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Frigid winter temperatures on the Prairies combined with rain-related loading delays on the West Coast are contributing to growing vessel lineups at Canada’s busiest marine port.

As of early February, the number of ships waiting to be loaded with grain at the Port of Vancouver was around 30, according to Canada’s Grain Monitoring Program (GMP).

That’s well above the port’s one-year average of 22 vessels and the highest number in almost a year.

Mark Hemmes, president of Quroum Corp., the Edmonton company that’s contracted to manage the GMP, said those numbers are concerning, but they aren’t indicative of a crisis in the Canadian grain handling and transportation system — at least not yet.

“If people are concerned, they probably should be,” said Hemmes. “But I wouldn’t be ringing any alarm bells just yet.”

In a recent interview, Hemmes said frequent rain in late January hampered ship loading.

Conditions have improved since, but it will take some time before vessel lineups return to more normal levels.

Frigid winter temperatures across the Prairies also affected train movements at Canadian Pacific Railway and Canadian National Railway in late January and early February.

According to the Ag Transport Coalition, CN’s car order fulfillment rate declined for four consecutive weeks in January.

In Week 27 of the 2017-18 crop year, the seven-day period that ended Feb. 3, CN supplied just 54 percent of the grain hopper cars that were ordered, ATC said in its weekly rail performance report distributed Feb. 11.

Through the first 27 weeks of the current shipping year, CN has rationed more than 13,000 hopper car orders placed by ATC shippers, the report said. That’s more than five times as many as last year at the same time.

CN’s on-time car order fulfillment rate has fallen below 60 percent in several of 27 weeks, with car rationing affecting 11 percent of all hopper car orders placed at CN, the ATC report said.
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On the Farm: This southern Saskatchewan farm experienced ups and downs last year. See page 19.

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THE FAST AND THE FLEXIBLE. Get rapid, superior burndown and residual where you need it most. Heat LQ. Powered by Kixor Herbicide.
Veterinarians believe an exhausting effort to eradicate the virus appears to be nearing an end.

"War on PED almost over in Man." 

BY ED WHITE

Manitoba’s swine veterinarians hope to see porcine epidemic diarrhoea virus disappear from the provincial herd within weeks. The last active infection was found Jan. 25 in a few animals on a previously infected farm, and control efforts there appear to have stopped it spread.

“We haven’t seen any spread from that site since,” Glen Duizer, Manitoba’s chief veterinary officer, said in a presentation to the Manito- ba Swine Seminar.

“All previously positive herds are reporting effective biocontainment with elimination well underway,” Duizer said he hopes to see clean-up efforts in the Manitoba industry completed by May. The outbreak, which began April 28, 2017, was the “largest animal health outbreak the province ever had.”

The centre of the outbreak was just southwest of Steinbach in the middle of the most heavily popu- lated area of the provincial herd and where the greatest number of sow barns are located. Almost 200 barns were infected over the course of the outbreak, but those have been cleared out and the animals in them given immu- nity and cleared of the disease. It has been an exhausting process for farmers, barn workers, veteri- narians and truckers.

Veterinarian Jen Demare said the extra work undertaken to give sows immunity to protect piglets involved six to eight hours a day of mixing m aure, water and feed with infected material. That mate- rial would prompt the sow’s bodies to produce antibodies to pass on to a litter.

“You want a high immunity in that piglet, you want a low chal- lenge of virus in the environment or coming from Mom, and that equals healthy piglets,” said Demare.

The immunity is passed on through colostrum and is effective as long as each piglet is getting enough from the teats. A piglet that is unable to get enough needs to be removed for the sake of the rest of the animals, who would be vulner- able if it got sick.

The extra work for barn workers was made more trying by the need to put down many sick and dying piglets infected with PED.

“That’s not easy for anybody,” said Demare.

Truckers also faced extra demand from circuitous routes created by the need for five kilometre buffer zones imposed around hog barns. In one case that turned a normally six to eight km patch of road into a 68 km workaround.

Duizer said the intense efforts have paid off, with the outbreak fading, but he encouraged farmers to be conscious of risks and to avoid anything that could bring re-exposure.

Operators need to understand that existing biosecurity protocols probably aren’t enough to keep herds safe from PEDv.

“With this virus, if you make a mistake and it’s right there (in your area), it’s probably going to find its way in,” said Duizer.

New newsletters to help farmers make market decisions

BY BRIAN CROSS

Glacier FarmMedia, the parent company of The Western Producer, is launching a new suite of electronic information products for Canadian farmers.

Glacier MarketsFarm comprises several news products that will be distributed daily or weekly via email.

The MarketsFarm package includes daily updates on com- modity markets, weekly market summaries, podcasts and details on breaking agricultural news sto- ries that affect farm management and marketing decisions.

Visitors to marketsfarm.com can register for a trial subscription at no cost.

When the trial period expires this spring, users will have the option of becoming paid subscribers.

“The (MarketsFarm) website went up in January and we’re in a gradual roll-out mode,” said Bruce Burnett, Glacier FarmMedia’s director of weather and markets information. Burnett was formerly a markets and weather analyst with the Canadian Wheat Board and G3 Canada.

“The website and daily and weekly newsletters are sort of the first phase of this that we’re rolling out,” he said.

“You can sign up and get access to the product and test drive it….

There isn’t an official launch date yet but when we launch this spring, we’ll be offering the services as a paid subscription.”

Subscription costs have yet to be finalized but are expected to be competitive with other market insight newsletters.

Burnett said growers are looking for current and relevant informa- tion that can help them make informed decisions on the farm.

In addition to market informa- tion unique to MarketsFarm, the package will include selected items from Glacier’s other news outlets, which include Commodity News Service Canada (CNS), The West- ern Producer, Grainews, Alberta Farmer Express, Canadian Cattle- men and Country Guide.

“We’re trying to keep the package rather simple, but with some in depth analysis as well,” Burnett said.

“We’re aiming to cut through the clutter and jargon, to some extent, and provide some solid actionable marketing advice, along with mar- ket news.”

Some residents of a central Alber- ta community hope concerns over noise and dust are enough to prompt the province to scuttle plans to build an elevator to relocate the project.

The GrainsConnect terminal, which will have a storage capacity of 35,000 tonnes, is slated to be built just outside Huxley, Alta. It is expected to be the region’s largest, capable of holding 134 cars, and Canadian National Railway would service it.

Some residents say the development, particularly the rail loop, is too close to their properties and will cause disturbances. Develop- ment documents show there are 11 buildings within one km of the centre of the terminal. The rest of the hamlet is within 1.5 km.

“It’s going to be a noise issue, and it’s so close to our home, the train will be shining their lights right at us,” said David Swanson, who lives within one km of the site. “I’m also pretty allergic to the stuff. Ifarmed for 25 years and then gave it up. By the time harvest was over, I basically had no skin left.

“We’re not against them building an elevator, it’s just that this eleva- tor is too close to town. If they moved it away by two miles (3.2 km) that would be better.”

The development requires approval from Kneehill County council, which is expected to pass it next week.

The development application is scheduled to be heard by council- lens at a Feb. 22 meeting.

GrainsConnect has previously said its building the elevator due to strong interest from farmers in the area and declined further comment.

“If we have received formal written responses regarding our application, GrainsConnect will provide written responses regarding our application package.”

 “…and those comments form part of any decision that might be made about our proposed development,” Stacey Rad- dard wrote in an email.

Kneehill County Reeve Jerry Witt- stock has also refrained from com- menting further until the develop- ment comes before councillors at the meeting.

“There is a process that we are required to follow and we must protect that process to ensure fair hearing is held,” Wittstock wrote in an email. “In that process there is an opportunity for the public to oppose or support the application and those comments form part of the application package.”

Huxley resident Sharon Wesgate is hoping council listens and acts on their concerns.

“The terminal shouldn’t be ‘close to the residential area,’ Wesgate said. “There are a lot of seniors who live close to this area and the community. What are we going to get out of it?”

The terminal is expected to be completed in the spring and will be here by early spring.

Gideon Stahl will carry this minute-old lamb to the warmth of the barn with its mother following close behind on a snowy -18 C day Feb. 8.

Lambing is under way at the Cayley Colony near Cayley, Alta., with about 700 lambs expected.

“Lambing is under way at the Cayley Colony near Cayley, Alta., with about 700 lambs expected.”

BY BRIAN CROSS

News of agricultural newsletters is under way at the Cayley Colony near Cayley, Alta., with about 700 lambs expected.

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BY BRIAN CROSS

News of agricultural newsletters is under way at the Cayley Colony near Cayley, Alta., with about 700 lambs expected.
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Meanwhile, CP’s car order fulfillment fell to 78 percent in Week 26 and 69 percent in Week 27. Those were CP’s lowest weeks so far in terms of 2017-18 shipping season performance.

Wade Sobkowich, executive director of the Western Grain Elevators Association, said larger-than-normal vessel lineups at the West Coast are already resulting in demurrage costs and could trigger additional contract extension penalties.

“Individual shipping contracts specify how much time is allotted for loading a vessel, but the window is typically about 12 days, sometimes up to 18, said Sobkowich.

Demurrage costs are in the range of $10,000 per day for a Panamax-sized vessel.

Lack of fluidity in the grain-handling system, particularly on CN’s network, is also complicating grain origination efforts at some country elevators, Sobkowich said.

Delivery schedules are being adjusted at many locations to account for lack of shipping capacity and loading delays at port.

Throughout January, grain inventories in the country elevator system shrank at a gradual increase, rising from 77 percent of working capacity early in the month to 84 percent of working capacity as of Jan. 27.

Some delivery points on the CN network are no longer taking deliveries until grain inventories can be drawn down.

Sobkowich described CN’s car order fulfillment record since Aug. 2017 as “very poor”.

“We’re having to adjust a lot of pieces in the logistics system to account for the lack of capacity that we’re getting on CN,” he said.

“Cold weather is a factor but it isn’t the largest factor. The largest factor is that CN doesn’t have enough capacity for the grain industry due to the increase in demand from frack sand and intermodal, primarily.”

By comparison, CP, which is subject to the same weather conditions as CN, has been servicing the grain industry well, he added.

Hemmes said grain inventory levels at country elevators and export terminals could be drawn down quickly if weather conditions improve.

“Right now, there’s just not enough grain in position to load the vessels. Some of that has to do with rail service and a little bit has to do with bad weather at port as well.”

Man. beef producers vote in favour of mandatory livestock inspection

BY ROBERT ARNASON

Livestock inspections may soon be mandatory in Manitoba.

In a close vote Feb. 8, members of the Manitoba Beef Producers passed a resolution at the organization’s annual meeting in Brandon to lobby the provincial government for mandatory inspections.

Manitoba cattle producers have debated the idea in the past, but it was previously voted down.

Not this time.

The vote this year was 45 in favour, 42 opposed.

“It was imperative that we got it passed. And we did get it passed,” said MBP president Ben Fox. “It opens up a lot of security for the producers and the lenders. So, it really is a win for the beef industry.”

Manitoba remains the only province in Western Canada where livestock inspections are not mandatory. Nonetheless, Fox is optimistic that the provincial government is open to change.

“I would argue when beef producers are in favour of certain resolutions… that they (provincial government) would lend us their ear.”

Passing the resolution proved difficult, with some cattle producers at the Brandon meeting speaking against mandatory livestock inspections.

Heinz Reimer, former MBP president, was one of those opposed.

Reimer argued that livestock inspection is too expensive, and may cost $4 to 6 per head.

Fox said those figures are incorrect.

“The cost right now of Manitoba cattle that are inspected, it’s $2.75 charge per head. Those charges they happen now, on the cattle going west. It’s just that the producer doesn’t necessarily see that… Those cattle have to cross Saskatchewan and into Alberta. There is legislation that those cattle carry a… permit with them. Those cattle have to be inspected by livestock inspectors.”

Other producers at the meeting said livestock inspection is unnecessary, a hassle and slows down the process of selling cattle.

Fox didn’t agree with those ideas.

“In my experience with it, it actually speeds the process up… It’s a simplified piece of paper that makes the industry and commerce flow that much more easier,” he said. “It’s a line of paperwork that producers can use, that was filled out by a third party. It shows who owned the cattle. Where they were shipped to. Who gets paid for the cattle.”

Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia all have organizations that provide branding inspection and brand inspection services.

In Alberta, the branding of livestock has been a legal requirement since 1878.

Robert.arnason@producer.com

BY ROBERT ARNASON

Man. beef producers vote in favour of mandatory livestock inspection
The $100-million expansion of the FS Bioenergia plant in Lucas do Rio Verde, Brazil, is expected to be completed in the first quarter of 2019 and will more than double annual corn ethanol production. | FS BIOENERGIA PHOTO

SECOND WAVE POSSIBLE FOR ETHANOL SECTOR

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

2005, establishing national mandates for blending of the fuel. That policy helped support corn and other grain prices until the market took a downturn in 2013 and hasn't yet to recover. Many grain industry participants such as Glen Pownall, managing director of Peter Cremer Canada Ltd., say the days of biofuel mandates propping up grain prices are over as influential players such as the U.S. and the European Union have taken steps to cap crop-based biofuel production. “That’s the problem, you just really don’t have any growth in the world. Everything is kind of going backward for biofuels,” he said. “We’ve had tremendous growth in that sector for so many years but now it seems to be plateauing.” Rastetter said that is not the case and that ethanol is still very much in a growth phase in other places around the world. Brazil is a good case in point. The government recently approved the Renovabio program, legislation that will double the country’s renewable fuel use by 2030. That legislation helped Summit Agricultural Group decide to invest $100 million in expanding its FS Bioenergia plant in Mato Grosso, which is already Brazil’s largest corn ethanol facility. The expansion will more than double the plant’s ethanol production to 530 million litres from 227 million litres annually. Construction will be complete in the first quarter of 2019. The plant is expected to process more than 50 million bushels of corn annually once the expansion is complete. Justin Kirchhoff, Summit’s investment manager for the Brazilian operation, said the Renovabio program applies to any type of ethanol but he believes corn ethanol will triumph over sugar cane ethanol because with double-cropping corn now common in Mato Grosso the cost of production is much lower for producing corn ethanol. Brazil produced 28.4 billion litres of ethanol last year and will easily double that some time between 2022 and 2028 due to the new program, he said. That would create a new annual market for 2.7 billion bushels of corn if all of the new capacity is corn ethanol. China has also announced an ambitious plan to adopt a 10 percent ethanol blending mandate by 2020. Bryce Knorr, senior grain market analyst with Farm Futures, estimates China’s mandate will create an annual market for 1.1 billion bu. of corn, up from the 235 million bu. consumed by its ethanol sector today. “China has to ramp up its ethanol industry from very little to a whole lot in the short period of time,” he said. Reuters estimates China’s mandate will require the construction of 36 big new plants each producing 379 million litres of ethanol a year. Knorr is uncertain what impact the mandate will have on corn and other grain and oilseed prices because it is unclear exactly how much ethanol production China already has and how quickly it can build the new plants. He predicts China will initially have to import ethanol from the U.S. to meet its mandate. There is plenty of idle ethanol capacity in the U.S. and when that is used to supply the new Chinese demand it should bolster U.S. corn demand by a few hundred million bu. per year, which would be supportive for prices. Other analysts believe China’s new mandate will have little to no impact on prices because the government will divert corn from its massive stockpile into the ethanol sector. Rastetter believes analysts are over-thinking everything. “I struggle why people think that’s hard to figure out because any additional use of corn, which clearly this is, helps strengthen the corn market and will continue to,” he said.

Knorr does not believe that a second wave of ethanol demand coming from places like Brazil and China is going to bolster grain prices. He thinks the new source of demand will simply help mop up a portion of the nearly eight-trillion-bu. global stockpile of corn, which will help ensure the market has bottomed out. But he isn’t holding his breath for another bull run to $8 per bu. corn any time soon. That is because global corn production has dramatically changed since the first wave of ethanol demand. There is far more corn being produced in places like the Black Sea region and plenty of potential there for even more acres and better yields. “You’ve seen an explosion in corn production. People around the world are learning how to grow corn the same way we do in the U.S. and Canada,” said Knorr.

The big change is that farmers must now have an aggregator by May 1 to claim credits with the program. By Jeremy Simes

Alberta farmers have to change the way they claim carbon credits for fields they don’t till. The provincial government announced last week that farmers must now have an aggregator in place by May 1 to claim carbon credits with the Conservation Cropping program. If they don’t have an aggregator by that date, they won’t be reimbursed for 2018, and they won’t be able to save their credits for reimbursement for following years. While the change might mean extra work, the province is making the changes so it can better forecast how much carbon will be sequestered and how much will be emitted, said Paul Jungnitsch, a carbon offset agrologist with Alberta Agri

“Because the program is not only aimed at agriculture — it deals with factories and other emitters — the province wants to be set up for the purposes of how much carbon is going to happen,” he said. “It’s a better way to think about the processing.” Before this change, farmers at the end of the season supplied aggre

Now, they’ll be required to supply records to aggregators that show which fields they don’t plan on tilling. If they change their practice, however, producers will be required to update the aggregator later in the year. “If they miss May 1, they’re out of luck,” Jungnitsch said. “It’s not a complicated change, but having a hard deadline like that does make a difference if they start thinking of doing this after that date.”

Bren Breitkreuz, chair of the Alberta Canola Producers Commission who farms near Onoway, Alta., said the organization’s board of directors needs to look into this change before commenting. To claim credits, farmers can go through aggregator companies AgriTrend Aggregation, Carbon Credit Solutions and Farmers Edge.

Alberta changes Carbon Offset Credit program

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FEBRUARY 15, 2018

NEWS

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Malting barley exports are frothy
Shipment of 925,300 tonnes up to week 27 are 85 percent higher than the same time last year

BY SEAN PRATT
SASKATOON NEWSROOM

Cheers to Canadian barley exporters. The crop has been moving at an incredible clip so far in the 2017-18 crop year. Exporters shipped 925,300 tonnes of barley through week 27 of the campaign, an 85 percent increase over the same period the previous crop year.

“It’s pretty phenomenal this year,” said Phil de Kemp, executive director of the Barley Council of Canada. “Virtually all of that is malting barley for the surging beer market in China.”

Just a little over halfway through the 2017-18 marketing campaign, exports are 425,300 tonnes ahead of last year’s pace. That brings into question AgriCanada’s full-year export forecast of 2.45 million tonnes, which is 128,000 tonnes more than the previous year. The forecast includes the barley equivalent of malt exports.

Brennan Turner, president of FarmLead, believes exports will end up between 2.8 and 2.9 million tonnes, which means carryout will be smaller than Agriculture Canada’s 1.55 million tonne estimate.

Derek Squair, president of Agri-Trend Marketing, agrees that Agriculture Canada is going to have to revise its numbers at some point if exports keep up the current pace. And he believes that will happen because China’s demand is strong and Canada’s quality is exceptional.

Unfortunately, he does not believe that will result in higher malt barley prices because Canada’s crop was so good that most of the carryout will be malt quality. “Because of that, the malt prices may not take off a whole heck of a lot,” said Squair. He is bearish on feed prices because of the lack of feed quality barley.

De Kemp said there are a number of reasons China is in the market for more Canadian barley. Australia had a disappointing crop. Growers harvested eight million tonnes, down 40 percent from the previous year. Australia also had a poor quality crop due to poor harvest weather conditions while Canada harvested one of the best quality crops on record, said de Kemp.

Canada has also benefitted by growing consumption in the world’s largest beer market and Chinese maltster preference for Canadian barley. “Certainly, they [Chinese maltsters] are increasing their malting barley purchases from Canada considerably, no question about that,” said de Kemp.

But he does not expect the torrid shipping pace of 2017-18 to be duplicated next year because part of this year’s surge is due to the short Australian crop. “I’m not sure it’s going to be able to hold at those kind of export numbers,” said de Kemp.

“Hope I’m wrong,” the export numbers are not getting much help from feed barley shipments, which are almost nonexistent. “We’ve lost the Japanese market the last couple of years. We haven’t sold a bushel of feed barley and that used to be a 300,000 tonne market,” he said.

Environment Canada’s 1.55 million tonne estimate includes the barley equivalent of malt exports. A low carryout of 1.55 million tonnes means the market has to revise its numbers at some point if exports keep up the current pace.

FarmLead believes exports will exceed 2.45 million tonnes, which is 128,000 tonnes more than the previous year. The forecast of 2.45 million tonnes, down 40 percent from last year, “said Phil de Kemp, executive director of the Barley Council of Canada. “Virtually all of that is malting barley for the surging beer market in China.”

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Environment Canada’s 1.55 million tonne estimate includes the barley equivalent of malt exports. A low carryout of 1.55 million tonnes means the market has to revise its numbers at some point if exports keep up the current pace. And he believes that will happen because China’s demand is strong and Canada’s quality is exceptional.

Unfortunately, he does not believe that will result in higher malt barley prices because Canada’s crop was so good that most of the carryout will be malt quality. “Because of that, the malt prices may not take off a whole heck of a lot,” said Squair. He is bearish on feed prices because of the lack of feed quality barley.

De Kemp said there are a number of reasons China is in the market for more Canadian barley. Australia had a disappointing crop. Growers harvested eight million tonnes, down 40 percent from the previous year. Australia also had a poor quality crop due to poor harvest weather conditions while Canada harvested one of the best quality crops on record, said de Kemp.

Canada has also benefitted by growing consumption in the world’s largest beer market and Chinese maltster preference for Canadian barley. “Certainly, they [Chinese maltsters] are increasing their malting barley purchases from Canada considerably, no question about that,” said de Kemp.

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New supply-demand report doesn’t tell dramatic tale

The USDA’s World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates report shows supplies of corn and soy aren’t historically high, but wheat remains big

BY MICHAEL RAINE
SAULTON NEWS-DISPATCH

There was a time when the world waited on the U.S. Department of Agriculture to write the outlook for the commodity markets, but last week’s report was more like punctuation of a sentence already penned.

Imported global supply and projected crop reconnaissance might be a growing factor in the reduced impact of the monthly World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE). Or maybe that be the reason global stocks on the supply side. But the weekend’s predicted rain in Argentina failed to materialize and it came at a hot and dry forecast for the week. The result was higher prices across the board Feb. 12 for grains and oilseeds.

Arlan Suderman of INTL FCStone said the WASDE still sends different infor- mation to the markets, but each year more is known about weather and crop yields around the globe, so the report tends to move the markets less than it once did.

However, the WASDE data still fills in the knowledge gaps, says analy- lysts, and confirms other findings, priming the market for moves such as the one on Feb. 12.

Last week, the report showed supplies of some crops held out- side the U.S. and China are at levels similar to the 2010-12 period, at a time when prices were 40 percent higher than today’s.

The USDA report showed about a 46-day supply outside of those countries, putting most of the world in a just-in-time position for corn. When the U.S. and China’s stocks are taken into account, there is a 78-day supply. That is higher than it was in 2010-12, but not unlike 2008-09. Global corn supply is now 10 days lower than it was from 2014-16.

“What is a bushel of corn worth?” asked Suderman during his analy- sis of the WASDE report last week. “About US$4.36 in the Midwest; about $2.50 in Mato Grosso (Brazil); $7.20 in China… It is whatever the local market perceives it to be,” said the American commodities analyst.

He suggested last week that the move from a bearish farm com- modities market to a bullish one was underway and there could be some higher prices as a result. The markets actions on Feb. 12 seemed to prove him right. China appears to be using inter- national trade tools to restrict U.S. corn and grain sorghum, accusing the Americans of dumping sor- ghum onto its shores. Analysts suggested the desired result is a release of China’s own, poorer quality corn reserve at good domestic prices. China has 121 days of corn, similar to its 2008-13 situation, but much lower than the past three years.

Wheat, however, is still rising in global supply, according to the WASDE report and has now broken the one-billion-bushel carryout. While this could improve as record-low American plantings cut supplies in 2018-19 and dry winter conditions persist in the U.S., the report indicated that supplies will likely remain high for several sea- sons to come. Feb. 12 saw a three percent increase to hard red winter prices on Chicago for all contract months through September as other com- modities surged.

Suderman said Russia remains a big factor in the wheat market.

“"They have lots of wheat and the (lower-valued) currency has allowed them to expand acreage profitably. Russia will see evenmore acres this year. There is some poten- tial for drought. They are doing wheat because it is profitable," he said.

"But they are reaching the limits of their infrastructure to get to mar- ket," he said.

If China takes actions on soybeans, similar to its corn and sorghum positions, it will lead to greater supplies in the U.S. However, even with a few weather- related issues in South America, the WASDE showed there will likely be little upside for oilseeds.

One of the yet unknown factors for commodity prices might be the movement of money leaving global stock markets and investing in commodities, similar to the shifts that happened in 2008.

This could slow expansion as profits slip away but if there is no serious drought, growth could con- tinue.

With ample domestic supplies, the U.S. is importing less beef and is focusing on more trade with Japan, Hong Kong, South Korea, Mexico and Canada.

A big change for the domestic beef industry could be the decision of McDonald’s Corp. to switch from imported frozen patties to U.S. product only.

That will be nationwide so that is going to bring in a whole other demand level for the packers and further processors that make ground beef to be able to supply that on the fresh side," he said.

There will be a big push on pack- ers to fill the orders with U.S. fresh product and it could affect the price of 90 percent trim.

"Trimm is now a bigger component within the beef carcass and could be something that drives the mar- ket this year," he said.

There is also increased demand for more all beef patties, hotdogs and sausages made from fresh meat rather than frozen.

"We have hundreds of thousands of consumers who all want to eat hotdogs all summer. That creates a demand no one can handle all through that time frame," he said.

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND CEO

Mike Raine
Crop market ignoring stocks volatility

MARKET WATCH

D’ARCE McMillian

The stock markets might be undergoing a correction, but the decline so far hasn’t hurt grain futures prices.

I’ve been reading about how some analysts, notably Goldman Sachs, think commodities could be a big beneficiary from the decline in equities with the potential to lift prices, including agricultural product values.

However, others disagree with that outlook. As for me, I think shifting investment flows and currency fluctuations could have a minor impact, but crop prices are unlikely to move significantly higher until there is a widespread weather problem that seriously threatens yields in an important growing region.

The factor that apparently sparked the sell-off in stocks is the prospect of rising U.S. incomes fueling inflation, which in turn would cause the U.S. Federal Reserve to raise interest rates more aggressively.

Money managers think that after a huge run-up on stock prices since 2009 and especially last year, the likelihood of further equities rallies is limited and so are looking at bonds, where interest returns could be more attractive and secure.

The prospect for higher U.S. interest rates would normally lift the value of the greenback, but that is counterbalanced by the idea that central banks in other major countries are also expected to raise rates or undertake other policies to step back from the stimulus that they have pursued in recent years.

Indeed, the U.S. buck has weakened against a basket of world currencies over the past year. Commodity bulls argue that unlike equities, commodities have gone through a gloomy time for several years and are undervalued. If the U.S. dollar weakness continues and world economies continue to strengthen, leading to more demand for raw materials, then investors taking money out of stocks could add commodities alongside bonds as their new targets.

However, even if they do, the positive price impact on the crop part of the commodities sector will likely be limited.

Grain markets remain well supplied. The U.S. Department of Agriculture forecasts for global year-end supply of wheat, corn and soybeans are generally OK, even with excess country, but winter crops in Europe are generally OK, even with excess.

Argentina’s corn problem is not yet big enough to make much difference to global supply and demand.

It is dry in U.S. hard winter wheat country, but winter crops in Europe are generally OK, even with excess rain in France. And in Russia, prospects for another huge winter wheat crop improved with recent snow.

On the trade front, China has launched an anti-dumping probe into U.S. soybean trade and limited licences to import U.S. genetically modified corn.

If the U.S.-China spat were to widen to include soybeans, then that would certainly roil crop markets.

For all these reasons, it is likely that crop futures markets will continue to focus on its own supply-demand and trade issues instead of the volatility of the stock markets.
**MARKETS**

**FED MARKET STRENGTHENS**

Fed steer prices rose by 28 cents last week to average 163.52 per hundredweight. Fed heifer prices were not available.

Canfax reports that since the beginning of the year, western Canadian fed prices on average have been trading four percent higher than last year while Ontario prices have been two percent below. Strong prices and basis levels in Western Canada have encouraged packers to pull cattle ahead of schedule, but this is not necessarily the case in Eastern Canada.

Western Canadian steer carcass weights are 14 pounds below last year, on average. Ontario weights are four lbs larger. Buying interest in the cash market was moderate last week but was not a surprise given the cash market was moderate last week and was not a surprise given that packers have been pulling steer carcass weights weakened, going from +10.90 to +5.41 last week. For the month of January, Canadian fed cattle exports from Western Canada were down 23 percent compared to last year, and exports from Eastern Canada were down one percent.

In the United States, there was little fed trade last week. Live bids of US$126 were reported in the south while packers in the north were bidding $200 dressed. Bids were steady with the previous week.

Forward beef sales for 22-60 day delivery have been strong. Sales are in line with last year and larger than 2015 and 2016. Since the start of the year, 550 lb. stocker calves in the U.S. have increased four percent and are trading at the highest point since April 2016.

**WP LIVESTOCK REPORT**

**HOG PRICES VARIABLE**

The U.S. national live price averaged for barrows and gilts was US$54.81 per hundredweight Feb. 9, up from $54.37 Feb. 2. U.S. hogs averaged $69.72 on a carcass basis Feb. 9, down from $72.59 Feb. 9.

The U.S. pork cutout was $74.44 per cwt. Feb. 9, down from $81.63 Feb. 2.

The estimated U.S. weekly slaughter to Feb. 10 was 2.388 million, down from 2.438 million the previous week.

Slaughter was 2.360 million last year at the same time.

In Canada, the Signature Five price was Can$165.93 per 100 kilograms Feb. 10, up from Can$160.13 the previous week. On a per pound weight basis the price was $75.27, up from $72.63.

**BISON STEADY**

The Canadian Bison Association said Grade A bulls in the desirable weight range sold at prices up to Can$260 per hundredweight. U.S. buyers are offering US$4.75 or more with returns dependent on exchange rates, quality and export costs.

I'm curious about the basis levels of the fed cattle sales. Could you provide more details on that?
New agricultural programs expected ahead of schedule

CAPITAL LETTERS

KELSEY JOHNSON

Otawa is getting ready to roll out the Canadian Agricultural Partnership ahead of April 1 implementation deadline. The Canadian government and the provinces agreed to the five-year CAP when agriculture ministers met for their annual federal-provincial-territorial meeting last July.

The agreement, once implemented, will replace the current $3 billion Growing Forward 2, which is set to expire at the end of March. Agriculture Minister Lawrence MacAulay was set to announce new details about the CAP framework and its programs Feb. 13, after deadlines for this issue, as part of the Agriculture Day in Canada celebrations in Ottawa.

In November, the federal minister promised to open applications to the various federally funded programs in early 2018 to give producers and bureaucrats time to get the necessary funding in place before April and avoid funding gaps. “Of course, when the consultations started, one of the first things I was warned about was to make sure that we did not have the lapse that we had previously, because it hurts,” MacAulay told the House agriculture committee Nov. 30.

“Hurt’s innovation and it hurts research. It hurts all the programs done under Growing Forward 2 that are under the CAP program,” he continued, adding Ottawa “will be able to roll out money after April 1 to make sure we have continual flow.”

The federal programs, valued at $1 billion combined, include the previously announced AgriMarketing, AgriCompetitiveness, AgriInsurance, AgriDiversity, AgriNovate and AgriScience. More specifics about these programs were expected Feb. 13.

A review of CAP’s business risk management programs is also underway after MacAulay appointed a special producer advisory committee.

The committee is expected to release an interim report later this spring with its final findings expected to be presented at the provinces’ annual meeting this summer.

New details around the Canadian Agricultural Partnership isn’t the only agriculture-related announcement expected.

Innovation Minister Navdeep Bains was expected to announce Ottawa’s long-awaited picks for the nearly $1 billion in federal innovation funding aimed at bolstering Canadian economic growth within select industries. The federal government has flagged this country’s agriculture industry for its economic growth potential. Ottawa has said it wants to grow the sector’s exports to $75 billion by 2025. Industry has said federal innovation funding would help the sector meet that target.

MacAulay has repeatedly said innovation funding is a key part of the agriculture industry’s future potential. Canada’s agriculture sector, he has insisted, has to be on the cutting edge.

Meanwhile, Feb. 13 happens to be Agriculture Day in Canada with producers and industry groups descending on Ottawa to chat farming, trade and the future of the sector.

The day’s activities include a keynote speech from Saskatchewan’s Murad Al-Katib, President of AGT Food and Ingredients Inc. and chair of the Agri-Food Economic Strategy Table.

Al-Katib is heavily involved in the plant-protein related supercluster proposal. He also served as an adviser during Ottawa’s fast-tracked review of the Canadian transportation system, whose related legislation remains under Senate consideration.

Kelsey Johnson is a reporter with iPolitics, www.iPolitics.ca

Women on Boards

This debate over gender balance really detracts from the conversation we’re trying to have about the importance of diversity and ways to make it better. I want to know that I’m there for my skills, experience and value, and I know that’s the case with this position.

HANNAH KONSCHUH, NEWLY ELECTED DIRECTOR TO ALBERTA WHEAT COMMISSION, PAGE 17

New agricultural programs expected ahead of schedule
Herb resistant crops remain best way to control weeds

BY GRAHAM SCONES PAG

While engaging in an online debate around herbicide-resistant crops and the application of subsidies and seem to see this as a frivolous activity by farmers. I suggested they do not any weed control in their garden and wait until the end of the season to observe the results. The smart ones would have told me they mulch to control weeds. However, mulching a thin mulch of canola or wheat is not feasible.

Mulching on a small scale for weed control can work but it smoothes weed seedlings that may be produced by the seed bank. All cultivated fields have thousands of seeds of various species in their seed bank. This arises by virtue of the characteristic of weeds because they have evolved to produce thousands of seeds each generation, and they produce seeds that have various levels of dormancy, some of which may not germinate for a decade or more.

Soil tillage brings up weed seeds from the seed bank, allowing them to germinate. A farmer can reduce, but not eliminate, the impact of weeds from the seed bank through a year of fallow or a cover crop but such techniques take the land out of production for the year. Changes to prairie agriculture since the 1970s to significantly reduce tillage not only help to maintain our soil but also minimize soil disturbance and disturbance of the seed bank.

Unlike natural ecosystems, in which plants come into a balance with other plants, fungi, insects and animals, cropping systems are an unnatural system. They are continuously threatened by the evolutionary tactics of weeds, diseases and insects, which reduce yield and/or quality. Weed control will always be with us in large-scale agriculture, most critically before the weeds draw on soil nutrients or water needed by the crop. Our use of herbicides has much improved since they were first used in the 1940s and will continue to improve as new technologies come along. Hopefully, with greater understanding through genomic technologies of our crops and weeds, more elegant solutions will come along.

At present, herbicide-resistant crops through genetic modification provide an elegant solution to the seed bank problem and offer the best means we currently have to control weeds in large-scale agriculture.

Kevin Hursh is an agricultural journalist, consultant and farm. He can be reached by e-mail at kevin.hursh.ca.

Editorial Notebook

Michael Raine
Managing Editor

All modern farm guidance and controller gear collects raw data, if you want it to. Just what you do with those shevelfuls of raw information is the question that most farmers are offering to answer. Most pitch the idea that the process would be better, or more profitable, for the farmer. Some offer to sort it. Most take that step but do not make it based on agronomic needs. Many will bundle it with recommendations of what actions farmers should take and build the guidance and application control maps. Several efforts to provide inputs for those activities.

The biggest systems will tie in machinery location and operating conditions (telematics), farm operations, staff communication, inventory management and marketing suggestions. A few might even put it all together with crop marketing and tie the whole process up with a financing opportunity bow. And one is now partnered with an insurance company (see page 61). Our data, if you want it, is available last fall. Producers who weren’t willing to put their data to work at this point are going to have a chance to make it happen on their farms.

Many producers might not see the need to track the variable rate seeding and fertilizer technologies, as the payoffs aren’t well documented on the arid western Canadian Prairies or the United States northern Great Plains. The real incentive in this region will likely not come from bigger crops or less fertilizer, but from the value of the data itself.

Farmers can show their bankers how they are reducing risk by tracking their activities and should be eligible for better interest rates or higher operating lines of credit. Farmers should be able show governments and commodity buyers that they are acting sustainably and deserve premium prices and lower taxes, until everybody does.

As we see this week, insurance companies might offer a break to a lower-risk producer, or higher coverage at the same prices, knowing the operation was likely mitigating its exposure to loss through the evidence provided by accumulated data.

At some point, even land sales and rental pricing might be affected through data packages that show the potential of a parcel of land or its fertilization history. This is happening in the U.S. Midwest now.

But none of that can take place until the data has been collected. April seems like a good time to start harvesting.
Fababeans chart own course in the livestock feed market

Prices are starting to move above those for feed peas, which could become permanent

BY KAREN BRIERE

If fababeans prices continue to move above feed peas, market analyst Chuck Penner thinks that could be positive for the crop in the long term.

Prices for the two crops often move in tandem, and Penner told the Saskatchewan Pulse Growers that has been true until recently.

“Just in the last few months fabas have actually continued to rise while feed peas have kind of gone sideways or even a little bit lower,” he said.

“I don’t know if this is a trend yet, but because fabas have higher protein, theoretically they should hold the spread over feed pea prices. ”

For many local pharmacies, personal care home contracts make up a big share of their revenue. That means they go above and beyond to provide quality, compassionate service. “We’re worried that a corporate chain based in Ontario won’t care about patients and families in the same way. This could hurt our seniors who rely on timely delivery of the medications they need,” he said.

I urge you to reach out to your provincial representative and call on them to reverse this decision and to support local pharmacies. I am more than happy to hear your concerns too.

Wab Kinew
MLA for Fort Rouge, Leader of the Official Opposition
Winnipeg, Man.

Ontario’s advertising pullout causes headaches for DFC

BY JOHN GREIG

Freelance Writer

The decision last June by the Dairy Farmers of Ontario to pull out of national dairy advertising is forcing change at the national Dairy Farmers of Canada.

The decision, which took effect in January, delayed the DFC 2018 budget as the national organization reworked staffing and commitments based on losing $37.5 million in 2018, the amount Ontario normally would have contributed. DFC had a budget of $89 million in 2017.

A large proportion of the DFC budget goes to national promotion and education.

Sorting out the new budgetary reality will continue with the 2019 budget, said Sylvie LaRose, DFC’s director of finance, at the DFC’s annual policy conference in Ottawa.

Ontario’s concerns with marketing and promotion at DFC started about six years ago, says Dairy Farmers of Ontario board chair Ralph Dietrich, who is also a DFC board member. “There was an increase in promotion fees to producers at that time. “There were questions on this from the producers’ perspective,” said Dietrich.

“They agreed with it, but conditionally, and one of the conditions was to see how the money was being spent and what is the return on the investments.”

The request for that information was made, but “unfortunately we did get what was required. We needed it as a board to pass it on to producers who were asking for it”

The lines of communication remain open and Ontario will continue to work with DFC on some promotion projects. DFO has expressed strong support for the rest of DFC’s mandate.
Livestock producers can defer sale proceeds

Livestock producers affected by drought, flood or excess moisture conditions in 2017 may be eligible for 2017 tax relief.

Agriculture Canada on Feb. 6 released the final list of regions designated under the Livestock Tax Deferral Provision, adding regions in British Columbia and Saskatchewan.

The initial list, posted Nov. 6, 2017, also listed regions in B.C., Alberta, Saskatchewan and Quebec.

The provisions allow livestock producers to defer a portion of 2017 sale proceeds of breeding livestock producers to defer a portion of 2017 income, thereby reducing the tax burden associated with the original sale," Agriculture Canada said in a news release.

To be eligible, livestock producers must be within one of the designated areas and request the deferral on their 2017 tax return.

"Extreme weather and natural disasters created significant challenges for many Canadian livestock producers in 2017," said Agriculture Minister Lawrence MacAulay. "This tax deferral will help producers manage the impacts of the adverse weather, while focusing on rebuilding their herds in the coming year."

Drought caused pasture and feed shortages in the four designated provinces in 2017 and some producers reduced their herds because of it.

For more information visit bit.ly/2HI1BQ.

India hikes chickpea duty again

WINNIPEG (CNS) — The Indian government has raised the import tariff for chickpeas from 30 to 40 percent.

The government said the tariff, which was published in the Gazette of India Feb. 6, is to be imposed immediately with existing circumstances making it necessary. Chickpea prices have continued to fall over the last six months, according to reports out of the country.

India imposed a 30 percent tariff on imports of chickpeas and lentils Dec. 21, which had followed a 50 percent tariff on pea imports Nov. 8 — the maximum allowed under World Trade Organization rules.

The tariffs were set to support Indian farmers who faced lower commodity prices following large world crops of pulses. India had a good monsoon rain this growing season, and the country is expecting large crops as the harvest approaches.

Indian government has previously said it wants to reach self-sufficiency for pulses, but many analysts have said that isn’t possible because the country relies on variable monsoon rains for its growing season.

The Indian government has raised its import tariff on chickpeas by 10 percent in attempt to bolster prices for its own farmers. | FILE PHOTO

Horses surrendered to SPCA

The Alberta SPCA has removed 25 horses from a property east of Taber, Alta., out of concern for their welfare.

SPCA communications manager Roland Lines confirmed Feb. 6 that the herd of saddle horses was voluntarily surrendered by the owner when the SPCA responded to reports of horses in distress.

“He was concerned for the horses being underweight,” said Lines, adding a veterinarian will be doing a full assessment of the animals’ health.

“Police could not search the property,” he said. “We don’t know what happened.”

An investigation by the SPCA is now under way, and Lines said he could release few other details. He could not speculate on the reasons for the horses’ condition.

“Some reports were that they’re underweight in terms of whether it was a medical condition versus lack of feed."

Farmers sell pulses before road bans hit

WINNIPEG (CNS) — Demand is picking up as pulse crop producers in Western Canada look to sell what’s left of last year’s crop before spring.

“(Farmers) need to get some cash flowing. They’ve got payments probably in February and March and then they want to beat the road bans,” said Allan Johnston with Johnston’s Grain in Welwyn, Sask.

Pulse prices dropped in the last few months of 2017 as India, a major buyer, placed import tariffs on peas, lentils and chickpeas. Johnston said producers had been waiting to see if prices would improve before selling.

“It’s just the reality of the marketplace and because of the tariffs and the hassle going on in India. I don’t think that’s going to go away too soon, either,” he said.

At Johnston’s Grain as of Feb. 6, red lentils were being bought at 17.5 to 18 cents per pound. Green lentils were higher at 29 to 30 cents per lb. Yellow peas were at $7 per bushel, to be picked up at the farm. Green peas were higher at $8.25 to $8.50 per bu.

“Those markets are all softer than what they were a few months ago, but it’s just the reality of the marketplace,” Johnston said.

At Raygen Commodities Inc. in Saskatoon, prices haven’t changed much since before Christmas when they dropped, according to Kent Anholt, although Anholt said India isn’t completely to blame for the price drop.

“(The tariffs weren’t?) a big thing because everybody knew India wasn’t really buying, so the tariffs were part of it but it’s an over-saturated market,” he said.

Producers around the world took notice after pulse crop prices rose in late 2015 and early 2016, which led to more pulse acres being planted, leading to large world stocks and making for an over-saturated market in 2017.
President of merged Potash and Agrium believes nitrogen and potash prices are on the rise

New Nutrien optimistic about fertilizer prices

The world’s largest fertilizer manufacturer and retailer is bullish on prices for 2018. Nutrien Ltd., which was formed by the merger of PotashCorp and Agrium Inc., said fertilizer markets have turned a corner after years of struggling with oversupply.

“The fundamentals for our business have improved, in particular the outlook for potash and nitrogen markets,” president Chuck Magro said during a conference call announcing the company’s fourth quarter 2017 results.

Crop nutrient prices remain affordable, which is expected to lead to robust demand for the products in the upcoming year. Global potash demand reached a record 64 million tonnes in 2017, up six percent from the previous year. Nutrien expects it could climb as high as 66 million tonnes in 2018. Magro said nitrogen fertilizer prices have firm with benchmark prices at the start of 2018 up 15 to 40 percent over the lows during the fourth quarter of 2017. That is partly because of the tailing of Chinese production caused by government regulation.

Magro said nitrogen fertilizer higher natural gas prices and the continued strength in coal prices. He views the Chinese situation as a structural change that will lead to reduced Chinese urea exports in the future. North American imports of urea were down by 50 percent, or one million tonnes, in the second half of 2017, more than offsetting the increase in domestic production during that period.

Magro said North American demand for nitrogen fertilizer is expected to be stable in 2018, but the reduced imports he expects tight supply of the product between now and spring. “Overall we anticipate an improved nitrogen market compared to 2017 based on the expectations for higher global energy prices, lower Chinese exports and demand growth absorbing recent capacity additions,” he said. His forecast is at odds with a recent report produced by Credit Suisse, a financial services company.

It is pessimistic about nitrogen fertilizer prices for the upcoming year because production capacity that was supposed to be operational in 2017 has been rolled into 2018. Credit Suisse is forecasting a 4.76 million tonnes of additional urea supply in 2018, which is more than the 4.6 million tonnes of urea that China exported in 2017. “Put simply, market headwinds many were anticipating in 2017 appear to be being pushed off by roughly a year, delaying any anticipated recovery,” stated the report.

Jason Newton, Nutrien’s director of market research, expects China to export three to four million tonnes of urea this year, which would be a 13 to 35 percent drop from last year.

Indian market softens

Meanwhile, India’s buying has yet despite depleted urea inventories that are down an estimated 500,000 to 600,000 tonnes from the previous year. “I’m a little bit surprised that we haven’t seen India come back in,” said Newton.

Magro said one reason potash demand is “robust” is that Brazil continues to move pastureland into cropland.

Another reason is that governments in India and China are starting to mandate soil tests, and the results have been “worrysome.” “Finally, they’re starting to see that if they don’t change the soil health dynamics it could have long-lasting implications,” he said.

One investment analyst asked if the company is considering permanently closing some of its smaller, less efficient potash mines in Saskatchewan and New Brunswick as it increases production at Rocanville, Sask., and other low cost mines.

Raf Sully, Nutrien’s president of potash, said that is definitely under consideration. “All of those things are on the table. We’re certainly looking at those options,” he said.

Production had already been cut at the company’s Cory, Allan and Lanigan mines before the formation of Nutrien. However, at least in the short term the company needs to keep all six of its Saskatchewan mines running.

Mike Frank, Nutrien’s president of retail, provided a 2018 price outlook for crop protection products. He said there will generally be price inflation, but it will be “lumpy” with some product prices increasing five to 10 percent while others will be flat.

Overall, he estimates there will be a two to three percent increase in crop protection products, while seed prices will remain flat.

www.JohnDeere.ca/Oil

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Pulse sector develops diversification plan to reduce reliance on Indian market

BY KAREN BRIERE
REGINA BUREAU

Canada has been too reliant on the Indian market for pulse exports, says Pulse Canada chief executive officer Gordon Bacon. That came home to roost in the last few months when India imposed tariffs. Pulse Canada intends to counteract that with a diversification strategy.

“We set a very specific target, saying that 25 percent of the demand for Canadian pulses has to come from new uses and new opportunities by 2025,” Bacon said at a Saskatchewan Pulse Growers regional meeting in Regina Feb. 5.

This would create two million tonnes of new demand, he added. Potential markets include more pulse rations in hog feed, adding pulses to snack foods to improve their nutritional quality and adding pulses to processed meat.

Bacon said adding more nutritional information to food labels is also a way to leverage more markets. For example, pasta with pulse content contains more fibre and protein than others. The labels could be expanded to include the carbon footprint of the ingredients.

He said that would be a uniquely Canadian opportunity. “Origins out of the Black Sea will not be able to supply this information,” he said.

It’s time to work co-operatively with other sectors, such as cereals and dairy, to provide what consumers are looking for, he said. Rather than developing a plant-based burger, Bacon said a beef hamburger containing 30 percent lentil flour offers half the fat, 50 percent more fibre and a 30 percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

Bacon said recent events in India aren’t the sole reason to develop additional markets, but they did provide the impetus to get moving. “The Indian government is a very interventionist government,” he said.

Pulse policy is important there because 67 percent of the population lives in rural areas, agriculture’s share of unemployment is 49 percent and yet agriculture is the main livelihood for 58 percent of the population, he said.

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Dairy farmers receive no assurances on NAFTA

Federal agriculture minister refuses to guarantee that renegotiated deal won’t grant more access to dairy market

BY JOHN GREIG
GLACIER FARMER

Dairy farmers sought assurances there would be no more access to Canada’s dairy market in the North American Free Trade Agreement, but federal Agriculture Minister Lawrence MacAulay would not provide them.

“Because of the NAFTA negotiations going on, we have to be careful what we say publicly,” MacAulay said at the Dairy Farmers of Canada’s policy conference in Ottawa after multiple questions on trade policy from farmers.

“I’ve been quite clear and publicly stated what I thought about what they [Americans] said what I thought about what they policy from farmers. After multiple questions on trade negotiations going on, we have to be careful what we say publicly,” MacAulay said at the Dairy Farmers of Canada’s policy conference in Ottawa after multiple questions on trade policy from farmers.

The U.S. proposal on supply management but has not been willing to guarantee that access to the Canadian dairy market will not be granted under a renegotiated NAFTA.

“The current agreement does not include dairy products. Dairy farmers pushed MacAulay on NAFTA because of American threats and Canada’s recent decision to join the Comprehensive Progressive Trans-Pacific Partnership. The United States was involved in the original TPP negotiations and part of the 3.25 percent access to Canada’s dairy market. The new agreement doesn’t include the U.S. but it also pulls out of it. However, the 3.25 percent access remains for other countries such as Australia and New Zealand, which at one time had to share it with the U.S.

That means dairy farmers will lose more market share than they expected to the U.S. under CPTPP and access to the Canadian dairy market is negotiated under NAFTA. Ralph Dietrich, chair of Dairy Farmers of Ontario, told MacAulay that he appreciated the remarks that dairy farming is a great industry and that it has a bright future. “But dairy farmers want assurance that work, “ he said.

MacAulay also refused to say if the government would have a program to help dairy farmers adjust to increased imports under CPTPP as it did under the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) between Europe and Canada. MacAulay highlighted the $250 million for processors and $100 million for processors in the CETA-adjustment fund. He said 500 projects have been approved worth $23.5 million.

More industry consultation is needed before a CPTPP adjustment program is created, MacAulay said. “We will come up with a program that will make the dairy industry stronger than it has ever been,” he said. “For me to just tell you that I’m going to have the solution right here and now, it would be totally inappropriate.”

Alberta ag minister talks trade in India

Minister will also raise fungicide issue and promote Canadian pulse products on trip

BY JEREMY SIMES
EDMONTON BUREAU

Alberta Agriculture Minister Oneil Carlier is heading to India to discuss looming trade and fumigation issues with that country.

While he said changing India’s mind immediately might be tough to do, he’s confident the province and the federal government can make some progress.

“I have no doubt India realizes the importance of the Canadian pulse crop to their economy and to the feeding of their people,” Carlier told reporters last week when he announced the travel plans. “With the federal government, we are able to continue doing what we can to turn that corner, so that we can get some of these trade issues favourable to our own producers here somewhere down the line.”

Carlier’s trip will occur a week ahead of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau’s trip to India. Carlier will be there from Feb. 10-17, while Trudeau will be there from Feb. 17-23. The trade issue between both countries has lasted for a few months.

Carlier said the province would like some of these issues to disappear, but we’re doing what we can.”

Last year, Alberta’s agriculture trade with India was worth $82 million. It’s the province’s largest market.

Carlier couldn’t say how the trade issue will affect the provincial economy because it’s too soon to know exactly how many acres of the crop will be seeded this year.

“It’s understandable a lot of producers might not plant the same amount of acreage if the prices are not what they were,” he said. “Time will tell after seeding and how many acres we get. It’s still a good crop to rotate in.”

While deliberations with India continue, the federal government hopes to expand markets for pulses.

Carlier recently announced that $575,000 will be available for three projects. The funds will be used to expand and find new markets for pulses in China, eastern Asia and the United States and to promote the crop to Canadian food service companies.

Carlier’s trip is expected to cost $36,500 and covers travel, meals, accommodation and hosting for him, his staff and two department officials. He said a highlight will be giving a keynote address to the Pulse Conference India.

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Discussion hits the spotlight as the Alberta Wheat Commission elects its first female director

BY JEREMY SIMES
EDMONTON BUREAU

The Alberta Wheat Commission elected its first female director at the FarmTech conference in Edmonton last week, a change that suggests the needle has moved slightly to get more women on ag boards.

The topic of diversifying boards was raised multiple times at the annual conference held Jan. 30 to Feb. 1. There was a panel dedicated to it, with female farm leaders encouraging women to step up if they know they’re ready for the job.

The Western Producer reported last November that only 12 percent of all board members on Prairie ag commissions that accept check-off dollars are women. The low number is in contrast to Statistics Canada data that shows nearly 50 percent of all farm operators are women, and debate has since swirled around whether commissions should do more to attract women to their boards.

Some have said they don’t want to enforce a gender balance, where half of the board is men and the other half women. Others argue that a gender balance policy promotes diversity, which ensures better decisions are made.

But Hannah Konschuh, who was newly elected to the province’s wheat commission, has a different view.

She doesn’t believe in setting a gender balance policy, but she said it’s important for organizations to actively diversify their boards.

“This debate over gender balance really detracts from the conversation we’re trying to have about the importance of diversity and ways to make it better,” said Konschuh, who farms near Chury, Alta. “I want to know that I’m there for my skills, experience and value, and I know that’s the case with this position.”

Of the three crop commissions that held their annual general meetings at FarmTech, Alberta wheat was the only one to newly elect a woman.

In Konschuh’s case, she said wheat commission leadership sought her out for the job because they knew she was interested and they knew they’re ready for the job.

Four of the six said they were buying less meat overall.

“It’s more cost than anything,” said one woman, while another said because the family income was limited while she is on maternity leave, the family had cut back on all sources of protein.

None of them said they evaluate the nutritional profile of their protein sources.

That surprised Joe Schwarcz, a chemist who heads McGill University’s Office for Science and Society. He addressed the Saskatchewan Beef Industry Conference before the panel and stayed to listen.

“I have no idea how that panel was selected but was surprised to hear that they based their decisions almost exclusively on price without mentioning health or nutrition,” he said. “Especially surprising because five out of six were significantly overweight.”

The panel was independently chosen to attend the conference and answer questions from the audience.

Three said they had never been on a farm while one had spent time at a grain farm and two others had both been on hog farms and one on dairy.

They get their information largely from social media and most said they tended toward ground beef because they didn’t know how to cook other cuts.

The panel was also asked about fast food and specifically A&W’s marketing campaign that promotes ‘no added hormones’ in its beef.

“I don’t pay attention,” said one woman.

“I know they’re there for one purpose, to target people who may be scared,” said Joe Schwarcz, a chemist who heads McGill University’s Office for Science and Society. He addressed the Saskatchewan Beef Industry Conference before the panel and stayed to listen.

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FEBRUARY 15, 2018 | WWW.PRODUCER.COM | THE WESTERN PRODUCER

TEAM RESOURCES

BETTY ANN DEOBALD, BSHeC

February, being Heart Month, brings increased focus on matters of the heart, and not just for romantic reasons. Heart disease statistics for women, from the Canadian Heart and Stroke Foundation, are alarming. Heart disease is the leading cause of premature death for women in Canada and in fact every 20 minutes a woman in Canada dies from heart disease. Women are five times more likely to die from heart disease than from breast cancer. Many women are family caregivers, for parents, spouses, children and neighbours. They often feel they need to keep it all together and don’t take time to stop and listen to their own bodies or voice their concerns about symptoms they are having. The best gift women can give to their family is to care for themselves.

The common signs of a heart attack are:
- chest discomfort, pressure, squeezing, fullness or pain, burning or heaviness
- sweating
- upper body discomfort, neck, jaw, shoulder, arms, back
- nausea
- shortness of breath
- light-headedness
- pressure or pain in the lower chest
- upper body discomfort, neck, jaw, shoulder, arms, back
- nausea
- shortness of breath
- light-headedness
- pressure or pain in the lower chest
- upper body discomfort, neck, jaw, shoulder, arms, back
- nausea
- shortness of breath
- light-headedness
- pressure or pain in the lower chest
- upper body discomfort, neck, jaw, shoulder, arms, back
- nausea
- shortness of breath
- light-headedness
- pressure or pain in the lower chest

Here are the procedures if you are experiencing the signs of a heart attack:
- Call 911 or your local emergency number immediately. Emergency personnel can start treatment en route to the hospital.
- If you feel symptoms, stop all activity, sit or lie down, in whatever position is most comfortable.
- If you have nitroglycerin take your normal dosage.
- Take an ASA tablet chew, if you are not allergic or intolerant, either one 325 mg tablet or two 81 mg tablets.
- Rest and wait, stay calm while waiting for help to arrive.
- Keep a list of your medications in your wallet and by the phone.
- Emergency personnel will want this information.

Witnessing signs of a cardiac arrest? Here’s what to do:
- Call 911, or your local emergency number right away.
- Yell for an AED. While you do CPR, someone else can fetch an external defibrillator (AED). AEDs are often in public places. The AED operator may be able to locate the nearest one.
- Start CPR. Push hard and fast in the centre of the chest.
- Don’t be afraid of doing it wrong. Doing CPR, even if not perfect, gives the victim the best chance. You can’t hurt. You can only help. Source: www.heartandstroke.ca

Heart healthy foods

Include the following suggestions in meals to make them more heart healthy.
- Choose omega-3 rich foods like salmon, mackerel and flax seed.
- Include more vegetables and fruit, up to 10 servings a day, because they are good sources of vitamins and minerals, rich in dietary fibre and antioxidants. Spinach, blueberries and pomegranate juice are all top choices. A diet high in soluble fibre can help lower blood cholesterol and reduce risk of heart disease. Antioxidants prevent free radicals from damaging body cells.
- Snack on nuts and seeds. Studies show that they can reduce cholesterol levels. High cholesterol is a risk factor for heart disease.
- Enjoy a little dark chocolate or a five-ounce glass of red wine — they contain flavonoids and antioxidants, which may reduce the risk of heart disease and stroke. Choose 70 percent dark chocolate, which has twice the heart-healthy phytonutrient content of red wine and three times that of green tea.
- Include a daily brisk walk; exercise is good for your heart.

LEMONY SALMON QUINOA TOSS

Salmon is an excellent source of vitamin D and heart-healthy omega-3 fatty acids.

Prep time 20 minutes. Serves four.

1 c. quinoa, rinsed, can use a combination of white and red quinoa 250 mL
2 c. sodium-reduced vegetable broth 500 mL
1/2 tsp. salt 2 mL divided
1/4 c. chopped fresh parsley 60 mL
12 oz. skinless salmon fillets cut in 1-inch (2.5 cm) cubes 350 g
1/4 tsp. pepper 1 mL
1/2 tsp. olive oil 2 mL
1 tbsp. Dijon mustard 15 mL
1/2 tsp. grated lemon zest 15 mL
1 tsp. lemon juice 5 mL
1 tbsp. honey 15 mL
1 tbsp. ground flax seed 15 mL

Rinse quinoa well under running water and drain in the natural bitter seed coating.

In saucepan, bring quinoa, broth, pepper and half of the salt to boil over high heat; reduce heat, cover and simmer until quinoa is tender and no liquid remains, about 15 minutes. Remove from heat; stir in parsley.

Meanwhile, sprinkle salmon with pepper and remaining salt. In large nonstick skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat; cook salmon, stirring often, until golden, about five minutes. Using slotted spoon, remove salmon to plate. Set aside.

In same skillet, cook onion, stirring occasionally, until softened, about four minutes. Add spinach, lemon zest, lemon juice, honey and mustard. Cook, stirring occasionally, until spinach is wilted, about two minutes.

Stir half of the spinach mixture into quinoa. Add salmon to remaining spinach mixture, stirring to coat. Serve over quinoa mixture.

Adapted from www.canadianliving.com

HEART HEALTHY SNACK

Serves four.

1/4 c. Chips Inspirations
70% dark chocolate pieces 60 mL
1/2 c. mixed shelled nuts, unsalted 125 mL
1/4 c. blueberries, dried 60 mL
2 tbsp. pumpkin seeds, unsalted 30 mL
2 tbsp. sunflower seeds, shelled and unsalted 30 mL

Place all ingredients in a sealable plastic bag. Seal bag and shake to mix. Pack in sealable bags to take along as a snack or serve with a glass of red wine or pomegranate juice.

BETTY ANN DEOBALD PHOTO
Sask. ranch learns from adversity

The weather didn’t co-operate last year, but then this ranch shone at Agribition

BY WILLIAM DEKAY
SASKATOON NEWSROOM

CORONACH, Sask. — The Elders’ purebred Charolais have garnered their share of slaps and banners in the show ring.

“This year at (Canadian Western) Agribition in 2017, we won the Charolais barn and then the president’s classic, which is an all-breed bull calf show,” said Mike Elder.

“We were fortunate to be slapped champion. That was a very proud moment for the farm.”

Mike and Judy Elder co-own Elder Charolais with Mike’s parents, Ron Elder and Donna Ross.

Since starting Elder Charolais in 1991, the family’s purebred operation has steadily grown in size and reputation.

Mike and Judy’s three children represent the fifth generation of Elders: Cassidi, 14, Keanan, 12, and Klay, 9, attend school in nearby Coronach.

The family grain farms about 3,500 acres and last year’s major crops included canola, durum, kabuli chickpeas and large green lentils.

They also run about 150 purebred Charolais cattle, as well as 100 Red Angus Simmental cross cows that they breed back to Charolais.

Their annual sale of 40 yearling bulls is held in March at their Coronach farm and draws buyers from across Canada and the United States.

“Ron and Mike are exceptional at looking after cattle and genetics and picking out those genetics and trying to provide the best that we can for our customers and aim to use our breeding program to meet our customers’ needs,” said Donna.

Added Mike: “I think where Elder Charolais is today is because of dedication, hard work and pride built up through my grandpa and grandma and then Mom and Dad and then my wife and kids.”

Leading up to the March 22 sale, January and February are some of the busiest months for the family and farm.

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ON THE FARM

The Elder family poses with some of their purebred Charolais. Sitting are Keanan, left, 12, Klay, 9 and Cassidi, 14. Standing are Donna, left, Ron, Mike and Judy. | WILLIAM DEKAY PHOTOS

THE ELDER FAMILY
Coronach, Sask.

Ron Elder gathers twine from a straw bale while family members spread it out for newborn calves.
Purebred calves are being born and processed daily, bulls and cows need to be fed, as well as a host of other chores that need tending throughout the day. Weeknights and weekends are also absorbed with the children’s extracurricular activities in Coronach and outlying communities. “If they’re not playing hockey, basketball, dance or 4H there’s chores to do,” said Mike, who also sits on the Canadian Charolais Association board. However, the family was reminded last year that hard work can’t compete with what Mother Nature dishes out, and 2017 proved to be one of the more stressful times in the family’s farming history. The Coronach area was hard hit by drought. Add to that, many crops in the area were hit by a killing frost and severe hail damage in July. "We got touched by hail on all of our grain land, anywhere from 25 to 100 percent on every quarter. But we have hail insurance too,” said Mike. "We’re just fortunate in our area where we can grow some lentils and kabuli chickpeas where prices have been at all-time highs the last two years. So even on a year like 2017 with the drought and the hail we still made out OK,” he said.

However, dismal hay production was another story and tough decisions had to be made in July. Ron said they decided in July that they would either have to sell cows or buy feed. They opted to keep the cows. Since he started farming in the 1970s, Ron said 2017 was the most challenging year he has ever seen for feed because they had to buy 1,000 hay bales and 500 big square bales of straw.

However, Donna and Mike say hard times have a role to play in life as well as the good times. In fact, they say perhaps struggle is a better teacher. "You have to remind yourself to be grateful for what you do have," said Donna. Mike said going through a drought like last year’s helps build character. “You hope you don’t get them on back-to-back years, but you just deal with it and push on. You do all the work, you do everything right and then Mother Nature just didn’t co-operate. So, you’ve just got to deal with it and put it behind you. "You can’t change the weather and there’s not one thing I would have done any different last growing season. You put it in the ground again and see what happens.”

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"I think it was a great decision to use Zone Spray, it’s a very efficient way of applying fungicides and I’d recommend it to other farmers.”
- James Jackson, Grower, Jarvie, Alberta

To learn more about Zone Spray, and sign up, visit digitalfarming.ca

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Snow creates winter playground for farm kids

The farm gives lots of space for kids to play, and my childhood was no different. For my brother and me, our farmyard was one giant playground of bush, junkyard, tall trees to climb, water to get soaked in, and of course, a barn and bale stack to re-explore. Each new season had its characteristic qualities and my brother and I relished it all, especially our Canadian winters with its changing snowscapes and weather.

Being nine years old, tunnelling in the snow was the most fun. With anticipation, we’d eye the places where big drifts usually developed. We’d watch for the depth we needed and the hard crust on top. To start, we might dig into the side or top depending on the shape of the drift. No tools required, we’d poke a hole with our boot, then start digging...

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We spent a lot of time outdoors. Our land was too flat for good sledding hills but we’d go to the dugout and slide down one side. Not a long run, but still fun for nine year olds.

In our first winter of tunnelling, we worked together on one, but in later years, we built separate burrows to suit our tastes. We were becoming connoisseurs of the snow tunnel. It entertained us for hours, a benefit for which I’m sure our mother was grateful. I liked to go in and curl up, pretending I was a mouse under the snow. I’d listen to the birds, the cows and sometimes, the wind outside. Inside my little hole, the sunlight filtered through and it was absolutely silent except for my own breathing and noises outside. To help us out and keep our holes from blowing in, Dad gave us pieces of plywood to lay over top of the doorways. A couple of times, we tried building a snow house, but our feeble skill and the low density of the snow always failed us.

We spent a lot of time outdoors. Our land was too flat for good sledding hills but we’d go to the dugout and slide down one side. Not a long run, but still fun for nine year olds. We had to get Dad’s permission after he checked the ice for thickness because invariably the sled took us out to the middle. The aluminum, circular Flying Saucer-style sleds we got for Christmas one year were the best at gliding over the snow and tough enough to last through our childhood. Eventually, one was forgotten on the ice and sank to the bottom in spring. It’s probably still there. Other, newer innovations that followed the saucers didn’t work as well, but a sturdy cardboard box slid on the snow better than some purchased sleds, and it was all right if they eventually crumpled after a lot of good fun.

We also liked to skate on the dugout but it appeared lower on our list because of the work to clear the snow off the ice. Cleaning it filled an afternoon and dampened our enthusiasm until we grew bigger. After I started figure skating, I had more incentive to give myself a place to practice, and by then I was a teenager so it was easier work. If we wanted to get creative with snow clearing, we’d make a circle or figure eight and leave the snow in the middle for another day. Practicing turns, backward skating and figures, or games like tag filled our afternoons. A backward race, anyone?

We were always sent scrambling to the banks by the booming sounds of the ice cracking. We never seemed to learn not to panic, but caution was preferable to the alternative. We never broke through.

Neighbour skating parties on a slough or lake also serve as great memories. Square bales were still plentiful then, and they made good benches with a plank across them, arranged in a circle with a fire in the centre.

Skating at night with friends on unfamiliar ice held enticing fun we seldom got a chance to experience. Sometimes someone played music with our mittened hands.

Tobogganing never gets old. The author’s mother has fun as a teenager with friends in 1937.
from a vehicle or on a portable player. Of course, there was food and hot chocolate. Games like fox-and-goose were always good fun.

Later, the next generation enjoyed their own variations to many of the games we once played. Hide-and-seek had new appeal in winter because snow drifts and sometimes whole blocks of snow turned up after grading. Flowing the road after a storm created such high blocks in a lunar-like landscape that my kids played for hours after getting off the school bus before coming into the house. They had tunnels, too, caves and forts built by stacking blocks.

In the spring, the snow gives all farm kids new fun in the form of little streams running across the barnyard. The slope of the land on Dad’s farm gave my brother and I a wonderful mix of mud and running water. We armed ourselves with a long stick to move obstacles out, widen our streams in places and give us a sense of importance. The cows didn’t mind our activity among them and gave us room. A short piece of twig became a boat to float down river. A gully ran with water through our yard in spring. Many times, we went in for supper and stood our soaked boots upside-down over the furnace vent because we had gone in too far, allowing the icy water to run into them.

Children may like to pretend they are mice living under the snow but in reality, they don’t have a mouse’s protective coat and circulatory system.

My brother and I used up several variations of winter clothing, but no matter the style, layers always work best, allowing us to enjoy endless fun on our giant farm playground during our wonderful Canadian winters.

Trudeau talks tough on NAFTA

Prime minister says he’s prepared to walk away from deal

NANAIMO, B.C. (Reuters) — Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau took a tough line on the North American Free Trade Agreement on Feb. 2, repeating that he could walk away if he was not happy with talks to change the pact.

“The negotiations are complex and challenging ... I’ve said many times, we are not going to take any old deal,” Trudeau told a sometimes raucous event in Nanaimo on Vancouver Island.

“Canada is willing to walk away from NAFTA if the United States proposes a bad deal.”

“We will not be pushed around. At the same time, we can remain confident about NAFTA,” he said, adding that if Washington walked away from the deal, it would be “extremely harmful and disruptive” to both the United States and Canada.

Canada and Mexico are striving to address U.S. demands for NAFTA reform, which they argue threaten the integrated North American economy.

A senior U.S. trade official previously rejected proposals for unblocking the negotiations but pledged to seek “breakthroughs,” easing concerns that Washington would soon withdraw from the $1.2 trillion North American Free Trade Agreement.

Trudeau said he did not think U.S. President Donald Trump would pull out of NAFTA, despite slow progress at the talks.

During the Nanaimo event, Trudeau was interrupted by hecklers angry that his Liberal government approved a plan by Kinder Morgan Canada to increase the capacity of an oil pipeline from Alberta through British Columbia.

Police removed at least three demonstrators, who complained the risk of a spill was too great to allow the project to continue. Trudeau repeated that the pipeline would be built.
FARM FRESH

NIKKI WIART

I once interviewed a pair of farmers who described their operation as a “regenerative-agriculture, soil-building, carbon-sequestration, grass-fed meats, pastured poultry, direct-to-consumer farm.”

Being in the thick of it, I didn’t think twice about the litany of adjectives that described their farm.

From supermarkets to farmers markets, food eaters are inundated with ag buzzwords: organic, non-certified organic, non-GMO, non-sprayed, gluten-free, ecological, agroecological, grass-fed, grass-finished, dynamic, fair trade, pastured, free-range, free-run, cage-free, and many more.

All of these labels mean something, but that something is sometimes hard to define, and is often defined differently by different people.

That’s why one of the largest grocery chains in the world, Walmart, is currently facing a class-action lawsuit for selling organic eggs purportedly laid by hens with “outdoor access,” which consumers thought meant the hens were taking dust baths and chasing dragonflies and scratching up worms. What it really meant was the hens had a screen on their cages that allowed them to see the outdoors.

Being fluent in the language of labeling is challenging and now, the Government of Alberta wants consumers to broaden their lexicon to include another word: local.

Local seems fairly simple, right? To me, it means buying a side of beef from your ranching neighbour instead of a pound here or a pound there from the grocery store. It means finding a hobby beekeeper and buying a jar of raw honey fresh from the hive.

In a new piece of legislation, to be tabled this spring, the Alberta government is defining local food as something along the lines of “food grown, made and/or harvested in Alberta and then marketed in Alberta.”

That means, if you live in Lloydminster, tomatoes grown in Lethbridge are more “local” than tomatoes grown in North Battleford, Sask. If you live in Calgary, chicken from Fort McMurray is more “local” than chicken from Kamloops, B.C.

As it stands, the Local Food Act consists of four pillars: the definition of local, the proclamation of a Local Food Week; enhancement of the local; the proclamation of local; the formation of existing federal organic certification of local produce.

Renato Gandia, press secretary for Agriculture Minister Oneil Carlier, said in an email the government is in the process of reviewing what it heard at roundtable sessions on the Local Food Act in Leduc, Lethbridge, Airdrie and Grande Prairie, as well as the public feedback it received online.

“We’re always exploring ways to connect Alberta consumers and the producers of the fine food we have in this province,” he wrote, adding that, at this point, no decisions have been made.

In my capacity as a producer of local food (and someone who markets their goods that way already), I took part in the roundtable discussion in Leduc, along with other producers, industry stakeholders, and government officials.

The conversation was good, the people were interesting and intelligent and I genuinely applaud the government for its commitment in supporting local.

But despite all of that, I left the session feeling confused as to what the act would actually do for me, and for consumers, besides add another word for them to navigate.

As simple as supporting local food may seem, it raises some questions: what does this act do for larger producers, the ones producing on an export scale?

What does it do for the super small producers, the ones who have already been using the word local to differentiate themselves from medium- to large-scale direct-to-consumer producers?

What does it mean to sell something as local if it doesn’t affect the local environment in a meaningful and responsible way?

Tianna Albrecht, a local food enthusiast and board member of Eat Alberta, a non-profit dedicated to promoting and educating Albertans about local food (and someone who marketed their goods that way already), said teaching consumers how to source local food is more effective than giving them a definition.

“Be aware of sustainable farming,” she said. “Be aware of the fossil fuels used during transportation of fruits and vegetables and food. Be aware of the importance of supporting the local economy and then go out and do that in whatever way works for you.”

She thinks the legislation is missing the point as to why local food is important because a consumer’s definition of local will differ just as much as consumers differ from one another.

“The closer you can get things, the better.”

The best way to be committed to the local food movement, and really know where your food is coming from, is to know who is producing it. Otherwise, a made-in Alberta sticker means very little.

Nikki Wiart is a new farmer living in Castor, Alta., setting up a bee hive, raising chickens, pigs and selling honey.

What will Alberta’s proposed law mean for ‘local?’

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Construction continues on G3 network

Vancouver terminal ahead of schedule, and additional locations identified

BY BRIAN CROSS
SASKATOON NEWSROOM

G3’s dream of building a coast-to-coast grain-handling network in Canada is moving closer to reality, with key elements under construction and additional facilities likely to be announced in the future.

Brett Malkoske, G3’s vice-president of business development and communications, said construction of the company’s new high-throughput export terminal in North Vancouver will be ahead of schedule with the first grain expected at the facility in 2019.

“We’re very pleased with progress at the west coast terminal to date,” Malkoske said.

“We’re now on track to start receiving grain into the facility...in 2019, to start to settle the bins and it looks like it will be an early 2020 commissioning.”

Located on the North Shore of the Burrard Inlet, G3’s export terminal is being billed as the most efficient grain export facility on the West Coast, capable of handling eight million tonnes of grain annually.

It will be the first new export terminal built at the Port of Vancouver, Canada’s busiest, in the past 50 years.

Thirty-two of the facility’s 48 concrete grain silos have been poured and work is starting on the scale house attached to the silos.

“The site is really starting to take shape and you can really start to see the vision coming into a more tangible (form),” Malkoske said.

G3 officials told Reuters that as much as three million tonnes of annual export capacity at the terminal will be made available to other grain companies and exporters under commercial agreements.

Most of G3’s west coast capacity will be reserved for grain collected through G3’s inland terminals, including recently opened loop-track elevators at Pasqua, Sask., Colonsay, Sask., Bloom, Man., and Glenlea, Man.

Two additional high throughput elevators are under construction near Melville, Sask., and Saskatoon. The company has also identified five additional sites in Manitoba and Saskatchewan, although G3’s board has not formally announced plans to develop those sites.

The five potential sites are Vermillion, Alta., Morinville, Alta., Wataskiwin, Alta., Carmangay, Alta., and Maidstone, Sask.

“Certainly, no final investment decisions from our board have been made (related to those sites),” Malkoske said.

“But I can confirm we have secured land in those areas and are progressing quite rapidly through the different regulatory processes, as well as engineering and design processes that we have to go through,” he continued.

“But I’ll stress again that no formal investment decisions have been made.”

G3 Global Holdings is a limited partnership between the Saudi Agricultural Livestock and Investment Company (SALIC) and Bunge Canada.

It is the parent company of G3 Canada, which controls assets that were formerly owned by the Canadian Wheat Board.

G3 Terminal Vancouver will feature a rail loop track capable of unloading three, 134-car trains, a component that’s unique among existing grain export terminals in Canada.

The facility will include more than 180,000 tonnes of storage and will be able to handle cereal grains, oilseeds, pulses and special crops.

The design will allow prairie grain trains to travel to Vancouver, unload while in continuous motion and travel back to G3 Canada’s primary elevators without detaching from their locomotives.

With loop track access at its inland elevators and at its future export terminal, G3 will have the ability to load 134-car unit trains in the country, move them directly to port, unload in six hours, and return to the country for another load.

“This will reduce cycle times by up to 40 percent and increase the velocity and volume of grain that can move through the port,” G3 Canada chief executive officer Karl Gerrand told The Western Producer in 2017.

G3 has a busy construction plan.

We’re now on track to start receiving grain into the facility...in 2019, to start to settle the bins and it looks like it will be an early 2020 commissioning. – Brett Malkoske, G3 vice-president of business development and communications.

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“Certianly, no final investment decisions from our board have been made (related to those sites),” Brett Malkoske, G3 vice-president of business development and communications, said.

“The facility will include more than 180,000 tonnes of storage and will be able to handle cereal grains, oilseeds, pulses and special crops.” – Brett Malkoske, G3 vice-president of business development and communications.
A LATE DINNER GUEST

BY KAREN BRIERE
REGINA BUREAU

Canadian farmers are known for their ability to adapt but they will need continued investments to help them find climate change solutions, organizations told the House of Commons agriculture committee recently.

Producers are feeling the effects of climate change in different ways, said Andrea Brocklebank, executive director of the Beef Cattle Research Council at the Canadian Cattlemen’s Association. For example, she said cold winters traditionally prevented parasites and diseases from surviving but producers can no longer count on that.

She told the committee that dog ticks that can carry anaplasmosis, which causes abortion, anemia and productivity losses, used to be found only in southern Manitoba and eastern Saskatchewan.

"Recent research has found this tick further north in Manitoba and as far west as Alberta," she said. "Widespread ticks will make it much easier for anaplasmosis to spread."

That is just one example of the animal health and welfare implications of climate change.

More extreme weather events increase the risk of crop failure at a time when increased productivity is required. More land might be converted to pastures as a result, Brocklebank said. This points to the need for investment in forage and grassland research.

"Government can play an important role in building resiliency to climate change through research by fully funding the proposed third beef science cluster, and furthermore, we recommend the funding of the smart agri-food supercluster, investing in long-term higher risk discovery research and investing in critical research infrastructure and capacity," she told the committee.

CCA also advocates improved hay and forage insurance that could replace calls for AgriRecovery after a weather-related disaster.

"Government can play an important role in building resiliency to climate change through research by fully funding the proposed third beef science cluster, and furthermore, we recommend the funding of the smart agri-food supercluster, investing in long-term higher risk discovery research and investing in critical research infrastructure and capacity," she told the committee.

CCA and CFA both spoke to the need for improved disaster response programs.

Brocklebank said the program has to be sufficiently funded and consistently delivered. AgriRecovery has been used in several cases of weather-related disasters but not all of them. She said it must contain clear triggers.

"Historically, AgriRecovery’s dependence on political decision-making during a disaster has compounded confusion in challenging times and made planning for disasters enigmatic for producers," she said.

She said producers have to make decisions quickly during a disaster and don’t often know if funding is available at all and what is eligible.

Bonnett said program designers also should consider that disasters aren’t necessarily one-time events.

"Sometimes a disaster is something that goes on gradually and you wouldn’t have a disaster declaration," he said. "It can be a progression of events."

The agriculture committee is studying climate change and water and soil conservation and is likely to commit this week to studying rural mental health.
Implementing farm safety rules not hard: consultant

Some farmers in Alberta are concerned they don’t have enough resources and say they need help to implement programs.

BY JEREMY SIMES
EDMONTON BUREAU

As Alberta farmers and ranchers gear up for new safety rules, consultants hope to ease their concerns by providing solutions they say will make the new guidelines workable.

For one, a binder on a shelf just isn’t going to cut it, according to Reg Steward, a ranch safety consultant with AgSafe B.C. Instead, he recommends producers equip themselves with easy-to-follow checklists.

A checklist can be attached to a head gate and workers would go through the list before walking in to the cattle, ticking off each item as a reminder and to show the tasks were done.

“The really important part is to realize that a lot of the things you’re doing are right. The problem is most producers don’t have that proof that they did it. These checklists ensure there is proof and that proof is necessary in case someone gets injured or worse,” Steward said.

But another problem is some farmers and ranchers aren’t sure where to start with their safety programs.

Karen Rosvold, a cattle producer and councillor with the County of Grande Prairie, said she’s worried smaller operators lack the resources to create safety programs, and they will need help from organizations like AgSafe Alberta.

“We need help to build these programs and have them easily in place,” she said. “It’s very important. Every farmer strives to have a safe workplace for their family because most are still family farms.”

While the new safety rules will apply only to farms and ranches with employed staff, families are welcome to take part in the program if they want to.

Checklists are available for Alberta farmers and ranchers at agsafe-ab.ca, and producers can bring in an AgSafe Alberta safety consultant free of charge to develop a program that works for them.

“What we always encourage producers to do is start small and build the program over time,” said Donna Trotter, an extension co-ordinator with AgSafe Alberta. “They don’t have to introduce the full program right away. We want them to pick the issues and work with those first because that will help improve the safety of their farms.”

Rosvold said she’s glad to know there will be help.

“You’re already talking to your crew before everyone goes out to combine the field. That’s your safety program,” she said. “But instead of doing it all verbally, now we’ll have to have it on a checklist. AgSafe can help with that, so that’s a big relief.”

Steward said these new safety programs can show the public that producers really do care about their people.

“Society doesn’t think upon farming operations with the sympathy they used to when mishaps and fatalities occurred,” he said. “We need to wise up to that. We need to make sure we’re demonstrating ourselves in this area of safety the same way we’ve shown ourselves to be responsible with the environment and with livestock stewardship.”

Alberta’s new farm safety rules are currently under review. Producers looking to provide feedback can visit www.alberta.ca/farm-and-ranch.aspx.

The deadline to submit a response is Feb. 26.

jeremy.simes@producer.com

Reg Steward, a consultant with AgSafe B.C., helps ranchers implement safety programs for their operations. [PHOTO SUPPLIED BY REG STEWARD]
Poor farmer ‘myth’ targeted

U.S. gov’t data shows 97 percent of farm households fall into high income/high wealth category

BY ROBERT ARNASON
WINNIPEG BUREAU

OTTAWA — Most people have a favourite actor or a favourite hockey player. It’s more unusual to have a favourite agricultural economist, but Barry Goodwin has one that he especially likes.

“My favourite Canadian agricultural economist — Neil Young of Farm Aid. Save the family farm,” said Barry Goodwin, a professor of agricultural economics at North Carolina State University.

Goodwin’s line about the famous singer generated few laughs and many smiles at the Canadian Agri-Food Policy Conference, held in late January in Ottawa.

Young and musician Willie Nelson may believe that U.S. farm families are suffering and eating gruel for supper, but the facts don’t back that up, Goodwin said.

Data from the Economic Research Service, a division of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, shows that farm households in the United States have much higher incomes than the average American household. Instead, they should be compared to other businesses. Others said farmers take on more risk than the average American. Instead, they shouldn’t be compared to the average American. Instead, they

things aren’t so bad, Goodwin said. “I think the generosity of these programs and the fact that the farm sector is doing quite well is starting to be noticed by the non-farm segment of society.”

A few economists at the Ottawa meeting pushed back against Glauber. One said the income of farmers shouldn’t be compared to average Americans. Instead, they should be compared to other businesses. Others said farmers take on a lot of risk, so they should receive different treatment.

BARRY GOODWIN
NORTH CAROLINA STATE UNIVERSITY

From 2007 to 2016, canola growers in North Dakota received $420 million in government subsidies, including $280 million in crop insurance subsidies. In 2015 and 2016, they received $122 million through the Price Loss Coverage program, where the government pays producers if the canola price drops below a reference price of $10.075 per bu.

Total North Dakota canola subsidy payments, 1995-2016 (US.):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Amount (US. 1995-2016)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Loan deficiency payments</td>
<td>$131,954,385</td>
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<tr>
<td>Price loss coverage</td>
<td>122,430,580</td>
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<tr>
<td>Direct payments</td>
<td>68,643,862</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oilseed program payments</td>
<td>11,343,095</td>
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<tr>
<td>Market gains</td>
<td>2,955,287</td>
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<tr>
<td>Direct payments</td>
<td>1,208,968</td>
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<tr>
<td>Risk coverage (counties)</td>
<td>217,208</td>
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<tr>
<td>Risk coverage (individuals)</td>
<td>9,082</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct payment violations</td>
<td>-284</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loan deficiency refunds</td>
<td>-615,676</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Environmental Working Group farm subsidy database  |  WP GRAPHIC

Goodwin doubts the legislation will pass, but it’s indicative of the changing mood in Washington around farm subsidies.

“I think the generosity of these programs and the fact that the farm sector is doing quite well is starting to be noticed by the non-farm segment of society.”

A few economists at the Ottawa meeting pushed back against Glauber. One said the income of farmers shouldn’t be compared to average Americans. Instead, they

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robert.arnason@producer.com

Individual results may vary and performance may vary from location to location and from year to year. This result may not be an indicator of results you may obtain as local growing, soil and weather conditions may vary. Growers should evaluate data from multiple来源s and pests whenever possible.

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Prairie oat production migrating northeast

BY BRIAN CROSS
SAKATOON NEWSROOM

Canadian farmers produced more than 3.7 million tonnes of oats in 2017, the third highest total in the past decade, according to Statistics Canada.

Provincially, Saskatchewan was the country’s biggest producer last year, harvesting almost two million tonnes, or roughly 53 percent of Canada’s total tonnage.

That’s good news for the Saskatchewan oat industry.

But it also suggests that farmers in other provinces are becoming less inclined to grow oats, a trend that hasn’t gone unnoticed by oat market analyst Randy Strychar.

“We’ve seen a pretty dynamic shift (in oat production) over the last 10 years, but particularly over the last five years,” Strychar said.

“Essentially in the oat market, all the activity — production, yields and everything — is basically moving north and west.”

“It’s moving out of … Manitoba, out of southern Saskatchewan and, out of Alberta … into northern Saskatchewan.”

During a recent presentation to growers in Saskatoon, Strychar used maps to show how oat production has been migrating toward northeastern Saskatchewan.

Twenty-five delivery points in Western Canada account for 70 percent of all commercial oat deliveries on the Prairies, Strychar said.

Of those, 17 are located in eastern or northeastern Saskatchewan, within a 200 kilometre radius of Quill Lake, Sask.

The expansion of corn and soybean acres, particularly in Manitoba and southern Saskatchewan, has been a key factor.

“It’s corn and beans that are moving oat acres north and west,” he said.

“There’s better returns for corn and beans,” he continued.

“Farmers are putting more of those two crops in the ground. And, oats are … a better northern tier crop. (They like) warm days and cool nights.”

The concentration of oat acres in northeastern Saskatchewan means that nulling oats grown in the West must often be shipped further to reach processors in Canada and the United States.

Another concern is beta glucan levels.

In general, beta glucan levels in Saskatchewan-grown oats are lower than those in Manitoba-grown oats.

Beta-glucan is a key consideration for processors and food manufacturers because edible oat products must meet a certain beta-glucan threshold to carry Heart Healthy labels.

In general, processors want oats that have beta glucan in the range of 4.5 to five percent, said Aaron Beattie, an oat and barley breeder at the University of Saskatchewan’s Crop Development Centre in Saskatoon.

Some of the more popular oat varieties grown in northeastern Saskatchewan have struggled to meet the 4.5 percent threshold.

“It’s a little bit about varietal choice but it’s also about the environmental conditions there,” Beattie said.

“Varieties grown in the southern tier of Saskatchewan so that generally means that the oat grains are accumulating a lot more starch, which is basically diluting the concentrations of beta glucan in the grain.”

When it comes to varietal selection, AC Morgan, a solid performer in terms of yield, continues to be one of the more popular varieties grown in northeastern Saskatchewan.

But according to Beattie, AC Morgan is also a variety that tends to have relatively low beta glucan levels, barely hitting the minimum of what end-users are looking for.

“Something like Morgan would probably be struggling to hit that 4.5 percent level on a consistent basis,” Beattie said.

“If growers moved on to some of the newer varieties, they would be a bit safer in terms of hitting closer to that five percent mark…”

AC Morgan has been around for a long time and has consistently ranked among the highest yielding oat varieties in Saskatchewan trials.

Growers also like its straw strength, which reduces lodging under high moisture growing conditions.

In Saskatchewan, Morgan was the most widely grown oat variety in Saskatchewan last year, accounting for 13 percent of all insured oat acres in the province, according to the Canadian Grain Commission’s 2017 Insured Acreage Report.

In recent years, oat breeders have been aiming at developing new oat varieties that offer big yields, strong straw and high beta glucan.

Newer varieties such as Summit, Camden CS, Triactor and Norseman are starting to catch on with growers in northeastern Saskatchewan, but the transition is taking time.

Researchers are taking a closer look at oat agronomy to determine which practices might be linked to higher beta glucan production.

Higher nitrogen rates, for example, can boost beta glucan content but can also contribute to yield losses and lodging. Seeding rates are another factor.

Beattie said most commercial oat buyers don’t offer premiums for beta glucan.

“As a result, many growers continue to focus on yield, rather than beta-glucan content.”

brian.cross@producer.com

Oats’ move to northeastern Saskatchewan has been occurring for the last five to 10 years. | FILE PHOTO

TOP OAT VARIETIES ON THE PRAIRIES IN 2017

Top varieties, by insured acres: Saskatchewan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variety</th>
<th>Insured Acres</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AC Morgan</td>
<td>185,858</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camden CS</td>
<td>130,606</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Not specified</td>
<td>116,050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Triactor</td>
<td>80,999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summit</td>
<td>57,077</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manitoba</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summit</td>
<td>158,597</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camden CS</td>
<td>126,615</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Souris</td>
<td>74,681</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pinnacle</td>
<td>12,493</td>
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<tr>
<td>*Not specified</td>
<td>8,055</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alberta</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>AC Morgan</td>
<td>94,868</td>
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<tr>
<td>AC Mustang</td>
<td>18,538</td>
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<tr>
<td>Derby</td>
<td>13,409</td>
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<tr>
<td>Camden CS</td>
<td>7,803</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDC Baler</td>
<td>7,019</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| *Farmers don’t have to specify the variety they are insuring.

Source: Canadian Grain Commission, MASC, SCIC, ATG
WINNIPEG (CNS) — When the Canadian Oilseed Processors Association announced Feb. 2 that it would no longer publish its weekly report on member crushings, the Canadian grains industry was shocked.

“I loved that report. In Western Canada, or Canada in general, I think any reports that give you kind of a weekly snapshot of what’s happening in terms of usage are important,” said Neil Townsend with FarmLink Marketing Solutions.

The report detailed how much canola and soybeans were crushed in Canada. It was sent out weekly and followed by different industry professionals across the country.

COPA executive director Chris Vervaet said on Feb. 5 that the decision came as part of COPA’s future plans for the organization.

“As an association, we’ve just decided to streamline our priorities for 2018 and the weekly publication was just something that we ranked a lower priority for us,” he said.

Farmers to lose transparency with end of COPA’s weekly report

The Canadian Oilseed Processors Association to stop publishing weekly crushing report; Statistics Canada data not as timely

COPA is a federally incorporated non-profit industry association that works in partnership with the Canola Council of Canada to represent Canadian oilseed processors. COPA’s members are ADM Agri-Industries, Bunge Canada, Cargill Ltd., Louis Dreyfus, Richardson Oilseed Ltd. and Viterra Oilseed Processing.

Last month, Richardson’s pulled its funding from the Canola Council of Canada and Soy Canada, stating it didn’t think it was getting value.

Vervaet said the decision to end the crush report was unrelated.

COPA said crushing data will still be available through Statistics Canada’s annual and monthly statistics. Vervaet added that COPA plans to update statistics monthly on its website based on the StatsCan information.

However, Townsend said it won’t be nearly as timely as before. Statistics Canada’s data isn’t usually released until later.

“The lag is too long. So, you’re kind of flying blind,” he said, adding Canadian farmers don’t have nearly as much access to information as their counterparts in other countries.

In Australia, shipping lineups from its ports are released and the United States Department of Agriculture releases data weekly for most crops.

There are other ways to access similar information to the COPA member crushings report. The Canadian Grain Commission releases weekly domestic disappearance reports, which for canola basically means crush numbers.

“I’ve watched the two, they’re close, they’re not always the same,” said John DePape with FarmCo.

“I’m not happy when we lose good data but I think there’s still decent data there through the grain commission.”

Vervaet said COPA considered the value of the weekly report before ending it, but hadn’t received a lot of feedback on it.

Townsend said he was caught off guard when the announcement was made and to his knowledge the grains industry wasn’t consulted.

“I have spoken to a few other people. We instantly sent them an email (when we heard) and just said, ‘hey, we really like this, we really appreciated it,’” he said.

To Townsend, the decision to end the report is the wrong direction. He wants more transparency throughout the Canadian grains industry.

“In the U.S., they report those numbers every week. I think farmers deserve it…. I’d just like to see more transparency in Western Canada,” he said.
Hog farms make extra effort to keep employees

Producers say attracting people to the industry is the hard part; managing and guiding them improves retention

BY BARB GLEN
LETHBRIDGE BUREAU

BANFF, Alta. — Large agricultural operations are putting more emphasis on human resources in efforts to find and keep employees amid a country-wide shortage of farm labour.

Among those is Sunterra Farms, and Trish Hyshka, human resources manager in the company’s Acme and Trochu hog operations, said it remains difficult to find enough people to work in hog barns and processing plants.

“It’s a tough industry. It’s something that people don’t ‘look at as a career, and that’s where we’ve tried to do our people development, turn people into leaders and realize that this is a career. It’s a very important industry.” Hyshka said in an interview during the Jan. 9-11 Banff Pork Seminar.

Attracting people to the industry in the first place is the hard part, she said. Once hired, managed and guided, employee retention levels improve, as has been the case at Sunterra.

“Eve’rything in and we’re able to show them a path, the longevity in those employees is very good. If we don’t on-board them properly and they don’t see that they can get somewhere, the turnover is very high. “Our turnover has decreased tremendously in the last 10 years just because we’ve spent more of a focus on seeing what we can do to develop these people.”

Hyshka uses the Keirsey Temperament Sorter as a tool when working with managers to retain employees. It’s a simplified version of the Myers Briggs Indicator, a test that reveals personality type and temperament.

By learning what makes a person tick, so to speak, managers can put them in a job that suits their temperament and learn how best to work with different personality types.

The Keirsey sorter puts people into one of four categories: artisans, guardians, idealists and rationals. Hyshka said sorting isn’t designed to weed out any personality types in new hires.

“Everybody brings a different piece of the puzzle to the big picture so we want people of all different personalities. They truly do bring a different perspective, a different idea on how things work and how they come together,” she said.

She administered the sorter to groups at the Banff Pork Seminar, where one session identified a high percentage of guardians, those who are sensible, down to earth, well-organized, co-operative, highly ethical, values beauty and poetry, seeks ideals, easily upset by disagreement, good people skills, empathetic, trustworthy, hardworking, warmly affectionate, loyal, cautious about change, warm and affectionate.

The swine industry is one of 11 key agricultural industries that CAHRC said will be challenged by labour shortages in the future.

“The area of greatest concern to agricultural employers and sector stakeholders is the persistent lack of workers, especially workers with the right skills who are located in areas where agricultural jobs are located,” CAHRC said on its website.

WHAT’S YOUR TEMPERAMENT PROFILE?

The Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council has said the shortage is “chronic and significant” and will intensify as the global market expands for Canadian agricultural goods.

The swine industry is one of 11 key agricultural industries that CAHRC said will be challenged by labour shortages in the future.

1. Artisan: seeks adventure, impulsive, daring, creative, optimistic, willing to take risks, likes to try new things, easygoing.

2. Guardian: sensible, rules follow, loyal, cautious about change, trustworthy, hardworking, warmly affectionate, likes routine.

3. Idealist: cares deeply about people, co-operative, highly ethical, values beauty and poetry, seeks ideals, easily upset by disagreement, good people skills, empathetic, trustworthy, hardworking, warmly affectionate, loyal, cautious about change, warm and affectionate.

4. Rational: driven to learn how things work, efficient, skeptical of all ideas, values competence, bothered by wasted effort, questions authorities, private, ambitious, to schedule.

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1 All comparisons are to untreated, unless otherwise stated. Always read and follow label directions.

Get a higher level of blackleg control, because every bushel counts.
Plant protein not competing against beef: processor

BY KAREN BRIERE
REGINA BUREAU

SASKATOON — The beef sector shouldn’t look at pulses as competition in the protein market, says the president of AGT Food and Ingredients, one of the largest pulse processors in the world.

Murad Al-Katib told people attending the Saskatchewan Beef Industry Conference that there is more than enough protein demand to go around.

“I don’t think it’s an either-or,” he said. “We both have more than enough to grab.”

He said Saskatchewan should be the first stop on the protein highway.

“Protein demand is what the world is going to talk about for the next 40 years,” he said, and Asia is really where the opportunity lies.

Middle class consumer spending there totals $32.9 trillion, Al-Katib said, and meat consumption is growing at three percent annually. He said while the large population there presents an obvious market the income growth within that population is a bigger driver.

“What do you do when you make a lot more money? You go out and you buy a really good steak, don’t you? That’s what they do too,” said Al-Katib.

China spends about $300 billion per year on meat and that is rising three to four percent annually. Al-Katib said that is $9 to $12 billion per year for an estimated 50 years.

The beef sector has to figure out how to gain its piece of that increasing market share.

He pointed to an Ontario company that went from zero to $18 million in sales last year by selling vacuum-packed frozen beef steaks online to China.

Online sales are the future, he said, and the industry has to be ready for that.

Al-Katib also said every successful pulse milling industry in the world has co-products and byproducts that are going into animal feed to build successful livestock operations.

In China, millers extract starch from one million tonnes of peas and feed the remaining protein to livestock.

“We’re going to do that here, too,” he said. “We need to do more in domestic milling.”

He also said that he doesn’t believe vegetable protein replaces meat protein or vice versa.

“It’s a protein industry,” he said. “It’s not about replacement.”

AGT is working with the Canadian Feed Research Centre on opportunities to move co-products and byproducts into the beef industry to create a reliable, consistent, cost-effective beef.

Al-Katib said rather than worrying about competing with plant protein, the livestock sector should be worrying about how to feed animals to meet the demand.

“He said he doesn’t believe consumers will actually turn to synthetic laboratory-produced meat but there are moves toward insect-based protein and more plant-based protein.

“The consumer resolve isn’t very strong,” he said. “I think the norm is more a flexitarian type of diet.”

Al-Katib, who heads the Protein Innovation Canada supercluster project as well as the national agri-food strategy roundtable, said he sees a future for all proteins.

“I think there’s this weird agricultural adversarial thing going on,” he said. “I think we’ve got to recognize we have a protein sector and there’s an advantage for everybody to look at how we brand Canada as the protein giant.”

While the supercluster application is backed by the plant protein sector, he said there will be opportunities in phase two for the livestock sector to put its money where its mouth is.

Murad Al-Katib says the beef sector has to figure out how to gain its piece of an increasing market share for meat. | FILE PHOTO
By Karen Briere
Saskatoon Bureau

SASKATOON — So many myths, so little time to debunk them all. But Joe Schwarcz, who heads McGill University’s Office for Science and Society, routinely tries to educate those who want to learn more about science. He hosts the Dr. Joe Show on radio in Montreal and has written 16 books. Recently, he spoke at the Saskatchewan Beef Industry Conference.

He said constant confusion and bewilderment has created panic among the public about what they should be eating. Meat is a particular lightning rod thanks to organizations such as People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals.

“PETA is one of the most unethical organizations I’ve ever come across,” Schwarcz told the conference. “They don’t present data in any kind of scientific way.”

Instead, groups like this use scare tactics and claims that can’t be proven.

He said arguing with those who believe the ideology but don’t research the facts is useless. There is, however, a large group of consumers who are interested in the facts, who attend public lectures and who do their research. That’s where people like him, and industry, can make some gains.

“You win some battles; you can’t win the war,” Schwarcz said in an interview. “The only way to win the war would be to have universal high quality scientific education from grade school on in terms of critical thinking and how scientific literature works.

“It’s not really achievable. There is always going to be scientific illiteracy.”

It doesn’t help that people can cherry-pick data and studies to prove any position they want to take.

“There is always a smidgeon of scientific fact” to back up claims, he said.

A classic example is the World Health Organization’s International Agency for Research on Cancer, which has categorized food into different carcinogenic groups. IARC has classified bacon as a Group 1 carcinogen, meaning that it is an established carcinogen that is known to cause cancer in humans. This is true.

“There is sufficient epidemiological evidence that people who eat huge amounts of preserved meat … grotesque amounts, have an increased risk of colon cancer,” Schwarcz said.

Red meat is in the Group 2A category as a probable carcinogen. But Schwarcz said that the IARC classifies substances based on hazard. Red meat could be a hazard, but that isn’t the same as risk. Exposure matters considerably.

In the same way that a grizzly bear in the wild is more dangerous than a grizzly bear viewed in a zoo, the hazard is the same but the risk is vastly different.

“In the same vein, any kind of baked good is put into the same category (Group 2A) because when you bake wheat products, you produce acrylamide, naturally, and acrylamide when given to test animals in grotesque doses causes cancer,” he said. “That does not mean when you eat bread it causes cancer.”

Hot beverages are in the same category because there is an increase in esophageal cancer in countries in South America where people consume boiling hot beverages.

He reminded the crowd that the presence of a chemical doesn’t mean there is risk.

“Coffee contains formaldehyde, furan, styrene, yet drinking coffee of course is not carcinogenic,” Schwarcz said.

“If you listen to IARC you just about have to eliminate everything you eat. We need to look at risk.”

karen.briere@producer.com
France bans ‘buy one get one free’ food deals

Farmers welcome move as they complain about being hit by retail price wars that help consumers but not them

PARIS, France (Reuters) — France plans to ban “buy one, get one free” offers on food products in supermarkets to guarantee better income to struggling farmers, in a move that could also test President Emmanuel Macron’s free-market credentials.

The move is part of a wider food

Warm winter boosts export estimates

Russian grain exports expected to set record

MOSCOW, Russia (Reuters) — Warm winter weather and fewer storm disruptions at ports have pushed expectations for Russia’s 2017-18 grain exports to record levels, with room for further increases, analysts and industry players said.

The previously forecast 45 million tonnes of exports in the 2017-18 marketing year, which began on July 1, was seen by some as the limit of capacity for one of the world’s biggest grain exporters.

However, most recent estimates have consolidated at about 47 million tonnes this season.

It will be a breath of fresh air for retailers, who will be able to trim their margins on other products and pay producers better,” Agriculture Minister Stephane Travert told reporters, adding that non-food products would not be affected.

Banning “buy one, get one free” bargains, which are less common in France than in countries such as Britain, will also help fight against food waste, he said.

The proposed legislation will effectively prohibit “buy one, get one free” offers by barring supermarkets from making discounts of more than 34 percent. But “buy two, get one free” discounts would still be allowed, Travert said.

Eight months into Macron’s presidency, the move shows the new government’s interventionist instincts despite the 40-year old president’s campaign promises to cut red tape and liberalize the French economy.

But it comes after hefty discounts of up to 70 percent on products such as Nutella, a chocolate-and-hazelnut spread very popular in France, caused brawls in a chain of supermarkets recently.

On Jan. 31, Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire said he had planned to the chief executive officer of the Intermarché supermarket chain, where shoppers again fought over discounted products, this time for diapers and coffee.

“I told him this can’t happen again, that we can’t see these kind of scenes in France every five minutes,” Le Maire said.

Intermarché did not immediately return a request for comment.

Selling at a loss is forbidden in France. The new measures, which also include a 10 percent increase in the regulated threshold at which retailers are allowed to sell a product, will be put in place for a trial period of two years.

France’s 2017-18 grain exports are expected to set record levels.

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WASHINGTON, D.C. (Reuters) — The head of the United States Environmental Protection Agency said Feb. 1 that the recent bankruptcy of a Pennsylvania oil refiner was evidence the nation’s biofuel policy needs an overhaul.

The comments infuriated biofuels advocates.

Philadelphia Energy Solutions, the largest oil refiner on the East Coast, filed for bankruptcy last month. The company blamed the cost of complying with the U.S. Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS), a law requiring refiners to blend corn-based ethanol and other biofuels into their gasoline and diesel.

EPA chief Scott Pruitt said in an interview with Fox News that the bankruptcy largely stemmed from the RFS, and cited the program’s requirement that refiners earn or purchase biofuel blending credits called RINs to prove to the EPA that they were meeting their obligations.

“We need RIN reform,” Pruitt said, pointing out RIN prices had risen in recent years. “It is something I’ve talked to Congress about.”

He also said the EPA wanted to take a more conservative approach to setting annual biofuel blending volume requirements, an idea he has floated in the past and which has faced stiff resistance from the ethanol lobby.

“We set volume obligations every November,” he said. “Our job should be to take the market and production levels and set volume obligations that are consistent with objective factors, not set inflated or blue-sky types of numbers that create this inflationary pressure on RINs.”

The RFS requires refiners to blend 57 billion litres of ethanol into the nation’s fuel each year. Pruitt’s comments angered proponents of the biofuel industry.

“Mr. Pruitt’s current stance is... in direct contradiction to President (Donald) Trump’s repeated and consistent promises to support the RFS, American farmers, and American energy security,” said Emily Skor, chief executive officer of biofuel producer Growth Energy.
Our office will be closed February 19th for the Family Day Holiday.
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Entertainment Crossword by Walter D. Fenner

ACROSS
1. Last name of Batista, Chip, and Don on The Mick
2. She played on The Brady Bunch
11. She played on General Hospital
13. She played in Heaven
15. She played Detective Homicide Inspector on a British television crime show
16. She played on Days of our Lives
17. She played a lead in a 1980s sitcom
18. She played Miranda on Grey’s Anatomy
20. She played on The Beverly Hillbillies
22. She played Hester contrat on the 1960s sitcom
23. She played a lead in a 1970s sitcom
24. She played on The Brady Bunch
26. She played on The Love Boat
30. She played the president’s daughter, Rebecca, on The West Wing
32. She played on The Office
35. She played the girlfriend of the first baseman on Home Run
38. He was nominated for the Academy Award for Best Supporting Actor for his role in The Name of the Rose
40. He played the lead role in the 2006 film
42. He played in the 1980s TV series
43. He played the President on The West Wing
45. He played entomologist Dr. Jack Hodgins on Bones
47. She played a lead in a 1990s sitcom
48. She played a lead in the 1990s sitcom
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53. She played the president’s daughter, Rebecca, on The West Wing
54. He played the lead role in the 2006 film
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57. She played a lead in the 1990s sitcom
58. She played a lead in the 1980s sitcom
59. She played on The Brady Bunch
60. She played on The Love Boat
61. She played Sarah Palin, the Vice President on Saturday Night Live
63. She played in the 1980s sitcom
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DOWN
1. He was nominated for the Academy Award for Best Supporting Actor for his role in The Name of the Rose
2. She plays “Hutch”, A red waitress on The Middle
3. He and his daughter Lucy (Lucy Liu) are her father
4. The Great American Road movie
5. The film released in 1941
6. The film released in 1985
7. The film released in 1995
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26. The film released in 2014
27. The film released in 2015
29. The film released in 2017
30. The film released in 2018

Last Words Answers

A 35
B 56
C 80
D 90
E 100

1. Last name of Batista, Chip, and Don on The Mick
2. She played on The Brady Bunch
3. She played on General Hospital
4. She played on Days of our Lives
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Pre-complimentary dinner 5:00 PM

Bull Sale Draft Sale 6:00 PM Draft Sale followed by Hearse Sale

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FEBRUARY 15, 2018 | WWW.PRODUCER.COM | THE WESTERN PRODUCER
Researchers have discovered a way to recycle waste greenhouse gases to make plastic.

“Our technology takes carbon dioxide and converts it into ethylene, which is the main precursor of plastic,” said Phil De Luna, a PhD student at the University of Toronto.

Using the Canadian Light Source at the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon, De Luna was part of a group of researchers from the University of Toronto that recently found a new catalyst for recycling carbon dioxide.

“Our project is on developing new catalysts for converting carbon dioxide into useful fuels and feedstocks,” said De Luna.

“For this particular project, we utilized a custom-made cell that could not have been done in any other light source in the world.”

Researchers used the light source’s high-powered X-rays to measure the oxidation state of copper, which is a metal that can convert carbon dioxide more efficiently and more selectively than any other catalyst.

“We were able to do this for the first time while the reaction is occurring, which is typically very hard to do because the reaction occurs in a liquid, kind of like an electrolyte,” he said.

Photosynthesis is the natural process that plants use by taking sunlight, water and carbon dioxide to make sugars and essential fuels needed for survival.

However, the U of T researchers are not focused on recycling carbon dioxide directly from the atmosphere.

“There are other researchers who are looking at capturing CO2 from the atmosphere. Basically, we’re kind of agnostic to where the source of carbon dioxide comes from. It can either be from fume stacks or it’s a power plant, or for example it can be from the recycling of waste plastic,” he said.

“Capturing and conversion are kind of two separate technologies or two separate problems right now and we’re focusing more on the conversion part.”

“What we’re trying to do in our lab is to take carbon dioxide, water and renewable energy that’s either from solar, wind, or hydro and we’re trying to convert carbon dioxide into something that humans can use,” he said.

Specifically, we converted it in this project into ethylene, which is the main precursor for polyethylene, a major plastic.

However, De Luna pointed out that fossil fuels will continue to be consumed in the medium term as transition to renewable energy occurs.

“There simply isn’t enough solar cells, wind, or hydro to sustain our energy needs indefinitely. So, if we’re going to continue to burn fossil fuels, which we need to in order to sustain a quality of life, we need to be able to capture it and keep it from going into the atmosphere. But once we capture it, the question becomes what do we do with it,” he said.

From a recycling aspect, using end-of-life-cycle plastic is an important process to cleaning up the environment. Polyethylene is the most common plastic used today, with annual global production around 80 million tonnes.

“We have way too much plastic and the only thing that people can do to get rid of it that is effective and economically efficient is to burn it, which releases carbon dioxide into the atmosphere,” he said.

“If we can take post-consumer-use plastic — that is plastic that is being built up and kind of wasted or thrown into the oceans — if we can take that plastic and we can burn it, capture the carbon dioxide and then turn it back into plastic, then we’ve found a way to completely recycle something that is not normally biodegradable and something that is a lot harder to recycle than people think.”

Plastic grain bags that farmers buy in the thousands each year end up stockpiled or blowing in the wind. Often farmers burn them, which is illegal in Saskatchewan.

De Luna said the new technology is a good match for recycling the bags in a controlled environment to capture the carbon dioxide and convert them back to plastic.

“That’s kind of the ideal sort of market, or the ideal demographic that this could be useful. If you have a bunch of waste plastic and you don’t have anything to do with it, you have to burn it, but rather than letting that carbon dioxide just be admitted to the atmosphere, there are technologies where you can capture that carbon dioxide and then you can use our technology to recycle it and convert it back into plastic,” he said.

De Luna said the next step for the researchers is durability and to scale up the technology.

The U of T research group is a semi-finalist for the NRG COSIA Carbon XPRIZE, which is $20 million for the team that can capture and convert the most carbon dioxide by 2020. Members will find out in March whether they have been shortlisted for the final contest round.

“There currently (in the lab) we can do grams per hour. Our pilot unit is kilograms per day and then in the next round we have two years to go to tonnes per day,” he said.

Besides government and third-party organizations, he said industry is putting considerable money into funding carbon sequestration research.

He said current problems will be addressed through the use of many different solutions like next generation solar as microgrid and smart grid systems.

“There’s not going to be just one sort of technology or one solution to climate change. It’s going to be a combination of many things.”

William Dekay
william.dekay@producer.com
Hoarfrost works its magic in Alexander Ridge Park near Miami, Man., in late January. | JEANNETTE GREAVES

The Honourary membership is given to dedicated contributors who exemplify 4-H values. Porter has more than 30 years of contributing to the 4-H program in New Brunswick. She is the executive director of 4-H New Brunswick and a former member of the 4-H Canada board of directors, as well as a long-time volunteer and mentor.

Carlson devoted his personal time as a volunteer and professional resources to the 4-H movement in Canada. He was instrumental in creating major funding resources during his tenure with the Canadian 4-H Foundation and helped modernize 4-H Canada’s governance model and practices.

The Honourary membership was created in 1950 and has inducted 68 people as lifetime members.

Farm Credit Canada is giving $225,000 to help support agriculture programs and research projects at three Canadian universities. The Livestock and Forage Centre of Excellence at the University of Saskatchewan received $100,000 to help fund construction of the livestock and food building for the advancement of forage and cattle production.

Dalhousie University’s agricultural campus, located in Truro, N.S., received $100,000 to support the development of a new student learning commons.

Ontario Agricultural College at the University of Guelph received $25,000 to study current and future human resource needs of the province’s agriculture and agri-food sectors.

Ken and Rebecca Mackenzie were recently honoured by the Canadian Angus Association for 50 years of continuous membership. The Mackenzie’s are pioneers for the Angus breed. The family operation, Mackenzie Brothers, was the first to import Red Angus genetics including one herd sire, one cow-calf pair, and two bred heifers into Canada. Ken’s grandfather established the Mackenzie farmstead in 1898, which was made up of Shorthorn cattle during their time of popularity in Canada. When that popularity declined, the Mackenzie family focused on solid red genetics. One of their biggest highlights was showing a Chevron cow that placed 21 times and won 17 grand champion titles.

The Mackenzie’s final bull sale takes place March 13 at Dawson Creek, B.C.

Alison Squires, publisher at Wadena News, Murad Al-Katib, founder of AGT Foods and Ingredients and Steve McLellan, chief executive officer of the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce, were recently awarded the Senate Sesquicentennial Medal.

The medal marks the Senate’s 150th anniversary and honours individuals who have improved their communities with exceptional generosity, time and dedication.

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Chukwudi Amadi, PhD, AAg
Laboratory Coordinator - Soil Science Dept
U of S - College of Agriculture and Bioresources
Saskatoon, SK

Chukwudi designs and teaches laboratory courses in soil science and environmental science. He works one-on-one with students to provide experiential and hands-on learning opportunities to visualize and practice soil and environmental concepts through laboratory experiments and demonstrations.

Chukwudi is originally from Nigeria. He received a Bachelor's in Soil Science from Imo State University in Nigeria, an MSc in Agroforestry from the University of Wales, Bangor, and a PhD in Soil Science from the University of Saskatchewan. Chukwudi has previous teaching experience in Nigeria.

Taylor Wallace, PAg
Sales Agronomist
Veikle Agro
Cut Knife, SK

Taylor provides knowledge and advice to grower customers to help them choose the best products and practices that serve and improve their operation.

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Taylor grew up on a grain farm near Unity, SK. He received a BSc in Agriculture with a major in Environmental Science and a minor in Soil Science from the University of Saskatchewan. Taylor joined Veikle Agro in November 2014.

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Here’s to the Rancher

Devastation was complete after a fire destroyed a goat barn on this Alberta farm Feb. 4. | MARIA JOHNSON

Alberta farm loses 300 goats in barn fire

BY MARIA JOHNSON
FREELANCE WRITER

CLIVE, Alta. — Meindert and Johanna Dijkstra were nearing home around 10:30 p.m. Feb. 4 after being out for the evening. As the couple got closer to their farm, set in the hills a few kilometers southeast of Clive, they wondered at the orange glow in the night sky. Upon turning south at their range road they were met by neighbor Tim Vander Roest, who told them one of their barns was on fire.

The barn housed 300 goats. Vander Roest had already called 911 and was waiting there at the Highway 12 turnoff to direct firefighters because the numbered range road sign was missing.

Vander Roest said his son, Gabri- el, 17, had returned home a few minutes earlier from nearby Alix to report a glow in the sky and the appearance of flames as seen from the Vander Roest driveway.

Tim, who had been a volunteer firefighter for 16 years, jumped in his truck and hurried to investigate. The blaze was well under way, and firefighters from Clive, Al- ix and Lacombe began to arrive 15 minutes later.

Clive Fire Chief Monte Zaytsoff said the roof had collapsed by the time his crew arrived at approximately 10:45, and it was too late to save the structure or animals, which he said were “already gone.”

“At that point I called in the track hoe to pull the tin off the roof,” he said.

The priority then was to contain and extinguish the blaze and ensure other buildings and livestock were not at risk.

Lost in the fire were approximately 200 milking goats and 100 or so pregnant goats due to kid soon. Unharmed were another 90 younger goats in a nearby pole building, 100 dairy bull calves in another barn nearby and the family’s main livelihood, a 4,000 head finishing hog operation elsewhere on the farm.

The Djikstras had left their farm that evening around 6:30 to deliver their weekly collection of goats’ milk to their dairy processor in Ponoka. They then stopped to visit friends for a while before heading home.

Dijkstra said arriving to such a tragedy was “a shock” and “unreal.” He said the 13,000 sq. foot structure had under floor heat in just the central parlour.

Investigations are underway to determine the cause of the blaze, he added.

“We plan to rebuild,” Dijkstra said. “It will take a couple years, but we’ll build the herd again.”
BRANDON — Canola and soybeans were the biggest crops in Manitoba last year, representing more than half of all seeded acres in the province.

Given the scale of the two crops, it’s logical that many producers are growing soybeans and canola in rotation.

Agronomists still aren’t sure if that’s a good idea or not because there’s almost no research on the concept.

Holly Derksen, Manitoba Agriculture’s field crop pathologist, searched for studies on canola-soybean rotations and could find only two that apply to the northern Plains: one from the North Dakota and one from Manitoba.

“It’s peanuts (for research) at this point in time but it’s what we have to start with,” said Derksen, who spoke at Brandon’s Manitoba Ag Days in January.

Growing canola after soybeans or soybeans after canola is something that requires more research because soybeans are now a broad acreage crop in Western Canada.

More than three million acres were planted to soybeans in Manitoba and Saskatchewan last year, and advocates of the crop expect that figure to climb higher, perhaps reaching five million.

“There’s a lot of canola in the West, and that’s where soybeans are moving into,” Derksen said.

“It’s not replacing canola in the rotation, it’s being added into the rotation.” Growing canola and soybeans back to back is worrisome for plant disease experts because the two crops are susceptible to a number of the same diseases.

The list includes sclerotinia and a few root rot pathogens such as pythium, rhizoctonia and fusarium.

Some growers may assume that sclerotinia isn’t related to crop rotation because it’s more connected to a wet growing season, but evidence from 2016 and 2017 suggests there is a carry-over from year to year. The sclerotinia pressure in Manitoba was severe in 2016, and it carried over into 2017, even though it was a dry year.

Derksen said sclerotinia incidence across Manitoba was higher than expected in 2017. Consequently, growers may want to avoid seeding a crop susceptible to sclerotinia following a year with high disease pressure.

“Rotation isn’t on the top of the list on how you manage sclerotinia,” she said. “But think it does play a role when you have a really bad year (for sclerotinia) and you get a huge amount of inoculum added to the soil.”

Despite having diseases in common, anecdotal evidence from the United States indicates that soybean yields are higher following a crop of canola. As a result, some growers have concluded that the crops work together in synergy.

Scientists at North Dakota State University conducted trials at four locations in North Dakota and Minnesota in 2015 and 2016 to test the synergy concept. They compared wheat-canola to soybeans-canola and wheat-soybeans to canola-soybeans.

They found no difference in yield, test weight, oil content and other factors at the three North Dakota sites. In other words, growing canola and soybeans in succession had no ill effects but no benefits either.

However, the site in Roseau, Minn., was different.

Soybean yields were higher following canola in one year, and canola yields were slightly higher following soybeans in both years.

Derksen said the NSDU findings are inconclusive, likely because the study lasted for only two years.

“There’s a lot of canola in the West, and that’s where soybeans are moving into,” Derksen said.

“I would say the North Dakota one didn’t give us a lot of straightforward answers.”

The University of Manitoba study was more interesting, Derksen said.

Ahmed Abdelmagid, a post-doctoral research student at the University of Manitoba, conducted trials at four locations in North Dakota and Minnesota in 2015 and 2016 to test the canola-soybean rotation.

They compared wheat-canola to soybeans-canola and wheat-soybeans to canola-soybeans.

The continuous soybean rotation had the worst severity of root rot, but the canola-soybean sequence also amplified root rot.

“They saw significantly higher root rot in soybeans when it was a canola-soybean rotation versus a corn-soybean rotation,” Derksen said.

“It gives us an indication that the canola crop is adding to the inoculum and making that root rot a bit worse in soybeans.”

There may be a disease synergy between canola and soybeans, but that hasn’t shown up in yield results from Manitoba. Data from the Manitoba Agricultural Services Corp. shows that growing soybeans-canola or canola-soybeans doesn’t reduce yields.

That data is reassuring but the same question remains: is a rotation with both canola and soybeans sustainable over 10 or 15 years?

Derksen offered the standard scientific answer: more research is needed.

“I imagine we’ll see some more research,” she said.

“Where do soybeans fit in the rotation, long-term?”

Robert Arnason

WINNIPEG BUREAU

BY ROBERT ARNASON

Rotational choices — can you have beans with your brassica?

Rotating soybeans with canola could be an option financially, but agronomically, is this choice going to work? While this crop of soybeans at Wilcox, Sask., has some glyphosate resistant volunteer canola in it, other than from those pests, yields don’t seem to have suffered due to rotation with the oilseed. However, more research is required before recommendations can be made about the practice.

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PRODUCTION

OF MICE & MACHINES

Residents can do a lot of damage to farm equipment. A Saskatchewan farmer has a solution.

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MACHINES

OF MICE &
Keep to the right

Right-hand unload grain carts for Canada — it’s a natural

BY RON LYSENG
WINNIPEG BUREAU

It’s a pain in the neck to always look over your left shoulder at harvest time, which is why Australian farmers have been buying right-hand unload grain carts.

Some of those right-hand grain carts are built by Elmer’s Welding in Altona, Man.

Mike Friesen, an agricultural engineer and owner of Elmer’s who has been building right-hand unload carts for the Australian market for a number of years, says it’s time to introduce the idea to Canadian prairie farmers.

Australian farmers cite ergonomics, safety and reduced operator fatigue as the main reasons for the switch to right-hand unload. Surveys there say farmers prefer right-side unload over a left-side unload.

As well, there’s no cost increase because right-hand unload uses the same components — just arranged differently.

“All your hydraulic controls, your powershift and everything in the cab is on the right side, so that’s where your attention is focused,” said Friesen.

“Guys say it’s easier on their neck to look over their right shoulder. They say it’s easier to keep their foot on the clutch when their body is twisted to the right. So, we build right-hand unload carts for Australia because that’s what the market demands. But I think it’s time we show the advantages to Canadian farmers.”

North American grain carts have historically been built with left-side unload augers because it was assumed this arrangement reduced the risk of the cart auger contacting the combine auger.

However, Elmer’s has found that more operators have begun folding in their auger after each unload, thus eliminating that left-side rationale.

Elmer’s made right-hand carts available for testing last year with a small number of select North American customers. The feedback was positive.

Operators say looking out the right side of the tractor is more natural when adjusting hydraulic and throttle controls. It’s also more comfortable working the tractor’s pedals during unloading.

With the growing awareness of right-hand augers in North America, Elmer’s will offer it as an option on new carts this year. Details on potential conversion kits for existing carts will be available at a later time.

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Most Schnell conveyor kits went on 9500 and 9600 combines, simply because they were the easiest to convert. The list price for a new kit is $25,000 and used kits sell for about $20,000.

BY RON LYSENG
WINNIPEG BUREAU

Right-hand unload isn’t exclusive to grain carts. Over the years, a number of combines in bean-growing areas have been modified for conveyors coming out either the left or right side.

“The thing with edible beans is you get docked so bad for splits. Splits can cost you a lot of money,” said Mike Friesen, owner of Elmer’s Welding in Altona, Man.

“There’s kits available to convert some combines to conveyors for beans and pulse crops, but we made our own conveyor conversion,” he said.

He said the first step is to reverse the auger. It’s chain driven and it’s on the left-hand side, so it’s simply a matter of flipping the chain to the other side of the sprocket.

“That’s the easy part, he added.

“Then we needed a gate on the right side of combine. So they cut a hole on the right side of the tank and installed a boot below that to catch the beans. They just drop through the chute onto the conveyor,” he said.

“Some guys have modified their combines so the conveyor is on the left-hand side, which would be easier. Schnell in Winkler makes a conveyor conversion kit, and they’ve sold a lot of those over the years.”

Fred Dueck, owner of Schnell Industries, said the kits for JD 9500 and 9600 combines brought the auger out the right side of the combine because of the design.

The kits for newer combines bring the conveyor belt out the left side. The kits list for about $25,000.

“But the demand has really fallen off in the past couple years,” said Dueck.

“There’s a lot of used kits on the market selling for about $20,000, and some of the new combines are a lot more gentle on beans, so there’s less reason to put on a rubber conveyor.”

One grower in southern Saskatchewan speculated that it would not be difficult or expensive to set up a dedicated bean and pulse combine. He reasoned that used JD 9600 combines are cheap and available, as are used Schnell conveyor kits. A person can streamfeed the feeder house and other contact surfaces with hockey board or Teflon sheeting.

A variety of used headers and cutter bars can be adapted to cut at ground level, and a number of different air systems help push delicate crops into the header without damaging them.

PROS AND CONS OF THE RIGHT-HAND CART

Australian farmers Simon and Stuart Smart operate Elmer’s right-hand unload grain carts. They offered the following pros and cons.

Pro

• Increased body comfort at the end of long days due to not having to turn across the body to unload.

• Reduced chance of unload error due to a more natural set up.

• Passengers in jump seat do not interfere while unloading.

Cons

• Operator must be careful and patient to fold in auger after each unload.

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Stacy has over 21 years of HR management experience in the agriculture sector. As well she operates a large grain operation in SE Saskatchewan with her spouse. Stacy maintains her CHRP designation and has a degree in Commerce specializing in HR Management. Stacy’s presentation will include best practices, tools discussing human resource related topics while providing an uplifting message geared to all.

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Here’s to the PRODUCER

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Mice and modern machinery don’t mix

Reduce rodent damage with a fresh take and a deep breath

BY RON LYSENG
WINNIPEG BUREAU

BRANDON — It used to be simple repairing damage to a piece of equipment after mice had eaten into the wiring harness. Those days are gone.

Any truck or piece of farm equipment built within the past five years is now digital, and the function of the machine is controlled by delicate sensors and computers. Reeling off 30 inches of new wire of the appropriate colour and splicing it into the harness just doesn’t work anymore.

That farm call by the dealer won’t be cheap.

One hungry mouse can do thousands of dollars in damage and cripple the machine.

Mothballs and traps work to a certain degree. Mothballs keep mice out of the areas where the odorous white balls are located, but it’s not always possible to protect every nook, cranny, sensor and wire.

Traps work until they’re sprung. If you have 10 traps and a family of 12 mice, you haven’t protected your investment. If those two survivors are boy and girl, they’ll boost their family back to a dozen in no time.

Most people would prefer to kill the mice, but you get the same effect if you can simply keep them out of equipment in the first place.

Mice get onto and into machines by climbing the tires — rubber is a perfect ladder for them. So perhaps the key to a successful mouse strategy is to keep the mice on the ground and off your tires.

Mice don’t like peppermint oil, and if you could coat all the tires on all your machines with peppermint oil, you might never have a rodent in your equipment again — maybe.

Well, in fact, you can do just that, according to John Wilke, who was at Manitoba Ag Days promoting a new rodent retardant based on peppermint oil. The product is called Store It Safe, and it is designed to keep rodents off tires.

“It used to be called Mouse Free, but they had to change the name because it doesn’t actually kill the mice. It just keeps them off your tires,” said Wilke, emphasizing that it’s not toxic to rodents, so it’s safe for pets.

He said prairie farmers have begun applying Store It Safe to combines, sprayers, tractors, semis, personal cars and all other rolling stock on the farm. The product is made in Ontario and was reintroduced under the new name two years ago.

“If you’re putting a vehicle into long-term storage, one application lasts three years. If you drive the vehicle regularly, you need to apply it more often,” he said.

On my tandem, the mice used to get in under the windshield by the defroster, and they plugged the defroster. So I’ve stopped that, but I still get one in my headliner every now and then, so obviously I haven’t done a 100 percent job of spraying yet. There’s one more spot I have to find and spray.

Just one untreated opening is all they need. Mice will go through a hole as small as a pencil, and they leave a urine trail for all their buddies to follow. The strong peppermint smell disrupts that trail. Farmers also spray it around bins and seed bags.

Mice can jump as high as 60 centimetres, which is why the manufacturer recommends coating the entire undercarriage. Many customers also spray a strip on the ground around vehicles that will be parked for any length of time.

List price is $175 for a one-gallon jug. The application sprayer is $40.

Wilke shakes his head: “I don’t know what the Good Lord had in mind when he invented mice, but Noah should have killed that pair before they snuck on his boat.”

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Farmers Edge gets into the insurance business

Manitoba company to work with PartnerRe by using precision agriculture data to help improve risk modeling for insurers

BY MICHAEL RAINES 
SASKATOON NEWSROOM

Farmers won’t know the name, but they likely have done business with PartnerRe, and Farmers Edge is no exception.

One of the world’s largest companies in agricultural reinsurance is working with the Manitoba company to create new opportunities for crop insurance, says Farmers Edge chief executive officer Wade Barnes.

The partnership with PartnerRe will use precision agriculture data to help improve risk modelling for insurers, giving those companies real data from potential farm customers and from the regions covered.

Barnes said private insurers that are underwritten by PartnerRe will have a better idea of the risk and reality of farm production and be able to offer better tailored products.

“We see independent crop insurance companies getting into the business and thriving and this should create more opportunities for them and for other companies to compete in the area,” said Barnes.

Farmers Edge will provide the data and enrol acres into its precision ag system from PartnerRe’s retail and, potentially, government insurance customers.

“The insurance and data project will cover Canada, the United States and Eastern Europe this year. Africa, Western Europe and Argentina will follow in 2019.

“There are large parts of the world that have no (crop) insurance at all. Brazil has about 10 percent insured,” said Barnes.

“This can bring a lot of stability to agriculture in those parts of the world, and precision agriculture can help those farmers improve their operations.”

Farmers Edge’s data strategy was to add value to farmers’ operations, said Barnes, “just yield.”

“In the fall of 2014, when we started this different strategy, we said the data is valuable,” he said.

“You don’t have to sell your information. You can sell your competitive edge.”

Barnes feels that while government crop insurance programs “bring a lot of value, they might not be the right fit for every farm.”

The concept is that data from the farm will improve agronomy, improving margins from higher yields and lower costs, create specialized markets for data-tagged production and now get potentially better insurance rates.

“And that makes banks more competitive to get those farmers’ business because they tend to have their risk managed better,” he said.

“That is the value we find from (farmers’) investments in precision ag.”

The exclusive agreement is a global, four-year deal and the companies say they hope to see 20 million acres enrolled in the programs.

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Climate Corp.
working with all colours

Firm signs deals with major manufacturers

BY MICHAEL RAINES 
SASKATOON NEWSROOM

Farm equipment gathers data all the time. In most cases, if the machine is on, it’s harvesting. But the majority of producers aren’t storing those data yields.

Using the information has to be inexpensive and relatively simple, say producers. Precision agriculture companies are hearing that call and seeing the potential value, beyond just higher yields or greater per-acre margins.

Monsanto’s Climate Corp. is one of the companies working to make getting the data from machine to office easier.

Keeping data flowing from the field as simply as possible is key to getting farmers to enrol acres in larger, systemic programs, says the company.

John Raines, senior vice-president of global commercial business at Climate Corp., says new partnerships with farm equipment makers make that first step easier and more effective.

Last month the company penned a new deal with Case New Holland to get their technologies to work together rather than just in tandem.

Climate’s FieldView Drives plug into the ISObus systems of farm equipment, picking up the machines’ most intimate operational details and sending that back to the company’s technology hubs, which in turn feeds it to farmers’ offices and mobile devices.

CNH joins Agoe and John Deere as data partners with Climate.

As well, CNH dealers will be offering Climate’s FieldView farm management system to the machinery company’s customers.

Without these agreements, companies like Climate Corp. must reverse engineer their software to work with the machinery, and some details are likely left out of the data flow.

Raines said the deal adds to the 20 other equipment lines that are now supported with FieldView.

mike.raine@producer.com

Here’s to the Farmer

“My family started working this land in 1891. Today, I’m proud to continue our farming tradition with my dad, brother and sister. Our farm is part of a great industry, and I want the world to know it. My name is Katelyn Duncan and I grow lentils, canola and durum.”

From all of us at FCC, thanks for making Canadian agriculture so amazing.

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New Claas Torion machines built specifically for agriculture

Wheel loaders are typically designed for construction and mining, used for farming.

BY CHRIS MCCULLOUGH
FREELANCE WRITER

HANOVER, Germany — Farmers and contractors that are in the market for a new wheeled loader built specifically for agricultural use now have a new name on the market from which to choose.

The new Claas Torion series boasts seven models in three categories ranging from 63 to 228 horsepower built by a merger between two German machinery manufacturers. Claas and Liebherr have been developing the new Torion machines over the past two years in a joint venture and launched them at the Agritechnica farm show in Germany last year.

Former Claas managing partner Helmut Claas and Willi Liebherr, president of Liebherr International, pulled the covers off the new machines, unveiling a number of loaders in the range.

The goal for the two companies was to introduce a wheel loader specifically manufactured for the agricultural market sector, something both Claas and Liebherr say has never been achieved before.

The little ones

The smallest Torion 535 and 639 models are powered by 63 and 68 h.p. Yanmar engines and can be used in a variety of agricultural jobs on both livestock and grain farms.

Both four-cylinder engines meet the requirements of exhaust standard Tier 4i. Exhaust treatment is carried out with a diesel particulate filter with integrated diesel oxidation catalyst. Claas says the use of SCR technology is not required for these machines.

The filter regeneration mode can be adjusted according to the conditions with either manual or automatic regeneration.

In the Torion models, fresh air is drawn in from the radiator cooling package and pre-filtered. The air filter is readily accessible on the left of the machine engine compartment.

A dust extractor valve efficiently removes dirt and dust particles from the filter, which protects it and makes servicing easier.

In these smaller Torion models, the generously sized radiator cooling package ensures there is plenty of cooling capacity in all climate conditions. The intelligently designed air supply route guarantees high cooling capacity right from the outset. The heat given off by the engine can leave the engine compartment without being drawn back into the system.

The tipping load of these models is less than 2.5 metres.

The infinitely variable hydrostatic drive has two drive modes: F1 from zero to six km-h and F2 from zero to 20 km-h. The driver can switch from one drive mode to the other at the touch of a button, depending on the application. Pressure on the brake and inching pedal allows infinitely adjustable deceleration of the ground speed with the engine speed remaining the same. Fully depressing the pedal automatically decreases the ground speed to zero and activates the service brake, an hydraulically operated drum unit.

There is a creep mode for specific agricultural jobs that require higher oil flow but slower speeds such as bedding and sweeping barns.

This creep speed means the machine is driven at a constant speed in a set inching position and the required flow of hydraulic oil can be controlled with the accelerator via the engine speed.

Claas says the cab and boom on both models are positioned for maximum visibility, and the rounded rear window provides the operator with an optimum view to the rear when on the move.

Being smaller in stature allows these loaders to operate in more confined areas, thanks to their sharp 40-degree articulating angle.

Mid-sized machines

Moving up in size, the mid-range Torion series consists of three models ranging from 140 to 167 h.p. The Torion 1511 is the biggest in the middle range at 167 h.p., the 1410 is rated at 155 h.p. and the 1177 at 140 h.p. These three models are powered by DPS engines, which have dynamic cooling demand-driven engine cooling. They have already proven their worth in the Claas Arion 500 series tractors.

All these models have a three-range hydrostatic vario-power transmission.

The convenient hydrostatic Vari-power transmission provides three drive modes: zero to six, zero to 16 and zero to 40 km-h for optimal adjustment to the conditions.

Models in the mid-range Torion series are therefore ideal for farms and contractors requiring sufficient power for silage compaction or for handling grain, fertilizer and other bulk materials.

The engine is positioned low and toward the rear so it acts as a countercrweight and means that high tippingloads of 7.75 to 9.75 tonnes are possible. All models feature programmable bucket return function and defined lifting and lowering limits.

All three models in the mid-range Torion series are equipped with a standard seven inch touch screen, which serves as a central information hub for operating the machine and is extremely easy to use.

Two joysticks are available for convenient and sensitive control of the Torion. The ergonomically designed joystick can be used to easily operate all boom functions with precision.

The direction of travel can also be changed easily via a toggle switch on the handle. The multifunction lever, available as an option, has an additional four-way control lever that can be used to control a third and fourth hydraulic circuit for filling and dumping a high dump bucket or opening and closing a silage grab.

Let nothing slow you down.
Claas, Liebherr share strong bond

Two German companies work together to build farm equipment

BY CHRIS MCCULLOUGH, MICHAEL RAINE

HANOVER, Germany — A pair of family businesses built around engineering found their cultures a good match for partnering in farm equipment.

Both Claas and Liebherr have a strong history in engineering that has developed over decades from a dedicated family base.

That reliable family structure remains solid in both companies to this day, albeit a few generations down the line.

Claas was founded in 1913 by the Claas brothers — August, Theo and Franz — originally producing straw binders but later developing a strong knotting system to tie bales. August’s son, Helmut, 90, was the managing partner of the Claas Group for many years and was on hand to unveil the new Torion models at Agritechnica last year.

In 1958, Helmut Claas entered his parents’ family firm in Harsewinkel, a German town now known regionally as “Combine City,” and was appointed director of the engineering department four years later.

Helmut was responsible for a number of innovations that put Claas on the map, including the Dominator combine developed in 1970.

The Lexion was then developed, also in Helmut’s era, and was considered the most advanced and capable combine harvester worldwide when it came to market.

In 2003 Claas took over the Renault Agriculture tractor division and expanded its offerings to producers.

Today, Claas remains a family business with Helmut’s daughter, Cathrina Claas-Mühlhäuser, leading the corporate group as chair of the supervisory board.

Claas employs around 11,500 workers worldwide and reported sales of $5.9 billion in 2015.

Liebherr is also a family business that started in Germany in the late 1940s when Hans Liebherr recognized the need for tools and machinery for the construction industry.

He worked with design engineers and tradesmen to develop the TK10 in 1949, which was the company’s first mobile tower crane.

This started the Liebherr company on its journey to develop construction machines and a spin-off venture into refrigerators.

Today, the Liebherr group has manufacturing bases in a number of countries and remains family operated.

At the end of 2016 the group employed 42,308 people and had a turnover of slightly more than $13.9 billion, the third highest turnover in the group’s history.

Claas-Mühlhäuser said at the launch of the new jointly built Torion agricultural wheel loader that the companies’ cultures around innovative ideas, “whether it’s good or bad times in the market,” help to make the partnership “an easier choice to make.”

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Beef producers may be losing out by ignoring unscientific views on growth hormones

Canada’s beef industry has science on its side when it comes to the safety of using growth promotants, but it is of no help when it comes to selling beef overseas.

“We can talk about science-based (practices), but at the end of the day, if the consumers don’t want to buy our products, I think we’re missing the mark,” said Fred Gorrell, an assistant deputy minister with Agriculture Canada.

Gorrell made his comments about beef production and growth hormones Feb. 8 at the Manitoba Beef Producers annual meeting in Brandon. He was formerly the head of the market access secretariat with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency and also worked as executive director of international policy at the CFIA.

He is now the assistant deputy minister for international affairs at Agriculture Canada.

Gorrell made it clear that the department supports the use of hormones in the beef sector, where growth promotants are used to increase the feed efficiency of beef cattle.

But some consumers, particularly in European Union countries, want beef produced without the use of growth promotants. In his opinion, Canada’s beef industry is “leaving money on the table” by not serving that segment of the market.

“Hormone free or with hormones, they’re all safe…. (But) if we want to be in that market and (if) we want to sell product there, you have got to have the conversation.”

Thanks to the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) with Europe, Canada’s beef sector will eventually get a tariff-free quota of 50,000 tonnes of beef annually to the EU. The beef, though, must be raised without growth hormones. The Europeans have also put up a technical hurdle and don’t accept the safety of certain carcass washes used in Canada.

It may take years to sort out the rules around carcass washes, but there is another massive market that also wants beef raised without hormones — China.

“On beef and pork, they (China) have always said, ‘we don’t like growth promotants,’” Gorrell said at the Brandon meeting. “They’re looking for hormone-free beef and pork, not just from Canada but the world.”

A CFIA website explains that Canadian beef destined for China must be raised under the Canadian Beta-Agonist Free Beef Certification program because China doesn’t accept beef produced with synthetic growth hormones.

China began accepting Canadian beef again in 2012. Exports to China climbed from nothing to $228 million in 2015, based on Ag Canada data.

“But in 2016… you see the numbers went down quite a bit,” Gorrell said. “That’s because they’re being very strict, saying (they’re) having a hormone-free program.”

Canadian beef producers and industry advocates have said, many times, that growth promotants pose no risks to consumers because they add only a few nanograms of hormones to a hamburger or steak.

That message hasn’t changed many minds, as public polling shows the percentage of Canadians concerned about hormones in meat hasn’t changed since 2001.

“There’s science, but there’s also political science and there’s social science. Those come into the mix too, sometimes,” Gorrell said.

“Being right doesn’t mean that you win,” he added.

Betty Green, a beef producer from Fisher Branch, Man., listened to Gorrell’s message. She runs two operations, with her herd of beef cattle: one with growth promotants and another without.

“If we didn’t tell us that everybody should run down that path, but that consumers and customers are going to have an influence on what we have to do… and we should give some thought to that.”

Five to 10 years ago, ranchers didn’t talk about growth hormones, but now Canadian cattle producers are thinking more about the benefits and drawbacks of the products, Green said.

“I think things are changing and they will continue to change.”

Canada’s pork industry has shown it is possible to move away from ractopamine, a type of growth promotant. Scientific studies show that ractopamine is safe but Canada’s pork trade collectively abandoned it a few years ago because markets like China and Russia didn’t want pork produced with it.

It was easier for the pork sector to make such a decision than it would be for beef because the pork industry is smaller and more integrated, but it is an example where buyer expectations triumphed over scientific evidence.

Green agreed with Gorrell’s message that science has limitations in a consumer-driven world.

“If the consumer says that’s what they want and you want to sell to that consumer … The science in some cases… is kind of irrelevant.”

For Gorrell, the issue comes down to opportunity. China has 1.4 billion people and the EU has more than 500 million. Those are awfully large numbers to ignore.

“When we’re a major exporting country, we really should look at what we’re producing. Is that what the other people want?”

Fred Gorrell
Agriculture Canada

‘Leaving money on the table’

Beef producers may be losing out by ignoring unscientific views on growth hormones

BY ROBERT ARNASON WINNIPEG BUREAU

Canada’s beef industry has science on its side when it comes to the safety of using growth promotants, but it is of no help when it comes to selling beef overseas. “We can talk about science-based (practices), but at the end of the day, if the consumers don’t want to buy our products, I think we’re missing the mark,” said Fred Gorrell, an assistant deputy minister with Agriculture Canada.

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Agriculture Canada

Regulatory changes for drugs worrisome

BY KAREN BRIERE IN GRAHAM

SASKATOON — Saskatchewan cattle producers continue to worry about access to livestock medication as new regulations come into force across Canada.

The changes mean certain drugs used for livestock will no longer be available at farm retail stores. Producers will have to obtain prescriptions from veterinarians, with whom they will require a client-veterinarian relationship, and purchase the medication from a veterinarian or veterinary pharmacy.

Several resolutions at the Saskatchewan Cattlemen’s Association annual meeting last month asked for changes to keep costs down.

One asked that antibiotics still be available from retail stores as long as the producer has a prescription.

Another asked governments to urge pharmacies to carry veterinary products.

Dr. Betty Althouse, the provincial veterinarian, said that the federal government sets the rules on prescribing while the provinces determine who can dispense.

“In Saskatchewan, we have no regulations under agriculture on who can dispense,” she told the meeting. “That comes under the pharmacy act.”

Pharmacists, veterinarians and licensed feed mills can dispense, but the latter are limited to sales of medications in feeds or pre-mixes in the same product and actual drug products, Althouse said.

The new regulations come out of the national antimicrobial resistance framework and a focus on improved stewardship. Own-use imports of medications have been restricted and all antimicrobials were moved to the prescription drug list as of this month.

“By Dec. 1, 2018, the only access to category one — through three antimicrobials will be for veterinary prescriptions,” she said.

Tetracycline and penicillin that were available at retail stores will require a prescription to make sure their use is medically appropriate.

Brent Johnson from SCA District 6 said pharmacies should be encouraged to carry the medication.

“If you’re in a small town and pharmacies are up that, we could immediately have come up with prescrip-

LIVESTOCK
LARGEST CATTLE HEADS

SASKATOON — Canadian beef herds are going to have to get a whole lot larger if overall cattle numbers are to hold steady, the Saskatchewan Beef Industry Conference heard.

Dr. Murray Jelinski from the Western College of Veterinary Medicine said census data shows that producers are getting older and herds are getting larger, particularly in Western Canada.

The beef cow numbers remain relatively flat.

He said in 1996 there were two producers older than 60 for every one younger than 30. The 2016 data show there are now seven older than 60 for each under 30.

The oldest producers are responsible for both the largest and the smallest herds, the data show.

“If we’re going to maintain our herds across Canada, herd size is going to have to dramatically increase,” he said.

Bacus said large producers are in charge of the industry, the ones left operating will have to have more animals to be competitive.

Overall, the number of producers in Western Canada dropped from 93,520 in 1996 to 53,505 in 2016. Average herd sizes number about 90 head in the West and just 30 in the East.

Jelinski’s interest in beef farm demographics stemmed from widespread concern about fewer large animal veterinarians.

He said there has been angst for the last 20 years about a shortage, but that hasn’t actually materialized because producers changed their management systems.

Breed programs changed, herd size increased and Jelinski said data show that the larger the herd the less veterinary service is required.

“You’re not going to the average mixed animal practice anymore because when you’ve got 2,000 to 3,000 head out on pasture, you’re not going to the person that is doing bovine practice 10 percent of the year,” he said.

He added that if the trend continues, 12 percent of producers will leave the industry by the 2021 census. Logically, larger herds will follow.

“Is this an opportunity or a threat?” he said.

It could mean a chance for younger producers to enter the cattle business, he said. There is a diminishing pool of people who want to buy beef farms.

“You can either take the attitude of, ‘I don’t want my sons or daughters to do this,’ or, ‘this is a great life,’ ” he said.

karen.briere@producer.com
U.S. debates pros and cons of cattle traceability

Interviews with producers found most neutral with 10 percent opposed and 15 percent in favour.

BY BARBARA DUCKWORTH
CALGARY BUREAU

PHOENIX, Ariz. — Less than 10 percent of cattle in the United States can be traced back to the herd of origin. That places the U.S. at a disadvantage against other major beef exporters that have traceability programs in place, according to a recent study.

Today, about 65 percent of the global beef traded comes from countries with traceability systems. The U.S. and India are the only major exporters without traceability.

The U.S. National Cattlemen’s Beef Association commissioned the study by World Perspectives Ltd. as part of a five-year business strategy that includes introducing some form of traceability to promote more sales.

The final report was released at the NCBA convention held in Phoenix Jan. 31 to Feb. 2.

Producers from the various sectors, beef organizations and processors were interviewed. The results showed many were neutral about the idea with about 10 percent opposed and 15 percent very amenable to full traceability. The questions of voluntary versus mandated systems and traceability were discussed with mixed reactions among those interviewed.

“Despite being a globally recognized leader in all points of the beef value chain, the U.S. currently does not have robust, nationally significant animal identification and traceability systems in place for its domestic beef industry,” said the report presented by World Perspectives analysts David Gregg and Dave Judy.

“The ideal outcome of this report is that this report can help reframe the discussion. There have been bits and misses on this at the federal level,” said Gregg.

“We would like to give industry a tool to conduct a productive discussion now,” he said.

About 22 percent of producers reported using some form of identification. State rules may require a more robust system to track cattle but the programs can be diverse.

Large operations with more than 1,000 head that are involved in a value-chain report they have some form of voluntary traceback to take advantage of a market premium, control their data or mitigate a disease outbreak.

“Industry has already started down this path,” said Judy.

“There are lots of programs that folks are participating in already,” he said.

Most countries adopted a traceability scheme when a crisis, such as foot-and-mouth disease or BSE was discovered.

Animal identification and traceability helped them maintain or regain foreign markets, manage animal health issues and invest in best practices.

In many locations, one extreme outcome of animal identification and traceability shows most people in the sector are neutral, while 10 percent are firmly opposed and 15 percent agree with wholesale acceptance.

Feedlots interviewed placed significant emphasis on traceback for disease control and many favoured knowing the ranch of origin.

Producers realize they will not make more money if they have a full traceability system in place. The study showed said most of the cost would be borne by the cow/calf sector.

“Out-of-pocket costs shouldn’t be the measure,” said Judy.

“What should be the measure is net cost and opportunity costs,” he said.

Nevertheless, costs to individuals remain an obstacle to adoption, Gregg said.

“Out-of-pocket costs shouldn’t be the measure. What should be the measure is net cost and opportunity costs,” said Judy.

Most countries favored knowing the ranch of origin, according to a value-chain report they have in hand.

The authors said by taking the opportunity costs inherent in not adopting an expanded U.S. systems approach to traceability outweighed any general cost-projection concerns.

The study determined traceability must:

• be credible in domestic and international markets
• be managed and overseen by an entity that includes private and government interests
• maintain data privacy
• be equitable for all industry sectors
• operate at the speed of commerce
• be credible in domestic and international markets

Most countries adopted a traceability scheme when a crisis, such as foot-and-mouth disease or BSE was discovered.

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Clostridial vaccines prevent more than blackleg

John Campbell, DVM, DVS

Clostridial vaccines are the most widely used vaccines in the beef industry. Almost all producers use these vaccines in their herds. These vaccines are prepared to prevent the disease blackleg, which is caused by Clostridium chauvoei bacteria and causes muscle infections that result in sudden death in young growing calves.

These vaccines protect against seven or eight different strains of the Clostridial bacteria related to Clostridium chauvoei, which can cause C. chauvoei bacteria and causes muscle infections that can result in sudden death in young calves, usually beginning at two to three months of age, primarily to prevent the disease blackleg. Blackleg is caused by Clostridium chauvoei bacteria and causes muscle infections that result in sudden death in young growing calves.

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I want to focus on the strains of the Clostridium bacteria called Clostridium perfringens, which can cause severe bloody diarrhea in calves as well as other digestive upsets. All of these Clostridium bacteria are present everywhere in the soil and in the intestinal tract of ruminants. They all possess the ability to generate a number of potent toxins that can cause damage to the tissues of animals, such as the intestine and cause severe diseases with sudden onset.

The Clostridium perfringens bacteria can be subdivided into multiple strains and most of our vaccines help to protect against strains C and D. Both of these strains can cause a severe bloody diarrhea when the bacteria multiply and release their toxins in the intestine of young calves.

Type C tends to cause disease in very young calves less than 10 days of age, while Type D also affects very young calves, but can occasionally cause problems in older calves. The main clinical sign is the sudden onset of very profuse bloody diarrhea. Calves will be listless, reluctant to nurse and may show signs of colic. The toxins that are released by the bacteria cause severe damage to the intestine and often these calves die within hours of showing clinical symptoms.

These bacteria require special circumstances to develop and grow within the intestine and release their potent toxins. The bacteria are normally present in the intestine of ruminants and are considered part of the normal flora at low levels. However, if given large amounts of carbohydrate or protein to digest and if the gastrointestinal tract suffers from some incident that causes decreased motility, then these bacteria can multiply and produce their toxins, which cause disease.

Clostridium perfringens disease episodes are usually linked to calves consuming large volumes of milk at individual feedings. The disease tends to occur in calves from dams who are exceptionally good milk producers.

The disease can also be associated with events that cause calves to stop nursing for a period of time and then take an exceptionally large feeding, such as separation of calves from dams at branding or storms or inclement weather that may delay nursing.

Intestinal motility can be negatively affected by these events as well as by coexisting infections, viral infections or coccidiosis that may play a role in creating an environment conducive to Clostridium perfringens growth.

Diagnosis of these conditions can be somewhat problematic. The clinical signs of bloody diarrhea and sudden death in young calves are certainly distinctive, but confirmation by a veterinarian and a diagnostic laboratory help to rule out other possibilities.

Culture of the feces or intestine are oftentimes valuable because Clostridium perfringens is present in normal calves and can proliferate after the death of an animal in the intestinal tract. The only way to definitively diagnose these diseases is to submit a sample of fresh or frozen intestine to the diagnostic lab. The tests are somewhat difficult and specialized and as a result, veterinarians may rely mainly on clinical signs to make a diagnosis.

Treatment is difficult and there is limited scientific evidence to support our treatment decisions when dealing with these cases. Many calves will require intravenous fluids to help restore fluid loss, as well as to correct electrolyte imbalances. Antibiotics are usually recommended to try to stop the overgrowth of Clostridium perfringens in the gut, and penicillin is usually the antibiotic of choice for these particular bacteria.

Some veterinarians may prescribe penicillin orally as well as giving another antibiotic such as tetracycline by injection. This combination has been suggested by some authors as somewhat effective in treating these cases.

In many cases, calves are very close to death by the time they are discovered and it can be difficult to save them. In surviving calves, it may be necessary in some cases to restore normal bacterial flora of their gut, which can be done by transferring rumen fluid from a healthy animal. Prevention is much more easily accomplished because we have fairly effective vaccines that will immunize animals against these diseases. Most producers will vaccinate young calves at two to three months of age and again at weaning with Clostridial vaccines.

There is some evidence that in some cases this four-month gap between vaccinations may be too long and allow immunity to wane in these calves. These herds may require a booster vaccination before weaning in those circumstances. To protect the very young calves from Clostridium perfringens enteritis, producers may need to vaccinate dams to provide immunity throughout the colostrum.

John Campbell is a professor in the department of Large Animal Clinical Sciences at the University of Saskatchewan’s Western College of Veterinary Medicine.
Firm tests ‘mortgage streaming’ contracts for canola

BY BRIAN CROSS
Saskatoon StarPhoenix

A Regina-based company that buys unharvested canola from farmers through so-called “streaming contracts” is dipping its toes into the farmland mortgage market.

Input Capital Corp. announced Jan. 30 that it has launched a new “mortgage stream” on a pilot project basis. Western Canadian canola growers who require financing for farm-land real estate purchases will have the option of entering a mortgage contract with Input Capital and making subsequent mortgage payments with canola.

“There are still some edges to be figured out on this, but we’ve done a couple of these agreements and they’ve been pretty straight forward so far,” said Input Capital president Doug Emsley.

“It’s like a traditional mortgage product... We would be the finance company... but with our product, the idea is that you (the borrower) would pay us off with canola.”

As with other mortgage products, amortization periods and mortgage terms would be negotiated. Borrowers would be required to make an initial down payment, probably in the range of 20 to 30 percent of the farmland’s value, in order to qualify. Borrowings by the farmer would be repaid over a number of years with canola prices fixed over the term of the mortgage.

Emsley said the concept is appealing to farmers because it allows them to lock in the price of canola and reduces their exposure to market fluctuations.

Input would also assume responsibility for picking up canola at the producer’s farm. Input’s interest rates would be “competitive” with those offered by other commercial lenders, Emsley said.

“But because we’re going to assume that price risk on the canola, our (product) might be a little bit more expensive from an interest rate standpoint,” he added. Input has already negotiated its first “mortgage stream” contract in the amount of $400,000 with an existing client in Saskatchewan.

“Others growers have also expressed interest. “There’s been a fairly decent interest level,” Emsley said.

“We’re going to do it as a pilot test first... and if it works, we’ll carry it forward and make it one of our company’s (standard offerings) to the market.”

Input is an agriculture commodity company that buys and sells canola, the largest and most profitable crop in Western Canada.

“Input is well positioned to finance multi-year canola streaming contracts with canola farmers in the prairie provinces and buy a fixed volume of canola annually for the duration of each producer’s contract.”

firm.brucetyck@producer.com
Make sure you are getting the best use out of your time

TERRY BETKER

There’s a concept known as return on time invested. It can get fairly complex, but here’s a simple way to rate or score the effectiveness of a meeting.

When the meeting is over, think critically about how you use it.

• The meeting was above average and that you gained more than the value of the time spent.

• Two fingers means the meeting was useful, so not a complete waste, but a losing proposition from a return on time invested perspective.

• Three fingers is average, so not a complete waste, but a losing proposition from a return on time invested perspective.

• Four fingers is an indication that the meeting was above average and that you gained more than the value of the time spent.

• Five fingers means the meeting was extremely useful.

• Two fingers says the meeting was a complete waste. If you find that the meetings you’re attending are getting lots of one and two finger scores, it’s time to critically look at the purpose and function of the meeting and make some changes so that there is an acceptable return on time invested.

Back to the discussion on how you spend your time. Key to the longer-term success for many farmers is focusing more on doing the “right things” in the business than doing “things right.” It’s easily said but not easily done.

There is no debate that things need to get done right. Seasonal pressures are great, and the margins are just too thin not to make sure that things are getting done right.

“It’s incredibly easy to get caught up in an activity trip, in the busyness of life, to work harder at climbing the ladder of success only to find it’s leaning against the wrong wall,” says Stephen Covey, author of 7 Habits of Highly Effective People.

Is it possible to be busy, very busy, without being effective?

I think the answer for farmers and farm families is yes. “Busy-ness, though is not about doing the right things to do on a farm. It’s generally easier to just be busy. Is that, though, going to win the day? If so, then just get at it.

For a great many farms, though, they will be better served by making different choices about how they spend their time, which could very well mean a whole lot less time on a tractor than in an office.

Terry Betker is a farm management consultant based in Winnipeg. He can be reached at 204-782-8200 or terry.betker@backswath.com.

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There is only one absolute finite resource. And that is your time.
## CATTLE & SHEEP

### Alberta

- **Total beef**: 215.1 +9
- **Non-fed**: 41.7 +6

### Saskatchewan

- **Saskatchewan Sig.**: 5

### Manitoba

- **Shipments**: $210

### Market Prices

- **Canadian U.S.**: $1.2587
- **Sheep**: 1.20-1.40
- **Lamb (under 110 lb)**: 1.38-1.79
- **Lamb**: 1.20-1.40

### Grain Futures

- **Chicago Corn ($US/bu.)**: 2.74-2.76
- **Chicago Soy Meal ($US/short ton)**: 4.68-4.80
- **Chicago Soy Oil (¢US/lb.)**: 26.67

### Hogs

- **Fixed contract $/kg**
- **Maple Leaf**
- **Thunder Creek**

### Eggs

- **Desi chickpeas (¢/lb)**: 26.67
- **Mustard, Oriental, No. 1 (¢/lb)**: 30.75
- **Mustard, yellow, No. 1 (¢/lb)**: 36.33
- **Maple peas ($/bu)**: 17.30
- **Peas, sm. yellow No. 2 ($/bu)**: 5.98

### Cattle Slaughter

- **Feeder Cattle ($/cwt)**
- **Total $215.08**
  - **Non-fed**: -
  - **Slaughter**: -

### Feeder Cattle

- **Feeder Cattle ($/cwt)**
- **Sask. Man. Alta. B.C.**

### Live Cattle

- **Mar 26**: 115.80
- **Apr 23**: 114.80
- **May 20**: 113.80
- **Jun 17**: 112.80

### Sheep

- **Sheep ($/cwt)**
- **Cdn AAA (C$)**

### Beef Cutout

- **Mar 26**: 156.91
- **Apr 17**: 155.71
- **May 18**: 151.81

### Livestock

- **300-400**: 238-260
- **400-500**: 219-252
- **700-800**: 180-200

### Canned (¢/bbm)

- **Feb 9**: 26.67
- **Mar 9**: 26.67

### Cattle & Beef Trade

- **Exports from 17/18**:
  - **To**:
  - **To Total Last Year**

### Feed Wheat (Letheridge)

- **Dove Creek (head)**
- **Steers ($/cwt)**
- **Cows ($/head)**

### Barley (Cash)

- **March**: 17.15
- **May**: 15.40

### Cattle Slaughter

- **Fed. inspections only**:
  - **Canadian U.S.**: 202.68
- **Chicago**: 202.68

### Wool lambs

- **<80 lb**: 1.90
- **>110 lb**: 2.25

### Swine

- **Pork**: 6.25

### Beef Cutout

- **Mar 26**: 156.91
- **Apr 17**: 155.71
- **May 18**: 151.81

### Sheep ($/head)

- **Sheep**: 1.20-1.40
- **Lambs**: 1.35-1.65

### Beef

- **Hogs ($/cwt)**
- **Pork**: 6.25

### Beef Cattle from U.S.

- **Mar 26**: 143.00
- **Jun 18**: 143.00

### Feeder Cattle

- **Mar 26**: 143.00
- **Jun 18**: 143.00

### Beef

- **Hogs ($/cwt)**
- **Pork**: 6.25

### Beef Cattle from U.S.

- **Mar 26**: 143.00
- **Jun 18**: 143.00

### Beef

- **Hogs ($/cwt)**
- **Pork**: 6.25

### Beef Cattle from U.S.

- **Mar 26**: 143.00
- **Jun 18**: 143.00

### Beef

- **Hogs ($/cwt)**
- **Pork**: 6.25
### Saskatchewan Temperature and Precipitation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Temperature (°C)</th>
<th>Precipitation (mm)</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assiniboia</td>
<td>-10.1</td>
<td>-32.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Broadview</td>
<td>-11.6</td>
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<td>Eastend</td>
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<td>-33.5</td>
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<td>Estevan</td>
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<td>-31.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kindersley</td>
<td>-8.7</td>
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<td>Maple Creek</td>
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<td>Meadow Lake</td>
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<td>Melfort</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nipawin</td>
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<td>North Battleford</td>
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<td>0.9</td>
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<td>Regina</td>
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<td>1.1</td>
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<td>Saskatoon</td>
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<td>1.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Swift Current</td>
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<td>Val Marie</td>
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<td>-38.3</td>
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<td>Wynyard</td>
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<td>Yorkton</td>
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### Alberta Temperature and Precipitation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Temperature (°C)</th>
<th>Precipitation (mm)</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brooks</td>
<td>-5.2</td>
<td>-37.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Calgary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cold Lake</td>
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<td>Coronation</td>
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<td>4.1</td>
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<td>Edmonton</td>
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<td>-33.0</td>
<td>2.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grande Prairie</td>
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<td>High Level</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lethbridge</td>
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<td>-32.4</td>
<td>1.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lloydminster</td>
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<tr>
<td>Medicine Hat</td>
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<td>Milk River</td>
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<td>Peace River</td>
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<td>Pincher Creek</td>
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<td>Vegreville</td>
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<td>-35.0</td>
<td>0.8</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Manitoba Temperature and Precipitation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Temperature (°C)</th>
<th>Precipitation (mm)</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brandon</td>
<td>-12.9</td>
<td>-28.9</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dauphin</td>
<td>-9.9</td>
<td>-26.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gimli</td>
<td>-12.4</td>
<td>-29.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Morden</td>
<td>-12.9</td>
<td>-30.3</td>
<td>0.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Portage la Prairie</td>
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<td>-25.4</td>
<td>0.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Swan River</td>
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<tr>
<td>Winnipeg</td>
<td>-12.3</td>
<td>-27.4</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### British Columbia Temperature and Precipitation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Temperature (°C)</th>
<th>Precipitation (mm)</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cranbrook</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>-20.3</td>
<td>13.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fort St. John</td>
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<td>Kamloops</td>
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<td>Kelowna</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prince George</td>
<td>-6.9</td>
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<td>31.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The numbers on the above maps are average temperature and precipitation figures for the forecast week, based on historical data from 1971-2000. Maps provided by WeatherTec Services: www.weathertec.mb.ca

n/a = not available;  tr = trace;  1 inch = 25.4 millimetres (mm)
THERE ARE 6,272,640 SQUARE INCHES IN EVERY ACRE.

With the new Tiger-Mate® 255 field cultivator and 2000 series Early Riser® planter, you can maximize every single square inch you farm. It’s creating the most level seedbed in the industry, while others are just scratching the surface. It’s the ability to gauge ground pressure 200 times per second. It’s targeting a nickel-sized area to plant a seed — and never missing. Then, inch by inch, the result is productivity like you never thought was possible. Start rethinking the productivity of your seedbed by visiting a local Case IH dealer or caseih.com/seedbed.
SAVE ON SUPERIOR BURNDOWN CONTROL

BlackHawk®
Group 4, 14

PRIOR TO CEREALS SOYBEANS

• In cereals and soybeans, BlackHawk delivers two modes of action with two active ingredients for a burndown solution that doubles as an effective herbicide resistance management tool.
• Tank mix with glyphosate to control Group 2- and glyphosate-resistant weeds and volunteers, including narrow-leaved hawk’s-beard and kochia.

CONQUER®
Group 6, 14

PRIOR TO CANOLA

• In canola, CONQUER delivers fast, complete weed control with two active ingredients and two modes of action.
• Tank mix with glyphosate for triple action against kochia, cleavers, narrow-leaved hawk’s-beard, volunteer canola, including Group 9- and Group 2-tolerant biotypes.

GoldWing®
Group 4, 14

PRIOR TO PEAS CORN CEREALS

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• Tank mix with glyphosate for early season weed control that includes Group 2- and glyphosate-resistant weeds and volunteers.

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Purchase any amount of CONQUER herbicide for the opportunity to earn a $1/acre reward.

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