

# THE WORLD-Spectator AG NEWS

FEBRUARY 2022



Farmers volunteer to harvest a crop for the Canadian Foodgrains Bank at the Harvest for Hope near Moosomin in the fall of 2021. Saskatchewan exported a record value of agriculture products in 2021, as higher prices more than made up for lower production due to drought conditions.

## Sask ag exports hit record in 2021

BY SIERRA D'SOUZA BUTTS

LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Saskatchewan exported a record value of agriculture exports in 2021 as higher prices more than made up for lower production due to drought conditions.

Saskatchewan's agricultural exports were worth \$17.5 billion in 2021, which set another new record for the province.

The 2021 total was an increase of almost seven per cent over the record of \$16.4 billion set in 2020, which itself surpassed the previous year by 27 per cent.

Leading agri-food export commodities in 2021 continue to be canola seed, canola oil, non-durum wheat, lentils, durum and dry peas, with top international market destinations including the United States, China, Japan and Mexico.

"These record export numbers show Saskatchewan is in a strong position to continue producing and supplying the world-class agricultural products a growing world wants and needs," Trade and Export Development Minister Jeremy Harrison said.

"Our growing export base is creating economic opportunity, good jobs and generating investment for communities across the province."

Agri-food exports represented nearly

half of Saskatchewan exports in 2021, valued at \$37.1 billion. Saskatchewan overcame challenges including infrastructure disruptions due to adverse weather events in British Columbia to remain one of Canada's leading agri-food exporters, with a global reputation as a consistent supplier of safe, high quality, sustainability-produced agri-food products.

Saskatchewan exported more than \$2.6 billion in each of its key crop product sectors—cereal grains, oilseeds, pulses and edible oils—in 2021.

Compared to 2020, canola oil saw an increase of over 50 per cent, with exports to the United States increasing 72 per cent from \$1.1 billion to \$1.9 billion.

Canola oil to South Korea also experienced a dramatic increase of 106 per cent from \$71 million to \$146 million.

"Saskatchewan's agriculture industry is, and has always been, a significant part of our economy - with an impact that extends far beyond our provincial borders," Agriculture Minister David Marit said.

"Our producers have fed the world for generations, and we continue to enable the innovation necessary to keep feeding the world's growing population, expected to be 10 billion people by 2050. These export figures prove once again that we're

up to that challenge and well on the way to meeting the future goals we've set."

Saskatchewan has grown its agricultural exports by more than 56 per cent since 2012.

The province's ongoing international market expansion plans are progressing with the establishment of new trade and investment offices in the United Kingdom, United Arab Emirates, Mexico and Vietnam in addition to existing offices in Japan, India, China and Singapore.

The value-added processing and agriculture sectors are major components of Saskatchewan's Growth Plan goals, which include increasing crop production to 45 million tonnes, agriculture exports to \$20 billion, and value-added revenue to \$10 billion by the end of this decade.

The most recent example of progress toward these targets includes the announcement by Federated Co-operatives Ltd. of their plans to develop a renewable diesel facility as well as a canola crushing plant in Regina, in partnership with AGT Foods, with a capacity of 1.1 million tonnes and combined economic benefits estimated at \$4.5 billion.

Saskatchewan has the second-highest GDP per capita in Canada, second only to

Alberta.

Minister Marit spoke about what he expects the records of crops to be like in the future.

"We're hoping to achieve very significant numbers, our growth strategy is we want to hit 45 metric tonnes by 2030. When you look at that number alone just on the food production side and the livestock side of things, you'll see \$3 billion there as well," said Marit.

"When you see those numbers of production of the livestock side as well, you're obviously going to see an increase in the value of that trend, so you'll see those dollars increase as well."

"What it really means is that agriculture always has and always will be a leading industry in this province. When you look at what global companies are doing and the record investments they made into this province, these are significant investment dollars that these companies are making in this province, to increase value added production."

"I think what it recognizes is that global companies and countries around the world, have recognized that there's a huge opportunity in the food production side from the province of Saskatchewan, that's what it tells me."

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# Manitoba Association of Watersheds leads partnership on AAFC's on-farm climate action fund

Manitoba Association of Watersheds (MAW) is a successful recipient of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) On Farm Climate Action Fund Project. The MAW-led project, which was supported by 38 organizations throughout the region, will receive up to \$40 million over the two-year project to be de-

livered throughout Manitoba and Saskatchewan around three key farming practices that benefit climate resiliency in agriculture: rotational grazing, nitrogen management, and cover crops.

"The fight against climate change is not only about reducing Canada's greenhouse gas emissions,

but also helping farmers to innovate and adopt more sustainable farming practices," said the Honourable Marie-Claude Bibeau, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food. "We will continue to do what is necessary to protect our environment and provide farmers with the support needed to make their operations more sustainable for future generations. The On-Farm Climate Action Fund builds on the work already underway by our Government to lower greenhouse gas emissions and help improve long-term climate resiliency in the agriculture sector."

"We are ecstatic to receive this news," said Lynda Nicol, MAW executive director. "The project partners we are aligned with all have long history of producer-focused project delivery and producer outreach, which are key components of the project proposal's success."

Nicol said the AAFC

project will be overseen by a steering committee led by MAW, and including Saskatchewan Association of Watersheds (SAW), Manitoba Forage and Grassland Association (MFGA), Saskatchewan Forage Council (SFC), Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation (MHHC), and Manitoba Beef Producers (MBP), in addition to representatives from watershed districts in both Manitoba and Saskatchewan. The project partners will be fully engaged in planning, outreach, mentorship, and producer engagement.

"We are taking a grassroots, regional approach to addressing issues related to climate change in agri-

culture," said Garry Wasylowski, MAW board chair.

"Supporting farmers to implement BMPs related to nitrogen management, rotational grazing, and cover cropping will have a positive impact on Canadian agriculture. We are proud to have the opportunity to deliver this programming in Manitoba and Saskatchewan thanks to AAFC."

Nicol pointed out the front-end work of the MFGA in the organizing of the regional group's discussions around the proposal opportunity and says the framework and respective group networks, including conservation interests and agriculture groups, are in place to allow the group to

move forward quickly under MAW's leadership.

"This is a project for producers and has been since our very first steps together as a group," said Nicol. "We are intent on producers seeing the great impacts they can make on their farmlands via this project and are confident in the strength of our delivery partners to move this project forward to communicate, mentor and engage producers efficiently while delivering the on farm climate actions identified by AAFC that are so paramount to this project. We expect more program details will be released in March."

## Saskatchewan agriculture helps feed the world and helps fuel our province's growth.

Thank you to our agriculture community for the enormous contribution you make!

**Steven Bonk,**

**MLA**

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### EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

## Field Research Technician

1 Year Term (possibly permanent based on performance)

The Westman Agricultural Diversification Organization is an applied agricultural research group funded by the province of Manitoba that operates in Melita and southwest Manitoba. WADO is seeking a flexible, motivated and hardworking Research Technician for the 2022 field season. This is a one-year term (with possible extension). This is an excellent opportunity to grow with the region, learn new skills, and join an exciting program helping the local & provincial agriculture industry.

#### DUTIES:

The Diversification Technician provides field operations and technical support to applied crop production and agricultural land management research at Diversification Centres. Responsibilities are to prepare for & execute field experiments in agricultural crops. Activities include file management, land preparation and maintenance, equipment operation & maintenance and crop husbandry related to crop seeding, maintenance, harvest and storage. Activities also include plot data collection, data entry, and assisting with report writing, communication and administrative functions.

#### CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT:

- Must be legally entitled to work in Canada.
- Physically capable of working outdoors in various environmental conditions.
- Able to work extended or flexible hours during peak periods (growing and harvest seasons).
- Must possess and maintain a valid Manitoba class 5F driver's license. Class 3F is an asset.
- Access to a personal vehicle for business purposes.
- This position requires registration with the Agrolists Institute in Manitoba

#### ESSENTIAL QUALIFICATIONS:

- Diploma or Degree in Agriculture or a combination of relevant education and experience in field research
- Experience operating and maintaining farm equipment
- Knowledge of crop husbandry practices
- Strong organizational skills and record keeping & proficiency with Microsoft Office applications (Word, Excel, Outlook and PowerPoint)
- Ability to work independently with minimal supervision
- Ability to pay attention to detail and ensure accuracy
- Excellent written & verbal communication skills
- Excellent interpersonal skills with the ability to build and maintain positive working relationships with internal and external stakeholders

#### DESIRED:

- Experience supervising staff
- Experience in statistical analysis interpretation
- Experience using auto steer technologies, GPS, RTK guidance systems
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We thank all who apply and advise that only those selected for further consideration will be contacted. Your cover letter, resume and/or application must clearly indicate how you meet the qualifications. Expected start date is as soon as possible.

**CLOSING DATE: MARCH 31, 2022**

**Email Cover Letter and Resume to:**

Scott Chalmers, Applied Research Specialist | [scott.chalmers@gov.mb.ca](mailto:scott.chalmers@gov.mb.ca)

Questions: Cell: 204-522-5415 | Website: [www.mbdiversificationcentres.ca](http://www.mbdiversificationcentres.ca)



# Spring runoff expected to recharge moisture, not lead to flooding in most of Sask

The Water Security Agency (WSA) has released the preliminary spring runoff outlook for 2022.

Runoff potential is determined based on the conditions at freeze-up, the snowfall received to date and that further precipitation will be average between now and spring melt.

The report shows most of southern Saskatchewan with below normal snowmelt runoff potential. The central areas, with above normal snowpack, can expect an above normal snowmelt response and

near normal conditions are currently projected for the far north.

Much of the southern areas of Saskatchewan experienced very dry conditions through the summer and into fall last year. The exception is an area just east of Moose Jaw through Weyburn, Indian Head and Regina, where wetter fall conditions and near normal snowfall have projected a near normal snowmelt. The snowpack is generally above to well above normal to date in the central areas; however, flooding is not expected despite the predicted

above normal runoff response. The far north, encompassing the areas of Uranium City, Stony Rapids and Cluff Lake are anticipated to experience a near normal runoff event.

The melt rate is expected to have a significant impact on runoff yields across the south. With depleted subsoil moisture, a slow melt will likely result in the bulk of the snowpack recharging the soil column. A rapid melt is likely needed to result in

an improvement to surface water supplies. The current snowpack is not sufficient to satisfy both. Without additional snowfall, surface water supply issues are likely to occur in southwestern Saskatchewan in 2022.

The spring runoff outlook could change as there is potentially another eight to 10 weeks of winter remaining. The first spring runoff forecast will be issued in early March.



Despite lots of snow in the southeast, spring runoff is not expected to cause flooding, but to recharge moisture levels.



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# Look closely for verticillium stripe in 2022

By CLINT JURKE

Verticillium stripe caused yield loss in some canola fields in 2020 and 2021, and probably will again in 2022. The disease can be confused with blackleg, sclerotinia stem rot and lodging, and—unlike these other common problems—verticillium stripe tends to be worse in dry conditions.

Verticillium stripe, caused by the pathogen *Verticillium longisporum*, was first detected in canola Manitoba in 2014, and surveys in 2015 found the pathogen's DNA all across the Prairies. It seems to be getting worse—likely because it is still establishing itself. The bottom line: It's here and we want people to know about it. That is why SaskCanola held a verticillium workshop in February. A video recording of the workshop is posted at [www.youtube.com/canolacouncil](http://www.youtube.com/canolacouncil).

## Identification

Symptoms are easiest to see at harvest. Look for brittle

stems with a peeling outer layer. Some stems may be lodged or broken. Tiny specks called microsclerotia form under the peeling skin.

Verticillium stripe, like blackleg, will cause discoloration inside the stem. Blackleg stem infection tends to be darker and moderate levels of infection cause distinct wedge shapes of black. (Severe blackleg will leave the stem completely black and dead.) Verticillium stripe tends to cause grey discoloration throughout the stem cross section, getting continually darker as microsclerotia build up.

At the workshop, Yixiao Wang, a University of Alberta PhD student researching verticillium stripe, shared another way to distinguish blackleg from verticillium. Blackleg stem infection is concentrated in the crown—the point at ground level where root and stem meet. Verticillium darkening can extend well up the stem. Using a knife to split stems longitudinally, Wang discovered she could distinguish the two diseases based on how far the darkening extended up the stem.

## Management

We don't have a fungicide option, so management comes down to genetics and rotation. Unfortunately we don't have confirmed recommendations for either of those options.

All four presenters at the workshop are researching genetics, and they have found clear differences. Some canola breeding lines are quite resistant. Some are very

susceptible. But we don't know the level of resistance in commercial cultivars in Canada, and we don't have an official method to rate this resistance.

For rotation, anecdotal evidence suggests that longer breaks between canola crops may help to reduce disease severity. It certainly works for blackleg and clubroot. We need more research to tell us how long a break will provide an effective reduction in soil inoculum levels of the verticillium pathogen.

The good news is that research continues in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. These studies will help us learn more about the pathogen and the disease. The Canola Research Hub at [canolaresearch.ca](http://canolaresearch.ca) has updates for ongoing and completed projects. Enter "verticillium" in the keyword search.

In the meantime, keep an eye out for verticillium stripe in your canola in 2022. For more images, identification tips and a lifecycle graphic, please see the verticillium stripe chapter in the Diseases section at [canolaencyclopedia.ca](http://canolaencyclopedia.ca).

Clint Jurke is agronomy director for the Canola Council of Canada. Email [jurkec@canolacouncil.org](mailto:jurkec@canolacouncil.org).



Verticillium stripe symptoms are easiest to see at harvest. Look for brittle stems with a peeling outer layer. Some stems may be lodged or broken. Tiny dark specks called microsclerotia form under the peeling skin. Photo by CCC.



Verticillium stripe, like blackleg, will cause discoloration inside the stem. Blackleg infection (centre) tends to be darker with distinct wedge shapes. Verticillium stripe tends to cause grey discoloration throughout the stem cross section (left). Photo by CCC.

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# Better days ahead

Despite this nasty cold weather we have had to endure, one thing is certain—the days are getting longer and that is so, so sweet. When we check the cows before the sun sets, it's such a treat to see the calves bouncing around the corral without a worry in the world. Well, except for that one special little fellow who, when he sees my hubby coming with or without the bottle, is sure to run up to him and follow him around.

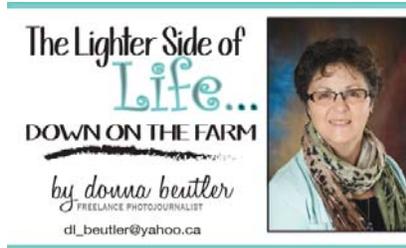
I am reminded, when I see this calf—a twin whose momma loves him to bits but can't quite feed two calves—of how our twin grandsons (10) told us when the calves were born that it was “good money” to have two at once. Uh-huh, I thought at the time, even before the first bag of milk replacer was purchased. We can totally relate to the Beutlers down the road who had triplets born (unassisted and all fine no less) a couple of weeks ago and who are supplementing by bottle feeding as well. It's such a novelty, but also an added chore every day. But farmers, bless their resilient and persistent hearts, do everything in their power to take the best care they can of babies and mommas alike.

With all the snow we have had this year, I doubt our bottled calf is going to be able to supplement his daily nutrition requirements with fresh shoots of green grass anytime soon. In fact, you have to wonder if we'll still be under a foot or two of snow in May! Let's hope not, right?

It's been quite the winter for everyone but of course my heart always goes out to the cattle farmers at this time of year as they fight mountains of snow and bitterly cold temperatures. I was watching Quick Dick McDick the other day in “You get my Drift?” and could not help but laugh at his hilarious video on “types” of Saskatchewan snowdrifts—something we Saskatchewan folk can totally relate to.

At this point in time—February 2022—we have reached (at least at the moment of this writing) the end of vaccination passports and masks. At least for the time being considering we are also at this point in time facing the highest numbers of Covid hospitalizations in two entire years. That's not meant to be a statement for or against any viewpoint, nor is it a veiled political statement. It's simply a statement of fact, and I am hoping for better days ahead.

Of course, better days ahead is definitely what I am personally hoping for as I have just learned I have been in



close contact with someone who tested positive. What a long haul it's been with this whole pandemic. Our youngest granddaughter (five) was preparing to go for her first shot back a month or two ago (Regina) and I heard her mom telling her they would go shopping for a little something after she got her shot. Her little eyes lit up as she ran back into the living room and plopped herself on the couch. She looked at her Grandpa and I and said, “I'm getting an iPad after I get my needle!” We looked at each other, both wondering if we should burst her bubble then or just let her mom burst it later. We chose the latter. And she was perfectly happy with that little toy puppy on a leash.

Meanwhile back at home, we were spending some time with the twins (the human kind). At 10, they are both interested in the great outdoors, the farm and all the things little farm boys tend to gravitate to. I decided to ask them what their passion was, what the thing was that they loved to do more than anything else. “The main three,” they responded. As if I knew what the main three even remotely were. “Farmin’, fishin’ and huntin’” they explained in their “men-of-few-words” way. I guess I shouldn't have been surprised because that likely covers it all.

“Well, what about me?” I asked them. “What do you think my passion is?” They see me often enough, typing away at the computer and saying I need to get a story or column off to “the paper,” so there was part of me that thought they might answer my question with “writing.” And they would be oh so right. But no, that's not at all

## Ag insurance product to strengthen Manitoba forage, livestock sectors

The governments of Canada and Manitoba are investing \$253,600 through the Canadian Agricultural Partnership (CAP) to develop a new usage-based insurance (UBI) product, in collaboration with Dairy Farmers of Manitoba (DFM), to respond to needs expressed by forage crop growers and other stakeholders in a 2020 review of forage insurance programs, Manitoba Agriculture Minister Derek Johnson and Terry Duguid, member of Parliament for Winnipeg South, announced.

“The forage and livestock sectors in Manitoba have been vulnerable in times of substantial forage shortages, as was the case during last summer's drought conditions, and traditional risk management and insurance methods used for other crops do not always work well for their specific needs,” said Johnson. “We are pleased to work with industry to develop this ground-breaking insurance product that will help forage growers better meet operational challenges, especially under extraordinary circumstances.”

“Forage producers have seen firsthand the impacts of ongoing climate-related challenges – most notably this past year,” said Duguid. “By using scientific tools to gather and assess local conditions, projects like this will create new solutions for drought-affected producers in Manitoba.”

The province will enter a two-year contribution agreement (2021/22 to 2022/23) with DFM to provide up to \$253,600 in CAP-Ag Action Manitoba Strategic Initia-

tives (industry-led) federal flow-through funding. The project will be led by DFM in partnership with Manitoba Beef Producers and four additional producer organizations.

“Dairy Farmers of Manitoba is pleased to work with the Canada and Manitoba governments and agricultural sector to support the development of this innovative UBI product that will benefit

forage growers throughout the province,” said David Wiens, chair, Dairy Farmers of Manitoba. “Using leading-edge artificial intelligence, the product will measure and predict forage crop yields automatically and in near-real time based on satellite remote sensing, weather and geophysical data.”

The project will develop a usage-based, farm-specific

index insurance product for Manitoba forage growers. It includes the integration of satellite remote sensing and other big data, combined with an interactive web-based application that farmers can use to individualize their insurance, receive real-time and dynamic pricing, monitor forage production throughout the season and fast-track claims settlements, the minister noted.

### FARMLAND NORTH OF ELKHORN FOR SALE BY TENDER

The James Joseph Livestock Co. Ltd is tendering two quarters of farmland north of Elkhorn, Manitoba. Bids will be considered on individual quarters or on all quarters. No mineral rights are included in the sale.

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Tenders are to be submitted in a sealed envelope to the law office of McNeill Harasymchuk McConnell, Box 520, 243 Raglan Street W., Virden, Manitoba, R0M 2C0, Attn: Glen Harasymchuk; accompanied by a cheque for 5% of tender payable in trust to the law firm to form the deposit on any successful tenders. Highest or any tender not necessarily accepted. Cheques for unsuccessful tenders will be returned. Please include name, mailing address and phone number. The successful bidder(s) will be required to complete an agreement covering terms and conditions of sale. Please note “Joseph Tender” on envelope.

Tenders close Tuesday, March 4th, 2022, at 12:00 noon.

#### TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF SALE:

1. Closing to be on or before March 18, 2022.
2. In addition to the deposit, the balance of the accepted tender must be paid on or before closing. If the balance is not paid by closing or on terms acceptable to the Vendor, the deposit may be forfeited as liquidated damages and not as a penalty.
3. Purchasers will be responsible for municipal taxes after December 31, 2021.
4. Purchaser shall be responsible for payment of GST or shall self-assess for GST.

what they said. Two sets of eyes looked back at me and they said: “Combinin’?” Ahhhh, now why didn't I suspect that's what they would say, considering the countless hours they have spent with me on that machine, complete with car seats and coolers of baby bottles back in the day right up to more current times when packed lunches, snacks galore and frozen bottles of water accompany us to our perches in the big green machine. Yup, what other than combinin' could Grandma's passion be!

There's a huge part of me that cannot wait for spring/summer just as I am sure it is for you all. Much as the snow is so pretty when it's falling, it's sure created some interesting travel days and downright impossible travel days. And after seeing nothing but white since the middle of November at least, I am ready to see green one of these days. Our “creek” days, much loved last winter when there was little snow and the temperatures were quite balmy, came to a complete and sudden halt last fall once the snow began to accumulate. So, yeah, I am ready for green grass, green leaves and some much-needed creekside gatherings where roasting weiners and marshmallows and watching the wildlife below has become the best stress-relieving spot on earth for these not-yet-retired-but-should-be-retired folks!

As we venture into spring in the next few weeks, I can't wait for the warmth of the sunshine, the first signs of spring growth and the chance to once again sit outdoors free of snow boots, hot shots and head gear. Here's hoping your spring wish list has started coming true by the time the next month passes by. And in the words of Theodore Roosevelt, I hope you can say, “I do not believe there was ever a life more attractive than life on a cattle farm.”

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# SARM looking for more volunteers to join Rural Crime Watch initiative to reduce crime in RMs

BY SIERRA D'SOUZA BUTTS  
LOCAL JOURNALISM  
INITIATIVE REPORTER

On Thursday, the Saskatchewan Rural Crime Watch Association (SRCWA) announced that they are seeking more volunteers to join their Rural Crime Watch initiative, in order to reduce crime in rural municipalities across the province.

"Rural municipal landowners have been keeping a watchful eye over their land for years because the risk of crime happening and going unnoticed in remote areas is a reality they live with," said Ray Orb, SARM President.

"So this idea of a Rural Crime Watch Association is exactly what we need for our residents. The only way we will find success with our recently established Saskatchewan Rural Crime Watch Association (SRCWA) is by members joining together to volunteer."

SARM's call to action is for more residents in our 296 RMs to join as volunteers with local crime watch groups.

"We're really pushing this out to the public to make sure as many RMs as possible can join the Rural Crime Watch network. At the same time we're asking rural residents to take part in this as well, because we need lots of volunteers out there," Orb said.

"We really need people to join Rural Crime Watch because of the fact that they need to be the eyes and ears out there, and they need to help the local RCMP detachments, to do surveillance, to watch for things that the RCMP reports, but also to provide information back to the RCMP." "Because of that network and the collaboration that goes with it, we're hoping we can reduce the rural crime that's still prevalent out there. Its numbers are increasing from time to time, and we would like to lower those numbers."

Although rural crime slowed down for a bit, Orb said criminal activity in rural areas has increased over the last year.

"There's still property crimes on the rise, mostly because of break ins and theft. There are lots of areas out there that are remote, places where there might not be people living, those are the areas where crime seems to occur. It's still a problem that's for sure," said Orb.

He said local volunteers will help in reducing overall rural crime, as police are not always able to be present in rural areas.

"Local people can help because they'll be getting information from the RCMP. One example is the RCMP may be looking for a certain vehicle that was involved with a



break in or theft, and people can watch for that vehicle," Orb said.

"They can make a model of that vehicle or its license plate, so if they see that, they can report it. It really saves the RCMP a lot of time and it also brings a lot more people into the network, that can watch for the same thing and report on it."

"It's a pretty efficient system and certainly makes a difference."

## How RMs and residents can volunteer for Rural Crime Watch

Volunteers can sign up to be a part of the Rural Crime Watch Association by contacting their local RCMP officer.

"People can contact their local RCMP detachment and in most cases it's going to be the RM local assigned to initiate this, so they will get a list of volunteers of people who are interested in joining," said Orb.

"Then they will get a criminal record check from the RCMP, and then the person will most likely have a meeting with their RM council or the RCMP. They'll lay out the ground rules for what that person will need to do and how things will actually work."

Orb said the call for action for volunteers to help in rural areas has been an ongoing project.

"We've had this provincial wide association in effect for less than a year, and I think things have slowed down a little bit."

"We have about 13 RMs that belong to this provincial association, but we have some operating independently so we would like to bring them all in under a new umbrella," said Orb.

"Also we would like new RMs, because eventually we want all RMs to join. We're pushing this harder now and bringing attention to the RMs and the general public, to let them know that our convention is coming up in Regina in less than a month."

He said if any RMs or rural residents have any ques-

tions about the Rural Crime Watch Association, they can contact SRCWA at the upcoming SARM convention in March.

"We have Rural Crime Watch on our agenda because rural crime is always an issue, and we also have our association in the trade show so that people will be able to stop by and ask for information, and talk about how they can sign up."

The Saskatchewan Rural Crime Watch Association (SRCWA) brings efforts to combat rural crime together; under one provincial umbrella. The non-profit association is led by SARM, SUMA, Rural Crime Watch members, the RCMP, and the Ministry of Corrections and Policing.

It's a community-led and police-supported program dedicated to preventing and reducing criminal behavior. "This newly formed collaboration is underway with SARM, but the call for more of our members to join the initiative continues."

"Volunteers work together in their RMs to report suspicious activity immediately to the RCMP or 911. The need for volunteers shouldn't go unnoticed, RMs need these volunteers' knowledge of the land and their eyes and ears for local police when they may not be in their area."



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# Governments remain committed to supporting producers through 2022 Crop Insurance program

On Feb. 22, Federal Agriculture and Agri-Food Minister Marie-Claude Bibeau and Saskatchewan Agriculture Minister David Marit announced details of the 2022 Crop Insurance Program.

"The resilience and determination that prairie producers have shown through this incredibly challenging year is an inspiration to all Canadians," said Bibeau. "The drought of 2021 demonstrated the value in risk management programs, such as Saskatchewan's Crop Insurance, to ensure producers have the best coverage to meet their needs. I encourage producers to continue to subscribe to government programs and private insurance that will protect their crops against on-going climate-related challenges."

"Reflected through the historically high claim year, the challenges Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers faced during the 2021 growing season reinforces the importance of our Business Risk Management Programs," Marit said. "The Crop Insurance Program remains an actuarial sound program, with strong funding. Producers can continue to rely on the support, coverage and flexibility of the Crop Insurance Program, as they work toward the future of their operation."

Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation (SCIC) continues to provide relevant pricing and coverage levels. Average coverage will reach a record level of \$405 per acre, due to higher commodity prices and increased yield coverage. Due to this year's 48 per cent increase in coverage, the average total premium is higher, at \$12.05 per acre, compared to \$8.59 in 2021. The average premium rate is lower, due to the strong production in 2020. As there is a one-year lag when calculating premium rates, 2021 production is not used until 2023.

"We appreciate the changes to these programs for 2022-23," SARM President Ray Orb said. "SARM has always valued working with the Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation and the Ministry of Agriculture to make programs better for our producers and looks forward to that continued collaboration in the future."

Last year, producers faced a provincial-wide drought, resulting in reduced available moisture to pasture and hay land. In response to experiencing extreme heat temperatures and dry growing conditions, a heat adjustment factor was added to rainfall data used in claim calculations for the Forage and Corn Rainfall Insurance programs. When temperatures reach 31 degrees Celsius or higher, precipitation amounts are now reduced in the 'monthly per cent of normal' calculation. This adjustment helps recognize the impact of extreme heat on forage and corn yields.

"Business risk management programs are critical tools for producers to address market volatility and severe weather conditions," Saskatchewan Stock Growers Association



President Kelcy Elford said. "We appreciate SCIC responding to producers needs to make coverage levels more reflective of increased forage costs and to adjust for moisture loss due to extreme heat."

With the Contract Price Option, producers can use their contract prices to blend with the Crop Insurance base price for higher coverage. This allows producers to establish an insured price reflective of the actual market value they would receive for their production. New for 2022, this price option is available on all commercial crops. New crops added include fababeans, Khorsan wheat, fall and spring rye, sunflowers, triticale, winter wheat, extra strong wheat, hard white wheat, all classes

of chickpeas, caraway, irrigated dry beans and soybeans. Producers can select the crops they want covered under the Contract Price Option by March 31, 2022, and submit their contracts to SCIC by May 31, 2022.

"We appreciate the changes SCIC has made to the Contract Price Option," Saskatchewan Pulse Growers Chair Shaun Dyrland said. "It could be an attractive option for pulse growers with the new inclusion of chickpeas, soybeans and fababeans."

March 31, 2022, is the deadline to apply, reinstate or cancel their Crop Insurance contract. Producers must select insured crops and coverage levels or make additional changes by this date. Producers can speak to their local SCIC office to make any changes or coverage will remain the same as the previous year.

SCIC provides a diverse and relevant suite of risk management programs: AgriStability, Crop Insurance and Livestock Price Insurance. Producers can reduce their risk by reviewing all SCIC options to find the right insurance and coverage package for their operation. For more information, contact a local SCIC office, call 1-888-935-0000 or visit scic.ca.

Crop Insurance is a federal-provincial-territorial Business Risk Management program under the Canadian Agricultural Partnership. Under Crop Insurance, premiums for most programs are shared 40 per cent by participating producers, 36 per cent by the Government of Canada and 24 per cent by the Government of Saskatchewan. Administrative expenses are fully funded by governments, 60 per cent by Canada and 40 per cent by Saskatchewan.



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## Risk of moderate to major flooding in Manitoba

Manitoba's Hydrologic Forecast Centre's spring flood outlook reports the risk of moderate to major flooding in most southern Manitoba basins is dependent on weather conditions from now until the spring melt, Transportation and Infrastructure Minister Doyle Pivniuk said.

"Our government continuously monitors all watershed conditions across the province to remain vigilant and ready to respond to ensure that all Manitobans are protected should there be a risk for flood conditions," said Pivniuk. "The Hydrologic Forecast Centre monitors river flows and lake levels daily throughout the year, and we work in collaboration with municipalities and communities to best prepare for potential flood mitigation operations."

The Hydrologic Forecast Centre advises that, while there is a risk of major flooding

along the Red River and its tributaries, including the Roseau, Rat and Pembina rivers, water levels are expected to remain below community flood protection levels at all locations. There is also a risk of moderate flooding for most other southern Manitoba basins including the Assiniboine and Souris rivers and the Whiteshell lakes area. The risk of spring flooding is low for the Interlake region and northern Manitoba regions.

The Hydrologic Forecast Centre also reports that operation of the Red River Floodway is expected this spring to reduce water levels within the city of Winnipeg with some operation of the Portage Diversion anticipated to prevent ice jamming on the Assiniboine River, the minister noted.

The next flood outlook will be released late March.

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# New federal funding to enrich USask digital agriculture research

A University of Saskatchewan (USask) Computer Science and Global Institute for Food Security (GIFS) team has been awarded \$125,000 in funding from the Canada Foundation for Innovation's (CFI) John R. Evans Leaders Fund (JELF) to support the development of innovative greenhouse imaging and computing infrastructure.

Data-driven processes and decisions are increasingly important in the agriculture sector. Although large amounts of farm and plant data are being collected by growers and scientists, the ability to create actionable information from these large datasets remains a key challenge.

To fill this gap in the rapidly expanding digital agriculture sector, the USask team, led by Dr. Lingling Jin (PhD), assistant professor of computer science in the College of Arts and Science, and GIFS research leaders, Dr. Ian Stavness (PhD), Research Chair in Computational Agriculture, and Dr. Leon Köchian (PhD), Canada Excellence Research Chair in Global Food Security, will use the new funds to build the Green SkEye platform. This innovative infrastructure combines state-of-the-art computing and plant imaging hardware to analyze plant populations in greenhouses at an unprecedented level of detail.

"At USask our researchers are working hard with the future in mind, and that means developing technologies that can contribute to greater food security around the globe," said Vice-President Research at USask, Baljit Singh. "We appreciate this investment, which allows us to help us attract and retain world-class expertise."

The platform will build on the foundation and strengths of the GIFS-led Plant Phenotyping and Imaging Research Centre (P2IRC), including data science and bioinformatics. GIFS' Plant Growth Facility will also provide greenhouse space and resources, as well as serve as a testing ground for

the Green SkEye platform. GIFS will also provide additional funds for the development of this platform, with other funds and support flowing through the Canada Excellence Research Chair in Food Security, led by GIFS.

"The Green SkEye platform represents an innovative solution to a challenging problem in agriculture and that solution would not be possible without our strong agtech ecosystem," said Dr. Steven Webb (PhD), GIFS chief executive officer. "We are excited to provide both matching funding and infrastructure for this collaborative project that contributes to our vision of a world where everyone has access to safe and nutritious food."

Current plant imaging systems widely used for research and commercial purposes are large and expensive. The Green SkEye platform is a made-in-Saskatchewan plant imaging system that will be globally unique, capturing real-time colour and near-infrared images at a fraction of the cost of commercial solutions for imaging plants in specialized chambers or on robotic gantries.

"The unique data generated by the Green SkEye system, in combination with existing field and genotyping data platforms, will provide a competitive advantage, helping attract and retain outstanding new researchers working on deep learning, data analytics, bioinformatics, genomics, and phenomics research," said Jin.

The transdisciplinary collaboration enabled by the project will advance our understanding of the interactions among the different elements of the agricultural system, ensuring Canada stays on the cutting edge when it comes to agricultural productivity and food security.

"This new facility builds upon data science and bioinformatics foundations established in the CFREF-funded Plant Phenotyping and Imaging Research Center, led by GIFS," said Stavness. "It will result in collaborations between GIFS, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, the Crop Development Centre, and a number of industry partners."

Funding provided through JELF helps institutions attract and retain outstanding researchers by providing up to 40 per cent of the cost of academic research infrastructure, with remaining funds solicited from other public and private sources.

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# Measuring the amount of carbon in Sask wetland soils: USask study

BY BROOKE KLEIBER

University of Saskatchewan (USask) graduate student Chantel Chizen is investigating how much carbon is stored in the soil of Prairie wetlands, and what this can mean for environmental carbon management in agriculture.

Saskatchewan is home to 11 per cent of Canada's wetlands, with an estimated 1.5 million wetland areas located in agricultural fields. The wetland regions analyzed in Chizen's project are referred to as "pothole" wetlands, a category including sloughs or depressions in the ground filled with water.

"Together, healthy soil and freshwater are like the environmental cornerstone of food production," said Chizen, who is a PhD candidate in the USask College of Agriculture and Bioreources.

Chizen's doctorate project measures the amount of carbon in the soil of cultivated wetland regions in Saskatchewan, and how the soil carbon level changes across soil zones and with differing amounts of water, salt and drainage.

This information is essential for farmers, as soil carbon content contributes to the overall quality and functional ability of the soil to retain water and nutrients and to grow plants.

"We know that the brown soil zone (arid regions in Saskatchewan) will have less carbon than the black soil zone (moist regions in Saskatchewan), but we currently don't have reliable values for how much carbon is stored in the soil of different pothole wetlands."

Chizen and her research team collect soil samples during the fall following harvest from three different points in the wetland area and classify them based on colour and the presence of mottles. Mottles resemble specks of rust and are indicators of prolonged water presence in the soil.

The samples are taken back to the USask laboratory to determine their carbon content and the characteristics of their organic matter, to help build an understanding of how carbon is stored in the soil.

"We can then group the wetlands based on soil zones, how long the wetland is filled with water, and soil salinity, and compare the carbon values among these groups to see if the soil carbon is related to these factors or to other soil properties like nitrogen or pH levels."

Wetland soil from the Ag in Motion Discovery Farm has also been sampled following drainage procedures to determine how this management practice affects soil organic matter quantity and quality. Chizen said the quality of the organic matter in drained wetlands may serve as an early indicator of soil carbon changes that may be occurring over longer than the study period of three years.

Sample collection will continue in fall 2022 so the team can reach its goal of collecting samples from 180 wetlands.



USask College of Agriculture and Bioreources PhD candidate Chantel Chizen's project will inform current estimates of soil carbon levels in Saskatchewan wetlands.

The project is supervised by soil science professor Dr. Angela Bedard-Haughn (PhD), who also serves as the dean of the USask College of Agriculture and Bioreources.

Chizen said that although the study focuses on Saskatchewan, the data can be applied to larger-scale studies of soil carbon and wetland ecosystem services across the Prairie Pothole Region, which extends through the Canadian Prairie provinces and the Upper Midwest of the United States.

The study is unique in that it considers soil samples from as deep as one metre, whereas most studies conducted in the past have only taken samples to a depth of 30 centimetres. In wetlands, deeper soil can contain a large quantity of stable carbon, so sampling to greater depth will provide more accurate soil carbon estimates.

The preliminary study results will be presented at the Soils and Crop Conference in March 2022, as well as at both the Canadian and American Society of Soil Science annual meetings.

"Knowing the amount of carbon in the Prairie potholes will play a key role in developing best management practices for wetland management and environmental carbon management in agricultural landscapes," said Chizen.

The research is jointly funded by Canada's Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) Alliance grant program, the Saskatchewan Water Security Agency, the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture's Agri-

culture Development Fund, and the Saskatchewan Wheat Development Commission. Chizen has been awarded an NSERC Postgraduate Scholarship and was selected for the Foundation for Food and Agriculture Research's Rocky FFAR Fellows Program.

*This article first ran as part of the 2022 Young Innovators series, an initiative of the USask Research Profile and Impact office in partnership with the Saskatoon StarPhoenix.*

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# Federal and provincial partnership funds innovative research in agriculture and agri-food sector

The governments of Canada and Manitoba are investing \$326,688 in research projects aimed at strengthening the agriculture and agri-food industries through the Ag Action Manitoba program.

The announcement was made last week.

"Research projects like those announced today allow agriculture and agri-food businesses in Manitoba to stay strong and prosperous," said Agri-Food Minister Marie-Claude Bibeau Bibeau.

"Our government's investments will ensure the sector's sustainable growth and competitiveness."

"Funding available from Ag Action Manitoba supports the vital work of our research community in advancing our province's priorities for the agriculture sector," said Johnson.

"This support for research and innovation is the key that opens the door to new discoveries, novel approaches and technologies, ensuring Manitoba's continued success in the national and global agriculture markets."

The Ag Action Manitoba program for research and innovation offers two streams of funding—basic and applied research and development activities, and investment related to capacity-building.

Applications are received for projects in four focus areas, including climate change adaptation, environmental sustainability, food, diet and health, and sustainable feed grains supply and utilization.

This announcement includes funding for promising projects focused on grain innovation and crop production. They include:

- Manitoba Pulse and Soybean Growers Inc.—development and evaluation of a fully automated, made-in-Manitoba rover for the rapid collection of environmental data to improve soybean adaptation to drought conditions, purchase of specialized lab equipment for crop protein research, development of the carbon footprint of typical pulse and soybean production in Manitoba and assessment of alternatives to reduce carbon intensity;

- Ducks Unlimited—maximizing the potential of high-yielding winter wheat in Manitoba;

- Manitoba Crop Alliance Inc.—grain dryer efficiency;

- Manitoba Horticulture Productivity Enhancement Centre Inc.—improvements to the soils of Manitoba's potato industry through decreasing wind erosion and variable rate irrigation; and

- University of Manitoba—noxious *Amaranthus* weed (pigweed) identification using molecular markers and genome editing of functional genes in *Brassica napus* to advance plant resistance to environmental conditions. adfaasdfa



The funding for this research comes through the Ag Action Manitoba program.



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# Manitoba's plan to become world leader in sustainable protein gains momentum

Manitoba's quest to become a global leader in the development and production of sustainable protein has gained further momentum through Project Accelerating Sustainable Protein Impact and Results (ASPIRE), an industry-led, concerted and co-ordinated team effort toward advancing the Manitoba Protein Advantage Strategy, Agriculture Minister Derek Johnson announced recently.

"This plan represents tremendous opportunity for our province's industry and economic future," said Johnson. "Our government appreciates the shared expertise that has led to this pivotal development."

The release of Project ASPIRE was to be a key highlight of the third annual Manitoba Protein Summit, a virtual conference slated for Feb. 22 to 23. This major industry conference has attracted more than 650 attendees from around the world, with "Sustainable Protein Food Systems" as this year's theme.

"The Manitoba Protein Advantage Strategy was released in 2019 to sustainably grow Manitoba's plant and animal protein industry through innovation and value chain collaboration," said Johnson. "To date, Manitoba's protein industry has attracted new investments valued at \$753 million, creating



840 jobs and surpassing 50 per cent of the strategy's \$1.5-billion target in new investments through 2025."

The Manitoba Protein Consortium, an industry committee appointed by cabinet, has transitioned the strategy from a government-led initiative to an industry-led strategy through the establishment of a strategic advisory body of 18 industry leaders to lead the implementation of Project ASPIRE.

"Project ASPIRE is a comprehensive plan focused on realizing the province's potential to produce protein that is diverse, high-quality, healthy and increasingly sustainable," said Dickson Gould, chair of the Manitoba Consortium and president of

The Progressive Group. "We are very pleased to appoint David Wiens, the chair of Dairy Farmers of Manitoba and Chris Anderson, the chief technology officer at Protein Industries Canada to co-chair the strategic advisory body. Together, we want to accelerate sector leadership to make Manitoba a globally sustainable protein hub for

plant, animal and alternative protein development, as well as increase the economic opportunities for our producers and protein manufacturers."

"We have established roundtables to bring action to key pillars in the strategy, such as workforce, water and wastewater infrastructure and sustainable protein research.

Other priority areas will be determined within the next few months," said David Wiens, chair, Dairy Farmers of Manitoba and co-chair of the strategic advisory body.

"Our Workforce Roundtable will ensure that we have the right skills in Manitoba to sustainably grow our protein industry," said Ron Koslowsky, chair, Workforce Roundtable and head of the Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters Association of Manitoba.

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Federated Co-operatives Limited is hiring a  
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 at our FEED PLANT IN MOOSOMIN, SK

During these challenging times, Federated Co-operatives Limited is working to serve our local co-ops, customers, and communities. We are committed to supporting our local co-ops and the communities they serve. Working together to provide essential services to communities across Western Canada, we are hiring a Feed Customer Service Associate on a temporary basis for up to 13 months at our Feed Plant in Moosomin, Saskatchewan.

**WHO WE ARE:**

As a co-operative, we do business differently. We believe in working together to serve Western Canadians, delivering profits back to our communities and investing in sustainable growth. Our work is guided by our values of integrity, excellence and responsibility and driven by our vision of building sustainable communities together. To learn more about who we are, visit [www.fcl.crs](http://www.fcl.crs).

**WHAT YOU'LL DO:**

You will be responsible for managing, overseeing and leading the direction of the Feed Plant and customer relationships. This includes administering and monitoring regulatory compliance, safety programs, and quality control.

- Manage and maintain Feed Plant front end computer JDE and DAS files which are utilized to track and price all manufactured and resale product lines. Resolve Feed Plant issues including ingredient shortages, equipment failure, logistics, and customer complaints. Monitor daily and monthly production and sales activity to verify that financial goals are being achieved and that the operation is optimizing profitability.
- Direct and monitor the implementation and maintenance of the FeedAssure and quality control programs. Under the direction of the Senior Manager, Feed, this role is responsible for implementing and monitoring department and company safety programs. This includes the documentation and training of employees in the programs.
- Direct purchasing activities to ensure adequate ingredients are available for manufacturing feed products. The Feed Plants are responsible for procuring local ingredients such as grains, by-products, and minerals. Items that cannot be procured at the local level are purchased from Home Office Feed Procurement. Monitor inventory daily to ensure continuous supply of manufacturing ingredients and maintain realistic ingredient inventory levels.
- Evaluate and verify the department's feed plant safety program complies with OHS, Certificate of Recognition and FCL's Safety Management System programs. Co-ordinate corrective action with management employees based on deviations from written procedures. Generate and compile safe job procedures for all tasks and educate employees in the hazards surrounding the worksite. On-site visits are completed annually to look for ongoing hazards or potential hazards that require expenditure to resolve. The Feed Plant Manager is responsible in deciding on what is/ should be repaired; a procedure must be created to train employees in the procedure to mitigate the risk until the issue is resolved.
- Develop approximate annual sales, production expenses, and sales and administration expenses budgets. Work with Feed Plant Supervisor to plan and develop capital expenditure requirements of the facility to meet existing and future equipment requirements
- Analyze monthly expense reports for the plant and follow up. This analysis includes comparing budget against actual, looking for variances and determining the reasons for the variance such as accounting errors, repairs, maintenance, fuel, and power expense increases. The Feed Plant Manager is responsible for the attainment of the budgets.

**WHY IT MATTERS:**

Our Agro team helps to feed and grow Western Canadian communities by sourcing and distributing products and services to local Co-ops in the feed, crop supplies and fertilizer business.

**WHO YOU ARE:**

You are looking for a career in Production, Trades and Maintenance and:

- You have a 2 Year Diploma with preference for Bachelor's degree (Agriculture or Marketing)
- You have a minimum of 10+ years of relevant progressively responsible experience. Preference for sales or manufacturing experience, including management experience. Knowledge base in livestock and grain would be an asset (a combination of relevant education and experience may be considered)
- You're familiar with Occupational health and safety course and/or Enterprise Risk Management experience would be an asset.
- You're honest and trustworthy, are results oriented and strive to be the best in what you do.
- You believe in collaboration, building relationships and value the perspectives of others.

Our Team Members receive competitive salaries, short-term incentives, a comprehensive benefits package and an employer-contributed pension plan. We encourage our Team Members to take advantage of learning opportunities, to grow and develop, and to foster a culture of teamwork and innovation.

FCL embraces diversity and inclusion and we're working to create a workplace that is as diverse as the communities we serve. We support and provide an environment that allows every person to bring their whole self to work.

We take the health and well-being of our team members and customers very seriously. We continue to take steps across all areas of our business and locations to keep our team member

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## CAREER OPPORTUNITY



Federated Co-operatives Limited is hiring a  
**TEMPORARY FEED CUSTOMER SERVICE ASSOCIATE**  
 at our FEED PLANT IN MOOSOMIN, SK

During these challenging times, Federated Co-operatives Limited is working to serve our local co-ops, customers, and communities. We are committed to supporting our local co-ops and the communities they serve. Working together to provide essential services to communities across Western Canada, we are hiring a Feed Customer Service Associate on a temporary basis for up to 13 months at our Feed Plant in Moosomin, Saskatchewan.

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As a co-operative, we do business differently. We believe in working together to serve Western Canadians, delivering profits back to our communities and investing in sustainable growth. Our work is guided by our values of integrity, excellence and responsibility and driven by our vision of building sustainable communities together. To learn more about who we are, visit [www.fcl.crs](http://www.fcl.crs).

**WHAT YOU'LL DO:**

The Feed Customer Service Associate is responsible for assisting customers and providing product information, as well as resolving product and service issues. The Feed Customer Service Associate is also responsible for processing orders, invoicing, and inventory.

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- Communicate, audit and issue debit and credit memos to customers.
- Assist in the safety program by being involved with inspections, note taking at meetings, train the trainer and writing job procedures.
- Order of office supplies and place service calls for office equipment maintenance.
- Other duties as assigned.

**WHY IT MATTERS:**

Our Agro team helps to feed and grow Western Canadian communities by sourcing and distributing products and services to local Co-ops in the feed, crop supplies and fertilizer business.

**WHO YOU ARE:**

- You have a high school education or equivalent
- You have a minimum of Minimum one year of related customer service experience, or one year directly related feed/agriculture industry experience.
- Must be professional, punctual, and reliable. Strong customer service skills are essential and should be very fluent in MS Office, particularly Excel
- You're honest and trustworthy, are results oriented and strive to be the best in what you do.
- You believe in collaboration, building relationships and value the perspectives of others.

Our Team Members receive competitive salaries, short-term incentives, a comprehensive benefits package and an employer-contributed pension plan. We encourage our Team Members to take advantage of learning opportunities, to grow and develop, and to foster a culture of teamwork and innovation.

FCL embraces diversity and inclusion and we're working to create a workplace that is as diverse as the communities we serve. We support and provide an environment that allows every person to bring their whole self to work.

We take the health and well-being of our team members and customers very seriously. We continue to take steps across all areas of our business and locations to keep our team members and customers safe and healthy.

If this opportunity speaks to you, we invite you to apply by March 11, 2022.

We thank all candidates for their interest, however only those selected to continue in the recruitment process will be contacted. If you require support to apply for this opportunity please contact us at [fcldr@fcl.crs](mailto:fcldr@fcl.crs).

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## Understanding trade issues: Implications for the farm

Trade statistics, international trade agreements and non-tariff trade barriers are not always top-of-mind for farm families. Since most producers sell to intermediaries and don't export their products directly to other nations, trade issues can seem one step removed from the farm gate.

However, for many commodities, product demand and prices are directly affected by trade factors. Understanding and following trade dynamics can help with decisions on the farm. Market analysts provide information on supply, demand and prices and trade figures prominently into their projections. A lot of market analysis is available at little or no charge to producers, but there are also specialized services to which producers can subscribe.

### Consider processing

Canola is Canada's highest value crop, and about half of the canola is crushed into vegetable oil and meal rather than being exported as whole seed. The oil is exported to many locations, including the U.S., China and Chile, who use it primarily for food applications. Most of the canola meal is exported to the U.S. for feeding dairy cattle.

Sometimes crush margins are high - meaning crushing plants are profitable, and they can afford to outbid buyers that export raw seed. And other times, the reverse may be true. It all depends on international demand.

In the Prairie region, several field pea processing plants have been established to isolate protein for the growing plant protein market. The demand and trade of pea protein is becoming a factor in the marketplace.

Proximity to processing plants can influence the returns farmers receive and, therefore, the crops they produce.

*Continued on page C18*



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# Understanding trade issues: Implications for the farm

Continued from page C17

For hogs and cattle, a large live animal trade occurs between Canada and the U.S. For offshore markets, the main exports are pork and beef. With a highly-integrated North American red meat industry, what happens in U.S. processing plants can directly affect the prices received by Canadian producers. Any event that disrupts a major processing plant is bad news for livestock demand and prices.

In the beef industry, cattle hides are sometimes in demand for various leather uses, which adds to each animal's overall value. At other times, the international leather market is oversupplied relative to demand, and hides might have such a low value that they are discarded.

Understanding supply and demand and the factors influencing trade can help with on-farm production and marketing decisions. Each commodity has its nuances. Identity preserved non-GMO soybeans face very different market factors than soybeans grown for the oil and meal market.

While individual producers have little influence on the various trade factors, those factors are increasingly affecting day-to-day operations.

### Keep it Clean

Most cereal, canola and pulse crop producers will be aware of the Keep it Clean initiative. This is a coordinated industry response aimed at keeping international markets open.

The proper timing of pre-harvest glyphosate has a big emphasis on the site. Glyphosate is not to be used as a desiccant and needs to be applied when grain moisture content is less than 30% in the least mature part of the field. These measures are to avoid glyphosate in the harvested crop exceeding the maximum residue limit (MRL) of importing nations.

Malting barley should never have a pre-harvest glyphosate application, and an increasing number of milling oat buyers have the same requirement.

In the pulse crop information on the site, the clear link to trade is explained. "Canada exports close to \$4 billion of pulse crops to over 130 countries annually, and shipments containing even the smallest amounts of unaccept-

able pesticide residue can be rejected, causing millions of dollars in losses and putting key markets at risk."

Proper crop staging, pre-harvest intervals and the use of only labelled products are emphasized. The issue is complicated by different countries having different MRLs. What's acceptable in one nation may not be permitted in another.

Growing only registered crop varieties, managing disease and proper crop storage are also key aspects of Keep it Clean.

### Declaration of Eligibility

Effective August of 2020, as part of Canada's commitment under CUSMA, the Canada-United States-Mexico Trade Agreement, Declaration of Eligibility affidavits have become critical. The producers declare that the grain delivered to a buyer is the variety and class designated through signed affidavits. A separate affidavit is required for each grain buyer that a producer sells to each year.

The U.S. had expressed concern about discriminatory treatment of American-grown wheat, particularly related to statutory grading. CUSMA allows grain grown in the U.S. to receive an official Canadian grade if it's a variety registered in Canada. As part of trade reciprocity, all grain sellers have the same declaration requirement.

Affidavits were already quite commonly used in Western Canada, particularly for the different classes of wheat. In Eastern Canada, the Canadian Grain Commission works with grain sector stakeholders to phase in the declarations during the 2020-21 crop year.

### Sustainability parameters

Buyers and end-users, whether domestic or international, increasingly want to know how their food is produced. Sometimes a premium price might be paid for a particular production practice, such as with grass-fed beef. In other cases, sustainability requirements must be met to do business, and no incentives are offered.

Different companies around the world have different beliefs on what's important. Some want to know grain production land wasn't grassland or forest in the recent past. Others want to ensure workers are being treated well. Some buyers want to know what's happening on

each farm from which they're purchasing. Other cases, such as Canadian canola oil going to Europe for biodiesel, required an overall Canadian industry assessment.

Various industry initiatives have been launched to demonstrate and certify responsible stewardship and sustainability. For instance, Verified Beef Production Plus (VBP+) validates responsible on-farm practices. Enrolling in the program is voluntary, but producers that go through the training and auditing may eventually have an advantage in accessing specific markets.

The same is true for Environmental Farm Plans. Buyers with sustainability requirements sometimes start with the requirement that a farm must have a current Environmental Farm Plan.

### Consumer is always right

Rule 1: the consumer is always right. Rule 2: if the consumer is wrong, refer to rule 1.

The ever-increasing requirements for selling agricultural products domestically and internationally place an extra burden on farmers. However, they can also be viewed as an opportunity.

For Canada to maintain its reputation as a reliable supplier of clean, safe food products, the entire food supply chain will need to continue innovating and evolving. Paying attention to trade patterns, trade restrictions and what international buyers require is necessary to maintain and expand markets.



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