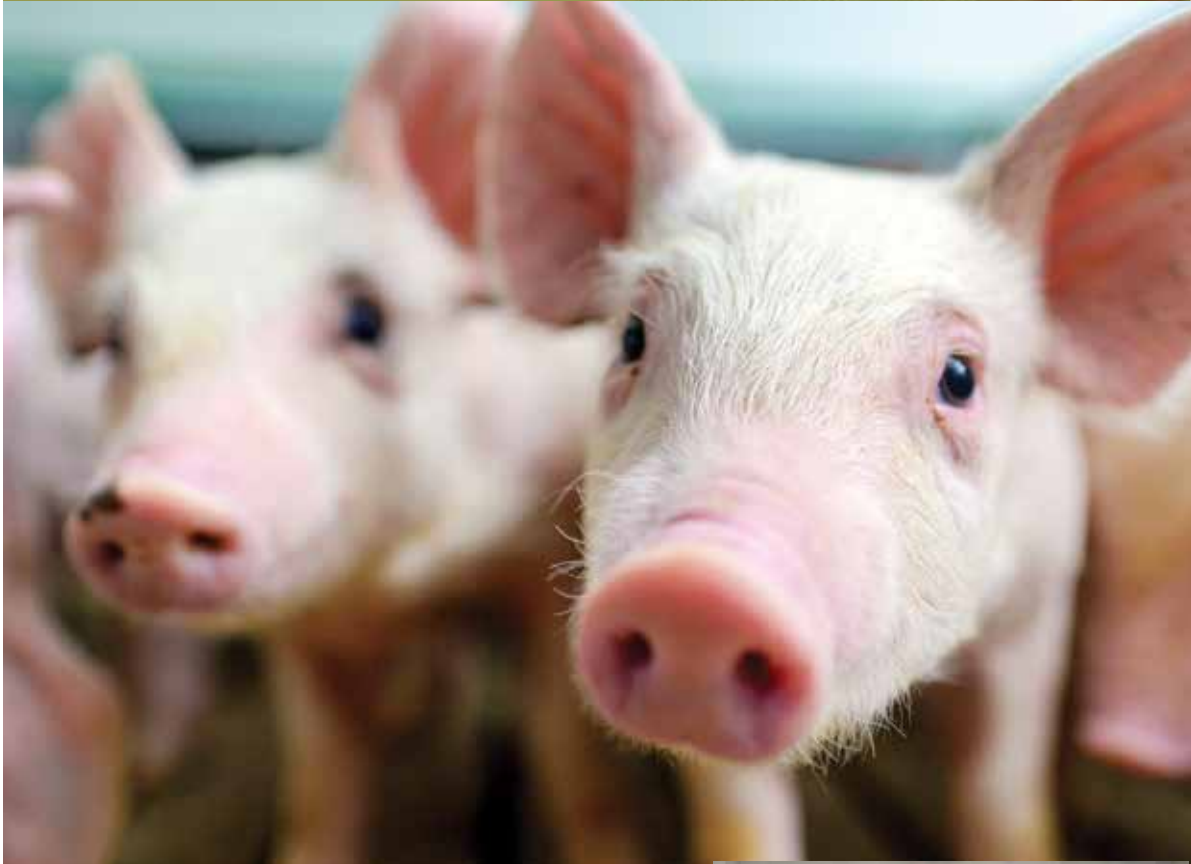




FARMING



*Roots
that run deep*



TUESDAY, MARCH 12, 2024

*A Special Supplement to Your West Central
Voice and The Kerrobert & District Chronicle*



Producers eye Mother Nature warily as spring approaches

Drought-struck regions bracing for another tough year

BY SHERI MONK

Producers are nervously watching forecasts, pig spleens and fortune tellers for reassurance that enough moisture is coming to protect crops and livestock this year.

The Canadian Drought Outlook releases monthly drought forecasting and current conditions across the country, with the most recent data being from January 31. Since then, there has been some precipitation in the form of snow, but many are worried it will not be enough.

“It’s only March, but it’s also already March. Nobody has ever lost a crop in March, but it’s also March coming off of an abnormally dry fall. The vast majority of the province is sitting in a drought situation and it doesn’t look like we are going to have a lot more moisture coming in the spring for planting,” says Jeremy Welter, a producer in the RM of Mariposa and board member with the Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan. “There is definitely, at minimum, a level of concern or apprehension around this coming year.”

Kindersley falls in the D3 category of extreme drought. Oyen is in the worst category, D4, or exceptional drought. Further south, Medicine Hat and Maple Creek are both classified D2, as being in a severe drought. But what will happen later this year? The forecasting by the Canadian Drought Outlook looks forward one month at a time, so current forecasting is for what drought conditions were expected to be by the end of February. Oyen was expected to improve slightly, Medicine Hat was anticipated to come out of drought conditions entirely, and Kindersley and Maple Creek were not forecast to change at all.

In 2023, more than 50 rural municipalities would go on to declare disaster in Saskatchewan in 2023 thanks to poor yields and terrible conditions, but Welter believes many municipalities simply didn’t bother declaring at all.

“We declared in 2021 and we got a very nice letter to the municipality from our ag minister saying that he understood it was challenging when it was dry. There is no real benefit to the individual producer if a municipality does declare an agricultural disaster,” said Welter. “A lot of municipalities did declare with the hope/expectation that something would be done either from

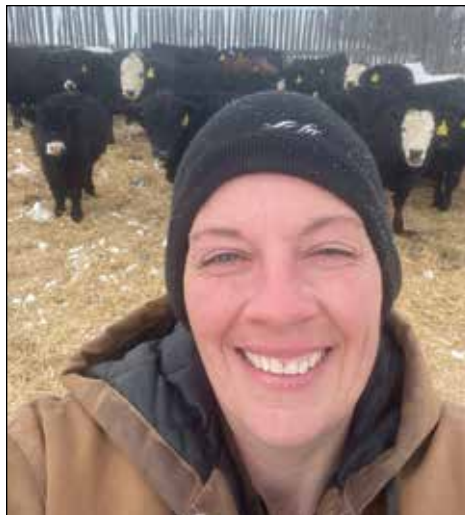


A failed crop near Leader, Saskatchewan photographed last year. PHOTO BY SHERI MONK

the province or the feds.”

As many may recall, 2023 wasn’t just a dry year – it was a weird weather year entirely. Blowing snow in the Kindersley area in January recorded more than 120 hours with less than one kilometre of visibility. A massive snow storm in April was followed by rising temperatures that hit 30°C by early May – and that’s when everything started to burn. Seeding was delayed with most producers running behind thanks to the late season snow and cold. But followed rapidly by intense and early heat, many crops in the southwest and southcentral regions were crippled from the outset as what little moisture remained was quickly lost.

Indeed, the living skies became smoldering skies with people across the province dealing with increased asthma and breathing problems as the fires continued. When it was all done, 1.9 million hectares of land had burned, beating the 1.8 million hectare record from 2015. While the fires were tragic and devastating, they may potentially have benefitted the crops growing in



Joleen Shea

Nothing is sitting in excellent shape right now. There’s just been too many dry years in a row.

Joleen Shea, Saskatchewan Cattlemen’s Association

certainly think it made a difference last year shading the crops to some extent from what could have potentially been a lot hotter,” said Welter.

How much would be enough?

“It’s easy to look at the snowfall optimistically. From a realistic point of view, this snowfall – if every ounce of moisture could be absorbed – might be an inch of water. It sounds like a lot but it isn’t. It’s like spitting on someone that’s dying of thirst. We need a lot more. We probably need six inches over April

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

KEEP PLANTING SEEDS. YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT MAY TAKE ROOT
 {Ecclesiastes 11:6}

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

to replenish what we lost last year, let alone the moisture that's been mined out of the soil the last three years," Welter said, adding that no one wants those six inches all at once.

Last spring, many producers were also insulated by better subsoil moisture coming into the growing season.

"We lucked out with some very timely rains, but we also were very lucky with the subsoil moisture we had and which I question whether we will see this year. It is only the beginning of March – anything could happen in the next four to six weeks," Welter said.

Talk on coffee row would indicate increasing numbers of producers are taking advantage of crop insurance programs, though maintain they're still underutilized.

"My understanding is that 65 -70 per cent of the province is covered by crop insurance. Over the last two or three years, I think there are more people looking at forage rainfall insurance. I've talked to a number of different producers from around the province and if it wasn't for crop insurance, we would not be here. There are always improvements that could be made to the program, but crop insurance has made sure we can maintain farming. There's definitely value in the program."

Farmers are also worrying about lacklustre markets, while still paying higher prices for inputs.

"They keep talking about how much supply there is – I don't know where it is and I can't see how that's accurate. Indications are that the world is currently sitting on... I don't want to say an over-supply, but a good cushion of all the crops right now," Welter said.

The tea on beef

"We just received some snow the other day so at least we've got potential now to get some run-off and fill some dugouts," says Joleen Shea, district seven's director for the Saskatchewan Cattlemen's Association. "But when it comes to actual grass and producing the feed we need, we're going to need some spring rains. There's no subsoil moisture and the snow might get the grass started, but we need rain to keep things going throughout the year."

Shea ranches east of Kindersley, in the very heart of the worst of the drought scenario. This winter, Mother Nature was on one hand kind, but on the other cruel. The mild temperatures helped conserve feed, but the lack of precipitation isn't setting producers up for summer success.

"We've had a fairly nice winter really, so that's definitely helped with fee-

It's only March,
but it's also
already March.

**Jeremy Welter,
Agricultural Producers Association
of Saskatchewan**

ding. Until the last two weeks or so, we hardly had any snow so that helped not having to put out as much straw to keep the cows warm," Shea said. "We probably actually had an ideal winter given what most people's feed situation was going in because I think everybody was running a little bit tight."

Last spring, the late snow delayed getting cows out to pasture, but this year producers may hold them as long as they can at home to allow the grass to recover a little more from last year.

"There was very little grass left. The last few years for us anyway it has been probably May 20th that we've been going out and it'll be at least that this year, if not maybe even the beginning of June. It will all depend on what the weather conditions are in April and May. We'll feed them as long as we can in the yard to give those pastures as good of a start as we can allow. Nothing is sitting in excellent shape right now. There's just been too many dry years in a row."

The cattle inventory is showing the stress cracks of the industry with significant drops in numbers across the country.

"We have already seen that in the U.S. – I think they have the lowest numbers since the 1960s. We have seen them suffer through the same drought we're suffering from. I think in Canada they're saying (we have) the smallest cow herd since 1989. We're still in the contraction phase it seems like, and it's not going to change until the drought breaks," Shea said.

While the weather isn't always predictable, the cattle markets over time certainly are. Low inventory generally means high prices for the cow-calf sector, which is perhaps the only silver lining of the drought.

"We've never sold animals for more," Shea said. "We have record prices right now, but there are also record expenses. It should be spurring on expansion, but we just haven't seen that. You can't expand your herd until you can feed them."

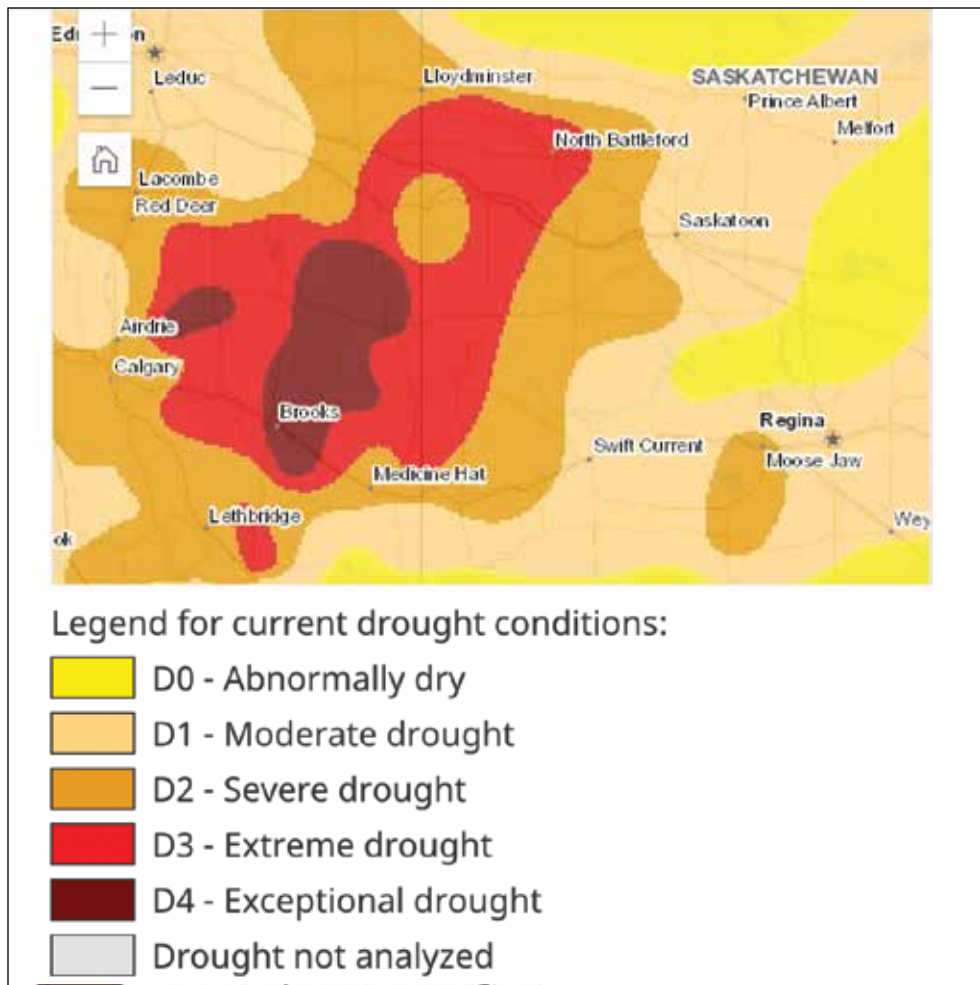
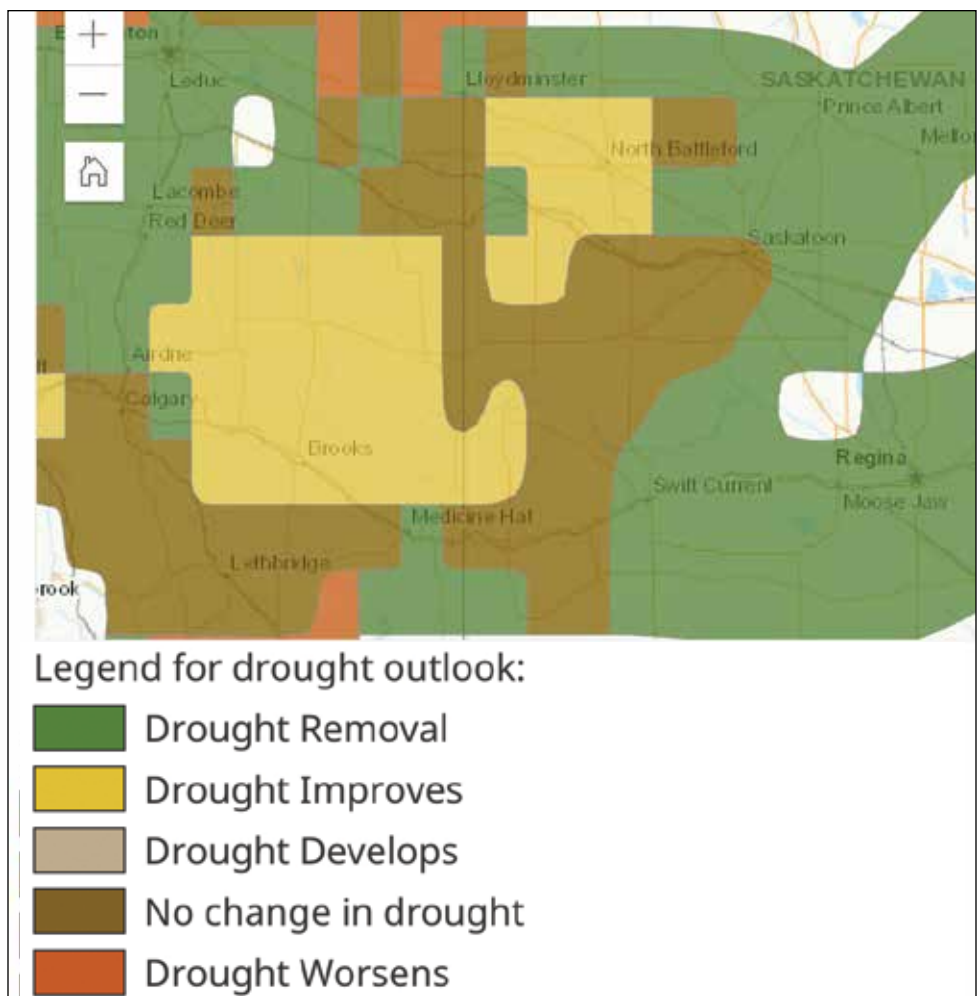


Chart depicting drought conditions as of January 31, 2024 by the Canadian Drought Outlook



Drought forecasting issued by the Candian Drought Outlook current to the end of February. OUTLOOK

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Working in agriculture means long days during busy seasons like calving, seeding and harvest.

Agricultural Safety Week March 10 - 16, 2024

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PPE for farmers: Six essential items you need on hand

Personal protective equipment (PPE) keeps farmers safe and protects their well-being in the often challenging and hazardous conditions of agricultural work. Here are six essential items that every farming operation should have on hand:

- 1. Eye protection.** Safety glasses or goggles shield the eyes from dust, debris and harmful chemicals. Eye injuries are common in farming activities, and proper eye protection can prevent accidents and long-term damage.
- 2. Respirators or masks.** Farmers frequently encounter airborne particles, pesticides and other pollutants that can harm their respiratory health. Respirators or masks with appropriate filtration prevent the inhalation of harmful particles.
- 3. Gloves.** High-quality gloves protect the hands from cuts, abrasions and exposure to chemicals. Different tasks may require different types of gloves, so having a variety on hand ensures you're adequately protected for any job.
- 4. Ear protection.** The noise from tractors, power tools and other farm implements can permanently damage your hearing. Wearing hearing protection dampens noise to prevent hearing loss.
- 5. Footwear.** Sturdy, slip-resistant boots with steel toes and soles protect you from sharp objects, chemicals and uneven terrain. Proper footwear prevents injuries and maintains comfort on long workdays.
- 6. Headgear.** ATV crashes are re-

sponsible for farm fatalities and injuries every year. Always wear a helmet while driving ATVs and other off-road vehicles around the farm.

Canadian Agricultural Safety Week takes place between March 10 and 16. This event is the perfect reminder to check your gear and ensure it's ready to go and in good condition.



the barnders by gord.coulthart

"This farm's our heritage, folks - no more chicken crossing the road stunts; we're in the business of safe farming, not turkey tomfoolery."

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March 10 to 16, 2024

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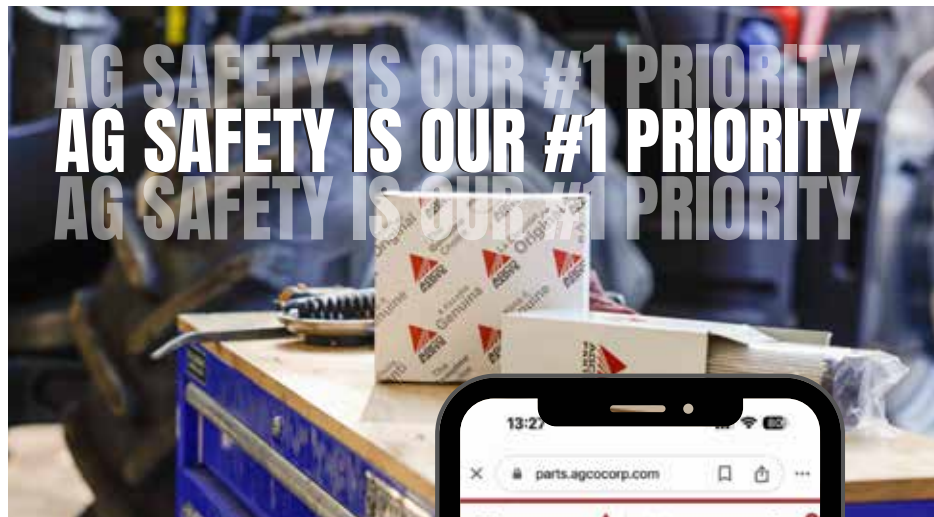
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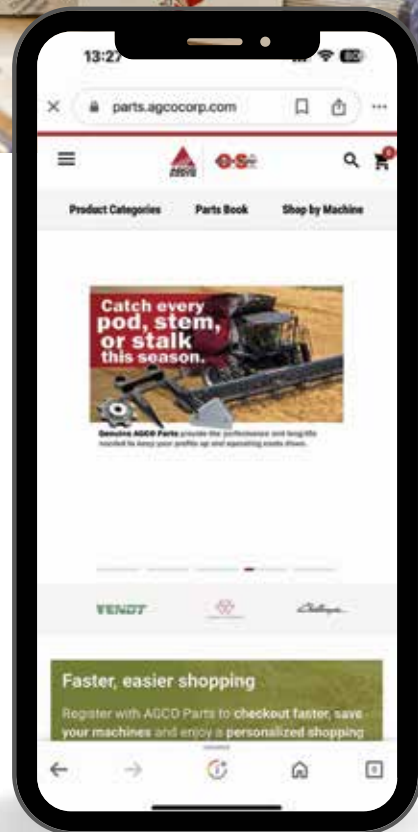
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BY SHERI MONK

Small towns, big dreams

It's hard to believe it's coming on 20 years since I first fell in love with the West, but in two more years that's exactly what it will be. I came out for the very first time in 2006 in a bid to find and photograph some prairie rattlesnakes. The rest, as they say, is history.

I moved from Winnipeg in 2007, settling first in Maple Creek, then Leader, Pincher Creek and finally, Medicine Hat. In many ways, it was the "Empire Strikes Back" chapter of my life and only now am I really feeling the "Return of the Jedi" vibes. (To non-Star Wars fans I apologize, but essentially things were darker, but now they're much brighter.)

After moving to Alberta, I always deeply and viscerally missed Saskatchewan. While "Friendly Manitoba" was inscribed on every license plate in my home province I found Saskatchewan to be more like a family than a friend. In the years since, I have returned to those memories many times as a source of comfort, strength and inspiration.

In Saskatchewan I could drive for a couple of hours looking for snakes and other critters and not see another human or vehicle. But once I did, that human and vehicle would stop and ask if I needed help. I'd always say something like, "I'm ok. I'm just looking at this snake or toad," and without fail, the person who stopped would get out of their truck and soon we would both be looking at a snake or toad. It was amazing. Then they'd tell me about some other spot I should check out, and I'd usually come away with a name and phone number for land access and a friend for life. I absolutely loved it, every time. (Although there was that one time a very scary landowner was encountered, while on a public grid road near Val Marie, but that's a story for a beer parlour, not a newspaper.)

I've never been able to properly explain how Saskatchewan feels to people who have never been there because truly, it's a feeling more than anything else. But there is one story I can tell that helps paint a very vivid picture of why I moved. During my first trip to find rattlesnakes I was exuberantly exploring the Leader area and of course, Checkerboard Hill is famous as far as these things go. Inadvertently and out of city stupidity I made the error of entering someone's yard. The landowner asked why I was there and I explained, apologizing profusely for my rookie mistake. Once he realized I was looking for rattlesnakes in his gravelly voice he commanded, "Wait right here."

I waited. And then I saw him walk to a truck and grab a bucket out of the back of it. I knew with certainty there was going to be a snake at the bottom of the bucket. What I didn't know was whether it was going to be alive or dead.

Then I heard the rattle and in that moment, and in that sound, I fell in love with Saskatchewan, with its people and with its landscapes. This rancher had caught it in his yard and was releasing it safely nearby. That was a beautiful first lesson in land stewardship and the value of native prairie for me. I've never forgotten it, and it would turn out to be an incredibly formative moment that would go on to change the course of my life.

It wasn't long after that I gave up my media job in the city, sold my house in Winnipeg and moved to southwest Saskatchewan. I went on to specialize in beef and agriculture journalism, and then natural history and biology. This paved the road for me to begin my official work with rattlesnakes through my company Snakes on a Plain. This year I am pleased to announce I am introducing a stewardship award for landowners or land managers who promote coexistence with rattlesnakes through understanding, habitat conservation and tolerance. Nominations will open over the summer and the winner will be announced in the fall. It may not be a large cash award, but a rattlesnake trophy is some pretty cool hardware to hang on the wall or display on the mantle.

We need to do more to incentivize keeping what remains of the deeded native prairie in grass. Currently, there is no widespread, universally available mechanism to pre-emptively safeguard these incredibly important lands with tax breaks or even direct compensation. And while the cow-calf sector is lucrative right now we know that's not going to last. And when that bubble bursts we are destined to lose more ground. That's how it always goes because folks still have to make a living



Sheri Monk

and if they can't make it from grass, they'll make it from crops.

Apparently, the Canadian Cattlemen's Association is working on programming in this arena, but they never answered my inquiry for more information. Before the Alberta Livestock and Meat Agency was dissolved in

Alberta, they were looking at and measuring the value of ecological goods and services so they could build the justification for future funding. At the time I did quite a bit of contract work for them and I was gutted when they were shut down before they could act on that vision.

Easements are not enough. Whatever programming exists now is not enough. There is an inherent public interest in retaining native prairie in the same way conserving our forests is a public issue. The tragic part here is that most Canadians have no idea what native prairie is, much less why it needs to be conserved. I don't think we can ever count on public pressure to help with this cause. "Save the Grass!" just doesn't have the same ring to it. And

what would the protestors tie themselves naked to? The barbed wire fences?

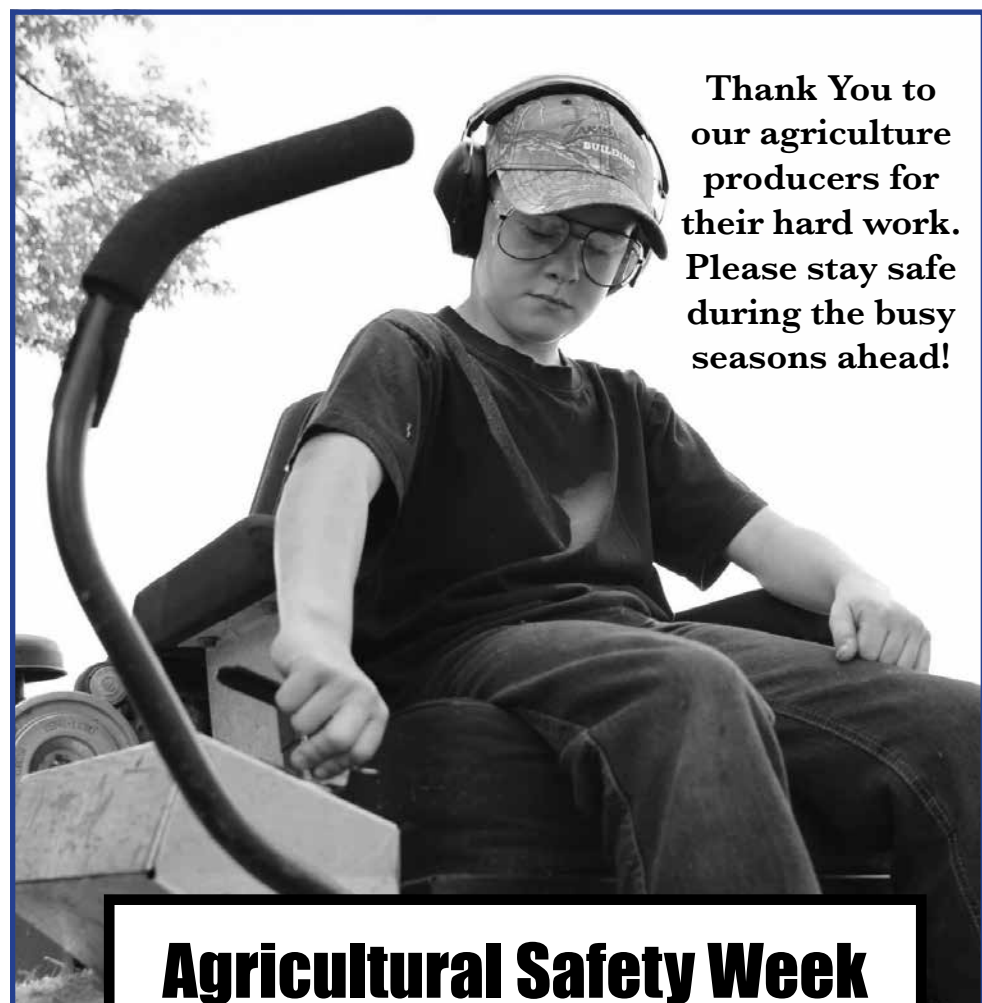
We need to pressure our legislators, (federal and provincial) as well as our producer groups to take action. And this isn't just a cattle industry issue - this affects all of us. Native prairie helps stabilize the Earth's surface reducing the risk of disastrous flooding. The carbon sequestration the prairie provides is incredible. And without a doubt, native prairie provides habitat for the pollinators and invertebrate checks and balances that benefit crop producers. The diversity comparison between cultivated and native land tells a compelling story and provides a stark warning.

Organizations like the Saskatchewan Prairie Conservation Action Plan (pcap-sk.org) and the Alberta Prairie Conservation Forum (albertapcf.org) both do incredible work - but they can't do it alone and they can't do it all.

For my part, and because it makes my own little dream come true, I am working to purchase a very, very small piece of Saskatchewan prairie which I will enhance for insects and bats, to begin with. Our parts may vary in importance, size and scope, but make no mistake - we all have a role to play.

To all of you involved in agriculture, thank you for what you do through all the ups and the downs. Thank you for not giving up or selling out. Thank you for keeping all our small towns, arenas and schools alive because although small, they're filled with big dreams. Thank you.

sherimonk@gmail.com



Thank You to our agriculture producers for their hard work. Please stay safe during the busy seasons ahead!

Agricultural Safety Week
March 10th - 16th, 2024

Farm workers and family members helping out on the farm experience one of the highest rates of hearing loss among all occupations. Be sure to protect your ears while operating equipment.

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FARM SAFETY

Responsibilities of owner/operators and farm workers

Agriculture is one of Saskatchewan's largest and most hazardous industries. Incidents occur more often between seeding and harvest, and can cause needless suffering and consequently reduce farm revenues.

Fatal injuries occur on the farm every year, most involve machinery and equipment. Most incidents occur in the farm yard.

Everyone can do their part to help make Saskatchewan farms safer. Some tips to remember while farming include:

- Be sure to replace all guards and shields following maintenance and repairs. A few extra minutes might save your life or a limb.
- Watch for overhead lines when moving equipment, augers, bins, and when loading grain trucks and semis.
- Ensure employees and others helping on the farm are properly trained.
- Change jobs periodically or take a short walk to help you stay focused.
- If youth are recruited to help with farming, make sure the activities are age appropriate and the youth are properly trained and supervised.

Responsibilities on the Farm for Employers and Employees

If you are a farmer, you are not exempt from Saskatchewan's health and safety laws. The Saskatchewan Employment Act (Act) covers the health and safety of both farmers and farm workers, especially where an employer-employee relationship exists.

Farmers/Farm Operators

As a farmer or farm operator who employs farm workers, you must:

- Provide a safe working environment for the worker.

Town of Eston Council and Staff would like to wish all the farming community a safe and productive growing season. For more information please visit eston.ca/planning-reporting/




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- Provide orientation to:
 - Location of first aid supplies
 - Fire and emergency procedures
 - Prohibited or restricted areas
 - Chemical and physical hazards
- Ensure that each worker understands and complies with the provisions of the Act and regulations that apply to the work being done.
- Ensure that workers know their rights under the legislation:
 - The right to know
 - The right to participate
 - The right to refuse
- Provide hazard information - ensure that the worker understands the potential hazards, and the precautions that must be taken to avoid injury or illness associated with their daily work tasks.
- Ensure that training for workers includes:
 - Knowledge about workplace hazards and any other information needed to keep them safe
 - An explanation of safe work procedures and a practical demonstration by the worker to show that they have acquired the necessary knowledge and skills
- Supervise the worker. This means monitoring the worker's activities to ensure s/he is working safely and being available to assist and answer any questions. Usually more supervision is needed when a worker is undertaking new or hazardous tasks.
- Identify who the supervisor is (e.g., If multiple family members are involved in the farming operation, who does the worker answer to?).
- Inform the worker of their own responsibility to follow safe work practices, use the safety equipment provided and bring any unsafe condition(s) or equipment to the attention of the employer.
- Keep in place and maintain all safety shields, safety latches and safety devices.
- Discuss safe work practices (the how and why) for each work-related activity.
- Openly discuss work practices, remain open for

questions and acknowledge suggestions for improvement from a worker.

- Supply personal protective equipment (PPE), and instruct the worker about the requirement to wear PPE and how to correctly use and maintain it.
- Discuss safe handling of chemicals and controlled products.
- Report fatal incidents, serious injuries and dangerous occurrences to Occupational Health and Safety. Consider insurance coverage (Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) or private insurance).

Farm Workers

A farm worker:

- Must cooperate with the employer to ensure employer's health and safety responsibilities are fulfilled.
- Must conduct him/herself in a safe and responsible manner at work.
- Has the right to refuse any work they believe is unusually dangerous to him/herself or others.
- Must use the safeguards, safety appliances and personal protective equipment (PPE) or devices provided pursuant to the Act and The Occupational Health and Safety Regulations, 2020.
- Must bring health and safety concerns to the farmer's attention.
- Should ask for a tour of the farm prior to commencing work.
- Should clearly understand who their supervisor is (e.g., If multiple family members are involved in the farming operation, who does the worker answer to?).
- Should ask questions to ensure they understand safe work procedures before proceeding and ask what PPE is required.
- Should clearly understand the communication plan (e.g., work progress checks, employer assistance and availability).
- May ask if the employer has registered with the Workers' Compensation Board.

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Chinook Board of Education
AGRICULTURE CONTEST

- Choose a category
- Submit a short video
- Win great prizes!

The Chinook Board of Education is dedicated to honouring the invaluable role agriculture plays in shaping our lives.

Let's cultivate a deeper appreciation for agriculture and inspire a new generation to carry its legacy forward!

Submission deadline: April 29, 2024 Contest details: www.chinooksd.ca

CHINOOK SCHOOL DIVISION

Chinook Board of Education announces agriculture contest for students

The Board of Education is excited to announce the Chinook Agriculture Contest for students in the division. The Chinook Board is dedicated to honouring the invaluable role agriculture plays in shaping our lives and celebrating the rich heritage and boundless potential of agriculture.

Through this contest, the Board aims to raise awareness about the profound impact of agriculture and inspire Chinook students to be the driving force behind its future.

"With many of our students already deeply connected to agriculture, we are excited to see their creativity and passion shine. We hope to cultivate a deeper appreciation for agriculture and inspire a new generation to carry its legacy forward," stated Chinook Board Chair, Kim Pridmore, "We also are very grateful to all of the generous local businesses, who stepped up and offered their sponsorship of our prizes."

The Board is inviting entries from individual students and classrooms throughout the division, with the deadline of April 29, 2024.

Individual student entries include four age groups: grades K-2, 3-5, 6-9

and 10-12. Students can choose from the following three category themes and submit a video for a chance to win a Chromebook:

1. Show an example of technology and agriculture working together.
2. Highlight a career in agriculture or celebrate someone you admire in the ag industry.
3. Demonstrate how agriculture benefits our lives and/or the environment.

Classroom entries include two age groups: grades K-3 and 4-7, as well as a Hutterian colony school category. Classrooms will collaborate on a video submission for a chance to win an agricultural field trip or event and colony schools will submit a poster or mini booklet for a chance to win an agricultural project. Entries are based on the following theme:

Demonstrate how agriculture benefits our lives and/or the environment.

A selection committee made up of Chinook trustees, staff, sponsor representatives and community members will judge each category and award the prizes to the best entry. Winners will be announced at the Chinook Board of Education Meeting in May.

Over 70 per cent increase in agri-food exports to India

India, already one of the top global markets for Saskatchewan's agriculture producers, is also one of the fastest-growing with provincial agri-food exports increasing in volume by over 71 per cent in 2023, when compared to 2022.

Exports of Saskatchewan lentils and peas to India, the province's largest pulse market, experienced significant growth by the end of 2023. Saskatchewan's total agri-food export volume to India ranked second in year-over-year growth among its markets, behind only Nigeria. India ranked sixth among Saskatchewan's agri-food export markets in terms of value for 2023, at \$712 million.

"Our agriculture producers are among the best in the world at supplying safe, nutritious and sustainably grown products," Agriculture Minister David Marit said. "With India being Saskatchewan's fifth largest trading partner, we want to

help our companies and producers remain profitable and competitive by reinforcing our global links with key trade partners in support of Saskatchewan's long-term economic goals."

Saskatchewan has already surpassed its 2030 Growth Plan target of \$20 billion in agri-food exports with total shipments of \$20.2 billion for 2023.

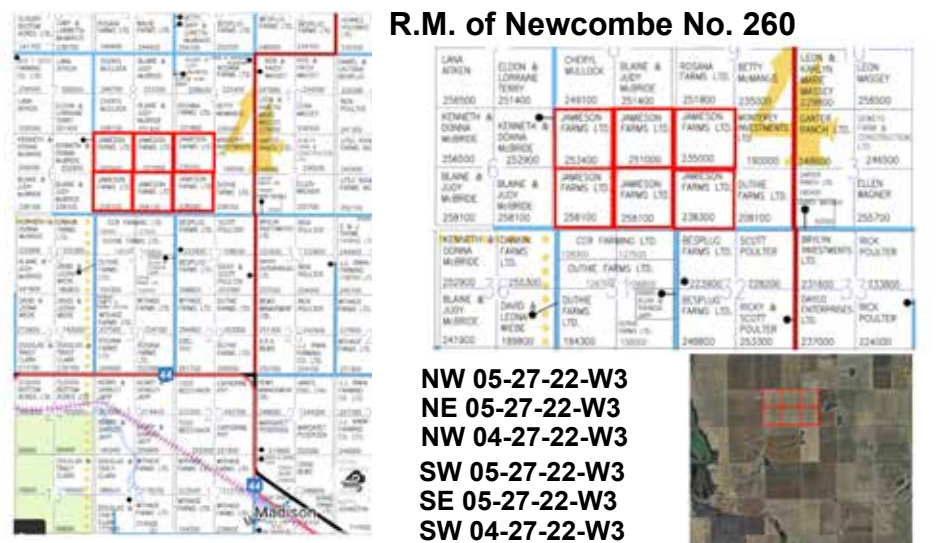
Saskatchewan's exports have grown by more than 52 per cent since 2013, contributing to Canada's total exports to India in 2023, reaching a value of \$5.1 billion. The province also continues to strengthen its economic links with India beyond commodity trade, exemplified by the recent renewal of a Memorandum of Understanding to enhance academic collaboration with the Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute, a bi-national educational organization with 194 member institutions including the Universities of Regina and Saskatchewan.

LAND FOR SALE BY ONGOING TENDER

Tender Date: April 4, 2024

2,650 cultivated acres (18 quarters, total acres of 2,862) 321 acres of pasture (2 quarters)

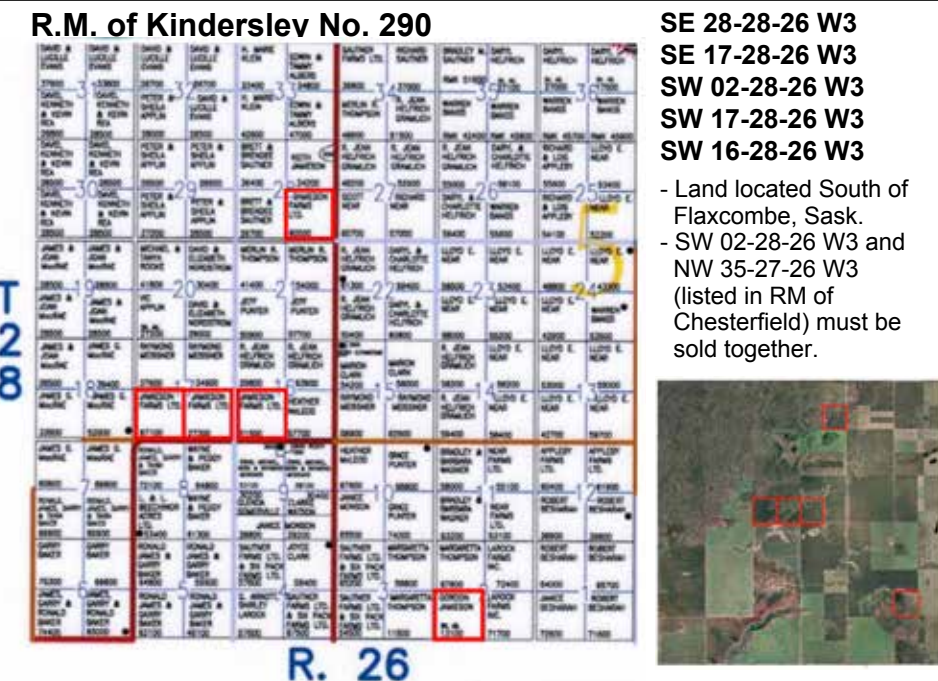
R.M. of Newcombe No. 260



NW 05-27-22-W3
NE 05-27-22-W3
NW 04-27-22-W3
SW 05-27-22-W3
SE 05-27-22-W3
SW 04-27-22-W3

- Land located 3.5 miles North of Madison, Saskatchewan
- SW 04-27-22 W3 includes four 5,000 bushel Westeel bins

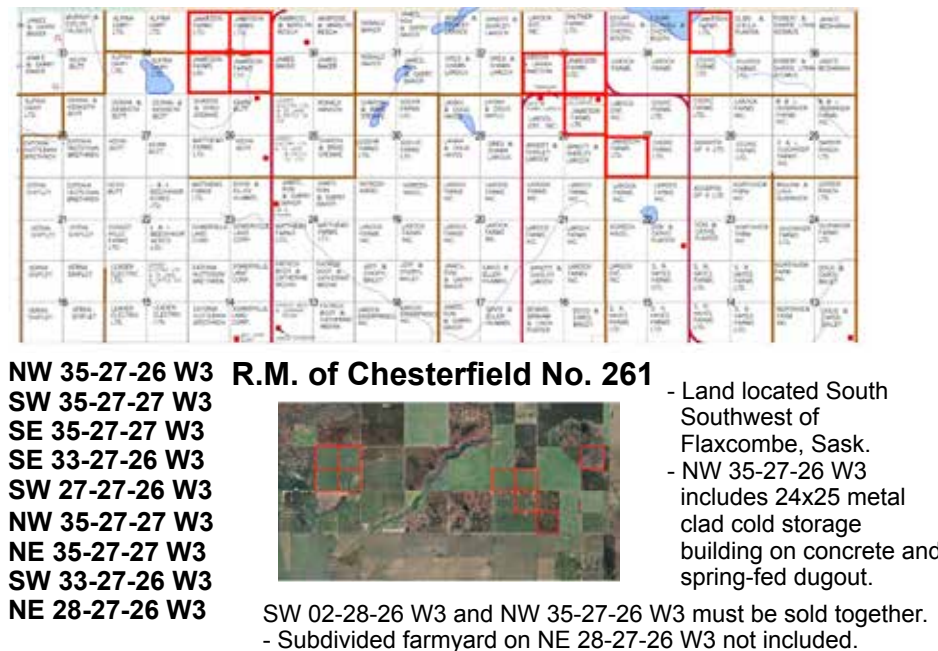
R.M. of Kinderslev No. 290



SE 28-28-26 W3
SE 17-28-26 W3
SW 02-28-26 W3
SW 17-28-26 W3
SW 16-28-26 W3

- Land located South of Flaxcombe, Sask.
- SW 02-28-26 W3 and NW 35-27-26 W3 (listed in RM of Chesterfield) must be sold together.

R.M. of Chesterfield No. 261



NW 35-27-26 W3
SW 35-27-27 W3
SE 35-27-27 W3
SE 33-27-26 W3
SW 27-27-26 W3
NW 35-27-27 W3
NE 35-27-27 W3
SW 33-27-26 W3
NE 28-27-26 W3

- Land located South Southwest of Flaxcombe, Sask.
- NW 35-27-26 W3 includes 24x25 metal clad cold storage building on concrete and spring-fed dugout.
- SW 02-28-26 W3 and NW 35-27-26 W3 must be sold together.
- Subdivided farmyard on NE 28-27-26 W3 not included.

Land Description	Cultivated Acres	Conditions:
NW 05-27-22-W3	160 acres	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Highest or any offer not necessarily accepted. 2. All property not necessarily sold by the same Vendor (personal/corporate). 3. Bidding will be conducted by ongoing tender. Once all qualifying bids are received, all bidders will be informed of the highest bid on each quarter they have bid on. Bidders will then be provided the opportunity to declare their bid final or to increase their bid at least 2% above the last highest bid. Once all bidders have declared their final bid the bidders shall be informed of the Vendor's decision. 4. All bids must be in writing and accompanied by certified payment in the amount of \$10,000 per quarter section bid on payable to Battle River Law in Trust. Payment will be returned without interest if offer is not accepted. 5. Possession Date: November 1, 2024 (unless agreed otherwise). 6. Balance of the purchase price for the successful offer, plus GST (if applicable), to be paid to Battle River Law in Trust on or before the Possession Date or the deposit will be forfeited. 7. All 2024 rents payable to Vendor. 8. All 2024 property taxes payable by Vendor. 9. Successful offer(s) to enter formal purchase agreement following tender. 10. Land to be sold as any number of package(s) or as individual quarters. The Vendor retains the right to select to sell one or more quarter sections to a package offeror. <u>Package bids must specify the price offered for each quarter bid on.</u> 11. Property sold "as is". 12. Land Assessments on R.M. Maps not necessarily up to date. Please contact for more details.
SW 05-27-22-W3	160 acres	
NE 05-27-22-W3	160 acres	
SE 05-27-22-W3	160 acres	
NW 04-27-22 W3	160 acres	
SW 04-27-22-W3	160 acres	
SE 28-28-26 W3	155 acres	
SW 16-28-26W3	120 cultivated, seeded to alfalfa (158.87 total acres)	
SE 17-27-26-W3	30 acres (158.64 total acres)	
SW 17-28-26-W3	145 acres	
SW 02-28-26-W3	Native grass (161.21 total acres)	
NW 35-27-26 W3	Reseeded to grass/alfalfa (160.5 total acres)	
NW 35-27-27-W3	160 acres	
SW 35-27-27-W3	160 acres	
NE 35-27-27-W3	150 acres	
SE 35-27-27-W3	140 acres	
SW 33-27-26-W3	160 acres	
SE 33-27-26-W3	160 acres	
NE 28-27-26-W3	150 acres	
SW 27-27-26-W3	160 acres	

For more information contact:
Thomas Frarnsoo, 306-445-617
thomas@battleriverlaw.ca
Offers must be received no later than 12:00 p.m. on April 4, 2024. All Tenders must be placed in a sealed envelope marked "Do Not Open: Jamieson Land" to: Battle River Law, No. 201, 1291 - 102nd St. (Box 95), North Battleford, SK, S9A 2Z3, Attention: Thomas Frarnsoo.

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— Aldo Leopold, A Sand County Almanac



CUTE KIDS! These baby goats are a reminder that sometimes the best things come in small packages.

PHOTO SUBMITTED BY LEANNE CAMPBELL



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Sky high technology to assess crop damage

As part of Budget 2024, Alberta's government is investing in drone technology for faster, easier assessment of wildlife damage to crops.

During the growing and harvest seasons, producers often experience crop loss or ruin due to wildlife damage. To help producers address this business risk, Alberta's government is providing Agriculture Financial Services Corporation (AFSC) with \$900,000 to hire drone services for aerial assessments of crops if Budget 2024 passes.

Deploying drones is a practical, cost-effective way to assess damage while increasing efficiency in processing claims for our producers.

"Alberta's hardworking farmers and ranchers depend on AFSC programs for peace of mind each growing season. The high-definition imagery these drone assessments will provide will enable government and AFSC to gain a clearer picture of damage to Alberta's crop fields and offer more responsive support for producers."

RJ Sigurdson,
Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation

AFSC helps producers protect themselves against wildlife damage by compensating them through the Wildlife Damage Compensation Program. The imagery from these new drones will enhance the ability of AFSC adjusters to provide producers with suitable, timely coverage.

"Alberta's government investment in our drone services is an exciting step towards improving our support for Alberta's agriculture industry. Adjusters will continue to play an important role in assessing claims, but drones will enable us to view real-time field conditions faster."

Daryl Kay,
chief executive officer, AFSC

These funds are part of the government and AFSC's continued commitment to work alongside producers



Agriculture Financial Services Corporation (AFSC) is hiring drone services for aerial assessments of crops.

and agri-businesses to support a strong, sustainable and diverse industry into the future.

Budget 2024 is a responsible plan to strengthen health care and education, build safe and supportive communities, manage the province's resources wisely and promote job creation to continue to build Alberta's competitive advantage.

Quick facts

- Agriculture Financial Services Corporation, or AFSC, offers client-focused financial and risk-management solutions to grow and sustain the agriculture industry in Alberta.
- AFSC administers a suite of business risk management (BRM) programs, funded through the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership (Sustainable CAP), that provide insurance and income stabilization for Alberta's farmers and ranchers, including AgriInsurance, AgriStability, AgriRecovery and AgriInvest.
- The Wildlife Damage Compensation Program is a federal-provincial program that is administered by AFSC.

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Agricultural Safety Week
March 10 - 16, 2024

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"Good farmers, who take seriously their duties as stewards of Creation and of their land's inheritors, contribute to the welfare of society in more ways than society usually acknowledges, or even knows. These farmers produce valuable goods, of course; but they also conserve soil, they conserve water, they conserve wildlife, they conserve open space, they conserve scenery."

— Wendell Berry,
Bringing it to the Table: On Farming and Food

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Crop Insurance program enhancements announced

Federal Agriculture and Agri-Food Minister (AAFC) Lawrence MacAulay and Saskatchewan Agriculture Minister David Marit announced details of the 2024 Crop Insurance Program, administered by the Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation (SCIC) last week.

"As a farmer myself, I know it can be hard to protect your business while continuing to produce the food Canadians and customers around the world rely on," Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Lawrence MacAulay said. "In the face of increasing challenges, it's vitally important that farmers in Saskatchewan have risk management tools available to them, like crop insurance, to help minimize the economic effects of production losses."

"It is important to ensure Business Risk Management Programs are comprehensive and provide relevant, reliable coverage for the diverse operations of our Saskatchewan producers," Marit said. "We recognize weather conditions brought significant challenges

in recent years and these programs are a producer's first line of defense. I encourage all producers to take a proactive approach to tailor their coverage to further manage and mitigate their risk."

This year's enhancements build on SCIC's existing suite of Business Risk Management programs that have demonstrated success in providing support to producers impacted by drought conditions. Over the last three years, this suite of programs has largely responded to weather-related production losses, providing over six billion dollars of insurance claims and other program benefits directly to Saskatchewan producers.

For 2024, multi-peril crop insurance average coverage is \$389 per acre, a decrease from 2023, largely due to an average decrease in insured commodity prices. As a result, the average premium is also decreasing to \$12.71. Producers' coverage and premium are individualized to their operation. Coverage reflects each producer's production



Federal Agriculture and Agri-Food Minister, Lawrence MacAulay announces details of the 2024 Crop Insurance Program last week. SCREENSHOT

records and premium reflects each producer's claim history.

SCIC's existing Weather-Based Programs include Forage Rainfall Insurance, the Corn Rainfall Insurance, and Corn Heat Unit Insurance. The rainfall insurance programs provide protection in the event seasonal precipitation is below the long-term average, adjusted for extreme heat. The Corn Heat Unit Insurance Program insures against a shortage of heat units over the growing season. A selection of program options allows producers to tailor coverage to their needs.

Introduced for the 2024 Crop Insurance Program, SCIC's weather-based programs now provide options to insure intercrops and additional feed crops. The Mixed Forage Rainfall Insurance Program protects any forage feed crop not previously covered under weather-based programs, including mixed forage, greenfeed and silage, if seasonal precipitation is below average. With the Intercrop Rainfall Insurance Program, annual intercrops intended for harvest can now be insured for below average seasonal precipitation.

Additionally, coverage is increasing for the 2024 Forage Rainfall Insurance Program. Coverage levels now better reflect the productive capacity of the insured acres and increased transportation allowance (which recognizes the costs associated with replacing lost feed). Producers can select from three levels of coverage, Low, Medium, and High, offering flexible risk management and related premium cost options.

For 2024, SCIC is pleased to announce an additional 38 weather stations to supplement its existing network. All weather-based programs are enhanced by this increased weather station density provincewide.

With 224 weather stations across the province, most land is located within 30 kilometres of at least one weather station. One weather station can be selected for each insured land location. This allows producers to insure each of their land locations with relevant coverage.

"During our Town Hall drought meetings last summer, producers emphasized changes to programs such as Forage Rainfall Insurance Program were needed to provide better coverage and flexibility, especially during times of prolonged drought," Saskatchewan Cattlemen's Association Chair Keith Day said. "It's clear to SCA that Minister Marit and SCIC took the feedback from those meetings into consideration when making changes such as increasing the number of weather stations, improving communications and increasing the transport allowance. Expanded coverage for cover cropping, green feed and silage is also a significant improvement. We will continue to work with SCIC to improve programs for the benefit of cattle producers."

"SARM appreciates the province's ongoing commitment to Saskatchewan agriculture and producers will appreciate the enhancements that were announced this morning," SARM president Ray Orb said. "We thank the Ministry of agriculture and SCIC for listening to concerns brought forward from SARM and other organizations that will promote increased communications and provide better insurance programming for farmers and ranchers alike."

"The improvements made to the forage and rainfall insurance options underscore the ongoing evolution of the program in meeting the requirements of producers," APAS Vice President Bill Prybylski said. "We eagerly anticipate collaborating with SCIC to further enhance this crucial program and urge farmers to thoroughly review their information to fully understand their coverage and explore available options."

"We want to thank the province's ongoing commitment to Saskatchewan agriculture," SSGA's Chay Anderson said. "We support SCIC for adding additional weather stations to address gaps in their network."

Additional options to their weather-based programs can further help producers reduce their risk on their operations."

"Saskatchewan Forage Council is pleased about the changes to forage insurance programming that will benefit producers," SFC Vice President Kevin Steinley said. "An increased number of weather stations and expanded options around coverage for cover crops, greenfeed and silage are enhancements that will make insurance decisions easier for our producer members."

March 31, 2024, is the deadline for Saskatchewan producers 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 offers a full suite of programs that can work together to ensure you have every angle covered. These include Crop Insurance, AgriStability, Wildlife Damage Compensation and Prevention Program and Livestock Price Insurance. We encourage producers to review their options and find the right coverage 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-producer cost-shared program that helps producers manage production and quality losses. Support for the program is provided by the governments of Canada and Saskatchewan under the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership (Sustainable CAP).

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Incubating chicks is all it's cracked up to be

BY JOAN JANZEN

Incubating chicks is becoming increasingly popular, especially among hobbyists. Kyla McCallum and her daughter Reese from Liebenthal have been using an incubator for a while now. Although it's proved to be a learning experience, they have managed to achieve success. At the time of writing this article, they were on day four incubating approximately 60 eggs.

"We usually get the eggs that are underneath the hens because if the eggs are cold, they're not as good. We know the routines of our hens and roosters and use fertilized eggs," young Reese explained. At the age of nine years, she has acquired a wealth of knowledge regarding incubation. Although the incubator's instructions recommended using 55 percent humidity at the beginning of the process, Kyla said they don't add water to the incubator until the last three days before the chicks hatch.

"It's a learning process. Saskatchewan is a little more humid, and if the humidity in the room is high, there's no point in making the humidity high in the incubator. It seems to work; we have up to a 90 percent success rate," Kyla said. She said humidity is the biggest factor in incubating.

On day ten, Reese and her mom candle the eggs to see if they're viable. Other than causing a bit of a drop in temperature, opening the incubator is not a problem. Before purchasing their present incubator, Kyla said they had tried making one but found there was too much fluctuation in the temperature loss and the humidity was too high.

They also placed two thermometers alongside the incubator's thermometer since they noticed the incubator's thermometer didn't have good readings. This helped to keep the temperature consistent.

They have an automatic egg turner that rolls the eggs back and forth. This prevents the heat loss that would result if it was done manually.

It takes 21 to 23 days for regular chickens to hatch and 19 days for Silkies, which is one of the breeds the Mc-



This is a newly hatched Silkie.

Callums have on their acreage. "Silkies are good for pets for people who live in the cities; they look fancy," Reese said.

Silkies are showcase birds that have what Kyla calls "pom pom poofs," and their pink eggs are tiny but "delicious," said Reese. "We've noticed the egg colour matches the colour of the chicken's legs," Kyla added.

When the chicks are getting ready to hatch, they can be heard chirping. Once the chickens have hatched, they leave them in the incubator for a day before being taken out. After that, they place them in a large container with a heat mat. The heat mat is an alternative to heat lamps and is safer and more effective. The heat can be adjusted on a heat mat, and the chickens can go under it. "Since we have used the heat mat, we have had zero losses because they all get heat," Kyla said. "You wean them out of the heat mat by reducing the heat."

Reese sold some of her chickens over the winter, but they also use them for meat. They have more specialty chickens because there are more towns and cities allowing people to have chickens on their property. They said people in the Medicine Hat area are often looking to purchase Silkies; many of those people have not had them before.

Silkies have thin feathers and need to be kept in heated coops. The McCallums found that insulating their coop made a huge difference. "Our chickens are spoiled, but they're very happy birds and they are consistently laying eggs," Kyla said. Most of the time they sell the eggs for incubating.



This is Trapper. He's a Silkie and the McCallum's main Silkie rooster. He was incubated from eggs they bought last year from a farm near Disbury.



Two Silkie chickens on the McCallum's acreage.



Reese McCallum holds a few of the eggs she and her mom are incubating.

PHOTOS SUBMITTED

"Last year, we bought a dozen eggs from a farm near Didsbury. The eggs were two weeks old and stayed with us in several hotel rooms as we made our way to Westlock to pick up our new incubator and chickens," Kyla recalled. Depending on the breed, day-old chicks can cost from \$5 to \$15 per chicken when purchased from a hatchery.

"Sometimes when we sell these breeds, one of the show breed chickens will sell for \$40," Kyla said. It's apparent people value their show birds. As

for Reese, she names each and every one of her birds. There's Trapper, Mayo, Opal, Espresso, Copper, and so many more. Reese and her mom said they all have different personalities.

"There's lots of people who are trying incubating and sharing and sending information about trying different things," Kyla said. "Learning about it is a really good thing. We are constantly learning every day."

"Yes, we're learning every day," Reese agreed.

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"A farmer is a magician who produces money from the mud."

— Amit Kalantri, Wealth of Words

APAS calls for a provincial Drought Preparedness Committee

With many regions of Saskatchewan's agricultural sector facing mounting challenges from drought, the Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan (APAS) is calling for the establishment of a Provincial Drought Preparedness Committee. In a letter addressed to Minister Marit, President



Ian Boxall

Ian Boxall underscored the critical need for proactive measures to mitigate the devastating impact of drought on farmers, ranchers, and rural communities.

The proposed Drought Preparedness Committee could serve several critical functions:

- 1. Early Warning and Mitigation:** The Committee would monitor meteorological and climate data to identify early warnings of potential drought conditions. By reviewing and providing input on the province's drought response plan, policies, and proactive measures, the Committee aims to mitigate the impact of drought on farms and rural communities.
- 2. Resource Allocation:** During drought emergencies, the Committee would facilitate resource allocation to support affected farmers and communities. This includes water development and conservation strategies, extension resources, business risk management program supports, and livestock management.
- 3. Stakeholder Engagement:** The Committee would foster collaboration among government agencies, agricultural organizations, research institutions, and community representatives. By facilitating partnerships and sharing expertise, innovative solutions can be developed to build resilience against drought challenges.
- 4. Long-Term Planning:** The Committee would facilitate long-term planning and investment in infrastructure, technology, and research to enhance adaptive capacity and

sustainability in the face of drought.

Furthermore, APAS emphasizes the importance of program flexibility and enhancements to assist farmers in managing drought risks effectively. Features such as multiyear yield cushioning and greenfeed conversion provide additional tools to protect production guarantees against the impact of multiyear droughts on coverage and premium levels.

"We welcome the recent enhancements to crop insurance forage and rainfall programs. Features like multiyear yield cushioning and greenfeed conversion provide crucial tools to safeguard production amid multiyear droughts," emphasized Boxall. "The proposed Committee could monitor program participation, distribute information, and explore further changes to better equip farmers in managing weather challenges and making informed decisions."

While recent snowfall has provided some relief, numerous areas across Saskatchewan continue to grapple with the enduring effects of the multiyear drought. The need for substantial precipitation to replenish soil moisture reserves remains critical, underscoring the severity of the situation.

Boxall added, "Business risk management programs play a vital role in safeguarding farm viability against weather-related production risks. Recurring droughts can significantly impact access to these programs through increased premium costs and reduced coverage, particularly for farm operations already operating on narrow profit margins." He emphasizes the imperative to ensure these programs evolve, incorporating tools such as yield cushioning and greenfeed insurance coverage, to assist producers in adapting and managing drought risks effectively.

Boxall concluded the letter by urging the Saskatchewan Agriculture Minister to prioritize drought resilience and preparedness ahead of the 2024 growing season. The establishment of a Drought Preparedness Committee, coupled with measures such as multiyear yield cushioning, are seen as a proactive and strategic approach to safeguard Saskatchewan agriculture against the growing threat of drought.



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SAFETY IS OUR HERITAGE

Canadian Agricultural Safety Association Celebrates Ag Safety Week

Canadian Agricultural Safety Week takes place March 10-16 and this year farmers, farm families, farm workers, and farming communities are encouraged to consider how they plan for #FarmSafetyEveryday.

Canadian Agricultural Safety Week (CASW) is an annual national initiative delivered by the Canadian Agricultural Safety Association (CASA) that raises awareness about the importance of safe agriculture. Your Farm, Your Family, Your Success: Safety is Our Heritage is the final part of a three-year safety campaign.

This year, organizers are focusing on providing practical safety advice and encouraging conversations about farm safety while showcasing how safety directly contributes to the success and sustainability of farming operations.

"There is no question that farm accidents can have a devastating toll with physical, psychological, and financial consequences," says Andrea Lear, CASA's Chief Executive Officer. "But we also know that many on-farm incidents are preventable. That's why we want to provide Canadian producers with the tools and resources they need to protect the health and safety of everyone who lives and works on or visits farms and ranches. Canadian Agricultural Safety Week serves as a reminder that farm safety is important year-round and that by working together, we can ensure a safer agricultural sector."

Every year, CASA raises awareness about the importance of safety on Canadian farms through CASW, which takes place during the third week of March. This year's sponsors are CN, Syngenta Canada, Canadian Canola Growers Association, Fertilizer Canada, and Parrish & Heimbecker.

Additional information about CASW, including the media kit and resources, is available at agsafetyweek.ca. The media kit contains feature stories, safety advice articles, public service announcements, graphics,



There is no question that farm accidents can have a devastating toll with physical, psychological, and financial consequences

Andrea Lear, CASA's Chief Executive Officer

and more.

The Canadian Agricultural Safety Association is a national, non-profit organization dedicated to improving the health and safety of farmers, their families and agricultural workers. CASA is funded in part by the Government of Canada under the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership, a federal, provincial and territorial initiative. For more information, visit www.casa-acsa.ca, find us on Facebook or LinkedIn, or follow us on X @planfarmsafety.

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March 10th - 16th, 2024



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Agricultural Safety Week

March 10th - 16th, 2024



Austin Jacksteit and Mackayla Scheller from Golden Prairie are the owners of this cow and calf who have identical markings. *SUBMITTED*



How to take farm safety courses online

Canadian Agricultural Safety Week takes place annually during the third week of March. This campaign encourages farmers, farm families, workers and communities to commit to farm safety every day.

The Canadian Agricultural Safety Association (CASA) offers online safety training courses for employers and workers to learn about farm safety.

The CASA online training modules are available online at www.casa-acsa.ca. They take between 45 and 60 minutes to complete and have a quiz at the end. Course topics include:

- Introduction to grain handling and storage hazards
- Farm safety orientation
- ATV safety awareness
- Tractor and farm machinery safety
- Agricultural machinery safeguarding
- Dairy worker safety

There's also a course that teaches sea-

sonal farm workers about basic agricultural safety so that farm owners and operators can practice due diligence when managing the well-being and safety of their employees.

Accessible and affordable

The courses are affordable, with most modules available for between \$30 and \$40. CASA members can receive a 25 per cent discount.

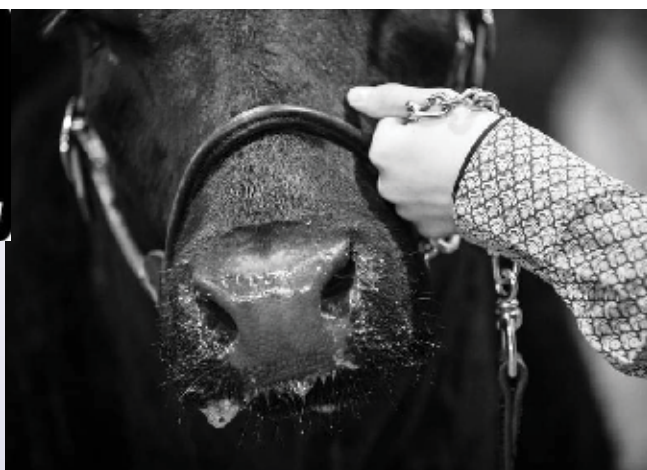
If you own or manage a large agricultural operation, CASA provides you with the option to offer courses through your own website. With CASA's assistance, you can set up a personalized web training platform for your business that includes course administration training.

This Canadian Agricultural Safety Week, educate yourself and others about farm safety. By sharing knowledge and resources, you can help prevent accidents and promote a safer work environment for farmers and their families.



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Digital water licences speed up drought response

There are about 25,000 water licences in Alberta. The province now has an easy-to-use digital system that lets users report on water use and manage their licence through a confidential online tool. However, many water licences issued before November 2021 still report in using older electronic and paper-based systems that are slow and hard to track.

The Alberta government is asking all Albertans with water licences issued before November 2021 to move them into the online system by the end of this year. This will help licence holders save time and help the province understand how much water is available during a severe drought.

"In 2024, we can't have a system that relies on papers, faxes and other methods to manage water licences and track Alberta's water use. I want to thank all the water licence holders for helping us by moving their licence to the digital system as quickly as possible. It'll save you time and effort and help us make every drop count this year."

Rebecca Schulz,

Minister of Environment and Protected Areas

Alberta's Digital Regulatory Assurance System is a secure and 100 per cent confidential online platform. It helps licence holders submit reports, apply for renewals or amendments, receive email reminders and track their status. Alberta Environment and Protected Areas uses this information to help water managers and users make important decisions on how to manage the drought.

"Moving into the digital system will make your license quicker and easier for you to manage and help us keep track of how much water is available in Alberta. As we face the risk of severe drought, I'm asking all irrigators and water licence holders to make the time to move their licence as soon as they can."

RJ Sigurdson,

Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation

"I'm glad we have worked with Environment and Protected Areas to move the water license system to a simplified and modern digital system. This is part of our commitment to making Alberta the most innovative jurisdiction in Canada and deliver better, faster and smarter services for Albertans."

Nate Glubish,

Minister of Technology and Innovation



Oldman Reservoir near the Island View day use area. GOVERNMENT OF ALBERTA

The digital system will provide a faster and better experience for water licence holders, who will be able to easily access and view licence records. Applying for new licences or renewals will become much quicker, and it will be easier to submit and track incident notifications. Overall, the system provides easy access to important information that licence holders need to manage their licences.

Moving a licence into the digital system does not change or replace the original licence in any way. There is absolutely no change to the licence priority number. All information submitted through the digital system will continue to be kept strictly confidential.

Quick facts

- Water licences issued under the Water Act and precedent legislation, such as the Water Resources Act, must move to the Digital Regulatory Assurance System (DRAS).

- DRAS has been accepting applications for Water Act licences and other types of water authorizations, such as codes of practice, since 2021.
- Any water licences issued under the Water Act before November 2021 must be moved by December 31, 2024. That includes all records of the water licences issued under Alberta's past and current water use-related legislation.
- Any licence, amendment or renewal issued after November 2021 will already be in DRAS so no move is required.
- Documents associated with water approvals and authorizations under the Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act and the Public Lands Act are not currently required to move but will be included as part of future releases.
- EPA's Water Use Reporting System (WURS) will be closing as early as June 2024, so all licence holders should take action as soon as possible.

Reeves play an important role in rural communities

BY JOAN JANZEN

Bill Owens has been Reeve of the R.M. of Snipe Lake for eight years and was also a councillor for 12 years. He was born and raised in Eston on the family farm his grandfather homesteaded in 1906. "He was one of the first homesteaders in the country and had the first post office in this area," he said. Now, Bill is semi-retired from farming, and his son and grandson have taken over the farm, which is located near Eston.

He's witnessed many changes in farming throughout the years. "Years ago, we grew wheat, barley, and some flax. Now there's a lot of other crops grown. You get into a crop rotation and stick to it," he said. Of course, the prices of machinery, fertilizer, and chemicals have all increased. While prices increased and grain farms mushroomed in size, the population decreased as a result.

He's been an active volunteer in the community. "When you live in the community, you do lots of things and don't think about it because it's a job that has to be done," he reasoned. Bill has coached hockey and has belonged to the Masonic Lodge and Wildlife Federation throughout the years.

While all of his past experience was beneficial, Bill said his time spent as a councillor helped prepare him for the position of Reeve. "You learn as you go," he said.

He had just attended a day of meetings, and said a lot can be learned by networking with others. "If you're going to keep up with everything, it requires attending a lot of meetings," he said.

"We just finished putting in a rural water line taking water to the farms, which is in the neighbourhood of 300 feet of pipe in the ground. That really benefits the area," Bill said, acknowledging it is probably the largest project they've tackled.

At the local level, he said everybody is concerned about the most important road in the R.M., "and that's the road they drive on", he chuckled. As well as keeping up with infrastructure, the R.M. deals with culverts, and as soon as it warms up they'll put out the road bans.

"Ever since I've started we've been building roads and have been fortunate to get government grants to build a lot of miles of roads," he explained. He also looks after maintaining roads in the R.M.

The R.M. of Snipe Lake has been fortunate to have many loyal employees. "Most of our employees have lived here, so they tend to stay longer," he commented. "Our foreman retired last summer after working for 40 years. So that says something to have someone work that long."

The most recent dump of snow kept the R.M. crew busy. "When it snows, you just get at it and work till you catch up again. You have to keep the road open, and sometimes that can be a challenge, but you have to learn to work through it," he said.

Bill has worked through a few winter seasons during his terms as Reeve and now thinks he's put in enough time. "The Next election is coming up in November, and I don't plan on running again," he said. But he does plan to tinker around with his woodworking hobby, something he previously didn't have time to enjoy.



Bill Owens, Reeve of the RM of Snipe Lake.

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Using Acoustic Pulse technology in dairy cattle

BY ADRIANE GOOD, MSC, AAG, LIVESTOCK AND FEED EXTENSION SPECIALIST, MOOSE JAW

Acoustic pulse technology (APT), mainly used in human medicine, has a new use for the livestock industry. This technology gives a shock wave to tissue that produces various biological effects, including development of new blood vessels, improved blood flow and oxygenation, and anti-inflammatory effects. Armenta has introduced an APT applicator for the treatment of mastitis and maintenance of udder health and persistent milk yield in dairy cattle. Their device is designed to use shock waves to improve the immune response in a cow's mammary glands to improve the health of their udder. An ADOPT project was recently done to demonstrate APT's effect on milk yield, milk component yield and somatic cell count (SCC) on two Saskatchewan dairy farms.

Each farm used the treatment for three months. During this time, the farms randomly selected two or three cows between 18 and 35 days in lactation to be treated according to Armenta's persistent milk yield method each week. Another two to three cows were randomly selected to be monitored but not treated. Each cow had their milk tested according to the farms' regular protocol following treatment. Predicted milk fat and protein, predicted 305-day milk yield and SCC were evaluated. Farm One also collected peak milk yield data. Farm Two collected data at two milk tests following treatment.

Both farms showed an improvement in the predicted 305-day milk yield in the treated cows. The predicted 305-day protein and fat yield were higher in untreated cows on Farm One and the treated cows on Farm Two at the first milk test following treatment. On the second milk test, it was higher in the untreated cows, suggesting that the benefit seen on milk protein and fat production may not be sustained. Untreated cows had a lower SCC on Farm One, while Farm Two had lower SCC in treated cows. Overall, the SCC on both farms remained below 400,000 cells/mL, meaning neither farm was penalized for their somatic cell count.

Due to the short-term nature of the project, the effects of APT on the entire lactation were not measured. While the increased predicted milk yield on both farms and reduced SCC results on Farm Two looked promising, it is difficult to say whether acoustic pulse

Farm One - Milk Test results					
	SCC (x 10 ³ cells/mL)	Peak Milk (L)	305M (L)	305Fat (kg)	305Protein (kg)
Average Treatment	70.9	41.2	11934.1	359.7	309.9
Average Control	54.8	43.7	11723.1	385.8	337.7

Farm Two - Milk Test results								
	SCC (x 10 ³ cells/mL)	SCC 30D (x 10 ³ cells/mL)	305M at Treatment (L)	305M 30D (L)	305Fat at Treatment (kg)	305 Fat 30D (kg)	305Protein at Treatment (kg)	305 Protein 30D (kg)
Average Treatment	71.2	48.3	10682.2	11287.8	429.1	416.8	353.9	363.6
Average Control	264.5	175.9	9976.1	10602.9	388.2	430.4	335.8	364.4

technology made a significant impact on each farm's production.

In Saskatchewan, the current cost of APT is a barrier for uptake of the technology. Between the rental price of the applicator and air tank refills, the estimated total cost per cow was \$60.97. Since there was no sustained improvement in milk fat production, there was no economic gain to the treatment.

Although there was no economic gain because of APT treatment, it is promising to see an increase in predicted milk production on both farms and decrease in SCC on Farm Two. There is potential for APT technology to be used as a treatment for sub-clinical mastitis and potentially clinical mastitis. However, due to the high cost of treatment, it may not be practical on Saskatchewan dairy farms. Further demonstrations with longer time frames would be beneficial to demonstrate how the technology affects milk production over the entirety of lactation.

For more information, contact your local livestock and feed extension specialist or the Agriculture Knowledge Centre at 1-866-457-2377.



Using the APT applicator on a cow after milking.

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LOCATIONS IN LEADER & CABRI, SASK.

A HOMESTEADER'S STORY:

No more spuds and a 2-storey sod house

An article by J.E. Hess printed in the history book "Many Trails Crossed Here" records the story of his father homesteading in Oyen in July, 1910. The land was located one and a half miles west of the present town of Oyen. Here is his story ...

At that time there were no roads, no fences, no phone or power lines, no railroad. Most of the trails followed the buffalo trails, which had a general direction of northwest and southeast. In August, 1910, my mother, Alberta F. Hess, brought me, James Edmond, and my two sisters, Ellen and Virginia, from St. Louis, Missouri, to join my father on the homestead. I was six, Ellen eight and Virginia one and a half years old.

About three weeks later my grandfather, James A. Sickley, arrived at Kindersley with some household furniture, a few chickens and three pigs. The mode of travel was by train to Kindersley, then by covered wagon and horses from Kindersley to our homestead, a distance of 70 miles. In those 70 miles we passed two homestead shacks about eight feet square.

We lived in a tent at first. This tent was saved from burning by my father as he returned from filing his homestead application. He had to do this at Brooks. He came back just as the 1910 fire roared through that area. He was alone and riding a tough little saddle horse. He was able to backfire enough to save about 10 acres of grass on our land which saved our horses. The soil was quite rich and this is what caused the burnouts where the humus burned down as deep as 12 to 16 inches in some places. The ropes of the tent were on fire when he got there. I remember seeing the burnt rope after we arrived.

There was little to do but sleep and work. We slept in the tent. Dad and his brother Thurman built a small sod cottage 16 feet square, half on our part of section 6 and half on the part that Grandfather Sickley homesteaded. This enabled both homesteaders to live in the same house. We went on to build a large sod house for Thurman Hess who had four children at that time and later another home for our family.

The sod house had a living room and one bedroom on the main floor and two attic bedrooms upstairs. The walls were 30 inches thick and eight feet high, with a frame ceiling and roof. The roof was covered with tar paper and sod for the first three years, then it was shingled. A cellar under the floor kept vegetables in the winter and provided a cool place for milk, etc.



Bill and Mrs. William Hess inside their two-storey sod house with a cellar on their homestead one and a half miles west of the present town of Oyen. PHOTO: MANY TRAILS CROSSED HERE

The sod house had a living room and one bedroom on the main floor and two attic bedrooms upstairs. The walls were 30 inches thick and eight feet high...

in the summer.

We broke up ten acres and seeded it to oats for the stock. Our first large crop was three acres of potatoes and that produced 1200 bushels of excellent spuds. My father had dug a cellar in the hill behind the house. It had two rooms and there was about eight feet of dirt overhead. He bored an eight inch auger hole down from the outside and put in a galvanized iron casing. This provided ventilation. There we stored the spuds. The following spring my dad and I took two wagons with a team each, loaded with 60 bushels of potatoes and drove to Empress. I was eight years old at the time.

From Empress we drove west along the CPR right-of-way for 60 miles. The railway was being built at the time and we stopped at each railway construction camp and left all the potatoes they would accept. At the last camp our loads were emptied.

We were more than 120 miles from home and hadn't received a penny of money. A cheque for \$64 came to dad the following September from the CPR purchasing agent.

That 120 bushels of potatoes was all we sold. The balance spoiled and had to be shovelled out. We raised no more spuds.

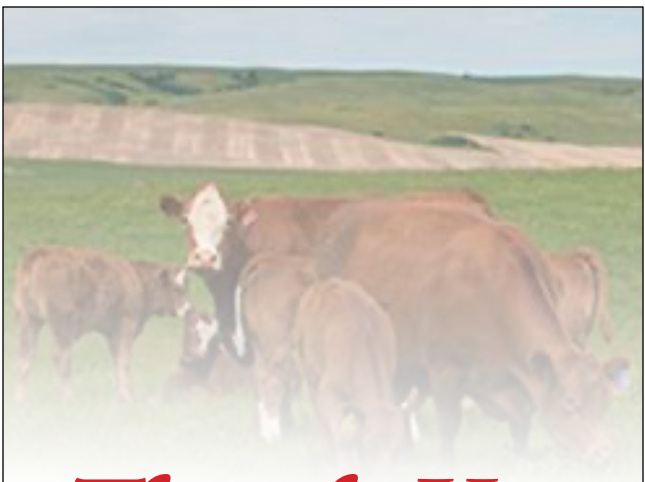


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What about the land renewable energy projects are built on?

BY JOAN JANZEN

A local landowner recently shared some interesting information at an open house at Oyen, as well as on his video blog. Tyler Chiliak farms near Alsask and is described as a “straight shooter” by those who listen to his podcast. Numerous comments from his listeners followed his recent talk about industrial blanket easements; it was a topic of interest to local landowners. Tyler agreed to have the information shared in this article, which is much appreciated.

As a landowner, he notes he’s not opposed to solar and wind power and uses renewable energy on his farm. “However, one side of renewable energy that nobody really talks about is the landowners,” Tyler said. Although numerous studies have been done on renewable projects, virtually nothing is said about the land on which the projects are built. And here is where the words industrial blanket easement comes into play.

He explained the definition of easement as an agreement between a landowner and someone who wants to use their land. The person who wants to use the land approaches the land owner about using the land for a particular purpose. They’ll give the specific details of what they want to do and how much they’ll pay the land owner and try to come to an agreement.

“In oilfield country, we call this a lease,” Tyler said. “An oilfield company will be very specific about what they want; they need to be sure they have enough space to do whatever they need

done, and they’ll show you what it will look like. But with renewables, it’s not quite the same.”

A salesperson will approach the farmer about putting renewables on their land. They’ll present a drawing detailing where they will place a windmill or other renewable project, the size of the area required, as well as where the access road and trenching for the cable will be located.

“But what they don’t tell you is that’s not the easement agreement. The easement agreement is kind of buried in a bit of fine print,” Tyler explained. The word “blanket” in blanket easement agreement means covering the whole thing. Therefore, the easement covers the entire parcel of land, whether it’s a quarter or whole section.

The word “Industrial” refers to the zoning of the land. Tyler noted that industrial-zoned land is worth far more than agricultural land by an incredible margin. Industrial land can be used for turbines, solar farms, etc. and therefore has a lot of value.

Before a project begins, a salesperson will approach the land owner, asking to put a project on their land. He’ll ask the land owner some questions, and the land owner signs a paper and waits to receive information regarding the project. They also wait to receive their money because they will be promised a lot of money to make this project happen.

After the agreement has been signed, a representative from the company that wants to develop the project takes the agreement to a financial institution.

“They say they have an industrial blanket easement and want to build a wind turbine and want a loan to do it. The land is collateral,” he explained. “They get the money and are good to go.”

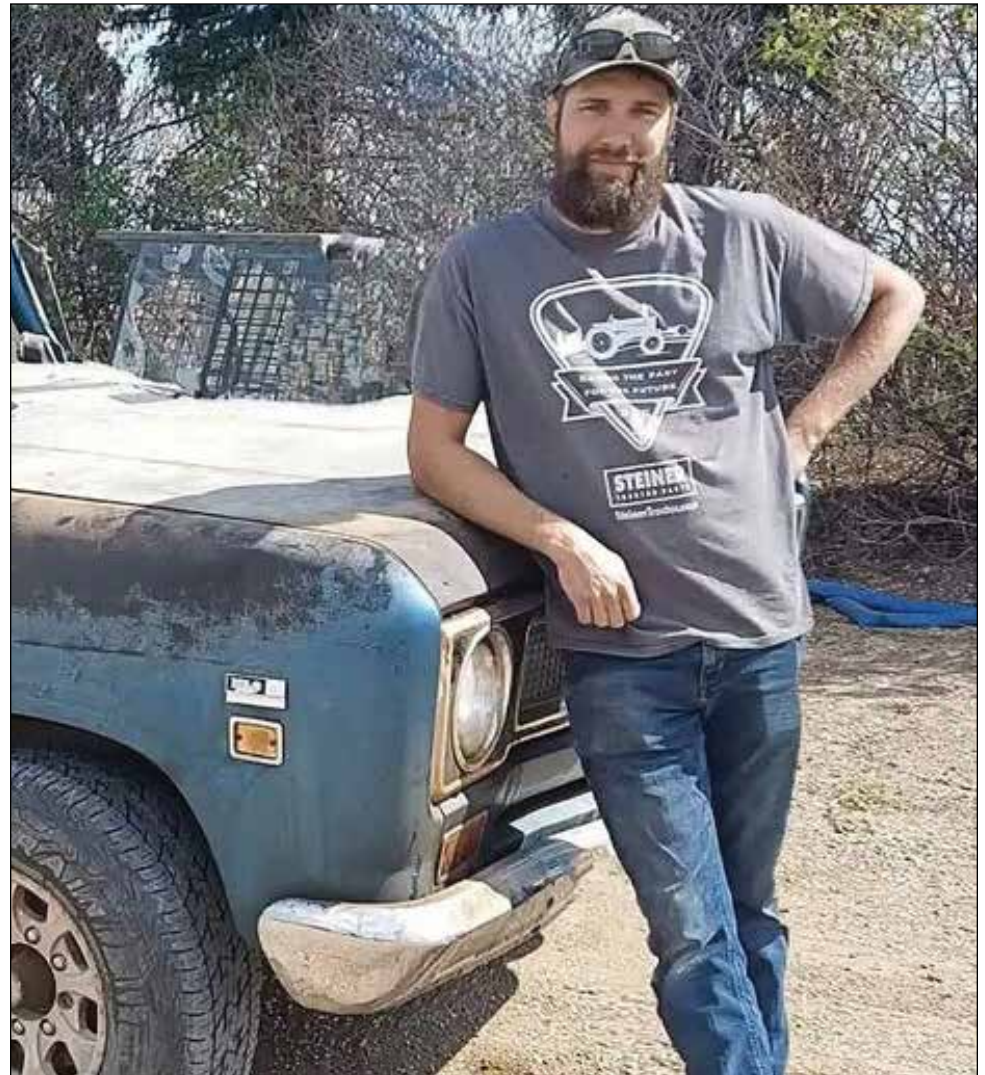
Unfortunately, the land owner may not even be aware this is happening. In fact, Tyler said he had heard of several instances where the land owner received a notification in the mail. The notification said the collateral no longer exists for the quarter of land the farmer had put up as collateral for his crop inputs loan so he could run his farm.

“That quarter of land has a multi-million dollar loan lean put against it, and you can’t use it for that anymore,” Tyler added. Furthermore, the land owner can’t transfer that land to an estate. “If you want to sell the land before you die, you can’t because the land is tied up and has a lean against it.” The land cannot be sold until the lean is satisfied, and if it has a multi-million dollar lean against it, even selling the land won’t satisfy the lean.

Tyler’s main point is that a lot of landowners aren’t aware that they have

an industrial blanket easement. The contracts may vary, but depending on how the contract is worded, the industrial blanket easement gives the company that’s developing the project the right to do whatever it wants. “Depending on how the contract is set up, they might be able to do whatever they want with the entirety of the land without your say, so because you now have 49% controlled interest in your own land,” he explained. “If they told you they’re going to put up one turbine, maybe they’ll put up three. Maybe you have a dugout there you want protected, and they might fill it in because they want to put something there.”

Many of the large projects are financed, and land for the project is via industrial blanket easements. “If you have an industrial project on your land, and you’re not aware of this, you might want to dig into your contract,” he advised. “Maybe ask a lawyer or a land agent about it. Chances are you have an industrial blanket easement, and you don’t even know about it.”



Tyler Chiliak farms near Alsask. Last month he spoke at an open house in Oyen, to discuss the term “Industrial Blanket Easement”. SUBMITTED

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An exhibit of beef excellence

BY MARIKA LYSTER

The 22nd Ashley Good Memorial Crossroads Beef Expo filled the Crossroads Centre in Oyen with 40 pens of yearling bulls, 2-year-old bulls, purebred and commercial yearling heifers from local and afar on February 17, 2024. On February 18, the youth presented steers and heifers.

Exhibitors travelled from Sturgeon County, Innisfail, Eckville, Olds, Sylvan Lake, Byemore, Hanna, Viking, Czar, and Bassano. Local breeders came from Esther, New Brigden, Acadia Valley, Sedalia, Sibbald, Oyen and Leader, Sask.

The bull pens consist of two bulls; the heifer pens consist of three heifers. The animals are off-halter and judged by a panel of three judges.

This year, our judges were Ashley Peacock of Cereal, Dale Howe of Empress and Darcy Lakevold of Provost. Karin Roen of Oyen capably emceed the show. Marshalls Cash and Coleman Norris kept the animals and exhibitors ready to enter the ring as each previous class exited. Barn Boss Kerry Molzan oversaw all issues behind the scenes on both days.

Auctioneer Shane Stammers and his bid catchers recognized bids in a live auction of items donated by local businesses between the bull and heifer pen classes.

The 300-ticket Ranchmen's Raffle sold out. Winners, Michael and Marie Kulyk of Buffalo chose the \$5,000 cash surrender rather than a \$7,000

credit toward the purchase of cattle from our pen show exhibitors. Congratulations!

After announcing the pen show winners and awards, the complimentary Breeds Brisket Challenge and Wine & Cheese commenced.

Rob Mundt of Sibbald smoked nine briskets from Limousin, Simmental and 4-H animals. Kelly Skappak smoked the Charolais brisket.

Good Angus (Mindy Good) served complimentary wine augmented with cheese, compliments of TD Bank - Erin Logan.

Clark Huston and Jerilyn Norris entertained the crowd with music from many eras and genres. Everyone enjoyed it!

Sunday, February 18, 84 youth brought 125 impressive steers and heifers to our haltered youth show with emcee Art Paetkau of Brooks.

The youth competently presented the steers and heifers in an open or 4-H division for conformation judge Kehler Eaton of Lloydminster and showmanship judge Kira Axley of Czar, assisted by ring person Vanessa Hadwin of Consort. Dexter Miller, Tamara Shadlock and Coden Kosolofski marshalled the individual classes.

The tradeshow, open for the entire weekend, displayed a variety of booths from agricultural, leather, feed and home products to clothing and textiles.

The Longbranch Saloon and BCAS concession were in full swing all weekend!

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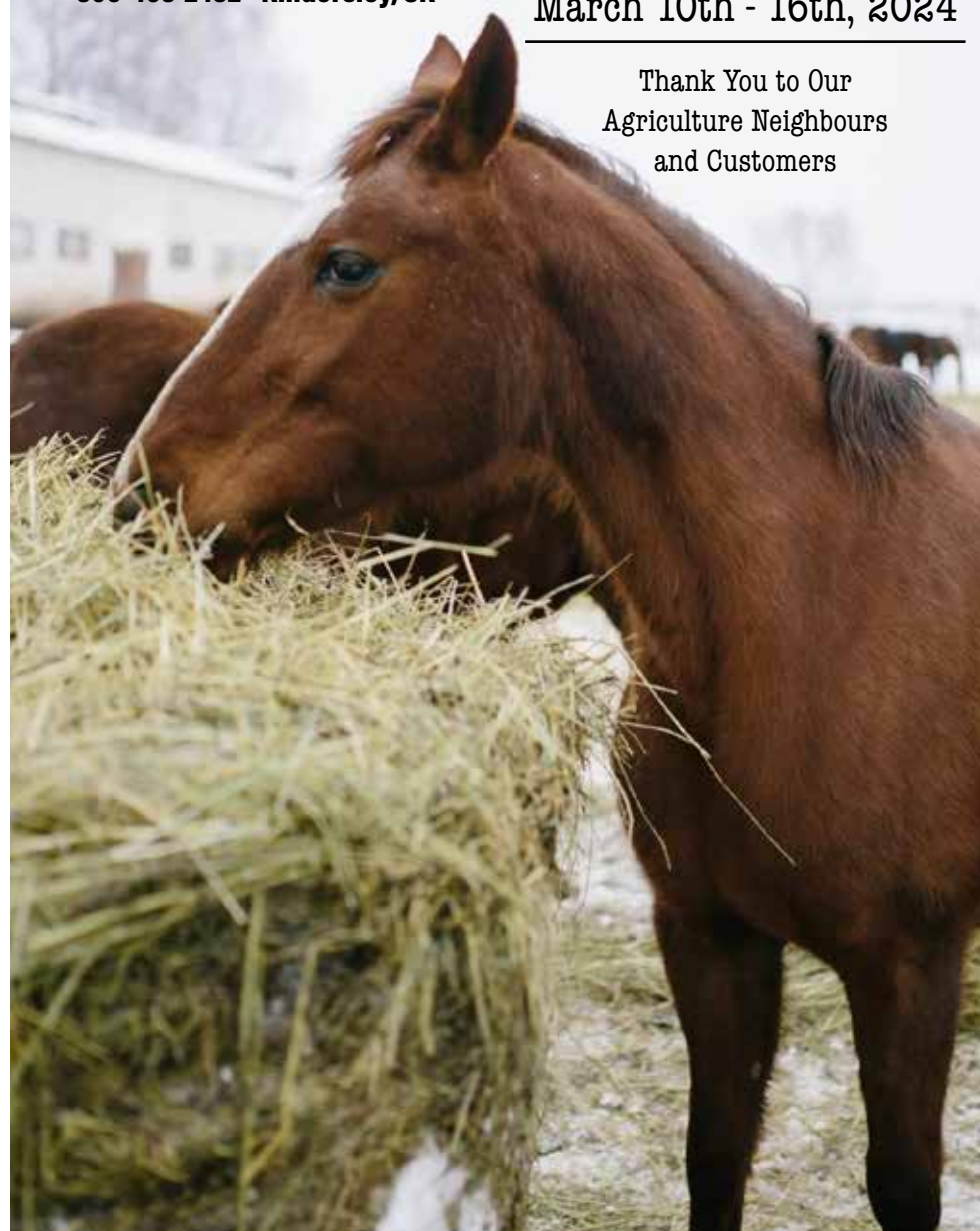


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