



# THE WORLD-Spectator AG NEWS

APRIL 2023



Growing numbers of mule deer have been causing issues for farmers across Saskatchewan. Alvin Nixon took this photo of mule deer in the area.

In response to concerns of producers:

## Province considers extending deer season to cut numbers

BY SIERRA D'SOUZA BUTTS

Saskatchewan Environment Minister Dana Skoropad told the World-Spectator that the provincial government will be providing more hunting tags to help address the overpopulation of deer.

In addition, the province will be looking at extending the hunting season in areas with an overpopulation problem as a long term solution for tackling the out of control deer population.

"We've identified a number of hot spots whether it's for elk, whether it's for whitetail deer, whether it's for mule deer, and it varies as you go around the province," said Skoropad.

"We've identified those hot spots, and in many of those cases we will be providing more hunting opportunities to better manage these wildlife populations."

Skoropad said the resolution came forward after the ministry of environment met with various people including SARM, the SUMA advisory committee, the Wildlife Advisory Committee, RMs, towns, Saskatchewan Crop Insurance, and conservation officers.

"This is for the regulated hunting, to allow more oppor-

tunities for hunting," Skoropad said.

"I'm giving you an exclusive here—we're also working on a long term solution as well, that involves the possibility of looking at extended hunting season opportunities, where we are still experiencing some management challenges.

"The management challenges were identified late into the regular hunting season, and we're really using hunting as our primary tool as we've always done, but allowing it to be a little more flexible as well as to be able to manage that."

With the exploding deer population causing problems for farmers—deer getting into feedstocks for livestock producers and getting into grain bags—Skoropad said the department wants to work with landowners.

"Right now we are trying to manage the wildlife population through the regulated hunting," he said.

"As far as working with the landowners, we encourage them to certainly reach out to us. We need to understand where these hot spots are so that we can make adjustments where necessary.

"We encourage them to reach out to conservation offi-

cers, and work through their conservation officers. That's where we'll be going as of now."

### Tracking of deer numbers across the province

Skoropad spoke about the methods the Government of Saskatchewan uses to track the deer population across the province.

"We've got a number of mechanisms in place to track deer numbers. As far as the ministry goes, we do aerial and ground surveys," he said.

"We also take in hunter surveys. There's also field reports that come in from the general public in addition to information that the RMs and communities would share with us, information that our Wildlife Advisory Committee would have as well. It all comes together that way."

Based on the feedback from people across the province, Skoropad said they have noticed this year's deer numbers being higher compared to previous years. However, it varies for the different areas. "What we do notice this year in particular, there's significant herding of the deer," he said.

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# New USask researcher focuses on growing forage production

Dr. Breeanna Kelln (PhD) loves to connect the dots, even when the dots are scattered and seemingly unrelated.

"I don't fit into any box. I do interdisciplinary work and because of that, I'm connecting all these different pieces and I find the work to be super exciting," said Kelln, assistant professor in the College of Agriculture and Bioresources and the Beef Industry Research Chair in Integrated Forage Management and Utilization at the University of Saskatchewan. She holds a joint appointment in the departments of Plant Sciences, and Animal and Poultry Science.

"Connecting the dots between the soil, the plants and the animal is so needed from an industry perspective. And when I say it's important for industry, who is industry? It's the guys and the gals feeding cows in minus-40 weather. It's our duty to provide them with the resources to do that properly and efficiently and profitably. It's also our responsibility to help them tell their story, especially when the environment comes into play."

Kelln has been connecting her own dots for years. After high school, she wasn't interested in attending university but her mom enrolled her anyway. She quit school at Christmas, got her Class 1A truck driver licence and started driving a super-B truck hauling grain and fertilizer across the Prairies.

"More than 20 years ago, that was quite unique – a single woman driving a super B," she laughed.

While it was a good life for a couple of years, Kelln knew it wasn't what she wanted as a career. Because she thought she wasn't smart enough for university, Kelln applied to



Kelln will be supervising Tyler Peterson when he starts his master's degree this spring. His research will begin in the greenhouse one plant at a time before he takes his work to the field next year.

attend Lakeland College. It wasn't long before she realized two things: she was smart enough because she is a hard worker and she fit in with other students who were also interested in the livestock industry. After her first year, she transferred to USask. At the university, she studied under Dr. Bart Lardner (PhD), completing her fourth-year project looking at winter feeding options for cattle. That, in turn, led to a more in-depth

look as a master's student in her thesis. The effects of winter-feeding systems on beef cow performance, soil nutrients, crop yield and system economics. She completed her master's degree, also under Lardner's supervision, in 2010.

"I caught the research bug. Research really is the forefront of knowledge. We got lots of traction with that extensive winter-feeding research. I was able to do presentations on our research and be a real service to producers by teaching them what we learned."

Lardner encouraged her to get a job in industry before starting a PhD program. For almost 10 years, Kelln worked as an agronomist for various companies helping producers find ways to grow crops more efficiently and profitably while protecting the environment.

Meanwhile, Kelln and her husband, Greg Hill, were building their farm near Duval, Sask., about 90 km north of Regina.

Although they were both raised on farms, their operation is akin to a startup. Because they didn't inherit any land or cattle, they have purchased all their land from family and neighbours. Over the years, they grew their land base and cow herd to 1,000 head. They disbursed their cow herd in 2019 and have diversified their operation from strictly a cow-calf operation to a mixed farm with a small cow herd, tame and native forages, grain crops including oilseeds, cereals and pulses, and even a commercial laying hen barn built in 2020.

"We laugh about where we are as a family. We are great business partners. Greg's the hands-on partner and pushes for constant growth of our operation. I'll drive truck, but I'm not that involved in day-to-day operations."

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# Farmers anxious to get to spring seeding

BY SIERRA D'SOUZA BUTTS

Farmers across southeast Saskatchewan see some challenges for this year's crop—prices of grain and oilseeds dropping, a late start to seeding—along with some of the opportunities they see for the season ahead.

"Things are still looking fairly promising right now. I'm just a little bit nervous that we're getting later in the season and we're nowhere near starting," said Mark McCorrison, a Moosomin area farmer.

"There's still snow in the field and there's still snow in the forecast. I'm not giving up hope, but I am starting to get a little bit concerned that we haven't been able to get on the land yet.

"I checked back on the records to 1976 and I would say we're still ahead of the average, but it wasn't too many years ago that we were seeding by April 19.

"I would like to be on the land by May 10. That's when we would start to get really concerned if we weren't started, because then it would be getting kind of late."

This year, McCorrison said he plans on seeding mostly wheat and canola, and some barley.

"The prices for canola have dropped off substantially. It's gone from the high of, let's say, \$25 a bushel, it's now hovering around \$16 a bushel," he said.

"It's not horrible, but it's definitely not as good as it has been. Wheat has been hanging on between \$10 and \$11 which is pretty good. I'm confident that a guy can make money with wheat."

He said the higher grain prices are vital for farmers to keep up with inflation.

"Barley has dropped off, it's more around \$6 or \$7 which is again not horrible, but it's not as high as it has been," said McCorrison.

"Equipment is more money, even fertilizer is more money, and diesel is more money, and manpower is more money. The prices haven't dropped back to what they were a few years ago, but they all dropped quit a bit. I would say oats would be the worst.

"Oats used to be around \$7 to \$10 a bushel last year too, and it's dropped right around the \$3.50 to \$4 mark. The way I penciled it out, it just doesn't really work for the changing times so I don't have any intentions on seeding oats this year. Normally I would seed some oats, but I'm going to skip it this year."

Aside from crop prices dropping, McCorrison spoke about some of the other challenges he expects to see during this year's season.

"The usual fuel would be an extreme factor. A farm op-

eration uses thousands and thousands of gallons of diesel throughout the growing year," he said.

"Diesel is a major factor. Also, mother nature is not really co-operating. There were lots of years where you can be on the land by April 1 doing some prep work, but right now there's still snow in spots on the field, and the fields are muddy.

"I would say mother nature and diesel fuel would be the main factors that would worry me a bit about this year's growing season."

McCorrison said wheat seems to be the most lucrative crop for this year's season.

"I think wheat looks very promising between \$10 and \$11. I feel like there's money that can be made off of wheat," said McCorrison.

"I feel our area, Saskatchewan, is the wheat province. Our area grows relatively good wheat crops. With the prices right now, I feel confident that wheat is the best looking crop for the year.

"Canola, I'm a little bit nervous about canola. It doesn't look very good on the spreadsheet right now. I've been toying with the idea of cutting some canola acres and growing more wheat, but I haven't made that move yet. It's definitely an idea in the back of my mind.

"Oats I can't make it pencil out so I'm not doing any oats, and barley I would say is hit or miss. The main reason I grow barley is because part of it I'll be putting up for silage for the livestock, and then the other part is we bale our barley straw after we harvest. That's also part of the ration for feeding the cows."

## Thoughts about this year's season in the Esterhazy, Gerald area

Kevin Hruska, who farms the Esterhazy, Gerald, Lagenburg, and Bredenbury areas, shares his wishes for this year's crop season.

"Our hopes are always to have a better year than last year, which will be hard to do," said Hruska.

"We're heading into good moisture conditions so I think we're off to a good start.

"A little later than we'd like obviously, but not unusual for this area. A winter storm like this is expected almost every year."

Based on what Hruska is producing this year, he said the costs reflect the same prices from the last three years.

"The commodity prices seem to be remaining really strong. We've been able to sell a lot forward to protect

our costs of inputs and things like that," said Hruska.

"It all looks good. Costs are just skyrocketing faster than we can even keep up to them, that's disappointing. It's kind of sucking the air out of the room a little bit on that end of it.

"It's back to the same old typical farming where you have to be super diligent about cost of production, stuff like that.

"The increase in costs absolutely absorbed a lot of the profit and the higher commodity prices."

He said some of the challenges that farmers will face this year are due to inflation.

"Controlling costs on inputs will be challenging because of supply and demand," Hruska said.

"There's still a shortage of machinery and equipment. We're in good shape that way, but some people if they expanded their farms, they're really being held ransom as far as adding machinery, stuff like that.

"There's a lot of profit taking going on in that industry now because of the shortages, and Covid obviously caused that to happen, the delays and problems in production.

"I guess I see quite a bit of moisture to deal with, I would say, going into the spring. Other than that I don't expect anything out of the ordinary as far as difficulties and hurdles to get over. It's the usual thing I would expect."

With the late winter storm in April, Hruska said he hopes to be seeding during the second week of May.

"We circled May 8th on our calendar. We'll be lucky to get going by then," he said.

"Normally we would like to go the first Monday in May and if we can't get going by then, we go to the next Monday. Hopefully by May 8th we can start going."

Hruska spoke about the opportunities he sees for the upcoming season.

"I see some pricing opportunities going into the future, and I see some pretty good potential for moisture. It doesn't seem like we're in a drought trend this year," Hruska said.

"We're hopeful about everything really. As long as we can get the crop in, get it up, and growing quickly is the trick. That's the biggest challenge, is getting it in and getting it established as soon as possible.

"I just wish everyone well, hopefully they get out on their land and have a good year."

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# USask launches new University of Saskatchewan Insect Research Facility

On April 5 the University of Saskatchewan (USask) launched the University of Saskatchewan Insect Research Facility (USIRF), the first insect research facility with quarantine capabilities in a western Canadian university. Research conducted in the new facility will boost Canadian agriculture, protect the environment, reduce risk to food security, and provide fundamental insight into insect ecology.

"The USIRF places USask in a unique position among research institutions in Canada," said Dr. Baljit Singh, USask vice-president of research. "This facility, and the research it will lend itself to, is another example of how USask is leading in the areas of food security and agriculture. We are tackling important questions that will ultimately have an impact and better our communities."

Located in the Agriculture Building on the USask Saskatoon campus, the 500-square-foot insect quarantine facility is designed to meet Canadian Food Inspection Agency Plant Protection Containment Level-2A requirements, allowing researchers to study non-native insects and pathogens that pose a potential threat to western Canadian crops.

"Insects are an important part of agricultural ecosystems but some present huge economic and environmental risk," said Dr. Sean Prager (PhD), USask entomologist and USIRF research lead.

"The USIRF provides us a space to pre-emptively study how these pests would work in our environment and with Saskatchewan crops before they become an issue. This facility also allows us to involve students in this research, which means we can train students at the highest level of entomological research."

The bio-secure insect-rearing and quarantine facility employs mechanical and operating safeguards to prevent accidental release and cross-contamination of harmful species. The USIRF contains climate-controlled chambers for sustaining insects and infested plants, and space for conducting experiments.

The USIRF supports collaborations between pest researchers and USask Crop Development Centre plant breeders. With the increased research capacity, USask researchers will be able to develop proactive methods of managing insects, resulting in new ways to predict pest outbreaks, decrease pesticide use, and develop new pest-

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Research technician Ningxing Zhou (left) and graduate student Grace Onu-Odey (right) transfer a pea aphid in the new University of Saskatchewan Insect Research Facility.

Kira Glasscock photo

resistant crop varieties.

"Our researchers will be able to conduct the high-impact

entomological research needed in Saskatchewan to develop more sustainable pest-management options and mitigate future risk," said Dr. Angela Bedard-Haughn (PhD), dean of the College of Agriculture and Biore-sources.

"These discoveries will have economic benefit for producers and help protect our agricultural ecosystems."

Funding for the USIRF was provided by \$500,000 from the Western Grains Research Foundation (WGRF) as part of its \$32 million Capacity Initiative, \$285,000 from the Canada Foundation for Innovation, \$70,000 from the Saskatchewan Canola Development Commission, \$70,000 from Saskatchewan Pulse Growers, \$70,000 from the Saskatchewan Wheat Development Commission, and \$50,000 from USask.

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# Government of Saskatchewan grants \$90,000 to support ground-breaking Chronic Wasting Disease research

The Government of Saskatchewan has announced a \$90,000 grant to support innovative research out of the University of Saskatchewan to study the spread of chronic wasting disease (CWD) and meningeal worm in woodland caribou and other boreal species.

Through this grant, the University of Saskatchewan's Dr. Phil McLoughlin and his team will study the population dynamics of deer in the southeastern part of the caribou range.

This work uses state-of-the-art radio collars and trail cameras, enabling the team to better understand animal movements and develop a comprehensive transmission model.

The results of this research will provide the Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment with valuable insights to develop science-based policies and management actions that prioritize the conservation of woodland caribou and their habitat.

"We know these diseases put the long-term survival of woodland caribou and other boreal species at risk, which is why we are proud to support Dr. McLoughlin's innovative research," Environment Minister Dana Skoropad said. "This grant reflects our government's commitment to protecting Saskatchewan's unique wildlife and habitat, including our threatened woodland caribou populations."

"The goal of our research is to provide practical tools,



knowledge, and options, and build the capacity to conserve the Boreal Plains ecosystem while safeguarding the core socio-ecological needs and values of resi-

dents," Dr. McLoughlin said. "We are very grateful for the province's interest and financial support in this important research."

Woodland caribou are a species at risk, and the spread of CWD and meningeal worm into the boreal forest poses a significant threat to their survival, as well as the survival of other cervid species. The presence of CWD in deer of the SK2 woodland caribou range and the northwesterly spread of meningeal worm has heightened the urgency to further understand transmission risks for caribou and other boreal species.

This grant builds upon previous funding from the Fish and Wildlife Development Fund to a larger umbrella project led by Dr. McLoughlin involving moose populations and the spread of meningeal worm in Saskatchewan.

The Government of Saskatchewan is committed to supporting this vital research and recognizes the importance of this work to the conservation of woodland caribou, as well as the food security of Indigenous people.

## Farmers anxious for warm spring weather

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### Agronomist says soil moisture recharged

Wendy Schatz Leeds, lead agronomist with Sharpe's Crop Services, said soil moisture conditions are great for the start of the crop year.

"It's setting out to be a really good season for us. We had good soil moisture recharge in the fall," said Schatz Leeds.

"Really, our winter snowfall wasn't abnormal. Luckily we fared better than the south did in this last snowfall. Let's say Estevan and Weyburn that got a foot of snow, the snow here should just melt in."

"We should be fully recharged with moisture for our season. That gives us a good start at excellent yield potential."

Schatz Leeds was asked if farmers should be concerned about the snowfall in April.

"We didn't need this, but in the long run we didn't really have a ton of snow," she said.

"If we had a foot of snow like the area more south of us did, then that would've been more of an issue."

"This will soak in. If we get some dry weather following this, as long as our topsoil is able to handle the equipment and doesn't compact too much, we should be okay."

She spoke about what the biggest impact would be on farmers if they seed too

late in the season.

"We have seeded this early in years past, but last year is a great example where we were quite delayed and yield ended up being very good," said Schatz Leeds.

"Delayed seeding, especially in wheat, can reduce yield."

"There's a higher yield potential if you seed earlier with wheat. It sort of misses the heat window in July, it likes it cooler. The wheat can grow in cooler weather, but we're by no means late."

Schatz Leeds said farmers should be able to start seeding in early May.

"Hopefully we'll get to start planting the first week of May," she said.

"For the next seven days, our weather for the long range is still below normal for temperatures so that is an issue. The nights are really cool so what happens is the soil doesn't get a chance to warm up as much."

"But, you can seed wheat into three degrees celsius soil. Luckily we start with that crop because we have more flexibility."

"Canola needs warmer soil, about 10 degrees celsius soil so we wouldn't be able to seed canola without some struggles right now, but as soon as we can get on the land, wheat does fine in these conditions."

"It would be nice to see the beginning of May, but it may be the weekend of May 7 which is still not late."

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# New USask researcher focuses on growing forage production

Continued from B2

"I enjoy helping with planning and management of the farm, but I don't want to be on the farm full-time. While I love being involved in our farm, I need my own thing."

Kelln defended her PhD thesis, Improving grazing capacity through introduction of bloat free legumes in existing pasture stands, in August 2022. But she is quick to dismiss the notion that she's the brain and Greg's the brawn.

"I learn so much more from Greg most days of the week because his knowledge of the cow-calf business and of how our farm works is incredible. This is his life's work."

It's a perspective Kelln takes when she is talking with cattle and forage producers.

"When I go to give a talk, I'm likely going to learn just as much, if not more, from the people sitting in the audience than I am able to teach them. It's a humbling experience."

Kelln divides her time between research, extension and, starting next year, teaching. All three are connected and feed into each other. Sometimes researchers drive change as they test out new ideas but sometimes it's the producers driving the change. Early adopters and innovators in the cattle business will often try something new even to researchers. And then the researchers are catching up, testing out the ideas to determine if they warrant a change in practice.

"Let's put some numbers and stats to what those early adopters are doing so we can understand exactly what's happening on farm. That's really important so other producers can decide whether they are going to adopt that practice or not, or maybe the early adopters are on the right track and we can tweak it a bit and make a good idea even better."

"Going back to my husband, I use him somewhat as a litmus test in terms of what are good ideas and what are practical ideas, what is easily implemented. In my role at the university, I want to expand and talk to all kinds of producers to find out what they are doing, what they are needing. Let's work together to benefit the industry."

Kelln becomes animated when talking about her research ideas.

"The fun part is starting from scratch with a question, working it through a project and then being able to deliver that information to the producers. The future is now. The research that I want to do is research that's going to be applicable and make a difference on farms now with best management practices and blueprints that producers can take to their farms."

Kelln will be supervising a master's student starting



Dr. Bree Kelln (PhD) presented her integrated forage systems research proposal at the Beef and Forage Research Forum on March 2.



With Dr. Bree Kelln's (PhD) supervision, Tyler Peterson's research will involve seeding cicer milkvetch, sanfoin and alfalfa, each with meadow bromegrass, to identify optimal seeding rates for such binary blends. Peterson, who grew up on a mixed farm between Dalmeny and Langham, graduated from Dalmeny High School in 2019.

this spring. Leading the team that includes soil scientist Dr. Jeff Schoenau (PhD) and plant scientist Dr. Bill Biliget (PhD), Kelln and the others will work together to determine the optimal seeding rate for legumes when a producer decides to sod-seed a pasture in need of rejuvenation or seed a mixed species forage blend.

It seems like a basic question, but it's one that hasn't been answered. If rejuvenating pastures is important, and it is, it's equally important to provide guidelines based on science on how to do that, says Kelln.

The issue is critical. Beef and forage producers are facing higher land prices and using fewer acres for hay and pasture. Between 2011 and 2016, hay and pasture area in Canada declined by 1.1 million hectares as farmers converted land to annual crop production. Much of the land that is used for perennial forage is becoming less and less productive with yields decreasing. From 1980 to 1990, the 10-year average was 2.2 tons per acre compared to the average over the past 10 years, 2012 to 2022, which was 1.7 tons per acre.

"It's essential to have healthy forages. Forages are providing a feed source for cattle, which is incredibly important to grow our industry, but they are also providing ecological goods and services, they are providing habitat for endangered species, they are providing environmental benefits."

The Beef Industry Research Chair in Integrated Forage Management and Utilization was established in response to concerns raised by the beef and forage industries. Funding for the chair comes from a variety of organizations including the Beef Cattle Research Council, the Saskatchewan Cattleman's Association, the governments of Canada and Saskatchewan through the Canadian Agricultural Partnership, and the Global Institute for Food Security at USask.

If producers on the Prairies are going to increase beef production, they will need to feed their animals.

Kelln is eager to help.

"I'm not a patient person," she

laughed. "Nothing is ever happening fast enough for me. I feel a huge responsibility and I want to deliver on this."

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# Deer population a concern across the province

BY SIERRA D'SOUZA BUTTS  
The exploding deer population is causing problems for farmers, with the deer causing damage, getting into feedstocks for livestock producers, and getting into grainbags.

"We have had several conversations about deer and the wildlife damage," said Bill Prybylski, Vice President of the Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan (APAS).

"Some of the issues that have been identified is the damage that's been happening to some of grain bags that are still out there.

"We've had some issues with deer getting into feedstocks, and getting into the hay stacked up for livestock. There have also been swath grazing incidents where people have left some swaths and the deer come clean it up.

"There's certainly been some significant losses for producers caused by wildlife."

With the issue being of great concern to farmers, APAS plans on developing a policy to suggest the government give landowners access to extra hunting tags to tackle the out of control deer population.

"We have been talking about it, we haven't had an official policy, but at our AGM we did have some resolutions passed with regards to some compensation for livestock damage," said Prybylski.

"As well, we talked about landowner tags as a possibility, just to reduce the number of deer that are out there. Those are some of the things we talked about, but we haven't adopted an official policy yet.

"We would like to see, maybe, landowners accessing an extra tag just because landowners that have deer on their property, we're basically feeding them and in a lot of cases not getting anything back from them."

Although deer usually come into farmyards and towns around this time of the year, Prybylski said there seem to be much larger numbers of deer causing issues this year. "There's always some damage from



Farmers are worried about large numbers of deer getting into feedstocks and grain bags and causing damage.

livestock every year. For whatever reason this year seems to be particularly bad," Prybylski said.

"I think it's because there was a lot of the snow out in the field this year, and I think the numbers of wildlife out there have just been steadily increasing over the last several years to the point where there's a lot of deer out there.

"Everyone likes to see the wildlife out there and that's great. They are great for the environment, but when the numbers get to be too much they start to cause damage.

"SGI claims have certainly increased because of collisions with wildlife on the highways. Also, if the health of the (deer) population starts to decline there will be more disease within the animal herd. Controlled numbers is believed to be the answer."

## Concerns addressed to ministry of environment

Ray Orb, president of the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities (SARM) said SARM reached out to the province's environment minister to address the concerns people have shared

about the deer population.

"We've been hearing a lot from producers and RMs about the abnormally high numbers of whitetail deer and elk getting into farmers' haystacks, making a mess with grain bags, things like that," said Orb.

"We've been hearing a lot about it. We're getting more complaints every day from people who have concerns out in the rural areas. We put in a request to talk to the minister of environment.

"Unfortunately we haven't heard anything back from the ministry other than they are looking at trying to resolve it.

"When we met with the minister, about 10 days ago, I did relay the message that this is something really urgent. He promised he was going to get back to us on a strategy."

Orb was asked what he thinks people should be doing in the meantime.

"Right now we're getting into the time of year where the deer are starting to disperse back into their natural habitats and

starting to move out of the yards a bit," he said.

"I would say the damage has already been done, unfortunately, for this year, but we certainly want a plan in place for next year if this happens again.

"Some of the issues were brought on by the early snowfall, the large amount of snowfall, the rain that's mixed with the snow that really made it tough for them to get to their feed source out in the field.

"It was sort of an odd year I think, but certainly we want some sort of a plan in place so hopefully it can be mitigated next year. Another request that we have is that there is a Wildlife Advisory Committee that's in place in Saskatchewan. SARM is on that committee and we asked the minister to reconvene that advisory committee as soon as possible.

"Some of the things they do talk about is the draw tags and the seasons for the timing of all of that. They really believe the ministry has to change some of those things. We can't continue to operate like this where there is no change, that things are the same, but farmers are suffering from the consequences."

## RMs offering coyote bounties

In relation to the overpopulation of deer, Orb spoke on the coyote bounties that were put out last week by three RMs in southern Saskatchewan—the RM of Weyburn, Cymri and Estevan. The coyote population has grown along with the deer population.

"The coyotes were pretty prevalent this winter because of the weather with the large amount of snowfall," said Orb.

Continued on page B12

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# Canadian producers increasingly confident in use of digital data: survey

Canadian agriculture producers are becoming more comfortable with the adoption of digital data tools and farm management software, bolstering their trust in the technology according to a RealAgristudies survey.

The survey shows how farmers are adopting digital tools and managing data, including how those practices have evolved since AgExpert conducted a survey on the same topic in 2018. In the RealAgristudies survey, 66 per cent of respondents said they feel the companies that handle their data are doing a good or excellent job. That's a 31 per cent increase from the survey conducted by AgExpert four years ago that asked the same question.

"There was tremendous uptake by respondents to this survey which signals that digital farm management is top of mind for producers," said Justin Funk, Agri Studies Inc. managing partner. "We learned that farmers are not just using data but are making it a priority to do more with it in the future as they make important farm management decisions."

Over 90 per cent of respondents said they use some form of data to manage production on the farm and 60 per cent say they are moderate or extensive users of farm data. Survey respondents cited the ability to make better decisions and to help manage costs as the top benefits of using digital data.

"While cutting costs is important, farmers may be beginning to see more holistic benefits as well," said Funk. "They are also seeing increased efficiency, better organization and increased profitability, which all contribute to



Over 90 per cent of respondents said they use some form of data to manage production on the farm and 60 per cent say they are moderate or extensive users of farm data.

a well-run operation."

Compared to the 2018 AgExpert survey, the 2022 RealAgristudies survey indicated that many farmers feel more comfortable sharing their data; however, some feel less comfortable.

"Companies that ranked as the most trustworthy by customers are also certified as Ag Data Transparent," explained Funk. "That is a group that subscribes to a set of core principles around the collection, use, storing and sharing of farm data. It speaks to the role the digital data industry has in earning the trust of farmers by being transparent and working with customers to help them understand how their information is used."

The RealAgristudies survey suggests those who are the biggest users of farm digital data platforms and technol-

ogy are also the most confident in its safety.

"With today's rising costs, producers are wisely looking at how to be more efficient. Using any digital data tool can help producers benefit from time, labour and cost efficiencies," said Krista Kilback, manager, FCC AgExpert. "Once you identify where you want to find an efficiency, you can find a tool to match. For example, one customer wants to keep track of grain in the bin; that is the best efficiency on their farm and there is technology for that. Another farmer found AgExpert accounting software brought him the accurate financial information he needed in real time instead of having to sift through books and not have information when he needed it."

The benefits are well documented. When farmers see profitability by the acre, they can fully understand their cost of production, develop specialized seeding plans, and run scenarios to know how to make the most advantageous decisions. The shareability of records also means quicker, more precise communication with farm partners.

The survey suggests Canadian producers are on a trajectory towards increased use and trust of digital farm management, positioning the industry for continued stability and growth in the future as individual operations adopt the agricultural management practices that are right for them.

The survey was conducted in November 2022 using the RealAgristudies Insights Panel, along with AgExpert subscribers. The survey is accurate +/- four per cent with 95 per cent confidence. RealAgristudies is a partnership between the AgMedia company, RealAgriculture and Agri Studies.

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# Objectives for better beetle management

BY KEITH GABERT

Flea beetles are the pest of greatest economic risk to canola production, according to our 2022 Canola Council of Canada survey of canola growers. With more striped species, which emerge earlier in the spring and seem more tolerant of common seed treatments, and with spring weather conditions that challenge rapid crop emergence, flea beetle damage seems worse than ever.

Canola growers have two major objectives to reduce the risk.

**Objective A: Rapid canola emergence**

The ideal flea beetle buster is a canola crop that establishes quickly with five to eight plants per square foot. More plants mean more food for the flea beetles, which limits the damage per plant.

Scenarios that require multiple in-season foliar sprays are often the result of a slow-establishing, non-competitive crop. Many factors can cause this, including moisture, temperature, plant populations, seed treatment and overall flea beetle numbers.

Management steps to reduce the risk include:

- Seed shallow into warm, moist soil. Consider seeding cereals first as they can tolerate cooler spring soils. Seed canola after soils have warmed up and ideally just before or after a spring rain.
- Use an advanced seed treatment to improve flea beetle protection in high-risk areas. These include Buteo Start, Lumiderm, Fortenza and Fortenza Advanced.
- Use safe rates of seed-placed fertilizer. The recommendation is to use only phosphorus in the seed row at rates of 20 lb./ac. of actual phosphate. Higher rates of seed-placed fertilizer can add more stress, slow the pace of growth and reduce the stand.

**Objective B: Effective foliar sprays**

Fields under moisture stress may not



**Left:** Two species of flea beetle—striped and crucifer—on the same canola plant. Striped species emerge earlier in the spring and seem more tolerant of common seed treatments. **Above:** Farmers can reduce flea beetle risk with a canola crop that establishes quickly with five to eight plants per square foot. More plants mean more food for the flea beetles, which limits the damage per plant. Source: Canola Council of Canada

meet objective "A". Flea beetles love dry conditions, crops don't. In that case, growers should set up for effective foliar insecticide.

What makes a spray effective?

First, apply it at the right time. Action thresholds for canola are when damage exceeds 25 per cent cotyledon or leaf area loss. However, in warm weather with actively feeding flea beetles and slow-growing crop, this threshold can be passed quickly.

Growers will want to anticipate the speed at which damage is developing and proactively begin spraying before 25 per cent defoliation. In some cases, early spraying around headlands may be enough when damage is localized from flea beetles entering the field edge.

"Right time" is also when flea beetles are most active. Warm, dry and calm are good conditions for spraying. In rainy cool weather, flea beetles often take shelter in the soil and don't feed as much. In these conditions, insecticides, which all rely on contact with the flea beetle tar-

get, will have lower efficacy.

Second, consider the temperature effect on insecticide efficacy. On spray days with highs over 25°C, malathion and Sevin XLR may provide better results. On days with highs below 20°C, pyrethroids (Decis, Pounce, Perm-UP and others) will show better results. Pyrethroids have restrictions when temperatures exceed 25°C.

Third, achieve coverage. Flea beetle insecticides do most of their work through contact. Because young canola plants take up only a small percentage of the ground area and because flea beetles are small targets, effective contact requires adequate water (at least 10 gal/ac.) and medium nozzles.

Check labels for specific nozzle recom-

mendations. Low-drift nozzles, which are a good practice for some herbicides, produce a coarse spray droplet that may not provide efficient flea beetle contact. Without coverage, results may not be as good as hoped.

This is just a quick overview of the top points. Continue regular scouting for flea beetle damage until your crop is well established. For more on flea beetle management tips and how to make the spray decision, please see our agronomy-based articles in the Insects section at [canolawatch.org/fundamentals](http://canolawatch.org/fundamentals).

*Keith Gabert is an agronomy specialist and insect management lead for the Canola Council of Canada. Email [gabertk@canolacouncil.org](mailto:gabertk@canolacouncil.org).*



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In response to concerns of producers:

# Province considers extending deer season to cut numbers

☞ *Continued from front*

"I certainly don't want to speak to one area of the province in this regard, but certainly as the generality winter came around early, and it looks like we're not quite through it, this has created a challenge," said Skoropad.

"We're looking at many cases of food shortage, shelter issues as well, and deer travel many kilometres in some cases when winters are like that.

"We're hearing a lot of herding which does then create issues, and issues that we hear from producers, ranchers and residents of many communities.

"It depends on what area you're in, in the province, and depends on what species you're looking at. The last couple of years we've had a really good habitat so we certainly see it a little bit higher.

"Thus, we try to inform the individual wildlife management zone to work as best as we can."

Skoropad explained what the government's policy is for managing the extensive number of deer in RMs and farmlands that are causing issues for farmers.

"What we try to do each and every year is manage deer and other species in the province, wildlife in the province, through regulated hunting," said Skoropad.

"That becomes our main tool



Concerns about the overpopulation of deer across certain areas in Saskatchewan have been addressed by the provincial government with plans for adding additional hunting tags, and extending the hunting season for next year. Photo credit: Alvin Nixon.

and we certainly try to get it right when it comes to the hunting allocations in each of the wildlife management zones.

"Beyond that, we certainly en-

courage landowners, or otherwise, to engage with their local conservation officers who have a number of strategies.

"Also, more particular for pro-

ducers and ranchers, to work with Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation. There's some funding available for some preventive measures that can be put in

place."

The Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation allows farmers to apply for compensation for livestock and feedstock damage.

"That said, there certainly are some variables there and we know the weather is a really big variable, but those are certainly some tools that we've got in place presently," he said.

Skoropad said the concerns about deer on peoples properties have only been raised in certain areas of the province.

"I wouldn't say it's been across the province, but I would certainly say in areas of the province," he said.

"As I mentioned before, it depends on the species as well. What's a problem in one area as far as the population goes in some cases is not even a point of conversation in another.

"We've certainly heard, and we've worked closely, we'll continue to work closely, I want to stress, with SARM in particular.

"We met with SARM just a number of weeks ago and we'll continue regular touch points throughout the year to ensure that we're really being able to address this appropriately.

"As well to hear and understand fully what's happening on the ground."

# Deer population a concern across the province

☞ *Continued from page B7*

"The RMs have imposed their own coyote bounties, that's because they have a lot of problems in that area with coyotes going after the calves.

"The province had that bounty back in 2009 where there were a number of coyotes that were taken out of the rural area of the

province, but those populations are back now, and they can cause a lot of damage as well towards farmers calves.

"Unfortunately it is an ongoing issue."

With coyotes being a concern to farmers and people in rural areas, Orb was asked if he thinks the bounty will help solve the issue.

"The RMs have their autonomy to be able to do this or whatever they think will help. We're not discouraging any RM for doing that, that's for sure," he said.


"I think it does control the concern. It may be a shorter term plan, maybe if you looked into the longer term it doesn't make as much of a difference as you want to. I

think that depends on the species surviving and being proliferated at the same time.

"Every year it would be different. It's sort of a wait and see thing, but immediately I think our RMs feel the need to do that because they need to try to project and mitigate the damage that the farmers are feeling right now."

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# Canada, Saskatchewan invest in 21 infrastructure projects, including bridge in RM of Antler

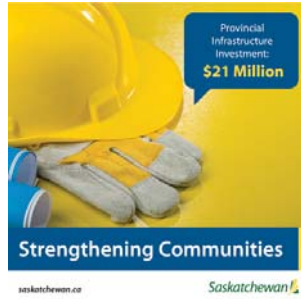
Dominic LeBlanc, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Infrastructure and Communities, and Saskatchewan's Government Relations Minister Don McMorris, have announced a joint investment of more than \$42.1 million to support 21 infrastructure projects across the province.

Several rural areas will see infrastructure improvements. These include bridge replacements in the rural municipalities of Antler No. 61, Caledonia No. 99, Hudson Bay No. 394, Keys No. 303, Lacadena No. 228, Lumsden No. 189, Mervin No. 499, Orkney No. 244, Poplar Valley No. 12, Preeceville No. 334, Porcupine No. 395 and Torch River No. 488. This work with help improve the transportation systems of these communities.

Funding also will support the construction of a new arena in the City of Lloydminster, which will feature two indoor and one outdoor regulation-sized rinks, including sledge hockey-friendly amenities. The building will include accessible seating and washrooms for spectators and dressing rooms for hockey teams. The new arena will be an inclusive and accessible space where residents can gather to enjoy sports and community events.

Residents of the Town of Balgonie will benefit from the construction of an aquatic centre, featuring a 430-square metre outdoor swimming pool with spacious changerooms and a zero-depth beach pool entry, enabling access for residents of all abilities and ages. The project also includes the installation of a regulation compliant circulation and water treatment system which improves water quality, and a high-efficiency heating system, which will keep the pool at a comfortable temperature.

The Resort Village of Cochin is receiving funding for the rehabilitation of their breakwater, a structure that protects against erosion, maintains fish spawning area, and allows for free movement of water between lake systems. It also provides a scenic community-centred area



formational to our community and region by allowing us to attract an array of large-scale events and entertainment options. It will also support enhanced recreation and culture opportunities for people of all ages and all abilities."

"The Resort Village of Cochin appreciates the federal and provincial investments to help our breakwater rehabilitation project become a reality," Resort Village of Cochin Mayor Harvey Walker

said. "When the work is finished, it will extend the service life of this important infrastructure, which is key to ensuring recreation opportunities for all who live, work, play and visit the area."

The Government of Canada is investing \$20,133,458 toward these projects. The Government of Saskatchewan is investing \$21,986,742. Recipient communities are contributing \$23,846,620 and responsible for any additional costs.

for public gathering and fishing. Once completed, these improvements will rehabilitate the existing breakwater.

"The investments we are making will improve the quality of life of residents across Saskatchewan," LeBlanc said. "We will continue working with our partners to invest in community infrastructure and build a better future for all Saskatchewanians."

"Our government continues to invest important infrastructure dollars in communities across Saskatchewan and is proud to provide nearly \$22 million in provincial funding toward these projects," McMorris said. "Once completed, these projects will mean a more efficient rural transportation system to further support Saskatchewan's export-based economy and create greater recreation opportunities and gathering places, strengthening the hearts of communities."

"The funding committed from both the Government of Canada and the Government of Saskatchewan toward this important event facility project is very much appreciated by the City of Lloydminster," City of Lloydminster Mayor Gerald Aalbers said. "When construction is completed, this new infrastructure will be trans-

**As farmers gear up for the busy spring season, be diligent and stay safe.**

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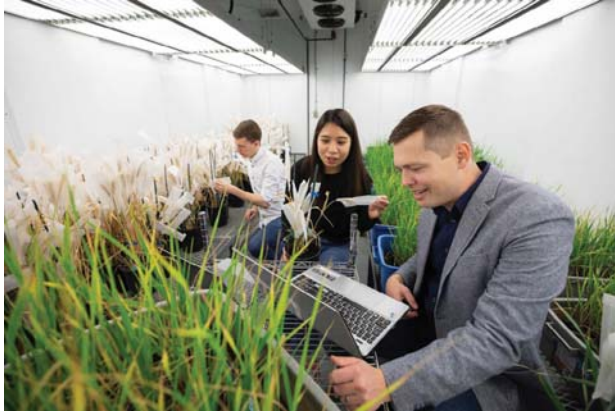

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# USask students training for the future in agriculture technology



Dr. Ian Stavness (right), associate professor in the College of Arts and Science, and Enhancement Chair at USask's Global Institute for Food Security.

University of Saskatchewan photo

BY KATIE BRICKMAN-YOUNG

Graduate students at the University of Saskatchewan (USask) will experience a one-of-a-kind training opportunity thanks to a new program that has received a \$1.6 million grant from the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC).

The NSERC CREATE grant in Computational Agriculture will explore the deep-rooted collaboration between plant and computer sciences at USask. The unique program will enhance the shift towards data-rich processes in the agricultural sector to drive economic competitiveness and environmental sustainability.

"This is an exciting opportunity for advanced training. This program builds on the strength that we have at the University of Saskatchewan in computer and plant science," said Dr. Ian Stavness (PhD), associate professor in the College of Arts and Science, and Enhancement Chair at USask's Global Institute for Food Security (GIFS). "USask has been promoting and cultivating their signature areas [of research] and agriculture is one of them. I think this [funding] is recognition of our current world-leading place in this field."

Over the course of six years, the program will offer dedicated cross-disciplinary train-

ing in agricultural and computer science to 87 students. Students in the computer science program from the College of Arts and Science will come together with students from the plant sciences program at the College of Agriculture and Bioresources to cross-train subjects and collaborate on research in agriculture and technology.

"I think one of the critical aspects of this program is the cross-training component. Plant sciences students will be trained in data science approaches and programming – areas where they wouldn't [traditionally] have core training," explained Stavness. "And the computer science students will get training in biology, plant genomics, and plant breeding and other core topics they haven't been exposed to before."

There will be an equal number of trainee students from both streams exposed to the wealth of opportunity in agricultural technology and applying their expertise to agricultural problems.

"The research outcomes will be ongoing, and we expect to see research results immediately and continuously from our graduate students as they move through this program," he said.

As environmental changes put pressure on the agricultural and food production sectors, using data analysis to drive change for sustainability will be key, not only for these students, but also the companies and organizations they will work with during their time in the program.

"There is a lot of interest in agricultural solutions to combat climate change. We have significant challenges with more variable weather conditions in different regions across Canada and around the world," said Stavness. "With this computational analysis program, we are hoping to support advances to adapt agricultural systems to those changing patterns, making plants and cash crops more resilient to those changing conditions."

"[USask has] real strength in plant breeding from the specialists at the Crop Development Centre, and with our computational side, we can build new tools to generate those new varieties that will be resistant to climate change and provide environmental and economic sustainability for farmers."

Trainees will put their skills to work in professional rotations or company internships and at three training hubs in Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba. The training program will also strengthen the international reputation achieved through the Plant Phenotyping and Imaging Research Centre at USask. The Global Institute for Food Security at USask is also a key partner who will be providing professional development and entrepreneurship training for graduate students in the program.

"Their experiences will be enriched through those rotations and internships. Through those, they will get a better sense of the real needs for ag-tech companies, organizations, growers, and agronomists," said Stavness. "Those needs will certainly drive a lot of the research problems that we will pursue so they can really tackle the most important problems that will have the most impact in the sector."

Stavness and his program counterparts are looking forward to seeing the accomplishments of the students as they explore this unique experience at the intersection of plant and computer science.

"When they graduate, they are going to be the employees and leaders in agricultural technology companies and/or entrepreneur activities," he said. "We see the main outcome is the people and how they will be conducting world-leading research and developing state-of-the-art tools and critical solutions for growers to use to make decisions on the management of their crops."

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# Canada, Manitoba sign agreement to grow Manitoba's culture and agri-foods sector over five years

On April 6, federal Agriculture and Agri-Food Minister Marie-Claude Bibeau and Manitoba Agriculture Minister Derek Johnson announced \$221 million for strategic agricultural initiatives in Manitoba under the new Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership (Sustainable CAP).

The Sustainable CAP is a five-year, \$3.5-billion investment by Canada's federal, provincial and territorial governments that supports Canada's agri-food and agri-products sectors.

This includes \$1 billion in federal programs and activities and a \$2.5 billion commitment that is cost-shared 60 per cent federally and 40 per cent provincially/territorially for programs that are designed and delivered by provinces and territories.

The Manitoba government has launched a suite of programs under the Sustainable CAP framework that will help the sector reach its full potential by expanding business opportunities, investing in sustainable practices throughout the sector, and strengthening resiliency of the entire food chain.

These programs were developed through significant consultation with industry partners, who highlighted a number of priority areas, including research, innovation and market development, emergency preparedness and technology advancement.

For example, the new Resilient Agricultural Landscape Program has been developed based on feedback from the industry, and supports ecological goods and services by funding on-farm projects that remove carbon (or carbon dioxide) from the atmosphere to reduce greenhouse gas

emissions.

Eligible applicants include community pastures, agricultural Crown land forage lease-holders, First Nations and Métis communities and farmers outside of watershed district boundaries.

Canadian producers also have access to an enhanced suite of business risk management programs to help them manage significant risks that threaten the viability of their farms and are beyond their capacity to manage.

The Sustainable CAP comes into effect April 1, and replaces the Canadian Agricultural Partnership.

"The Sustainable CAP is a commitment by the governments of Canada and Manitoba to continue investing in the agriculture sector's growth and innovation, ensuring producers, ranchers and processors reach their full potential and have access to new markets for their products. Building a resilient and productive sector in Manitoba will help Canada remain a world leader in sustainable agriculture," says Bibeau.

"Manitoba producers and agri-processors are key contributors not only to Manitoba's economy, but to the entire international agri-food value chain," says Johnson. "Our government is committed to supporting this industry through targeted programming while they work to sustainably feed the world, right here at home. I want to thank our industry stakeholders for their input in consultations over the last two years so we could create programs that fit exactly what Manitoba producers need. I look forward to future investments that will support Manitoba agricultural operations."

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\*all acreages taken from the most recent Manitoba Property Assessment Reports

### CONDITIONS OF TENDER

- Interested parties must rely on their own inspection and knowledge of the property and not on the above or any other particulars or representations made by or on behalf of the Seller.
- Tenders must be received at or before noon on May 23, 2023.
- Each tender must be accompanied by a \$5,000.00 deposit cheque payable to Meighen Haddad LLP. Deposits accompanying unacceptable bids will be refunded.
- Tenders may be submitted for one or more parcels.
- Highest or any tender not necessarily accepted.
- There are approximately 500 yards of gravel stockpiled on Parcel Two. Tenders for that parcel must specify whether the tender includes the purchase of the gravel. If the successful bidder for that parcel does not purchase the gravel it will be removed by the municipality.

### TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF SALE

- The bidder whose tender is accepted will be required to complete an agreement covering terms and conditions of sale.
- In addition to the deposit, the balance of the accepted tender must be paid within thirty (30) days from the date of notification of tender acceptance, or evidence provided that the purchase funds will be available under conditions acceptable to the Vendor. If the balance of the accepted tender is not paid within the set time limit the deposit paid may be forfeited as liquidated damages and not as a penalty.
- Possession is not authorized until acceptable arrangements for full payment are made following acceptance of tender.
- All mines and minerals will be reserved from any transfer.
- Land is in the Torren's Title system.
- Successful bidders will be responsible for real property taxes commencing January 1, 2023.

For further information or an appointment to view, contact Municipality of Grassland, Hartney, MB. Telephone No. (204) 858-2590 – attention: Kristy Wells.



# Supporting Producers Through Programs

Apply today for programs under the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership, a federal-provincial-territorial-initiative. Producers can access programs to develop water projects, adopt beneficial management practices, enhance animal health and welfare and much more.

For program information, visit [saskatchewan.ca/S-CAP](http://saskatchewan.ca/S-CAP).



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# Louis Dreyfus to double capacity at Yorkton canola crushing plant

Louis Dreyfus Company (LDC) has announced it will expand its canola crushing facility at Yorkton.

"This major investment by LDC is good news for Saskatchewan canola growers and good news for workers and the economy in Yorkton and right across the province," Saskatchewan Trade and Export Development Minister Jeremy Harrison said.

"This expansion brings Saskatchewan even closer to several of the 2030 Growth Plan goals, including the ambitious goal of crushing 75 per cent of the canola produced in the province. This investment strengthens the province's position as a global leader in agriculture value-added processing and will further increase Saskatchewan's international exports."

The facility's new capacity will be over two million metric tons, which is more than double its current capacity. LDC initially opened the Yorkton facility in 2009 and currently employs approximately 120 people.

"This investment supports the group's strategic growth plans by reinforcing core merchandizing activities, in this case with additional capacity to originate and process Canadian canola seeds to provide nourishment for people and livestock," LDC Chief Executive Officer Michael Gelchie said.

"It also positions LDC as a strategic feedstock provider to renewable energy producers and accelerates our contribution to a global energy transition that we are excited to be a part of."

In addition to helping with the canola crushing goal, the expansion puts the province closer to meeting several other key goals outlined in Saskatchewan's Growth Plan, including:

- Grow private capital investment in Saskatchewan to \$16 billion annually;
- Increase the value of exports by 50 per cent;
- Grow Saskatchewan's agri-food exports to \$20 billion; and
- Increase agriculture value-added revenue to \$10 billion.

Canola oil and canola seed were among Saskatchewan's top three agri-food exports in 2022, with a value of \$3.5 billion and \$2.7 billion, respectively.

Construction of the additional canola crushing line is expected to begin later this year.



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# Navigating a lifetime of financial learning

Good financial management is not an inherent skill—it must be taught and learned through experience. And, based on our age and circumstances, the focus of teaching and learning changes.

“Like brushing your teeth, developing good financial habits comes from timing and repetition.”

Learning the basics of financial management can start at a young age. But Stephanie Holmes-Winton, founder and chief executive officer of CacheFlow, says lessons need to match what an individual will encounter in their daily lives.

“Like brushing your teeth, developing good financial habits comes from timing and repetition,” she says.

It also takes time to teach and learn discipline, so make it easier by matching the lesson with the right time in our lives.

Here are examples of financial lessons for various stages in life:

## Young children

Teaching a young child about credit is a fruitless exercise since they don't need credit. They will likely forget the concept of debt and interest well before acquiring credit.

Yet teaching young children about value by encouraging them to shop for a healthy snack at the grocery store with a fixed amount of money, will have a more significant impact.

First, they learn what they can afford. As they grow older, parents can help the child figure out costs per serving, comparison shop with other favourite



Learning the basics of financial management can start at a young age. But Stephanie Holmes-Winton, founder and chief executive officer of CacheFlow, says lessons need to match what an individual will encounter in their daily lives. “Like brushing your teeth, developing good financial habits comes from timing and repetition,” she says.

items—apples might be more economical than raspberries—price variations between brands and whether the cost is worth the money spent. If there is any money left over from the purchase, it can be used next time or saved.

For FCC business advisor Terry Jones, financial literacy begins by connecting money to work. Whether through a small allowance or chores, doing so encourages young people to develop respect for where the money comes from.

## Teens and young adults

Older children, teenagers and young adults should be taught more complex concepts—but not in excessive detail.

Understanding the basics of debt is important, such as how much of your income will pay for a house or vehicle. It's also the time to learn about credit and borrowing.

Jones points out that the lessons about credit are important foundational financial learnings.

“It's far too easy in this world to acquire credit. Paying it on time every month—an amount equal to or greater than the minimum due—is a must,” Jones says.

This is also the age to learn that adults should save a significant amount of money for the most expensive period of life: retirement and old age.

After post-secondary, it's time to learn mortgage literacy, then turn the focus to saving for retirement.

## 30s and 40s

Age and experience do not guarantee

better financial management skills. Through adulthood, Holmes-Winton encourages farmers to know how much debt they owe for every dollar earned and how their income and expenses will change as they age.

In our 30s and 40s, the focus is usually on how much income comes from where because many of us tend not to think about retirement at that age. And when we do, the default is often RRSPs. But RRSP withdrawals are taxable. We need to start thinking about the most tax-efficient income we can create because when you're 60, you need to make your assets last.

Jones recommends the lifelong practice of using the 80/20 rule: all expenses and debt payments should not exceed 80 percent of our revenue stream, and the remaining 20 percent is saved for retirement.

When it comes to paying debt, Jones encourages farmers to consider these two strategies:

- The snowball method: pay down the smallest debts first (regardless of which debt has a higher interest rate), then apply the payment from the now-paid smaller debt to the next largest. This method allows for greater cash flow flexibility, and debt will still be paid relatively quickly.

- Avalanche approach: the largest, highest-interest debt is paid first. While it takes care of the high interest, this strategy can take a long time.

## 50s, 60s and beyond

As you approach retirement, Holmes-Winton encourages farmers to consider how they want to live. Are you going to sit at home and read some good books? Or will you hit the road and travel the country—or beyond? Write down all your current expenses and, based on your dream retirement life, identify which expenses will increase and which will decrease.

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# BMO's \$2 million donation to U of S to accelerate research critical to the future of food

Critical research into regenerative and digital agriculture at the University of Saskatchewan will be accelerated thanks to a \$2 million donation from BMO. The donation will support two initiatives within the College of Agriculture and Bioresources: the "BMO Soil Analytical Laboratory and the Jarislowsky and BMO Research Chair in Regenerative Agriculture.

"USask is excited to partner with BMO to strengthen the College of Agriculture and Bioresources' research ecosystem," said USask President Peter Stoi-cheff. "BMO's investment will accelerate research and training in one of our signature areas and ensure that farmers and agronomists are at the cutting edge of production and environmental practices that support global food production."

"We're excited to contribute to the progress of the University of Saskatchewan's research in support of sustainable agriculture," said Lynda Taylor, Head, BMO Agriculture. "As longtime partners and investors in the agricultural sector and a leader in sustainability, we know this research is vital to the future and the progress being made to grow Canada's agri-food sector and the strength and resilience of our farmers, who are among the most innovative producers in the world when it comes to regenerative agriculture."

A multi-donor initiative, the new research chair position will focus on accelerating the science and adoption of regenerative agriculture, through detailed assessment of management practices aimed at preserving and restoring agroecosystem health while maximizing yield and profitability.

The soil analytical laboratory will help alleviate a critical bottleneck in digital agriculture research and providing key analytical capabilities for research in regenerative agriculture. The new laboratory will:

- Expand current capability for characterizing soil carbon and nitrogen dynamics, a cornerstone for quantifying regenerative agriculture impacts
- Build high-throughput spectroscopic capability for rapid assessment of a range of soil properties, including plant-available nutrients
- Facilitate rapid characterization of the soil and plant microbiome, an indicator of soil health and function
- Enable data integration across multiple analytical



The donation will support two initiatives within the USask College of Agriculture and Bioresources: the "BMO Soil Analytical Laboratory and the Jarislowsky and BMO Research Chair in Regenerative Agriculture.

Christina Weese photo

platforms, building a soil database that can be mined to better understand the interactions between soil function and above-ground crop performance

\*Name pending approval from USask Board of Governors.

• Create world-leading training opportunities for students in some of the world's most advanced agriculture practices right here in Saskatchewan

"Expanding our research capacity in regenerative agriculture and our analytical capacity in soil health will accelerate development of targeted solutions for food security while protecting our natural resources," said Dr. Angela Bedard-Haughn (PhD), Dean of the College of Agriculture and Bioresources.

"Soil carbon storage will play an important role to help achieve a net zero future and we need innovative research to establish the next-generation of technologies to build climate change resilience and feed a growing population," said Michael Torrance, Chief Sustainability Officer, BMO. "That's why BMO is happy to partner with the University of Saskatchewan to establish a Chair in Regenerative Agriculture and the BMO Soil Analytical Lab, as a leader in this space."

BMO's gift is part of the university's upcoming Be What the World Needs campaign.



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