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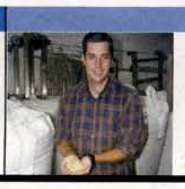

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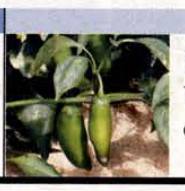

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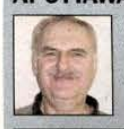
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Wellington County beef farmer Bob Bosomworth swathing grain. (PHOTO BY SHARON GROSE)

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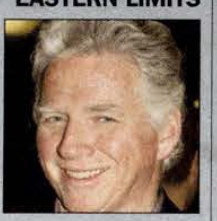
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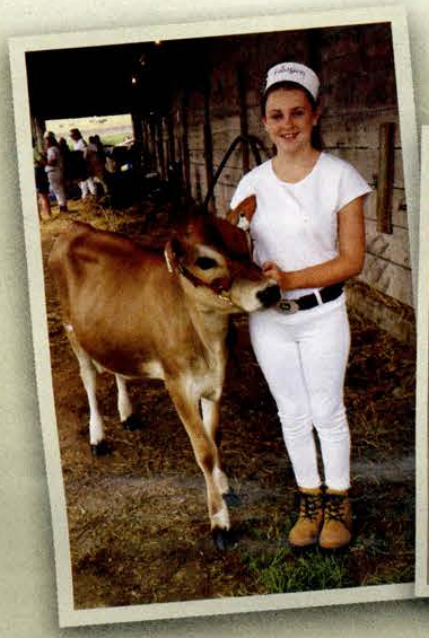

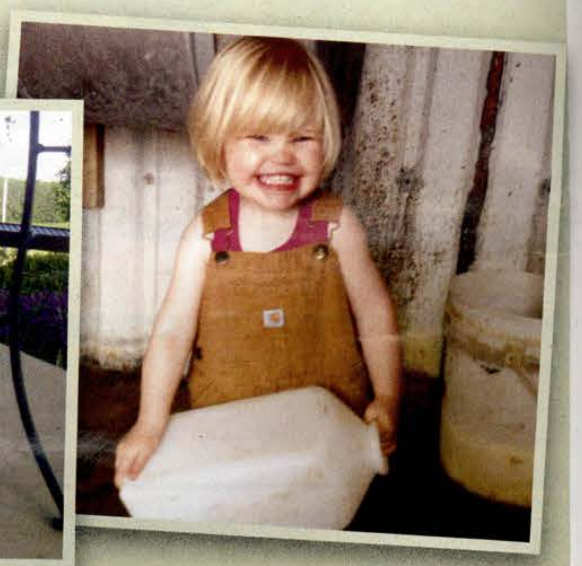

SHOWTIME: Amy Dafoe of Havelock showing Dalock Rose July 14th 2015 at the East Central Junior Show at Orono Fairgrounds. This is Amy's first year showing. She belongs to the Hastings County Stirling -Tweed Dairy 4-H club. CALIBER: Griffin Kuntz, 3, son of Steve and Terri-Ann Kuntz, visits his grandparent's farm (Paul and Donna Kuntz) near Mildmay on summer holidays and is always greeted by Caliber. PREPPING: Ava Whitton will be two years old in October. She already comes to work with her Mom Mary Whitton every day at her grandparent's dairy farm, Clarkview Holsteins, owned and operated by Brent and Katrien Clark, near Beaverton. Prepping the 15 bottles for baby calves is one of her favourite jobs. Her father Dennis Whitton works as service manager at Green Tractors in Omemee. Ava is the third generation to work at Clarkview Holsteins.

Send us your scenes from the farm with detailed descriptions: **ontariofarmer.farmseen@sunmedia.ca** (high-resolution images)

eye OPENER

"NOW, that looks like a happily married couple,"

remarked the husband.

"Don't be too sure, my dear." replied his wife.

"They're probably saying the same thing about us."

A MAN took four tires to a friend's garage sale and was asking $30 apiece. He needed to leave for a few minutes, so he asked the friend to watch them for him.

"Sure," he said, "but if someone offers less, how low are you willing to go?"

"Try for more, but I will accept $15," the man said and left.

When he returned, the tires were gone.

"How much did you get for them?" he asked excitedly.

"Fifteen dollars each."

"Who bought them?"

"I did!"

TAILENDER on page 31B

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From the **Editor's Desk**

A certain degree of latitude

BY PAUL MAHON
Publisher and editor-in-chief, Ontario Farmer Publications
paul.mahon@sunmedia.ca

In the early 1970s my mom convinced my dad to take a trip to the far reaches of Ontario's north. I went along, taking the TransCanada to the City of Cochrane on the upper side of the Temiskaming northern farming region, there to take a five-hour train ride to Moosonee, Ontario's most northerly city. There is no highway to get there except in winter.

I don't remember much about it, but looking at a map a few years ago, I was surprised to learn that I had been to the very foot of James Bay. Moosonee is a city alongside a Cree reservation called Moose Factory, which together have about 3000 people and to this day, have not a single paved street.

A couple of weeks ago, we took a five-day mini vacation to retrace the steps of the 1970s trip, and really, not much has changed. Same train even, which was borrowed from its night job of transporting wizards to Hogwarts.

> **Uh, I was told, the 49th parallel marks the border, not the 42nd. That is why there is a marker. Have you seen other markers for any other latitude line?**

As we drove the highway toward Cochrane, in the real north, the farmland became sparser and sparser and tougher and tougher. We passed a highway monument that told us that this was the continental divide, that all waters from this point on flowed toward the Arctic Ocean. That just makes you want to put on thick socks.

We passed a large beef herd on pasture, and I was compelled to make a statement that is probably the dumbest thing ever said on matters of geography.

"This farmer," I said pompously, "is probably on the most northerly edge of the grow zone. The only thing that can grow here is pasture and short-season grains. He is probably the most northern farmer in all of Canada."

A few miles on, we came to another roadside marker, making note of the 49th parallel of latitude. "That shows how high we are," I said, "The 42nd parallel marks the divide between Canada and the U.S.! We are so far north, we should be looking for polar bears."

Uh, I was told, the 49th parallel marks the border, not the 42nd. That is why there is a marker. Have you seen other markers for any other latitude line?

It is true. The Cochrane farm may have been north for Ontario (and not really, as it turned out) but the simple geographical fact is that ALL of the Canadian Prairies, that huge bread basket for the world, was further north than we were at that time. That farmer may well have been in the bottom 50 per cent of farms in the country by latitude.

We forget, in the balmy border afterthought that is southern Ontario, that this country is the truth north after all.

Bird flu recovery to take up to 18 months

The Iowa egg industry won't be back to full production for a year to 18 months, says the Iowa Poultry Association about the avian influenza toll this spring.

About 30 million hens were lost, 40 per cent of the state's flock.

Wisconsin lifted its final six quarantine zones this week, so those farms in Barron and Jefferson counties are set to repopulate.

Minnesota had more than 100 farms hit this past spring. Nearly 40 of them have been repopulated and 37 more have achieved regulatory standards they need in order to follow suit. Minnesota lost about five million turkeys and four million egg-laying hens.

It is probably not over yet. Animal health experts believe high-pathogenic strains of avian influenza may return as early as this fall as wild bird migrations resume.

Canadians remain vigilant after losing flocks in the Fraser Valley of British Columbia around Christmas time and three flocks in Oxford County, Ont., this spring.

Merger leads to layoffs at Kraft-Heinz

First came the merger between Kraft and Heinz. Now come 2,500 layoffs, 700 of them at Kraft Foods head office in Chicago.

Those offices will move from the suburbs to smaller space in the downtown.

The new owners – Berkshire Hathaway and 3G Group – said after they bought both companies that they aim to reduce costs by $1.5 billion by the end of 2017.

Another 150 will be cut when a new $114-million hot dog plant for Oscar Mayer opens in Columbia, Missouri.

Heinz closed its ketchup plant in Leamington a couple of years ago.

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One acre of corn sacrificed for a place of baseball dreams

Oxford County cash cropper Mike Van Boekel built his diamond, just like the guy in the movie

BY IAN CUMMING
The writer lives in Glengarry County
glengarryfarms@sympatico.ca

Actor Kevin Costner and Oxford county cash cropper Mike Van Boekel certainly don't look alike.

But they both built a baseball Field of Dreams on their farmland, were once there was corn. Costner in a movie with that title, Van Boekel for real.

About 10 miles north of Woodstock, between Innerkip and Tavistock, with a 200-cow robot dairy farm across the road, the president of Jersey Canada two farms over, is an unlikely location for a ball diamond, where four youths under 14 years old have played, developing into Canadian ball playing champions this year.

They played and played and got better and better, night after night "until they couldn't see any more," over the past half decade, said Van Boekel. "Those hundreds of hours having fun were great practice. It's open to any kid that wants to play."

Van Boekel's cash crop and hog operation is on one side of the ball field, the United Church on the other, right at the four corners.

A tough-looking motorcycle gang once congregated at the church yard, throttling their bikes, doing their best to look evil, when Mike's dad Gerry of horse racing fame, once owning a racer with Peter Heffering, stopped at the road and summoned several of the bikers over.

"You're too early," Gerry told them. "Church isn't until Sunday."

Van Boekel, who also has a full-time off-farm job as long time elected union leader down at the car plant, was a pretty good ball player in his day. The lass he married across the county from Oxford Centre, Jennifer Hampson, had a dad Bill, who loved and played the game for a long time as well.

Bill, my best friend, shared a lot in thousands of phone calls, and when Mike – called the DC by Bill – short for Dutch Catholic, started seriously sniffing around his dairy farm, there was a wariness in his voice on how this would mesh with the Church of England upbringing of his oldest, beautiful daughter.

Then one night came the excited call. "The DC is a hell of a ball player, he got a home run tonight when we were all at his game to watch."

From then on Bill and his wife Betty not only approved, they gushed. So much so that the wedding 18 years ago was at the Catholic church.

The years passed and Mike and Jennifer, have three children. The two boys, Jacob and Greg, due to a combination of genetics and encouragement, have developed into great ball players.

In April 2010 Mike seeded the ball field, putting the foul lines 160 feet deep. They also got some team benches and a back screen.

That summer real magnetic bases, a home plate and a pitching rubber appeared on their porch with a note "for the kids." To this day they don't know who left them there.

The local ballpark also donated an old limer, enabling them to mark the lines.

In 2012 the field was expanded with the foul lines now at 200 feet deep. In 2013 a home run fence was put in.

This spring the infield was dug out, gravelled and bleachers were added to accommodate the crowds for the many exhibition games, several league games and the constant gathering of youths just having fun, said Van Boekel. A few businesses now have advertisements hanging on the home run fence.

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CH '96 JD 9600 UX667412
3524hrs, 2097 SEP, PRWD, Chopper, 20ft. Unl Auger, Hyd. Fore & Aft, Bin Ext.
$47,500

CH '02 JD 9650STS UA697185
2637hrs, 2005 SEP, 2WD, Contour Master, 20ft. Unl Auger, Hyd. Fore & Aft
$112,500

CO '09 JD 9770STS UA732942
1756hrs, 1057 SEP, 2WD, Contour Master, Xenon Lighting, Hyd. Fore & Aft, Prem Cab
$189,500

CO '04 JD 9860STS UA706300
4359hrs, 3700 SEP, PRWD, Chopper, Contour Master, 22.5ft. Unl Auger, Hyd. Fore & Aft
$125,000

CH '13 JD S550 UA755208 204hrs, 130 SEP, 2WD, Chopper, Prem Cab, HID Lights, Autotrac, 28L26 FS $269,500
CH '14 JD S650 UA765030 100hrs, 50 SEP, PRWD, Prem Cab, HID Lights, Autotrac, 3Spd Elec. Shift $315,000
CO '12 JD S660 UA747255 529hrs, 345 SEP, 2WD, Chopper, Prem Cab, HID Lights, Autotrac, 28L-26 ..... $289,500
CO '12 JD S660 UX746650 594hrs, 401 SEP, PRWD, Chopper, Prem Cab, HID Lights, Autotrac, 3Spd Elec. Shift $299,500
CO '12 JD S660 UA746013 605hrs, 409 SEP, PRWD, Prem Cab, HID Lights, Autotrac, 22.5ft. Unl Auger, 520/85R38 Duals $295,000
CH '12 JD S660 UX746517 1008hrs, 704 SEP, PRWD, Chopper, Prem Cab, HID Lights, Autotrac, 3Spd Elec. Shift $269,500
CH '13 JD S660 UA755933 450hrs, 298 SEP, PRWD, Prem Cab, HID Lights, Autotrac, 6.9M Unl Auger, 520/85R42 Duals $315,000
CH '13 JD S660 UX755935 491hrs, 345 SEP, PRWD, Chopper, Prem Cab, HID Lights, Autotrac, 520/85R42 Duals $309,500
CH '14 JD S660 UA765921 176hrs, 117 SEP, 2WD, Chopper, Prem Cab, HID Lights, Autotrac w/Harv Monitor, Pro Drive $335,000
CH '12 JD S670 UX748085 782hrs, 511 SEP, PRWD, Prem Cab, HID Lights, Autotrac, 3Spd Elec. Shift, 520/85R42 Duals $295,000
CH '13 JD S670 UX757153 480hrs, 326 SEP, Prem Cab, HID Lights, Autotrac, Pro Drive w/Harvestsmart, 7.9M Unl Auger $359,500
CH '13 JD S670 UA757451 612hrs, 419 SEP, 2WD, Chopper, Prem Cab, HID Lights, Autotrac, 6.9M Unl Auger, 28L-26 ..... $335,000
CH '13 JD S670 UX757152 755hrs, 568 SEP, PRWD, Chopper, Prem Cab, HID Lights, Pro Drive, 7.9M Unl Auger $335,000
CH '12 JD S680 UA746571 1078hrs, 641 SEP, 2WD, Spreader, Prem Cab, HID Lights, Autotrac w/Harv Monitor $319,000
CO '13 JD S680 UA757512 716hrs, 442 SEP, 2WD, Prem Cab, HID Lights, Autotrac, Pro Drive, 7.9M Unl Auger $379,500
CO '14 JD S690 UA765546 517hrs, 321 SEP, PRWD, Spreader, Autotrac, Pro Drive, 7.9M Unl Auger, 520/85R42 Duals $455,000
CH '79 JD 6620 UA354725 2773hrs, 2WD, Chopper, w/216 Platform Selling 'AS IS' $8,500
CH '90 JD 9500 UA638476 2816hrs, 1542 SEP, PRWD, Bin Ext, Crary Double Chaff Spreader $47,500
CO '91 JD 9500 UA641573 6151hrs, 4132 SEP, PRWD, Chopper, 235hp $49,500
CO '92 JD 9500 UA646059 3984hrs, 2840 SEP, 2WD, Chopper, 17ft. Unl Auger, Hyd. Fore & Aft, Harvestrak Monitor, 235hp $43,500
CO '09 JD 9570STS UA730483 959hrs, 682 SEP, 2WD, Contour Master, Xenon Lighting, 21.5ft. Unl Auger $185,000
CO '00 JD 9650STS UA686417 2000hrs, 1600 SEP, PRWD, Chopper, 20ft. Unl Auger, Level Land $120,000
CO '00 JD 9650STS UA685570 3515hrs, 2258 SEP, 2WD, Chopper, Contour Master, 20ft. Unl Auger, 20.8R-38 Duals $99,500
CO '01 JD 9650STS UX692408 3159hrs, 2213 SEP, 2WD, Contour Master, Greenstar Yield, Maurer Bin Ext, 20ft. Unl auger $98,500
CO '00 JD 9650W UA685482 4590hrs, 3192 SEP, PRWD, Chopper, 20ft. Unl Auger, AWS Fan, Maurer Bin Ext $87,500
CO '04 JD 9760STS UA706959 1857hrs, 1273 SEP, 2WD, Contour Master, 22.5ft. Unl Auger, 520/85R42 Duals $145,000
CH '07 JD 9760STS UU721839 1924hrs, 1336 SEP, 2WD, Prem Cab, Contour Master, Hyd. Fore & Aft, 22.5ft. Unl Auger $175,000
CO '01 CIH 2388 UA269102 3324hrs, 2399 SEP, PRWD, Singles $79,500

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CO '12 JD 640FD UA746263 One PCE Spare knife $79,500
CH '14 JD 640FD UA766119 Poly Tine Pickup Reel, Dual Knife Drive $95,000
CO '00 JD 930F UA686969 HH Sensing & Contour Master, Splnd Backshafts/Universal, Fore & Aft Reel $15,500
CH '13 JD 608C UA756617 30" Row Spacing, Stalkmaster - Chopping, Temp Corrosion Protection $73,000
CH '14 JD 608C UA766117 30" Row Spacing, Stalkmaster - Chopping, Autotrac Rowsense Sensors $85,000
CO '13 JD 616C UA755252 30" Row Spacing, Non Stalkmaster, Autotrac Rowsense Sensors $119,900
CH JD 643 UAT28255 30" Row Spacing, w/Poly Snouts $8,500
CH '01 JD 893 UX696386 30" Row Spacing, Hyd. Deck Plates, Straight Fluted Row Units $26,000

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Keep It Clean - Cereals launched

Cereals Canada is proud to announce the launch of the Keep It Clean – Cereals campaign. "There is a growing focus, both within Canada as well as in key export markets, on grain safety", noted Cam Dahl, President of Cereals Canada. "Canadian farmers consistently deliver high quality safe food to consumers around the world. There are a few steps that producers can take to ensure that Canada preserves and builds on this brand reputation." Keep it Clean – Cereals is an informational campaign aimed at reminding producers about the best management practices needed to preserve Canada's place in world markets.

Key focal points for the campaign include:

- Knowing the market implication of all crop production products;
- Always following the label when applying crop production products; and
- Following best practices to avoid mycotoxin growth.

"Harvest is a critically important time for these issues. Now is the time when producers are making decisions on pre-harvest applications and storage. Care and attention during fall will make a difference when it comes time to market Canada's grain."

Keep it Clean – Cereals builds upon ongoing efforts by the Canola Council of Canada.

"Rather than creating a stand-alone but similar brand, Cereals Canada has worked with the Canola Council of Canada to present a consistent message to producers across commodities", continued Dahl. "Cereals Canada thanks the Canola Council for their openness to the idea of a single platform for these key messages. This is an example of industry cooperation that benefits every part of the value chain," concluded Dahl.

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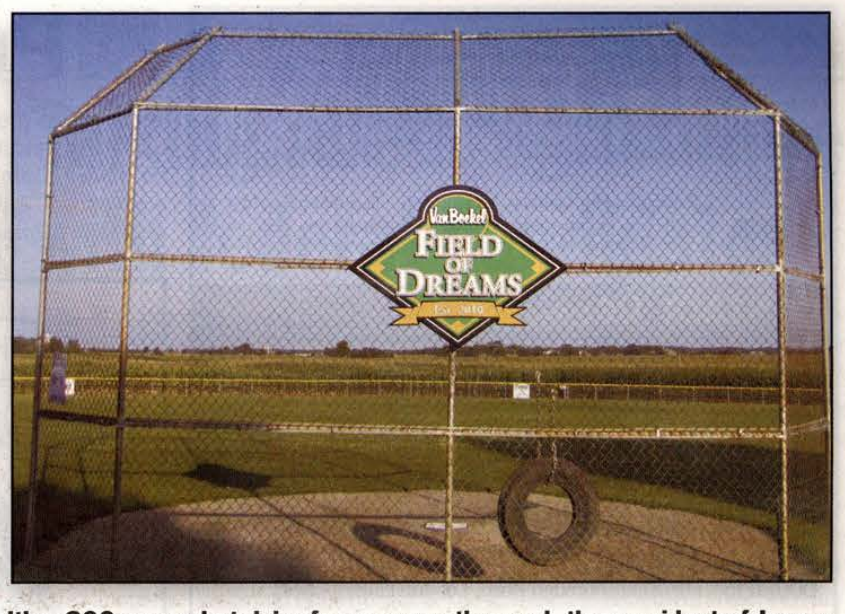

About 10 miles north of Woodstock, between Innerkip and Tavistock, with a 200-cow robot dairy farm across the road, the president of Jersey Canada two farms over, is an unlikely location for a ball diamond, where four youths under 14 years old have played, developing into Canadian ball playing champions this year.

They are still seeking an old-fashioned, metal score board, "the kind you used to see in every town," said Van Boekel. "The kids say they want lights, but dad wants a beer tent," he quipped.

One evening in late July, when he and his family were horsing around on the field, an older stranger walked out of Van Boekel's corn field wearing a baseball uniform.

Van Boekel was perplexed as this person stood silently looking into the corn field, than another older ball player came out, then another, he said.

"All of a sudden two ball teams of young players, followed by their parents and grandparents came out of the corn," said Van Boekel. A ball game ensued, followed by a BBQ.

They not only recreated that heartfelt scene from the movie Field of Dreams, "but they gave us a sign, Van Boekel's Field Of Dreams," he said.

In early August at the Canadian baseball championships in Saskatchewan for boys under 14, Jacob and Greg played on the elite gold medal team. One a pitcher, the other a catcher.

Their cousin Andrew Van Boekel and nearby friend Kyle Pullen, both always on this ball field, played for the silver medal team.

They had never built the field to mould Canadian champions but rather, "we thought playing with their friends and getting dirty was more important than one acre of corn," said Van Boekel.

Olymel will meet with workers union

Olymel has finally agreed to negotiate with workers' union following the closing of its hog slaughter plant at St-Valerien and St-Simon shut in 2007.

Olymel said it will not appeal the decision of the Superior Court of Quebec dismissing the company's request to review an arbitrator's decision on union grievances linked to the closing the plant.

Judge Jean-Francois Buffoni dismissed the company's review request in September and now Olymel now says it is open to hold talks to reach a compensation settlement that would "satisfy both parties" covering the period between April 20 and Oct. 16, 2007.

OFA Ontario Federation of Agriculture

Federal election

TALKING ABOUT AGRICULTURE WITH CANDIDATES

Here are the issues and opportunities the OFA is talking about with federal candidates in the weeks leading up to the October 19 election. We want to be sure politicians appreciate and understand the importance of our industry, including its contributions to the national economy.

- ✓ **Risk Management Programs** – We want the next federal government to work together with the province to improve RMP programs, including Production Insurance, Agri-Invest and Agri-Stability.
- ✓ **Infrastructure Support** – We are asking the next federal government to increase transfers to rural municipal infrastructure to boost economic development and competitiveness on farms and in rural communities.
- ✓ **Agricultural Research** – We need the next federal government to continue to support publicly-funded agricultural research in Canada.

We all have an important role to play, advocating for issues that impact our farm businesses. And there are many federal programs and regulations that impact the way we farm in Ontario. Let's use the federal election to get agriculture on the table as we talk with local MP candidates.

OFA: Advocating for Ontario agriculture.

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ONTARIO Farmer

Published 52 times annually in London, Ontario

POSTMEDIA

BPA WORLDWIDE

Publications Mail Agreement No. 40064683 — Registration No. 07624
Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to:
Circulation Department PO Box 7400 London ON N5Y 4X3
ISSN 1199-3529

CONTACT US:

CANADA TOLL-FREE: 1-877-358-7773
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MAIL: Ontario Farmer, Box 7400 London ON N5Y 4X3
COURIER: 1147 Gainsborough Road, London Ontario N6H 5L5
WEBSITE: www.ontariofarmer.com
E-MAIL: Advertising: ontariofarmer.advertising@sunmedia.ca
Editorial: ontariofarmer.editorial@sunmedia.ca
Circulation/distribution: cathy.goodhue@sunmedia.ca

Hours: Mon.-Thurs. 8:30 am – 4:30 pm; Fri. 8:30 am – 1:00 pm

ADMINISTRATION: 1-877-358-7773

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ADVERTISING: 1-877-358-7773

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Printed by Islington Printing

We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada through the Canada Periodical Fund of the Department of Canadian Heritage.

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Public Opinion

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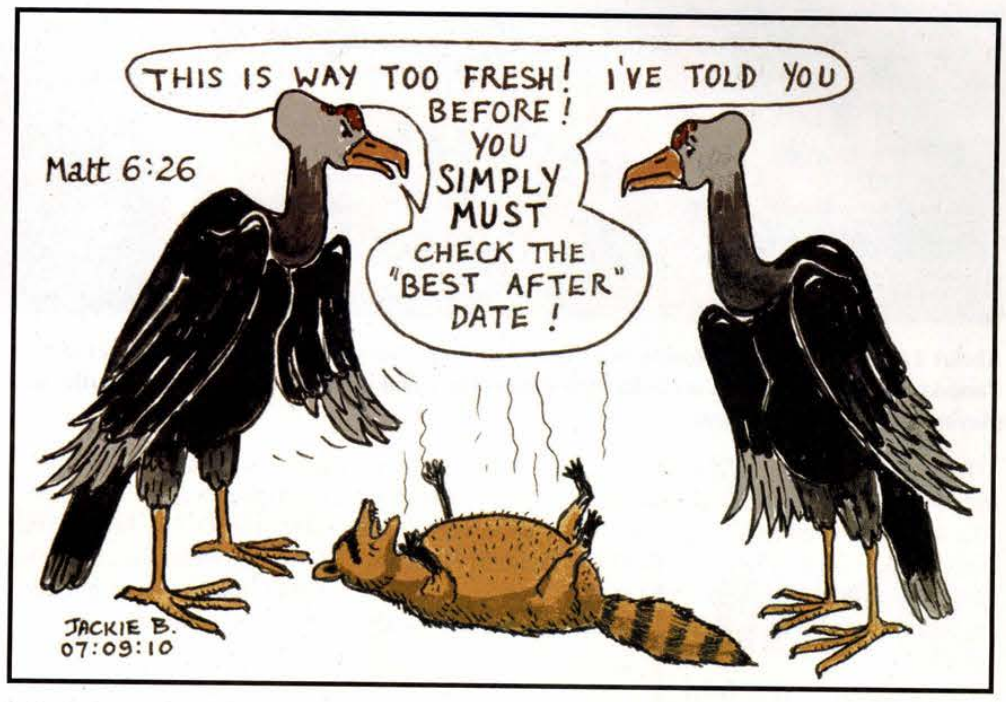

Won the battle! Lost the war??

Dear editor:

This letter is in response to Mr. Szabo's victory speech in a recent Ontario Farmer. I do congratulate Szabo and the Ontario Beekeepers Association, as a very small organization, in their ability to align with a couple of large, well-funded, anti-modern agriculture environmental groups and overwhelm our urban-based, anti-agriculture provincial government into banning neonics.

I personally consider the new legislation as a ban because in my opinion the process set out in the regulations is not realistic or workable. To analyze 4 million acres of Ontario corn and soybean acres in the fall to accurately predict soil insect pressure the following spring is at best an educated guess. The cost and liability associated with the process is huge.

I am a Certified Crop Advisor and have over 30 years experience in agri-business, primarily assisting crop producers with their cropping plans and crop input supplies. I consider the ongoing insistence that crop farmers are only using these products because the 'big bad chemical companies' tell them that they need too an insult to the professionalism of the vast majority of our crop farmers. Producing corn and soybeans in Ontario is a low margin business. Our producers and their suppliers carefully plan their input programs including pest control. I have worked with a lot of growers and have yet to find one that puts on a pesticide just because he can or someone told him he should.

Szabo suggests in his article that GFO is "threatening" that farmers will use pesticides more harmful to bees. That is not a threat but just a reality! Farmers have lost the use of neonics so will have no choice but to revert to using older foliar applied insecticides. Be careful what you wish for!

He seems surprised that crop farmers have become very "cautious" about working with bee producers to allow them to place hives on their properties, etc.! I am surprised any of them allow you to use their properties!! This political fiasco is going to cause corn and soybean farmers a considerable hardship – reduced yields and increased costs.

Ontario farmers have also made huge advances over the last several years in moving to reduced tillage systems and use of cover crops. These practices have huge value in the climate change issue, soil health and reduced soil loss. One of the tools that has made the adaption of these practices possible was the use of effective soil insect control as the increased crop residue and cooler soils in these systems encourage more soil insect activity.

With the loss of neonics many of these growers will quickly revert back to high tillage, low residue systems. Actually a little ironic that the same government that was so quick to ban neonics has climate change as one of its major platforms.

Szabo suggests that it's time to move on and get along! It is very unfortunate that OBA and some other ag organizations didn't take that approach a couple of years ago when the issue first appeared. Unfortunately all of agriculture including beekeepers are losing substantially with the new regulations. The only winner is a provincial government that is getting lots of 'brownie points' with its urban supporters.

Les Nichols

The weather in July matches the 10-year average

Dear editor:

The average temperature for July was 20.9 degrees which is the same as the 10-year average. Rainfall continued the wet trend established in June with 130 mm or 5.1 inches. Ormstown has now received three months' worth of rain in only two months. All the crops appear to enjoy the combination of normal temperature and abundant rainfall as the growth has been phenomenal. Some fields of soybeans are as tall as the fence pickets. Heat units were 784 for the month, which is 10 below normal and 1848 since May 9 which is 79 above the 10-year average.

Peter Finlayson, Ormstown

NUHN15000022657

Exhibit 2070
Bazooka v. Nuhn - IPR2023-01161
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Grain farmers more thoughtful than portrayed

Dear editor:

Tibor Szabo writes a fine and friendly letter; maybe the first olive branch in what has deteriorated into an acrimonious debate.

However his content and that of the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change lack acknowledgement of some important elements of this situation.

First neither of the 'anti-neonic' proponents recognize nor acknowledge the thoughtfulness of grain producers. Do they think that farmers simply want to enrich the coffers of ag chem manufacturers and blindly buy and use their products? Secondly, neither seems to recognize the difficulty of forecasting pest attacks. The Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program being offered by the provincial government is a good step but will it decisively tell the grower, "yes - this field needs treatment, this one does not"?

A few decades ago, well before Bt corn, Pickseed introduced a high yielding grain hybrid to the Manitoba market; come July these fields (and others) were attacked by corn borer at rates exceeding 20/stalk - a pest never seen at damaging levels before.

The Environment Minister needs to recognize that farmers farm for profit and invest in crop inputs to assure profits (oh and by the way, pay their share of taxes on those profits).

There are better ways to meet the needs of both parties. North America's largest potato producer based in Minnesota recently introduced a Pollinator Protection Plan. A suggestion to Ontario Ag Minister that such an initiative may work in Ontario still awaits an answer.

It is discouraging to think that Ontario farmers need to take their government to court when opportunities for a dialogue-based solution to this issue is well worth exploring.

Martin C. Pick, Cavan

Corn foliage needs protection after tasselling

Dear editor:

Further to your article 'As disease levels build, so do fungicide recommendations', July 28th edition, perhaps your readers would find my observations interesting.

"All Roundup Ready products are prone to Northern Leaf Blight", a conclusion I came to after seeing fungicide response when applied to the leading two corn seed company products in high yield farm field trials.

The reality today is corn foliage should be protected after tasselling, if you have the other production components in place. Fields lacking fertility will never enable a corn crop to achieve the top yields.

Drowned-out areas don't warrant treatment, especially if yield is your only criteria. The protectant fungicides have to be delivered down into the entire upper canopy, using drop nozzles. Better foliage coverage means better protection. Use more than minimum water rates.

The ideal time to treat the crop is before disease has had a chance to progress. Waiting until a scout tells you to spray is mostly late advice. Planning ahead allows the fungicide applicator to include your best fields in their schedule, and the fungicide products to be in place at your local suppliers warehouse.

Keith McKell, SoilSmith Ltd., London

Talking about agriculture with federal candidates

Don McCabe, President, Ontario Federation of Agriculture

Canadians are heading to the polls this fall to elect federal Members of Parliament, since the Prime Minister dropped the writ recently. The Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) is taking the opportunity to talk with federal candidates about the issues and opportunities in the Ontario agriculture industry.

There are many federal programs and regulations that impact the way we farm and operate our farm business in Ontario. For example, the current Growing Forward 2 program is 60% funded from the federal level in cost share with the province on numerous programs. Agriculture and AgriFood Canada, Fisheries and Oceans, Natural Resources Canada, Health Canada, Environment Canada, Revenue Canada and others are all federal departments that have a regulatory effect on Ontario farm businesses.

As farmers we need to talk to MP candidates around the province and through county and regional federations about the issues facing agriculture. We want to be sure politicians appreciate and understand the importance of our industry, and the contributions we make to the national economy. The next federal government needs to be aware of and implement an agenda that works for Ontario's farming and food sector.

There are three main issues in need of focus at a federal level. We'll be looking for every opportunity to talk with federal candidates over the coming weeks about risk management programs, infrastructure support and agricultural research.

As candidates meet and greet voters and debate the issues we want to be sure that agriculture gets top billing. When we talk about risk management, our overall goal is to have the federal government work together with the province to improve risk management programs including Production Insurance, Agri-Invest and Agri-Stability. Volatility in the market place combined with currency fluctuation and reduced coverage under current federal risk management programs needs to be addressed.

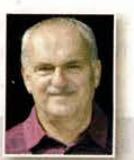
Infrastructure is the backbone of communities across Canada. We'll be advocating the need for the next federal government to increase transfers to rural municipal infrastructure. Municipalities need more support to facilitate farm competitiveness and rural economic development. Rural Ontario needs solid transportation, internet and natural gas infrastructure to grow our businesses and our communities.

Our agriculture sector across the country depends on a steady stream of new research to support sustainable, innovative improvements in agriculture. Continued cuts in federal spending have seen agriculture research centres close, and fewer Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada research positions. OFA needs the federal government to support publicly-funded agriculture research in Canada with a continuum of support from basic to commercialization. Today's innovations keep Canadian agriculture strong. With broken links in the chain, future opportunities to meet tomorrow's challenges will not come from Canadian sourced achievement.

Ontario agriculture contributes $13.7 billion to the annual GDP and $3.9 billion in government tax revenues ($2.1 billion to the federal government). And 1 in 8 Canadian jobs comes from agriculture and food. All of these major economic impacts come from Ontario farm sector production and it's important all federal candidates understand the importance of providing national solutions to Ontario agriculture issues.

We all have an important role to play, advocating for issues that impact our farm businesses.

Secrecy leaves TPP with a huge credibility gap



BY ALEX BINKLEY
The writer is a veteran national affairs reporter based in Ottawa
alex.binkley@sympatico.ca

As details dribble out about the proposed Trans-Pacific Partnership trade deal that foundered in Maui in early August, the more the Harper government's fetish for secrecy is apt to come back to haunt it.

So far the government has been fortunate that the deal has not attracted any public attention in the Oct. 19 election other than NDP trade critic Don Davies' sharp criticism of the government for keeping Canadians in the dark about what's in the 29 chapters of the deal. The government gets away with vague promises of increased access to a market of 800 million and 40% of the world trade while being silent on the price tag for Canada.

We've known for a long time that dairy and poultry supply management would take a hit. Since then the price tag has been steadily escalating to include what's left of the auto industry, the CBC, Canada Post, any possibility of a national pharmacare program or better access to generic drugs. The latest release centers on Internet services and intellectual property protection. Other damaging details could well be flushed out in the coming weeks.

Wickileaks has been releasing details of the earlier negotiations and now a U.S. non-governmental organization, Knowledge Ecology International, has provided a May 11 version of the TPP, which shows many issues were far from agreement by the 12 would-be signatory nations. Much of the time between then and Maui was taken up in U.S.-Japan bilateral talks that left the issues of the other countries on the backburner.

Then there was the Globe and Mail story about business groups being told by a senior Harper aide to be ready to cheer loudly about the TPP deal to drown out the complaints from the dairy farmers. The Globe doesn't seem to have learned poultry producers are also involved. One might expect our business leaders to be more interested in finding out how the trade agreement would affect them than being government cheerleaders.

The concept of freer trade among Pacific Rim countries sounds good. But the determination of the United States and Japan to stack the deck in their favour compared to the other 10 countries doesn't auger well for anyone other than some large multinationals that don't want to be bothered with pesky national rules and standards.

If the TPP is to come together, then a deal has to be reached before the end of September. It still could happen. We should be learning about what's at stake in the deal in a more forthright manner than from leaks to newspapers.

NUHN15000022658

Farming: A picture in a thousand words

Anna Preston is 19 and lives outside of Guelph. Her father works for a poultry farmer, but he's also done beef and sheep. She wrote this essay for friends and family - it is exactly 1000 words - and they urged her to send it in for a broader audience

Farming n: the practice of agriculture

That is the dictionary definition.

But beyond those few words lies a whole other world.

A world of dirt and weather and growing things.

A world of family and history and the lay of the land.

A world of heartbreak and satisfaction.

A world where life and death are so continually present that we know what they mean.

A world of blood, sweat, tears, and laughter.

The truth is, it's a way of life.

It's the time we spend in our tractor seats squinting into the sun or driving by the high beams, pulling whatever it may be: hay cutter, plow, baler, or manure spreader.

It's the physical labour: pitching hay, carrying buckets, pushing wheelbarrows, loading (or unloading) feedbags, doing a posting trot for twenty minutes without stirrups.

It's the number crunching: with your calculator late in the evening at the kitchen table, or lounging against the barn during your lunch break with your smartphone.

It's the smells you recognize: pig manure, fresh hay, horse; and the sounds: the bawl of a calf, the clucking of a chicken, the gobble of a turkey, and the mewing of kittens.

It's how you look at the prices in the grocery store and know what they really mean.

Farming...

It's a young couple watching their first lamb be born.

It's a white-haired gentleman recalling the bulls he'd seen.

It's a girl dumping her wheelbarrow, and pausing to watch the yearlings play in the corral.

It's a square-baling team working like a sweat oiled machine, as clouds loom behind them.

It's a sister pulling weeds and telling stories.

It's the dinner table talk that consists of loaders, ear tags, and 'stemmy' hay.

It's the tired cheer from a dozen throats as the flames are finally doused and the barn's still there.

It's the squeal of a child as a lamb's searching mouth finds the bottle.

It's the kids absorbed in the tractor ads.

It's leaving a now contented mother and baby and stepping outside in time to watch the sun rise.

It's standing in a dark, warm barn, surrounded by contented noises, knowing your job is done for the day.

Farming...

But it's other things too.

It's standing in the barn, hearing the rain on the roof, and looking out at your just-raked hay field.

It's the way you set your face when you pull out one, two, three, four lambs; one of them alive.

It's your dad, taking his gun and going out to do what he knows he's gotta do, even if she was his first heifer.

It's Great-Grandfather's Farmall giving one last gasp.

It's planting your soy beans and getting no rain.

It's planting your wheat and getting nothing but.

It's Barn 6, where the birds are all dying.

It's stepping out of the storm cellar, and hearing your son ask, "What happened to the barn?"

It's the echo of the auctioneer's gavel, mixing with the sound of hail.

It's the moment when you pull out the mail and find what you're dreading.

It's the mangled calf's body on the wrong side of the fence.

It's the look on the vet's face, as he sets the hoof down.

It's the man who watches the sun rise and whispers, "God. Please send rain."

Farming...

It's dirt under your fingernails and callouses on your palms.

It's mucky rubber boots on the mat and bare feet on the driveway.

It's sweat dribbling down your neck and clouds of breath hanging in the air.

It's hay dust dancing in the sun beams and rain pounding on the tin roof.

It's a quick breakfast and a weary supper.

It's a boy's first tractor ride and Grandpa's hair-raising adventures.

It's manure piles and glistening hides.

It's a roosting hen and a galloping horse.

It's rippling green corn fields and carrots fresh out of the dirt.

It's a hayloft warm with fresh bales and the ring of a hammer across the yard.

It's squishy cow pies and stubborn stones.

It's a cloud of dust and the rumble of a thousand hooves.

Farming...

It's hay dust plastered on sweaty skin.

It's the icicles in your beard melting in the warmth of the barn.

It's your brother, peering out from under the hay cutter, with greasy hands and a spot on his nose, and calling for the 3/4 socket.

It's the lambs who think your hair is edible.

It's 'Knee high by the first of July'.

It's losing your cell phone in the straw chopper.

It's a chicken undoing your laces, while you try not to drop any eggs.

It's stepping in a fresh green cow-pie, and going down laughing!

It's horse breath on your cheek.

It's cobwebs and dust and smells that aren't so nice, until you lose them.

It's the swallows swooping in and out through the stable windows.

It's tallying up the poults and finding you're 30 short, so you each grab 5 and jump in the back of the truck to take them down the road where they belong.

It's standing, watching your dad and the vet through the fence, fists clenched, fighting for every breath of your own, willing the newborn to live.

It's the fear from a cloud of smoke billowing above the trees, The wheat field!

It's three days straight of rain, and zero complaints.

It's the bowed heads and circle of hands at the supper table.

Farming...

It's in the roar of a corn dryer and the hushed awe of a new born foal.

It's in the laughter of children and the tears of grown men.

It's in Grandma's stories and in our children's fingers.

It's in the barn and the field, in a shovel and a fork.

It's in the cattle and the corn, in the goats and the grain.

It's in the past and the present and the future.

Farming...

It is the oldest and, I think, the noblest way of making a living there is.

Farmers feed families, so thank God for farmers!

- Anna Preston, Guelph

NUHN15000022659

Comment

What we have learned from the neonic fiasco in Ontario

Dear editor:

The recent decision by the Ontario government to critically restrict usage of neonicotinoid seed treatments for corn and soybeans, despite limited scientific support, has been a real eye opener for Ontario farmers. This column is about broader implications for Ontario agriculture.

Message One: The Ontario political landscape has changed dramatically, permanently and not favourably for rural residents and farmers

The neonic decision can be linked directly to the 2014 vote when, for the first time in history, Ontario elected a majority government containing almost no rural legislators.

The message was clear to politicians and citizens alike: Electoral success in Ontario means catering primarily – maybe exclusively - to the wants of the urban population, not those of the 15 per cent who are rural, and especially not those of farmers and their families who represent but 1.4 per cent of Ontarians. In the future, our political significance will decline further.

Message Two: To be heard, rural and farm issues must be portrayed in a context important to urbanites

As farmers, we love to emphasize our high efficiency, technical sophistication and importance to the economy, but the average urbanite really doesn't care.

Urbanites know that they need farmers for food, but mostly don't see this as an issue. (They also need oil companies for gasoline.) Grocery shelves are always full, and price and quality - not source - are what matters most – notwithstanding the present public profile of local food.

Urban families are concerned with food safety, health, risk avoidance and how to make scarce dollars go farther. But concerned about food supply? Not so much.

Public distrust of both big business and big government is part of the dynamic and that increasingly includes big agriculture/farming – especially if there is any perceived threat to the environment.

Very importantly, politicians respond to what they hear from their constituents and those constituents are urban. To be heard, farmers must present their issues in ways important to those urban constituents rather than just to farmers themselves.

Message Three: Science is of declining importance in political decision making

Most farmers assume science is basic for decisions about technology including its safety for usage. Canadian farmers have looked at Europe where regulatory decisions are made increasingly by politicians in defiance of good science. We thought this wouldn't happen here. We thought wrong.

The ban on lawn pesticide usage imposed in Ontario in 2009 was a sign of things to come. The science was unambiguous: if used as directed, lawn pesticides represent no threat to human health and almost none to the environment. But Ontario politicians listened instead to anti-pesticide and fringe health groups and their chemophobic messages.

It was a clear signal of growing distrust of both science and scientists by both the public and politicians. The recent Ontario policy decision on neonicotinoids, made in response to NGO efforts, is a further step down this road.

The bottom line is that farmers can no longer rely on scientific principles and the scientific approach as the foundation for regulatory policy setting in Ontario.

Message Four: We must respond to critical issues at the beginning, not when they become an avalanche

With neonics, grain farmers and the agribusiness community seriously underestimated the appeal of the message carried by anti-pesticide NGOs and a few media-savvy individuals in the Ontario Bee Association.

The activists developed slick messages, staged media events, built public support, lobbied urban-based politicians, brought in sympathetic 'scientific experts', even purchased ads on Toronto subways. Activists redefined farmers as bee killers rather than food producers.

When agriculture finally responded by trying to tell 'the full story', it was too late. The public was already convinced (falsely, in my view) that honey bee numbers are plunging and that farmer-applied neonic insecticides are the dominant reason.

Agriculture did react with measures to reduce neonic-laden dust emissions. In early 2015 the Grain Farmers of Ontario produced a credible plan for enhancing the well-being of pollinators. But it was all too late.

Once the public forms an opinion, rightly or wrongly, no amount of advertising or messaging can cause reversal. You can't stop an avalanche when it is half-way down the mountain.

In my view, the neonic issue is probably beyond saving for Ontario corn and soybean growers (and for many beekeepers also concerned about what replaces neonics). It is time to focus on what's next. Activist campaigns are well underway on other agricultural practices including use of other pesticides (glyphosate), genetic modified (GM) crops, fertilizer usage, livestock antibiotics – and more.

I am especially concerned about GM crops. Polls show public attitudes to GM technology are becoming more negative, even as the science in support of benefits and safety becomes stronger. Sort of like neonics two years ago.

Each negative column, letter to the editor or other media feature needs a response containing documented facts while emphasizing what's important to urbanites. We need to better use trustworthy 'experts', especially those who can communicate, to counter those provided by activist groups.

We need to get more consumers to understand that accomplishments of modern agriculture mean important benefits for them – an abundant and diverse food supply, of ever-improving quality and safety, representing a declining share of family disposable income, and grown on a shrinking farmland base.

It's a new reality for Ontario farmers. If we are going to be politically significant in the years ahead, we must think and communicate different.

Terry Daynard, Guelph

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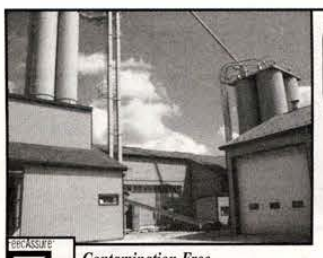

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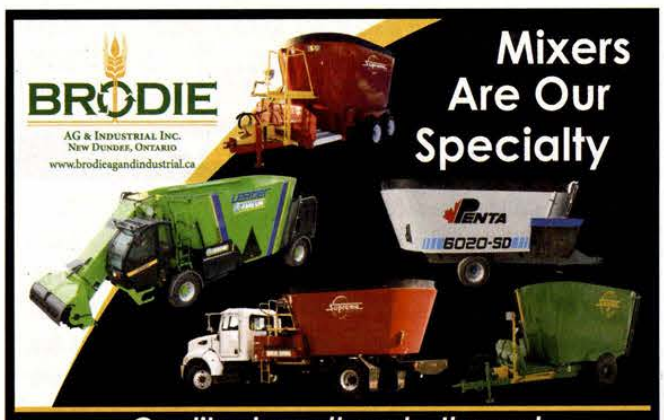

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Dairy goat COP study does not reflect this farmer's reality

Dear editor:

I am writing in response to a letter that was printed August 4th, written by Kevin D'Hondt, which was titled 'Maybe goats not such a good idea'.

In this letter D'Hondt discusses the Cost of Production (COP) survey from Ontario Goat. Specifically, D'Hondt describes that his perspective of starting a potential dairy goat enterprise was greatly influenced by the COP survey. D'Hondt's letter is an excellent example of how inaccurate information is troubling to the goat industry.

I have personally milked goats for the last 15 years and therefore I consider myself a veteran in the goat industry. Two years ago all Ontario goat farmers were asked to vote either for or against the need for Ontario Goat. I voted against the need for Ontario Goat, and at that time I was not sure if I made the right decision.

Now, after viewing the COP survey I find that I am disappointed with how Ontario Goat is representing our industry. I believe that Ontario Goat should be very careful with over-pricing our products because we are not protected by any form of production control.

The dairy goat COP survey can create a lot of misunderstanding about the value of the dairy goat industry, which in turn brings down the value of existing dairy goat farms, and makes our supporting financial institutions very nervous. Worst of all, the Ontario Goat COP survey could make potential dairy goat entrepreneurs confused about whether or not they should be a part of the goat industry.

Existing dairy goat farmers currently pay a hefty mandatory fee to support Ontario Goat, and in return Ontario Goat informs potential goat farmers about our industry. Personally, I advise potential goat farmers to talk directly with members of the Ontario Dairy Goat Cooperative (ODGC) who are pleased to provide genuine information about the industry.

Moreover, it would be especially wise for potential goat farmers to discuss the goat industry with longstanding members of ODGC who have already proven that they are successful in the dairy goat industry. The ODGC has turned the goat industry around and provides dairy producers and processors with tremendous opportunity to be successful.

With this in mind, I would like to give my advice to potential goat farmers, which is backed-up by 15 years of experience, and more importantly it's free of charge!

I want people to know the truth about what my goats have done for me within the last 15 years. My dairy goat farm has provided me and my family with three meals a day, and all the comforts of the middle-class lifestyle we wanted even with high debt-loads. My goat farm has provided my daughters with cars to drive and plenty of gas to keep filling their tanks. Our goat farm has put my four daughters through college and university, and has provided me and my wife with our retirement fund.

I believe it is important to note that all of this was achieved with a liter price that was half of what the COP survey came up with. In addition, I accomplished all of this without an off-farm job to support the family. Altogether, I believe my experience and advice is more valuable to potential goat farmers then the numbers in the COP, which I believe to be out of line.

Lastly, I will quote D'Hondt, "time is a precious commodity" and to that I say, don't waste it. Start milking goats!

Antoon Romme, Norwich

Another deal with a country that does not play fair?

Dear editor:

The US demands Canada eliminate our supply management system for dairy and poultry producers if we want to be part of the P.P.T.A.

If we do, can we depend on the US to begin playing by the rules? Their Country of Origin Labeling legislation protects their beef and hog farmers from Mexican and Canadian exports. This costs Mexican and Canadian farmers billions of dollars every year. The US has been dragged before the appeal court set up to adjudicate such matter and declared guilty five times. The US continues to enforce its COOL legislation and thumb its nose at trading partners.

If the US refuses to play by the existing rules why would Canada agree to impose new rules on Canadian farmers?

Gordon Hill, Varna

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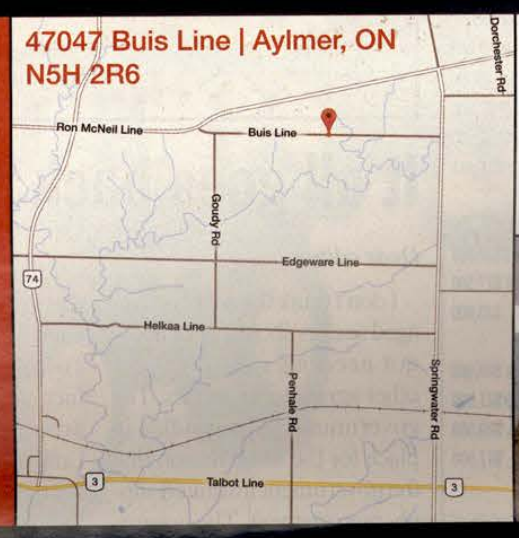

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It all goes back to public sector wages

Dear editor:

I don't think the supply-managed sectors should gloat about not needing subsidies like other agricultural sectors. The government put subsidies in place for the same reason that the government instituted supply management. The government put these programs in place because some 50 some years ago the public and civil servants were getting 20 to 30 percent pay increases.

These pay increases raised the cost of production and each farmer had to do more to compensate for the cost increases. This led to a severe drop in commodity prices. Low prices force more farmers to drop out of production. Supply management and subsidies were put in place to try and keep as many farmers in the industry as possible.

The public and civil servants and politicians are still taking unchecked pay increases. Supply management's cost of production price increases and the subsidies for the other agriculture sectors somewhat help farmers catch up to the cost increases.

The public and civil servants unchecked pay raises are responsible for the constant shrinking number of farmers left in each sector.

Larry Biesinger, Listowel

A rebuttal on bee comments

Dear editor:

This letter is in response to the letter submitted by Tibor Szabo on August 4, "Let's move on and get along".

Grain Farmers of Ontario has never threatened to use pesticides more harmful to bees. Left without the option of using neonicotinoid-treated seed due to the recent regulations surrounding the use of the product, many farmers will be forced to use far more detrimental products like foliar sprays that are arguably more harmful to the environment and farmers.

Grain Farmers of Ontario is simply looking out for the well-being of its farmer members. Advising members to seek legal advice when bees are housed on their property ensures their own protection; many grain farmers and beekeepers have expressed concern over the return to foliar sprays, and it is important the beekeeper assumes responsibility for the hive.

Mr. Szabo also refers to the Canadian Association of Professional Apiculturists report, where Canadian honeybee losses for the winter of 2014/2015 were reported. What Mr. Szabo neglects to mention is that this number is significantly lower than the 58 per cent Ontario losses reported in the winter of 2013/2014; this year's numbers are one-fifth lower. This is largely due to the immense efforts farmers put in to minimize pollinator exposure to dust when planting corn and soybeans by using the Fluency Agent as well as dust deflectors.

There have been recent claims that European canola planted without neonicotinoids have higher yields than previous years when crops were planted with neonicotinoids. However, canola harvest in the European Union has just begun, and it's too early to be making these predictions. In addition, production totals do not include fields completely destroyed due to high insect pressures. Extremely favourable weather conditions that have not been experienced in the EU in recent years can largely be attributed to whatever increases being reported.

COLOSS, a global honey bee research organization located in Switzerland just released a study that looks at the over wintering bee deaths in the EU from last year and two years ago. The study found that the overall proportion of colonies lost was estimated as 17.4 per cent, twice that of the previous winter. This also correlates with the 2013 ban of neonicotinoids imposed on European farmers; now, two years later, bee mortality has not decreased.

Grain Farmers of Ontario recognizes the importance of working together with other farmers, but it is important to do so in a way that is not harmful or detrimental to the well-being of its own farmers.

Mark Huston
Vice Chair, Grain Farmers of Ontario

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Prison farm STILL a local election issue in Kingston

Three Kingston candidates all pledge to do something about reviving the local prison farm

BY SUZANNE ATKINSON
The writer farms near Warkworth
zan@xplornet.com

Urban vegetable farmers Tim and Tracy Lyon protested at the prison farm rallies in 2010 and returned with their two children last week for the fifth anniversary vigil.

Kingston - It may be old news in the rest of the country, but in Kingston with an election underway, there is support by all three mainstream candidates for the resurrection in some form of this city's prison farm.

CPC candidate Andy Brooke, a former RCMP officer who investigated crimes within penitentiary walls, is so convinced that a farm program is beneficial, that he purchased a $300 Prison Farm co-op share, and says he would lobby within caucus for the revised farm program.

Liberal candidate Mark Gerretsen, a former city mayor, says his party has committed to the prison farm and the policy put forward by former MP Ted Hsu which would see a 50-cow herd re-established at the farm, now known as Collins Bay minimum, and producing artisan cheese.

And the NDP's Daniel Beals says the farm should be resurrected, beginning with the chickens because they're "easier than the cows, but the cows could come back in the long-term."

Beals and Gerretsen joined 60 prison farm supporters last Monday as the community here marked the fifth anniversary of the day more than 100 cows were trucked off to a sale barn.

Much has changed here in the intervening years with a new prison building gracing what was once a hay field, a new community plan proposing a housing complex for farmland which is rented to nearby farmers, and the inmates themselves learning skills - in a dry cleaning plant.

Every Monday night; and they haven't missed one in five years, a core group of five volunteers shows up to spend the 7 to 8 p.m. hour protesting the closure; no matter the weather. They bring signs and cowbells, wear cow spotted overalls and wave as motorists pass by; horns honking generously, always, they say, in support.

That 14-year-old girl, who eventually went to jail with other protesters, then became a celebrity for her stand, proudly told Ontario Farmer that "it's something I believe in."

"I vote every chance I get," the now university student, who can't be named, explained.

"I would do it again in a heartbeat."

Beals too was around then, going to Parliament with the core prison farm committee made up mostly of National Farmers Union members, and being frustrated at the closure.

"What I would hope for is a full consultation with the community," Beals says as he visits with protesters.

Brooke says he told the Prison Farm co-operative "that they needed a new business model.

"Clearly the model that was in place wasn't working," he told Ontario Farmer, acknowledging that "this issue has a particular resonance."

"It cuts across all party lines."

He admits that during his investigative work he never had occasion to "come in contact with the prison farm."

Brooke wasn't in attendance at the rally, but he did tell Ontario Farmer in a telephone interview that he would "be quite prepared to advocate," for the new prison farm business model, developed by the Co-Op.

Co-op member Dianne Dowling says the co-op has not developed any plan beyond its continued housing of the descendants of 31 cows purchased at a local sale after the closing, with the plan to sell them back to CSC when whatever party is in charge, re-establishes the prison farm program.

A letter to the Pen Farm co-op by public safety and national security critic Wayne Easter, commits to building a "new facility...to produce artisan cheese.

"Based on the initial financial assessment it is our intent as a future Liberal Government to support the re-opening of this facility."

Dowling allows that the prison farm closure might not resonate on the national scene.

But here where farmland is at a premium, it joins the litany of misdeeds perpetrated by the Conservatives on this once-Conservative strong community.

Hsu too is on hand, having decided that one HoC term was enough for him, but going out having costed out the Prison Farm artisanal cheese program, demonstrating why he once got the nod from his elected colleagues as the "MP who best represents his constituents."

Brooke admits the race for the Kingston and the Islands seat will be tight.

"I am entirely focused on local," he says. "I won't hesitate to advocate for any issue that is locally important." He acknowledges that all the candidates are singing from the same choir book when it comes to the prison farm.

The question he says is one of representation.

"Who will be best situated to plead their case in a caucus setting?"

60 prison farm supporters rallied last Monday as the community marked the fifth anniversary of the day more than 100 cows were trucked off to a sale barn.

NUHN15000022665

Wayne Lawrence, chair of the three-day Canadian National Junior Limousin Show

Showing industry optimism along with the cattle

Youth travelled to Stratford recently to take part in the Canadian National Junior Limousin Show

BY BOB REID
The writer lives near Bright
farmhouse@cwisp.ca

Hope springs eternal among youth but even more so among young beef farmers in the current market upswing.

Fifty plus of those youth travelled to Stratford recently to take part in the Canadian National Junior Limousin Show.

While older, long established beef farmers are seeing record high prices for beef as an opportune time to exit the industry, youngsters with an interest in cattle are feeling encouraged to continue that interest, said Wayne Lawrence, chair of the three-day event.

Whatever the future holds for youth participants – aged four to 21 – Lawrence believes they will be developing life skills simply by participating. Besides preparing and showing various classes of cattle, there were opportunities to participate in public speaking, team judging, marketing, photography and art.

"For some of the shy kids it often brings them out of their shell by the time it is (show) all over," said Lawrence.

The National Limousin Show alternates between four provinces – Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Ontario – where most of the cattle are located. However participants this year are attending from British Columbia and Nova Scotia as well.

It is the first time the show has been held in Stratford. The previous time in Ontario the show was hosted in Orangeville with it scheduled for Alberta in 2016.

While aggressive advertising by Black Angus cattle associations have increased retail sales of beef for that breed, Limousin cattle continue to enjoy success in selling breeding bulls for crossbreeding purposes, said Lawrence.

The double-muscled breed provides carcasses that are sought by packing plants for their high dressing percentage.

To differentiate the breed the identification ear tags required by the Canadian Inspection Food Agency (CFIA) are now pink on the back.

Lawrence had purchased Limousin bulls to use on his herd of commercial cattle for 30 years before establishing a purebred herd of Limousin six years ago. He now keeps 30 brood cows on his farm near Durham.

A daughter and a son and daughter-in-law all participate in raising Limousin cattle, representing the next generation of beef farmers.

The Canadian Limousin Association annual meeting is held in conjunction with the Junior Show each year.

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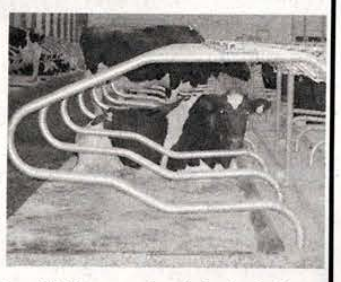

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TALES OF COLOUR AND VARIETY FROM THE FARM NEIGHBOURHOOD OF ONTARIO

Fast Eddy and his rig arrive

BY TOM VAN DUSEN
The writer lives in Russel County
tomvandusen99@yahoo.com

Charity runner Eddy Dostaler: "Back home, we're taught that Ontario would starve without the west," he says during a four-day pit stop in Russell where he has relatives. "That doesn't seem to be true." He is doing a cross-Canada charity run for the Alzheimer's Society and the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation

Russell - For Fast Eddy Dostaler, his first look at Ontario was an eye-opener...he couldn't believe it wasn't wall-to-wall urban sprawl.

Trotting along at 5-7 km an hour pushing a jogging stroller, about 6,000 km into his 'There and Back Journey' for charity, has given Ed a close-to-the-ground view of the landscape.

Coming from Kamloops, BC, west of the country's famed breadbasket, he was surprised at the fields of Ontario corn and beans as far as the eye could see. It was the first time he'd ventured beyond Saskatchewan.

"Back home, we're taught that Ontario would starve without the west," Ed says during a four-day pit stop in Russell where he has relatives. "That doesn't seem to be true."

It was in Kamloops in March that Fast Eddy, 26, launched his ambitious journey, alone and on foot, to raise funds for the Alzheimer's Society and the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation.

A former sprinter turned ultra-marathon runner, Eddy has adopted the two causes in question to satisfy commitments he made to a dying professor and to his grandmother who he watched suffer through Alzheimer's.

The stroller Eddy pushes holds the essentials: Tent, sleeping bag, stove, utensils, tools, clothes including extra shoes, food and laptop, for a total of 110 pounds. Unfortunately, he says, because he's pushing the stroller, he must give up the arm-pumping action that normally accentuates running; he could move along three times as fast without it.

He prefers running at night when its cooler and traffic is reduced. His official vehicle, the jogging stroller, is emblazoned with "Fast Eddy" across the front. He refers to the vehicle as a "she" and occasionally gives her a friendly pat of encouragement.

He claims he's not attempting to cross the country to the eastern tip of Newfoundland and return to BC through a frigid Canadian winter to prove something to himself. Other than pride and stubbornness, it's all about the causes.

By cross-Canada charity tour standards, Ed's goal is modest. He hopes to raise a total of $800,000 to be distributed regionally to his dual causes; about $5,000 has been collected. Donations can be made at www.fasteddycanada.com.

Blaming in part disinterest on the part of the news media, he's disappointed at the amount raised so far. Understandably, he allows, the media has become jaded after about 50 cross-Canada runs completed since Terry Fox's famous feat in 1980.

He hopes his attempt will have become better known on the return trip and, as a result, he'll be able to realize his financial goal. It'll mark the first time, Ed claims, that a nationwide trek such as his will include a continuous return trip.

Fox has been an inspiration for Ed. He refers regularly to a copy of "Terry Fox: His Story" which he appreciates particularly for the parts about soldiering on under adversity.

The Man in Motion, Rick Hansen, has also provided kind words, including cautioning Eddy not to let anyone else set his schedule: "He told me that I'm the only one who knows what I'm going through."

As the man behind the stroller says, he isn't crossing this vast land from one end to another just once; he's going as far as he can go east and all the way back west again. That's 21,585 km there and back. Estimating it'll take him another nine months to get back home, he's convinced he can do it.

"It's just a question of time," he says. "You put one foot in front of the other until you get it done… even if it takes a little longer than expected. See you back in Russell in December."

Ed is a cousin of Russell resident Des Korotash who, with wife Chris, picked him up outside Carleton Place so he could enjoy some downtime and take in some National Capital attractions. The Korotashs returned him to his spot on the road Aug.12; he jogged through Ottawa, exiting at the east end, heading down the highway towards Hawkesbury and across the bridge to Grenville, Que.

So far, Eddy has burned through five pairs of shoes. Fortunately, one of his sponsors is Hoka One One running shoes which has provided 29 pairs based on a formula of about 500-700 km a pair; however, Ed has been getting about 1,000 km a pair.

He expects the entire adventure will cost about $30,000, including standard food items such as sandwiches and jerky. While the camps out part of the time, he also stays in motels along the route.

For the most part, Ed's fellow Canadians have treated him well. Yes, there have been some negative experiences, including one time when a bottle was thrown at his stroller. Another time, a car clipped the stroller and kept on rolling, even though the passenger side mirror was broken.

The female driver was busy applying makeup, Ed recalls.

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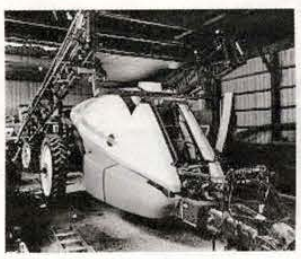

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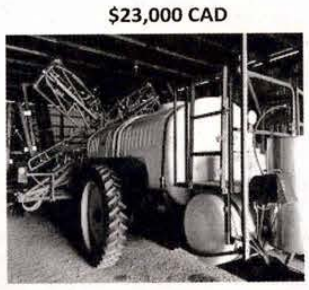

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News

CWB, G3 finalize commercialization deal for former board

BY HARRY SIEMENS
Ontario Farmer

Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz announced recently it's a done deal: the Canadian Wheat Board has finalized the commercialization deal with G3 Global Grain Group and has become a fully private and global competitor in the Canadian grain sector. This follows the planned investment deal announced in April 2015.

The commercialization of CWB is part of the federal government's broader modernization of Canada's grain sector to stimulate investment and create jobs and economic growth for farmers and Canadians. It includes an aggressive trade and market access agenda, grain transportation and supply chain improvements and investments in science and research.

On April 15, the Government of Canada announced approval of a deal reached between the CWB and G3 Global Grain Group, which included a G3 investment of $250 million in the CWB, subject to closing adjustments.

• 70% of western Canadian grain exports flow through the west coast.

• G3 Global Holdings, an affiliate of G3 Global Grain Group, is also examining the feasibility of developing a new port facility in Vancouver that would greatly increase Canada's export capacity. This would be the first new port facility for grain in Canada's busiest port in nearly 50 years.

"Canada's farmers depend on an efficient gateway to get their top quality products to the world. Today, we see how Marketing Freedom continues to open the way for investments in the grain industry leading to jobs and growth for farmers and Canadians," says Ritz.

Smithfield loses money raising pigs

Smithfield Foods Ltd., the largest hog producer outside of China, lost $90 million in the most recent three-month financial quarter.

But it made $79 million more than a year ago in its packaged meats division.

When everything is added up, the company's second-quarter profits declined by 27 per cent to $104 million.

Sales were down by eight per cent to $3.49 billion.

Smithfield is now owned by WH Group Ltd. of China.

NORTH WATERLOO FARMERS MUTUAL INSURANCE

NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING OF MUTUAL POLICYHOLDERS

NOTICE is hereby given that a Special Meeting of Mutual Policyholders of North Waterloo Farmers Mutual Insurance Company will be held on August 27, 2015 at 1:00 p.m. at the **Waterloo Inn Conference Hotel, 475 King Street North, Waterloo, Ontario N2J 2Z5** for the purpose of:

(1) considering a special resolution for the amalgamation of the Company with the Oxford Mutual Insurance Company; and
(2) transacting such other business as may properly be brought before the Meeting.

By Order of the Board
Helen J. Johns
Board Chair

NUHN15000022669

Exhibit 2070
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Corn futures dropping back again

The most obvious opportunity for a tighter corn supply and demand corn balance during the year ahead would come from a smaller than expected harvest.

Corn futures prices increased about $0.90 per bushel from mid-June to mid-July, says University of Illinois ag economist Darrel Good. The increase was driven by a combination of a smaller-than-expected USDA estimate of June 1 stocks and production concerns stemming from record June rainfall in much of the eastern Corn Belt.

But, he says, over the past two weeks, futures prices have declined nearly $0.65 per bushel as production concerns have subsided. Expectations are for corn supplies to remain in surplus during the 2015-16 marketing year. Prices, then, will remain at the current low level unless there is some evidence that the supply and demand balance is potentially much tighter than currently expected, he says.

A slightly tighter supply and demand balance for the 2015-16 corn marketing year could be generated by a smaller carryover of old crop corn than currently projected. Based on the current pace of ethanol production, for example, the use of corn for ethanol production during the current marketing year (ending Aug.t 31) could be about 10 million bushels more than the current USDA projection of 5.2 billion bushels, Good says.

Similarly, exports could be slightly larger than the projection of 1.85 billion bushels if Census Bureau export estimates for June, July, and August exceed the USDA export inspection estimates as was the case in the first nine months of the marketing year. However, for carryover stocks to be lower than the current projection of 1.79 billion bushels by enough to meaningfully alter the 2015-16 supply and demand balance would require larger than expected feed and residual use of corn during the final quarter of the marketing year, he says.

The USDA's projection of 5.3 billion bushels of feed and residual use for the year implies fourth quarter use of 522 million bushels. That is 111 million bushels more than use of a year ago and the largest fourth quarter use since 2009. Use is expected to exceed that of a year ago due to an increase in pork and broiler production and small increases in the number of dairy cows and the number of beef cattle on feed. The number of layers has been sharply reduced due to bird flu. Fourth quarter feed and residual use will be revealed with the estimate of Sept. 1 stocks of old crop corn to be released on September 30 and a surprise is always possible.

A tighter supply and demand balance could also result from larger than expected consumption during the year ahead, Good says. Such a development would obviously take time to unfold, but opportunities for consumption to exceed the current projection appear to be limited. The USDA currently projects 2015-16 marketing year exports at 1.875 billion bushels, 25 million more than projected for the current year. However, interest in U.S. corn is currently limited by abundant supplies of low-priced South American corn. As of July 16, the USDA reported that only 152 million bushels of U.S. corn had been sold for export during the upcoming marketing year. On the same date last year, outstanding sales of new crop corn totaled 232 million bushels.

Corn used for ethanol production is projected to increase by 25 million bushels during the upcoming marketing year. The expected increase in ethanol production and corn consumption reflects expectations for growth in domestic gasoline consumption. Growth beyond that, however, will be limited by the 10 percent ethanol blend wall and the very slow pace of growth in the consumption of higher ethanol blends. In addition, ethanol exports are already large so that growth potential is likely limited.

The USDA projects feed and residual use of corn to decline by 25 million bushels during the year ahead. Consumption should be supported at a relatively high level due to larger livestock inventories. However, hog producers have indicated that they will reduce the number of sows farrowed during the last half of 2015 and growth in the other animal sectors will likely be very modest.

The most obvious opportunity for a tighter corn supply and demand corn balance during the year ahead would come from a smaller than expected harvest. The USDA's Crop Production report to be released on August 12 will contain the first survey-based yield and production forecasts for the 2015 crop. Expectations for the U.S. average yield projection are in a wide range, but have generally increased over the past two weeks as weather conditions have become less stressful and as crop condition ratings have stabilized at a high level. The average yield expectation appears to be near 165 bushels, 1.8 bushels less than projected in the July 10 USDA WASDE report. The August production forecast will also reflect the estimate of harvested acreage, but a large change from the June acreage forecast is not expected. Based on the projection of 81.1 million acres harvested for grain, a yield of 165 bushels would result in a crop of 13.38 billion bushels, about 150 million bushels less than projected in the July WASDE report. Still, if 2015-16 marketing year consumption is near the current USDA projection of 13.735 billion bushels, year-ending stocks would be abundant at about 1.45 billion bushels. On the other hand, a yield forecast of 161 bushels or less would likely be sufficient to push prices back to the mid-July highs.

Recent corn price declines indicate that the market is removing the production risk premium from the price structure in anticipation of another year of surplus. The question is whether that removal is premature.

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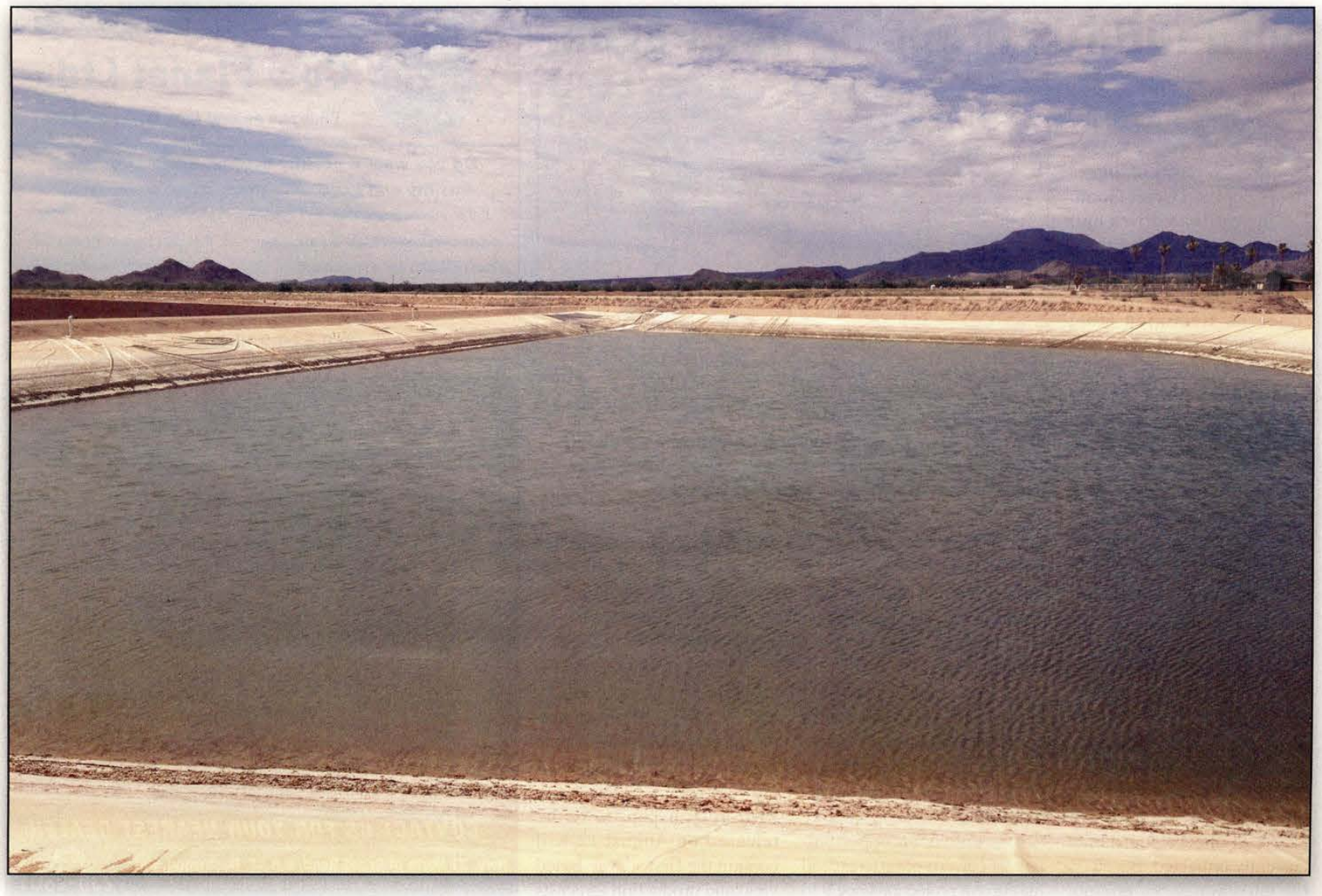

The Central Arizona Project is a 336-mile long transport system that supplies the state with water from the Colorado River – irrigation is the backbone of Arizona agriculture.

An arid land where every flush and gulp counts

Agriculture is Arizona's largest water user, accounting for 73 per cent of usage in 2013

BY LILIAN SCHAER
The writer is a freelance journalist based in Arkell

I recently had the chance to spend a few days in Arizona, including a day touring farms. Yes, Arizona in July is hot, hot, hot – 43C in mid-afternoon hot.

It's also dry and water is a top of mind issue with all farmers we met. What struck me as interesting is that everyone we spoke to was quick to point out that although water is a precious and limited resource, Arizona was not at the same level of crisis as neighbouring California, or even in a water crisis at all for that matter.

Pepper farmer Rob Knorr, for example, told us that although they track water usage like financial statements on their 3,000 farm south of Phoenix, they have enough water for what they want to grow. Their challenge was figuring out new ways to stretch their water allocations further, through tools like sub-surface drip irrigation, so they could boost their yields and extend their irrigation season.

Large livestock operations like mega-dairy Shamrock Farms, where they milk 10,000 cows, and Pinal Feeding Company's feedlot (population 48,500 head of Holstein steers) pull most of their water from the ground, using wells that are up to 1,600 feet deep. Neither seemed overly concerned about a possible lack of water during our tours there.

The key to Arizona's water situation seems to lie with the foresight that led to the construction of the Central Arizona Project (CAP) in the late 1960s, the introduction of the Groundwater Management Act in 1980, and the creation of the Arizona Water Banking Authority in 1996.

CAP is a 336-mile long system of aqueducts, tunnels, pumping plants, and pipelines that brings about 1.5 million acre-feet of water from the Colorado River and Lake Havasu to southern Arizona, where more than 80 per cent of the state's population lives.

"Arizona has over 40 years of water re-use and reclaim history," says Thomas Buschatzke, Director of the Arizona Department of Water Resources, who spoke at a panel discussion on water issues. "With the Ground Water Management Act of 1980, for example, we became one of the first states to prevent over-mining of ground water."

The Act introduced mandatory water conservation for agriculture, industry, and municipal users, and through the Water Banking Authority, Arizona stores about 9 million acre-feet of water – its way of ensuring it claims its total annual Colorado River allocation even if it it's not needed right away.

And Arizona's efforts seem to be paying off, at least according to Buschatzke. Despite a six-fold increase in the state population and a 19-fold increase in Gross Domestic Income, Arizona's water use has actually decreased slightly – falling from 7.1 million acre-feet in 1957 to 7 million acre-feet in 2013.

> **It's that large water footprint that has made the industry a target despite widespread efforts by farmers and rural dwellers to manage water responsibly and reduce use – right down to no-flush urinals in rural areas.**

But there are challenges too. The state population is still increasing, and once water levels in Lake Mead in nearby Nevada drop below elevation (1,075 ft.), automatic use reductions will kick in, meaning Arizona will lose 320,000 acre feet of water, said Buschatzke.

Half of that loss will directly affect farming through cut backs to the Central Arizona Project, the backbone of agricultural irrigation in the state, and the other half will result in decreases in underground water storage.

Agriculture is Arizona's largest water user, accounting for 73 per cent of usage in 2013.

It's that large water footprint that has made the industry a target despite widespread efforts by farmers and rural dwellers to manage water responsibly and reduce use – right down to no-flush urinals in rural areas.

Bas Aja, executive vice president of the Arizona Cattle Growers' Association, says infrastructure will need more focus in the future in Arizona, and that should include tools that are currently not well accepted by the public, such as dams and the use of treated waste water.

"We should be using every tool we have, and not eliminate tools in the water continuum right out of the box," he says, stating that continuing the collective process of water decision-making is important.

"We don't let anyone muscle anyone over water. It's a grudging consensus process, it's hard and time-consuming but that's why we've been successful," he adds.

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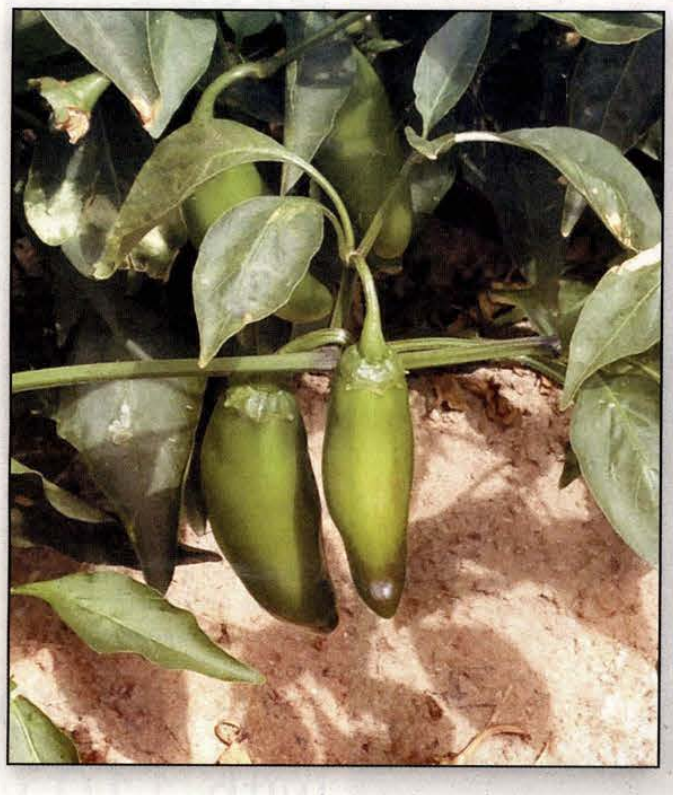
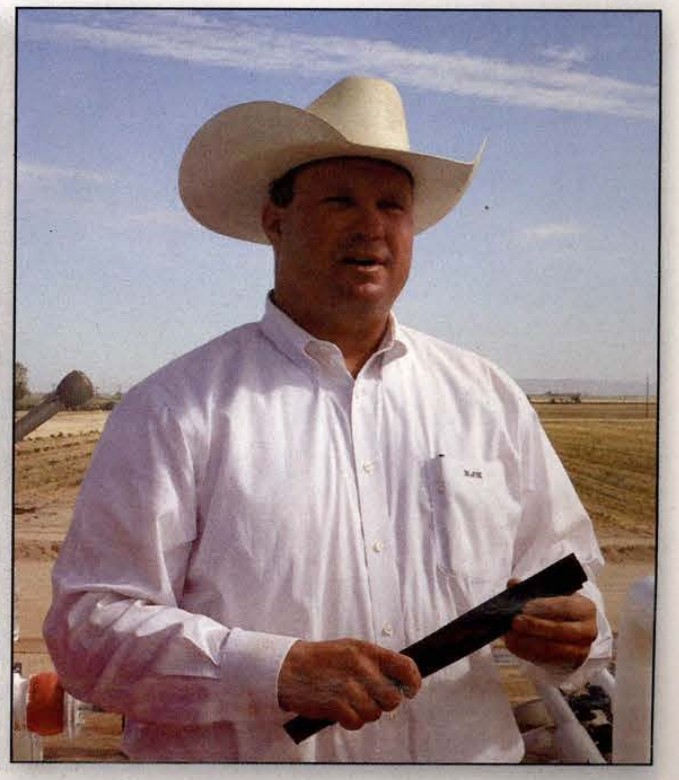
Filling a fresh jalapeno market niche

"We count the minutes from the field to cooling because this extends the shelf life. In the morning, peppers come off the field at 85F but they're 100F by lunch time; we can cool to 36F in five hours."

BY LILIAN SCHAER
The writer is a freelance journalist based in Arkell



Jalapenos ready for harvest



Rob Knorr talks about irrigating crops in Arizona

If you've ever had Pace-branded salsa, there's a good chance the jalapenos in it came from Knorr Farms in Maricopa, Arizona.

Thanks to a deal they made with a New Mexico processor to supply America's largest salsa maker more than 15 years ago, they've cornered the fresh jalapeno market in a crucial harvest window gap.

Harvest ends in Mexico in May, and starts in California and New Mexico in August; Arizona growers can fill that June-July gap with fresh jalapenos. And when they prune their plants down at the end of July, they can get a second harvest to market in October and November.

"David Pace wants a fresh jalapeno in every jar of salsa. In June and July, and October-November, 85 per cent of the fresh jalapeno for salsa comes from this farm," Rob Knorr told members of the American Agricultural Editors' Association touring his farm last month as part of their annual conference. "I have 2016 contracts for one-hour delivery window slots already signed and we haven't even planted the seeds yet."

Most jalapenos the Knorrs grow are non-hot varieties, and each plant is hand-harvested three times during June and July. That's because processors want all stems and crowns – their woody textures pose a potential choking hazard in the salsa – removed so peppers arrive at the plant ready for dicing.

That's not a process that can be done mechanically, making labour an ongoing challenge for Knorr, who hires a labour contractor out of Texas to bring in harvest crews of migrant workers.

Due to the heat, they start at day break (about 4:30 am) and work until 2 pm, earning $2 per bucket of picked jalapenos; the best workers can pick 60 to 80 buckets a day.

"We count the minutes from the field to cooling because this extends the shelf life. In the morning, peppers come off the field at 85F but they're 100F by lunch time; we can cool to 36F in five hours," explains Knorr.

The Knorrs also grow cotton, wheat, beans, peas, corn for silage, green chillies, melons and an experimental crop called guayule (pronounced why-yoo-lee), a possible natural rubber alternative to latex.

In a state as dry as Arizona, almost every Knorr farming decision ultimately comes back to water.

"As long as we have water, we can grow almost anything," Knorr believes. "We track water like financial statements, down to the inch."

Knorr's father and grandfather, attracted by a long growing season, grandfathered water rights and close proximity to a major metropolitan area, started buying farm land in Arizona in 1994, and Knorr himself moved to the state to run the new family farming operation south of Phoenix in 1997.

His brother still farms in North Dakota, growing 5,000 acres of wheat, corn, sunflowers, canola, and dry edible beans.

The Central Arizona Project, a system of canals that brings water from the Colorado River and Lake Havasu, is the lifeline of Arizona agriculture, where irrigation is vital to supplement the meager annual rainfall.

Traditionally, Arizona farmers have used furrow or flood irrigation to water their crops, but Knorr is transitioning his land to a sub-surface drip system, which he says has made all the difference in stretching their water resources and increasing yields.

Irrigation infrastructure at Knorr Farms

Crews harvesting peppers in Arizona

"This is the most efficient type of system that works economically in our fields," he explains. "For example, 85 per cent of the roots in a transplanted jalapeno plant are in the top 12 inches of soil. We now lay down permanent drip irrigation at eight inches whereas before we used to water six feet down using flood irrigation."

His first drip irrigation system was installed on 45 acres in 2000; today, that has reached 1,000 acres. The goal is to eventually have the entire farm converted, but at $2,000 to $2,500 per acre to install, it's a gradual process. The benefits are paying off, though, both in reduced inputs and better productivity.

"We've seen a 50 per cent decrease in fertilizer costs and a 40 per cent increase in jalapeno pepper productivity from drip irrigation," he says, adding that he can now add liquid-based fertilizer directly the plants' root systems.

Under his water allocation, Knorr is allowed 4.5 acre feet of water per acre per year. With the sub-surface drip system, he's using less water and applying it in a more targeted manner so he's now able to plant crops in March and water them until October, instead of having to stop in August when his water allocation was used up.

Knorr says their goal is to get 10 years out of the drip tape and 30 to 50 years out of the remaining infrastructure, although this will depend on how well they maintain their water quality.

Gophers are their biggest problem, biting holes into the plastic tape underground to get at the water, followed by coyotes that find the field valves and rip off the plastic spaghetti lines for a drink.

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07	Fendt 712	104	ldr, 4WD, cab, 480/70R28, 580/70R38	3100	$101,900
11	Fendt 714	125	4x85 cargo ldr, 50km suspended, 540/65R28, 650/65R38	3600	$116,000
14	Fendt 714	110	rental return, 5x85 ldr, 40GPM hyd, 5 rem, 540/65R28, 650/65R38	800	call
13	Fendt 722	185	rental return, profi plus, vario guide, xenon, 540/65R30, 650/65R42	700	call
12	Fendt 724	197	Profi, cargo 5X90 ldr, 600/65R28, 710/70R38	3200	$177,900
11	Fendt 822	185	Profiplus, reverse station, new 600/65R28, new 710/70R38	2100	$178,900
12	Fendt 826	225	frt 3ph, 600/70R30, 650/85R38	2500	$187,900
03	Fendt 926	240	460/85R34, 710/70R42	9800	$59,900
08	Fendt 930	250	870kg, 600/65R34, 710/70R42	2900	$187,900
08	Fendt 930	250	reverse station, 600/65R34, 710/70R42	3300	$188,900
11	Fendt 930	250	profiplus, front pto, 600/65R34, 650/85R38	3600	coming
08	Fendt 936	300	profi, 4WD, 600/65R34, 710/70R42	5700	$183,900
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77	MF 245	35	2WD, diesel, original hours	3002	$7,900
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12	NH LM5020	cab, heat+air, manitou quick tach, 12/75x18, telehandler	1900	$57,900
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	Kongskilde 600	6 furrow semi mount, manual vari width, hydraulic reset	$6,900
	White 8106	6 row, dry fertilizer, cross auger, markers	$31,900
14	White 9106	6RN dry fertilizer	call
13	Sunflower 1321-16	16' folding offset disc, tandems	coming
14	Sunflower 1234-18	18' disc, demo	call
06	Sunflower 1434-29	29' disc, tandems, 3-bar coil tine harrow	$34,900
13	Sunflower 1435-26	26' disc, hydraulic leveler, rear hitch	$46,900
09	Sunflower 1435-33	33' disc	$36,900
08	Sunflower 1435-36	36' disc, 4 bar hi-res harrow, tandems	$38,900
14	Sunflower 6333-28	28' soil finisher, frt disc, 6 row drag, last year stock	call
12	Sunflower 7232-30	30' soil conditioner, 17" round bar reels	$16,900

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	Hardi CM 1200	80' HZ, air assist, mustang 3500 ctrl, chem fill, markers, flush & rinse	$31,900
	Hardi NV 4000	90' HZ, triplets, flush&rinse, chem fill, 12.4x46 susp axle, HC5500 rate ctrl	$39,750
	Hardi NV 4000	90' HZ, triplets, 14.9R46 susp axle, AgLdr Edge ctrlr, swath ctrl, OnTracII steer	$48,900
	Hardi TR5000	45' hyd fold, tank[illegible]	$3,495
	Precision 500	60' hyd fold, hyd [illegible] 60[illegible], rear hitch, hypro 9016 pump	$5,495
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	ldr sub frame	for MF 7616	$2,195
	ldr sub frame	sub-frame + hood guard, for AA5670 and AA5680 part #10347015	$695
	Stoll q-attach plate	black	$695
	Topcon System 110	lightbar guidance system	$1,895

Watch for Tillage Day Details Coming Next Week

News

Eastern dairy herds will be sold

BY IAN CUMMING
Ontario Farmer

The dairy herds at Alfred and Kemptville Colleges will be sold by the end of August, said DFO board member Nick Thurler recently.

A potential organic buyer had until August 12th to finalize an offer for the Alfred herd, while the Kemptville herd is slated to leave the new, robot facilities at the end of the month.

A decision on what to do with the research quota from both facilities, owned by the DFO, will be made after the herds are dispersed. "Then we'll have to do something about it."

While controversial, the only place for Ontario research milk quota to go is to the new dairy facilities that the government, university, DFO and other major contributors built at Elora.

Thurler and a number of eastern dairy producers had donated and fundraised to build the new facility at Kemptville College, which will now sit empty.

Fire destroys barn with 110 veal calves

Fire destroyed a barn near Dorking Tuesday, killing 110 veal calves.

It was a "ball of flames," said one fireman.

Rick Richardson, the fire chief of Mapleton Fire Rescue, said the firefighters were called around 1:15 p.m and on arrival found the barn fully engulfed. It's on on Wellington Road 10 just north of Wellington Road 86.

"It was a ball of flames when we got there," said Richardson. There were four departments on the scene, including firefighters from Drayton and Moorefield which are part of Mapleton Fire Rescue, as well as Palmerston and Milverton. Over all 45 firefighters and 12 vehicles were on site.

"We concentrated on cooling down the exposures, the gas tank, the propane tank and outer building to contain it and we monitored that until the smoke clamed down last night about nine o'clock," said Richardson to CBC news.

The fire started in the hay loft and then spread to the lower level.

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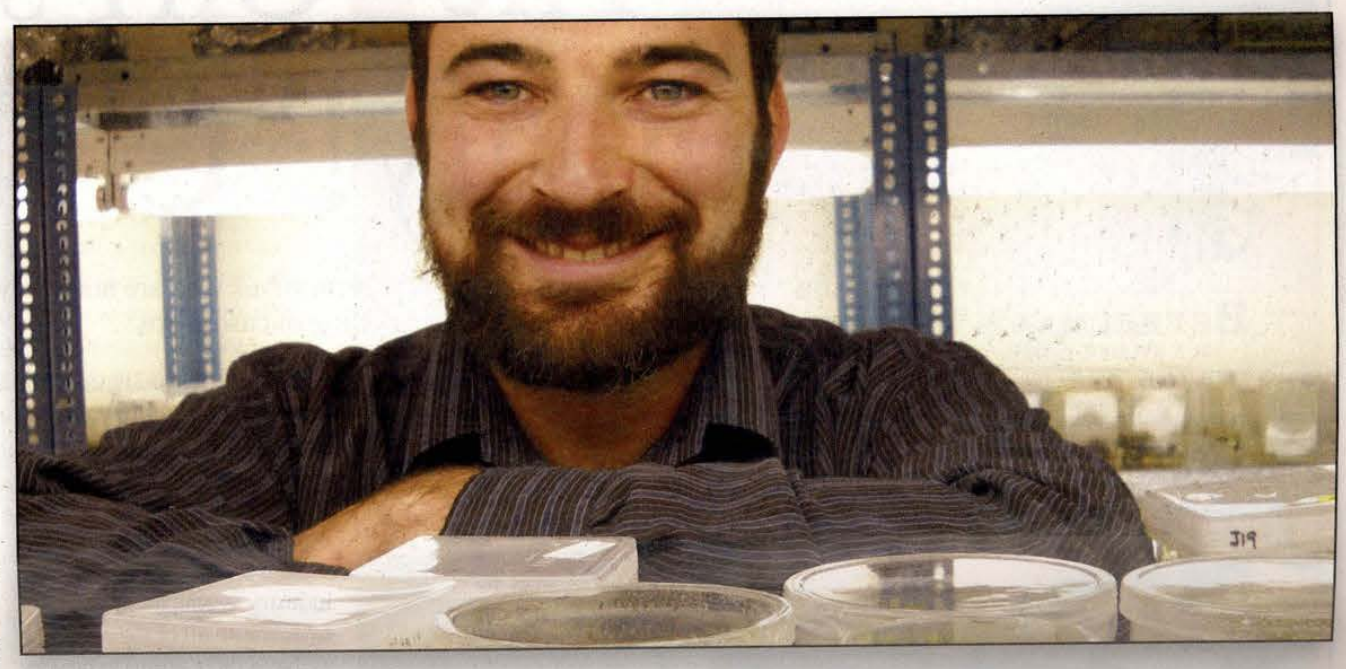
Researchers making plant propagation cheaper, quicker

Micro-propagation involves developing technology and techniques to provide disease-free plant materials for Canadian horticultural crops like apples and hazelnuts

BY LILIAN SCHAER
The writer is a freelance journalist based in Arkell



Dr. Max Jones: "The benefit of micro-propagation is rapid multiplication of disease-free plant material."

Research is underway at the University of Guelph to speed up how quickly and efficiently a plant can be reproduced.

Dr. Praveen Saxena and Dr. Max Jones of the Gosling Research Institute for Plant Preservation (GRIPP) are leading work in micro-propagation, which involves developing technology and techniques to provide disease-free plant materials for Canadian horticultural crops like apples and hazelnuts.

"When we micro-propagate a tree, we make a small piece of tissue develop into a shoot, grow roots, then grow it in the greenhouse until it can ultimately be sold as a tree or rootstock," explains Jones, adding that Ontario apple farmers currently use about one million rootstocks – the base onto which apple trees are grafted – per year, most of which are imported from the United States and Europe.

"The benefit of micro-propagation is rapid multiplication of disease-free plant material. With tissue culture technology, we can get five or six cycles of trees in per year, which is much faster than using traditional methods," he adds.

The GRIPP team, which also includes research associate Mukund Shukla, has just made a successful pitch to the University of Guelph's 2015 Gryphon's LAAIR (Leading to Accelerated Adoption of Innovative Research) program – a sort of on-campus version of Dragon's Den – for funding to make the micro-propagation quicker, cheaper, and more practical.

They're experimenting with liquid instead of gel-based tissue culture, which increases the volume of plants that can be produced. Conventional containers and a type of shelving unit that rocks the containers holding the tissue cultures are expensive - $20 per container and up to $20,000 for a rocker system – and not very user-friendly.

"The containers have a very small opening that contaminate easily and they can't be put into the dishwasher, so you have to pay someone to scrub everything because it all has to be sterilized," explains Jones.

VRE Greenhouse Systems of Grassie ON is redesigning the rocker system to be more durable, hold more plants, and be about two thirds less expensive.

Jones and his colleagues are working on revised container prototypes that are fully open, dishwasher compatible, and can accept inserts that let plants be immersed in different levels of growing liquid.

Jones says they're currently printing sample containers on a 3-D printer in the lab, which is letting them perfect their design at a relatively low cost before moving to producing samples using injection molding technology, which is very expensive when used in prototyping.

Harster Greenhouses in Dundas will begin testing the new equipment this fall and provide feedback to the GRIPP team on how their prototypes perform in a commercial setting.

"The partnership with industry is important because we want to make sure what we're developing will meet their needs," says Jones. "The long term goal is for this technology to meet our Canadian propagation needs and to give Canadian growers an advantage by producing disease-free plant stock more quickly and efficiently."

In Canada, micro-propagation work is underway in apples and in hazelnuts, where the focus is on developing trees resistant to Eastern Filbert Blight.

Internationally, the technology has the largest application for banana and sugar cane, but could also be used in plant conservation to help re-establish endangered plant species.

The Gryphon's LAAIR program is supported through Growing Forward 2, a federal-provincial-territorial initiative.

Start-up funds for the GRIPP micro-propagation work were provided through the Gosling Foundation, an environmental venture fund that identifies and supports strategic start-ups, leadership, collaboration and partnerships.

This article is provided by AgInnovation Ontario, a project of the Agri-Technology Commercialization Centre (ATCC). The ATCC is funded by Growing Forward 2, a federal-provincial-territorial initiative.

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The 'Girl's Only!' Club

It's a "club" created for farm wives who are not always in sync with farm activity; especially the marketing of cash crops

BY SUZANNE ATKINSON
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Campbellford - It's the farm risk management program that could save more than your farm.

"We are the risk managers," Maizeing Acres elevator co-owner Donna Archer explains, as she weaves experiences from her own life into a 'Girls Only!' boardroom discussion of farm management and crop marketing that is reaching far beyond wheat, beans and corn, with a clientele so green some don't know what crops they grow.

"Men are the risk takers."

Girls Only! was Archer's brainchild; a "club," she's created for farm wives who are not always in sync with farm activity; especially the marketing of cash crops. "Nothing personal leaves this room," Archer says, easily connecting with farm women who run the gamut, from not knowing how many acres they farm, to the ladies who regularly cross the weigh scales driving a product-laden transport.

Archer's hope "is that this will be a fun, informative group that gives you the skills and tools you are looking for to assist you in your farming operation."

"What's lacking in the grain industry is education," Archer says. "With all of the expertise we have, there seems to be very little actually helping you to market."

"There are ways to make our farms more profitable. There are a lot of things you can't do; but there are a few thing you can do," she said adding that with a little forethought farmers can be price setters rather than price takers.

Ultimately it's the tasks "that fall on your shoulders," that her 'Girls Only!' group will tackle.

These women; and they range in age from early 20s to mid-60s, don't expect to be taking over grain marketing. But they do expect to gain a better understanding of the crop growing/marketing cycle.

"Matt could talk to me about farming all day long but I don't know anything to be able to contribute to the conversation," says Girls Only! club member Jenn Thrower.

It was concerns about her own business, Archer said during the introductory meeting, which led to the formation of "Girls Only!

"That was a real eye opener for me," says Thrower. "I don't know anything. Matt picks out the seed and tells me when we're fertilizing. This is actually really good. Now I will feel confident. And I would feel like I could continue with the farm if he got hurt or something."

"I ask a lot of questions," she admits. "And it must drive Matt up the wall."

Thrower appreciates the diversity of operations represented around the Girls Only! table.

"I'm interested to know what others are doing. We're all doing something different but we're all having the same trouble."

"I like having some older and some younger," says Thrower. "We all have a different perspective." And she's hoping to learn how others cope; "what they do for a living and how they handle the stresses."

Stress too is big on Archer's agenda.

She first broached the idea of a marketing club for women at the spring Maizeing Acres Customer appreciation day. Two months later she emailed an invitation to the elevator's 5,000 farm, customer base.

She anticipated a "wide vari-

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