



Manitoba



# Farmers' Voice

The official publication of Keystone Agricultural Producers

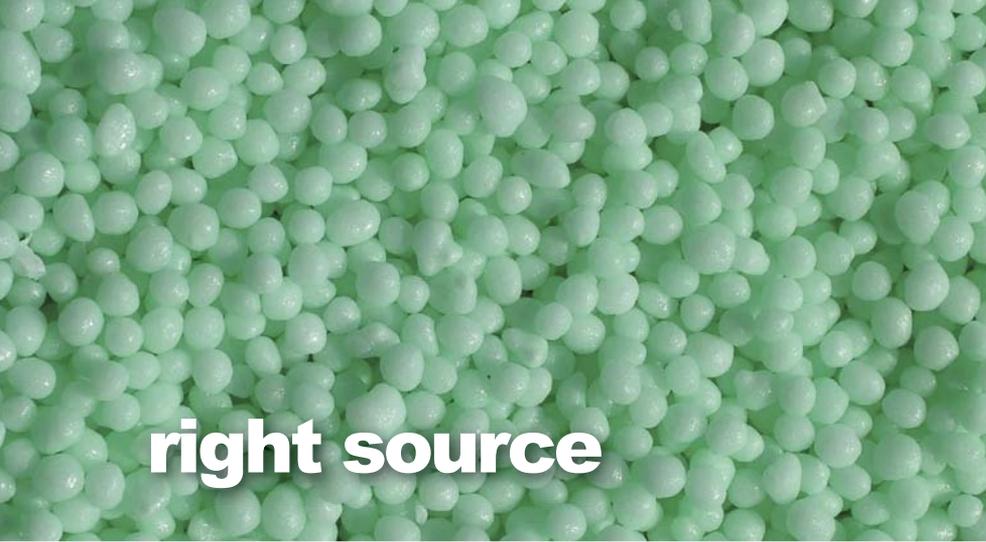
## MEMBER PROFILE

**Meet Chris McCallister:**  
farmer, family man,  
entrepreneur, pilot,  
investor...and more



### Plus:

- KAP working on grain dryer approvals
- Mayo Clinic access for KAP members
- Improving soil health pays off



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# Farmers' Voice

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James Battershill

## Public consultation is the essence of good government decisions

**T**here have been quite a few controversial pieces of legislation introduced by the provincial government this spring session.

The one that everyone is talking about is the *Manitoba Building and Renewal Funding and Fiscal Management Act* (Bill 20), which increases the PST by one percentage point to eight per cent.

In addition, three major changes to the Farmland School Tax Rebate program, also introduced in Bill 20, will cost some farmers thousands in lost tax rebates if the new program caps and limitations are not reversed. MAFRI's budget will save an estimated \$6.2 million from these changes, but we cannot ignore the fact that this money should not have been funded out of the agriculture budget in the first place.

KAP stands by the policy that education tax should not be levied against property and land, but rather education should be funded from general government revenues. The Province must commit to consulting with all Manitobans to try and find a more effective way of funding education, where the tax burden is more evenly distributed.

Another bill, the *Municipal Modernization Act* (Bill 33) seeks to force rural municipalities with fewer than 1,000 residents to amalgamate with a neighbouring RM. The bill has been decried by the Association of Manitoba Municipalities repeatedly, and KAP has voiced support in the call for more consultation on the issue before the Province forces this process on RMs.

AMM has been clear it is not opposed to the idea that in some circumstances it may be appropriate for RMs to be combined. However, forcing this process through legislation is akin to putting a puzzle together with a hammer. Eventually everything will stick together, but not as it should.

The Province has a responsibility

to work with AMM and the RMs that will be directly affected, and conduct extensive consultation to ensure that all stakeholders will benefit from and buy into the change.

Yet another bill, the *Government Efficiency Act* (Bill 39), introduced for first reading on May 7, will amalgamate various government boards and councils covered by separate legislation. It will eliminate the Agricultural Crown Lands Appeal Board and assign its functions to the MASC appeal tribunal. It will also amalgamate the Manitoba Farm Mediation Board, Manitoba Farm Lands Ownership Board, Manitoba Farm Machinery Board and the Manitoba Farm Practices Protection Board into a new Manitoba Farm Industry Board.

Since these changes are primarily administrative in nature, it was determined that consultation with industry stakeholders was not warranted.

However, KAP has regularly been asked about the work of the Farm Lands Ownership Board and its act. There is genuine concern in rural Manitoba that the rapid rise in farmland value could be linked to an infusion of foreign direct investment through agents acting on behalf of foreign citizens. There is a legitimate debate to be had about the influence of this type of investment on local economies; KAP is willing to lead this type of discussion, but we need active participation from lawmakers who have the ability to make any changes deemed necessary.

Extensive consultation may not be the most expedient process, and it may delay a government's legislative priorities, but it is certainly critical to both the development of good public policy and the establishment of buy-in from those who are affected by it. In this case, we need to have a full discussion between KAP, government and other stakeholders to look at how this new Farm Industry Board can function most effectively and achieve the mandate set out for it in legislation.

This is not to say that KAP has not recently had positive experiences with government departments and agencies. Within the last year MAFRI, Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation, Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship, and Manitoba Hydro have all reached out to us for input prior to implementing regulatory changes or beginning a project.

This session of the legislatures has made it clear, though, that there is more work to be done. KAP, along with our commodity group partners and other stakeholders, must press government at all levels to engage with us at the beginning, rather than the end, of the legislative process.

While it may be notable and newsworthy when a government decision is made and then changed as a result of our advocacy efforts, we will all be much better off if thorough consultation is done and the best public policy decisions made from the onset. ■

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**KAP**

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## President's Message



Doug Chorney

# KAP delivers value to all Manitoba farmers

At the time of writing this message (late June), we continue to experience cooler-than-normal temperatures and producers in some areas of the province have not been able to complete seeding operations. Those that have done all their seeding see crops about two weeks behind average development. Winter wheat and forages, too, are behind.

It will be a late harvest by all early indications, and that's why KAP has continued to work with the Office of the Fire Commissioner (OFC), the propane industry and grain-drying equipment providers to address member concerns around both grain dryers and low temperature bin heaters.

Many farmers in Manitoba, including the expanding grain corn sector, use such equipment or plan to install new equipment to deal with late-harvest drying challenges. We have been working on the issue of permit requirements for new and used equipment with the OFC, and we will have the OFC on hand at our July General Council meeting to do an update presentation.

This is a classic case of a problem faced by all Manitoba farmers that KAP is working to resolve. We have successfully co-ordinated industry, government and farmer engagement at the highest levels to solve this problem – and there is *no other organization* in the position to do this type of work on your behalf!

There is a challenge, however, that KAP faces every day. We use

our limited resources, with only 3,700 paid members, to bring benefits to all of the estimated 10,000 commercial farmers in Manitoba. What this means is that more than half the farmers in the province are getting a free ride, while we struggle on a limited budget. I urge these farmers to realize that they have a responsibility to pay their own way.

We have looked to government for assistance in re-visiting our check-off legislation to solve this membership imbalance, and we will continue that effort. Discussions continue with MAFRI Minister Ron Kostyshyn – and I want to thank him for his leadership, commitment and recognition that general farm organizations play a critical role in our industry.

Regardless of what happens, we must ensure that a clear value proposition is evident to every KAP member, and also to non-members. I found District 1 General Council delegate Bill Campbell's comments inspiring at our April meeting. He said "for \$200 (in yearly membership), this organization has returned to me far, far more than my GICs and all the rest of my investments." He was referring to the fact that he annually receives an 80 per cent education tax rebate on his farmland, which in his case is approximately \$4,500.

This is another good example of something KAP delivered to every farm in Manitoba. And we're still not done, as we continue to lobby for a 100 per cent rebate. We also met with Finance Minister Stan Struthers to express our disappointment in the clawback of \$6.2 million from the current rebate program as a result of the spring budget.

“We use our limited resources, with only 3,700 paid members, to bring benefits to all of the estimated 10,000 commercial farmers in Manitoba. What this means is that more than half the farmers in the province are getting a free ride.”

Again, this shows the value that all Manitoba farmers receive thanks to those who support KAP through membership. It goes without saying that if you have ever cashed a school tax rebate cheque, KAP is benefiting your farm.

KAP has also been very active on environmental files such as the many facets of water management, 4R nutrient stewardship, the ban on coal planned for January 2014, and the proposed cosmetic pesticide ban. I am pleased to report that our efforts have been noticed and that we have successfully moved forward the interests of agriculture.

While understanding that we have challenges ahead, I want to thank Conservation and Water Stewardship Minister Gord Mackintosh for hearing our message and acknowledging the importance of working with farmers in a positive and respectful fashion.

Another file we continue to work on is the need for landowner compensation in exchange for public benefit, as conceived originally by KAP leadership through the Alternative Land Use Service (ALUS). We are pleased that the provincial government seems to now recognize that more programming of this type is needed.

We thank all the members who fund this important work KAP undertakes, and we celebrate the fact that they want to be part of a positive, professional, progressive and strong farm group that is respected across Canada. We have earned our reputation through hard work and dedication to delivering results every day. Now it's time for non-members to recognize this, too.

*Please have a safe and successful harvest,*  
Doug 🐾

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# Chris McCallister: passion for challenge keeps him busy on and off the farm

By Richard Kamchen



Chris McCallister grows a variety of crops – including the traditional (oats), the new (edible beans), and the specialty (calendula).

Chris McCallister is a fourth generation farmer whose operation, five miles north of Portage la Prairie, is based on the new and the challenging. Edible beans are currently the mainstay of his 1,300-acre Red Beard Farms, but he's also tried his hand at hemp, echinacea (for the health food market) and calendula (for industrial oil).

He admits trying to focus on crops others might be somewhat wary about growing.

"I'm not scared to try stuff. It doesn't always work, but there's huge potential in

some of these new products," he said. "I love the challenge. The traditional wheat and canola bore me. I look at the economic potential. I guess I'm a bit of a risk-taker. I like the potential for economic return."

Hemp, he noted, can be particularly challenging, especially getting the combining done without damaging equipment. The market is also small, with just a couple of buyers in Manitoba such as Hemp Oil Canada in Ste. Agathe and Manitoba Harvest Hemp Foods and Oils in Winnipeg. Chris has also grown seed hemp for a breeder out of Saskatoon.

"It's a small niche market, but there is growing demand around the world for it."

Chris notes that his region allows him to produce a variety of crops: "We're kind of spoiled with our soil: we can grow everything. We've just got to make sure there's a market to back it."

Red Beard Farms Ltd., part of the original McCallister parcel of land that was settled a century ago, was incorporated 12 years ago, but his parents' operation, McCallister Farm Ltd., also on the original land parcel, will celebrate its 100th anniversary this summer.

“It’s a family farm with a lot of history,” Chris explained.

“It’s the old story that they’re driving across the Prairies and the wagon wheel fell off in Portage and they stayed,” he joked. “Basically, the family came from Scotland to Ontario, then moved to Manitoba and set up a farm on the east side of Winnipeg; didn’t like the soil on the east side and then moved out to Portage looking for better soil, and been near Portage ever since.”

Chris didn’t immediately follow in his parents’ footsteps, and actually left the farm after high school. But while travelling in Europe, he realized he loved farming and wanted to get back to it. When he returned, he completed his diploma in agriculture at the University of Manitoba and he’s been farming ever since.

Now married to wife Erin and with a daughter, Kaitlyn, who’s set to turn five, he’s interested in everything agricultural – including KAP. He joined Manitoba’s largest farm lobby group about a decade ago, thanks to another member who would in time go on to lead KAP as its president.

“It was actually my neighbour, Ian Wishart, who got me involved and I’ve been involved ever since,” said Chris. “I love the policies and politics behind agriculture, and I think somebody has to stand up and voice their opinion. I’m honoured to represent the farmers in my area.”

As a board member of KAP’s District 6, as well as a member of the Rural Development and Land Use Committee and a member of the Young Farmers Committee, Chris helps farmers move concerns forward as resolutions. Once passed, these resolutions are acted upon by KAP to affect change with governments and other stakeholders.

In addition to his interest in farm policy, Chris also has a great interest in new business opportunities. He’s currently considering starting his own crop-spraying business, after recently completing an aerial application program and obtaining his aerial applicators’ license. He already has his pilot’s license, which he received five years ago.

He recently bought a plane, and will begin first by spraying his own crops.

**(Continued on page 10)**



Chris and Erin McCallister with daughter Kaitlyn. Erin, who works at the Portage and District Arts Centre, also works on the farm when she can.

“I’m not scared to try stuff. It doesn’t always work, but there’s huge potential in some of these new products. I love the challenge.”

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Chris with daughter Kaitlyn whose picture will be his talisman during the STARS Rescue on the Island.

Chris is also a director for the Crop Research Organization of Portage, an independent group of farmers that conduct research trials. He's a member of a diversification committee for Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives, and a member of the Portage Chamber of Commerce.

"I'm always scheming up stuff," he said. "I would also like to own my own brew pub or restaurant – but this would be way down the road."

Meanwhile, Chris has no shortage of present-day projects. He's a shareholder in Avena Foods, a farmer-owned oat plant in Saskatchewan that produces products such as gluten-free rolled oats and baking mixes for celiac sufferers. While he grows oats himself, he sells them to the closer Can-Oat Milling Products in Portage.

Besides considering Avena Foods' business plan a strong one, he also has a number of family members who suffer from

celiac disease: "It seemed like a nice fit."

Chris is also a director for the Crop Research Organization of Portage, an independent group of farmers that conduct research trials. He's a member of a diversification committee for Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives, and a member of the Portage Chamber of Commerce. He also finds the time to give back to his alma mater.

"I donate my time to the University of Manitoba (agriculture diploma program) whenever I can," he said, explaining that he often hosts student tours and sits on panels that judge students' final presentations.

There is also another project that is currently on Chris's list. His father, Robert, will turn 65 soon and Chris is helping with the succession planning. He's already working his dad's acres and his own – all 3,700 of them – and now this necessary formality is being put into place. It's a very complex and slow moving process, he said, something that takes up a lot of his time.

With all he has going on, Chris is busy from dawn to dusk – and often longer. So how does he find the time for sleep?

"I don't," he joked. "There'll be lots of time later." ■



## Rising to the STARS challenge

As if family, farming, agricultural commitments and community involvement don't keep him busy enough, Chris has volunteered to be part of an event that will help raise money for the STARS air ambulance service that has recently expanded in Manitoba.

He, along with nine other community/business leaders – including the mayor of Virden and the CEO of Tundra Oil and Gas – will be dropped off on a wilderness island (location is secret), and won't get off until they each raise \$100,000. Modelled after an event in Calgary that takes place in the mountains, the Manitoba Rescue On the Island will happen on September 12.

"I think it's a really great cause – and I'm honoured to be representing agriculture," Chris said. "I'll have to take some time off from harvesting, but it'll be worth it."

He's heard rumours about wolves being on the island, and he's not sure if he and his fellow participants will have to build their own accommodations – but he's excited about the challenge. He said his good luck charm will be a picture of his daughter.

"I've never done anything like this before. I support STARS for my daughter, my family, and my community because you just never know when someone might need it."

Chris has a big job ahead of him to raise the money, and is hitting the pavement now that seeding is done. He must receive pledges prior to the event, and then ask those who have pledged to release the money on September 12 – so that he can get off the island.

If you're interested in sponsoring Chris, please go to his website at [foundation.stars.ca/chrismccallister](http://foundation.stars.ca/chrismccallister).

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## Highlights from the last quarter

### SPEAKING UP FOR FARMERS

- KAP expressed concerns on behalf of farmers to competition law officers from the Competition Bureau regarding Agrium's acquisition of Viterra's retail assets in Western Canada – a part of the Glencore-Viterra deal that has not yet been approved by the bureau.  
By both producing and distributing nitrogen fertilizer, Agrium has the potential to promote and market highly priced liquid and granular fertilizer over anhydrous ammonia – and there is a relatively high cost for farmers in switching between different kinds of nitrogen fertilizer. In addition, the integrated manufacturing

and retailing components of Agrium could potentially result in reduced competition and/or higher prices.

- The KAP management team met with provincial Conservation and Water Stewardship Minister Gord Mackintosh regarding the impending coal ban and the proposed cosmetic pesticide ban. KAP reiterated its concerns about weed pressure and seed drift from urban areas onto farmland, and the effect it will have on production.
- KAP president Doug Chorney appeared before the Federal Standing Committee on the Environment and Sustainable Development regarding habitat conservation. He stressed KAP's position that farmers and landowners

must be fully compensated for any measures required and any losses incurred while protecting legislated endangered species. He also discussed the ALUS program, as well as the success of the EFP program.

- KAP issued a news release after the incident at the Portage Diversion when farmers occupied the channel to prevent the diversion from opening, explaining that it was an indication of their desperation and frustration.
- KAP continued to participate in the coalition that is asking the federal government to take a second look at Canadian Grain Commission user fees that are for the good of the public, and not a service to farmers.



KAP told the Competition Bureau that the integrated manufacturing and retailing components of Agrium could potentially result in reduced competition and/or higher prices.



KAP reiterated its concerns to the Province about weed pressure and seed drift from urban areas onto farmland as a result of the cosmetic pesticide ban.

## FARM AND RURAL INTERESTS

- KAP is working with the Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan and other western stakeholders on moving forward with an alternative business plan in order to save the shelterbelt tree nursery at Indian Head. The group received funding from the Canadian Agricultural Adaption Program to hire a consultant, and is also seeking assurances from federal minister Gerry Ritz that the nursery will stay open for another year in order to allow time to put the plan in place.
- Following an annual meeting resolution calling for Manitoba Hydro to extend affordable natural gas service to farms where local pipeline access is available, KAP met with Hydro and will work with officials there to present farmers with information on pipeline access, as well as alternate energy sources.
- In response to KAP-lead resolutions passed at the Canadian Federation of Agriculture's annual meeting, CFA has established an oil and gas pipeline

review committee that will lobby at the national level.

- Membership on the Crop Residue Burning Advisory Committee remains ongoing; KAP committee rep Brad Rasmussen says in order to build on this success and avoid future restrictions, producers should exercise extreme care in burning residue. Always check for district or municipal burning bans.
- KAP continues to work with the Province on a new approach to drainage licensing.
- Further to an annual meeting resolution, KAP has contacted Rogers Communications to ask that Rogers enter into a service-sharing agreement with SaskTel, similar to the agreement it has with MTS in Manitoba, to ensure that Rogers' Manitoba customers have adequate cell service in Saskatchewan.
- KAP attended a stakeholder consultation with Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation regarding the repair of the bridge on Highway 23 at Morris,

and provided information on times of year that would be least disruptive to farmers for closing the bridge.

- Doug Chorney, on behalf of KAP, represented farmers at a Manitoba Hydro discussion regarding the way in which stakeholder consultations should be approached for future power line transmission corridors and routes.

## SUSTAINABILITY

- KAP will again be involved in delivering the Environmental Farm Plan program, this time under Growing Forward 2. To schedule an EFP workbook review or to get a copy of your certificate of completion, contact Alanna at [alanna.gray@kap.mb.ca](mailto:alanna.gray@kap.mb.ca).
- Work on the support and promotion of the 4Rs of nutrient stewardship, in partnership with the Canadian Fertilizer Institute, is in the planning stage. CFI has set the implemented dates for this winter and next summer on a number of initiatives. The 4Rs are important economically and environmentally.
- The partnership with Lake Friendly, the coalition that is engaging all Manitobans to do their parts in protecting Lake Winnipeg, remains strong. Doug Chorney attended a news conference where a new initiative was announced that will see sewage upgrades in 16 communities. KAP is also involved in the group's efforts on involving schools in promoting Lake Friendly practices.

(Continued on page 14)



KAP is working with other western stakeholders on moving forward with an alternative business plan in order to save the shelterbelt tree nursery at Indian Head.



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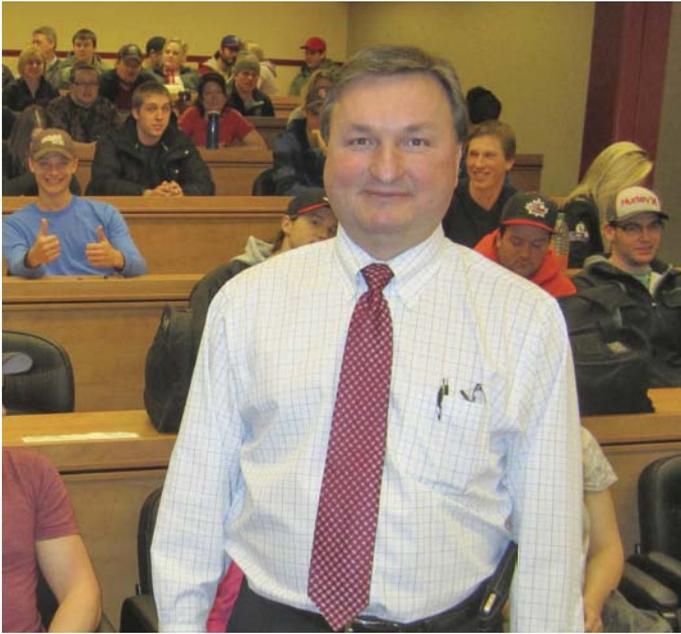
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Doug Chorney spoke to Assiniboine Community College agribusiness and environmental technology students about water management.



Nevin and Tania Bachmeier speaking about agri-food innovation at the Legislative Building.

- Executive Board member Rob Brunel represented KAP at a workshop titled Keeping Water on the Land, where he advocated for compensation to producers who lose productive land by maintaining wetlands.
- KAP environmental stewardship efforts were highlighted by Conservation and Water Stewardship Minister Gord Mackintosh at a Ducks Unlimited reception.
- KAP is supporting the efforts of Tire Stewardship Manitoba.

### 2013 PROVINCIAL BUDGET RESPONSE

- KAP reacted to the budget with a news release and a variety of media interviews given by president Doug Chorney and VP Dan Mazier. Front and centre was reduction to the Farmland School Tax Rebate program through the changes to the rebate rules.
- Doug issued a post-budget commentary indicating how the Province is back-tracking on the education tax rebate, asking for a reversal on changes made to the program in the budget.

### FARM PRODUCTION

- The Grains, Oilseeds and Pulses Committee met to discuss proposed changes to variety registration for wheat, forage seeds and some pulses. The committee has concerns about a wholesale overhauling of existing systems, but recognizes that some changes may be necessary.
- The Livestock and Traceability Committee met via conference call and discussed its work with the Provincial Animal Care Committee on a review of emergency preparedness for accidents involving the transportation of livestock. Deficiencies will be identified so that training for stakeholders can be delivered.
- The petition to the Province on behalf of the proposed Manitoba Wheat and Barley Growers Association has been submitted. Approval is needed to empower the organization to begin operations.
- KAP attended a Provincial Animal Care Committee meeting, where humane transportation and handling of livestock was discussed. To

complement increased CFIA inspection at auction marts, assembly yards and slaughter facilities, KAP will be exploring, with commodity groups, delivery of a certified livestock transportation course for farmers and others involved in transporting and handling livestock.

- Ideas for potential research projects were put forward to the Prairie Agricultural Machinery Institute – including height standards for equipment so that it can pass under Manitoba Hydro power lines, standards for cab noise, a cost-benefit analysis of grain dryers, and a study of tile drainage.

### WORKPLACE AND EMPLOYMENT

- KAP met with representatives from the Office of the Fire Commissioner, the Canadian Propane Association and grain dryer dealers to receive clarification on issues surrounding Canadian standards for new grain dryers and low-temperature bin-dryer systems. (See page 18 for more info.)

## Staff changes

Former policy analyst James Battershill has moved into the vacant general manager's position, Alanna Gray has become policy analyst and Wanda McFadyen has taken on the new position of operations co-ordinator. April Kuz is the new receptionist. Kathy Ulasy remains the financial co-ordinator and Val Ominski remains the communications co-ordinator. ▶

# Grassroots democracy at work

- KAP's spring General Council was held in Portage la Prairie, where resolutions included lobbying against changes to the Farmland Education Tax Rebate program, pressing for additional federal funding when flood waters originate outside Manitoba, and advocating for more farmer-based representation on the Surface Rights Board.
- Work is already under way for the KAP annual general meeting slated for January 29-31. If you're a delegate, plan now to attend this special 30th anniversary edition! ▶

Meanwhile, if you're setting up a new system, contact your dealer as soon as possible for inspection arrangements.

- Four workshops were organized, in conjunction with the Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council, on agriculture recruitment and retention.
- Farm safety specialist Amanda Briese continues to have input on a smartphone app for safe work procedures on the farm.
- KAP is consulting with the provincial safety co-coordinator to discuss delivery of farm safety programming.
- Amanda Briese is conducting farm safety assessments for KAP members; participants will be entered to win an iPad.

## STAKEHOLDERS AND THE PUBLIC

- KAP members Nevin and Tanya Bachmeier spoke about young farmers and agri-food innovation during a presentation at the provincial Ag Awareness event held at the Legislative Building.
- Doug Chorney spoke to Assiniboine Community College agribusiness and environmental technology students about water management and the need for a provincial water strategy. He also reviewed KAP's ag awareness efforts with them, highlighting the Sharing the Harvest campaign
- The management team represented KAP at commodity organization annual meetings, and at the Prairie Improvement Network (formerly MRAC) annual meeting.
- KAP issued a variety of new releases addressing topics from COOL to farm safety, to the flooding of farmlands. ▶

## Congratulations to all Manitoba 4-H Leaders for their nominations to the Manitoba Agriculture Hall of Fame.



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# Your Business through the Bank's Eyes

PREPARE EFFECTIVE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS TO SAFEGUARD YOUR BUSINESS

By Peter Manness, MNP Farm Management Consulting

**A**s a farm owner, you probably haven't worried about updating your resume recently. After all, it's unlikely you'll be applying for jobs or lining up interviews anytime soon – you've got a thriving farm business to manage and grow. But the financial health and stability of your farm may actually rely on what many banks see as the equivalent to a business resume: your farm financial statement.

A properly prepared financial statement provides your business partners, such as banks and suppliers, with a more accurate report card of your farm's performance than your tax return or bank balance. It includes year-over-year adjustments and shows how your business performance is trending.

As your farm grows, your bank will become a larger business partner. To

think of it another way, the more you borrow, the more attention your lender will pay to your farm's performance. Just because you have lots of equity or your loan payments are always on time, doesn't mean the bank will consider your account ideal. The more capital you require, the more lending requirements – called covenants – your bank will put in place.

A covenant is a condition on your loan, typically related to things like debt service and capital expenditures. The purpose of a covenant is to protect lenders by flagging any potentially risky financial behaviour by borrowers. If you consistently break your covenants, your loan may be considered in default and the bank can potentially increase your interest rate, or even ask for the loan to be repaid in full.

Even if you have a personal relationship with your account manager, they may be unable to help if someone at the corporate level decides your farm business is a financial risk. Risk-averse corporate leaders evaluate your management capabilities strictly through formulas and projections based on your financial statements, and not who you are as an individual.

If you're not sure what your 'business resume' says about your farm, it's time to talk to your trusted business advisor. They'll help ensure your financial statements reflect what the banks are looking for, to safeguard your farm against uncertainty.

*You can follow Peter Manness on LinkedIn and Twitter.*



## TIME TO GROW YOUR BUSINESS. Where do you go from here?

Manitoba farms are among the fastest-growing in size across Canada. More growth requires more capital to expand your farm business and keep it competitive, but it also requires an in-depth understanding of your farm's financial performance and industry trends. With Manitoba's largest team of Ag professionals, we help over 3,000 farm clients annually translate financial information into cost and revenue efficiencies, and ultimately, growth.

Contact Peter Manness, P. Ag, Farm Management Consultant at 204.571.7717 or [peter.manness@mnp.ca](mailto:peter.manness@mnp.ca) or Trevor Elyk, Farm Management Consultant at 204.336.6203 or [trevor.elyk@mnp.ca](mailto:trevor.elyk@mnp.ca).

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# Mayo Clinic access and treatment available to KAP members

By Val Ominski

If you're a KAP member, you can now access Mayo Clinic diagnostic expertise for serious illness and major orthopaedic concerns through KAP's benefit provider, STRATA Benefits. You can also purchase additional insurance coverage that will pay for travel to and treatment at the world-famous clinic.

Called MyCare, the program is designed to assist people, especially those in rural areas, who may not be able to quickly receive a diagnosis for a medical condition because of a lack of specialists or equipment in the region, or because of wait times.

The basic program, the MyCare Health Benefit Option, provides the plan member and his/her family with prompt access to an initial diagnosis or medical second opinion when a diagnosis cannot be achieved locally within 60 days.

A case management nurse, working in conjunction with Mayo Clinic, co-ordinates diagnostic or specialist assessments recommended by Mayo Clinic. Testing is performed in Canada – often within days – and travel costs are covered.

Test results are then forwarded to Mayo Clinic, where they are reviewed by a team

of medical experts; a diagnosis can be made in as little as 48 to 72 hours upon receipt of the patient's complete medical file. Mayo Clinic physicians work in collaboration with the attending Canadian physician every step of the way.

"The collaborative expertise of the Mayo Clinic is unparalleled in the world for serious-illness diagnosis and treatment," said Jim Viccars, president of Assured Diagnostics, the company that developed MyCare in conjunction with the Mayo Clinic. "The Mayo Clinic is a world leader in electronic health records, so that multi-physician consultation is applied whenever required."

In addition to the MyCare Health Benefit Option, KAP members can upgrade to MyCare Advantage Insurance, so that once diagnosis is completed, timely treatment can be accessed at one of three Mayo Clinic locations in the U.S. MyCare Advantage pays for treatment costs, as well as travel costs and companion travel costs.

"The Mayo Clinic is an extraordinary, not-for-profit health system whose motivation is to provide the best outcome for the patient," said Viccars, who developed MyCare after the death of a



friend who lived in rural Saskatchewan and didn't get a diagnosis and the treatment he needed in time.

For more information on MyCare Health Benefit Option and MyCare Advantage, please contact MyCare at 1-877-497-0233. Indicate you are a KAP member and are entitled to the STRATA benefits program.

*Please note that services are not available for diseases or conditions that have already been diagnosed or for which treatment has been received prior to becoming a policyholder. ▶*

## KAP FARM ESTATE PLANNING

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Rob Brunel's grain dryer with concrete posts protecting it.



Propane-venting pipes (the yellow ones) had to be added on Rob Brunel's new grain dryer.

# Light at the end of the tunnel for grain dryer approvals?

## Inspection procedures frustrate farmers

By Ron Friesen and Val Ominski



ROB BRUNEL

*"You expect to be able to use it when you want to and not have to change things on a brand new dryer that works anywhere else in North America."*

Rob Brunel knew it might take a few weeks to get official approval for the hookup of a new grain dryer on his farm near Ste. Rose du Lac. What he didn't know was that it would take the better part of eight months.

Brunel's previous grain dryer dated back to 1986 and he had a second tank installed about eight years ago. A fire forced him to replace the old unit with a new one at a cost of around \$50,000. But when a provincial inspector arrived, problems started.

The new dryer, with a major brand name, was manufactured in the United States and sold through a Manitoba dealer.

It had a Canadian Standards Association (CSA) sticker, but the Manitoba official was not satisfied by that alone.

The inspector said the propane venting on the new unit was inadequate and so would not approve the hookup. The new dryer was also deemed to require concrete-filled steel posts in front of it so no one would run into it and cause an accident.

The upshot was that Brunel, who represents District 11 on KAP General Council, had a new grain dryer which he wasn't allowed to use for an entire season.

Brunel says he understands grain dryers need to be inspected for safety reasons, but he still wonders why it was such a troublesome process to meet requirements in his case.

"When you buy a dryer, you expect to be able to use it when you want to and not have to change things on a brand new dryer that works anywhere else in North America," he said. "We lost a whole year of use."

Brunel's story, although extreme, is reflected in similar experiences reported by grain growers throughout Manitoba. Many

feel the required procedure for receiving approval to operate a grain dryer is unnecessarily lengthy and cumbersome.

"No one wants to be operating in an unsafe way. But we just want to get these dryers working in a timely manner," said KAP president Doug Chorney.

In Manitoba, grain dryer inspection falls under the authority of the Office of the Fire Commissioner, where it has been turned over to the newly formed Inspection and Technical Services Manitoba (ITSM) within that office.

An ITSM inspector will look to see if a dryer has a sticker indicating it has been manufactured to CSA standards, and that it has been hooked up according to CSA installation code 149.1 or 149.2. If so, then all is well, and the producer should receive approval to operate.

However, when there is no CSA certification sticker attached to the unit, or if the unit has been modified, the inspector will check to see if it has been installed according to CSA code 149.3 – which is more stringent. It is much more difficult to get approval for



*“It means you either have to get your grain custom dried...or you have to cough up major dollars for a brand-new grain dryer.”*

**ED REMPEL**

this type of dryer and its installation, said KAP general manager James Battershill.

Confusion reigns about the codes and the installation process required for a specific code – which is evidenced by the trouble Brunel experienced.

Farmers are also expressing concerns that used dryers with alterations have become practically worthless for resale.

A related concern involves low temperature burners (or “bin dryers”), where farmers use burners and fans of different sizes to circulate heated air inside grain bins in order to improve drying. ITSM inspectors do not recognize the non-standard pairing of these two components.

Because of this, farmers’ ability to dry damp grain is becoming limited, says Ed Rempel, who farms near Starbuck and heads the Manitoba Canola Growers Association.

“It means you either have to get your grain custom dried ... or you have to cough up major dollars for a brand-new grain dryer,” said Rempel.

A KAP General Council meeting in April 2011 passed a resolution asking the provincial government to “publish a clear set of guidelines for grain dryer installation and operation in Manitoba.” The fire commissioner’s office has responded to this request and has been meeting with KAP and other industry stakeholders to deal with the issue, says Battershill.

“Its plan is to have guidelines in place in the near future to provide inspectors with direction – including installation standards (codes) and setups that don’t have CSA certification stickers from the manufacturer,” Battershill said.

In a written statement, fire commissioner officials said their office is prepared to do field evaluations of equipment that has not been purchased certified.

Some farmers feel Manitoba has more elaborate inspection requirements for grain dryers than other provinces, such as Saskatchewan, but provincial officials disagree.

“The procedure is similar in Manitoba to other provinces, whereby the equipment is hooked up prior to the start-up inspection. The inspector is on site during the start-up of the equipment to ensure that all equipment is operating safely and as designed,” the statement said.

ITSM makes no apologies for demanding posts, such as the ones Brunel had to put up, because they are required by code “and are designed to protect the natural gas or propane lines and equipment that could be damaged by equipment or vehicles moving around the site.”

As for bin dryers, “the same requirements will be applied (as for standard grain dryers) to this type of equipment.”

ITSM promises an information session on grain dryer installation and inspection at KAP’s summer General Council, July 25 in Brandon.

Meanwhile, it said “the best way to avoid unnecessary delays is to book early and ensure that everything required to support the start-up of the dryer is in place at the time of inspection.”

ITSM last year implemented new inspection procedures, including a central booking system, so that inspection requests are now directed to a main switchboard number

(204-945-3373). It says the maximum wait time for an inspection is two weeks from the time of request.

Dave Wall, president of Wall Grain Handling Systems, one of the largest independent grain bin and grain dryer dealers in Western Canada, agrees that early preparation for inspection is important. He urges producers to plan ahead in order to avoid unexpected and costly delays.

“Make sure you have your electrical and plumbing lined up because it’s getting harder and harder to find the gas fitters,” said Wall. “You’ve got to plan ahead because you just can’t do these things overnight anymore.”

KAP says CSA-certified equipment should not pose any problems. But in cases where a dryer has undergone significant changes (e.g., switching from natural gas to propane), it will have to be inspected and re-approved. ■

## Quick facts

- KAP is working with the Office of the Fire Commissioner to clarify grain dryer installation requirements. Watch for an info session at summer General Council, July 25 in Brandon. All are welcome!
- Do it all early. Book electrical, plumbing and gas fitters – then book inspection. Fire commissioner’s office says inspection will be done within two weeks of booking.
- Call new central line to book inspection: 204-945-3373.



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## 4R programming planned for Manitoba

The 4R nutrient stewardship program, developed by the Canadian Fertilizer Institute, and supported in Manitoba by KAP and the provincial government, will help farmers apply nutrients using the right source at the right rate, at the right time and in the right place to protect the environment while maximizing returns.

The Canadian Fertilizer Institute has committed \$150,000 in funding over three years to this initiative, in order to provide local farms and communities with practical

tools to implement beneficial management practices. Watch for:

- An online 4R training program and other materials that will be Manitoba-specific – coming soon.
- A mobile 4R water and nutrient movement learning station that will travel across the province – coming this winter.
- Workshops on 4R nutrient management, including planning with certified professionals – coming in 2014.

- Demonstration farms that showcase the impact of 4R implementation – starting in the 2014 growing season.

This program is about empowering farmers to utilize the 4R nutrient stewardship framework, says the CFI, to ensure profitability, the protection of the environment, and the production of safe food.

More details and developments on the 4R Manitoba initiative can be found at [www.farming4Rfuture.ca](http://www.farming4Rfuture.ca).

## KAP VP recognized by U of M

KAP vice-president Dan Mazier was awarded a Certificate of Merit for his contribution to the agricultural industry and the community by the U of M's Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences, and School of Agriculture. The honour was bestowed on him at the convocation of the agriculture diploma students, May 3. Presenter was Dr. David Collins, U of M.



Do you have industry news or events to share with Manitoba farmers? Contact KAP at [communications@kap.mb.ca](mailto:communications@kap.mb.ca)



Large tires, including those from farm equipment, are shredded and used in road bed construction to alleviate problems with unstable ground and frost boils.

## Recycle tires from farm equipment and passenger vehicles

You may be interested to know that when you re-cycle tires from tractors and other farm equipment, you're putting them to good use. Tires from the agriculture industry are shredded and used to build roadbeds and make landfill liners, and depending on the quality, may also be used to make snowplow blades.

It's all thanks to Tire Stewardship Manitoba – the not-for-profit organization that is responsible for the recycling of 10,000 tires annually from the agriculture industry alone. Through a fee on every new tire sold, which varies depending on the size of

tire (farm equipment is \$30 per tire), TSM is able to facilitate collection and recycling of one million tires from all sectors.

Farmers can return old tires to their dealers, in most cases, or take them to a participating landfill, said TSM executive director Brett Eckstein.

"There are 137 municipal landfills in the province that accept tires," he noted. "The best way to find the nearest location is to contact your local municipal office."

Large tires are transported from the collection points across the province to a recycling plant in Ashern, while smaller

tires from trucks and passenger vehicles end up at a recycler in Winnipeg. The latter are used to make flooring products, artificial turf fields, rubberized asphalt, and a variety of other products.

Eckstein urges farmers to remember the importance of recycling these smaller tires, just as much as the larger ones.

As a result of Tire Stewardship Manitoba's efforts, the impact of 12,875 tonnes of tire and tubing waste on Manitoba's environment was eliminated. KAP is proud to be a member of the TSM advisory committee. **▶**



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# TWO STEPS BACKWARD

## for EDUCATION TAX FAIRNESS

By Doug Chorney

**T**wo pieces of news delivered via the provincial budget make it clear to farmers that the Province is watering down its education tax rebate program on farmland – and its promise to completely eliminate, through rebates, the long-disputed education tax on farmland.

The first piece of disappointing news is that the rebate remains once again at 80 per cent – even though farmers were promised in the 2011 election that the rebate would go right up to 100 per cent in order to make the education tax system fair.

The other disappointment is that the rebate has been capped at \$5,000, a blatant discrimination against producers with a larger land base.

Just to re-cap the history of this rebate, farmers used to be taxed on all farm property – and of course, this was unreasonable because land and production buildings are needed to carry on the business of farming. With years of pressure from KAP, the Province gradually reduced the tax through an increasing rebate.

There are many farmers who pay far in excess of \$5,000 in education tax, so with the new rebate cap, they will see their education tax bill skyrocket. For example, a farmer who was receiving a \$20,000 rebate will now lose \$15,000 – or three-quarters of the benefit.

This change, in combination with several other program modifications, will result in \$6.2 million of the promised rebate not being paid to farmers.

Is this fair? Farm families should not have to bear this tax burden, based on the way in which they operate their farm business. Many farmers, especially younger ones, see the opportunity in expanding their land bases and have gone into debt to do so. What a way for them to start out, with huge education tax bills looming every year!

The Province has found a way to cling to this antiquated method of collecting education taxes – still on the backs of those who own farmland. I recognize the need for fiscal restraint, but it should not be done by unfairly taxing farmers so that they carry more than their share of the cost of educating our children.

Manitoba is one of the last few jurisdictions still funding education through property taxes. Once and for all, we need a new model – one in which funding comes from general revenues and is truly sustainable. Everyone pays their fair share, based on their ability to pay.

In the current model, Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives is paying for the farmland tax rebate. Think of it – an agriculture department making a very significant contribution to education, and one group of society paying more than their share. It just doesn't make sense.

The Province, through the education tax rebate on farmland, and more recently through its promised rebate on principal property to seniors, has admitted that the system is broken. It's clear that it needs to be fixed.

In conclusion, we ask the Manitoba government to reverse the changes to the rebate program for farmland immediately, and make plans for the next budget that will see it live up to its promise of removing education tax completely from farmland. **■**

# IMPROVING SOIL HEALTH PAYS OFF FOR SOUTHWEST GRAIN FARMER

KAP member Dustin Williams learned at a young age that doing the right thing for the environment is also good for the pocketbook

Courtesy of Farm Management Canada



Wayne Williams switched to no-till two decades ago and the benefits of building soil health have become the foundation for son Dustin's farm business.

**D**ustin Williams was just a boy when his father Wayne parked his cultivator for good and plunged into what many considered the foolhardy business of no-till grain farming. But he'll never forget the reaction it caused.

"For sure, we were those guys," the KAP District 7 board member recalled with a laugh. "Every time we ran a new piece of equipment, the neighbours would be parked on the road just so they could see what we were up to now."

Dustin garnered more than a few looks himself two decades later when he outfitted his air seeder with a strange-looking array of silver tubing to pump tractor exhaust pipe into the soil.

The two initiatives are connected – by the idea that environmental stewardship isn't just about doing the right thing; it's also key to creating a financially viable farm business.

"I've learned that you have to pay attention to your land," said Dustin, 35, who operates Ash Haven Farms, a 4,700-acre grain farm near Souris, with his wife, Laura McDougald-Williams.

"The guiding principle on our farm is as much about reducing costs as increasing productivity. If you can find a new or better way to do things and reduce your cost base, then those are dollars in your pocket."

The couple was chosen the province's Outstanding Young Farmers last year, but their farming career almost ended before it got started.

"At the beginning, the strategy was just survival," said Laura, who grew up on a small cattle operation south of nearby Brandon, and met Dustin through community service work in high school.

"It was just trying to pay the bills and keep at it. I guess we were just optimistic that eventually we would get our head above water."

The couple began farming in 2001. Dustin had just earned his ag diploma and Laura was about to head off to law school in Montreal. Wayne Williams had built what was, at the time, a massive operation. By renting several small farms, he had expanded to 5,500 acres, but he encouraged his son to start his own

operation rather than work for him.

So the couple rented a few hundred acres, and Dustin did custom work for neighbours, trading his labour for the use of his father's equipment. Oh, and to speed things along, they started a cow-calf operation.

"We thought the cattle would be a good way to diversify and not have all our eggs in one basket," said Laura.

"We were in the cattle business for four months when BSE hit," added Dustin. "We didn't even have our first calves on the ground when BSE changed my business plan. But it turned out to be one of my best business lessons. I learned you can only plan out to the next fork in the road."

The experience convinced the couple they needed something to tilt the odds a little more in their favour, and Dustin's father's experience with no-till offered an answer.

The land in their area is sandy loam and highly erodible, which was why Wayne had always limited his tillage. But once he stopped altogether, father and son noticed other benefits.



## The focus on long-term planning and sustainability extends beyond agronomic issues. The couple rents half of their acres from non-family members...

For example, he's found that applying small amounts of micronutrients directly into seed rows gets plants off to a fast start by encouraging root growth and uptake of macronutrients. These types of efforts have allowed him to reduce nitrogen rates by 20 to 30 per cent in the last five years, he says.

The other lesson he learned from his father's experience with no-till is the value of patience. Today's farmers have a plethora of high-tech equipment to precisely plant seeds into stubble, and manage crop residues and weeds. In contrast, early adopters of no-till experienced all kinds of frustration, learning by trial and error what worked – and what didn't – on their land and modifying equipment in order to get better results.

Dustin is now going through the same process in his experiments with injecting tractor exhaust into his soil. Only a few hundred farmers are using the technology, but proponents say it boosts seedling growth by stimulating soil microbes, which convert nutrients into forms that a plant can take up.

Dustin spent \$30,000 to outfit his tractor six years ago, and says he has been able to reduce his fertilizer bill without sacrificing productivity.

"There's sound science behind it," he said. "When I looked at the potential to reduce my nitrogen by 30 per cent, I thought it would be one of the best investments I could make. I've kept experimenting with it year after year and I think I've got a system now that will provide consistent results."

The focus on long-term planning and sustainability extends beyond agronomic issues. The couple rents half of their acres from non-family members, partly because land in their area rarely comes up for sale and partly because they don't want to rack up millions in debt just to own every acre they farm.

Dustin Williams and Laura McDougald-Williams, pictured with daughters Eva (left) and Arden, focus on long-term planning and sustainability on their farm near Souris.

Soon, the soil was teeming with earthworms and the surface became home to a host of insects that dined on the straw residue. Those bugs were a food source for other insects, such as lacewigs, and having resident bands of carnivorous insects in their fields proved to be a real boon.

When pests that attacked crops or spread disease showed up, they were immediately assailed by the "good bugs," which reduced, and often eliminated, the need to spray.

"I didn't want to have to be spraying every time I turned around, and I realized it was really more of a Band-Aid solution a lot of the time," said Dustin. "By improving soil health, we could improve crop health and avoid a lot of these issues in the first place."

This line of thinking is evident in many of his farming practices. His alma mater, the University of Manitoba, has the country's longest-running organic cereal field study and Dustin took a keen interest in that work, including the use of green manure, cover crops to control weeds, and intercropping legumes and cereals.

"I considering going organic but it wasn't a fit for our operation," he said. "But I've tried to take these organic or low-input practices and make them pay on a commercial scale."

Many of his ideas now come from fellow farmers. Dustin attends as many conferences as possible, always seeking out innovative producers and asking what's working for them.

He's also a past president and networks with members of the Manitoba-North Dakota Zero Tillage Farmers' Association, the pioneering organization his father joined when the idea of farming without tillage was widely viewed as an impractical, fringe philosophy.

This has led him to adopt new practices.

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**...partly because land in their area rarely comes up for sale and partly because they don't want to rack up millions in debt just to own every acre they farm.**

But renting land is about more than cutting a cheque, says Laura, a specialist in agricultural real estate.

"Obviously, the primary concern of people who are renting is the economics and generating revenue, but there are other factors involved, too," she said. "They want to know the land is being cared for and I've found they also want a relationship with their tenants."

They never mail off the rent cheque, for example. Instead, Dustin hand-delivers it, and usually ends up sitting down for coffee to chat about what happened on those rented fields last year, and what he's planning for next.

"In these days of email and instant communication, we sometimes forget that people want that social interaction," said Laura. "Sustainability is central to our whole perspective in life and you want sustainability in your relationships with the people you rent from, too."

But there's a difference between sustainability and getting stuck in a rut, the couple says.

"We're always searching for new ideas," said Dustin. "I don't ever want to be in a position where we're coasting and just doing the things we did last year."

In fact, the couple, who have two young daughters, are considering the biggest change on the farm since it was homesteaded by Dustin's great-great-grandfather in the 1880s.

"A community group spent several years looking at building a biodiesel plant in Souris," said Dustin. "Ultimately, we decided we couldn't do it, but it got me interested in what we might do on our own farm."

They first looked at producing their own biodiesel for use in their equipment, and then whether it would be feasible to operate a farm-scale crushing plant to produce vegetable oil and canola meal.



Dustin Williams spent about \$30,000 on a system that cools and conditions tractor exhaust before injecting it into the soil. Advocates of this practice say it boosts seedling growth by stimulating soil microbes, which frees up nutrients already in the soil and reduces the need for additional fertilizer.

"The idea was marginal if you just sold canola meal into the traditional marketplace," said Dustin. "But that's when the idea of aquaculture came up. There's a method for converting canola meal into concentrated canola protein that you can feed to fish."

It would be a multi-million-dollar undertaking and require bringing in an equity partner.

"So for now, it's on the shelf but when the time is right, we wouldn't be afraid

to take it further and see where it leads," Dustin said. "We want to be low-cost, and we want to be sustainable. But we want to move ahead – and that means we don't allow ourselves to be afraid of change."

\*\*\*\*\*

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*(Photos courtesy of Province of Manitoba)*

The advertisement features the "Co-op Hail" logo in blue and white at the top left. Below the logo is a photograph of a combine harvester in a field at sunset, with a large industrial structure in the background. The text "5% DIVIDEND PAID ON 2012 PREMIUMS" is written in large, bold, orange letters. Below that, "CO-OPERATIVE HAIL INSURANCE COMPANY LIMITED" is written in white, and "Owned and operated by Saskatchewan and Manitoba Farmers" is written in white at the bottom.

# PLAY IT SAFE

## FOR YOU, YOUR FAMILY AND YOUR WORKERS

*Use of chemicals and machinery, long hours, and heavy workloads place farm owners and workers at increased risk of serious injury and illness. By identifying hazards before they become a problem and keeping employees, family members and visitors informed of safety and health measures in place, you can reduce the potential for injury and illness on your farm.*

*The following safety and health checklist is general in nature, but it can help you to think about the concerns that are specific to your farm.*

### **Worker and family involvement**

- Have worker/family members been trained on the safest way to do the job?
- Are they encouraged to raise safety and health concerns?
- Do you have regular safety discussions?

### **Contract workers**

- Are safety and health expectations discussed with contractors?
- Are hazards on your farm discussed with contractors?

### **Medical Aid**

- Is a first aid kit available at work sites (farm, yard, machinery)?
- Is someone on the farm trained to administer first aid?
- Are you aware of reporting requirements for serious incidents?

### **Farm machinery**

- Are guards and shields kept in place on power take-off shafts, belts, chains and other pinch points?
- Do you and all other farm machinery operators ensure young children and bystanders are a safe distance away from farm machinery, whether moving or stationary?

- Is there a standard rule on your farm prohibiting extra riders on farm equipment?
- Are seatbelts worn on tractors equipped with rollover protection structures?
- Is the power always turned off and are the keys removed before adjusting, servicing, or unclogging machinery?
- Are tractors and self-propelled machines equipped with fire extinguishers?
- Are drawbar loads always hitched to a drawbar rather than the tractor's axle or three-point hitch?
- Are emergency stops and safety devices in good working order?
- Are doors and windows in the building always open when starting or running a tractor, truck or other engine indoors, in order to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning?



- When moving farm equipment on roadways, are you following the requirements of Manitoba's *Highway Traffic Act*?
- Do you prohibit ground starting/jump-starting tractors on your farm?
- Have all equipment operators received training on the specific equipment they are operating on your farm?
- Do you and other machinery operators perform a walk about/walk around check before moving equipment?
- Do you and all farm machinery operators avoid wearing torn or ragged clothing when working near machinery?
- Are there audible warning devices on powered mobile equipment over one tonne?
- Are all farm equipment instruction manuals readily available?
- Have you supplied and ensured workers/family members are wearing the appropriate personal protective equipment when using powered mobile equipment (e.g., helmets on ATVs)?

- Are there procedures in place for using vehicle hoists and are workers/family members trained in the procedures?
- Are you aware that you need an excavation permit before digging more than 1.5 metres with a backhoe, track hoe, etc.?
- Do you conduct and keep record of machinery inspections?
- Are safety locks used when moving hydraulically raised equipment?

#### Ag chemicals

- Are there safe procedures for working with agricultural chemicals and are workers/family members trained in the procedures?
- Are chemicals stored in a safe place?
- Are signs posted on chemical storage areas to warn others of the hazards inside?
- Are chemicals stored and labelled in proper containers?
- Are empty chemical containers disposed of promptly and safely?

- When mixing chemicals, do you ensure the area is well ventilated?
- Do you have spill kits?
- Is personal protective equipment being used by farm workers when applying or handling farm chemicals (goggles, respirators, aprons, rubber or chemical-proof gloves, chemical suits, etc.)?
- Do you provide a 15-minute eyewash station?

#### Hiring and training

- Are new workers' previous skills and experience verified before they begin working on your farm?
- Do you ensure that everyone is trained to perform their duties safely before beginning work?
- Is training verified by worker demonstration and close supervision?
- Is there a system in place to ensure training records are kept and are easily accessible? **▶**

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