow corn. But premiums have shrivelled to four-year lows, to as little as five cents above Chicago Board of Trade corn futures.

Too many farmers planted white corn in states such as Illinois, Kentucky and Nebraska. Corn prices in 2017 declined for the fifth straight year and record-large U.S. stocks pushed growers to look for potentially higher-value alternatives.

However, as acres devoted to varieties such as white corn, organic and non-genetically-modified corn continue to rise, the benefits have shrunk for farmers switching to such strains.

White corn is used by companies such as the PepsiCo Inc. unit Frito-Lay to make corn chips, and by tortilla and chip makers including Chicago-based Azteca Foods.

Randy Anderson, who has planted white corn for 10 years in southern Illinois, said the market has become crowded. Local elevators, such as a Bunge Ltd. facility, are buying white corn at prices below his cost of production.

“I feel like there could be a better bid in the near future,” Anderson said, adding that he was holding out for another 20 cents per bu. to bring him closer to a profit. Premiums for white corn in the United States surged in 2015 and 2016 because of a drought-reduced South African harvest that led to increased U.S. exports and more demand from Mexico, which also shipped white corn to South Africa. But with supplies in South Africa once again abundant following a record-large corn harvest, there is more global supply than demand.

Anderson, who sold some white corn in 2016 at a 90-cent premium to CBOT futures, now can sell about 10 cents above futures. “This year, we are getting the same price for white corn as yellow corn,” he said.

Since the white corn growing region is centralized in a few states and its buyers are primarily food companies, the variety can be prone to more severe price fluctuations than the more widely grown yellow strain, Roger Theisen, specialty corn manager in DowDuPont’s agriculture division, said in an email.

DowDuPont has as much as a 90 percent market share of the global white corn seed market, according to industry sources. The company declined to comment on sales or market share, but Theisen said, “the total food corn market is growing.”

Exports of U.S. white corn through November of 1.48 million tonnes were down about 10 percent from 2016’s total of 1.63 million tonnes, according to U.S. Department of Agriculture data. The value of those sales declined to $312 million, from $367 million in 2016.

There are signs that 2018 could see a further decline. South Africa is likely to return to its status as a net exporter, limiting demand for U.S. shipments, said Max Thomas-Olson, an analyst at Global Risk Management, which publishes the Orville Fisher White Corn Newsletter.

Reed White, a 56-year-old farmer in Sturgis, Kentucky, said this spring he will plant no white corn for the first time in recent memory. He was not able to secure a big enough contract to supply white corn to a local tortilla maker and will instead plant only yellow corn.

“[If we could get a larger chunk of that business, we might consider growing for them],” he said.

Ben Scholl, president of specialty grain buyer Lewis B. Osterbur and Associates, said many of his farmer clients are looking for places to sell their white corn.

“End users have all they need and there’s more available to buy,” Scholl said.

Grain handler Andersons Inc., a Frito-Lay supplier, said it has a waiting list for farmers interested in growing white corn or other specialty varieties for the company.

“It’s not uncommon for farmers to wait two or three years,” said Andy Vollmar, food and specialty ingredients director at Andersons.

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**Grain glut causes specialty corn losses in U.S.**

Specialty white corn usually earns a premium over yellow, but those premiums have shrivelled because of oversupply.
Warming set to breach Paris accord limit by mid-century

Committee has broad mandate as it examines all aspects of Agricultural Land Reserve and Agricultural Land Commission

B.C. opts to review farmland management

B.C. opts to review farmland management

Committee has broad mandate as it examines all aspects of Agricultural Land Reserve and Agricultural Land Commission

OSLO, Norway (Reuters) — Globally, warming is on track to breach the toughest limit set in the Paris climate agreement by the middle of this century unless governments make unprecedented economic shifts from fossil fuels, a draft United Nations report said.

The draft, which is due for publication in October, said governments will also have to start sucking carbon dioxide from the air to achieve the ambition of limiting temperatures to 1.5°C above pre-industrial times.

“There is very high risk that ... global warming will exceed 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels,” the U.N. panel of experts wrote, based on the current pace of warming and current national plans to limit their greenhouse gas emissions. There were no historic precedents for the scale of changes required in energy use, to shift from fossil fuels to renewable energies and in reforms ranging from agriculture to industry to stay below the 1.5°C limit, it said.

The draft, by the UN’s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) of leading scientists, says average surface temperatures are about 1°C above pre-industrial times and that average temperatures are on track to reach 1.5°C by the 2040s.

Cutting warming to 1.5°C would help limit heat extremes, droughts and floods, more migration of people and even risks of conflict compared to higher rates of warming, according to the draft summary. But a 1.5°C rise might not be enough to protect many coral reefs, already suffering from higher ocean temperatures, and ice stored in Greenland and West Antarctica whose melt is raising sea levels.

At a 2015 summit in Paris, almost 200 nations set a goal of limiting a rise in the world’s average surface temperatures to “well below” 2°C above pre-industrial times while “pursuing efforts” for the far tougher 1.5°C ceiling.

They commissioned the IPCC report to map the risks of each goal. The 1.5°C limit is especially by developing nations most at risk from disruptions to food and water supplies.

The current draft was sent out for comments from governments and other experts.

Jonathan Lynn, spokesperson for the IPCC, said the text was a work in progress not intended for publication.

“The text can change substantially” he said.

U.S. President Donald Trump, who doubts climate change is man-made, plans to pull out of the Paris Agreement and instead focus on U.S. fossil fuels.

By contrast, the draft said that renewable energies such as solar and wind power would have to become the dominant form of primary energy by 2050 to achieve the 1.5°C goal. “Coal would be phased out rapidly in most 1.5°C pathways,” it said.

And limiting global warming to 1.5°C by 2100 would “involve removal of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere,” it said.

That could mean planting vast forests, which soak up carbon dioxide as they grow, or building power plants that burn wood or other plant matter and then capturing and burying the carbon dioxide they release.

But that might not be feasible because forests could divert land from food crops.

The draft estimated that human activity could emit just 580 billion tonnes of greenhouse gases to give a better than 50 percent chance of limiting warming to 1.5°C — roughly 12 to 16 years at current rates of emissions.

The amounts could be bigger if governments let temperatures exceed 1.5°C and found a way of turning down the global thermostat later in the century.

B.C. opts to review farmland management

The British Columbia government has appointed an advisory committee to lead the province’s revitalization of the Agricultural Land Reserve and Agricultural Land Commission.

Jennifer Dyson, who served on the current mandate by the middle of Paris industrial times.

“We’ve got this amazing group of individuals from around the province. We’re not a commodity group, but we’re certainly knowledgeable about land and land use issues. There are also a number of us who are also farmers, like myself. I’m also a bit of a veteran on the commission,” she said.

“We really look at all aspects of what that means to revitalize and look at the commission and the Agricultural Land Reserve. She said the committee is developing a discussion paper that will open an ended discussion in the province.

“We haven’t established questions that we’re asking,” she said. “We wanted it to be open.”

Dyson expects the committee will make its recommendations to Agriculture Minister Lana Popham by spring for the fall legislative session.

“We have some time but, obviously, the 1.5°C limit is a deal with the legislation, if there are any changes to the legislation, it needs to be before the minister by early spring,” she said Dyson.

“The interesting thing to all of this is in fact, many of us who farm and ranch this land are not those that are making applications to the Agricultural Land Commission. It’s simply owners of land. People buy it for speculative value. That’s no secret but we really want to talk about those of us who are making a living within the Agricultural Land Reserve.”

The committee will be speaking with key stakeholders throughout the province including local governments and the farming and ranching communities.

“If anybody is applying to the commission, it goes to local government first before it ever comes to the commission, so they are a key stakeholder in all of this,” she said.

“Agriulture Minister Lana Popham has appointed an advisory committee to lead the province’s revitalization of the Agricultural Land Reserve and Agricultural Land Commission.”

The draft estimated that human activity could emit just 580 billion tonnes of greenhouse gases to give a better than 50 percent chance of limiting warming to 1.5°C — roughly 12 to 16 years at current rates of emissions.

The amounts could be bigger if governments let temperatures exceed 1.5°C and found a way of turning down the global thermostat later in the century.
A snowy owl sits in a snowy field on a 2°C day near Cargill’s grain handling facility in Blackie, Alta. | MIKE STURK PHOTO

BLENDING IN
Aussie farmers suffer through third-hottest year on record

SYDNEY, Australia (Reuters) — Australia had its third-hottest year on record in 2017, the country’s weather bureau said recently, as farmers warned that unpredictable seasons are hurting the A$47 billion agricultural sector.

Unusually, the high heat last year came despite the absence of an El Nino weather system in the Pacific, which tends to warm Australia, the Bureau of Meteorology said in its annual climate statement.

“I think what it illustrates is even without the strong driver of an El Nino, the world is still producing very warm temperatures,” Blair Trewin, a senior climatologist at the bureau told Australian Broadcasting Corp. radio.

During 2017, hotter ocean temperatures near Australia’s north-east coast prompted “significant” coral bleaching along the world-heritage-listed Great Barrier Reef, the first time it had occurred in consecutive summers.

The national mean temperature was nearly 1°C above average, with the heat “mostly associated” with human-caused global warming that also reduced rainfall in Australia’s south, the bureau’s statement said.

That made for the driest September ever recorded in crucial grain-growing regions of New South Wales and the Murray-Darling river basin with heavy rains then hitting during harvest and making it even more difficult for farmers.

The world’s fourth largest wheat exporter is set for its smallest crop in a decade.

“It’s really the unpredictability of it rather than the actual event,” said Matt Dalgleish, a market analyst at agricultural advisory firm Mecardo.

“Farmers are used to dealing with different weather as long as it can run within a reasonably predictable pattern and sit reasonably close to the seasons they expect. It’s when you get these events that are uncharacteristically out of season that cause the most amount of heartache.”

Seven of Australia’s 10 warmest years have occurred since 2005, the bureau found, and another hotter-than-average year is expected in 2018, which has already brought heat wave conditions to the country’s southeast.

Sydney has been sweltering through some of its hottest days in 80 years, while highway bitumen melted in Victoria state and bushfires burned out of control.

Globally, it is likely 2017 will be the second- or third-warmest year on record since 1850, the Australian Bureau of Meteorology said.

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U.S. grain firms fear harm from new tax law

Private companies worry that a tax deduction to farmers who deliver grain to co-operatives will put them at a disadvantage.

CHICAGO, Ill. (Reuters) — New tax laws in the United States are poised to drive more control over the nation’s grain supply to farmer-owned co-operatives, provoking concern among ethanol producers and privately run grain handlers that they could be squeezed out of the competition to buy crops.

Until now, the co-operatives, private companies and publicly traded firms had a more even opportunity to handle the grain supply.

The changes mean massive grain traders such as Archer Daniels Midland, Bunge and Cargill could find it difficult to source corn, soybeans and wheat.

The perceived threat to these companies stems from a provision included in the final stages of the law’s passage in December. It gives farmers a big tax deduction for selling their produce to agricultural co-operatives that private firms fear their grain supply will dry up.

The provision was championed by Republican farm state senators. Privately held Cargill said it was surprised the provision was added to the bill at the last minute and is evaluating its potential impact.

ADM, which also produces ethanol, said it too was evaluating the provision. The change focuses on a provision included in the federal tax code that cuts taxes on proceeds from agricultural products that farmers sell to farm co-operatives.

"The advantage for the farmer is probably at least five times larger selling to a co-op versus not selling to a co-op," said Paul Neiffer, an accountant at CliftonLarsonAllen in Yakima, Washington.

Neiffer said he has received hundreds of calls and emails from private elevators upset about the law.

Chuck Conner, president and chief executive officer of the National Council of Farmer Cooperatives, said his organization had begun to receive calls from people asking about starting a co-op to take advantage of the deduction.

"The producer/member deduction is more generous than most of us thought possible a few months ago," he said in an email to members.

The number of U.S. farm co-operatives has been steadily shrinking in recent years as they scramble to consolidate and stay competitive amid the merger frenzy of major seed and chemical companies.

There were 1,953 farmer, rancher and fishery co-ops in 2016 in the United States, down 4.6 percent from a year earlier, according to the most recent U.S. Department of Agriculture data. They handled US$44.3 billion in net sales of grains in 2016, down 33 percent from a US$66.3 billion peak in 2013.

Some farmers seeking to take advantage of the new deduction are already asking about transferring grain they have stored at private elevators and selling it to co-operatives, Bell said. An association that represents co-operatives also has received questions from people who want to open new co-operatives.

The change focuses on a provision in the federal tax code that cuts taxes on proceeds from agricultural products that farmers sell to farm co-operatives.

There is no comparable provision for farmers doing the same business with private or investor-owned companies.

"The advantage for the farmer is probably at least five times larger selling to a co-op versus not selling to a co-op," said Paul Neiffer, an accountant at CliftonLarsonAllen in Yakima, Washington.

Neiffer said he has received hundreds of calls and emails from private elevators upset about the law.
RED RIVER BASIN COMMISSION NAMES EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Ted Preister of Fargo, North Dakota, has been hired as the executive director of the Red River Basin Commission.

Previously, he was an intelligence officer in the United States Army for more than 20 years before retiring as a lieutenant colonel.

His final position in the army was professor of military science at North Dakota State University.

The RRBC is a non-profit organization that works across the political boundaries of Manitoba, Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota to create a common vision for action on Red River Basin land and water issues.

SASK PORK NAMES NEW BOARD

Elected in October, the Sask Pork’s new board was officially introduced at the organization’s annual general meeting in December.

Board members are: John Beckton of Brock Stock Farm Ltd., Curt Kowalchuk of Polar Pork Farms, Jay McGrath of Suttner Pork Farm Ltd., Casey Smit of Olymel, Toby Tschetter of Star City Farming, and Grant Wilson of Fast Genetics.

Casey Smit was elected chair, Grant Wilson, vice-chair and John Beckton as audit chair.

More information is at saskpork.com.

CO-OP COMMUNITY SPACES FUNDS PLACES

In 2018, $2 million is available through the Co-op Community Spaces Program.

The program supports capital projects led by charitable and non-profit groups across Western Canada.

Co-op Community Spaces is supporting local projects dedicated to recreation, environmental conservation and urban agriculture.

Funding between $25,000 and $150,000 is available per project.

Since launching in 2015, it has provided $4.5 million to 64 projects, including parks, greenhouses and sports fields.

The program is administered by FCL and invites registered non-profit organizations, registered charities or community service co-operatives to apply online between Feb. 1 and March 1.

AGRICULTURE IN THE CLASSROOM

Katharine Cherewyk is Agriculture in the Classroom-Manitoba’s new program and volunteer manager after the retirement of Diane Mauthe.

Previous experience includes research work with the Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources, as well as Creaddo Group, which is a firm specializing in fundraising campaign development and implementation.

She was most recently the torch relay and ceremonies co-ordinator for the 2017 Canada Summer Games. Cherewyk’s main responsibilities include delivering the programs Amazing Agriculture Adventure and GEN AG, as well as working with the organization’s volunteers.

JERSEY REGISTRATIONS UP

Jersey registrations and memberships increased last year.

As well, in 2016 Jersey Canada experienced an 8.5 percent increase in memberships and a 7.5 percent increase in registrations.

Overall, activity levels are soaring as membership totals and registrations have both grown by 20.5 percent since 2014.

These increases led to the highest membership and registration total for Jersey Canada since 1986.

Reasons cited include the breed’s efficiency, as well as the efforts of the Jersey Canada organization and regional Jersey associations.

The number of Jersey owners is expanding in all regions across the country.

More information is at jersey-canada.com or call Russell Gammon at 519-821-1020 (ext 102).
Autosteer now works on older machines

Outback Guidance's Rebel line uses hydraulics to take over the steering

BY ROBIN BOOKER
SAULTON HENDRICK

Growers running older iron might be interested in the auto-steer products Outback Guidance launched at the Western Canadian Crop Production Show.

“With the oldest vehicle we can install on is 45 years old,” said Mike Bannister, product manager for Outback Guidance.

“Anything that is hydraulically driven.

Outback Guidance is able to fit older machines with its new line of auto-steer, called Rebel, with hydraulic components included in its guidance packages.

“The hydraulic kit is our way to take over the steering of the tractor. So it will come with all of the hoses, fittings and the actual valve that is sending the hydraulic fluid either left or right to steer,” Bannister said.

Three packages are available in the Rebel autosteering lineup, including a broad acre, row crop, and a sub-inch package.

“In our two higher level packages, in the row crop and the sub inch, we’ve got the proportional valve. So we’ve got proportional control of how much oil is going one way or the other. We’ve got a wheel angle sensor so we make sure we understand where the tires are facing, which increases the online acquisition time,” Bannister said.

The three complete packages are offered so customers don’t have to piece an autosteer system together.

“The packages come with everything you need, from the smart antenna to your GPS terminal that is the interface in the cab, and the steering system with the hydraulic install kit. Everything is included top to bottom,” Bannister said.

The sub inch package comes with a smart antenna that enables real time kinematic (RTK).

“It’s RTK capable with either one of our base stations, or we support network RTK as well,” Bannister said.

The broad acre package offers precision of six to eight inches.

The systems are ISO compatible, but add-ons for application control may be needed above the package purchases.

“The packages come with either a seven-inch or 10-inch monitor. ‘We’ve got built in wi-fi on our website, “ Bannister said.

“Right now because soil health is a big movement switch toward this idea of having soil health scores,” said Marla Rieker, land management specialist with Manitoba Agriculture.

Karamanos said growers seeking more information about soil health should start with the International Plant Nutrition Institute website.

“If you want to educate yourself, just go and look at those resources,” Karamanos said.

Michigan State University offers a tidy description of soil health and how it differs from soil quality: “Soil health refers to self-regulation, stability, resilience … in as soil as an ecosystem. Soil health describes the biological integrity of the soil community — the balance among organisms within a soil and between soil organisms and their environment…. Soil quality is a term that we use when we talk about the physical attributes of soil.”

Karamanos said soil health is about continuous improvement: starting from a certain point based on a list of criteria and tracking changes from that baseline.

Universities and companies, mostly in the United States, have developed several systems to measure soil health. One popular method is the Solvita test, which measures the amount of carbon dioxide a soil sample releases. A high level of carbon dioxide indicates the soil has a healthy community of micro-organisms.

The phrase “soil health” has become almost as common as tweets from U.S. President Donald Trump over the last two and a half years.

It seems like every agricultural conference in North America is required to organize at least one session on the topic.

The issue is worthwhile and probably merits the attention, but few companies in the agricultural industry are taking advantage of the phrase to sell products, says a soil fertility expert and member of the Saskatchewan Agriculture Hall of Fame.

“Right now because soil health is something that is very contemporary, rary, or sexy, people are taking advantage of it (that term) and coming up with all kinds of different things,” said Rigas Karamanos, senior agronomist with Koch Fertilizer, who spoke at Ag Days in Brandon Jan. 16.

“People say, ‘oh, soil health. You can apply this (and) you can apply that.’ That’s not what soil health is… Just going and indiscriminately applying different products does not fix (soil health),” Karamanos said part of the problem is terminology.

Growers and officials in the agricultural industry are using terms such as soil fertility, soil productivity, soil quality and soil health interchangeably, but Karamanos said they aren’t the same, pointing to Israel as an example.

The soil in Israel has poor soil fertility but is productive. Israeli farmers make it productive by carefully using fertilizer and irrigation to grow crops.

Similarly, soil health and soil quality are not the same.

“It goes on your next pass without you having to do anything,” Bannister said.

Outback Guidance offers an electric steer option to turn the wheel of most farm equipment and can tie into hydraulic auto-steering technology built into new equipment.

“We have steer ready kits which are for the newer model tractors that are coming off the production line that already have all the hydraulics and the valve already on it. We can just tie into the cable to take over those components,” Bannister said.

The broad acre package retails for $7,995, the row crop package retails for $11,995, and the sub inch package sells for $15,995.

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Harvest weather affects canola’s oil and meat quality

BY MICHAEL Raine
SASKATOON NEWSROOM

Weather has been the biggest issue in Canadian grain grading for several seasons, which is no surprise to farmers on the Prairies. However, the rest of the world is watching, too.

“I never thought I would need to watch the weather, in this job, as much as I have the past couple of years,” Veronique Barthet of the Canadian Grain Commission said while attending the Ag-West Bi- led Canola Week in Saskatoon.

“Wind issues, snow issues, rain issues: harvest finally got better this year. These are reflected in the samples … and the Japanese (and others) want that data.”

The comment illuminates the market’s sensitivity to quality and a desire to understand the production issues that can affect it. Harvest weather delays not only cut into yields due to shattering, but they can boost free fatty acids in the oilseed.

Depending on the year, the traits of the oil can change substantially.

“In Japan they don’t care about alpha linolenic for flavour. It’s health they are looking at,” she said.

Last season’s spring-harvested canola was in better condition than was expected by the industry, with a lot of it grading No. 1, and was exported whole. However, it might have had quality issues once crushed.

When canola germinates in the field or in storage it creates higher, undesirable free fatty acids. Storage conditions can also create problems.

She said there is still a lot to be learned about over-wintered canola and storage issues.

“We saw some big jumps (in fatty acids) recently with what would be dry canola (kept) in good storage conditions,” she said, which suggested more research is needed to better understand these issues for the marketplace.

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Harvest weather affects canola’s oil and meat quality

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*1 Bayer development trials with medium to high disease pressure (2014-2016)
Virtual crop scout wins hackathon

The device, which monitors crops while uploading digital imagery, wins a competition that focused on emerging technology.

BY WILLIAM DEKAY

A camera on a stick, able to capture time lapse imagery while crops grow, could be available to producers someday soon.

CropShot is the name of the inventive tool put forth by one of four teams participating in a recent hackathon, a group meeting and competition to rapidly develop technology ideas. This hackathon was focused on emerging agriculture technologies and was held at Co-Labs in Saskatoon Jan. 12-13.

The idea garnered the CropShot team of Ben Lewis, Eric Tetland and Kulani Zwane first place and a prize of $500.

It’s a virtual crop scout that is always monitoring crops while uploading digital imagery. The automated photography device could also be useful for comparing the visual effects of crop inputs such as foliar fertilizers and fungi-cides during different stages of plant growth.

“It’s meant to be used in addition with other tools such as a drone, where you can see the bigger picture of the entire field,” Zwane said.

“But at the ground level this is what our solution would be providing. This can definitely add to other sets of information used to make decisions.”

Four teams participated in this year’s hackathon, which is designed to foster innovation and collaboration with the goal of expanding software and hardware development.

This year’s crop of student hackers represented the areas of computer science, engineering, agriculture and commerce.

Students combine their varied educational backgrounds to identify a current challenge in agriculture and then map out their idea and a viable technical solution.

Participants have six hours to launch a design before presenting it to a panel of four judges who represented industry, education and food groups.

Throughout the day, a group of top-tier mentors were available to collaborate and assist with questions about agriculture and product development.

“I’m walking around and they throw ideas at me and I answer question(s) about operations and things that are going on in farming and what problems exist,” said Jared Nelson, who grows grain near Weyburn, Sask.

“Students ask what the value might be and where I think the market might be. We talked about things like research farms, individual producers and the value that could be added.”

Corey Wellness of CropPro Consulting, one of the competition judges, said hackathons are valuable experiences because participants are quickly challenged to overcome their fear of failure in an industry that many know little to nothing about.

“It takes a lot of guts to come up with something new and then six hours be presenting it,” he said.

“My thought is they’re all stars because there are thousands of other students that didn’t lay it on the line to risk looking like a fool because it’s a big challenge.”

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE
David Lutzer, left, and Uchi Uchibeke compete in the hackathon.

All four teams said the experience of brainstorming under a tight deadline, while being mentored by industry specialists and then judged on the outcome, was an invaluable opportunity on several levels.

“When engineering and computer science students graduate they know how to build technologies, but they don’t know what to build, so any opportunity for understanding an industry from the experts themselves in a situation where you can experiment, throw ideas around and get the most out of the experts that have real problems — you can know what technologies to build,” added Zwane.

“Hackathon helped us greatly because I never considered us tech,” Leger said. “We just picked up waste, but talking with these people we realized we have the ability to become a tech company by introducing apps and simplifying things. It was something that we never thought outside the box in that way.”

Leger said burning grain bags is now illegal in Saskatchewan with fines up to $1 million depending on the severity of each case.

“What we’re working on is setting up a facility that’s going to recycle this plastic in Saskatchewan and alleviating the need to export it overseas, which will make us more accountable for the waste that we create here.”

Third place went to InterSeed, a mobile app for farmers to input their soil information such as pH, moisture, and topography so that they can determine the best varieties to intercrop.

Farms2Forks placed fourth, which uses social media to quickly bring food packages directly to the consumer with an emphasis on a customized shopping list and traceability.

As one of the judges, Steve Shirtliffe of the University of Saskatchewan’s agriculture college said the hackathon process quickly encourages creativity while empowering people and providing opportunity in a positive way.

“We’re fostering a dynamic environment, community and economy by doing this. It’s a brilliant thing,” he said.

Clinton Monchuck, executive director of Farm and Food Care Saskatchewan, who also judged, said that although most students did not have an agricultural background, they are now looking for innovative solutions to improve the industry.

“Now there are 12 young adults that are interested in agriculture and want to be in the agriculture field,” he said.

“To me that’s excellent. That was worth its weight right there.”

David Lutzer, left, and Uchi Uchibeke compete in the hackathon.

**CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE**

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Dry weather is expected to reduce corn yields in the country’s grain belt by 3.7 million tonnes.

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina (Reuters) — The drought in the heart of Argentina’s Pampas grain belt is expected to reduce corn yields and cut up to 3.7 million tonnes from the projected 2017-18 harvest, local analysts have said.

Argentina, the world’s third largest corn exporter, has been hit by extremely dry weather that has slowed late season soybean planting, raising fears that some fields will go unseeded, while the Southern Hemisphere summer sun dries up corn yields in important farm areas.

Farmers only have another week to plant soy in order to harvest before frosts might hit in May and June. Argentina is also the world’s third biggest soybean supplier.

“The problem with corn is not so much that of reduced planting area as it is the effect that the drought will have on yields,” said Gustavo Lopez, head of the local consultancy Agritrend, which expects a 2017-18 crop of 38.3 million tonnes, down from a previous estimate of 42 million tonnes.

Lopez said he forecasts Argentina’s exportable surplus will be 23.5 million tonnes, down from his pre-drought estimate of 27 million tonnes.

Argentina started 2017 with the opposite problem. Many areas had been flooded by excessive rain, but long hot stretches of summer later parched prime corn and soy areas in the northern part of breadbasket province Buenos Aires.

The Rosario grains exchange recently cut its corn crop estimate by four percent to 39.9 million tonnes.

The Pampas recently received rain but the distribution of the showers was uneven, leaving many areas parched.

Rosario exchange analyst Cristiano Russo said this season’s corn yields will be less than the average of the last three years.

“In the areas that were less fortunate in receiving the recent showers, the drought will continue,” he said.

The most optimistic analysts say harvest losses in drought-stricken areas could be offset by higher than expected yields in other regions.

“This could provide a cushion in terms of average yields,” said Esteban Copati, chief analyst at the Buenos Aires Grain Exchange, which has stuck by a 2017-18 corn crop estimate of 41 million tonnes that it announced in September.

However, the exchange could cut its harvest estimate next month if hot and dry conditions remain in Buenos Aires.

Pablo Adreani, head of local consultancy Agripac, has trimmed two million tonnes from his corn harvest estimate to 38 million tonnes.

“There are areas that have been very much damaged by drought in December, with yield reductions of up to 50 percent,” he said, adding that his current estimate could rise or fall depending on January and February rains.

“Mid-February is when the overall picture is going to be defined with greater certainty, once the planting is finished,” said Alberto Morelli, president of Argentine corn industry chamber Marza.

Argentine farmers harvested 39 million tonnes of corn last season, according to the Buenos Aires exchange.
Calm temperament key trait for South Devon cattle

The Hoffman family of Nebraska has been raising South Devon cattle for over 100 years. They believe in raising cattle that are hardy and can thrive in all kinds of conditions. The family has maintained the breed ever since, looking for the same characteristics of docility, good mothering ability and high meat quality.

The South Devon cattle have very good maternal traits that can influence anybody’s herd in a positive manner,” said Vander Molen.

The Denver event was especially good to the Vander Molen family this year. They won grand champion female with a six-year-old cow and the calf at side went on to become grand champion bull.

The Denver show is the largest event for the breed. People tend to recognize the breed but want to know what they can contribute in a crossbreeding program to build hybrid vigor.

“We try to show some half bloods to show people what they can do on different breeds,” Vander Molen said.

The Hoffman family was also a partner in the Agribition grand champion Angus female and the grand champion Hereford female from Rocking G was sired by Sustainable.

Most of the Hoffman’s time is devoted to running the ranch in Nebraska. Owned and operated with Jason’s parents, Dennis and Dixie Hoffman, the main focus of the ranch is working with commercial beef producers. Each year they offer about 400 horned and polled Herefords, Angus and Simmental-Angus cross bulls at an annual spring sale. They also host a half female sale and sell by private treaty and on the internet. Dennis Hoffman started his cattle producer career as a 4-H member in 1957. He worked for some large purebred operations before starting his own business.

In 1995, he and his wife bought a place in California. She was a teacher and he managed a county feedyard. The entire family moved to Nebraska in 2008 where considerable expansion took place. The Hoffman family sees their winning ways in the show ring as part of a plan to reach commercial customers for the commercial guy because that is our bread and butter. You have got to have cattle that perform at all levels,” he said.

Commercial buyers can be discerning. “A lot of them are looking for calming ease because they go on heifers but our commercial customers can really appreciate the difference in being able to stand on their feet and legs and be easy feeding,” he said.

In addition, they flush about 50 donor cows and place 500 to 600 embryos each year. About half of those embryos are placed in cows owned by co-operating operations and then they buy the bull back. They also work with co-operators to market commercial heifers.

Jason and his wife, Kaycee, have three children younger than seven, who are being encouraged to take on the cattle lifestyle. Kaycee’s family has shown cattle at the Denver stock show for more than 100 years. She also owns and operates Bartone Hat Company, which makes custom-made cowboy hats.

The couple are working toward keeping the ranch sustainable for their children and hope to teach them the ropes. Jason’s seven-year-old son is attending his first junior national Hereford show this summer. “I would have had to work hard doing this, and whatever they decide to do, they can do it, but they need to learn how to work hard,” Jason said.
Whether it be geofences, a trailer bake or extracting petroleum from manure, there’s lots for producers to look forward to.

Hog farmers can expect lots of innovation

Lee Whittington, president of the Prairie Swine Centre, was one of the speakers at the Banff Pork Seminar Jan. 11. Whittington pays attention to swine welfare and he knows about the kinds of staff that you want to hire and what their capabilities must be in the future, he said. “I’m hoping that an inside glance on some of these things might be helpful,” Whittington told producers at the Banff Pork Seminar Jan. 11.

As president and chief executive officer of the Prairie Swine Centre, Whittington pays attention to swine industry innovation. It’s through innovation that a 130-kilogram pig can now furnish 400 eight-ounce portions to consumers.

He outlined several initiatives and projects that swine producers can access or one day expect to be used in their industry.

Geofences

Sensors can be used to create an invisible perimeter around a farm or barn so a signal is sent whenever a person enters. Service people and visitors on the property can then be sent instructions or directions. It could also improve health in the barn by monitoring the personnel that go in and out, potentially limiting those who have contact with the pigs. In the case of a disease outbreak, such a system could provide a record of who was in or out, helping to control spread and possibly trace infection source.

Whittington said an Ontario company has been working on this technology, primarily in poultry, but it could also be adapted to swine operations.

Cleanliness test

Sensors in the trailer indicate when a signal is sent whenever a person enters. Service people and visitors on the property can then be sent instructions or directions. It could also improve health in the barn by monitoring the personnel that go in and out, potentially limiting those who have contact with the pigs. In the case of a disease outbreak, such a system could provide a record of who was in or out, helping to control spread and possibly trace infection source.

Whittington said an Ontario company has been working on this technology, primarily in poultry, but it could also be adapted to swine operations.

Trailer bake

Castene Trailer of Spain has developed DrySist, a method of disinfesting trailers by baking them with hot air within a special station. Sensors in the trailer indicate when temperatures have reached 72°C. The process does not require heating an entire building, nor does it heat the truck engine or tires.

Trailer sensors

Whittington said the Raspberry PI microcomputer, developed in the United Kingdom, can capture data from various points within a trailer and send them to a tablet within the truck cab. Temperature, humidity and camera data can be transmitted in real time, ensuring driver oversight of pig welfare in the trailer.

Petroleum from manure

The University of Illinois has identified swine manure as a good source of food for algae, which can be used in hydrothermal liquefication to produce oil. There are already two small plants, in South Carolina and Texas, that can produce 40 to 160 barrels a day. Whittington said the process isn’t economically viable at today’s oil prices, but breakeven is potentially $80 per barrel. In his notes on this innovation, Whittington asks, “when designing new barns, should we be altering the proposed building complex site and making provisions for the capture of manure and taking advantage of also adding food waste to the mix?”

Air scrubbers

Whittington said the Prairie Swine Centre and the Centre de developpment du Quebec have a project that showed gases can be captured from hog barn exhaust, stripped of nutrients and then cleaned before release into the atmosphere. Research showed ammonia, dust and odour can be reduced by 77 percent, 92 percent and 75 percent, respectively. That could increase the options for hog barn sites, allowing them to be “better neighbours” while being located closer to packing plants.

barb.glen@producer.com

[Image of a tractor and trailer with the text: 24th Annual Bull Sale Saturday, March 3, 2018 - 1:00 pm At the Ranch, Carievale, SK (Heated sales arena) 180 Bulls Sell]

[Image of a bull with the text: Affordable Bulls • Herd Bulls Designed by Ranchers for Ranchers • THE BUSINESS IS WHAT WE DO!]

[Image of a bull with the text: 99th Annual Pride of the Prairies Bull Show and Sale March 4-5, 2018 SHOW: March 4th - 1:30 pm • SALE: March 5th - 1:00pm]

[Image of a bull with the text: Entire Bull Crop For Sale By Private Treaty Red Angus & Polled Hereford]

[Image of a bull with the text: HWY 16 WEST Multi-Breed Bull Sale March 17, 2018 - 1:00 PM Mayerthorpe Ag Barn]

[Image of a bull with the text: MRL Reciprocal Breeding/Bull Service]
Beef tenderness research points to aging, chilling

BY BARBARA DUCKWORTH

EDMONTON — Aging and chilling beef carcasses is the best way to tenderize meat. “The post-slaughter environment is probably going to have more of an impact on tenderness than anything that happened to the live animal,” said Jordan Roberts of Agriculture Canada, who works with a team of researchers on meat quality at the research centre in Lacombe, Alta. “If you properly age beef post-mortem, you’ll have good tenderness. We found 21 days is the optimum,” he said at the BeefTech seminar held Nov. 8-9 in Edmonton.

Past beef quality audits show one in four steaks do not meet consumer standards. “We have to have steak that people want to eat,” said Roberts. A national beef quality audit expected to be complete early next year should determine whether improvements have been made.

Besides aging, other factors like genetics, diet, hormone implants, beta agonists, handling and transportation stress can affect beef quality. “There is some evidence that a more aggressive implant strategy can lead to reduced tenderness but probably transport and handling conditions are more important,” Roberts said.

Beef tenderness research points to aging, chilling
CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

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close to slaughter have a greater effect,” he said.

Tenderness starts at the cellular level. Factors like the amount of fat in the muscle, enzymes, collagen and muscle fibre types influence tenderness, he said.

The genetic influence is complicated because tenderness is polygenic, meaning many genes contribute to it. Pleiotropic genes may affect multiple traits and some are antagonistic. For example, if producers are trying to increase marbling, increased back fat may also result with a reduced lean meat yield.

In the research world, tools have been developed to better assess carcasses without cutting them apart. Technology like gas chromatography can look at specific molecules linked with flavour, fat and moisture. Special cameras measuring the rib-eye area, marbling and fat thickness are increasingly accurate.

The Dual X-ray Absorptiometry system provides a full carcass analysis. Known as DEXA, the equipment can scan primal cuts and come up with an accurate estimate on the amount of muscle, fat and bone without cutting the meat. It is currently under research and has not been released for commercial use. DEXA is more accurate than the grading ruler currently in use and can go further than a visual grader’s assessment of lean meat yield.

Lean meat yield is a percentage of total muscle tissue, while salable meat yield looks at the boneless retail cuts from the primal cuts like the chuck, rib, loin and round. “Lean meat yield is more biologically relevant. It is a measure of the total muscle, whereas salable meat yield is a better determinant of the carcass’s value relative to specific cuts. It is harder to select for salable meat yield than it is for lean meat yield,” Roberts said.

Near infrared spectroscopy can assess fat and moisture content. barbaraduckworth@producer.com
When the headline is you: how to handle the media

Consultant tells producers that talking to reporters can be hard, but ignoring a story can be dangerous

BY BARB GLEN

LANEFY, Alta. — The sympathy for Sunterra Farms operations vice-president Ben Woolley was almost palpable in the room filled with more than 700 people with an interest in hog production. He volunteered for a mock interview Jan. 10 as former journalist and public relations specialist Jeff Ansell spoke about media and how to handle interviews.

Woolley answered questions about the hog industry only to find that his words were used later in a mock story that questioned the health of pork and the welfare of pigs in hog operations. It was not what he had intended.

“The truth is not good enough,” Ansell said in reference to Woolley’s experience with modern journalism.

“If a story happens to be accurate, often times it’s just a happy coincidence.”

Ansell reserved the bulk of his criticism for what he called “mainstream” media and social media. Speed in posting information often comes at the expense of accuracy.

“‘If the headline is you, how much faith would you place in the media to get your story right, because unless the reporter works for trade media and truly understands the challenges confronting the pork industry, they’re likely to be biased from the start.’”

Dealing with media is a topic of concern to the pork industry in light of recent higher profile incidents where animal activists have protested at the gates of meat packing plants or have been found on hog operation property without explanation.

A high-profile case in Ontario in 2015 involved charges against a woman who gave water to a pig while it was on a truck awaiting unload. Charged with criminal mischief, Anita Krajcic was acquitted of the charge in 2017.

Ansell said news stories about the food industry, at least in mainstream media, tend to involve issues with conflict, on which the media thrive.

“I’m not here to scare you off dealing with media. You just need to know that it’s an unnatural dynamic that bears no resemblance to everyday conversation,” Ansell said.

“Even before you have the chance to speak and tell your side of the story, the media and the general public have already framed the story. They’ve already framed the narrative.”

Even so, failure to discuss events or refusal to be interviewed is not a good option. Ansell cited the fallout from the XL Foods case in 2012 involving a massive beef recall on suspicion of E. coli contamination. Owners refused to comment publicly on the situation, leading to public distrust. The plant near Brooks, Alta., closed and was later bought and reopened by JBS Canada.

“Their wounds were self-inflicted. They did it to themselves,” said Ansell.

He compared that tactic to that of a high-profile case in Ontario in 2015 involving charges against a woman who gave water to a pig while it was on a truck awaiting unload. Charged with criminal mischief, Anita Krajcic was acquitted of the charge in 2017.

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Timing, type of BVD, IBR vaccines must be handled with care

A standard recommendation for all cow-calf herds in North America is to vaccinate with a viral vaccine that provides immunity to two important reproductive diseases: infectious bovine rhinotracheitis and bovine viral diarrhea virus. These two diseases have potential to cause serious reproductive losses due to abortions, if they infect the unprotected pregnant cow. In addition, BVD can infect the fetus during early gestation and, depending on the timing of the infection, will produce a variety of clinical syndromes, such as early embryonic death, congenital defects or persistent infections. It is essential that cows and heifers be given vaccines that contain IBR virus and BVD virus at least 30 days before breeding. BVD has a variety of genetic variations and is often classified into at least two different biotypes known as BVD type 1 and BVD type 2. Both biotypes can cause clinical disease and the vast majority of vaccine manufacturers include both biotypes of BVD in their vaccines. There are a variety of vaccines available that provide protection against these two important diseases. These different options may also provide protection against other viral or bacterial diseases and that may be one of the factors that a veterinarian will consider when choosing a particular brand or combination of vaccines. However, another important decision often depends on whether to use a modified live vaccine or a killed vaccine.

There can be good reasons for using either. Modified live vaccines have the viral components of the vaccine altered or changed so they will not cause clinical disease. However, the virus used in the vaccine is still alive and will replicate in the animal after it is given. Most viral vaccines require you to mix together a diluent and a small dried cake supplied in two separate bottles to activate the virus. The vaccine must be protected from heat and sunlight and used in a specific time period after mixing, while it is still alive or the vaccine will lose its effectiveness. In many cases, modified live vaccines may provide stronger immunity and greater protection than a killed vaccine. Killed vaccines can also be very effective, but in these cases the viral components that are used in the vaccine are no longer alive. Killed vaccines often require a larger dose of the killed viruses or viral components to stimulate immunity and may require a second booster vaccination in some circumstances. Killed vaccines are also often dependent on an adjuvant, which is a substance included in the vaccine to stimulate the immune response.

Modified live vaccines can be effective against diseases such as IBR and BVD, but they do have some inherent risks associated with them. Dr. Daniel Givens and Dr. Benjamin Newcomer addressed the risks in a recent paper delivered at the American Association of Bovine Practitioner’s conference in September of 2017. Administering a live vaccine to calves nursing pregnant cows that have not been previously vaccinated is one of the potential risks. You will need to read the label precautions for modified live vaccines warning such as “Do not vaccinate pregnant cows.” The potential risk is that the modified live vaccine could multiply within the calves after vaccination and potentially be transferred to the non-vaccinated dams and heifers, which could possibly cause abortions. There have been several studies on this unlikely scenario and the results have been mixed. In some studies, there was no evidence of transmission from vaccinated calves, while in others, there was some potential transmission occurring.

This seems like a very low risk scenario and it is easily prevented by ensuring your cows and heifers are vaccinated. The second risk is the potential of causing infertility by giving a modified live vaccine too close to the breeding season. Many labels will suggest that they should be administered at least 30 days before breeding. The IBR virus component of the modified live vaccine has the potential to cause inflammation of the ovaries and could potentially affect the estrus cycle if given too close to the start of the breeding season. The studies described by Givens and Newcomer suggest that this is most likely a risk in animals being vaccinated for the first time. Many of the studies showed no impact of a modified live vaccine given close to the breeding period in previously vaccinated animals, however, it is probably a risk to be avoided and an average practitioner’s conference in September of 2017. The final risk and perhaps the most important is that some modified live vaccines can cause abortions if given to pregnant cows. This is probably a much greater risk in animals that have not been previously vaccinated, but is certainly a significant risk to consider. Some available modified live vaccines have label claims that allow pregnant cows to be vaccinated, provided they were vaccinated, according to label directions, with this same product within the past 12 months. It is critically important that if modified live vaccines are given to pregnant cows, that these instructions be followed. Note the phrasing of the instructions, which include “with this same product.” It is extremely important that the identical vaccine from the same manufacturer be given appropriately in the past 12 months.
Colostrum consumption should not be ignored

BY BARBARA DUCKWORTH
CALGARY BUREAU

Colostrum is vital to give newborn calves the right start in life. That first drink of milk after birth contains antibodies to protect calves against diseases like scours and pneumonia, said Barry Yaremcio, a beef specialist with Alberta Agriculture.

Known as passive immunity, colostrum provides antibodies, minerals, vitamins A and E, sugar and protein needed for newborns’ early digestive and immune development. A calf should receive the equivalent of 10 percent of its body weight of colostrum within the first 12 hours of life.

A calf’s rumen wall is not completely formed when it is born so these immunoglobulins, which are large protein molecules, can be absorbed. These start to close up after 12 hours, and the colostrum is digested as a regular protein, said Yaremcio.

Beef producers who obtain four litres of dairy colostrum will receive only a third to a half of the needed immunoglobulins, said Yaremcio.

“The antibodies that have been produced within the herd are specifically set for your own operation,” he said.

A portion of calves that fail to acquire optimal levels of passive immunity may be treated for disease, “he said.

Commercial beef and dairy colostrum products are on the market and can be used to supplement. These must be prepared carefully. “When you mix the water with the dry colostrum, do not put it in the microwave,” Yaremcio said. “The microwave will basically destroy the proteins and you’ve got no benefit.”

“Excellent hygiene, supportive care and early vaccinations should help improve the calf’s immunity,” she said.

Antibodies against certain bacteria and viruses in the colostrum are absorbed by the calf and will provide protection for a certain period of time. However, research conducted at the University of Saskatchewan suggests about a third of Saskatchewan do not receive optimal levels of passive immunity that are most likely to fail to reach their true potential in terms of growth and performance, said veterinarian Elizabeth Homerosky.

“As a producer, if you are not happy with the pre-weaning health or performance of your calves, then evaluating colostrum management and measuring passive immunity levels may be warranted,” she said.

A small blood sample should be collected from the calf, ideally between 24 and 48 hours of age, and analyzed for either serum total protein or serum immunoglobulin levels. Unfortunately, by this age, the calf can no longer absorb colostrum.

“Excellent hygiene, supportive care and early vaccinations should help improve the calf’s immunity,” said Homerosky, who is an associate with Veterinary Agri-Health Services Ltd., at Airdrie, Alta.

Colostrum collected from within your own herd is best. “The antibodies that have been produced within the herd are specifically set for your own operation,” he said.

“You might have a specific set of diseases that you will pass immunity to,” Yaremcio said.

Producers can introduce a calf to a dry colostrum, do not put it in the microwave, “Yaremcio said.

“Do not warm it up in boiling water because it will denature the proteins.”

Commercial products are on the market and can be used to supplement. These must be prepared carefully. “When you mix the water with the dry colostrum, do not put it in the microwave,” Yaremcio said.

“The microwave will basically destroy the proteins and you’ve got no benefit.”

A calf should receive the equivalent of 10 percent of its body weight of colostrum within the first 12 hours of life.

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Milk replacers can help boost calf performance

BY WILLIAM DEKAY
SASKATCHEWAN NEWSROOM

Feeding more milk replacer more frequently in a calf’s early life is a win-win for animal performance and producers’ bottom lines, said a dairy expert.

“I think the key for dairy producers is to make sure that they get the sufficient volume into the animals,” said Chris Luby from the Western College of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Saskatchewan.

Luby said general feeding guidelines used to suggest about 10 percent body weight per day, but research using accelerated feeding systems have shown calves are consuming significantly more milk replacer.

“Once we get below three weeks of age, really young calves don’t seem to respond as well to non-milk proteins. I think I’m supported by the research that it’s preferred that we use milk proteins rather than plant proteins for really young calves,” he said.

Producers should work with a nutritionist and veterinarian when deciding what kind of milk replacer to feed their calves. | MIKE STURK

PHOTO

The main decision maker for whether or not to use a milk replacer compared to natural milk is economic.

“How much is the milk replacer going to cost compared to withholding that whole milk from the bulk tank,” he said.

He said the next factor is deciding the type and kind of milk replacer and recommends producers collaborate with a nutritionist and veterinarian to make the selection.

“The protein in milk replacer is a big thing that we look at for the quality of the milk replacer and we used to think that plant versus milk protein is the key. There has been some alternative research, though, and there is some plant-based proteins that are better than others. If the protein source is processed from milk replacer, and there’s research in its favour, then even if it’s a plant protein it’s probably going to work quite nicely,” he said.

Luby said research studies continue to find different characteristics and strategies.

“One of the concerns I have is that once we get below three weeks of age, really young calves don’t seem to respond as well to non-milk proteins. I think I’m supported by the research that it’s preferred that we use milk proteins rather than plant proteins for really young calves,” he said.

“Good quality milk replacer that’s containing whey protein, which is basically milk protein, the calves are probably not going to notice the difference (to natural milk) and early on in life will drink up to 20 percent of their body weight each day,” he said.

Most producers are feeding their calves from bottles, however robotic feeders are coming.

“Computer feeding stations, which are basically automated feeding stations, is where the milk replacer is mixed in advance and the calves can come up and choose to drink how much they want,” he said.

And with many calves being born in frigid temperatures, it’s important that calves consume enough in cold weather to keep them warm.

“There’s a great quote by a colleague of one of my mentors. He said a dry, fuzzy calf with a full belly is very resilient.”

william.dekay@producer.com
Pain relief may help after calving

BY BARB GLEN
LETHBRIDGE BUREAU

Cows and calves might benefit from pain relievers after calving, and consultation with a veterinarian can guide cow-calf producers to the best options for their cattle. Though there are no drugs registered in Canada that are specifically labelled for pain related to calving, there are several generally labelled for pain relief, said Dr. Claire Windydey, associate professor in beef cattle health at the University of Calgary.

Those NSAIDs (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs) include ketoprofen, flunixin, aspirin and oral meloxicam.

“It’s important that producers discuss the products they’re using with their veterinarian, particularly for off-label use,” Windydey said in an email.

“Withdrawal times can vary from the label when used in other animal types, by varying routes (subcutaneous versus intravenous), by varying doses or for various conditions,” Windydey said there is limited knowledge about pain mitigation in cattle, though research is ongoing.

“We’re still gaining an understanding of what conditions and diseases are actually painful and to what degree, in addition to how best to treat that pain,” Dr. Jennifer Pearson, a PhD student at the University of Calgary, said via email.

Now Pearson and other researchers are investigating the use of NSAIDs in dairy cows after calving but none in beef cows, she added.

Windydey said she’s heard that many producers discuss the products they’re using with their veterinarian, particularly for off-label use.

The cow will get eating quicker and be more vigorous, although many producers with a hard pull milk the cow to insure the calves get colostrum quicker,” Lewis said most NSAIDs seem to be effective for about two days. A list of pain control products licensed and available for use on beef cattle in Canada can be found at www.beefresearch.ca/research-topics/ena/pain-mitigation-818drugs.

Studies have found calves that experience difficult births have higher trauma biomarkers. | MIKE STARK

Beef calf twins need special care

The birth of twins in beef cattle herds is seldom cause for celebration. Though it does mean an extra calf to sell in the future, the extra labour involved in birthing and likely fostering the extra calf onto another cow can overshadow potential benefits.

Karin Lindquist, forage and beef specialist with Alberta Agriculture, said she’s heard that many producers suppress a groan when a cow presents them with twins. “A lot of the attitude is more negative than positive,” she said.

For starters, cows delivering twins can have calving problems that require intervention. Often one is backward and one forward, and the possibility of breech birth increases the likelihood of losing one calf or even both.

Feet sticking out at the start of birth might belong to both calves, so producers must feel around before attempting a pull and call a veterinarian if the matter proves difficult to handle, said Lindquist.

Twins are usually smaller than single calves and tend to be born early rather than late. That seems to increase the chances of the cow retaining placenta because the tissues aren’t as well developed and don’t slough off as quickly as in cows who deliver single calves.

That might be one reason cows that deliver twins often don’t rebreed as quickly. They can be stressed from the delivery and have low energy from trying to feed two calves. Lindquist said rebreeding is a particular problem in thin cows that deliver twins.

As for the calves, it’s vital that they receive enough colostrum in the first hours after birth, and if the cow doesn’t have enough, supplemental colostrum must be found and provided.

Even after that, the cow might not have enough milk for both calves, or it may favour one over the other. In that case, the calf has to be adopted onto a surrogate, which can present its own problems with acceptance.

“Some cows, no matter what you try, they’re going to be kicking off that calf no matter what,” Lindquist said. “It really depends on her. You can’t tell her what to do.”

Twins will occur once in every approximately 1,000 births, and heritability of twinning is fairly low, she added. Twins are slightly more common than they were in the past because of the introduction of continental breeds into the mix. According to U.S. data, Simmentals and Charolais tend to have higher incidences of twins than other breeds.
The disruptive power of mavericks

Disruptive questions and habits lead to innovation, which can be vital for success

BY KAREN BRIERE

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2018 could see record highs in beef production

Canadian beef cow numbers have not grown, but North America may see record highs in beef production this year, exceeding 30 billion pounds for the first time and surpassing the previous record set in 2002. The Canadian cattle herd has stabilized, but domestic beef production could still increase as more cattle are fed and processed in Canada. Markets performed well in 2017 despite larger beef and meat supplies, so what can we expect in 2018? Here are the key factors for Canadian producers to keep an eye on:

**BEEF DEMAND**

Although demand is critical, it’s very difficult to predict. International demand has been very strong because we have exported more beef and at higher prices. Competitive access to international markets will be critical as supplies grow. Domestic demand has also been impressive because retail prices have declined only modestly despite the larger supplies. Consumption may fall next year, but that is in part a result of the strong international demand.

Demand is also a result of economic performance across North America. The economic outlook is positive for 2018, but any changes to the economy, employment or wages could positively or negatively affect beef demand.

**COMPETING MEATS**

As mentioned, beef production could be record large in 2018, as may pork and poultry. Trade will also be important for competing meats, but larger supplies could negatively affect beef prices. Domestic and international demand is key for competing meats, while pork and poultry markets are more reliant on exports than beef.

**CANADIAN DOLLAR**

The Canadian dollar has generally been friendly to the cattle market since it went below 80 cents in 2015. The dollar can be volatile and vary depending on oil prices, the Canadian economy, the U.S. economy and relative interest rates. The dollar has been somewhat stronger than expected in the second half of 2017 and could weigh on the markets if it were to move above 80 cents. On the other hand, the dollar will continue to be supportive if it stays below 80 cents or drops further.

**WEATHER AND FEED AVAILABILITY**

The U.S. cow herd has rapidly expanded since 2014. Strong markets and very good growing conditions have aided this expansion. Therefore, there are larger cattle on feed numbers and more cattle outside of feedlots.

Any significant changes in the grazing and feed conditions could result in a surge of cattle available to the slaughter market, which could negatively affect the markets. Parts of Canada have faced dry conditions the last couple of years. A weather improvement may move more cattle into the breeding herd, potentially reducing beef production.

**BASIS LEVELS**

Basis levels have a significant effect on the fed and calf markets. If Canada can maintain historically strong basis levels, it will be supportive to the feedlot sector and the calf market. However, if basis levels were to move back to historical levels, it could put pressure on the calf market. A basis that is $6 better than expected translates into almost $15 per hundredweight higher calf prices.

**LIVE CATTLE TRADE**

Live cattle trade is partly a result of the above factors, especially feed costs and basis. Canada will likely be a net importer of feeder cattle in the second half of 2017. This adds to local supplies, and given that our prices are at a premium to the U.S, there is further risk to our market if these premiums were to move to historically lower levels. Prices for feeder cattle and cull cows have additional price risk before the U.S. market would add support.

Understanding the key factors will help put you in a better position to plan ahead, but as always, what’s going to happen in the market is always difficult to predict — and the beef industry will continue to be challenged on how best to manage risks.

More producers continue to drop out of the AgriStability program, but given continued profitability in certain areas of this sector, producers may want to reconsider the program, especially with the new rules coming into effect for 2018. For producers to get the most from the program, their reference margin (historical average) needs to be as high as possible because it determines the level of coverage for current and future years.

Increased profits have resulted in increased AgriStability support levels because producers have very good reference years. Also, AgriStability payments in 2016 and 2017 are expected to increase to remedy the swift fall in prices for cattle and calves between 2015 and 2016. That also continued into 2017, so now may be a good time for producers to reconsider the program.

The registration deadline to participate in AgriStability for 2018 is April 30.

Scott Dickson is MNP director of livestock services, located in Red Deer, Alta. Contact: scott.dickson@mnp.ca

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AGFINANCE
THE WESTERN PRODUCER | WWW.PRODUCER.COM | JANUARY 25, 2018

69
### Temperature Forecast

**Jan. 25 - 31 (in °C)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
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<th>Low</th>
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### Precipitation Forecast

**Jan. 25 - 31 (in mm)**

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### LAST WEEK’S WEATHER SUMMARY ENDING JAN. 21

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#### BRITISH COLUMBIA

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