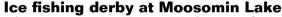
Focus on Agriculture inside this section



Covering Southeast Saskatchewan and Southwest Manitoba







Ice fishermen converged on Moosomin Lake from across Southeast Saskatchewan and southwest Manitoba on March 5 for a Telemiracle ice fishing derby sponsored by the Moosomin Kinsmen Club.

Above: People fishing on Moosomin Lake as temperatures climbed to 10 above.

Left: Carson Baily was the big winner of the day, winning \$2,300 for the largest fish and winning an ice auger for catching the first fish. In back are Kinsmen Jonathan Nosterud, Clayton Powlyk, and Ryan Thorn.

Below left: Jeffrey Skappel of Wawota was enjoying the ice fishing derby with his family.

Below: People came to the ice fishing derby from across a wide area, including Sierra Pasap from White Bear First Nation.





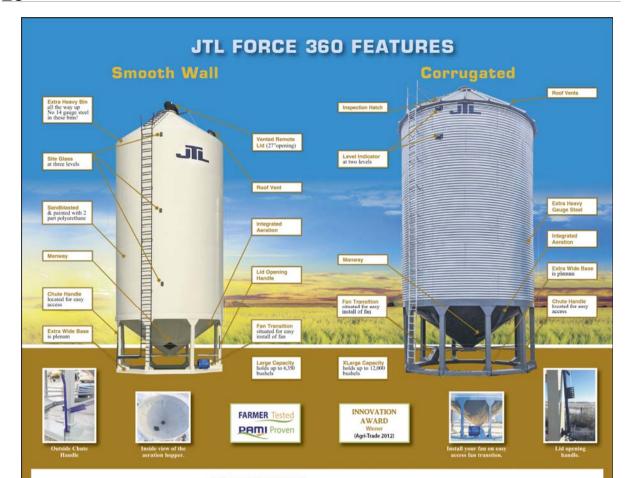


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FCC surveys farmers:

Survey shows strong appetite for risk management

In a business influenced by changing weather and volatile markets, only about one-third of Canadian producers and agribusiness operators have a formal risk management plan, according to a recent survey by Farm Credit Canada (FCC).

However, the vast majority (96 per cent) of those surveyed also said they use various risk management strategies—such as cash reserves and contracts for guaranteed prices—to protect their business against unforeseen circumstances and events.

untoreseen circumstances and events.

"The good news is most producers are
in a solid financial position to withstand
short-term impacts from changes in the
weather or the markets," said Corinna
Mitchell-Beaudin, FCC's chief risk officer.

"There's also a strong appetite among
producers to learn more about various risk

producers to learn more about various risk management strategies and to bring them together into a comprehensive risk management plan for their business."

In fact, 35 per cent of respondents who reported not having a plan said they have thought about creating one and many are turning to their financial institutions for information and advice on how to protect their business from unforesseen events. their business from unforeseen events. their business from unionescen events. Those who do have a plan say changes in commodity prices (52 per cent), a drop in quality and/or quantity of product (43 per cent) and tax implications (43 per cent) top

cent) and tax implications (43 per cent) top the list of risks to mitigate. The top five strategies used to mitigate risks, include cash reserves in a savings account, off-farm income, investments outside the farm operation, contracts for guaranteed commodity prices and assets that can quickly be liquidated.

The survey also showed farm operations and corporations with more than \$500,000

and corporations with more than \$500,000 in annual sales are more likely to have a formal risk management plan and had an expert assist in creating the plan. "A risk management plan ensures measures are in place to allow producers and agribusiness operators to react quickly and appropriately to individual or multiple risks," Mitchell-Beaudin said. "We encurage producers to have a risk "We encurage producers to have a risk and the producers to have a risk and the producers to have a risk to the producers and the producers are also and the producers are also and the producers are also and the producers and the producers are also and the producers and the producers are also and the producers and the produc

tiple risks," Mitchell-Beaudin said.
"We encourage producers to have a risk
management plan that pulls together mitigation strategies already in place, as well
as identifies key risks and available solutions to manage these risks should they
emerge in your business."
Mitchell-Beaudin recommends producment and arribusiness courses express expr

ers and agribusiness owners engage ex-pert advisors, as the growing complexity of agriculture can present different risks that require more complex solutions.

FCC offers a wide variety of free learning opportunities to help producers make effective business decisions. For more information on FCC and to register for various events, visit www.fcc.ca/exchange

ous events, visit www.rcc.ca/exchange. FCC's Risk Management in Canadian Ag survey captured the views of more than 1,100 FCC Vision panelists, who are mostly primary producers. Based on the sample size, the survey has a margin of error plus/minus three per cent, 19 times out of 20.

By sharing agriculture survey results, FCC provides solid insights and expertise to help those in the business of agriculture achieve their goals. To learn more about the FCC Vision Research Panel, visit www. fccvision.ca.



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CAHRC working on farm labour shortage

On February 9, the Agri-culture and Agri-Food La-bour Task Force (LTF) and Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council (CAHRC) partners were joined by officials from four federal departments to discuss critical labour shortages in agriculture and its effect on industry growth.

growth.

The meeting was part of the Canadian Agriculture and Agri-Food Workforce Action Plan (WAP) designed to address issues, impacts and solutions related to the pervasive labour shortages facing the Canadian agriculture and Canadian agriculture and agri-food industry. The meeting was an unprecedented collaboration of representatives from the representatives from the 67 WAP partners along with officials from Em-ployment and Social De-velopment Canada, Im-migration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and Statistics Canada.

The Council believes that the best way to ad-dress the labour shortages dress the labour shortages in primary agriculture and agri-food processing is through collaboration, explained Portia MacDonald-Dewhirst, CAHRC Executive Director. "We had a clear willingness among all parties to talk and work together to find solutions. The Council is very pleased with today's very pleased with today's very pleased with today's outcomes and will continue to work diligently to find solutions.

The meeting opened with a virtual farm tour of more than a dozen farm and ranch operations from across Canada. Each producer-speaker explained their commodity-specific issues arising from labour shortages, the economic repercussions it is having on their business and the long-term damage it will cause to the future health of the industry and Cana-

da's economy.

"The virtual farm tour was an important component of today's meeting because most of our government colleagues are ernment colleagues are not familiar with the dayto-day demands of the agricultural and agri-food industry and the impacts worker shortages have on businesses in this sector. The session helped them get a better idea of what we are talking about, why it matters, and how their department can help," explained Mark Chambers, Co-chair of the LTF.

Highlights of the meeting included an update

ing included an update on the foundational re-search and recruitment search and recruitment activities being conducted by CAHRC with industry partners – including reaching out to new Canadians and incoming refugees. Concerns were raised about the need to ensure a strong and stable workforce for the industry in order to ensure a stable supply of food products for the Canadian and world markets. With pervasive shortages experienced throughout Canada, industry representatives stressed the need for support from the protectional workers. vasive shortages being experienced throughout Discussions turned to the need to streamline the permanent residency process

for foreign workers who are willing and skilled at agricultural and agri-food labour. The meeting con-cluded with an overview of the Workforce Action Plan.

Plan.

In follow-up, the government officials have been invited to join producers and the agri-food industry at the CAHRC-

hosted "Growing the Agri-Workforce' summit, March 14 – 16 in Winnipeg where the latest labour market information about the sec tor will be released and the industry's future viability and success will be dis-cussed. Additionally, farm tours for civil servants are being planned by CAHRC and the Canadian Federa-

tion of Agriculture to help develop greater under-standing and awareness of agricultural issues, par-

"Before a problem can be fixed, it has to be un-derstood," said Mark derstood," said Mark Wales, Co-chair of the LTF. "We have now facilitated a connection between industry and a network of

the people who can make meaningful changes to ad-dress the agriculture and agri-food labour shortage agri-food labour shortage issue. Government under-standing and support of WAP is a key component to its successful imple-mentation. This meeting has been an important step toward finding solu-tions."



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Beef exports up

Canadian beef exports were up 1.4 per cent in volume to 322,343 tonnes and 15 per cent in value to \$2,23 billion in 2015, according to Statistics Canada's final trade data for the year.

The increase was achieved despite sev-

The increase was achieved despite several market restrictions following the February 2015 bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) case and lower monthly volumes in the second quarter.

A strong rebound in August as trade resumed supported the final volumes.

This, along with a weaker loonie supporting export competitiveness internationally and domestic prices, resulted in a very different year in Canada versus the United States (U.S.) where exports were down 11 per cent in volume and 12 per cent in value for numerous reasons.

The U.S. remains Canada's top market, accounting for 71 per cent of total beef exports.

The major shift was in Mainland China (10%) which jumped to second place while Hong Kong (3.3%) dropped to fifth. Mexi-co (6%), Japan (4.4%) and the Middle East and North Africa (1.2%) round out the top

six export destinations with all other mar-kets accounting for less than one per cent. Exports to the U.S. were up 3.7 per cent in volume to 230,197 tonnes and 16 per cent in value to \$1.57 billion despite larger rotein production, disruptions at west coast ports for a portion of the year and a stronger Greenback all contributing to

large supplies.

The projected increase in U.S. beef pro-Ine projected increase in U.S. beet production and continued challenges with the U.S. dollar will pressure trade in 2016. Exports to Asia saw robust growth with direct market access for Canadian beef. Exports to Mainland China increased

381 per cent in volume and 534 per cent in value to 32,869 tonnes valued at \$255 million in 2015.

This was driven by the Chinese govern-

ment's anti-smuggling campaign that saw more direct shipments. Exports to Hong Kong were cut in half (down 59% in volume and 56% in value) to 10,784 tonnes valued at \$88 million.

The increase to mainland China more than offset the decline to Hong Kong, resulting in a net growth to the region. Overall, China and Hong Kong represented 14 per cent of total exports up from

10 per cent in 2014.

Exports to Japan were down 24 per cent in volume to 14,384 tonnes and 9 per cent

in volume to 14,384 tonnes and 9 per cent in value to \$93 million.

Japanese beef imports have been negatively impacted by the devaluation of the yen and poor economic performance reducing both consumption and total beef imports.

Imports

Beef imports in 2015 were steady in volume and up 9 per cent in value at 203,983 tonnes valued at \$1.6 billion.

tonnes valued at \$1.0 billion.

The U.S. remains the largest supplier with 59 per cent of market share despite an eight per cent decline in volume.

Australia maintained second place with

Australia managed second place will be a considered to the created by 18.6 per cent to 41,569 tonnes in 2015 with continued large slaughter under persistent drought conditions.

New Zealand was the third largest sup-

New Zealand was the third largest sup-plier with 1.26 per cent of market share with volumes rebounding 56 per cent from the lows in 2013 and 2014. Overall, non-NAFTA imports increased 14 per cent to 83,175 tonnes surpassing the annual quota level of 76,409 tonnes for the first time since 2002.

Trade balance

Canada's net beef trade balance continues to improve from the 2012 lows and was up four per cent to 118,359 tonnes in 2015.

While net trade volumes remain below the 10 year average, net values have surthe 10 year average, net values have sup-passed the 10 year average over the last two years. In value, Canada shifted from being a net importer in 2012 (-\$164 mil-lion) and 2013 (-\$69 million); back to be-ing a net exporter in 2014 (\$1.9 billion) and 2015 (\$634 million).

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Pat Beaujot named to Ag Hall of **Fame**

™ Continued from front

"There were many small companies trying to find ways to do it, but there wasn't really anything that could seed shallow accurately enough, and that was the key. We had such cold, wet soil in the spring that the crop wouldn't come up quickly enough if it was just left with stubble on it. If we could seed shallow accurately, it would allow the crop to emerge quicker. There were many small the crop to emerge quicker. Before that, we were taught to seed wheat an inch and a half deep. If we did that in no till, it would take forever to come up. If we could switch to seeding it half an inch deep, it would come up ahead of the weeds. But the seeding equipment back then wasn't accurate enough—it had terrible depth control."

So how did he build his

first air seeder back in 1992?
"There was my brother and I and a guy named Brian Kent who was a machin-ist. We kicked it around. I knew we needed to side band the fertilizer, I knew we needed to get a lot more we needed to get a lot more accurate with the seeding and pack it at the same time. The three of us were kicking around how this was going to happen. "My brother was trying to think of ways to have sections of the machine float or follow the ground better and Brian Kent suc-

better, and Brian Kent sug-gested why don't we have each opener independent. My brother figured out if we put a hydraulic cylinwe put a hydraulic cylinder on each one it would do what we're looking to do. One thing led to another and my brother built a small opener prototype and it looked good, so we said let's build a machine and seed our farm with it. If it worked, I knew every-body in the industry was looking for something bet-ter, so I thought here's a business opportunity for us if we can do it right."

How quickly did the group go from a prototype to production?

"We basically built that first one for the farm only. We got it built by the spring of 1992, and seeded our farm with it and it worked fairly well. We had some fixing to do, but it worked. I was pretty excited about it. I knew that the market was ready for something like this, and it wasn't going to be the big companies making it, because they were selling tractors and cultivators and everything else, so none of those guys were all that excited about mo till, believe me. So I quit my job. I had a really good job with Simplot, but we decided if we were going to make this work, I was going to have to sell them, because I was that type of person, and my brother was more of the design and build type, and the same with Brian Kent. "We agreed to form a

company that spring and called it Seed Hawk. I hit the road with the opener and a table top display and I sold five machines that winter, and we built sixone new one for ourselves and the five we sold. We put a lot of sweat equity into it and we didn't expect

into it and we didn't expect much out of it.
"We built 15 for the spring of '94 and it just kept growing from there. We only had two hired people for a few years. It was just three couples who did most of the work at first, and it grew from there."

Did he expect the company to grow as quickly as it did?

"Maybe I was naive, but I thought we had something really exciting, and I pic-tured it getting big fast, to be honest with you," says Beaujot.
"There are tens of thou-

sands of farmers on the Prairies, so we didn't have to get everybody's busi-ness, we just needed a small part of it. I knew the induspart of it. I knew the indus-try was ready for some-thing, and I knew if we got it right it would take off. It took a little longer than I thought, but you're asking farmers to spend a lot of money on some company they've never heard of or seen before."

Is he happy with the way the company developed? "I was quite happy. It was

a struggle when we had to split with my brother, but that happens in business. When you have a family business, whether it's farming or equipment, that can happen. It was a difficult time when we split up in 2002. At that time, Brian Dean became my main partner in the business—he was one of our first employees. But since that hap-pened we've grown a lot, and we've done it the way

and we've done it the way we wanted to do it."
Pat's brother, Norbert Beaujot, went on to form SeedMaster, another air seeder manufacturer, then Swedish implement manufacturer Vaderstad purchased 49 per cent of Seed Hawk and opened up new markets for the company.

markets for the company.

"To be able to partner with Vaderstad was great," says Pat Beaujot. "In 2006, we formed that partnership because they wanted to bring our product to other parts of the world and we weren't big enough and didn't have the resources to do that. That turned into a great partnership." How has that changed

the business?

"They really helped us get into Australia and eastern Europe and they says Beaujot. "They owned 49 per cent of the company in 2006, and from that year to 2013—which was when we sold the rest of the company to them—we had grown eleven-fold, so it really did help us. We did some right things in there, too, but their support and their backing helped us

grow quickly.

"After the split with my brother I think we did a few other things right. In

2004, right after we split up, we started working on a large tank because I knew that farmers were trying to put all their seed and fertilizer on at the same time and they needed bigger capacity. The largest tanks out there at the time were around 400 bushels. When we decided that we were we decided that we were going to build our own tank, we designed an 800 bushel tank—it was double the size of John Deere's big-gest one. It turned into one of the best moves we made, of the best moves we made, because it really attracted a lot more people to us. We were able to improve our distribution because we were able to attract dealers. were able to attract dealers. We had equipment dealers coming to us asking to handle our product, and that's a great position to be in. Before we were selling everything direct, which is not going to let you grow too fast. That big tank line really helped us.

"The next thing we did for the industry was section control technology, which we introduced in 2008, which was a part of our tank line development

When we were able to take an 80-foot seeder and shut off 10-foot sections of it and lift the openers on 10-foot sections, so farm-ers didn't overlap when they were seeding with big equipment, that really changed the whole indus-

try again.
"I think after the split up we were still innovating and bringing new things to the market that were help-

ing farmers quite a bit.
"I think we've been leaders in the industry in many

The company is up to 200 employees after a series of

with Vaderstad, where they bought the rest of the company, I am happy with that. The reason it happened was they've got some products that would fit the North American market, such as the corn market in the midwestern U.S.

me midwestern U.S.
"They want to build
those products at Lang-bank. We're just working
on developing a North
American version of their
planter and I think that's

planter and I think that's going to help grow our business quite a bit as well. "We wanted them to build it here, and they agreed, but they said they wanted to own a control-ling interest in the op-eration. That had been the long-term exit strategy, but the timing seemed right, and it seemed like the right thing to do for the community and the staff.

"Those developments will drive the next expan-

sion. In the meantime our own product line is still own product line is still driving most of the busi-ness. Vaderstad are great people, they're from a small town in Sweden and they think much the same way as we do.

"They're a good com-pany and they really think long term so they will keep investing in the facility and in the people in Langbank."

Is it tough to run a com-pany the size of Seed Hawk in a community the size of Langbank?

Langbank?
"We've got a lot of great
communities around us.
Langbank's only got a
handful of people, but
because there's Kipling,
Whitewood, Moosomin,
Wawota, Kennedy, and
Broadview close by, we
can do it—we've got people coming from all those
places.

about running the business from a rural area, and I've always felt that people don't leave rural Saskatchewan because they want to, I think they leave because they have to-to find a good job. If we can offer good jobs here lots of people will stay.

"We've attracted a lot of people to come here and work. Obviously some of the types of people we needed we had to bring in, and sometimes that's hard, but once you get someone here they start to really ap-preciate the area we have with the lakes and valleys to the north and south.

"If we had built near Regina we wouldn't have the room to grow, and we'd be paying millions of dol-lars for every extra piece of land we wanted, whereas now we're on a full quar-ter-section that we bought,

and it's easy to grow.
"Part of what makes me feel good about everything is we did do this in rural Saskatchewan, and we've kept these communities Saskatcnewan, and we've kept these communities alive and growing. That makes me feel good." What does Beaujot see in

the future for Seed Hawk?
"We've got a great innovative staff and they all want to grow, so I think we'll see that growth con-tinue," he says. "The new products we have coming from Sweden are going to help us a lot, too. We set up a division in Eastern Canada and in the U.S. to start setting up dealers and

growing."

Beaujot says he feels he has accomplished what he set out to do, to encourage soil conservation.

"It feels pretty good," he

says. "I've been very fortu-nate to work in a field I'm passionate about my whole life, and to have success. I don't need an award to tell me I've been fortunate and had a good career.

"Our staff has been fan-tastic. I wouldn't be getting this recognition if it wasn't for my partner Brian Dean, if it wasn't for the staff we've been able to employ.
"I was taught a long time

ago to surround myself with smart people, and good people, and we have that. They're very innova-tive. That's kept us grow-

ing."
Has it been tough to keep that culture of innovation alive as the company has grown?

grown?
"As you get bigger, coming up with something new is more challenging," Beaujot says. "You can't change as fast when you're big, and it's a higher risk when you're big. You introduce a new product line and if you make some mistakes it can cost you a lot of money."

cost you a lot of money.

"When you're working for an innovative company it sounds cool but it is chal-lenging, because change is not easy.

not easy.
"Our production staff is always looking at changes, and our sales staff is selling something new. A lot of our staff put long hours into dealing with new products, but once we get an inno-vative product out and it works, we grow our market share, so everyone knows why we do it, but it's not as easy as it sounds. "Our staff really does rise

"They're kind of like me, they're proud of what we do."



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Canadian Agriculture Safety Week coming up

This March, the Canadian Agricultural Safety Association (CASA),the Canadian Federation of Agriculture (CFA) and presenting sponsor Farm Credit Canada (FCC) are encouraging farmers and their families to "Be an Ag-Safe Family" by "Keeping Kids Safe". Canadian Agricultural Safety Week (CASW) is an an-

calitatian agricultural safety week (ASW) is an air-nual public awareness campaign focusing on the im-portance of safe agriculture. In 2016 organizers want to empower farm families with the information they need to help keep kids safe on the farm while preserving the

to help keep kids safe on the farm while preserving the farming lifestyle.

The campaign lasts for a week, but Keeping Kids Safe is important all year long.

"We believe that we can teach the love of agriculture to our children in a safe and healthy way,", says Marcel Hacault, Executive Director of CASA.

"This year we are providing tools and safety advice on agsafetyweek.ca that can help make farms a safe place for children to grow up."

"At CFA we recognize the importance of teaching our."

"At CFA, we recognize the importance of teaching our next generation of producers about safety measures on the family farm," says CFA President Ron Bonnett.

"That is why we are proud to once again be a part of Canadian Agricultural Safety Week in order to highlight the significance of safety as a priority on Canada's farms." Farm Credit Canada is a long-time supporter of CASW

and of many farm safety programs.

In 2016, FCC has once again committed to support Safety Days in local communities. Coordinators can apply for up to \$1,500 to help offset some costs associated with hosting a safety day. FCC, through the Coordinator Funding, along with the support for CASW, is "Keeping Kids Safe."

"Safety on the farm doesn't just happen; it's a result of hard work by industry associations, government, indus-try advocates and of course farmers," said Michael Hoffort, FCC president and CEO.

"That's why we're proud to support Canadian Agricul-ture Safety Week and to partner with CASA. It provides the information and resources producers need to make

farms safer for everyone, including children."

As a part of CASW, organizers are working with Workplace Safety & Prevention Services to host launch activities on March 15, 2016. Activities include a morning session on building a farm safety plan, a luncheon featuring farm safety advocates, a half-day of training sessions including a tractor refresher, women in ag and orient-

ing young workers, and a Progressive Agriculture Safety Day® for children.
"Workplace Safety & Prevention Services is proud to be part of Canadian Ag Safety Week, and this year's theme really hits home," says Elizabeth Mills, President and CEO of WSPS

"On average, 13 children die on Canadian farms each year. We are looking forward to connecting with farmers, agricultural employers and partners to share the latest practices and tools to Keep Kids Safe and ensure that Ag families enjoy a rich, exciting and safe experience on the farm."

ram."

Canadian Agricultural Safety Week takes place every year during the third week of March. For more information about CASW, media kits or Ontario launch activities, please visit agsafetyweek.ca. Media kits include press releases, feature farmer stories, safety advice articles, public service announcements, graphics and more.

CASW 2016 is presented by Farm Credit Canada and brought to you by the Canadian Agricultural Safety Association and the Canadian Federation of Agriculture with assistance from the Government of Canada through Growing Forward 2, a federal, provincial and territorial initiative. In 2016, CASW sponsors include long-time corporate sponsor Farm Credit Canada, Esso and their Esso Branded Resellers, Fertilizer Canada, Dow AgroSciences,

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13	SUNDAY	REBELS OF THE WEST SIMMENTAL BULL SALE			
14	MONDAY	BUTCHER SALE	9 A.M		
16	WEDNESDAY	REGULAR FEEDER SALE	9 A.M		
17	THURSDAY	SHEEP SALE	12 NOON		
19	SATURDAY	PLEASANT DAWN CHAROLAIS BULL SAI	LE		
21	MONDAY	BUTCHER SALE	9 A.M		
23	WEDNESDAY	PRESORT FEEDER SALE	10 A.M		
25	FRIDAY	COW-BOYS ANGUS BULL-FEMALE SALE			
30	WEDNESDAY	REGULAR FEEDER SALE	9 A.M		

25	FRIDAY	COW-BOYS ANGUS BULL-FEMALE SALE	
30	WEDNESDAY	REGULAR FEEDER SALE	9 A.M.
API	RIL		
2	SATURDAY	TRI-N CHAROLAIS FARMS	
		& GUESTS BULL SALE	
4	MONDAY	BUTCHER SALE	9 A.M.
6	WEDNESDAY	PRESORT FEEDER SALE	10 A.M.
8	FRIDAY	BRED COW + COW/CALF SALE	11:30 A.M.
11	MONDAY	BUTCHER SALE	9 A.M.
13	WEDNESDAY	FEEDER SALE	9 A.M.
		PEN OF 5 REPLACEMENT HEIFER SALE	
18	MONDAY	BUTCHER SALE	9 A.M.
20	WEDNESDAY	REGULAR FEEDER SALE	9 A.M.
21	THURSDAY	SHEEP SALE	12 NOON
25	MONDAY	BUTCHER SALE	9 A.M.
27		REGULAR FEEDER SALE	9 A.M.
29	FRIDAY	BRED COW + COW/CALF SALE	11:30 A.M.
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Farm and Food Care Saskatchewan is trying to update the image of farmers by updating images of farmers it makes available to media and the

Group trying to update image of farmers

When you think of a farmer, do you picture an older fellow in his bib over-

alls, carrying a pitchfork?

If so, a visit to Farm &
Food Care Saskatchewan's new online image bank is definitely in order.

Farm & Food Care Sas-katchewan (FFC SK) is part of a national initia-tive to connect consumers with farming and food. The group represents thou-sands of livestock, poultry, crop and horticulture pro-ducers across the province, and works with agriculture partners, associated businesses, government, chefs - all those who are passion-ate about food and farm-

ing.
"Our objective with our new image library is two-fold," said Adele Buettner, CEO of Farm & Food Care Saskatchewan (FFC SK). "In addition to providing our members with photos for their communications for their communications efforts, we also want the media and public to use this collection. Ultimately, we're trying to help non-farmers better understand modern farming and put a face to the farmers and ranchers who grow today's food products."

Buettner noted that as FFC SK membership continued to grow and repre-sent such a wide array of crops and livestock, it became apparent that there is a distinct shortage of mod-ern images of not only the different agricultural com-modities, but especially photos which include pro-ducers at work with their families, their crops and

families, their crops and their animals. Over the past year, FFC SK has worked with farm-ers, photographers, mem-ber groups and database specialists to capture more than 2,000 new images of farmers and ranchers at work in different areas and sectors around the prov-

ince.

The online searchable database has been organized into categories such as 'Families and Kids', 'Farmers at Work', 'Fields and Crops', 'Farm Animals', 'Saskatchewan Food Products' and others. Products' and others.

Find the new online image library on the FFC SK website: farmfoodcaresk.org/

farmfoodcaresk.org/ photo-gallery "Today, more than ever, people want to know where their food comes from. They want to un-derstand how their food is grown, and be reassured that what they eat is pro-duced with care," Buettner said. "Our image bank is just another way that getting to know farmers helps people get to know their food."



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What's in your soil may affect what happens on top of your soil



BY SHERRI ROBERTS

WEYBURN CROPS SPECIALIST
As a new planting season approaches, decisions regarding what crops will be planted and where they will be planted

planted and where they will be planted are being made.

A wide pool of scientific literature is piling up on the connection between a healthy population of arbuscular mycorrhizae in your fields and increased yield. Arbuscular mycorrhizal (AM) fungi form a close interaction with plant roots. Studies show they improve the uptake of nutrients such as Nitrogen, Phosphorus, Zinc and Copper in soils that are deficient in these elements.

these elements.

Data also exists which indicates that the pathogen protection benefits of AM fungi might be as significant as the nutritional benefits to many plants. Crop rotations will affect AM species diversity and some studies also show certain pesticides can have a detrimental effect on AM and inter-fere with nodulation formation.

The number of different AM fungi spe-

Dealing with issues of

moisture management, hard pan, salinity, disease, etc.

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cies varies with the type of crop and the crop rotation. Crops that belong to the Brassicaceae (canola), Chenopodiaceae (quinoa) and Caryophyllaceae (buck-wheat) families do not form associations

with AM fungi. It has been suggested that including non-mycorrhizal crops in rotation might affect the concentration and viability of indigenous AM fungi in soil thereby affect-ing the growth of AM-dependent crops following in the rotation.

It has been reported that both the growth of corn including shoot weight, grain yield and AM formation were enhanced when the previous crop formed mycorrhizae. On the other hand, canola has been reported to inhibit AM fungal growth. AM fungi colonization of flax was 3.5% larger after wheat (a highly mycorrhizal crop) than when canola was the previous crop. Seed yield of flax was increased by threefold when grown after safflower versus a flax after flax rotation. Continuous monocultures can both decrease populations of AM

David Herperger

306.745.8032

position of the community toward species which may not be beneficial to the crop. Studies done on corn and soybeans both indicate that certain AM fungi species that become numerous with continuous monocultures may contribute to the yield de-clines over time noted for such crops.

clines over time noted for such crops.

The percentage of roots that are mycorrhizal is low in young plants but later increases to a high level.

In soybean the rapid increase in mycorrhizae begins as the third trifoliate leaf becomes fully expanded and continues until about 8-12 days before flowering in field-grown plants, and until early pod stage in plants grown in controlled environments.

FPGenetics

Inoculum of AMF exists in soil in three forms: spores, soilborne hyphae and colonized roots.

The presence of non-mycotrophic plants, such as members of the Cruciferae, (such as canola) decreases the inoculum of

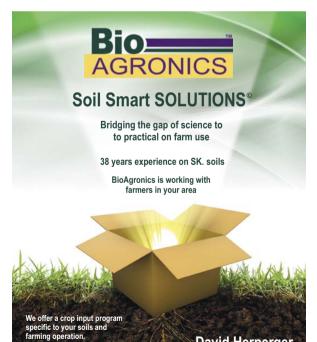
AMI:

As AM fungi form there beneficial re-lationships with live plant roots, studies have shown fallowing land substantially reduces their numbers. In fact, this reduction has been shown to be as great as forty percent with just one season of fallow.

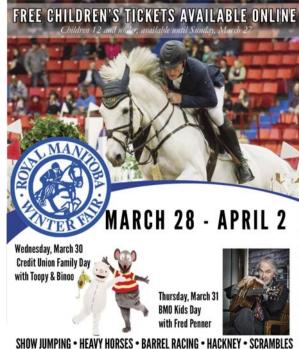
If you have additional questions in regards mycorrhizae, please contact your local Regional Crops Specialist or the Agricultural Knowledge Centre.



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Students from Campbell Collegiate in Regina were introagri-busiduced to ness through a recent partnership between the school and the Farm Credit Corporation



FCC takes ag to urban students

Farm Credit Canada (FCC) and Regina's Campbell Collegiate recently partnered in an innovative pilot project to introduce urban high school students to career op-

portunities in agriculture.

Dubbed the FCC Agri-Biz Case Study, 65 students spent a month last fall listen-ing to various agriculture business lead-ers and visiting their operations before ers and visiting their operations before breaking up into teams to participate in the "Making the Case for Agriculture" marketing case study competition. Judged by a panel of industry experts, the winner went on to execute their case study before the entire school, exposing students to the wide variety of career opportunities in ag-

riculture.
"I think it was a real eye-opener for a lot of students who may have envisioned agriculture as simply the little red barn on the prairies," said Todd Klink, chief marketing officer for FCC, who credits many in the industry for their generous support of the project.

"Many students were unaware that

agricultural career options extend well beyond the farm gate and into many arbeyond the farm gate and into many ar-eas, such as food science, veterinary, biol-ogy, economics, business and finance. It's sometimes hard to fathom how many peo-ple are connected – directly or indirectly – to this industry," he said.

The winning team's project, called "AG-ing," was a powerful, upbeat and fun idea based on the ALS Ice Bucket Challenge concept. But instead of using ice water, the AG-ing involved breaking plastic eggs – labelled with agricultural career options and filled with shampoo – on the heads of students and teachers.

"What better way to learn about the

What better way to learn about the business of agriculture and related career options than having tangible career options flow over your head?" said Campbell business teacher Jordan McFarlen, who collaborated with Klink on the projwho conabonated with kink of the project. "It's not only a clever and engaging marketing strategy, but it also generates interest and awareness among students in the various agriculture career options."

To publicize the event, the winning team hung posters around the school, created a social media campaign and invited the in-dustry judges and others to participate in the AG-ing. As a bonus, the Saskatchewan Egg Producers donated 15,000 eggs to the Regina Food Bank in recognition of the

Prior to the project, students who par-ticipated in the case study competition were surveyed on how much they actu-ally knew about one of the key sectors of Saskatchewan's economy. Only three of the 65 students had some connection with agriculture and almost all admitted they hadn't thought about a career in the indus-try. None of the students understood the breadth and depth of the industry outside primary production, nor did they realize how agriculture impacts the Canadian economy.

"I think we made a significant difference in how students view agriculture and their overall understanding of the many related career opportunities," McFarlen said.

For FCC, the project complements Ag More Than Ever, an industry-led cause to improve perceptions of agriculture in Canada.

Canada.

"Changing perceptions of agriculture takes time and many people working together," Klink said. "It's our responsibility as part of this great industry to reach out to young people and show them the opportunities and our passion for the industry."

It's estimated the content of the industry."

It's estimated that one in eight jobs in Canada are in the agriculture and agri-food sector. Only time will tell if the Campbell project will attract fresh faces to the business of agriculture, but McFarlen maintains it certainly had an impact on the students who participated in the project, as well as the students who took part in the AG-ing event.

"Maybe not all of our students will end up working in agriculture, but they will certainly have a greater appreciation for the industry that works every day to put food on their tables," McFarlen said.



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Foodgrains Bank commits \$3 million to nine projects

Over 25,000 people in nine countries will benefit from nine projects totaling \$3 million committed by Canadian Foodgrains Bank in February.

The projects are being implemented by Foodgrains Bank members ADRA Canada, Emergency Relief and Development Overseas (ERDO Canada), Evangelical Missionary Church of Canada, Mennonite Central Committee Canada, Presbyterian World Service and Development, and World Renew, in collaboration with their local partners

One project, through Foodgrains Bank member World Renew, is responding to El Nino-related drought conditions in In-donesia. On the island of Sumba, where many households depend on small-scale agriculture for their livelihoods, the drought has resulted in significant crop

Families have been reducing the num-ber of meals they eat per day, decreasing portion sizes, selling assets, and taking out loans in order to cope. Working through their local partner the Christian Church of Sumba, World Renew

Christian Church of Sumba, World Kenew is responding by providing monthly rations to 805 households for six months. The project is worth \$387,000.

Another project, through Foodgrains Bank member Evangelical Missionary Church of Canada (EMCC), is responding to the El Nino-related drought in Ethiopia where 10 million people are at risk of extreme hunger.

Through their local partner the Ethio-pian Kale Heywet church, the EMCC is responding with a project worth \$88,000 that is providing emergency food to 1,500 drought-affected people each month for

four months.
Other projects committed in February include:

A food assistance project in Honduras through Emergency Relief and Develop-ment Overseas, totaling \$79,000 and ben-

efitting 2,020 people.

• An agriculture and livelihoods project in Mongolia through ADRA Canada, totaling \$233,000 and benefitting 3,000 people.

• An agriculture and livelihoods project in South Sudan through World Renew, totaling \$418,000 and benefitting 4,200 people

people.

• A food assistance, agriculture and livelihoods, and nutrition project in Afghanistan through Mennonite Central Committee Canada, totaling \$1,331,000 and benefitting 6,400 people.

• A food assistance project in Colombia through Mennonite Central Committee Canada, totaling \$47,000 and benefitting Canada, totaling \$47,000 and benefitting through Mennonite Central Committee Canada, totaling \$47,000 and benefitting through Mennonite Central Committee Canada, totaling \$47,000 and benefitting through Mennonite Central Committee Canada, totaling \$47,000 and benefitting through Mennonite Central Committee Canada, totaling \$47,000 and benefitting through Mennonite Central Cen

Canada, totaling \$47,000 and benefitting 625 people.

An agriculture and livelihoods and food assistance project in the Democratic Republic of the Congo through Mennonite Central Committee Canada, totaling \$391,000 and benefitting 7,500 people.

 An agriculture and livelihoods project in Gustemals through Prochystoria World.

An agriculture and livelihoods project in Guatemal through Presbyterian World Service and Development, totaling \$86,000 and benefitting 1,600 people.
 A food assistance and agriculture and livelihoods project in Ethiopia through Mennonite Central Committee Canada, totaling \$481,000 and benefitting 1,600 people.

A food assistance project in India through Mennonite Central Committee Canada, totaling \$1,900,000 and benefit-ting 47,000 people.

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The changing face of the cattle industry

The cattle sector has always been one willing to change and adapt, at least since I was a youngster and paid atten-

tion to such things.

In my case, while not in the cattle business, I did attend many livestock shows from the time I was old enough to carry a show cane until the present day when I still attend a

carry a show can be used to the present day when you have few in my role as a reporter.

What that means is I grew up through the exotic breeds invasion which forever changed the cattle sector.

The arrival of Charolais were the first I recall, the big white cattle being dramatically different from the existing British breeds in Canada—Hereford, Aberdeen Angus and

Shorthorn.

British breeds were just emerging from an era of belt-

buckle-tall cattle. I can remember pictures of champion animals that barely came to the waists of the showmen in the late 1950s and into the 60s. They were cattle suited to an era that was gone.

that was gone.

There was a recognition that cattle should be bigger, and exotic breeds such as Charolais arrived to "grow" cattle.

The early arrivals caught attention and the stage was set for a long list of breed arrivals: Simmental, Limousin, Maine Anjou, Saler, Chianina, Meuse-Rhine-Issel, and Pinzgauer,

Anjou, Saler, Channa, Meuse-Rhine-issei, and Pinzgauer, among many.

Each year a new breed seemed to be the buzz at shows such as Canadian Western Agribition. I recall one year stickers all over the barn with "Chianina Can," even before the breed arrived on the scene.

Some of the breeds on the list above may not seem familiar. That is because, while in general exotics caught on and idi. Hat is because, while in general coulds cannot be a changed the sector, not all breeds found favor, some arriv-ing with a moderate splash and disappearing quite quickly. While the exotic influence was dramatic, it is not the only

While the exotic influence was dramatic, it is not the only development which has had its effect on cattle. Efforts through the years have also been placed on creating what are in their simplest terms traceable hybrids, with some becoming "official breeds."

The Hays Converter is a breed of cattle native specifically to Alberta. Named for Harry Hays, the agriculturalist and politician who developed the breed, it was the first pure breed of cattle created in Canada. Work on breeding the Hays Converter began in 1959, and it was officially recognized by the Canadian beef industry under the Canada Livestock Pedigree Act in December of 1975. Senator Hays wished to create a cattle breed that would be based solely on production, and as such would mature to market weight as fast as possible, accoding to Wikipedia.

"Hays chose three particular breeds of cattle in order to achieve the optimal breed of cattle. He achieved this by combination crosses of Holstein cattle on Hereford cattle and Brown Swiss cattle...

"Once the crosses began, Hays selected for the traits he

"Once the crosses began, Hays selected for the traits he wanted, and any offspring that did not make the cut in one way or another would have their tails docked and were



Calvin Daniels

shipped off to a processing plant. Once all desired traits were achieved in the offspring, the breed was closed off to mating with any outside breeds. By the time the breed achieved pedigree status in 1975, it had achieved all of the traits Hays had hoped it would. These traits included high growth rate, sturdy build, good carcass quality, easy calving and excellent milk production."

Bringing different breeds together to create a new one is

not new. It was the way Lacombe pigs were developed in Canada, as well as Canadian and Rideau Arcott and Outa-

Canada, as well as Canadian and Rideau Arcott and Outaouais Arcott sheep.

And again in terms of cattle "The Canadian Speckle
Park is a breed of cattle native to the Canadian province
of Saskatchewan. It is one of only a few beef cattle breeds
developed in Canada. The latter half of the breed's name
derives from the characteristic white, black and grey spots
and patches of color that it's known for," noted Wikipedia.

"The Candian Speckle Park is one of the work exittle

"The Canadian Speckle Park is one of the newest cattle breeds, having been officially recognized by the Canadian government in 2006. A breed association was formed in 1985, and exports of Canadian Speckle Park to the U.S. and Australia have occurred.

Australia have occurred.
"Work on breeding the Canadian Speckle Park began in
the 1950s with the crossing of a roan Shorthorn heifer to a
Black Angus bull. The spotting became a dominant trait in
the offspring, and the beginnings of a new breed emerged.
Descended solely from British beef breeds, it is naturally polled and inherits many of the characteristics of popular cattle like the Angus.

Similarly, the Brangus breed was developed to utilize the superior traits of Angus and Brahman cattle. Their genetics are stabilized at three eighths Brahman and five eighths

Angus.
"A review of the development of the Brangus breed would take us back beyond the founding of the American Brangus Breeders Association in 1949; however, registered Brangus Breeders Association in 1949; however, registered Brangus descends from the foundation animals recorded that year or registered Brahman and Angus cattle enrolled since then. Much of the early work in crossing Brahman and Angus cattle was done at the USDA Experiment Station in Jeanerette, Louisiana. According to the USDA 1935 Yearbook in Agriculture the research with these crossed started about 1932," noted www.ansi.okstate.edu

And now similar work appears to be taking place in cre-

ating what is being called the Durham Red.
The American Shorthorn Association introduced the first 100 per cent British breed composite when it allowed the registration of Shorthorns crossed with Red Angus. So far only a few hundred Red Durhams have been regis-

tered through the American Association, but again it sh a willingness to work on creating genetics which are felt to

It is not likely that Durham Reds will have near the impact of the importation of exotics, any more than has Hays Convertors or Speckle Park, but they do show the sector be-ing active in looking for new genetic packages to improve the industry.



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APAS sending youth to CFA meeting

Association of Saskatch-ewan (APAS) Board memewan (AFAS) board mem-bers and five young farm leaders will be attending the Canadian Federation of Agriculture (CFA) Annual General Meeting as part of an APAS development curriculum to encourage the next generation of produc-ers to take on leadership roles with financial support from the Youth Leadership and Mentorship Program through Growing Forward

"The Government's Youth Leadership and Mentorship Program allows po-tential young individuals to better understand the skills, knowledge, tactics and strengths of being a leader in the farming communi-ty," says Norm Hall, APAS President.

"As one generation retires, the farming community needs to find individu-als from the next generation to come to the forefront and take up the leadership challenge. It is essential to ensure our industry is well represented and I see this program has been a great step to ensure that succession occurs.

Successful applicants must be involved in farming, be under the age of 40 years and have demonstrated an interest in farm leadership.

As part of the Youth Leadership and Mentor-ship Program (YLMP), the participants are to be men-tored by knowledgeable, experienced farm leader-

ship individuals.
Five of the APAS Board of Directors has been paired with the program partici-

pants.
The majority of the YLMP program runs over the win-

Justin Cleaver, Dip. GISET

Each mentee chose an APAS Policy Committee to understand grassroots concerns and how they are the foundation of farm con-cerns to be forwarded to key decision makers. The mentees have been or will mentees have been or will be attending APAS Annual General Meeting, APAS Board meetings and CFA Committee, Annual General and Board meetings. The mentees will also be involved in meetings with Federal Ministers, MPs and with current and former farm leaders at the provincial, national and internacial, national and interna-tional levels.

"APAS was extremely pleased with our involve-ment with the 2014 men-

ment with the 2014 men-tees," says Hall.
"Being involved in the 2015 YLMP program pro-vides APAS a chance to improve APAS' program

Celina de Kock

Cell: 1.204.821.5818

cdekock@AGRI-TREND.com

icleaver@AGRI-TREND.com

Cell: 1.306.743.3300

SURE GROWTH



and more importantly, to encourage more youth to come forward and provide come forward and provide new ideas, ingenuity and energy. The bottom line is for mentees to better un-derstanding leadership and apply that knowledge to farming organizations.

"That is the strength of this program as leadership succession is vital to ensure agriculture and its produc-ers are well served in future vears.

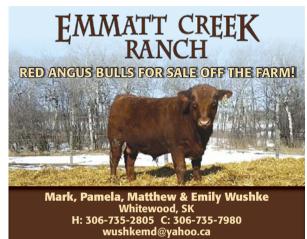
The 2015-16 APAS Youth Leadership and Mentorship candidates are Devin Har-lick from Eastend, Daniel Ottenbreit from Grayson, Matthew McKinnon from Eatonia, Daryl Fransoo from Meota and Spencer Maxwell form Nipawin.

APAS Mentors are Todd Lewis, Dorothy Weetman, Don Connick, Mickey Palfy and Jeff Simpson.

The project is made pos-

sible thanks in part to the

Youth Leadership and Men-torship Program, which provides funding to in-dustry associations in Saskatchewan to co-ordinate katchewan to co-ordinate and support mentorships between young produc-ers and industry leaders. The Youth Leadership and Mentorship Program is one of Saskatchewan's Growing Forward 2 programs, which are funded jointly by the federal and provincial governments.



EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNIT

Agronomist

Valleyview Consumers Co-op Ltd. is now accepting applications for the position of Agronomist. As a member of our AG Team of agri-business professionals, the position will take a lead role in partnering with producers in the Virden and Pierson, MB area, assisting them in finding innovative solutions to help grow their business.

RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE:

- Develop and implement a grower-customer communication plan, providing our customers with relevant, timely, accurate information on agronomy, products, and services available at the Co-op.

 Provide agronomic information and guidance on seed, pest identification and
- management, and where applicable, crop nutrition, so our grower customers can make informed decisions.
- Deliver on-field activities such as scouting and soil testing where required and communicate results effectively to grower customers.

 To efficiently facilitate the resolution of product inquiries between our customer

- and supplier.
 General Health and Safety.
 Continue both personal and professional development.

QUALIFICATIONS:

- DALIFICATIONS:
 Degree or Diploma in agriculture or related field
 Candidates should be registered, or eligible for registration, with the respective
 provincial Professional Institute of Agrology
 Ability to work both independently and as a member of a highly motivated team
- Must be creative and resourceful
- Must have the ability to effectively communicate, both orally and written

Hold a valid Driver's License

A Certified Crop Advisor designation is considered an asset

The Valleyview Consumers Co-op Ltd. as part of the Co-operative Retailing System offers a comprehensive salary and benefits package, with excellent opportunities for



Valleyview

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Valleyview Consumers Co-op Ltd. Box 550 Virden, MB R0M 2C0 Email:valleyv@mts.net Fax: 204-748-3436 Website: valleyview.coop

We thank all applicants for their interest; however only those candidates selected for an interview will be contacted.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Crop Inputs Manager

The Co-operative Retailing System (CRS) is a unique, multi-billion dollar organization based on the fundamental principles of co-operation. It is comprised of a network of approximately 250 autonomous retail co-operatives across Western Canada along with their branch operations, and Federated Co-operatives Limited (FCL). FCL is the wholesaling/manufacturing arm of the CRS, which provides the retail co-ops with a range of products and services. Valleyview Consumers Co-op invites applications for the position of Crop Inputs Manager. The Valleyview Consumers Co-op provides agronomic service from two Crop Protection sites located in Virden and Pierson, Manitoba and has a trading area that encompasses all of southwestern Manitoba.

Reporting to the Agro Division Manager, the Crop Inputs Manager is responsible for marketing seed, fertilizer and crop protection products to new and existing customers. Duties will include leading the agronomic team in providing advice to customers; managing product inventories; ensuring proper handling and storage of crop inputs products; managing financial aspects for crop inputs within the department. The successful candidate will also show strong leadership skills as the successful candidate would be responsible for a staff of agronomists, junior agronomists and other seasonal staff. The successful candidate will possess strong organization, controlling and interpersonal skills, with a customer focus. Strong technical competency requiring an Ag based degree or diploma or equiva-lent of at least two years' experience. Preference will be given to Ag Inputs sales experience and good knowledge of Ag chemical and fertilizer.

Valleyview Consumers Co-op offers a competitive salary, a comprehensive benefits package including a signing bonus, excellent opportunities for advancement and the opportunity to work with one of Western Canada's most successful organizations.



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March 2016

Focus on Agriculture

No free lunch with cage-free eggs

Today's food consumers increasingly challenge firms and farmers to change their production practices, but the evolution carries costs.

One of the first challenges to 21st century agriculture was how to define and label organic food. According to a report by Statistics Canada, in 2011 less than two per cent of Ontario farms are organic, but organic farming still receives a great deal of attention. Fast food firms McDonald's, Burger King, Tim Hor-tons and others recently announced plans to use only

Brady Deaton John Cranfield

eggs from cage free hen housing systems. The Egg Farmers of Canada followed with its own announcement that the use of conventional cages often referred

to as battery cages will end by 2036.

Presumably fast food firms have assessed the situation and decided any loss of business due to increased egg prices will be offset by the competitive advantages of marketing their eggs as cage free. Or perhaps they are willing to absorb any increase in the cost of pur-chasing cage free eggs in order to maintain their cus-tomer base. We also assume that the Egg Farmers of

tomer base. We also assume that the Egg Farmers of Canada disallowed future use of conventional cages because they believe that is consistent with good farm practices and their long term marketing strategy.

But there is no free lunch. Research suggests that the alternative hen housing will push up egg prices, although this may be a small price to pay for production practices that enable hens to pursue natural tendencies like perching, nesting, spreading their wings, etc.

So the new standards governing production practices could enhance the well being of some consumers and improve animal welfare for hens.

However, we must recognize that the gains and losses associated with these changes will not be uniform. Some consumers especially those with strong concerns about animal welfare may benefit greatly. Others, less concerned about animal welfare, may still find themselves paying slightly higher prices.

themselves paying slightly higher prices.

Some egg farmers may make timely and profitable adjustments to their production practices. Others may

adjustments to their production practices. Others may not be so fortunate. Even the hens' welfare will vary. Some hens will en-joy the new freedom to roam but others may fall victim to attacks from other hens that would have otherwise been caged.

been caged. We all have a stake in the outcome of the emerging discussions around animal welfare and agricultural production. As these issues are resolved, some members of society have more information and focused interests than others. The challenge is to ensure that those who are affected have high quality information about the tradeoffs they face when confronted with conventionally produced eggs and eggs from alternative housing systems. Quality information is needed all along the supply chain, from the farmer to the end consumer. consumer

Recent research conducted by Professor John Cran-field demonstrates the importance of information on the kind of tradeoffs consumers face each day at the grocery store.

In his research, one set of consumers received sci-entifically validated information about the positive and negative consequences of alternative hen housing systems. The other set of consumers did not have this information they only received a description of the different hen housing systems. The preliminary findings suggest that there is a premium for cage free eggs in both cases. Interestingly, however, when consumers had information on the positive and negative consequences of alternative hen housing they were willing to pay relatively less for cage free eggs than consumers

to pay relatively less for cage free eggs train consumers who did not have this information.

Twenty first century agriculture is evolving and animal welfare will likely remain an issue. The system that emerges will be at its best if the evolving preferences, standards and rules are accompanied by increasing efforts to provide an informed understanding of the tradeoffs involved.

This effort is a priority for academics and relies, in part, on our ability to communicate effectively on the issues. Stay tuned as the industry continues to evolve.

Brady Deaton, Jr. and John Cranfield are professors in the Department of Food, Agricultural and Resource Economics (FARE) at the University of Guelph.





(Tundra Oil & Gas Place)

Game 2: Sunday March 13th 7:00 (MTS Ice Plex)

Game 3: Tuesday March 15th 7:30 (Tundra Oil & Gas Place)

Game 4: Thursday, March 17th 7:00 (MTS Ice Plex)

Game 5: Saturday, March 19th 7:30 (Tundra Oil & Gas Place) ** If Necessary

Game 6: Monday, March 21st 7:00
(MTS Ice Plex) ** If Necessary
Game 7: Wednesday, March 23rd 7:30
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Elections Sask needs staff for election day

With a provincial election coming up, Elections Sas-katchewan is making prep-arations and hiring staff for the election

The provincial election is coming up on April 4, and the provincial agency is tak-ing more of a role in hiring

ing more of a role in niring this time.

"This is the first time we've done this approach of outreach ahead of time and getting people on the list. The last election was in 2011, and we know from hearing from the returning officers from back then that they spent a lot of their time on hiring and recruiting," says Tim Kydd, a spokesperson for Elections Saskatchewan. "This time we want to take some of the pressure off the local returning officers so they can focus on running they can rocus on running a high-quality election in their area. We're helping with the hiring and recruit-ing by having this "Ex-press Your Interest" list that

press Your Interest? list that we've been working on and adding to over the past year.
"We need over ten thousand workers for the April 4 election," he adds. "April 4, election day, is really the last day to yote, and it's the day we count ballots. Anybody can vote during the five days of advance voting

March 29 to April 2. And we will also need a few people in the local returning office for the month of March. But the primary need is that workforce of 10,000 people on April 4."

Elections Saskatchewan

is reaching out ahead of time to acquire staff where it is needed. Moosomin is an area were staff is in great need, says Kydd.

"In Moosomin, we need close to two hundred peo-ple and we have fewer than 100 righ now. Moosomin is a pretty big constituency, it covers as far west as Fran-ces, and all the way to the Manitoba border, and then it goes up just before Wawota," he explains. "What we're doing differently this time compared to 2011 is we've been reaching out and getting people to sign up well in advance over this past year. Overall we have more than 7 000 names who have signed up and expressed their interest to work in the election. But we have a few pockets where we are behind, and Moosomin would be one of

them. There are four main jobs to fill throughout the days of advance voting and elec-

tion day.
"They're all paid posi-

1,700

tions. We have primartions. We have primarily four positions that we're looking for on election day and on advance voting days. One of them is an Information Officer, so that person greets voters at every place and makes sure they brought idea with them," Kydd says.

them," Kydd says.
"The second position is a Registration Officer—we are just moving now to a permanent voters list in Saskatchewan. We have 90% of eligible voters on our list today—which is 815,000 eligible voters in Saskatchewan. So for the ten per cent who aren't on the list, they can still vote, but when they come to vote they have to go to the registration table to register where the Regis-tration Officer is.

"Then the two prima-ry jobs that we have are Deputy Returning Officer and Poll Clerk. Those two people work hand-in-hand at each poll the entire day guarding their ballot box," he adds. "They're respon-sible for handing out ballots, for crossing names off the voters list as people show up, making sure that ballots that are marked get

put into the box, and then after the poll is closed at 8 p.m. on April 4, they count the ballots in their box. So out of their sight the whole day

Continued on page 47 🖙



Kate Ecklund is your Green Party of Saskatchewan candidate in the next provincial election. She believes a

- better Saskatchewan looks like:

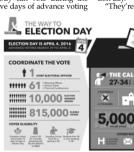
 Provincial anti-bullying legislation that would give teachers and parents a guide on what to do in hullving situations
- Setting minimum standards in senior citizens homes would ensure the wellbeing of people today, but also safe guard for the future. A provincial wide policy would be created with a monitoring program.
- Child-care costs need to be regulated. One parent, and two parent families are struggling with high and irregular daycare costs of upwards to \$750/child per month. More help directly to daycare facilities is needed from the government, whether it be through facility subsidization or other forms. Energy East pipeline should only be considered if the primary goal of it is to get all Canadians off foreign
- oil and using Canadian resources.

 A 1-800-oil-spill emergency response number is necessary for quick detection, efficient shut-off and reclamation.
- Agricultural draining needs to be regulated, with the greatest value being put on those wetlands which recharge groundwater. A provincial map needs to be create in order to reduce hostilities between neighbors during wet years and to slow algae growth in the Qu'Appelle River system.

 Elect Kate Ecklund as the next MLA for the Moosomin Constituency

Contact her for Lawn Signs, to join the Campaign or to Ask Questions at KateEcklund@live.com









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Don Toth looks back on his career

When the 2016 provincial election is called shortly, it will be the end of Don Toth's career as an MLA.

Toth is the longest serving MLA in Saskatchewan, having been first elected almost 30 years ago—in the 1986

provincial election.
In his final days as MLA Toth sat down for an interview with World-Spectator editor Kevin Weedmark to discuss his career.

Tell me how you first became involved in politics

Andrew Bruce is a neighbor of ours and he was the first to put the seeds in my mind. He called me up one day and to put the seeds in my mind. He called me up one day and said, "Would you like to come to a political meeting with me?" And I said "Oh, sure Andrew I'll go." So any time there was a constituency meeting I'd hop in the car and go with Andrew, and the next thing I know I became the president of the association, but at that time there was no

go with Andrew, and the next thing I know I became the president of the association, but at that time there was no real thought in my mind of getting involved in public life, other than helping the candidate out.

We worked hard to get the first Conservative candidate elected, and I just kept up my involvement. Then, in the fall of 1984, a gentleman came up to me and asked if I would take his position on RM council and I thought 'you know I could probably do that. Everyone should at least do a little bit to serve their community.' So I accepted that position. Then in the spring of '85 we had different people twisting my arm to seek the Conservative nomination. We had an MLA, and we kind of shrugged it off and didn't think much of it until Don and Betty Adair arrived in the yard one day and I happened to be cleaning out a hog barn. Don comes up to the door and he says "I got a better job for you." So we went in the house, sat down and had a coffee. Don and Betty were quite involved in the Conservative association and Maryfield was part of the Moosomin constituency back then, so I got to really learn to appreciate them. The fact that they took a good part of their day—it's an hour from Maryfield to the farm, but they came to see me and I said to my wife after they left, "if Don and Betty thought that hard and thought that they should come and see me then maybe we need to give it a little mere they had." should come and see me then maybe we need to give it a little more thought."

So I called Barrie Davidson in Moosomin. I got to meet So I called Barrie Davidson in Moosomin. I got to meet him and thought he'd have some advice. Barrie said "You need to run for us." That's when my wife and I really thought 'you know if that's where people are we need to give it some thought. If this is serious, then we need to prepare ourselves. I chatted with my wife Lois and my parents and we decided to take the shot and the rest is, well, history. We were elected in October of '86. There west, instory, we were elected in October of so, there was an actually significant increase in the Conservative plurality in this constituency in the early '86 election over '82. But you have to know that from '75 the Conservatives had generally been slowly building and gaining trust of the people.

What was it like being a newly elected MLA?

What was it like being a newly elected MLA?
Well, it was quite a new experience, it was something a little mind boggling. There was a fair bit of anxiety, because I was quite familiar with the farming operation and I knew what I was doing, and all of a sudden I'm elected to go into the legislature. It's quite an honour to be able to sit on the floor of the chamber and realize, "Man, I've got a lot more responsibility here than I actually anticipated."
The phone starts ringing, people are looking for assistance, and you're sitting on the floor and you're never really participated. I remember the first time I had to speak, I actually was given the privilege of being the seconder of the first throne speech. And I'm speaking away and I hadn't really spoken a lot before and you think well, half an hour to forty-five minutes that's quite a bit to put together. And then it's getting near the hour of adjournment for the day and I get this note that appears on my desk that says "Keep going." I said all I wanted to say, so all of a sudden for another 15 minutes I had to wrack my mind and start pulling things out just to speak the clock out to get to the supper hour.

Did you have a mentor or get some advice from veteran members when you were first elected?

When we were first elected there was a period where previously elected MLAs would set up a couple of sessions and say "Okay this is what you're going to see, this is what you're going to experience, and this is how to prepare yourself."

Previously elected members would say, "okay this is whet you the proper your set through this is what you're go the say this is whet you have the proper your set."

what we went through, this is what we recommend, this how the post functions, this is how you function on the floor and this is what you should and shouldn't do when you're speaking so you're not called to order." Like everything else it was trial and error. You learn as you go.

You have served both on the government side and the opposition benches. Which side is more fulfilling to be on?
I'll tell individuals, if you're in opposition, don't look at that as the worst place you can be. You actually learn more on the opposition benches than you do on the government's side of the house.

Why is that?

The simple reason is our parliamentary system doesn't allow for private members to have a lot of say on the government side of the house, because at question period all the questions are directed at the minister. When you get into committees it's all directed to ministers, it's not really

into committees it's all directed to ministers, it's not really directed to private members. We have what you call Private Member's Day and that's when private members can get up and speak, but that isn't very long.

What we've done in Saskatchewan now, we do have what we call the seventy-five minute debate, and that starts off Private Member's Day, so it's actually a debate. The first person who gets the motion, whether it's a government or opposition member, gets fifteen minutes. And then after that it's back and forth for ten minutes, and then there's a ten minute question-answer period. Very

then after that it's back and forth for ten minutes, and then there's a ten minute question-answer period. Very seldom does it get to a vote. You run out the clock. But that's about the only way a government member gets to have at least some opportunity to speak on the floor, whereas in opposition, you get all the time. The opposition is there to hold the government accountable, so they get the time in the house. There's also a lot more research you do in opposition, and you always have the floor.

When I was first elected I wondered why government members couldn't get up and ask a question. Now you don't want to put your ministers in a difficult position but if a government member would stand to their feet, the opposition would just get hostile. Because they would say, "Why is a government member standing? You're taking away from our time to hold the government accountable." Because it's their role to hold the government to account, the opposition generally has the opportunity to speak.

What are the main differences you found between

What are the main differences you found between government and opposition?

When session is on, the opposition actually has the greatest participation. Government members are obligated to be in the chamber to ensure that core number is maintained, but can't participate a lot.

There are lots of times you could get more accomplished sitting in your office than catching up with constituent business, because on the floor in the chamber you don't really have that access. You do have more access now because of technology. Your constituency assistant can send a note to you that this constituent is called with this issue. You pick that up and sometimes you have a minister sitting beside you who happens to be the minister you want to check with. You move yourself to the back so you're not seen as interfering in the debate on the floor. And you can say, "I just had this issue raised with my constituent, can you chat with your staff and see if they can get some information for me."

When I was first elected, you had to wait until session was over for the day and get back to your office, and a lot of times you've got a supper break from five to seven, who are you going to catch in the office after five? So it took a little more time. Nowadays with the new technology you can actually get things accomplished, and you can feel like you're accomplishing something versus just sitting there, reading up on issues or reading a book to fill in some time.

I enjoyed opposition, I enjoyed the participation and the ability to get up and quiz any one. That was a lot more fulfilling than sitting on the government side.

You've increased your share of the vote in each of the recent elections—I think you got 77 per cent of the vote in 2011. Did the election campaigns get easier each time? The toughest election to run in was the '91 election. The NDP had a local candidate and had an active campaign

NDP had a local candidate and had an active campaign going, and the big challenge there was the fact that people were looking to vote for change.

The Devine government had been in power for a few years, and people were ready for a change. So you're fighting that, even though this riding has never voted NDP. That was one election where a lot of NDP candidates were elected simply because of the sense that it's time for change. time for change

Do you think people judged the Devine government

faitly? You know, people basically through the years have judged centre-right governments, like Conservative governments, as not being caring or really just looking after the wealthy or the well to do, or the higher up, and not being really concerned about the issues around health care or people living on assistance, or people who have special needs.

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I think if you took a very careful look you would find I think if you took a very careful look you would find there was probably more done for people in need of assistance. For example, look at people with disabilities. This community (of Moosomin) had Bryant House built, the first house for people with special needs. That was the first initiative taken to house people with special needs in communities versus being locked up in an institution. Sarcan was started up in those years. I don't think Grant Devine and the Conservative government got the recognition that they should have got for what they did, like actually nutting money and programs in place to help those

tually putting money and programs in place to help those who definitely had a need. You'll find since 2007 money has been put into a lot of community-based initiatives, has been put into a lot of community-based initiatives, rather than government setting up a new agency. Prior to 2007 we said "Why don't we work with the community-based organizations that are already out there." And so a lot of the initiatives the Saskatchewan Party has done when it comes to assisting those in need have been with community-based organizations where they put more money in the hands of people with disabilities. So going back to '91, it was hard to understand, but there was just the sense that the government wasn't car-

ing. You were fighting that when you were out on the campaign trail.

What have you learned from the campaigns you have been involved with?

been involved with?

I remember once door-knocking in Regina, and Regina was an awful hard place to knock on doors. But this is after we formed the Sask Party, and we knocked on one door and a gentleman came to the door and his wife was right behind him, and he said, "Not interested. I'm not voting for you. Just on my way out the door, I'm going to go get some pizza for supper."

Continued on the next page 1887





Mainline Motors in Birtlewould like to welcome

TJ DUNCAN to our team!

Birtle Mainline motors would like to welcome TJ Duncan to our team. TJ is a Rossburn resident with three years of sales experience. He has recently moved back home to put down roots in a more rural setting. Mainline is excited to have TJ on board and we all look forward to working with him.







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Don Toth looks back on his years as



Longtime Moosomin MLA Don Toth

*** Continued from page 43
"I said, "Okay, that's fine, thank you very much. We're just letting everyone know that this is what we're prepared to do, and we're willing to do and we're not going to skip a house trying to guess whether or not you'll vote for us

We're walking away and he got in the car and took off. In the meantime, his wife comes running across the lawn and she says, "My husband doesn't know that I don't vote

doesn't know that I don't vote the way he does."

So there again, knocking on doors you find out some very interesting things. Stephen's found out too since he's been a candidate, part of your role as a candidate for your party is you don't just spend time in your own riding, but you help others out. You're just help others out. You're just expected, especially where harder ridings are. I appreciated that, I've always felt that those of us who happen to be running in ridings where we tend to have some very strong support, We should be given come time to help those besupport, we should be given some time to help those because they put their name on the ballot hoping to support the party, know that they may not even have a shot at getting elected. When I would knock on doors they would have wanted to send me some-place where we would have a real good chance, and I'd see this poor person who put the name to the ballot in a riding where we didn't have much chance, and I said, "They need a little encouragement," and I would go door-knocking for

You were in government when you were first elected. Did you ever consider leav-ing politics, say when the NDP went into government? You know, there was never

really a time where I wasn't happy to be involved with politics. And following the '91 election for example, after that our plurality increased. And what I've appreciated even in '91 is knocking on doors. A lot of people didn't vote because of the political climate of the day. Most people said, "I'm not going to vote for you this time, but it's not that I'm

"I'm not going to vote for you this time, but it's not that I'm not happy with what you've done for us."

I came close to not running in 2011. I thought I've been at it for a while, but people asked be to run again. The thing that always kept coming to my mind is the number of times you didn't have the opportunity to do some of the family things you like to do, or you'd like to get away on a holiday for a bit.

Were there some sacrifices involved?

Well you know when I was first elected. I said to the folks that my faith is a priority in my life. My family is priority number two. And then my responsibility to my

Substitution of the state of th You're right.

So there were some family sacrifices, no doubt about it.

Were the sacrifices worth it?

You know, I've enjoyed my time in public life. Even to-day, I'm still coming across people who say, "we wish you would stay around."

day, I'm still coming across people who say, "we wish you would stay around."

If you can quit, and people still feel that they would love to have you as their MLA, I think you've done your job well. This constituency, the people here I think have some very strong moral values, and if you can show that you got some values, you will have their support, but you can't speak it, you've got to live it.

I think people understand why I'm not running again, though. I know it's time for me to enjoy family a bit more.

We've got grandkids now and we want to spend some time with them.

What do you look back on as some of the highlights of

What do you look back on as some of the highlights of your career in politics?

First of all, the fact of what we've been able to do with people who have disabilities, who are physically and mentally challenged. Here we help those who need the help, people who are struggling without a job and through the welfare system, and even putting in the special income program, I'm really glad we were able to do that.

As far as the constituency, the fact that you have the hospital in Moosomin here. I said in my final speech that I have to give thanks to a few cabinet ministers, and the first one I started off with was John Nilson when he was the Minister of Health in the NDP government. I said, "Thank you, John. You could have said no but you realized there was a need in Moosomin and you gave the go-ahead. So

was a need in Moosomin and you gave the go-ahead. So thank you very much."

I'm also proud that highway 8, and 48, were rebuilt. I had lobbied for that for years. By the time the construction from number 9 to the Manitoba border started that wasn't in management that the construction of the properties of the started wasn't in management. in my constituency anymore. That doesn't matter, we completed that.

Just seeing what happened with the expansion of the potash industry in this constituency, and the oil activity. And while we're in a down-turn right now, it's going to bounce back.

bounce back.

Over the years there are going to be highs and lows. There's a new hospital in Kipling. That section of highway that took a long time to get built between Kipling and number nine—there was no excuse for it, the ministry didn't feel like it was a priority. We had a minister, Wayne Elhard, who was the minister of highways, he said to me one day. I think it was the end of July or early August, he said "Work" are not not a great of the property of one day, I mink it was the end of July or early August, he said, "We're going to go drive on these highways that these MLAs have been talking about." And he calls me and he says, "Now I know why you called that a goat trail." He was the one that said to highways, "We're finishing that, there's no reason why that stretch should not be finished." And before we even got to doing a tender on it he had been removed from the ministry.

How do you see your role in the formation of the Sask Party, looking back on it?

After the '95 election the Conservatives were supposed to be wiped out, but we ended up electing five and the Liberals had 11. They were fairly new, and I'm not sure they had a lot of information as to how house procedure work. We would listen to them, and we were able to get in lots of times on debates, so we were able to stand up and they'd be listening to us. And we got into discussion sitting in caucus and we said, "You know we could probably work with a number of members on the Liberal side. Maybe it's time to give it some thought." We met about forming one party to be a real alternative voice to the NDP. And I said, "You know what's interesting? In my constituency there have been some long-time Conservative and Liberal individuals, and I'd be visiting with them and they'd say, 'Have you ever thought of forming one party?' And I said, 'Not really, that's kind of interesting.' 'In order for Thatcher to get elected a lot of Conservatives had to vote Liberal. They said, "This is the best alternative to change government." And then when Devine got elected it was vice-versa. 2007 came along, and discussions got more serious and before long there were eight of us committed to formine this new party. It was actually quite a sions got more serious and before long there were eight of us committed to forming this new party. It was actually quite a turning point and it was an exciting time, even though there was a lot of criticism when we officially announced that we



Saskatchewan's longest serving MLA

"It was the right thing to do, and I guess we probably had the right people in the right place at the right time that were willing to take the initiative. It wasn't the easiest thing to do right off the bat because there were some significant criticisms of us as Conservative and Liberal members. But for a lot of people who watched politics through the years, that was the right thing to do. We just got along well with everyone. That would probably be the most exciting times in my term as an MLA. There was a lot of pride, and there was a lot of

What was the toughest part of being an MLA?

I would say eighty to eighty-five percent of the time you're able to as-sist people with dealing with issues, and you got a pretty positive response. But there are always some that the desire that they would like to see isn't nec-essarily what you're able to achieve. And there were some difficult ones where you would have to say to someone, "I've done my best, unfortunately these best, unfortunately these are the guidelines we have to live by, and the circumstances we're dealing with, we can't go beyond where you're already at." Those are difficult, but it helps when you have people who say, "Well you did your

How did you enjoy your time as speaker in the Sask Party's first term?

It was challenging. When I was elected speaker we still had a fairly large opposition, and there were a lot of members who had been around for a while and they knew how the government functioned. So they were going to be as disruptive as they could be. Trying to establish the could be. could be. Trying to establish some parameters to create more cordial debate on the floor, that was challenging. There were some person-

issues in the Speaker's office, so my turn as speaker's office, so my turn as speaker was trying to bring some order to the speaker's office as well as trying to address the decorum in the house. And part of addressing the decorum, when I'd host a tea or something I'd always tea or something I'd always extend an invitation to so many government mem-bers and so many opposi-tion members, and bring them in at the same time. I tried to give everybody the opportunity to sit down. The speaker's role is to be the independent officer, so you need to include everyone. You may represent a certain party, you may represent a certain view point, but in the chamber we also need to learn how to respect each other. And their right to speak.

Politics is a partisan business. Did trying to be fair to both sides ever get you in trouble with your colleagues? I think there were some

I think there were some times where my colleagues were wondering why in the world I would give credit to the other side. "Why would you recognize this other member, they're the enemy?" My views were that you need to recognize

that everyone is there to represent their constituents. I said in my final speech "Everyone who's sitting on the floor in this chamber, regardless whether it's the government side or the opposition side, the elec-tors in those constituencies felt that that person was the person they wanted to be the voice for them, so they're duly elected with the support of the public. And as members, we need And as members, we need to respect members on the other side regardless of their views. We may not agree with them, but they were still duly elected to be a voice because their con-stituents felt that they could be a voice for them."

And the other thing is,

coming back to my faith, the Bible says we're supposed to respect those and do unto others as you would have them do onto you. This is a great coun-try. We have the freedom to speak, the freedom to criticize, and the freedom to worship freely. And we need to recognize the fact that everybody has those rights and freedoms, and if we treat all people with respect I believe they will respect you back.

What will you miss most

What will you miss most about politics?
Probably just meeting with people, although I'm not going to just sit at home. I might actually get out and say a little more than I was saying before, because once you're elected there's still that broad electorate that you have to represent that you have to represent. I can't be at everything in Moosomin, I can't be at everything in Wolseley, and then there are the bigger demands on the provincial scene. I'll miss the walking down the street and meetown the street and meeting people as their MLA. On the other hand that doesn't mean I can't drop into Moosomin to say hi to people. That's what I'll plan on doing, and I'll be able to do it without someone coming up to me and saying, "Oh, I've got a problem. Can you help me?"

Years from now, what will you tell your grand-children about your time as MLA?

I remember when Sas-katchewan put sexual pref-erence onto our Charter of Rights, and the time when Bob Mitchell was the minis-Bob Mitchell was the minister an I was the justice critic and I said, "Mr. Minister, I believe our Charter already gives people with different sexual preferences the same opportunities. We're to respect their choices, and it's already in there." And the Minister said, "No, we've just out to be a little And the Minister said, "No, we've just got to be a little more specific. That's the only thing they're going to demand." Well we've seen over the years that the demands have grown. So I'll be able to say I stood up for be able to say I stood up for something of value that I believed in, and at the end of the day, we lost. But I expressed the views of a lot of people in the prov-ince. I think the greates thing is being able to work for people, represent them, make sure that their views are heard, make sure that the challenges they're fac-ling are dealt with fairly and ing are dealt with fairly and properly.



What's the most important thing you learned in your time as MLA?

I would have to say just treating people with re-spect and doing the best you could and not making promises you know you couldn't keep. Don't make outlandish promises, just promise to do the best you can and then get out there and do the best you can. Make sure that when someone calls you, you return the call. Even if the final result you get in working on their behalf isn't exactly

what they were looking for.

As I found out from
many people, they apprecimany people, they appreciate when you do your best. I don't know if there was anyone that didn't get a call returned. Some of the calls weren't fun, but it's best weren't fun, but it's best to address the issue, and a soft answer turns away

wrath. You call someone and somebody's really irand softeeous s really in-ritated, and you want to say something back, and then you realize you should sympathise with them and listen, and you start to un-derstand why they're calling and you offer some thoughts, and then if you think there's something think there's something you can do, you go to bat for them, and do your best to address the issue.

I learned a lot from my dad when he was the reeve of the RM. Something he had was patience galore, had was patience galore, and maybe that helped as and maybe that helped as well. I learned a lot of times that just shutting your mouth and listening with some patience, is best.

What will you do with all your free time now?

We're going to do some farming again. We'd like to travel a bit in the winter time, and maybe spend a little time looking for a a little time looking for a warmer location for a little bit more than we have in the past. And I'd like to be able to get out and join my grandkids at some of their hockey and other things. And we'd like to camp a hit with the leide there on. bit with the kids, they en-joy camping and we really haven't been able to do that in the summer because summer's been fairly full between the farming and the other responsibilities. We'll take the time to do it

Any additional thoughts on your time as MLA?
I must say I enjoyed public life. I enjoyed doing what I could for people, I enjoyed meeting people and this was a great constituency to represent people in represent people in.

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Upbeat outlook for Canadian farms

The federal govern-ment's financial report on Canadian farms for 2015 and forecast for 2016 is clear: mostly sunny ways are ahead.

The Canadian Agricul-tural Outlook, released last week, estimates that when the counting is com-plete for 2015, farmers in this country will have real-ized a record net cash in-come of \$15 billion.

That's a six-per-cent in-

crease over 2014, which was also a record.

Crop receipts and livestock receipts are both expected to come in with two-per-cent increases for 2015, rising to \$30.7 billion for crops, and \$26.2 billion for livestock.

The average farm-lev-The average tarm-iev-el net operating income in 2015 is forecast to be \$77,287. That's eight per cent higher than it was in 2014, but it's expected to fall to just under \$70,000

this year. Of the major commodities, only potato, vegeta-ble, fruit and dairy farms will see increases in 2016, and those will be margin-

The exception to the The exception to the generally favourable out-look is hogs. Producers experienced a 20-per-cent drop in income in 2015 compared to the previous year, and are expected to take another big hit in 2016. The report says overall, the low Canadian dollar has improved the competitiveness of Canadian agriculture and food products in export markets, contrib-uting to higher farm cash receipts. Compared to the American dollar, the loo-nie averaged 77 cents in 2015, compared to 91 cents in 2014.

Another factor working in farmers' favour in 2015 was the cost of energy. According to the report,

lower crude oil prices sig-nificantly reduced farm-ers' diesel and gasoline expenses. These prices are continuing to keep costs

low now.
And aside from the hog situation, the rest of the bad news isn't so bad, ac-

cording to the report.

While net cash farm income is expected to fall by nine per cent in 2016 to \$13.6 billion, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada says that's still well above average - in fact, it's 14 per cent higher than the 2010 to 2014 average of \$11.9

All in, average net worth per farm is expected to reach \$2.7 million in 2016.

Looking further into the future, the report says an increase in global trade and greater demand for agricultural commodities by developing countries present opportunities to further grow Canadian agriculture

Strong growth in Sask pulse exports recognized

Saskatchewan Trade and Saskatchewan Trade and Export Partnership (STEP) will be leading a strong contingent of Saskatchewan exporters to two major international food forums - the Pulse Conclave in Jaipur, India to be held February 17 to 19, 2016 and the Gulfood Show in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE) February 21 to 25, 2016.

STEP President and CEO

STEP President and CEO Chris Dekker noted that the trade mission is timely giv-en the growth in Saskatchewan pulse exports and the UN General Assembly de-

UN General Assembly de-claring the year 2016 as In-ternational Year of Pulses. "India purchased over \$1.5B in pulses from Sas-katchewan including \$960M in lentils in 2015 both record numbers," Dekker said. "And the UAE is the fifth largest market for Saskatchewan lentils and peas and has demon-strated strong growth potential.

The India Pulses and Grains Association ex-Grains Association expects over 800 delegates from around the world will participate in the conclave. The Gulfood Show in Dubai is now considered the world's largest annual food and hospitality show with nearly 5,000 exhibitors from 5 continents and 120 countries

"The global food indus-try meets at the Gulfood

try mee's at the Gulfood Show to trade and unveil the latest tastes, trends and innovations", Dekker said. STEP is privileged to have the Honourable Lyle Stewart, Minister of Agriculture serve as the mission lead during the India portion of the trip. "Minister Stewart's leadership will greatly enhance

ership will greatly enhance our presence and will as-sist with the objective to maintain Saskatchewan's position as Canada's top

exporter to India."
STEP is a non-profit, membership driven, gov-ernment/industry partner-ship, designed to promote the growth of Saskatch-ewan's export industry.



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Elections Sask needs staff for election day

Those who are interesting in applying will also have to attend a few hours of training prior to the election.

"Every one of our 10,000 workers attend in-person training. Think of that challenge as training a person for a job—but this is a 12-hour shift you work once every four years," Kydd says with a laugh. "We still have to train everyone because there are certain ways that th jobs need to be done to adhere to the legislation.

Everybody will attend this in-person training, they're held all around the province on various days in March leading up to the election. And they'll run anywhere from two to four hours depending on the

from two to four hours depending on the training."

There is also an opportunity for groups

to get involved, with members working the election to raise money for their orga-nization. "It can work for service groups, faith groups, sports teams, anyone who

faith groups, sports teams, anyone who does fundraising," says Kydd.
"You can register a number of your members as a group and donate all or some of your election day pay to the charity of your choice. So really you're doubling the difference you make in your community now. On one hand you're working the election and serving democracy and on the other hand you're helping your fayorite charity or cause with fundyour favorite charity or cause with fund-

your favorite charity or cause with fund-raising," explains Kydd.

"We know what a challenge fundraising is for groups now. Here's one where if you have 20 people from the same club, they work election day and if you add up

what you earn that day plus their training pay that they get, that's a pretty significant donation for a one-day fundraiser."

Elections Saskatchewan has simplified the process of signing up. "People can go to our website. There's information there

to our website. Inere s information there
on how you sign up.
You leave your name and contact information and then every day we send the
list off to the local returning officer in each
of Saskatchewan's 61 constituencies," he

of Saskatchewan's 61 Constituencies, are explains.

"And then they will start phoning around to people who have expressed their interest just to see when they're looking to work—whether it's just election day or if it's advance voting."

To express your interest to work in the elections, head to www.elections. sk.ca



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