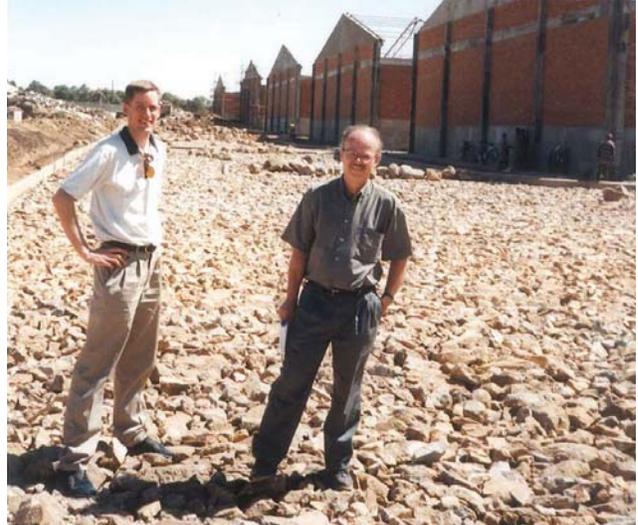




Jim Cornelius



Jim and senior program officer Rob Finlay visit a grain storage project in Eritrea in 1998.

# A lasting legacy of working together to end global hunger: Farewell to Jim Cornelius

**In September 2020, Jim Cornelius will hand over leadership of Canadian Foodgrains Bank to Andy Harrington and move into an advisory role to support Andy through the transition.**

By SHAYLYN McMAHON,  
 "I remember the room where we interviewed Jim. It was a horrible room. There weren't any windows—it was one of those dreadful closed rooms," says Rick Fee, who represented Presbyterian World Service & Development (PWS&D) on the board of directors when Jim Cornelius was hired. "But the interview went well, and we all came out of the meeting thinking 'Yes.'"

*"We've been blessed with Jim's leadership, faithful service and expertise. He has played a key role in the maturing of the Foodgrains Bank, a uniquely Canadian church-based organization that's now one of Canada's leading international emergency food organizations."*

Jim began his role as executive director of the Foodgrains Bank on February 1, 1997. By that time, Canadian Foodgrains Bank had been around for 14 years and was established as a credible network of Canadian churches working together to help families facing hunger in developing countries. Yet there was still room to grow, and the funding relationship with the Government of Canada needed to be carefully managed. "There was a lot to consider in those days," says Rick. "We were looking to expand our membership and ensure

our partnership with CIDA—now Global Affairs Canada—continued as we remained true to our values."

Foodgrains Bank members were also looking to support more long-term development work in addition to the existing emergency food aid and food-for-work programs.

Jim embraced these opportunities, working diligently and deliberately from the very beginning. "Jim comes across as a humble fellow. He fits in, is a keen observer and is very good at analyzing papers ranging from government documents to reports on the food market in Canada," says Rick.

### A record that speaks for itself

Jim joined the network after working for many years as a consultant on food aid and development and managing a large Canadian government project in East Africa. He has led the organization with unrelenting passion and expertise. Jim played a key role in many achievements, including:

- Maintaining a strong funding relationship with the Government of Canada.
- Growing the membership of the Foodgrains Bank to include most of the main Christian churches in Canada.
- Ensuring the Foodgrains Bank is well-positioned to respond quickly and effectively to food crises as they emerge.

- Persuading the Canadian government to permit food aid to be purchased from local or regional sources to improve efficiency.

- Expanding efforts to find long-term solutions to hunger.

- Leading the network to the milestone of providing \$1 billion of food-related assistance for tens of millions of people in over 70 countries.

"There's no other organization in Canada that does what the Foodgrains Bank does. It's an example of Christians working together, and Jim was a major part of this period of history. His work was faith in action, and without making it a cliché, he showed what Christians should be doing in the world," adds Rick.

**"Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." Matthew 25:40, NIV**

Twenty-three years after Jim began as executive director, his legacy and commitment to ending global hunger continues to inspire Foodgrains Bank staff, board directors, members and Canadians alike. He's highly regarded in Canada's humanitarian and development sector and was awarded the Lewis Perinbam Innovation and Impact Award in February 2020 for his work leading innovative approaches to ending global hunger.

*Continued on page B14*



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# Innovation to feed a post-pandemic world

World Food Day on October 16 is traditionally a time to shine the spotlight on global hunger and poverty and inspire innovative solutions for world change.



Photo by David Conlin

Peta-Gaye Burnett, the OPAL Platform Leader at GIFS, examines a plant specimen in the lab.

By OLUFUNKE OKOCHI

It's a challenge the Global Institute for Food Security (GIFS) at the University of Saskatchewan (USask) was designed to meet.

With the world still dealing with the effects of a global pandemic that has disrupted many food systems—including processing plant shutdowns that led to an oversupply of livestock on farms and meat shortages in grocery stores—GIFS researchers are committed to international collaboration and innovation to address the challenges facing agriculture production worldwide.

"At GIFS, our vision is a world where everyone has access to safe and nutritious food," said Dr. Steven Webb (PhD), GIFS' chief executive officer. "It's a bold vision,

but we're guided by our mission to work with partners to discover, develop and deliver innovative solutions for the production of globally sustainable food."

This year's World Food Day—featuring the theme Grow, Nourish, Sustain, Together—marks the 75th anniversary of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), an organization committed to finding new ways to feed a growing global population.

The FAO notes that "preserving access to safe and nutritious food is and will continue to be an essential part of the response to the Covid-19 pandemic." The international body also highlights the need for innovative solutions to help countries recover and make food systems more resilient and resistant to shocks.

This call for innovative solutions aligns directly with GIFS' mission and USask's signature area of research. Founded in 2012, GIFS is committed to using innovation to address challenges facing agriculture production.

While the global population is expected to reach almost 10 billion by 2050, simply producing more food isn't enough to feed a growing world. According to the FAO, more than enough food is produced to feed everyone; however, the imbalance with food systems and challenges such as Covid-19, climate change, and limited water, land and other resources, need to be addressed.

"We need a resourceful food production system that's sustainable—that can thrive

in different economic, environmental and social conditions," said Webb. "This sustainability isn't possible without innovation and new agricultural technologies."

Saskatchewan has an agricultural technology (agtech) advantage, as it is home to about 30 per cent of this industry in Canada. The USask campus offers one of the world's largest clusters for agri-food and bioscience—including the Crop Development Centre, the College of Agriculture and Bioresources, the Global Institute for Water Security (GIWS), and many more. The university also ranks first in water resources research in Canada, and is a global leader in sustainability and in agriculture and food security.

Continued on page 4

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## Website shares ag and food research

The Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences recently launched the Manitoba Agriculture and Food Knowledge Exchange website, a resource which shares current research by Faculty scientists and their collaborators.

The site is aimed at a variety of audiences, from consumers to farmers and agri-food processors.

"The MAKE site has been designed to share knowledge generated through research done in the Faculty in an engaging and understandable way," said Dr. Annemiek Farenhorst, associate dean (research).

"We see the site as serving as a critical link connecting those who are interested in learning more about our food systems with those conducting research in these

areas. MAKE will help us bring outcomes from the lab to consumers' kitchens and to farmers' fields and barns."

The site profiles current research programs shared as articles and podcast interviews with Faculty scientists and other research collaborators in the community.

Future resources planned include videos as well as a variety of printable downloads including recipe cards, infographics and factsheets. Coming soon is a dedicated resources section for those working in agriculture and agri-food.

Manitoba Agriculture and Food Knowledge Exchange can be found at [www.makemanitoba.ca](http://www.makemanitoba.ca).

New content will be added regularly, so visitors are encouraged to bookmark and visit often.

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# Innovation to feed a post-pandemic world



OPAL research technicians Rick Goertzen (left) and Zhijian Chai of GIFS discuss data in the lab. David Conlin photo

right amounts of water, fertilizers and pesticides, rather than uniformly spraying these products across their fields," said Burnett, a USask alumnus. "This precision in agriculture means a more efficient use of resources and reduced environmental impact, leading to accelerated crop breeding, less waste, and increased efficiency for breeders, agronomists, producers and other stakeholders."

Though its hard launch isn't until January 2021, OPAL is already operational, providing bioinformatics and long- and short-read genetic sequencing services to clients.

"We're open for business and eager to provide unparalleled satisfaction serving clients within and outside our campus community," said Burnett.

GIFS is part of another agtech collaboration, a new \$26.2 million Protein Industries Canada (PIC) partnership that's developing technology to help lower pesticide use across Canada. The project involves using artificial intelligence (AI) to detect weeds and



Many combines now feature the latest in advanced agtech.

Olufunke Okochi photo

Continued from page B2

GIFS collaborates with diverse partners including industry, government, producers and researchers, on innovative agtech to accelerate plant breeding, enhance digital agriculture, increase quality crop yield, and build plant resilience to climate change.

An example of this collaboration is the Omics and Precision Agriculture Laboratory (OPAL) managed by GIFS. OPAL was founded by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, the National Research Council of Canada and USask, with a strategic investment from Western Economic Diversification Canada.

The first of its kind in Canada, OPAL combines the digital data analyses of plant genes and traits with the latest precision agtech to improve crop yield, profitability and sustainability in the agri-food sector.

"OPAL is a one-stop-

shop for plant analyses at the molecular level, and we're excited to have these high-tech services right here at USask, supporting Saskatchewan's rich biotechnology ecosystem," said Peta-Gaye Burnett, OPAL platform leader at GIFS. "Through OPAL, Saskatchewan's agri-industry now has proximity to Canada's most integrated omics and precision agriculture facility to analyze crop data."

Using some of the latest in agtech, OPAL combines global positioning systems, remote aerial imaging, unmanned aerial vehicles and in-field environmental monitoring—with digital DNA sequence information—to provide a complete profile of plant samples. The versatile equipment can also analyze animal and human samples.

"OPAL's detailed plant analyses will help farmers target their crops with the

other crop pests, so they can be targeted directly with pesticides. The AI technology is estimated to reduce pesticide use by up to 95 per cent while maintaining crop yield, saving farmers about \$52 per acre per growing season.

Roughly 120 Canadian jobs are expected to be created as a result of this project led by Precision.ai Inc., Sure Growth Solutions Inc., Exceed Grain Marketing,

and GIFS. The partners are together investing \$13.4 million in the project, with PIC investing the remaining \$12.8 million.

"At GIFS, we believe that with collaboration and commitment, innovative agtech can help build sustainable food security. However, there needs to be structure to guide the extensive validation of the technologies before they can be successfully deployed as innova-

tive agriculture solutions," said Webb.

"By working together with diverse stakeholders and continued investments in research and development, we can advance and accelerate agtech's use as a valuable tool that enables sustainable access to safe and nutritious food in Saskatchewan, across Canada and everywhere in the world where the technologies are deployed."

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# Protect yourself when scammers come calling

Experts say Canadians, including farmers, need to have a healthy dose of skepticism when it comes to responding to requests for personal information in phone calls, emails and text messages.

## Follow up on suspicious requests

Check with the person you deal with most frequently at the institution, says Jennifer Hogan, a senior security analyst within the IT division of FCC. If the request is fraudulent, that alerts the organization to the activity, she says.

Many companies use multiple defensive measures to protect from email scams, including spam filters, antivirus and anti-malware scanners.

"This way, if one control fails, there are others to help detect and delay the attack," Hogan says.

She says even with these measures, phishing emails can still get through – which is why individuals have a critical role to play in protecting information.

## Watch for the warning signs

Hogan says there are several signs Canadian farmers can keep an eye and ear out for if they receive a call demanding funds.

"Is the caller talking quickly? Are they trying to get the person on the other end confused? Are they asking for personal information? Financial information?" she says.

The same goes for emails. Hogan says there are questions people should ask:

Does the email make sense?

Is the request within the character of the sender?

Is this how you normally communicate with this sender?



Do you feel uncomfortable or pressured by the email?

Is this an unexpected email with a link or attachment?

Is there bad grammar?

Is there a request in the email asking for personal, financial or login credentials or information?

If a request for personal information is received, the request should be checked out before any information is shared, experts say.

*It's always better to be cautious with requests for personal or confidential information.*

Shawna-Kay Thomas of the Better Business Bureau agrees and says it's al-

ways better to be cautious with requests for personal or confidential information.

"If you receive a call asking for that kind of information, you may want to hang up the phone and call back a legitimate number you have for that particular government agency and then follow up with the request that is being made of you," Thomas says.

## Stay informed and tell others

Jeff Thomson is a senior RCMP intelligence officer currently managing the fraud prevention and intake unit at the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre.

He says scams are tracked, and a list is available at the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre, or by calling their toll-free line 1-888-495-8501, where they have several resources.

"We try to give you some key indicators as to what to watch for," Thomson

says of the website content.

Thomson says everyone gains when information about phone scams and how to avoid them is shared with family and friends.

"In doing so, you hear what is going on, on the ground," Thomson says. "They may have heard something that you did not hear about, and in hearing your story, they're able to prevent you from falling for those scandals."

Thomson says that when a suspicious phone call is received, Canadians may want to consider using an initiative that started in the United Kingdom to combat schemes, called Take 5, Tell 2.

"Any types of funny calls you get – whether it is someone calling and threatening you or scaring you into performing something or asking for personal information – take a step back, don't react, and then talk to other people."

He says taking a step back and reflecting for five minutes or so, then speaking about the experience with two friends or family members, helps spread the word.

Suspicious phone calls, email or text messages should be reported to the local RCMP detachment.

## Bottom line

Schemes requesting confidential personal or banking information are a regular occurrence for many Canadians, whether by phone call, email or text message. Experts offer several tips for gaining knowledge and verifying the authenticity of the requests, such as confirming the source of the call with the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre or calling the organization directly. Experts also recommend sharing stories of fraudster requests with family and friends to raise awareness.

# How global currency and the Canadian dollar impact agriculture



The value of the Canadian dollar vis-à-vis the American dollar is widely reported and widely watched because of its importance to business. However, many lesser discussed currency issues also play a role. Let's start with the basics and follow up with more nuanced impacts.

## Dollar watching

Our trade surplus or deficit with other nations has a significant influence on the Canadian dollar. For example, a higher price for crude oil leads to an appreciation

of the loonie. Interest rates also have an effect.

How often have you heard this statement? "The value of the Canadian dollar has dropped, and that will be good for the prices of our commodity exports." The inverse is often stated as well. "The value of the Canadian dollar has increased, and that will be bad for the prices of our commodity exports."

Take, for example, a bushel of Canadian oats sold into the U.S. market at \$4.00. If the U.S. dollar and Canadian dollar are at par (worth the same amount), \$4.00 in the U.S. is also \$4.00 in Canada. However, if the Canadian dollar is worth only 75 cents in U.S. funds,

the \$4.00 per bushel price of oats in the U.S. equates to \$5.33 in Canadian funds.

On the other hand, any input that Canadian farmers buy from the U.S. becomes correspondingly more expensive as the value of our dollar declines. A \$400,000 used combine in the U.S. would require \$533,000 in Canadian funds to buy when our dollar is worth 75 cents.

Even though some inputs are more expensive with a lower Canadian dollar, it's generally accepted that Canadian exporters enjoy a net benefit.

## U.S. currency strength

We tend to focus on the Canadian dollar against the U.S. dollar and don't often consider the relative strength of American currency, but it matters too for agricultural markets.

We tend to focus on the Canadian dollar against

*We tend to focus on the Canadian dollar against the U.S. dollar and don't often consider the relative strength of American currency, but it matters too for agricultural markets.*

the U.S. dollar and don't often consider the relative strength of American currency, but it matters too for agricultural markets. A U.S. dollar index is used to measure the value of the U.S. dollar relative to the value of a basket of currencies. Six world currencies form the index: Euro, Swiss Franc, Japanese Yen, Canadian dollar, British pound and Swedish Krona. The largest weighting, more than 50%, is for the Euro.

In times of turmoil in the world, even if America is involved, investment tends to flow into the U.S. As the largest global economy and superpower, it's typically considered a haven.

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*It is from a position of humble gratitude that I write this.*

*There is a saying that goes 'When you have more than you need, build a longer table, not a taller fence'. That's what the Harvest of Hope is all about, and on behalf of the organizing committee I would like to both say Thank You to and publicly acknowledge the many friends and sponsors who have helped the HoH through what is now its 7th year.*

*There are almost 690 million people in the world experience hunger, nearly 98% of people experiencing hunger live in developing countries, and approximately 80% of displaced people live in countries affected by long-term hunger. Our goal is to put a dent in these numbers through building a longer table; one that reaches here from Moosomin all the way to places like the Congo, the Sudan, Lebanon, or Syria where there are people in significant need.*

*I would like to start by acknowledging everyone who has supported the project for demonstrating such incredible generosity, giving their energy, time, talents, resources and hospitality. I'd also like to acknowledge all of our sponsors for their demonstrations of care, compassion, and incredible community spirit. It is truly humbling to see people and local businesses working together for the benefit of people who they will likely never meet, showing them that they matter, they are not alone, and are welcome at our table.*

*Thank you to the local farmers and Ag Equipment dealers who continue to work on the field, donate seat-time, equipment, and other inputs to help get things seeded, sprayed, or harvested – and a special thanks to those who even put a pause on their own livelihoods to make it happen, taking a break from their own fields in these busy seasons. Farmers grow food and we couldn't do this without you.*

*Thank you to the local businesses and community leaders who help out in other ways, donating what you can. To our local Ag leaders, your help in supplying or donating inputs like seed, fertilizer, land rent, fuel, and money to help cover other expenses helps increase our project's impact. Every dollar of profit can be leveraged up to 4:1 through matching by agreements with the Federal Government. That means for a donation of \$100 to the HoH, up to \$500 can be sent to help address food security needs in the developing world. To our other community supporters, thank you for helping us promote and advertise this great cause, support our events with coffee (thank you Tim Hortons) and meals (thank you TJs Pizza) for those coming to work on the field at harvest (even in light of challenging Covid-19 restrictions). And lastly, thank you to the World-Spectator for your continued coverage of the project and for allowing us to use your platform to express our gratitude to those who have helped us so far.*

*There is another saying that goes 'many hands make light work' and the HoH would not be possible without any of these amazing contributors. Over the past 7 years, we've raised over \$400,000 together and we are forever grateful for the impact you've helped make in the fight against world hunger by building a longer table.*

Respectfully submitted;  
**Kyle Penner, on behalf of the Harvest of Hope Organizing Committee**  
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## 2017



## 2018



## 2020



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# Manitoba and Indiana partner on agriculture

Indiana Lt.-Gov. Suzanne Crouch met recently in Winnipeg with Deputy Premier Heather Stefanson, Agriculture Minister Ralph Eichler and Growth, Enterprise and Trade Minister Blaine Pedersen to discuss the shared interest of both jurisdictions in building on the strong Canada-U.S. trade and investment partnership, fostering economic growth, and encouraging stronger business and research connections.

The Indiana and Manitoba Departments of Agriculture also signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to foster co-operation in key areas including agricultural research, trade, investment and youth leadership.

"Indiana and Manitoba share common priorities and strengths in the agricultural sector that provide excellent opportunities for more collaboration and information sharing," said Eichler.

The agricultural sector has been a key driver of trade and economic growth in both Manitoba and Indiana. Through the MOU, the two regions will encourage stronger partnerships between researchers, innovation leaders, businesses and young farmers, and will share information and best practices to help each jurisdiction make the most of new opportunities to drive growth and innovation in agriculture and related sectors.

"This agreement lays the groundwork to establishing a long-term co-operative relationship between Indiana and Manitoba," Crouch said. "We look forward to the abundant opportunities this new partnership affords, especially in the area of agricultural economic development, and are excited about what the future holds for our two economies."

Manitoba's ministers also discussed the broader Manitoba-Indiana trade relationship, which encompassed two-way trade worth \$1.1 billion in 2017, an increase of almost 36 per cent since 2013. Indiana is Manitoba's seventh-largest trading partner among U.S. states, and 189,800 jobs in Indiana depend on trade and investment with Canada.

"Manitoba is committed to being the most improved province in Canada, and we will do that by finding ways

to help our producers and companies grow, build, innovate, and compete in the global market," said Stefanson. "In this period of rapid economic change, it is critical for provinces and states to build on the remarkable success of North American economic partnership by working together and by making sure our citizens realize the benefits of open trade."

Crouch was accompanied to Manitoba by a 20-member delegation including representatives from Indiana

companies, agricultural organizations, universities and state officials. The delegation was to participate in business events with the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce and the Business Council of Manitoba, as well as focused visits and meetings with leading Manitoba agricultural facilities including the Food Development Centre, the University of Manitoba, the Canadian International Grain Institute, and the Canadian Malting Barley Technical Centre.



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# APAS celebrates two decades of advocating for Saskatchewan agriculture



APAS President Todd Lewis.

**BY TODD LEWIS**  
 In 2020, APAS is celebrating our 20th year. Our organization began to take shape in the fall of 1999, at a time when agriculture was facing a very serious income crisis. Producers were having a hard time getting governments to recognize the impacts of poor growing conditions and low prices caused by international trade wars, and some of them decided to found an organization to promote our industry.  
 Producers saw the need for an organization to provide a united provincial voice on agricultural policy on behalf of farmers and ranchers. These pioneer members worked hard to build support and APAS was incorporated in July of 2000. Our first General Meeting was held that December with representatives from 80 RMs. Many miles were travelled, many meetings were held, and many days of farm work were taken over by family members as our founders worked to get APAS off the ground.

...to be heard because of those pioneers, and our current Board and elected Reps continue to set our priorities based on grassroots input from Saskatchewan producers.

Many of our active Reps have brought years of experience on RM councils and in other agricultural organizations to their work with APAS. They have brought their skill sets in practical problem-solving and in finding and proposing solutions, instead of just complaining. This "can do" attitude has made all the difference in our approach with provincial and federal governments. As we head into elections for our APAS Reps this November, I would like to offer our sincere thanks to retiring Reps for their dedicated service.

APAS continues to offer up solutions, and in preparation for the upcoming provincial election we packaged up proposals for the political parties on ways to build on the successes of Saskatchewan agriculture. We engaged with candidates and parties during the campaign and will

ing to world markets, generating billions of dollars in economic activity, and supporting one in every eight Canadian jobs. Saskatchewan agriculture is a Canadian success story.

In a time of uncertainty, it is always good to look at what is working right. With empty store shelves earlier this spring, the pandemic may have been a wake-up call to urban consumers about how our food supply chain can be impacted by major events. It also demonstrated the resilience of agricultural producers and businesses in ironing out those problems and keeping Canadians supplied with food.

The food industry had major challenges with the shift from restaurants to meals at home, and many adjustments were needed to get things right.

We also saw impressive performance from our transportation industry in both getting our inputs and supplies delivered in time for production season, and in shipping our products to market. Hats off to our railroads and truckers.

As we wrap up harvest and look back at all the challenges, many of our producers are thankful for Canada's crop development and public- and farmer-funded research systems. Despite several difficult growing seasons, we still have managed to pull off crops with yields and quality that would surprise our grandparents.

Governments have laid out ambitious plans for increased production and economic growth, and our system has responded to meet that challenge. As we go forward, we need to make sure we recognize the value of public investment, producer contributions, and the needs of growers in crop and variety development.

Producers also have noted some shortfalls in our infrastructure, and we are highlighting the importance of improvements.

Shortcomings in rural connectivity through cellular and internet coverage are hampering everyday life and our ability to do business in rural Saskatchewan.

We also need improved access to natural gas and three-phase electricity as the scale of farm business expands.

There are demands for our industry to continue its expansion to drive economic growth. We are happy to do our best, but as producers we need society to accept a share of the increased risk in order to provide the shared benefits that everyone enjoys from that growth. We need to make sure our young and beginning producers have the programs they need to take over and succeed.

The next 20 years will have as many challenges as we've seen since 2000, and I am confident that APAS will continue to represent our sector through good times and bad.



Todd Lewis speaks to APAS Representatives.

In this 20th anniversary issue, APAS pays tribute to the men and women who put their hearts and souls into building our organization, and celebrates the hard work and achievements of hundreds of dedicated APAS Representatives since 2000.

Over the years, your voice as Saskatchewan's agricultural producers has contin-

ue to promote these key issues over the term of the next Legislature.

This year has made it very clear that agriculture is the engine of our provincial economy. While the COVID-19 pandemic has caused a severe financial downturn in other sectors, agriculture has held its own during 2020. We have been hard at work and our products continue mov-

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# How do we solve the local food paradox?

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic disrupting supply chains and impacting purchasing habits, our relationship with food was different.

The pandemic has pushed governments to consider food autonomy as a priority and to look more at local supply chains. Discussions are about producing food in Canada, year-round, while offering products to consumers at reasonable prices, especially produce.

A recent study conducted by Dalhousie University was designed to gauge consumer willingness to pay for locally-grown food, as well as the perceptions of greenhouse-grown crops, what factors people consider when purchasing produce, where people purchase their produce, and how important fruits and vegetables are to their diets.

Several publicly-funded campaigns have assumed most Canadians think of local the same way. This just isn't so. The report suggests consumer definitions of local vary greatly across the country.

In the Atlantic and Prairie provinces, most respondents stated that if food is grown within the province, it's considered local. Consumers in British Columbia, Ontario and Quebec are more likely to consider only food grown within their region to be local.

Prince Edward Island residents consider where produce is grown more than the rest of Canadians, with 38.4 per cent of respondents saying they consider where their produce comes from important when choosing fruits and vegetables at the store.

One of the key points of the study is about pricing,



Sylvain Charlebois

When deciding what fruits and vegetables to buy, 79.5 per cent of Canadians are willing to pay a premium for locally-grown produce when grocery shopping.

However, only one in four Canadians consider where food is grown as important when grocery shopping. This is what's known as the local food paradox. Most of us want to pay more for locally-grown food and will respond so during a survey, but few are actively looking for opportunities to do so.

Price, unsurprisingly, is the most common important factor for Canadians, with 47.8 per cent citing the price of fruits and vegetables is most important. That's a significant barrier.

Essentially, Canadians may value local food more and think it's worth more money, but that doesn't mean they're looking for it.

The good news is that controlled-environment agriculture, like greenhouses, appear to have potential.

Offering some level of food autonomy to Canadians will require more use of production technologies. Most respondents to the survey perceive crops grown in greenhouses to be the same quality as those grown conventionally, with 63.4 per cent saying they're the same quality, 27.4 per cent saying they're better and only 9.2 per cent saying they're worse.

Only among respondents who grew their own produce did more people say greenhouse-grown produce was worse than those saying it was better, with 24.7 per cent

claiming it was worse compared to 15.9 per cent saying it was better than conventionally grown.

Those who shopped at independent stores had the highest opinion of greenhouse-grown crops, with 38.9 per cent saying they were better compared to 8.8 per cent saying they were worse.

Expecting Canadians to buy local, and perhaps pay a little more to support the 'local economy,' in the best of times—let alone during a recession—is simply unreasonable. Supporting our farmers and the rural economy is critical, but many consumers are struggling financially.

Once we make retail prices a non-issue, local produce will have a fighting chance against imported alternatives.

Given that the new Canada's Food Guide recommends that half of our diet be focused on fruits and vegetables, our food economy is particularly vulnerable, especially between November and May. Climate change, wildfires, pests, currency devaluations and many other things can compromise our food affordability when the core of our produce in the winter comes from abroad.

Many provinces have awakened to this reality since the start of our COVID-19 adventure. Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Alberta and British Columbia have all been quite active in looking for opportunities to increase their domestic production for the entire calendar year.

Given its high-volume, low-margin nature, investments in agri-food aren't compelling compared to other sectors of our economy. To move the needle on capital, government involvement is vital.

Let's hope it doesn't stop once we're done with this pandemic.

*Dr. Sylvain Charlebois is senior director of the agri-food analytics lab and a professor in food distribution and policy at Dalhousie University. Shannon Faires is a research associate at the Agri-Food Analytics Lab, Dalhousie University.*



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# 'What are we going to do this winter?'

What's that saying, 'Never borrow trouble?' I know it now, but I should never have asked the post-harvest question, "What are we going to do this winter?"

When harvest ended in mid-September, we moved right on to doing some fall field work, moved out some grain and last but not least, closed up the camper for the winter (but not without one final camping trip to the creek along our land). And that's when I asked, out loud, several times, "What are we going to do?"

As a grain farmer, the busy season always comes to an end following harvest of course, but in a pandemic, the usual plans for a fall and/or winter trip are completely out the window.

We don't make shopping trips to the city on a rainy day anymore, we don't head off to see the 'city grandchildren' like we used to. Even those evenings at the rink to watch curling or to catch a few hockey games and cheer the grandkids on won't likely be happening so ..... what ever will we do?

So far, in this first post-harvest month, I have my farm books completely up to date; everything is entered and filed. Even the storage room has taken on a completely new and organized look.

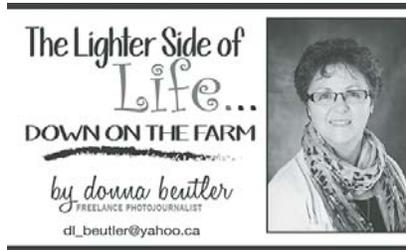
As I was bemoaning the very simple fact that we may be very bored this winter, save for helping in the feeding and calving of cows eventually, I suggested to my hubby that we maybe could paint the interior of the house. "We just built it five years ago," he says. "Doesn't need to be painted." "Well, how about puzzles?" I asked him. "Do you like building puzzles?" Okay, if looks could kill, that was definitely it! My guess is that puzzles are out the window too.

As luck would have it, or not perhaps, my hubby ended up in emerg in Moosomin one evening and it was obvious we weren't going to be going home but rather we would be heading to emerg in Regina.

Early the following morning, the call came that he was being transported by ambulance to the city. All I needed to do was pack a bag and get rolling. Of course that morning was the morning of the first snow of the season and I really wanted to take the half-ton but knew I would much rather park the car than the truck in the hospital parking lot.

I wasn't two miles down the road before I knew that this trip was not going to be the usual breeze that it normally is. The roads were icy and snow-packed and I had no idea if the ambulance, coming from Moosomin as I left from Whitewood, was ahead of me or behind me, not that that mattered particularly.

Although I was trying to hurry, passing was a bit trying



as the left lane was snow-covered. Vehicles were moving slower than usual and I was, at times, down to 80 kph. It was apparent that it would take me forever to reach the hospital.

Half way to Regina, I came up behind an ambulance. At 80, I followed it for many miles, having no idea if hubby was in it or not—after all it could have been an ambulance from anywhere.

The moment I gently moved into the passing lane, I saw, "Hutch Ambulance Service, Moosomin," on the side and I groaned. My eagle-eyed husband, if he was in this particular ambulance, was going to know I passed it at 85 kph on ice. Even if he couldn't see my car, he would just know, so uncanny is he. I was never going to hear the end of it.

There was a slight chance though, I thought if this was in fact the ambulance he was in, that he would be lying flat and in so much pain that he wouldn't even have noticed through those back windows that I was following behind him or that I had passed him.

I raced to the Pasqua emerg department where he had just been wheeled in. I could tell by his eyes the pain killers had made him very drowsy but when he saw me his first question was, "You passed the ambulance on icy highways?" Yup, he was clearly in the ambulance I had gone by.

And so began the process of determining the issue (gall-bladder) and the wait for an OR time. At times over the next three days until he was finally wheeled into surgery, I wanted to rip that clock right off the wall.

All through the first day in emerg in Regina, my poor big guy asked for water to no avail. Eventually he asked for a piece of ice and eventually, well into the evening, he got not only ice, but water, clear broth and jello! It was

obvious they weren't taking him into surgery on night number one.

On day two, we completed a Stats Can farm survey. "Really," he says, "a farm survey now?" Well, it's not like they knew he was in the hospital when they emailed it. That led to a check of the grain markets and some general farm marketing chat, like I am really into that but whatever. Oh and a text to our son to close the bins and turn off the fans—humidity's a bit high. And just like that, 20 minutes had passed! Now to get through the entire rest of the day!

While my guy went without water for hours and hours, and while he was extremely happy to actually get a glass of water, every time that happened, we knew surgery was delayed yet again.

By day three I began to regret ever asking what would I do this winter because it was obvious I would be spending the better part of a week in the city, not shopping, not dining out, but just sitting by his bedside—watching him sleep. Morphine has that effect.

On day 2.5, I said, "That's it. I am phoning that number on the TV so we at least have something to watch." That's when the nurse at hand told us it was no longer necessary to phone and have the TV connected—it was always available and at no charge to boot. Who knew, right? By nightfall on day three, we finally could say, "OR here we come!"

And so, as we prepare to go home, I plan to be very cautious about what I wish for.

I had, after all, just gotten used to having hubby back cooking all the meals in this post-harvest season and it appears I will be delegated back to kitchen duty, the thing I dislike doing most of all.

One thing I know, after several days away, is the farm is calling—not me personally, but him. We will likely need to drive to the farm before we actually go to the house (in town).

Check the bins, be sure all is well. (As if our son who lives on the farm wouldn't be aware). Once a farmer, always a farmer they say and yep, even in the midst of pain, and if nothing else, checking markets and humidity levels are forefront on his mind.

As life down on the farm winds down (or is just beginning for some of you as the case may be), we ask all our farmers and friends to work safely in all that you do. Our newspaper strives to provide a top-notch read for you all so take care and we'll see you next time!

Donna Beutler farms in the Whitewood area and writes amazing newspaper columns.



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# Farewell to Jim Cornelius

Continued from page B1

"We've been blessed with Jim's leadership, faithful service and expertise," says current board chair Ken Kim. "He has played a key role in the maturing of the Foodgrains Bank, a uniquely Canadian church-based organization that's now one of Canada's leading international emergency food organizations."

*Jim has led the Foodgrains Bank through multiple global food crises, from the North Korea famine in the late 90s to the Syrian refugee crisis and now increased hunger due to COVID-19.*

"The board has a great appreciation for Jim's commitment and dedication to the values of the Foodgrains Bank and his ability to communicate those values honestly and without equivocation," adds Ken. "A genuine and humble Christian, Jim has demonstrated that churches working with Canadian farmers, the public and government can demonstrably make a difference in the lives of hungry people around the world."

"Jim embraced Foodgrains Bank supporters wholeheartedly," says Marion Ausmus, a Saskatchewan grain farmer and current board member. "When we met Jim, he was so humble and down to earth. And he was keenly interested in all the 'farm talk.' I remember thinking that we have something to give and this is an organization I want to be associated with. Jim treated every one of us with respect and dignity, and I have seen him treat 'the least of these' with the same respect and dignity."

What is perhaps the most telltale sign of Jim's legacy is the number of families who have been able to access more food with support from Foodgrains Bank members and their partners. Jim has led the Foodgrains Bank through multiple global food crises, from the North Korea



Foodgrains Bank members have been responding to severe hunger caused by conflict in South Sudan for many years. In 2014, Jim met with families in the country who were receiving support through the Foodgrains Bank, including Victoria Loki and her baby Cecilia.

Photo by Amanda Thorsteinsson

famine in the late 90s to the Syrian refugee crisis and now increased hunger due to COVID-19.

"Jim has ensured that every decision made is made to increase the access to food for families in developing coun-

tries," says Marion. "He's wholeheartedly answered the call of Jesus to feed the hungry. He's inspired and encouraged others to answer that call, and when it's all said and done, fewer families will face hunger thanks to his lead-

ership of this special network."

"Jim has left the Foodgrains Bank well-positioned to continue responding to hunger needs around the world," adds Ken. "His legacy will live on for years."

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# Ag trade goes virtual at annual Tri-National Agricultural Accord

Agricultural trade went virtual last week, as Agriculture and Resource Development Minister Blaine Pedersen led the Canadian delegation at the 29th Annual Tri-National Agricultural Accord, which ran from Oct. 20 to 22.

"Even with the disruptions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, it is important that agricultural leaders continue open communications," said Pedersen. "This year has reinforced the necessity of ensuring agriculture and food products can move between countries and get to consumers."

The Tri-National Agricultural Accord represents a 29-year commitment among the senior state and provincial agricultural officials of Canada, the United States and Mexico to work together collaboratively on agricultural trade and development issues, as well as establish and strengthen business and trade relationships. At this year's virtual gathering, delegates discussed and made official statements on implementation of the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) and state and provincial responses to Covid-19.

"There are a lot of opportunities ahead

of us, particularly as the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement has come into force," said Pedersen. "We will also be looking at ways to collaborate within North America on zoning agreements to minimize trade disruptions due to animal disease outbreaks, which has happened elsewhere in the world with African swine fever."

The United States and Canada enjoy the largest bilateral trading relationship in the world. The United States is Manitoba's number one trading partner, accounting for agri-food exports worth \$2.7 billion in 2019. Manitoba's top exports to the United States are canola oil, processed potatoes, canola meal and live swine. Mexico is Manitoba's fourth-largest agri-food trading partner, with \$325 million in agri-food exports in 2019. Manitoba's top exports to Mexico are pork, canola seed and oil, wheat and processed potatoes.

The accords meeting typically rotates annually from country to country. In 2018, officials met in Monterrey, Mexico and last year's event was hosted in Winnipeg. Following this year's virtual meeting, the 2021 accord will be held in Washington, D.C.

## CO-OP Hometown Co-op Agro Centre



### Announcement from Broadview Hometown Co-op Agro Centre

Broadview Hometown Co-op is pleased to announce that Kory Francis has joined the Ag Team at Broadview. Kory is originally from Whitewood. He and his wife and family reside on a farm in the Whitewood area. Kory has been in the ag business in Saskatchewan for 15 years, the last 5 years dealing in fertilizer sales. We welcome Kory to our team!

**Feel free to call him for your fertilizer and bin needs. You can contact Kory at 1-306-735-7572.**

Hometown Co-op Ag Team would like to take this opportunity to say Thank You to our farmer customers for the past season's business and look forward to serving you in 2021!

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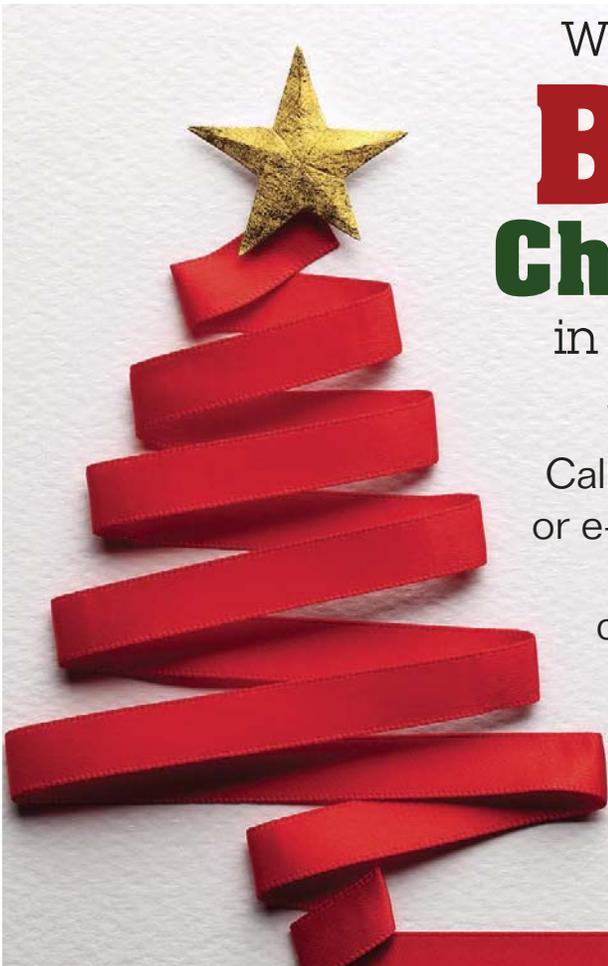
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