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Craig Roy submitted this photo of seeding last year in the Spring Creek area.

Spring Seeding 2021

Roy hopes for timely rains

BY SPENCER KEMP
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

For farmers across the region, the timely snowfall earlier this month was a welcome sight providing plenty of farmland with much-needed moisture.

While some producers received more moisture than others, the snow was largely welcomed by both producers who have begun seeding and producers who have not.

Craig Roy, who farms around Moosomin, says he is thankful for the moisture but noted the high winds that accompanied the snow took away moisture from the fields.

"Conditions are pretty good at the moment. The snow was appreciated, but the wind blew it off the higher land so some spots got more snow than others with the wind taking it into the bush and slough areas. There's moisture there to get started, but we're going to need some timely rains," Roy said.

"It was dry and it's still dry, we only have moisture in that top five to six inches of subsoil. We used that all up last year so we're going to need some timely rains to keep a good crop going."

One concern noted by Roy has been the accessibility of parts and supplies due to COVID-19.

He says that while he has not been affected by it yet, he has heard these concerns from other producers.

"We haven't run into any troubles running out of supplies, but I've heard of that from others. We are just getting into the spring seeding season so we might just find out the hard way on that. So far so good, though. We've had a few things delayed but nothing too serious.

"With the current restrictions that are in place, we've had them in place long enough that we've gotten used to how the system flows and how things work with respect to having to wear masks when we get parts or supplies, and then, of course, our safe distancing at work. But a lot of our work is outside so it's a little bit different than indoors. It hasn't affected us a whole lot yet though."

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Crops near the Qu'Appelle Valley last fall.

Spring Seeding 2021

Duchek concerned about getting parts

BY SPENCER KEMP

LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Blake Duchek says the moisture was much-needed East of Atwater following 2020's dry fall and low snowfall winter.

He says that before the snow came, he was able to make preparations for seeding.

"We've done a little bit of fieldwork to prep some things before we can get seeding here before this last snowfall. Then the snow came and we've been sitting since, things are ready to go but we're just waiting for it to warm up and for the snow to disappear. The temperature is a big thing now, though, that we need to lift," Duchek said.

Even with minor delays brought on by

the snowfall, Duchek says the moisture was necessary for his area.

"We were pretty dry. There was no sub-soil moisture last fall, you could dig down 15 feet and the dirt was like flour all the way through, it was super dusty. That snow that we got was much-needed. It'll be a start to get stuff germinating but we're going to need some timely rains at the end of May and beginning of June for sure."

Duchek says concerns about the availability of parts, saying the COVID-19 restrictions are starting to take their toll on the supply lines.

To remedy this, Duchek says he's been keeping a stockpile of spare parts.

"Things are relatively okay for us. Last year with the COVID-19 pandemic we weren't affected much last spring as far as getting parts, fuel, inputs, and everything, but now the supply chain is kind of drained out, and getting parts is a concern, even tires are a concern. If you get a deer horn through a tire there are no tires around until June to fix the air seeder, so stuff like that is a concern. We need to make sure we have a lot of parts on hand that we usually don't keep. Little things like electrical plugs and anything you can

think of. Stuff is getting scarce to get and you don't want to have an air seeder sitting there because of a \$5 item.

"Aside from that COVID-19 hasn't impacted us greatly. It's just that everything requires a bit more planning and a bit more looking ahead to make sure you've got everything in place, be it inputs, parts, or even just help. If you have a guy that catches COVID or something you have to have a backup plan, because they'll have to self-quarantine for two weeks, and that's a good chunk of the seeding win-

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An aerial photo of crops in the area taken by Kevin Weedmark last fall

Spring Seeding 2021

Van Eaton worried about increased costs

BY SPENCER KEMP
 LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER
 John VanEaton farms both East and North of Maryfield, planning on planting spring wheat, barley, canola, and peas this year.

He says that the moisture that was received will make for ideal conditions for germinating crops, however additional moisture will be needed after seeding is complete.

"We're still very concerned about moisture levels, not so much perhaps for germinating a crop but certainly for grassland and pasture. We're going to be reliant on timely rains this summer because the subsoil moisture is not going to carry us through the season," VanEaton said.

"We haven't begun seeding yet. We're working towards that and working on our cattle operation as well. We probably won't be seeding until around the 2nd of May."

He says that a healthy mixture of sun and rain would be ideal through May and into June.

"I wouldn't say the moisture we got was nothing. Certainly, it was welcome moisture but it's not going to be enough, especially on grasslands and pastures, it's not going to be enough to adequately get that crop going. We're not as concerned about field crops as we are about grasslands and pastures.

"We're just like everybody else, we want to see some timely rain with no adverse

weather and some warm, sunny days to go with it."

VanEaton expressed concern regarding the federal Carbon Tax as well, noting its impacts on production costs.

He says that despite the higher than average grain prices, this additional cost has weighed heavily on producers.

"Costs have escalated dramatically. It's been well-publicized about higher than normal grain prices, but they're being offset by dramatically increased costs. Part of the reason for that is because of COVID-19 and also covering the federal government's carbon tax. I think it's understated, the effect that it has on the economy."

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Ripening crops in the Moosomin area near the Red Lily Wind Farm.

Spring Seeding 2021 Agronomist says more moisture needed

BY SPENCER KEMP
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER
Gavin Leech, a Technical Agronomist with Sharpe's Crop Services in Moosomin says that the moisture was welcomed, but it's not enough.

He says that the moisture is a good start, but timely rains will be necessary for a good 2021 growing season.

"Things are setting up pretty decently. The moisture was good, it was needed, we needed it in some form and it came as snow. Seeding should be able to start here any day now and conditions are looking good, but we are going to need some rain in May, June, and July because it is still dry," Leech said.

Once the seed is established, Leech says producers will require several warm days followed by rain.

"We do want to get seeded in good time and get some moisture with some warm days to get it out of the ground. We need a bit of good weather, and once crops are established we can go from there."

He notes that there have been concerns raised by producers regarding both dry conditions and accessibility to parts.

"The main issue that I've heard from growers would have to be dryness followed by shortages on parts and supplies. I've been hearing stuff about parts and issues with getting them with COVID-19."

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- **ED & MICHELE GREENLEY**, Greenley Farms, Melita, MB

WCWG: Little in budget for grain farmers

In analyzing the 2021 Federal budget, the Western Canadian Wheat Growers say they see little that will benefit grain farmers.

According to WCWG, agriculture has been a strong contributor to Canada's economy during Covid-19 and should be supported accordingly. Grain farmers have been early adopters of the latest technology that maximizes production and minimizes costs, but the 2021 budget recognizes none of this.

"I have trouble downloading software for my equipment now and cannot wait for Earth Observation Satellites to be designed and sent into space. The federal government has stated it wants a 30 per cent reduction in GHG by limiting nitrogen fertilizer use but has never consulted industry

or farmers if this is even achievable," said Cheryl Jolly-Nagel, Saskatchewan Director and Past President.

Prairie grain farmers adopted low-till farming techniques decades ago and yet have no recognition for the great work that they have done. According to Canadian data, grain farmers are already a net-zero industry.

"It is staggering to think that the federal government wants grain farmers to adopt commercially available clean technology by moving off diesel and assist with the purchase of more efficient grain dryers—this is an odd proposal and suggests that the farmers don't already adopt the newest innovations that have proven benefits... which couldn't be further from the truth," said Margaret Hansen, Saskatchewan Director.



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New canola processing facility announced for Regina



Regina will soon be home to a new state-of-the-art canola processing facility. Cargill announced plans to begin construction of a new \$350 million project next year and it will be operational by 2024.

"Saskatchewan is a leader in agriculture production and through investments such as this we are growing our capacity to process these products at home," Premier Scott Moe said. "We welcome this significant investment and look forward to working with Cargill to add value to the canola our producers grow, create local jobs and support Saskatchewan's economic growth." "Saskatchewan is a reliable exporter of food and agriculture products to a

growing world and this new project will help us continue to meet that demand," Trade and Export Development Minister Jeremy Harrison said. "This new Cargill facility, and our growing canola processing sector, will strengthen our reputation as the world's leading exporter of canola seed, canola oil and canola meal."

"Our Saskatchewan producers are known worldwide for the safe, high-quality commodities that they produce and this announcement creates the opportunity for them to see a higher return for their product," Agriculture Minister David Maritz said. "We are excited to see companies like Cargill recognizing that there is no

better place to do business than Saskatchewan."

"Cargill is excited to continue to build our business in Canada. We see Saskatchewan as the right place to make this investment, as Regina is well-positioned in the canola production area and there

is ample talent available to support the new facility," Cargill Canada President Jeff Vassart said. "We look forward to helping farmers access the market opportunity from the rapidly growing global demand for canola."

The new facility is projected to have an annual production capacity of one million metric tonnes and will provide a consistent and fast point of delivery for farmers and end users. This investment will generate approximately one million hours of employment throughout the construction phase and approximately 50 full-time positions upon completion of the project.

Cargill's new facility will help the province reach Saskatchewan's Growth Plan goal to crush 75 per cent of the canola the province produces in Saskatchewan. It will also support Growth Plan goals to grow Saskatchewan's agri-food exports to \$20 billion, increase agriculture value-

added revenue to \$10 billion, increase the value of exports by 50 per cent and grow private capital investment in Saskatchewan to \$16 billion annually.

In addition to construct-

ing this new facility, Cargill will also update and modernize its canola facility in Clavet over the next 12 months to increase volume and broaden capabilities at that location.

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Provincial Budget

APAS sees investment in ag, rural telecommunications as step in right direction

The Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan (APAS) is pleased the Government of Saskatchewan is investing in agricultural programming and in improving rural telecommunications.

APAS recognizes the government's increased spending in the Agriculture budget. The six per cent increase amounts to \$386.9 million for the agriculture industry. The government's priorities for Agri-stability, irrigation development and research funding maintenance are positive impacts for the agriculture industry.

In Sasktel's investment plan for 2021 \$85.8 million is dedicated to fibre to the x (FTTx) program, with \$18.2 million going to the Rural Fibre Initiative. APAS sees this investment as a step forward in improving fast and more reliable internet access to rural areas. Last week, APAS released its findings from its Rural Connectivity Task Force. The final report outlines 43 recommendations to improve rural internet and

cellular service in Saskatchewan.

"Covid really has been a shock to the economy, and agriculture is well poised to lead the recovery, and we will," APAS President Todd Lewis said. "In a year, hopefully, we will be in a better financial position."

On Tuesday, the Finance Minister spoke about Saskatchewan's economic recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic. APAS wants to acknowledge all the producers who are playing their part in the province's economic sustainability. In 2020,

Saskatchewan's agriculture exports increased by 31 per cent from 2019, which amounts to \$16.9 billion.

"I think if we get enough rainfall and this spring, no reason not to expect another record year of export," Lewis said. "We've shipped record amounts of grain this year is the second-largest crop in history, and if the weather cooperates, we'll certainly see that continue."

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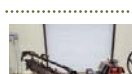






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 <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">Kuhn & Tubeline Manure Spreaders</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.1em;">\$450 / Day</p>	 <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">Leon 16' Pull Scraper</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.1em;">\$300 / Day</p>	 <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">Schulte 15' XH1500 Batwing Mower</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.1em;">\$500 / Day</p>	 <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">Trimble GPS EZ-Guide 250</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.1em;">\$50.00 / Day</p>
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The first Canadian reference barley genome: A gift beer drinkers can toast

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) has led the first project to sequence a Canadian variety of malting barley. While this might not immediately excite the average barley consumer, it is a big step towards better barley and better beer—one worth raising a glass to!



Maturing AAC Synergy barley spikes (heads).

Foundation for future advancement

Simply put, a genome is the genetic code of a living organism. By understanding the genetic code of crops like barley, scientists are better able to predict how the crop will fare under different conditions, such as drought or extreme temperatures, or what quality the end product might have. In turn, this allows plant breeders to select favourable traits. These traits make the crop more profitable, which appeals to farmers and end-users. And that means more barley for all of us.

“As new sequencing technology is evolving, the process of sequencing an entire genome is easier than it was just a few years ago, but assembling a big genome like barley is still not a piece of cake,” notes Dr Wayne Xu, who works at AAFC’s Morden Research and Development Centre in Manitoba. Dr. Xu is the biology study leader in bioinformatics and led the assembly of the barley variety AAC Synergy genome. “Nowadays the problem is not about generating sequencing data—the problem now is to have bioinformatics experts and hardware that can compute the data.”

For comparison, the human genome, completed by a multinational team of researchers in 2002, took 12 years to assemble and cost almost \$3 billion dollars (USD). The much larger wheat genome took 14 years to assemble and was completed in 2019. Thanks to advances in bioinformatics, it cost just \$75 million (USD).

International collaboration on sequencing the barley genome began in 2006, but not until 2019 did work begin that focused exclusively on one of Canada’s most planted malting barley varieties: AAC Synergy. Amazingly, the sequencing and assembling of this large genome was done in just one year!

This work is part of a larger project that

looks at both barley and oat genomes. It’s called “Targeted and Useful Genomics for Barley and Oat” or “TUGBOAT” for short, and is led by two AAFC scientists, Dr. Nick Tinker (lead) and Dr. Ana Badea (co-lead).

“Not only does this add to the international research community’s understanding of the barley genome, it gives Canadian researchers and breeders more data about the barleys adapted to Canada. By working on both oat and barley, our team is learning more about how to integrate this information into breeding programs, and we make better use of experts who can contribute to both crops,” said Dr. Nick Tinker, research scientist.

Dr. Tinker adds, “It’s important to remember that genes are like needles in the proverbial haystack—and we have only just finished finding the haystack!”

Breeding for beer... and also feed and food

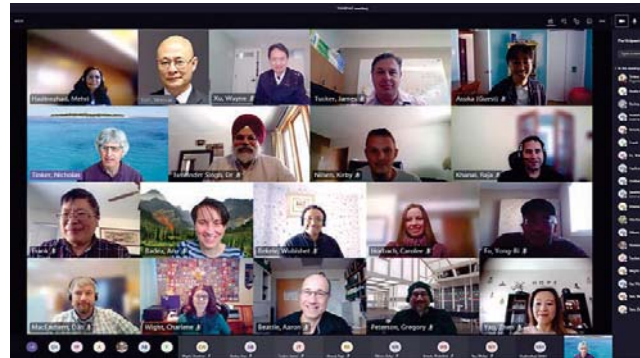
As a barley breeder, Dr. Badea is focusing on the development of barley cultivars for Western Canada—where about 95 per cent of Canada’s barley is grown. She notes that this genome work is essential for diversity analyses, gene discovery, and molecular marker development, which is important in breeding.

Because North American barley has evolved distinctly from European varieties since it was introduced in the 1600s, the team expects there will be small region-scale differences in the crop’s quality and tolerance to environmental stressors. These could only be discovered by having the full DNA sequence for Canadian barleys, such as AAC Synergy, to compare to barley genomes of different origins. Since many traits are controlled by the presence or absence of genes, having only one reference genome means researchers would never find these genes if they were not present in that one reference genome. These detailed differences are key in breeding and genetic work.

Given that it normally takes about a decade to develop a new crop variety, these genomic tools are an important leg up in ensuring the breeders are on the right track as early as possible.

“Since AAC Synergy is a high yielding malting barley, it will give Canadian breeders the ability to make selections for yield and malting quality at early stages in the breeding program—this could greatly increase the chances of developing good new malting varieties,” says Dr. Badea.

But what’s the big deal about malting barley? Why are researchers so focused on it? It is the barley used in beer, and it requires special traits to do its job in the beer-making process. It is the highest quality available—it gets the premium price into producers’ pockets. Canada is known as a world leader in high quality malting barley.



Members of the TUGBOAT team have been collaborating virtually. So far, their work led the first sequencing of a Canadian variety of malting barley.

First, the barley must be one of a handful of varieties recommended for malting, which involves years of malting analysis to ensure the variety is likely to produce grains that will meet the quality test. Secondly, the grain must be graded as malt quality when the producer delivers it to his or her buyer. In a given year, approximately 75 per cent of the harvested malt barley does not meet the grading standards for use in brewing and is subsequently used as livestock feed. During the past decade, of the total global barley consumption, about 65 per cent was used as feed, about 20 per cent for industrial use (which includes malting), and a small amount (five per cent) was used for food, while the rest was used for other purposes.

So while beer drinkers might not spend too much time thinking about barley genomes, they can rest assured that the barley breeders and researchers are. And it’s

helping to improve their future pints of beer.

Key discoveries and benefits:


- Thanks to the “TUGBOAT” project, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada has led the first project to sequence a Canadian variety of malting barley.

- One of the main TUGBOAT objectives is to develop Canada’s first complete genome sequences of barley and oat and to apply these innovations to accelerate conventional breeding of improved varieties for Canadian farmers and end-users.

- Through multiple agreements with academia and industry, the project is further expanded to allow sequencing and annotation of additional barley and oat genomes, which will position Canada as an international leader in “pan-genomics” (all the genes, gene variants and chromosome rearrangements in a species).



Dr. Ana Badea assessing barley plants in the greenhouse of the Brandon Research and Development Centre.



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Boost for USask research to bolster beef production with better biology approaches

A multi-agency research team led by University of Saskatchewan (USask) veterinary reproductive biologist Dr. Gregg Adams (DVM, PhD) aims to make rapid strides in improving the productivity, efficiency, and sustainability of Canada's \$18-billion beef sector by integrating advances from the field of omics into livestock production.

"USask has an amazing facility and program centred around the Livestock and Forage Centre of Excellence (LFCE), and expertise in all areas of livestock production, but one thing that has been missing is a genomic component," said Adams.

Genomics and other omics tools in biological science—such as phenomics, microbiomics, proteomics—involve the study of the appearance, structure and behaviour of animals, their microbiomes and cell proteins. Researchers have made tremendous progress in these areas over the past decade, and they can now use these advanced tools for extensive livestock production, he said.

The beef cattle industry is tremendously important in the West, with Saskatchewan and Alberta probably accounting for 70 per cent of Canada's beef production, Adams said. Consequently, even incremental changes in performance translate into big gains in economic value and job growth.

Adams's Integrated omics for sustainable animal agriculture and environmental stewardship (IntegrOmics) project has been awarded \$6.75 million over five years by the Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI), with another \$10.1 million expected from institutional partners, private industry and vendor in-kind support.

By bringing together experts in microbiology, epidemiology, reproductive biology and forage nutrition, the project aims to integrate the advances in omics tools to address challenges in the beef industry such as disease management, fertility improvement and environmental impact mitigation—something already in place in the dairy, hog and poultry industries.

The first step is to gather reams of previously unavailable behavioural and other physical data on beef cattle by placing multispectral cameras in pastures and close confinement areas and linking the information with gene markers for desired traits, said Adams.

"Once we identify these markers—the genomic characteristics that relate to performance, we can actually begin to collect the genetic material—the germplasm, embryos and semen from those individuals that have desirable characteristics," he said.

The goal of IntegrOmics is to make it easier for cattle producers to identify and breed animals with desired traits such as better meat quality, stronger disease immunity, healthy uterine and semen microbiomes, shorter gestation periods, and good maternal behaviour and heavier calf weights at weaning.

To accommodate the collection, processing, sorting and cryopreserving of bulls' semen and cows' eggs, and creating and preserving embryos, IntegrOmics is establishing a biobank at the LFCE that fits hand-in-glove with the genomic tools researchers will use. The biobank will serve the needs of the beef livestock industry as well as bison conservation efforts—the other facet of Adams's research included in the CFI award.

As well, IntegrOmics researchers are using genomics to develop rapid diagnostic tools for diseases and antimicrobial resistance that have been troublesome for the beef industry.



Cattle at the USask Livestock and Forage Centre for Excellence (LFCE) in January, 2020.

"If we can put these tools in the hands of diagnosticians or farmers themselves, they can report the results immediately—within hours or a day rather than having to wait days or even weeks—then we can cut the head off an epidemic, or certainly focus on appropriate antibiotics," said Adams.

"This project has been two years in the making, and it's created a lot of enthusiasm and momentum," he said. "Once the infrastructure and equipment are in place and we become proficient in its use, the impact will be felt for a generation or more."

USask researchers on the IntegrOmics project include: Cheryl Waldner, Janet Hill, Dinesh Dadarwal and Jaswant Singh, all from the Western College of Veterinary Medicine, and Matthew Links from the College of Agriculture and Biosciences. Other team members are Gabriela Mastromonaco (Toronto Zoo); Jocelyn Poissant (University of Calgary); Graham Plastow (University of Alberta); and Muhammad Anzar (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada).

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Coyote

Alvin Nixon took this composite photo of a coyote northeast of Wapella last week "This is a composite image of four pictures taken in medium speed sequence of a single coyote running in the distance," Alvin says. "What I found interesting was that the coyote never took its eyes off us as he was running."

Life down on the farm

Hallelujah! It's spring. Well, at least on some days—you know, between the snow and the wind. Now no farmer going into a dry spring like we presently have is complaining about moisture of course. I welcomed that snow-fall just like every other farmer around me. I may not have enjoyed clearing the sidewalk and I'm sure my next door neighbours felt like the only drift on the street was the four-foot high one against their garage door. Oh well, it's moisture and we will take it without complaint.

Now that we are (perhaps) past the snow, we are more than ready to get on the land. At least my husband is. While I will miss his meal-making, I do believe it's time for him to go! The camper is set in place and fresh bedding awaits his first night's stay. Alone. I typically don't stay at the farm until flip-flop weather and we are not quite there yet. Plus I need warm enough weather to paint outdoors—that dog house out my camper window could use a touch up.

I have stepped things up a notch this year in the spot where our camper rests. After a few years of having a "pallet" deck on which to set our barbecue, I raided the scrap wood pile and built a raised deck so I can step out of the camper door and right out onto the deck. "Build-day" was also vaccination day and they said to keep moving your vaccinated arm, so the timing was perfect. Plus the guys weren't too busy and, along with the twins, now nearly 10, we got it done in no time.

"Do you know what 16' on centre means?" I asked the boys as we worked, thinking there may as well be some construction and some math lessons built in to the fun of the project. Blank look. "How about 3.5x4, do you know what that is?" I continued. In the end we were multiplying by 7's and they were figuring out how to build the frame and screw on the deck boards. One was quite into it; the other not

so much. But one thing is certain—they can handle the drill just fine.

While I "invent" mini-projects like this just for the fun of it, there is actually some real work going on on the farm as the guys prep the machinery for the spring seeding season. I have been busy in my own way, doing something I have never done in 44 years of farming—making frozen meals. My goal was 20 meals and I am happy to announce I have reached that goal. This may seem like nothing to most of you, but remember I am the one who hates cooking with a passion.

With an array of frozen meals under my belt, I've been able to enjoy many days at the farm, off quadding to the creek and visiting the farm kids, at least at "recess time" when they can leave the kitchen table for the great outdoors. "Are you ready to stay in the camper yet, Grandma?" the twins asked the other day. Ahhhh I thought to myself, they miss me. They can't wait until I settle back onto the farm for seeding season. "Nearly ready," I say to them. "You got the groceries for the camper?" And then I realize, they aren't missing me at all. They are checking to see if Grandma has stocked the camper with chocolate bars and freezies.

I was working in my garage the other day, building little toy wooden "cabins" for the city grandkids who love making "campgrounds" in the trees behind their camper at the lake. These two (four and seven) asked if I could build cabins and campers for their "campground." I assured them I could and proceeded to use scrap lumber to make some of the crudest little toy cabins ever seen.

In the process, the muscles on my neck must have tightened up and by night-fall, I thought I would rub some heat rub on my neck, something I never usually do. And off I went to bed and off to sleep, forgetting all about my cat who absolutely loves A535.

At 1:30 in the morning I could feel the tickle of her whiskers on my cheek as she settled in to lick my neck. Seriously? I thought to myself as I lifted her off my shoulder and put her down by my feet. And off I went to sleep again. By 2:12 the flavour must have been calling her once again. By 3:30 I was very nearly finished with her and by 4:30 I was exhausted. It had been a long night and we haven't even started the busy season where I know 4:30 am is going to be the norm for someone in my world. I am so not ready.

Covid-19 has certainly made life restrictive and it's interesting how the simple things in life now entertain us. The other day I planned to pick up some groceries to put together a care package for a family affected by Covid-19. My hubby, bless his heart, told me to wait for him and we would go to the grocery store together. He has been going alone all winter so when we arrived, together, one of the staff members (bless her heart) said to us: "It's been so long since I've seen you here together. This must feel like a date to you guys." And it did! An outing—together! How exciting.

We have also enjoyed watching an exterior reno project move along at a very fast pace on our neighbour's house. It's been an amazing transformation and has been exciting to see the project evolve. Thanks neighbours for the entertainment!

But mostly during these Covid-19 days in White-

wood, especially in more recent weeks, we have had to extend the "Covid-19 prayer list" because some of our friends and acquaintances and members of our community ended up with it. Though some had few symptoms, some were hospitalized and we were once again reminded of how special the people of our community are and how desperately we wished and prayed for their recovery (and still

are). And so, to our readers in the communities we serve, we wish you health and safety during these pandemic days and especially to those who have been and are so sick, we are pulling for you!

And to our farmer friends preparing to seed, be safe out there and may the thought of new growth bring you hope for a successful year and the promise of a great harvest to come.



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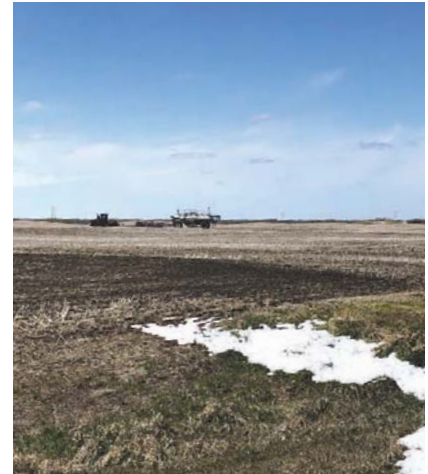
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The World-Spectator asked readers in 2020 to submit some of their spring seeding photos. Shown here are some of the submissions from seeding last year. The World-Spectator will be holding a spring seeding photo contest in 2021 as well!



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Innovation Saskatchewan supporting the growth of agricultural technology

On Monday, April 19, the government introduced The Innovation Saskatchewan Amendment Act, 2021, to further support agricultural technology development in the province. This legislation provides the authority for Innovation Saskatchewan to make investments in agricultural technology (agtech) startups through a Venture Capital fund.

"As our economic recovery continues, our government remains committed to supporting growth and investment in the technology sector," Minister Responsible for Innovation Saskatchewan Jeremy Harrison said. "The changes we are making to The Innovation Saskatchewan Act will allow for new investment into game-changing technology for farmers and producers that will help accelerate our economic recovery and become a significant economic driver for our province."

As part of the 2021-22 provincial budget, the government of Saskatchewan announced it will be investing \$15 mil-

lion—\$3 million per year over five years—in an agtech Venture Capital fund. The fund, which will be privately managed, will provide a mechanism to leverage millions more from private investors to make investment into Saskatchewan agtech companies that require Venture Capital to develop beyond the startup phase. This Venture Capital investment will enable companies to scale up their operations and manufacturing in Saskatchewan.

The Innovation Saskatchewan Act changes will allow Innovation Saskatchewan to continue to administer programs and supports to bolster the agricultural and technology industries in Saskatchewan including programs such as the Saskatchewan Advantage Innovation Fund, the Saskatchewan Agtech Growth Fund, and the Saskatchewan Technology Startup Incentive. Doing so will be critical in meeting the goals set out in the value-added strategy and the Saskatchewan Growth Plan 2020-30.

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 RM of Moosomin 100 acres 88 cult \$599,000 MLS# SK841046	 RM of Kelross 1/2 section \$380,000 MLS# SK845051	 RM of Dundurn 160 acres \$325,000 MLS# SK815326	 RM of Moose Range 154 acres \$250,000 MLS# SK850596	 RM of Fertile Belt 309 acres \$650,000 MLS# SK845457
 101 Assiniboia Ave. Stockholm, SK \$65,000 MLS# SK851104	 Metzler Acreage RM No 183 \$485,000 MLS# SK850521	 316 Vincent Ave. E. Churchbridge, SK \$155,000 MLS# SK850335	 302 Limit Ave. Stockholm, SK \$239,000 MLS# SK849551	 173 5th Ave. Esterhazy, SK \$629,000 MLS# SK849433
 Wandy Acreage RM 181 Langenburg, SK \$335,000 MLS# SK846581	 407 Stenburg Ave Stockholm, SK \$124,900 MLS# SK845743	 803 Sussex Ave Esterhazy, SK \$400,000 MLS# SK845049	 233 George Cres Esterhazy, SK \$245,000 MLS# SK811315	 Olson Acreage Fertile Belt RM #183 \$330,000 MLS# SK842862
 TJ Acreage RM of Spy Hill #152 \$474,000 MLS# SK833823	 1136 Grant Dr. Esterhazy, SK \$615,000 MLS# SK813418	 1129 Kaposvar Dr. Esterhazy, SK \$239,000 MLS# SK842090	 730 Rupert Pl. Esterhazy, SK \$294,000 MLS# SK838473	 1030 Assiniboia Ave. Grayson, SK \$226,000 MLS# SK841092