

MANITOBA Farmers' Voice

WINTER 2014 EDITION



The Official Publication of
Keystone Agricultural Producers



MEMBER PROFILE

LORNE AND DEBBIE ROSSNAGEL

Making environmental stewardship
a major focus on their farm

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LORNE AND DEBBIE ROSSNAGEL



BY RICHARD KAMCHEN

FOR PLUMAS CATTLE PRODUCERS Lorne and Debbie Rossnagel, the management and stewardship practices they've adopted over the years have paid off. They lowered their production costs while enhancing their environmental sustainability performance — and they won a conservation award to boot.

Lorne's family has embraced Manitoba's farmscape ever since his great-grandfather moved to Canada from Poland around 1892, setting up in the Walderssee area. In the 1930s Lorne's paternal grandfather moved to the Plumas area, establishing the farm that Lorne eventually grew up on.

When Lorne and Debbie married they bought the farm across the road in 1976, and eventually took over the family farm, too — along with their son Aaron. They now operate all 3,600 acres, running a successful cow-calf operation, as well as producing forages and crops.

Like all farmers in the area, Lorne and Debbie have experienced their share of lean years — from wet periods in the 1970s and drought in the '80s, to low grain prices and extreme interest rates. But nothing was as devastating as BSE in 2003.

Lorne was sowing the last half section of grain that May when his oldest daughter phoned from university in Ames, Iowa, and asked him what he was going to do now that BSE had closed the border to Canadian cattle.

He hadn't heard a word about it despite the radio being on in the cab all day. As it turned out, Lorne and Debbie had just converted most of their cropland to forages, so they didn't have a grain crop to sell that year — and their cattle were worth practically nothing. Without off-farm income at the time, their bottom line was hit even harder.

“On the positive side of it all, Canadian consumers were astute enough not to fall for all the crazy stories out there and kept eating beef in spite of it, so that was really one thing that kept us going,” said Lorne. We knew the consumer was behind us.”

Another positive that emerged was that BSE would force cattle farmers to improve their management practices, making it >>

Making environmental stewardship a major focus on their farm



Lorne divides their herd into three and rotates them over 60 paddocks. In addition to controlling over-grazing in a paddock and maximizing forage recovery, this also ensures manure is spread out and not concentrated in one area.

Adopting rotational grazing — the practice of moving cattle from one paddock to another to graze — is one of the sustainable management measures undertaken by Lorne and Debbie

possible for them to “get a calf out of the gate somewhere in the range of \$100 to \$200 less than we used to,” Lorne says. At the same time, these new practices increased environmental stewardship.

Adopting rotational grazing — the practice of moving cattle from one paddock to another to graze — is one of the sustainable management measures undertaken by Lorne and Debbie.

Lorne divides the herd into three and rotates them over 60 paddocks. In addition to controlling over-grazing in a paddock, this also ensures manure is spread out and not concentrated in one area.

It also maximizes forage recovery on grazed paddocks, and keeps vegetation on the land for wildlife use. Another plus is that water is trapped by the vegetation that remains in the fall.

As well, a few paddocks are selected each year for stockpile grazing — the practice of leaving mature plants over the winter until the following spring. This facilitates the spreading of seeds

from the mature plants, and also provides a good post-calving area. Great Pyrenees dogs are used to protect the small calves in the long grass.

“Every time you have more vegetation in the system, more thatch covering the ground, you slow water runoff, you slow snow melt,” he said.

In the winter, Lorne hauls feed onto the paddocks, which has cut down on fertilizer and manure-removal bills. He notes there was a time when manure removal cost them as much as \$10,000 some years.

Pasture feeding in the winter also means animals — and manure — are no longer concentrated in the yard, a practice that protects soil and water resources.

Lorne tries to incorporate bush into every paddock as shelter in the winter and shade in the summer, and uses three geothermal water units and a portable solar-pumping unit in order to keep cattle out of waterways. Additionally, he is now starting to use wind fences as

» CONTINUED ON PG 8

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Lorne's and Debbie's son Aaron, who works in Winnipeg, helps them out on the weekends as well as doing his own farming. "He works to support his farming habit," jokes Lorne.

shelter, so he can use some of his more-open paddocks in the winter.

Lorne and Debbie have also switched from winter to spring and summer calving. This means less feed is needed for pregnant cows than in cold weather, and animals can stay on pasture when calving, again avoiding use of the yard.

Environmental stewardship and sustainability practices on the Rossnagel farm have evolved over the years, some handed down from one generation to the next.

"When I came on the scene, dad was already getting some shelterbelts put in along some of the fields by Whitemud Watershed, and sowing down all the sensitive types of lands," says Lorne. "Anything that was subject to erosion, whether it was along the waterway or a high sandy knoll, he was sowing those areas down to forages, conserving bush, etc."

Lorne has now created huge dugouts to collect runoff and also double as a water source in drought years.

"Weather always runs in cycles, and we're going to have some dry years

come at us again, and it's nice to know that you've got lots of water reserve there to carry you through dry times."

Of Lorne and Debbie's 3,600 acres, about 1,000 to 1,200 have been turned back to grains and oilseeds, and the rest is hay land and pasture — although they keep about 250 acres free from any farming, strictly reserved for wildlife habitat. Their herd can run from 500 to 1,000, depending if they are custom grazing cattle for others.

In 2012, Lorne and Debbie were awarded the Conservation Award for the Whitemud Watershed Conservation District at the Manitoba Conservation District Association conference.

"We were pretty proud of that. It was nice to be recognized for the things we do."

Lorne is also active with the federal-provincial Environmental Farm Plan program that KAP administers, reviewing workbooks for farmers who are seeking to complete environmental farm plans and receive certification. Once they've done this, they can apply for cost-shared funding to implement

environmental practices (best management practices) they've identified in their plans.

"It's pretty impressive to see the amount of projects that farmers are doing out there, such as improved fuel storage and planting trees. Sometimes there's no short-term or even long-term financial gain, but they just do these kinds of things because it's the right thing to do," says Lorne.

"It gives you a good feeling that other people in your industry care that much about the environment, and stewardship of the land and resources, that they're willing to put this money out there to do these types of things."

Lorne is also on KAP's Livestock Committee, and Environment and Land Use Committee. He serves on the KAP's general council, and counts himself as a big KAP booster.

"I can honestly say I've been nothing but impressed," says Lorne. "If it wasn't for a general farm organization like KAP, I don't know where we'd be."

He says KAP's efforts on school taxes alone have saved farmers enough

money to pay for their membership for years.

Lorne is active elsewhere too, as a director of the Benchland Forage Consortium and a director of the Manitoba Forage and Grassland Association. Debbie is an auditor for the Verified Beef Program.

Given their off-farm commitments, it's hard to believe Lorne and Debbie run the farm with no outside help during the week — but they do. In the summer Debbie cuts the hay and Lorne bales it, and in the fall she combines and he hauls.

On the weekends, their son Aaron, who works as a technical specialist in Winnipeg with Outback Guidance Systems — a company that specializes in precision farming systems — heads home to help out on the farm. At 28, he has also bought his own land and some equipment.

“He works during the week to support his farming habit,” jokes Lorne.

Both he and Debbie are proud of all their children, who have followed more or less in their parents' footsteps when it comes to sustainability.

Aaron's involvement in precision farming helps farmers with practices that maximize production while protecting the environment. And their oldest daughter, Alyssa, 33, who works as a construction engineer in Denver, specializes in building LEEDS-certified “green” buildings.

Their other daughter, Andrea, 31, is an environmental scientist with Stantec in Winnipeg, having done her masters' research on climate change aboard the Amundsen research icebreaker in the Arctic.

Neighbours and community, too, are important to Lorne and Debbie. Although flooding prevented them from seeding and harvesting a crop this year, that didn't stop Debbie from lending a hand to help their neighbours combine, while Lorne baled the

much-needed straw the neighbours offered.

“In the country, good neighbours are extremely important,” says Lorne. “Without decent neighbours, it's going to be a pretty lonely life.”

He calls Plumas a close-knit, proud community.

“Like a lot of rural communities, anytime anybody has a problem, it never fails, everybody pitches in and does what has to be done to help out. It's one of the great benefits of being in a small town farming community.”

When the Plumas coffee shop burned down a few years ago, citizens got together to raise money and build a combined restaurant, lounge and motel. They also collectively raised the money and volunteered their time and skills to build a new community hall, one that's gained an enviable reputation for being well laid out and aesthetically pleasing.

“We've still got people coming for tours of the facility,” says Lorne. *MFV*

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Thank you for the opportunity to make a contribution to our industry

BY DOUG CHORNEY, KAP PRESIDENT

THE HOLIDAY SEASON IS UPON US AND many will use this time to reflect on the past year and start planning for 2015.

Unfortunately, 2014 will leave many farms impacted by the poor spring, difficulties from the following heavy rain-falls, and continued challenges right through to the wet and difficult harvest. With cropland of 980,000 acres unseeded and approximately 600,000 acres flooded out, combined with poor forage crops and flooded pastures, many farmers are facing a tremendous blow to their bottom lines.

I want to stress that KAP worked diligently, along with our commodity groups, to secure support beyond our existing BRM programs to address the costs from flooding and excess moisture. We provided real examples to the provincial governments of how farms were being impacted, and we provided ideas for program development.

Clearly, we have had some success in securing support for beef farmers through the AgriRecovery feed-assistance programming announcement on November 12. However, we are disappointed and alarmed at the lack of programming for crop producers — especially because current business risk management programs have failed to meet their needs.

KAP will continue lobbying for improvements to BRM programs during the upcoming Growing Forward program review in 2015, and that means working with both levels of government to review our production insurance products. We need to find ways to make them more responsive to the challenges faced by farms and ranches going forward.

As this will be my last message and the time has come for a new president of



KAP, I would like to reflect on the organization and the work it's doing.

I became engaged in KAP through the efforts of my local district to get more members involved, and I quickly began to learn about how the issues KAP worked on had real meaning to the success of my farm.

I would like to thank all of the members who continue to work hard at the local level to ensure our organization is well informed, and that elected officials are kept apprised of issues on a timely basis. Without the commitment of individual district boards and our commodity group members, KAP could not do all the work that is needed for our industry.

Impacts of decisions made over the past four years surrounding the Canadian Wheat Board, the Canadian Grain Commission, the regulation and restrictions on hog production, and all of the weather-related challenges make the

need for KAP's leadership more important than ever.

As technology, regulatory changes, market situations and government policies continue to evolve at a rapid rate, we will always need strong and professional advocacy for our farms — and I believe KAP members, elected officers and staff can provide that.

When I look at the long list of achievements KAP has on its list this year — from getting the trains moving last winter, to more grain-dryer inspectors, to assistance with farm safety inspections — I cannot think of a better way to spend \$210, than to put it into a KAP membership fee. I urge any farmer who is not a KAP member to consider this before deciding not to support KAP.

On a personal note, I want to thank the many individuals that I have worked with for their selfless efforts to move our sector forward. It is heartening to see so many work so hard for the success of our industry.

I am appreciative of the support I have received from KAP members, KAP staff, government officials, industry representatives and farm leaders during the last four years. I've gained many new friends and colleagues during this time, and I am honoured to have been able to make a small contribution to their cumulative efforts.

As I look forward, I believe a part of KAP's strength lies in its ability to remain accessible and open to new ideas, and we should build on this. We should also continue to build on our outreach and communication efforts, so that both members and non-members alike know about the work KAP, and Manitoba farmers, are doing.

Please have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. MFV



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Will Today's Lower Grain Prices Impair Your Grain Operation?

ERIC OLSON

Over the last five years, grain farming has been very profitable. Higher grain prices led to higher profits, resulting in producers reinvesting heavily into their operations. This has caused the fixed costs of farms to increase significantly.

We've witnessed two common outcomes of this reinvestment. First, higher debt levels are taken on by farm managers. The new debt results from the purchase of new assets such as land, buildings, and equipment which are financed instead of bought for cash. Financial Institutions have been eager to lend money into the profitable grain sector. Lastly, producers face higher land rental costs as the demand for productive land increases in times of high prices.

Prices have been strong over the previous five years, but have dropped significantly this fall and continue to decline with an outlook of a very large crop in the U.S., leaving producers to question if this is the beginning of a shift towards low prices in the coming years. While

grain prices and margins in Western Canada have been good, depending on the localized yield, producers may now need to re-evaluate their operations to protect their competitiveness in a time of falling prices.

One of the advantages of grain farming is having one production cycle a year. Operations have the ability to adjust before the next production cycle starts. The time between harvest and the start-up of the next production cycle in the spring provides six months of operational analysis. Producers can evaluate their operations and make adjustments to become more efficient. Other industries face much shorter production and adjustment cycles, such as the hog industry, where they produce and sell every month, and shifts in prices can dramatically and quickly affect their bottom line. As producers face a potential price decrease, some steps can be taken to minimize future risk:

- 1) Begin by reviewing your operations cash flow given today's prices. Does the farm generate enough cash and have enough operating credit to put in next year's crop?
- 2) Evaluate long term commitments. Land or

equipment rental arrangements that are priced to reflect the previously high prices may require re-evaluation now that prices are on a downward trend.

3) Does the farm have the ability to service debt today and into the future? For some operations, lowering fixed costs will be necessary to ensure profit.

4) Do you need to restructure your farm finances? Some operations won't be able to sustain their current payment levels with lower profit margins. Lengthening loan amortization allows the farm to conserve cash and carry an operation through several cycles of decreased prices and profits.

Ultimately, producers must determine if they can afford to operate during a time of lower prices. Mitigating the risk by making necessary adjustments to their operations can help them weather the price dip.

Eric Olson, BSAg, PAg is a farm management consultant with MNP in Winnipeg. For more information, contact Eric at eric.olson@mnp.ca or 1.877.500.0795 or visit mnp.ca.

KAP highlights from the last quarter

Working for all Manitoba farmers **BY VAL OMINSKI**

AGRIRECOVERY ASSISTANCE: GOOD NEWS, BAD NEWS

► The AgriRecovery program recently announced by the federal and provincial governments for livestock producers is welcome news.

The Canada-Manitoba Forage Shortfall and Transportation Assistance Initiative will provide assistance for the transportation of forage/feed, as well as for the transportation of breeding livestock and their unweaned calves to feed sources. In addition, it will provide assistance for purchasing forage to those in the Lake Manitoba/Lake Winnipegosis regions (see sidebar, below).

However, KAP has stressed that a vital

component is missing from the announcement.

“There is nothing for flooded crop producers, even though they, too, desperately need an AgriRecovery program,” KAP vice-president Mazier said in a news release.

Excess Moisture Insurance has failed to compensate producers for crop losses because the five per cent deductible is added on cumulatively every time a claim is made. This, combined with reduced government funding for other farm risk management programs, means crop producers are not receiving the same recovery assistance this year as they did after the 2011 flood.



A new AgriRecovery program has been announced that will provide flooded livestock producers with feed assistance. KAP has made it very clear that flooded crop producers also need an AgriRecovery program.

Details of the Forage Shortfall and Transportation Assistance Initiative

- Assistance of up to \$0.16 per tonne per loaded kilometre for the transportation of forage/feed and up to \$0.08 per head per loaded kilometre for the transportation of breeding livestock and their unweaned calves to feed sources.
- For the Lake Manitoba/Lake Winnipegosis regions, forage purchase assistance of up to \$50 per tonne.
- To ensure payments are targeted to those most affected, payments will be calculated based on individual need and receipts will be required to ensure producers have incurred eligible transportation and feed costs.
- Farmers should contact their local MAFRD GO offices for applications, or visit the MAFRD website.

KAP will continue to press for improvements to farm business risk management programs that will make them more responsive to farm losses, so that farmers don't have to rely on ad hoc assistance programs. KAP will also continue to press for 100 per cent compensation on losses as a result of artificial flooding or the operation of a water-control structure.

WORK ON SUBMISSION FOR CTA REVIEW CONTINUES

► KAP continues to gather information for developing its submission to the Canada Transportation Act Review by meeting with stakeholders to gather information on the kinds of changes they need to see.

KAP's submission will ask for significant changes to the rail system — including penalties for railways when they breach service level agreements. As it stands now, it's a very difficult process for a shipper to collect from a railway on a service level agreement default.

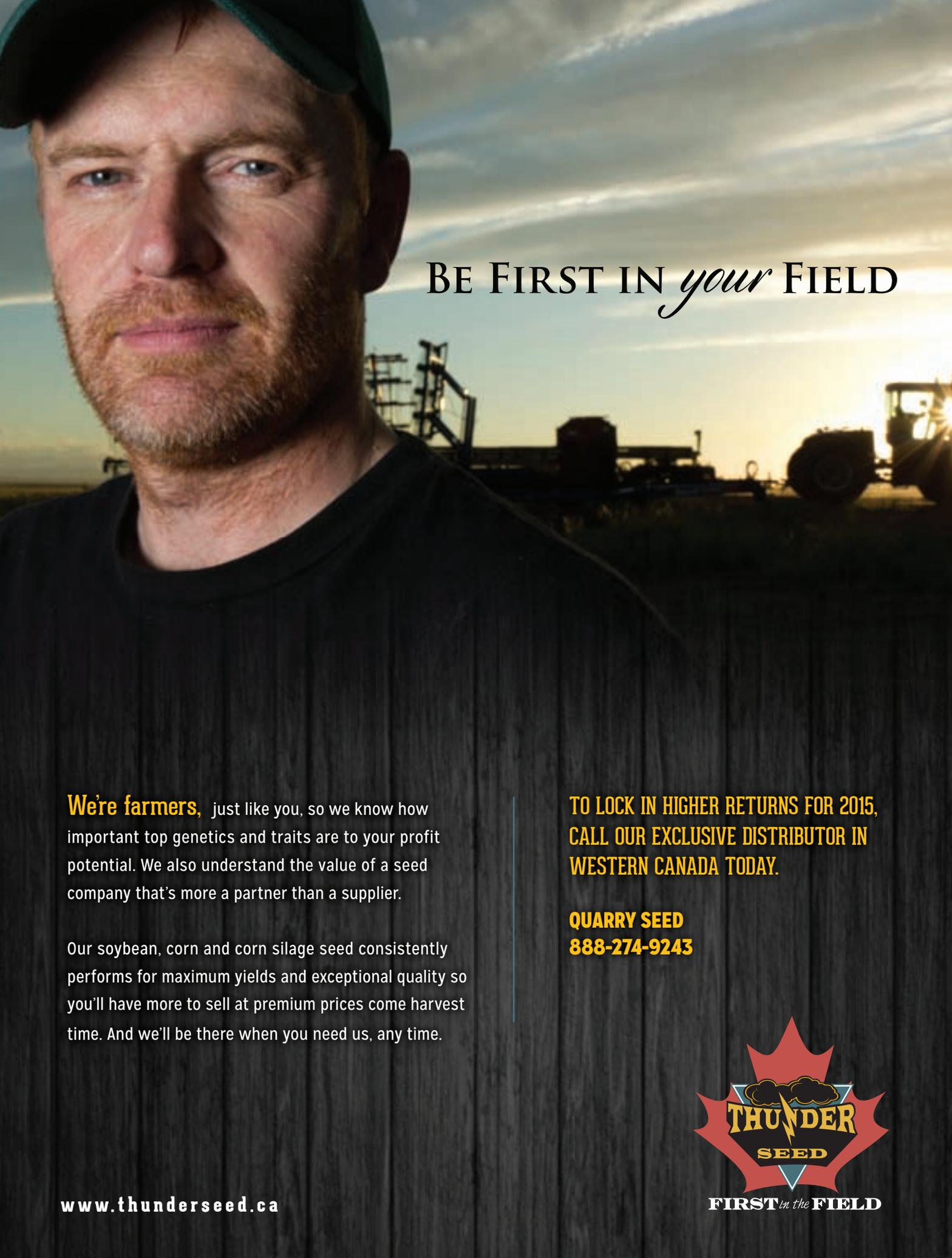
KAP will also be making specific reference to the needs of producer car shippers and the important role they play in grain transportation in Manitoba.

KAP SUCCESS: VARIANCE ISSUED ON DEADLINE FOR FERTILIZER APPLICATION

► Due to KAP's lobby efforts, the provincial government recently agreed to base the winter nutrient-application restriction on soil conditions and weather — as opposed to using the same date every fall and spring.

As a result, a variance to the November 10 start of the ban was issued on November 8, allowing farmers to apply nutrients until November 12 at midnight. In the spring, Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship will review the April 10 date for lifting the ban, also adjusting it according to soil conditions if need be.

» CONTINUED ON PG 14



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PRESENTATION ON PBR ACT, CASH ADVANCES

► KAP president Doug Chorney made a presentation in October to the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food regarding Bill C-18, The Agricultural Growth Act.

While the bill covers updates to nine different acts, Doug focussed on the changes to the Plant Breeders' Rights Act that will make Canada compliant with UPOV '91. He indicated the changes will encourage investment in new varietal development, but he stressed that costs to farmers for new seed technology must be transparent and fair.

Doug also commented on the positive changes to the Advanced Payments Program, but took the opportunity to call for an increase in the interest-free portion of the cash advance from \$100,000 to \$400,000. He also called for an increase in the maximum of the advance from \$400,000 to \$800,000, to reflect an increase in farm input costs.

MORE SUCCESS ON GRAIN DRYER INSPECTIONS

► Last year, after many discussions with the Office of the Fire Commissioner, KAP was successful in easing the inspection challenges surrounding grain dryers with a CSA 3.8 certification.

In addition, the OFC put standardized guidelines into place for a special acceptance inspection for used dryers

made before the CSA 3.8 standard came into effect, and it also developed service level standards.

This fall, as a result of the efforts KAP undertook last year, the Office of the Fire Commissioner added additional inspectors to deal with the heavy demand for grain dryer inspection. It also added engineers who can approve changes required by inspectors, prior to a second inspection.

Also this year, KAP lobbied the OFC to make a one-time exception and allow dryers installed by licensed installers to be used prior to inspection.

STRIVING TO TAKE THE STRESS OUT OF FARM SAFETY INSPECTIONS

► KAP met in the fall with officials from Manitoba Workplace Safety and Health on farm safety inspections, and received clarification on the process. If a safety violation is found during an inspection a fine will not be issued, but rather, an improvement order is given out to allow a farm to rectify a safety problem.

KAP is working work with SAFE Work Manitoba to develop a procedure that will help farmers better prepare for these inspections, and make farms safer overall. Watch for details!

PRESENTATION ON ANIMAL DISEASES AMENDMENT ACT

► In September, KAP general manager James Battershill made a presentation to

Resolutions from the fall General Council meeting

Biosecurity

Legislation allows right of entry onto farmland without permission for oil and gas companies, and farmers are not able to refuse entry — even if they are concerned about biosecurity. Therefore, KAP will lobby both levels of government to require oil and gas workers, and their companies, to be trained in biosecurity practices when they enter farmland.

Selling-price reporting

In this climate of marketing freedom, farmers need a better method of price reporting. Therefore, KAP will lobby the Government of Canada and the Government of Manitoba to implement mandatory selling-price reporting on all agricultural commodities.

Temporary Foreign Workers Program

Primary food producers and food processors are facing increasingly more cumbersome and restrictive temporary foreign worker regulations. Therefore, KAP will lobby the Government of Manitoba to forge stronger ties with the Government of Canada, so that the unique human resources challenges faced by the agriculture industry will be recognized, and the barriers the Temporary Foreign Workers Program creates for agriculture can be resolved.

Road and bridge upgrades

Grain delivery points have all but disappeared on the east side of the Red River, and grain is moving increasingly to points west of the river; however, infrastructure on the east side has not kept pace with traffic. Therefore, KAP will lobby the Government of Manitoba to upgrade roads and bridges to accommodate heavy traffic, or grandfather the use of the roads by agricultural producers to RTAC levels.



As a result of the efforts KAP undertook last year, the Office of the Fire Commissioner added additional inspectors to deal with the heavy demand for grain dryer inspection.

the provincial standing committee on the Animal Diseases Amendment Act. While commending the provincial government on its proposed amendments, he also made a number of recommendations, including:

- the opportunity for evaluation by the affected industry association of public advisories, reports or notices;
- clear, identifiable guidelines and expectations for inspectors coming onto a farmer's property;
- well-defined guidelines regarding the examination, quarantine, treatment and disposal of animals suspected of having a disease or having been exposed to a hazard;
- development of compensation guidelines.

HELPING IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CLUBROOT

► KAP has been working with Anastasia Kubinec, the oilseed specialist with MAFRD who is also a provincial expert on clubroot and biosecurity, to promote the Pest Surveillance Initiative she is helping to co-ordinate.

This a joint program between MAFRD and the Manitoba Canola Growers Association that is collecting soil samples to establish broad-spectrum information and maps on incidents of clubroot. If you would like to find out how you can get your field sampled, contact Alanna at the KAP office.

Kubinec urges producers to learn about field biosecurity if they are not already up to speed.

KAP continues to work with stakeholders including MASC and oil companies, as well as Manitoba Hydro, on developing and implementing biosecurity protocols. If you witness anyone entering your land without following proper biosecurity protocols, please document the event and contact the KAP office.

CURRENT LOBBY EFFORTS

- KAP is lobbying the federal government for the deferral of income tax on forced sale of all classes of livestock, in order to alleviate feed shortages.
- KAP has approached federal Finance Minister Joe Oliver regarding a tax

exemption on farm ownership transfers between siblings.

- KAP is lobbying the Province to include fuel storage once again as an eligible BMP under the Environmental Farm Plan incentive. It had previously qualified, but the recent program focus on nutrient management eliminated it. While KAP fully supports provincial assistance to help farmers better manage farm nutrients, the modernization of on-farm fuel storage would

also provide environmental benefits. It is a costly endeavour that few farmers can undertake without assistance.

- KAP has opened dialogue with Manitoba Hydro on the issue of rural service, sending a letter to CEO Scott Thomson requesting reliable, prompt, economical service, infrastructure maintenance, improved access to natural gas, three-phase power capacity and adequate staffing. MFV

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To Greener Fields



Portage-area farmer, KAP member looks back at almost three decades of working to improve safety and design of farm equipment

Lorne Henry got manufacturers to agree to standardize hydraulic quick couplers, three-point hitches on all makes of tractors, and the sizing of tractor tires. Another achievement was getting them to standardize hydraulic oils, too.

BY RICHARD KAMCHEN

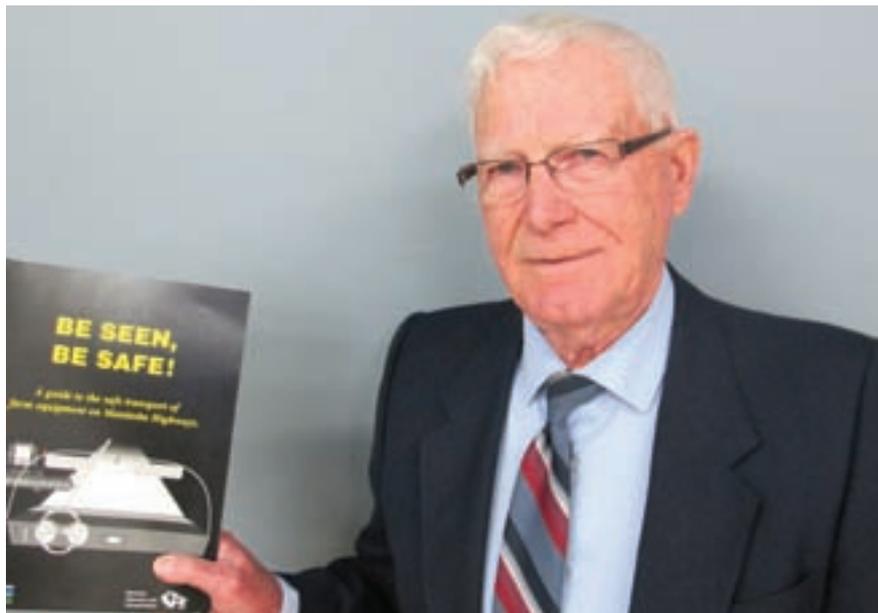
IN 1986, WHEN KAP PUT FORWARD Lorne Henry's name to sit on the Canadian Standards Association's Technical Committee on Agriculture, Machinery and Safety, Henry initially felt reluctant to accept. But when then-president Earl Geddes insisted, Henry thought he might try it for a year.

Now, after 28 continuous years at the post, Henry is recognized for the farm safety initiatives he's pushed through and his work to make farm equipment more user-friendly.

And now, after 28 years, Henry is stepping down.

"I very much enjoyed the work, and I think our CSA committee has created more safety for farmers and farm operators than any other organization," says Henry.

One of the first things he worked on was making the guarding on mov-



Lorne Henry convinced the provincial government to pass legislation in 1997 that required farmers to install lighting and markings on agricultural machinery, using a common North American standard. He then went on to develop a booklet, in conjunction with PAMI, for both farmers and dealers that explained step by step how to light and mark (retrofit) existing farm machinery.

ing parts less cumbersome to remove. When manufacturers attached the guards with numerous bolts, they effectively hindered necessary on-farm visual inspection, resulting in costly breakdowns.

And when farmers did remove the guards to undertake repairs, they didn't always replace them. Now those guards move on hinges, making inspections and repairs far simpler while improving safety.

Perhaps his highest profile achievement is tied to his work in ensuring greater visibility of farm equipment rolling down highways.

Former provincial cabinet minister Jack Penner remembers the government had been looking at ways to encourage farmers to put lighting on their equipment. Henry drove home the point that legislation was needed that would require farmers to install lighting and markings on agricultural machinery, based on the CSA standard that was in sync with the U.S. standard.

"It should be a North American thing," said Henry. Wherever people are driving down the highway, when they see the lights,

they'd know what it was and what it meant because it's familiar to them, it's the same everywhere."

Henry's resolve, however, would certainly be put to the test.

"The [Department of Highways] lawyers weren't about to have some farmer telling them how they should write their law," Henry said in explaining his efforts to get acceptance of a 15-point program he developed along with Bruce Allen, Prairie Agricultural Machinery Institute station manager at Portage la Prairie. "We spent a year-and-a-half arguing with them."

"I give Lorne Henry a tremendous amount of credit for being the kind of spokesperson at KAP that drove the issue," said Penner.

"They [the government] definitely had their own perspective on it," adds Allen, now the director of engineering at Westeel. "What they were proposing was in line with what was required, but was out of line with what was maybe practical or realistic."

Then-KAP president Leslie Jacobson finally helped break the gridlock after a >>

Perhaps his highest profile achievement is tied to his work in ensuring greater visibility of farm equipment rolling down highways



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meeting with Glen Findlay, the province's Minister of Highways and Transportation. Henry also gives recognition to Staff Sergeant George Wright of the RCMP, who had experience as a rural officer with observing farm machinery moving down highways without lights, and who backed his program.

"And virtually what we got in the end was what I proposed in the first place," says Henry.

Manitoba would pass legislation that regulated lighting and marking of farm equipment on highways in September 1997. And PAMI produced an accompanying guidebook, *Be Seen, Be Safe!*.

"One of the biggest reasons we needed this guidebook was because all the older machinery needed to be retrofitted," Henry points out. "Bruce Allen and I worked together assembling all the information needed on how to light and mark the machinery for both farmers and dealers."

In the end, they were able to take something complex and technical, and develop a well-received, readable document enhanced by visuals. Henry was instrumental in influencing the government to fund it, Allen says, and in promoting the brochure's use.

Other provinces followed Manitoba's lead – as would the U.S. – in adopting many of the same standards.

Much more recently, Henry pushed to standardize farm machinery with LED lights. With emergency vehicles already using them, he felt agricultural

“He’s able to achieve great balance between what farmers require, what regulators require and what manufacturers need to work with.”

equipment needed to get brighter too, just to get noticed.

"He elevated the usefulness on LED lights, getting them recognized as a very valuable option for lighting and marking, where previously the standard was silent on them," says Jim Wassermann, vice-president of PAMI Saskatchewan operations.

Wassermann has observed Henry for the last decade, and came away impressed by what he'd seen while they both served on the same CSA safety committee.

"He's able to achieve great balance between what farmers require, what regulators require and what manufacturers need to work with. And so he's never hesitant to raise concerns that need to be addressed. He's always been a very active and effective member of the committee."

Wassermann, currently the chairman of the committee, also watched Henry initiate numerous other changes. Among them was standardizing hydraulic oils used on farm machinery. It was a big issue for any farmer hooking up various implements with different brands on assorted tractor models.

"If you were running a potato digger one day and a pull-type combine the

next day of a different brand, there was a risk of contamination," Wassermann explains, noting farmers would also risk damaging their equipment and voiding their warranties. "So he had the industry agree to standardize."

Prior to that, Henry's efforts helped manufacturers agree to standardize hydraulic quick couplers, three-point hitches on all makes of tractors, and the sizing of tractor tires.

Henry also worked on helping produce a domestic standard for portable agricultural augers. There was a U.S. standard at the time, but it had become fairly outdated, and there'd been a need for Canada to develop its own up-to-date standard.

Wassermann also notes Henry's efforts on PTO drivelines, which had traditionally been engaged manually with a lever. When manufacturers moved to an electric switch, the engagement was almost instant, causing the drivelines and gear boxes on towed machinery with heavy loads to fail.

Henry brought the problem to the CSA committee's attention, and with the help of PAMI and its engineers, they approached the manufacturers.

"I emphasized that with the manual lever, the operator could 'feather' — or

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ease — in the engagement time and not cause stress and failure,” Henry says — an argument that convinced the manufacturers to slow the engagement time of the electric switch.

“Trying to get farmers, regulators and manufacturers talking about the issues and working their way through it, he was certainly a leader in that area,” says Wassermann. “He made sure if there was an issue, it was talked about; it wasn’t just pushed off onto the side. He made sure it stayed front and centre until it was talked through and sorted out.”

Henry is also recognized as a founding member of KAP after having been a part of the failed Manitoba Farm Bureau. One of the biggest differences between the two was giving elected members a greater say in KAP, an idea that’s proven to work.

“I always considered KAP to be a very good body to represent all the farmers and put their needs forward,” Henry says. “At one time you’re helping one part of the industry, and another time you’re helping another. You can’t always solve everyone’s problems completely, but that doesn’t say we can’t agree to do something.”

In addition to his CSA and KAP commitments, Henry also began sitting on the advisory board of the newly formed Canadian Agricultural Safety Association in 1991, acting as a liaison between it and the CSA to ensure collaboration on safety initiatives. He is still affiliated with the safety organization to this day.

Henry, who still farms out of Portage, offers a bit of simple advice to his replacement, KAP vice-president Dan Mazier, a grains and oilseeds producer near Justice, northeast of Brandon.

“You have to gain the respect of all original manufacturer engineers and farm safety representatives,” Henry says.

The chair of KAP’s Workplace and Employment Committee, and member of the Rural Development and Land Use Committee, Mazier also brings to the table an engineering background and 17 years’ experience in the fertilizer industry.

Mazier believes farmers have some

catching up to do with other industries when it comes to safety. He notes agriculture has only recently joined other manufacturing industries in requiring employees to undertake safety orientations, and adds a change of thinking is required.

KAP has responded to this challenge by focussing on universities and com-

munity colleges to address farm safety, which Mazier says tends to get overlooked in the agriculture curriculum.

“They’ve [students] got business plans and environmental farm plans, but where’s your safety plan? People are just starting to come around to that. I think we’re starting to see the change,” says Mazier. MFV

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Five years lost as farmers wait for better default protection on grain sales

BY DOUG CHORNEY

IN 2009, WESTERN CANADIAN FARM groups submitted a report to the Honourable Gerry Ritz, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, outlining options for a program that would provide security to producers when grain buyers defaulted on payments. The main options were fund-based, insurance-based or bond-based programs.

It was not that there wasn't already a form of protection in place. The Canadian Grain Commission did operate a bonding program in which it required grain buyers to have adequate levels of

bond capital prior to receiving a license permitting them to buy and sell grain. This bond security had to be set aside to be used if a buyer defaulted on payment to a farmer.

The problem was the program had significant flaws. Producers were dissatisfied because they were often not compensated the total amount they lost. In addition, because feed mills were exempt from the program, farmers who sold to them were extremely vulnerable.

Grain buyers, especially the smaller ones, didn't like the amount of capi-

tal that was tied up in bonding. And the federal government was concerned with the cost associated with administering the program.

Fast forward five years, and the program used in 2009 is not — as one would expect — a thing of the past. It is still in place because none of the options presented has been adopted.

What happened along the way is the CGC chose to pursue the insurance-based option, but lengthy negotiations with a major insurance player were recently terminated. The reason, the CGC has indi-



PHOTO: THINKSTOCK

KAP supports a fund-based option, but we are not opposed to re-exploring the insurance option or fixing the current bonding system. The point is that it's critical some form of action be taken immediately

cated, is the proposal it received was not in the best interest of all stakeholders.

With the collapse of the negotiations, it is now very alarming the CGC has not informed the industry what the plan is for going forward. Producers selling to feed mills are still particularly vulnerable, with no solution in sight. When Puratone filed for creditor protection several years ago, Manitoba farmers lost hundreds of thousands of dollars.

This is an urgent issue, and KAP is not satisfied with the vague CGC statement that it will continue to look at other options. Producers need to know when this will happen, and that it is a priority.

Some farm groups, KAP included, support a fund-based program where a levy on grain sales would go into a fund to be used when a producer doesn't receive payment. This type of producer security has been used successfully since 1985 in Ontario, where the fund is managed by a producer/industry board of directors which also administers and adjudicates claims.

If prairie farmers were to adopt this model, the obvious advantage is that insurance premiums would not have to be paid to a third-party organization whose main goal is to turn a profit. Instead, producer levies would be set cover administration and producer reimbursement — and that's all.

The program would initially require a federal government guarantee, as was provided by the Province of Ontario. After a set amount of time — most likely five years — the fund would be robust enough to stand on its own.

Transparency is also a strong selling point for this type of program because producers would know in advance what it costs and what the coverage is. This was a concern with the insurance-based option because farmers had no idea what it might look like, and were dependent on an insurance company to make that call. The fund-based program, on the other hand, would be producer owned and managed.

As I have said, KAP supports this option, but we are not opposed to re-exploring the insurance option or fixing the current bonding system. The point is that it's critical some form of action be taken immediately. With five years already gone, there is no further time to lose.

In the meantime, I urge the federal government to amend the Canada Grain Act regulations to include feed mills in the licensing and bonding system, so producers can be assured they will receive payment in the event of a default.

Farmers need federal action now, so that another half a decade doesn't slip by. **MFV**



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January 27, 28, 29 Delta Winnipeg

TUESDAY, JANUARY 27

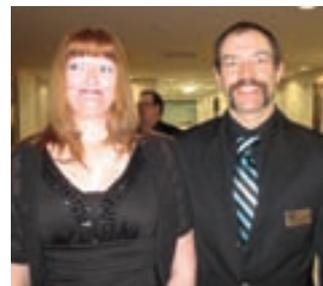
The first day of the meeting features an optional Farm Safety Workshop. For more information, contact Chandra at the KAP office – 204-697-1140.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 28

10:30 – 10:45	Call to Order – State of the Industry Address (D. Chorney)
10:45 – 11:00	General Manager’s Report (J. Battershill)
11:00 – 11:15	Greeting from the Province of Manitoba
11:15 – 12:00	Telling Agriculture’s Story (Speaker)
12:00 – 12:30	Resolutions
12:30 – 1:30	Lunch
1:30 – 2:00	Resolutions
2:00 – 2:45	On-farm Processing and Women in Agriculture (Speaker)
2:45 – 3:00	Break (Young Farmers Bear Pit Session begins)
3:00 – 3:15	Election of President
3:15 – 3:30	Auditor’s Report
3:30 – 3:45	Election of Vice-President
3:45 – 4:15	Resolutions
6:00 – 7:30	Cocktails and Banquet
7:30 – 8:30	Keynote Speaker

THURSDAY, JANUARY 29

7:30 – 8:30	Breakfast
8:30 – 9:00	Election of Vice-President
8:40 – 9:00	Resolutions
9:00 – 9:30	Preparing for Growing Forward 3 (CFA)
9:30 – 10:30	Agriculture in the Media (Speaker)
10:30 – 11:00	Break
11:00 – 11:30	Resolutions
11:30 – 12:15	Economic Outlook for Canadian Agriculture (Speaker)
12:15 – 12:45	Reflection on Presidency of KAP (Doug Chorney)
12:45	Adjourn



Keystone Agricultural Producers



KAP delegates, your meeting packages will be emailed to you. All other members, as well as non-members, industry representatives, media and government officials are welcome to all sessions, banquet excluded.



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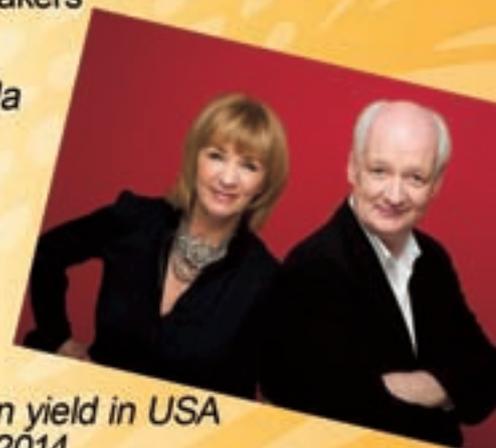
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- *Keynote Speaker: Drew Lerner*
Meteorologist, World Weather Inc.
- *Keynote Address:*
Kip Cullers: Producer of Highest recorded soybean yield in USA
David Hula: Producer of the Highest corn yield in 2014
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PHOTOS: THINKSTOCK



Manitoba Wheat and Barley Growers Association to hold first elections

A NEW ERA IN WHEAT AND BARLEY research in Manitoba will solidify this February when the freshly minted Manitoba Wheat and Barley Growers Association votes for its first round of elected directors.

The association is Manitoba's newest commodity organization, and it will collect and direct money for wheat and barley research. It will manage funding in much the same way that other organizations do — with a check-off.

"There are issues that have an enormous impact on the profitability of our

industry, and producers have to have funds available to respond to them. A check-off is the way to do that," explains the interim executive director of the organization, Brent VanKoughnet.

"There was some really interesting work done by Richard Gray from Saskatchewan that says dollars invested in public agricultural research and variety development can provide up to a 20 to one return on investment."

The Manitoba Wheat and Barley Growers Association is just one of sev-

eral similar organizations on the Prairies.

Upon the restructuring of the CWB, the federal government put a temporary check-off in place to continue funding research through the Western Grains Research Foundation. And meanwhile, prairie farmers set to work to develop provincial organizations to ensure a producers voice in the managing of future research funding and market development, when the temporary western Canadian deduction is over.

In 2012, representatives from Keystone Agricultural Producers, the Manitoba Oat Growers Association, Winter Cereals Manitoba Inc., the Manitoba Seed Growers Association and the Western Canadian Wheat Growers formed a steering committee and appointed an ad hoc board of directors to get a Manitoba wheat and barley organization on its feet.

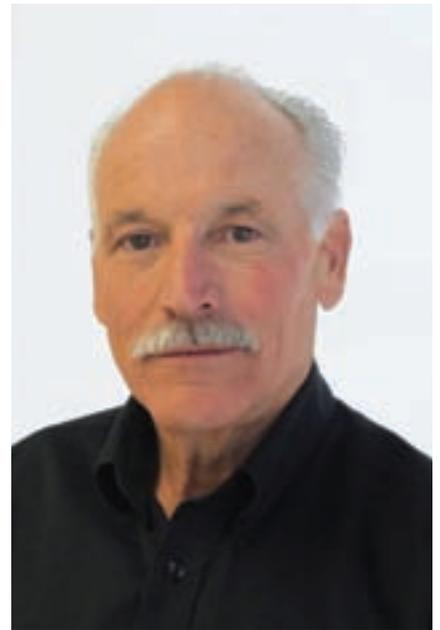
“Each province had to go through

the same process,” VanKoughnet said. “Alberta got the jump on it and was up and operating in 2012. Saskatchewan was up and operating August 1, 2013 and we began our Manitoba check-off in February of 2014.”

Unlike the other provinces who have separate commissions for wheat and barley, Manitoba opted for one association servicing both crops.

The current board of Manitoba Wheat and Barley Growers Association is made up of appointed directors, all of whom have shown tremendous leadership in getting the organization off the ground, says VanKoughnet. Over the next few years, these appointed positions will be phased into elected positions.

“When the producer steering committee appointed the six directors, three of them were for two-year terms and three were one-year terms so that the organization has some continuity through the start up. Three director positions are up for election this year,



Don Dewar, interim chair of the Manitoba Wheat and Barley Growers Association, and the other five interim directors have provided the leadership necessary to get the organization off the ground.



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Brent VanKoughnet, interim executive director of the MWBGA: "We need to be very strategic about how we build the capacity to be world class and to be competitive well into the future."

VanKoughnet says one of the most important things the organization can do is to make sure the industry keeps ahead agronomically with new varieties that will thrive in tomorrow's fields and meet the needs of tomorrow's markets

and three next year" said Don Dewar, >> current chair of the association and a Dauphin-area farmer.

The organization has set aside time at the Crop Connect Conference (Victoria Inn, Winnipeg) for its first annual general meeting, which is scheduled for the afternoon of February 18, and this is where the first seats will be contested. Nominations are open right up to the election.

Terms for the last three appointed directors will lapse this time next year, so another election will be held then.

The Manitoba wheat and barley check-off of 52 cents for wheat and 48 cents for barley, combined with the temporary federal check-off, add up to a dollar per tonne for either wheat or barley. With money starting to accumulate over the past year, the new association is ready to start allocating funds.

VanKoughnet says one of the most important things the organization can do is to make sure the industry keeps ahead agronomically with new varieties that will thrive in tomorrow's fields and meet the needs of tomorrow's markets.

"I think you can say that somewhere over 80 per cent of the cereal varieties grown in western Canada are developed through public breeding programs," he said. "We count on that innovation to keep us competitive, but if in the future our public system has fewer resources and more difficulty attracting the brightest minds, I think it puts us in a vulnerable position.

"We need to be very strategic about how we build the capacity to be world class and to be competitive well into the future."

Dewar says that there must be a large enough reserve of funds to cover any research agreements struck between the three provinces. Because the Manitoba Wheat and Barley Growers Association is not as big as its counterparts, its equal share will represent a greater chunk of its overall funds.

That means it will have to be very prudent with its investments.

"Over the winter and coming spring we'll be reviewing projects," Dewar said. "We'll be talking to Alberta and Saskatchewan, and find out what they are funding and what can we do together."

"There are a couple of projects that have already come our way — gene marking and ways to accelerate some techniques for breeding," adds VanKoughnet. "The gene mapping world allows you to sort and screen faster and more efficiently.

"That can accelerate our selection of which varieties show enough promise to take to the next level." MFV

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Here's how KAP tackled the issues that affected you and your farm this year.



\$36-plus million in education tax relief

As a result of KAP's intense lobbying efforts, the Manitoba government created a rebate to return education taxes on farmland. This year, over \$36 million has been put back in farmers' pockets! KAP continues to lobby for school tax relief on farm buildings, and for limits on the program to be removed.



Railways ordered to move a million tonnes of grain per week

KAP was instrumental in getting the trains moving last winter. As a result of KAP's lobbying and publicity efforts, the federal government agreed the railways were not performing and ultimately passed legislation ordering them to haul a minimum of a million tonnes of grain per week. KAP will continue to lobby for rail service improvement during the review of the Canada Transportation Act.



Flexibility for manure and fertilizer application

KAP successfully lobbied the provincial government to make the restriction on winter fertilizer and manure application flexible, based on whether the ground is frozen. This replaces the previous policy that solely relied on fixed dates every year, and will greatly improve farmers' ability to get fall nutrients applied in a late-harvest year.

And the list goes on! You can ensure KAP's work continues by renewing your membership for 2015.

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Farming has the highest incidents of workplace injury

KAP about to get tougher in pushing safety **BY JAMES BATTERSHILL, KAP GENERAL MANAGER**

IN MY TIME WORKING WITH FARMERS I've come to realize that there are three resources that they need in abundance to be successful in this industry: knowledge, money and time. (A little luck with the weather helps as well!)

Of these three resources, time seems to be the most valuable. You can borrow more money from ag lenders, while experience, education, friends, neighbours, and professional service providers help farmers become some of the most knowledgeable people in their fields.

Time, however, is much harder to come by on the farm. Farm Credit Canada doesn't lend it, and while you can learn to use it wisely, no amount of education will help you create more.

I point this out because over the next three years many farmers may be left questioning whether or not I understand the value of time on a farm at all.

That's because I'm going to ask you to use some of your time to read material, attend workshops, and meet with specialists in your machine sheds, in your barns and at your kitchen tables. It's all so you can develop individual farm safety plans.

Even worse, during the busiest time of year when you've got the least amount of time to spare, I'm going to ask that you take some of those precious few moments you have to implement that safety plan by finding your personal protective equipment, using machine guards, and taking the time to check and double check that you and your employees are working safely.

There are three reasons that I'm going to be asking for you to do this.

First, it's the law. I know that many KAP members don't realize their farms are subject to the Manitoba Workplace



It's not a badge of honour to be injured on the farm. Instead, the most admirable thing you can do is to keep farming and coming home safely to your family every day

Safety and Health Act, and related regulations. For farms that employ outside employees, the law is designed to ensure that employers provide their workers with a safe workplace, including the training necessary to ensure that accidents do not occur.

Farms without employees are still subject to the Act, in part because every operation has an outside contractor, delivery driver or customer entering the farm at some point, and you are responsible for their safety too.

The reality is that the department of Workplace Safety and Health has been given a mandate to increase inspections for high risk industries, including agri-

culture. Inspection officers are checking to ensure that your farm complies with the Act and regulations, and they have the legal right to do so.

Second, it's good business. Farm planning may take time, but farm accidents cost both time and money. According to Dr. Richard Rusk, the Chief Occupational Medical Officer for the province, over the past five years there were more than 2,200 reported injuries on farms in Manitoba that resulted in missed work time beyond the day of the injury.

The financial cost of these injuries to farms is significant. Even a non-hospitalization injury on average will cost a farm \$700 in lost work time and efficiency. An injury that results in hospitalization costs \$10,000, a permanent disability costs on average \$143,000, and a work fatality will cost between \$275,000 and \$1 million.

The third reason KAP is going to suggest, push, bribe, coerce, guilt, and do anything else in our power to get farmers in Manitoba to do extra work, take extra time, and put in extra effort to plan for farm safety is because it is our mandate to care for the physical well-being of farmers in Manitoba.

In the past five years approximately 5,000 farmers left the industry. Some left because of economic challenges, some went on to successful retirements, and some left for other jobs or moved out of the province.

Twenty-six of those farmers, however, are no longer farming today because they died in farm accidents. That's more workplace fatalities than mining, services, fishing, manufacturing and trades combined.

There is no doubt in my mind that farming is the most dangerous occupa-

» CONTINUED ON PG 33

Happy Holidays

FROM KAP

Best wishes for a joyous and safe holiday season.

– Doug, Dan, Curtis, Alanna, Val,
James, Kathy, Chandra, April

Keystone Agricultural Producers



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- **KEYNOTE SPEAKER:** Dr. John Fast, the “family business doctor” will provide insight into farm transition from generation to generation, including interaction with participants at different stages of the succession process.



Presented in part by Keystone Agricultural Producers Young Farmers Committee and Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Development. For more information visit the MAFRD website.

2015 MANITOBA YOUNG FARMERS CONFERENCE REGISTRATION

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Email: _____

Special dietary request: _____

Send form and cheque (made out to Keystone Agricultural Producers) to: KAP Young Farmers, 203 - 1700 Ellice Avenue, Winnipeg MB R3H 0B1

CONFERENCE FEES *(non refundable)*

- **Early bird:** \$125 per person by February 2
- **Regular:** \$135 per person by February 18
- **Daily:** \$75 per person by February 18 (no banquet)
- **Banquet:** \$50 per person by February 18

HOTEL INFORMATION

Group Name: MB Young Farmers;
Group Number: 276095
Rate: \$114.99 + taxes
(single occupancy) – includes one complimentary breakfast
\$124.99 + taxes
(double occupancy) – includes two complimentary breakfasts

tion in Manitoba, and yet our education and prevention efforts are dwarfed by industries with comparably low risk of injury. It is unacceptable that death and dismemberment are considered to be the cost of doing business for farmers in this province.

In the immediate future, you can expect to see KAP increase our attention and efforts on farm safety issues through our own safety initiatives and by partnering with other organizations to deliver programs to our members.

Three introductory farm safety workshops are going to be held by KAP in partnership with the University of Manitoba, Safe Work Manitoba, and the Manitoba Canola Growers Association this winter. These will act as a first step towards building a base level of knowledge about the risks and responsibilities around farm safety.

KAP has also partnered with Safe Work Manitoba to provide a farm safety

» CONTINUED ON PG 34



"During the busiest time of year when you've got the least amount of time to spare, I'm going to ask that you take some of those precious few moments to implement your safety plan by finding your personal protective equipment, using machine guards, and taking the time to check and double check that you and your employees are working safely."



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Growing Forward 2 

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Canada 

specialist who will be available to farmers in the coming months to assist them in preparing for a visit by a Workplace Safety and Health inspection officer.

Farms inspections are done by WSH alone, but if your farm is contacted about an inspection, this specialist is available to help you prepare, pre-identify areas of concern, and help prevent improvement orders and fines from being issued.

Finally, KAP is working with other stakeholders and the Province on a com-

prehensive Farm Safety Plan program, modelled after the successful Environmental Farm Plan program. It is expected that this program will roll out in late 2015.

The success of these initiatives will depend entirely on farmers in this province recognizing that their health and wellbeing is even more valuable than the time it takes to plan for farm safety.

Farm accidents happen every day. No one believes it will happen to them, and

farmers act as if their common sense alone can protect them from injury. The reality is that common sense is the first thing to fail when you're in a rush, tired from working a 20 hour day, or working with someone without a farm background. Well defined safe work practices that are followed are far more reliable.

It's not a badge of honour to be injured on the farm. Instead, the most admirable thing you can do is to keep farming and coming home safely to your family every day. MFV

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Visit KAP at Ag Days



Come to the KAP booth during Ag Days and find out what we've done for farmers – including you – over the past year. It's also an opportunity to meet with outgoing president Doug Chorney.

See you Jan. 20 to 22 at the Brandon Keystone Centre!



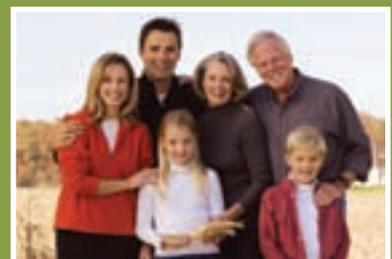
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27

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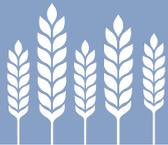
22

on managing people



8

ag industry outlook presentations



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attendees



More than

100

cities and towns



1

very good year



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