

# Plain & Valley

Covering Southeast Saskatchewan and Southwest Manitoba

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## \$2.8 billion mine expansion is underway

BY CHRIS ISTANCE

During a tour of PotashCorp Rocanville's mine expansion sites, I came to a quick realization: To fully comprehend what the \$2.8 billion expansion at the potash mine entails, it can't be read about, heard about or even seen in pictures or on film.

Whether it's the three new, giant brine ponds, the expanded rail yard, the tons of heavy machinery moving tons of dirt and gravel, or the solitary drilling rig tucked in a bush clearing at the site of the mine's new service shaft, one must see the project first-hand to fully understand how immense it is.

Last November, PotashCorp announced a \$1.8 billion expansion to its Rocanville operation in response to growing global demand for potash. The expansion is part of a company-wide plan to increase PotashCorp's production capacity. Projects are also planned at their Patience Lake, Cory and New Brunswick mines.

In Rocanville, the expansion will boost production capacity to 5.7 million tonnes per year, an increase of 2.7 million tonnes.

In July, the company added a further \$1 billion investment to the Rocanville expansion, bringing the total cost of the project to \$2.8 billion. The expansion will create 269 new permanent positions at the mine. Once all the hiring is completed, PotashCorp Rocanville will employ 641 people, up from the 372 employees currently working there.

The expansion involves sinking a new service shaft about seven miles northwest of the town of Rocanville. Office facilities will also be constructed at the new mine site.

The current service shaft will be converted to a second production shaft. A new underground con-



Chris Istance photo

A pair of drill riggers bring pipe out of the hole being drilled at the site where PotashCorp Rocanville will excavate a new service shaft north of Rocanville. Core samples are being taken for geological testing before the actual shaft sinking begins.

veyance system is being built to transport ore from the new mining area to the production shafts, and a new mill will be constructed next to the existing mill.

Other portions of the expansion include an increase to the mine's shop capacity, a new warehouse, a new tailings deposit area located on the western portion of the existing mine property, improvements and an expansion of the mine's rail yard and a new product storage facility that will double the mine's storage capabilities.

At the existing mine-site, a tour of ongoing expansion projects—which are really just getting started—takes an hour. Just outside the main gate, bulldozers, rollers and dump trucks are leveling and compacting a sand and gravel parking area for office trailers. The trailers will be set up for some of the multitude of contractors arriving to work at the mine through the next five years.

Just beyond that work is the most noticeable feature of the expansion—the giant containing wall on the north end of a three

zone brine pond area. Located just southwest of the mine and west of the tailings pile, the brine ponds cover an area of about 188 acres—the size of a small lake.

In Zone 10 of the pond—the section farthest south—poli-liner was already laid on about half of the pond bed and walls. The liner, which covers a three-foot thick, compacted clay base, will have sand laid on top to complete the leak-proof basin.

PotashCorp day-shift supervisor Blaine Jones guided me during my tour of the existing mine

site on Nov. 6. He said Zone 10 is scheduled to come on line in the spring of 2009. PotashCorp had planned on expanding the brine pond facilities before the \$2.8 billion announcement, putting them ahead of the other portions of the mine's expansion.

"It was just kind of included in the scale of the full expansion," said Jones. "It was already in progress, so it will be ahead of other parts of the project."

Also part of the brine pond expansion is a new brine return pump house, which will move the brine solution between the mine and the storage ponds.

Work has also begun on the several buildings being constructed at the existing mine site.

Just south of the mine's train car loading dock, the piles have been set for a new paint shop and a storage facility.

On the opposite side of the building, the concrete foundation was already in place for a new reagent mix area. The building will be used to prepare and store the solution of chemicals used in the process of separating the potash from the salt.

Like the brine ponds—which were best seen from the top of the tailings pile—you need a bird's eye view to see the rail yard expansion. From the top of the mine's production head frame, you can see a new set of tracks running west to east, curling to the south just past the east side of the mine. Besides the new line, an older rail line is being expanded.

When complete, the rail yard will double its capacity to load and ship out potash from the train car dock, Jones said.

Just below the head frame, more land has been leveled for office trailers and a new parking lot for employees sits waiting for pavement.

*Continued on page 2*



Chris Istance photo

One of three new brine ponds (left side) will come on line next spring. Crews are currently laying a poli-liner on its bed and walls, while excavation continues on two other brine ponds just north of it. This photo, taken from the top of the tailings pile, shows a majority of the PotashCorp mine site facing west.

# Shaft excavation scheduled to begin next fall

Continued from front

As the surface tour at the existing mine site ended, Jones pointed out one more thing; something that wouldn't have been noticed if he hadn't said anything.

Crews were moving large metal parts into the service shaft. The parts were being taken underground in preparation for the construction of the mine's new conveyor system.

Jones said that just moving the parts underground means months of work.

While work at the existing mine site is at full throttle, activity at the new service shaft site is just getting started.

The site—which will also have office facilities located just south of the new shaft's head frame with a picturesque view of Scissors Creek to the west—is located four miles north and two miles west of Rocanville. The new mine property will include three and a quarter sections.

From the existing minesite, the new service shaft will be 20 kilometres to the west. It's on an old farmstead known as the Sutton homestead.

Mine general superintendent Vance Thom drove me to the site, explaining what is currently taking place there.

A new road has been excavated in a field leading to the property that will contain the PotashCorp Rocanville mine site. As it curls to the north, it crosses a marsh which collects the headwaters for a creek that meanders back to the mine.

"We're trying to preserve the wetlands surrounding the new shaft, along with the trees. Many of them are oaks," Thom said.

The trees will border the head frame of the new shaft, but on Nov. 6, the bluff of trees surrounds a drilling rig taking core samples from a pilot hole for the shaft. Geological samples brought up by the rig are being studied by engineers and geologists to determine what kind of formations lie underneath the site.

Once complete, the pilot hole will reach a depth of about 1,100 metres. On the day of my tour, the drill was reaching a depth of 617 metres.

The drilling is being done 24 hours a day, seven days a week by a crew of 16 workers. Including geologists and engineers, there are 15 people on site at any one time.

The core sample drilling is expected to be completed in early December. The core

sampling is the second stage of testing, the first being a 3-D surface seismic to study the underground geologic formations.

Thom said there will be challenges for drilling the shaft. Among them is the Blairmore Formation, a water bearing formation that contains a mixture of sand, clay and water. The core sample drillers have already worked their way through the Blairmore Formation, Thom said.

"It's a major water bearing formation that is essentially at sea level and structurally not very strong," said Thom, adding that there are several more water bearing formations below the Blairmore.

To combat the potential damage caused by underground water sources, about three dozen more holes will be drilled in the area to a depth of about 640 metres and the earth will be chemically frozen. The freezing, which will take three to four months, should give the water bearing formations enough integrity for the shaft to be drilled through it.

Once the freezing is complete, the head frame foundation and the shaft collar will be constructed over another three months, and another three months after that, the concrete headframe should be near completion.

"I would say that at about this time next year, we should be starting on the shaft excavation," Thom said.

That will involve the movement of about 180,000 tons of earth to a depth of 1,100 metres. Thom said they will have a mining machine cutting a path underground from the current minesite, waiting for the shaft to be completed.

Once the integrity of the shaft has been deemed safe, the underground mining machine will cut into the shaft, completing a tunnel from the existing mine.

Currently, mining is taking place underground a few miles from the new site. Thom said miners have almost reached Highway 8 about a mile south of Spy Hill.

Before excavation, however, accommodations have to be set up for crews working on the project. Thom said a 100-man work camp will be created in a field just east of the service shaft site, and a second 400-man camp will be set up at the current mine site.

Accommodations are also being sought off site as well.



Chris Istace photo

A construction crew works on the new reagent mix and preparation facility, one of the first buildings to be constructed at the existing PotashCorp Rocanville mine site.



Chris Istace photo

A bulldozer operator waits for the dump truck to unload gravel in an area at the mine being set aside for office trailers to be used by companies working on the PotashCorp Rocanville expansion.

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# Rider offence falters in Western semi-final

BY CHRIS ISTACE

The conclusion to the Saskatchewan Roughriders 2008 CFL campaign was polar opposite to the way they opened the season.

After going 6-0 to start the season and finishing second in the West Division with a 12-6 record, the Riders faltered on home turf in the Western semi-final, losing to the B.C. Lions 33-12 last Saturday.

Rider quarterback Michael Bishop got the start, but failed to guide the offence to a touchdown. In the meantime, he completed 14 of his 27 passes for 172 yards and threw three interceptions.

Backup Darian Durant replaced Bishop in the fourth quarter, going three-for-seven for 82 yards. Late in the game, Durant drove the offence inside the B.C. 10 yard line, but Saskatchewan failed to score, turning the ball over on downs.

As a team, Saskatchewan turned the ball over seven times in the game. They fumbled four times, recovering it once, and turned it over on downs once.

B.C., meanwhile, fumbled twice, recovering once.

Saskatchewan's only scoring came from Luca Congi with four field goals. The Rider kicker hit a pair of three-pointers from 19 yards out, and another two from the 46 yard line.

On the other side of the ball, the Rider defence held off the B.C. offence through much of the first half, but quarterback Buck Pierce patiently developed momentum through the game. He would ultimately go 23-for-31 and throw the ball 221 yards.

But it was the B.C. defence that put the game away. Lions defensive halfback Ryan Phillips intercepted Bishop with 6:29 left to play and ran the ball 54 yards for the final major score of the game.

The West Division's first-place Calgary Stampeders now host the B.C. Lions in the West final on Saturday.

In the East Division, the Edmonton Eskimos crossed over for the semi-final and defeated the Winnipeg Blue Bombers 29-21. Edmonton faces the Montreal Alouettes in Saturday's East final in Montreal.

The Eskimos are the first crossover playoff contender to advance to a division final since the rule was established in 1996.



Chris Istace photo

B.C. quarterback Buck Pierce fires a ball over a pair of Roughrider defenders during the 2008 Western Division semi-final at Mosaic Stadium last Saturday. Pierce went 23-for-31 and threw one touchdown pass in a 33-12 Lions victory.



Chris Istace photo

Although he had pre-game concerns about the cold at Mosaic Stadium, Lions runningback Stefan Logan carried the ball 18 times for 154 yards in their West semi-final win over Saskatchewan.

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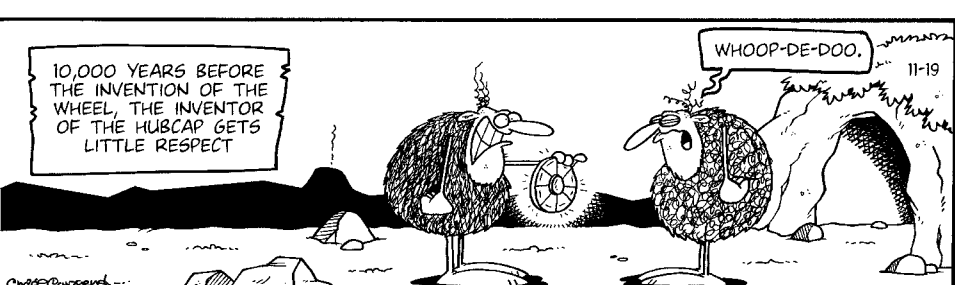
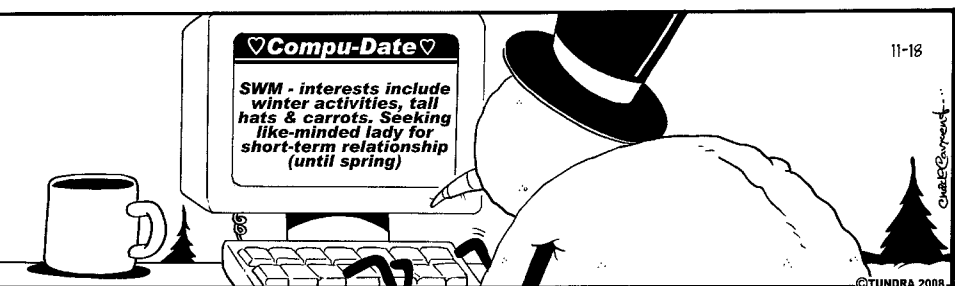
Do you have a story or photo that you think would be of interest to people across Southeast Saskatchewan and Southwest Manitoba. Send it to us!

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21st and 22nd - 7:00pm 23rd - 2:00pm  
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**Nov. 22-23:** Seasonal Spice Craft Show (Holiday Inn)  
For more information call 852-2504.

**Nov. 22:** The Dance Company of Minot (Dakota Square Mall) "Hot Days, Cool Nights" - Sneak Peek  
1:00pm  
Call 701-838-5094 for more information.

**Nov. 19-Dec. 26:** NW Art Center Exhibitions Fall Semester 2008 - "Americas 2000: Before and Beyond" (Gordon B. Olson Library Gallery, MSU)  
"Americas 2000: Before and Beyond"  
Prints from the Minot State University Permanent Collection  
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**Nov. 21-Dec. 23:** Festival of the Season Art Sale - Open House Nov. 21st (Taube Museum of Art 2 North Main St. Minot)  
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# Rural Sask and the 'Age of Innovation'

Change.

That seems to be the buzz-word these days—Barack Obama can't stop talking about it, Saskatchewan is in the midst of it and the markets are experiencing it daily.

I used to think it was a scary proposition—still do sometimes. After all, I am from Saskatchewan and change isn't easy for us classically trained don't-fix-it-if-it-ain't-broke folks.

I like seeing the same bank teller who has served me for 20 years (no joke, Maxine has to be up for some kind of teller-of-the-decade award or millennium-service-of-excellence pin). I like that we've all lived in this small town long enough to know the parents, the grandparents (and usually even the great grandparents) of the high school students who pump our gas at the Co-op service station. I like seeing the same ladies going for coffee every morning. And, when they order coffee, I like that it's still "a coffee." Not a tall café au lait or a grande mocha frappuchino with a cherry on top.

And just when I was getting all comfortable in my rural setting, complete with Beachcomber reruns, church every Sunday and daily weather reports at the post office, Mr. Jim Bottomley comes along.

This Canadian futurist recently spoke in Weyburn about my least favorite subject—change.



**Christalee Froese**

He talked about the historic eras of change: the hunter-gatherer era; the agricultural age; the industrial age and the information age. But, that's all changed (surprise, surprise), as we move into the "Age of Innovation."

So what does that mean to us? Well, it means less labor and more automation. It means we each get 4,000 messages daily from the media. It means change is happening at the greatest rate in the history of mankind.

It also means, I was amazed to discover, that of the 90 per cent of the workforce that was once dedicated to agricultural-related work, only a small percentage remains. Guess what the figure is today? Okay, all you farmers out there, this is your question. What percentage of our world-wide population is employed in the agricultural sector today?

Two per cent . . . yes, you heard me right . . . two per cent.

According to Bottomley, the arrival of the fifth major economy means a combination of computerization, robotics, automation, nanotechnology and DNA manipulation.

Furthermore, our culture is changing as a result of our immersion in the fast-paced Age of Innovation. For us consumers, it means we want our individual needs met faster, and more efficiently. If we can't get it at the Co-op, we'll find it on E-bay and have it shipped out in two days flat. For our kids, it means they embrace new technology and they're used to being decision-makers. For leaders, it means they have to "inspire" and "guide" rather than "manage" and "control."

Now, in light of all of this, you might say that rural Saskatchewan is destined to go the way of the dinosaur. With our lack of reliance on automation, our focus on people-first service and our inter-generational way of relating to each other, our rural communities have no place in the "Age of Innovation." Aaaahhh . . . but, according to Bottomley, that assumption would be wrong. Because, you see, the social trends that this new wired age is creating are these:

- People want to connect with nature, and get back to the basics.
- Stress relief has become paramount for those surrounded by fast-paced work environments and Blackberry driven schedules.
- Life balance is quickly overshadowing the need to be in the rat race.
- Cocooning, safety and security are more important than before.
- A creative class is emerging which seeks less structure and more creative outlets.
- Capitalism is becoming increasingly green and increasingly caring.
- Remote technology allows for alternate work sites and styles (like out of a home office, with brightly painted red walls, in a small town of 500 people)!

So, as I listened to Mr. Bottomley's take on "innovation," my heart soared. Because it is the very change that we are frightened of, that may lead more people to settle in our rural communities. We have nature, we have safety, we have one of the best cocooning-conducive settings around and we have alternative work sites.

Take this 40-year-old writer, for example, who will email these musings to her city-based editor from her home-based office in a town that is devoid of computerized gas pumps and self-check-out tills.

Change—it's the only constant, and I kinda like it that way.

*Christalee Froese writes from Montmartre, Sask. She welcomes comments at [lcfroese@sasktel.net](mailto:lcfroese@sasktel.net).*



"Yep, they always keep the ol' wheelbarrow handy for those who get over-turkeyfied . . ."

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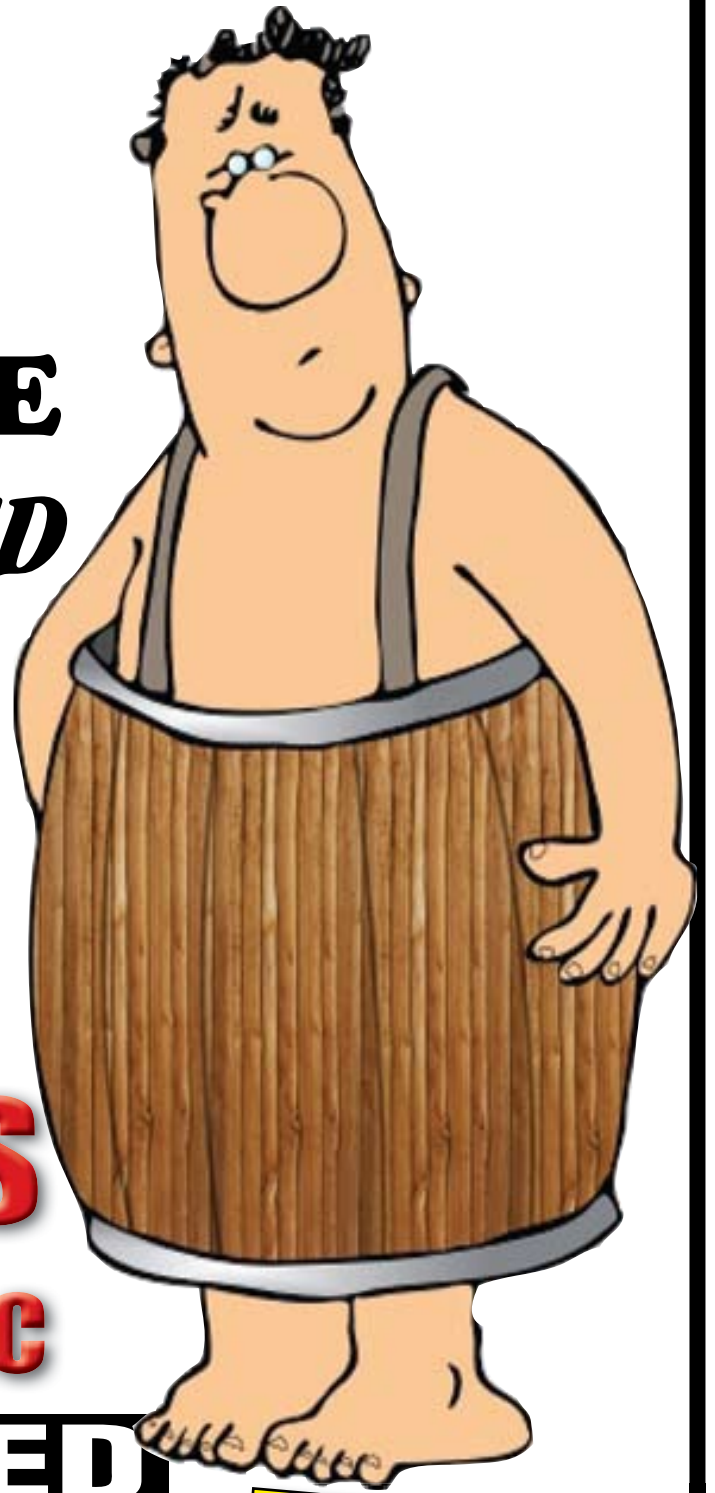
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# Pasture rejuvenation and watering system tour held in Lower Souris Watershed

Producers came from throughout the Lower Souris and Upper Souris Watersheds for the Pasture Rejuvenation and Watering System Tour held in the Kennedy area on October 10.

This event was co-sponsored by the Lower Souris Watershed Agri-Environmental Group Plan and the Provincial Council of ADD Boards. About 25 people met at Moose Mountain Auction Services for an educational tour of local ranches to see methods of rejuvenating older tame pasture and to see a variety of solar watering systems.

The first stop was at Kevin and Kim Dorrance's farm. Dorrance has seeded alfalfa into an existing stand of meadow brome grass that was established in the early 1980's. Using an air drill and just scratching the soil surface, he applied anywhere from 2.5 to 5 lbs/acre of alfalfa into this pasture stand last year. Dorrance is seeing a lot more alfalfa plants this year and the rows of alfalfa are clearly visible. He feels that most of the 425 acres he did this on worked really well, however he wishes he would have included some other legumes as well such as cicer milk vetch or birdsfoot trefoil.

The group also looked at an area where he simply broadcast the alfalfa seed onto a previously cropped field. The results he had from this were amazing as we stood in alfalfa up to our knees.

Dorrance also showed us the Kelln winter solar watering system that he has been using. This system involves trenching water from his dugout to a false well. When the cows come to drink, a motion detector signals the pump to fill the perforated trough sitting on top of the false well. When the cows leave, the water drains back into the well so that the system does not freeze. Dorrance has been happy with this system and waters anywhere from 50 to 300 head on it.

Is fertilizing pastures with commercial fertilizer economically feasible? Lorne Klein with the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture in Weyburn gave a presentation about fertilizing pastures.

In the black soil zone, 1 lb of commercial nitrogen fertilizer results in an average grass yield increase of 20-30 lbs of

dry matter. Based on the research done at the Brandon Research Centre from 2000-2004 with trials using unfertilized and fertilized grass pastures and unfertilized and fertilized grass/alfalfa pastures, it was determined that the only pasture with positive net revenue (based on nitrogen at \$0.50/lb) was the unfertilized grass/alfalfa pasture.

Why not try to incorporate legumes into these pasture stands instead? Alfalfa fixes 50 lbs of nitrogen for every 2,000 lbs of standing alfalfa dry matter; which is equivalent to applying 150 lbs of commercial nitrogen at 33 per cent efficiency. For producers who are worried about potential bloat risks involved with alfalfa, other legumes such as sainfoin or cicer milkvetch could be incorporated into the pasture stand along with the alfalfa.

At George and Colleen McNeely's farm, the group examined the Kelln drainback solar watering system which he uses year round. He has been very happy with the system and the service he has received from Kelln.

McNeely has also done some pasture rejuvenation this spring where he broadcast cicer milk vetch into an

existing pasture. The cattle were allowed to graze this pasture for two days during which they tramped the seed into the soil. The group saw quite a few cicer milk vetch plants growing in this stand while they toured the pasture.

The final stop was to see a Solar West watering system at Tim Daku's farm south of Kennedy. This system is set up for both winter and summer use.

This system involves trenching a line from the dugout to a false well, and includes a trough which drains back to the well to prevent freezing. Daku has provided a separate trough for the cows to use during the summer months. He has also installed a wind generator with this system which works to charge the batteries during extended periods of cloudy days. He has been very happy with this system thus far.

This event was well attended and sparked a lot of interest and questions about different methods to improve old pasture stands and about the wide variety of solar watering systems that are available. For more information about this and other events in the Lower Souris Watershed, please contact Karman Kyle at 452-7953.



Tim Daku displays his year round livestock watering system.

## FALL CANOLA UPDATE MEETING

Thursday, November 20th - Moosomin

Moosomin Uptown Banquet Room  
9:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Friday, November 21st - Weyburn

Weyburn Inn  
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Registration - \$20.00 (Includes Lunch)

### TOPICS INCLUDE:



**Canola Agronomy**  
Canola Council of Canada  
**Research Projects**  
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# Canadian and U.S. pork industries adjust to M-COOL

In the wake of the September 30 introduction of U.S. Mandatory Country of Origin Labelling pork producers and processors on both sides of the Canada-U.S. border have begun what has turned into a painful adjustment.

Regulations developed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) provide for the use of four labels. Label A, "Product of the United States" designates meat from animals born, raised and processed exclusively in the U.S.; Label B, "Product of the United States and Canada" or "Product of Canada and the United States" designates meat from animals born in Canada and partially raised and slaughtered in the U.S.; Label C identifies meat from animals imported for direct slaughter; And Label D identifies meat imported from another country.

## U.S. Packers Halt Slaughter of Canadian Origin Pigs

"We've seen a series of events unfold in the last month, starting with the position that the major US packers have taken regarding Canadian hogs," observes Perry Mohr, the CEO of Manitoba Pork Marketing, the province's producer operated hog marketing co-op.

Several of the major U.S. pork processors, most notably John Morrell in Sioux Falls, South Dakota have responded to the new rules by announcing they will no longer kill Canadian origin pigs and, in the case of John Morrell, effective September 30.

That has forced Canadian slaughter hogs that had been moving into the U.S. to find new homes. At the same time, many U.S. producers who had been buying Canadian weanlings for finishing and slaughter in the U.S. have stopped doing so for fear that they will not have markets for the finished hogs.

## Slaughter Hog Movement South Plummets

"You've seen the number of butcher hogs that are going into the United States virtually dry up. You've seen the number of weanling pigs going into the United States decrease on a weekly basis," says Mohr.

"From the butcher hog perspective it's forced those of us that were exporting hogs into the United States to find alternative markets and, quite honestly, those markets are not nearly as favourable as the ones we were shipping to in both Canada and the United States."

David Hamblin, the marketing manager with Phoenix Agritec, agrees.

"With John Morrell being so competitive over the years it hurt to lose that price. For a lot of the contract guys it was higher than even what they could get on a Maple Leaf price."

Phoenix Agritec has been shipping primarily slaughter animals into the northern U.S. on behalf of Canadian and northern U.S. clients for about the past ten years.

## Canadian Plants Handle More Hogs

Hamblin acknowledges, Canadian prices have held and, with Maple Leaf increasing capacity at Brandon, Manitoba, that plant has been able to take on a lot of those pigs.

He concedes some plants are discounting the pigs, some aren't and, in a lot of cases, it's a

matter of freight to find some of those plants.

He adds, "There's some pigs moving west into some of the other packers that have been short for some time. Other than that there's some of the smaller second tier packers in the states that are taking the pigs. It's just a matter of trying to keep the prices as competitive as possible."

## Limited Capacity Forces Manitoba Hogs to Alberta

Mohr adds, while Manitoba Pork Marketing has retained some U.S. customers, the majority of the surplus shackle space is in Alberta. "I believe there's between 5,000 and 7,000 hogs a week from Manitoba or the middle part of Canada flowing out west to Olymel to be slaughtered."

## Canadian Weanling Producers Lose U.S. Customers

Manitoba weanling exporters have also seen their American markets dry up.

Steinbach area weanling producer Rick Bergmann explains, "Producers who once had standing agreements with weanling buyers are finding themselves without contracts right now."

He says, "Since last March there's been a tremendous amount of the sow base going to slaughter. In some instances, barns are being left empty for a long period of time and possibly for good. You're seeing five year old barns, significantly sized barns, that are depopulating because of the economics."

Bergmann estimates a minimum of 10,000 to 15,000 sows have been depopulated within the last month in Manitoba.

After examining their options, Mohr explains, one of which was to find finishing spaces and have the animals slaughtered in Canada, many have decided to empty their barns.

"When you look ahead to getting them slaughtered in Canada, there's not any surplus capacity right now."

He acknowledges, many remain hopeful that they will ultimately be able to re-populate and resume shipments to the U.S. or finish the pigs in Manitoba and sell them into the Canadian market place.

Bergmann adds some producers are thinking they can repopulate next year and sell the isowears into a 2010 market. He believes that is the only option for those producers with newer built facilities because of the cost of the barns.

## Saskatchewan Producers Dodge Worst Effects of COOL

The impact of COOL has been less pronounced in Saskatchewan.

"Because Saskatchewan is not a large shipper of live animals into the United States we really haven't seen that many problems with COOL," says Don Hrapchak, the general manager of the SPI Marketing Group.

He notes most of the remaining producers decided some time ago to solidify their contract bases with Springhill, with Maple Leaf in Brandon or Olymel in Red Deer. I would say almost all Saskatchewan producers have long term contracts with Canadian packers so the COOL effect on those producers has been limited."

## Tight Capacity Leaves Little Margin for Plant Slow Downs

However, Hrapchak acknowledges, there are occasionally Saskatchewan market hogs available for shipment to the United States and, since that opportunity is no longer available, there will be an effect as time passes.

His concern is with the bottleneck that will be created when Canadian processing plants experience break downs or when processing slows during holidays.

"In the past we've been able to utilize the large slaughter capacity of the United States to market our excess hogs when ever we've experienced problems in western Canada. With the western Canadian packers basically processing at capacity, any hiccups will pose some major problems in trying to merchandise the hogs that we have available."

Mohr agrees, "The real pinch for Manitoba butcher hog producers is going to come during the holiday shortened weeks, one of which we have next week with Remembrance Day. Then, if we look ahead into Christmas, we've got the potential for our major processors to be down almost four days during those weeks over Christmas and New Years."

## Producers Advised to Work With Canadian Processors and Stay Current

Manitoba Pork Marketing is advising producers to get as current as they possibly can.

"We can't go into that Christmas period with any kind of a surplus inventory because it's just going to exacerbate the situation," says Mohr.

Phoenix Agritec is also advising producers to strengthen their relationships with the Canadian packers.

"The success of our industry is very dependent on the success of our Canadian packing industry up here," Hamblin suggests. "It's definitely looking good compared to what it was. With Maple Leaf getting their expanded double shift rolling and with Hytek building in Neepawa and kind of getting into their new role, it is looking good for our Canadian industry. And, in the last few weeks, having the dollar move down into that 80 to 85 cent range has all of a sudden placed us, as a Canadian industry, in a lot different position than we were just a month ago with a par dollar."

## Longer Term Outlook Somewhat Brighter

Despite the immediate uncertainty many there is hope that Canadian hogs will ultimately make a return to the U.S. market.

Mohr points out many on both sides of the border believe the American processors will ultimately ease their position on purchasing Canadian origin pigs, particularly next spring when supplies are typically a little bit light.

However, he acknowledges, there are others that believe, as was witnessed with the cattle industry when Canadian cattle were restricted from flowing into the United States, many packing plants closed. Some people that feel that that is a distinct possibility on the hog side of things as well. You may see some processing capacity disappear in the United States as a result of the decisions that are being made today.

Hamblin is convinced, "There still are going to be options for moving pigs to the United States. We just have to work harder to find them. The options are there, it's just a matter of everybody from the retailers to the packers and the producers being on the same page as far as where the new labelling requirements have to be."

## 2009 Offers Hope

"I think producers are looking forward to 2009," says Hrapchak.

"We are looking at hog prices hopefully moving into the profitable area. Feed grain prices are starting to come down. That will allow prices in the \$160 to \$180 range to become profitable. Most of the producers who are remaining in the business desperately need those profitable periods in order to start to regain some of the lost equity that they've suffered during the past two or three years."

Hamblin expects a number of changes back and forth during the U.S. Department of Agriculture's six month period of outreach and education.

"Realistically the number of pigs coming to market is going to have a big impact on how packers choose to deal with it. As numbers, especially out of Canada, continue to decrease packers could be in a little different situation toward the end of that six months should the number of pigs being killed come down."

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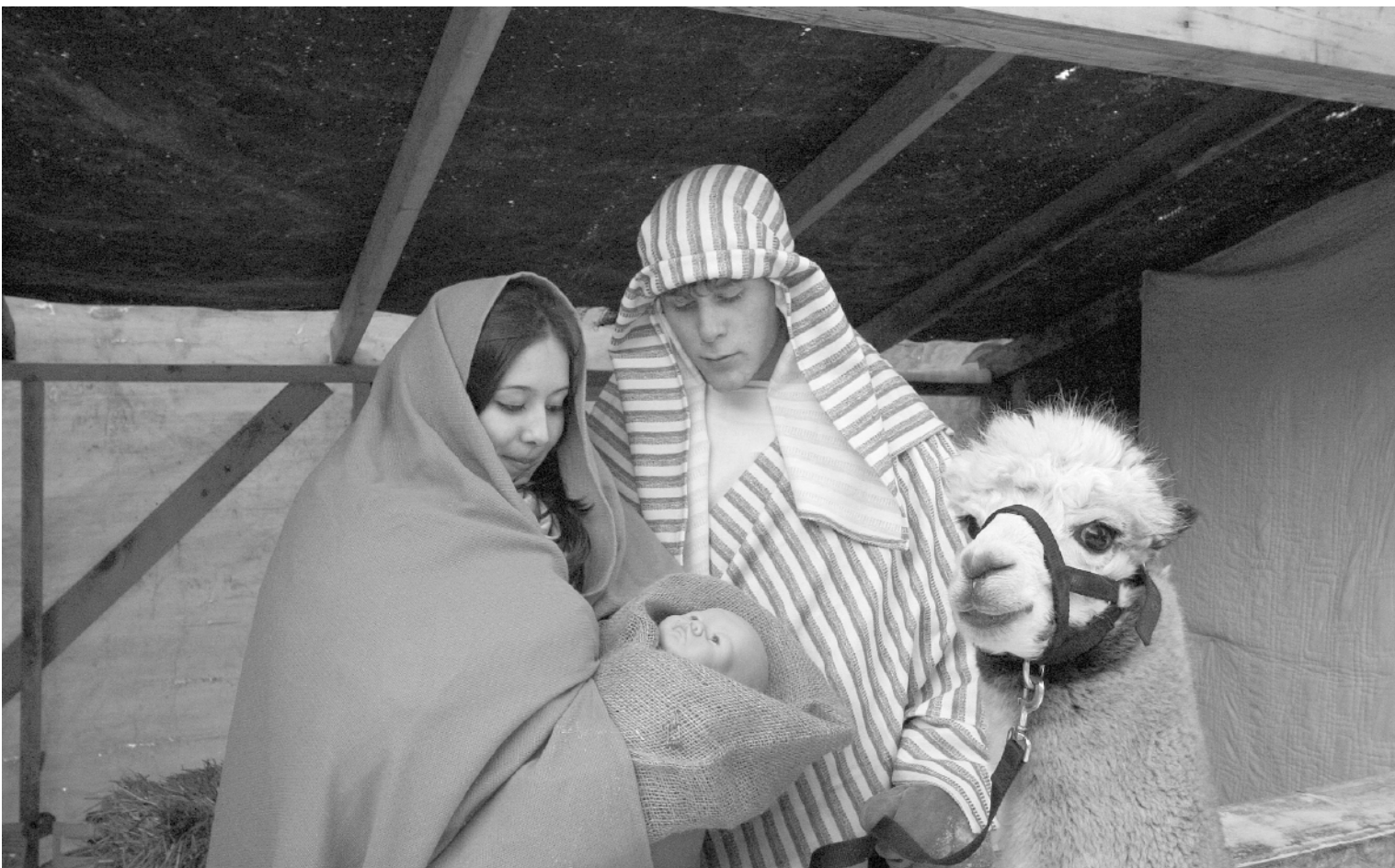
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# Fighting felines cause major car accident

• A driver rolled her vehicle in Colorado, apparently because she was distracted by trying to break up a fight between two cats that had been riding on her lap. A car and a semi both veered off the road so they wouldn't hit the woman's vehicle. She was ticketed for careless driving and was hospitalized.

• Birmingham Cathedral in England has announced plans to open a series of wine bars in London, as an alternative way of engaging non-church-goers.

• Lorenzo Earl Knight, 22, broke into a truck in a Tampa mall, but when spotted by the owner, he fled. He found what he thought was a great hiding spot, a Port-a-potty. The truck owner and a friend found Knight and tipped over the toilet to keep him there until police arrived. Knight, who ended up covered with the contents, was arrested on two counts of burglary.

• A man from Queens, NYC survived an electric shock and fire two years ago after he climbed on an empty, stopped Amtrak train after a night of bar hopping in Boston but now he is suing the railroad. Apparently Amtrak didn't do enough to protect trespassers like him. Brian Hopkins, 25, was jolted by 27,500 volts from arcing overhead wires and suffered third-degree burns over 85 per cent of his body. Doctors were forced to amputate his left hand and leg. Hopkins argued that Amtrak "should have known that persons trespassed" so therefore should have monitored the area, cut off the electricity going to the overhead wires, and even parked its trains somewhere else when they weren't in use.

• The toilet on the international space station is broken again. "You know it's bad," quipped Alex Kaseberg, "when someplace has more crap floating in the air than a presidential election."

• An American cyclist was knocked down by a car and, six hours later, Robert Evans was hit by a train. Evans, 46, of Boulder, Colorado, was first hit by a car, taken to hospital and released. He was on his way back to town when he was hit by a train while walking his bicycle across a bridge. He survived.

• A San Diego poacher was caught with six lobsters stuffed down his pants. Binh Quang Chau, 33, has been cited four times for poaching, and took these ones from the La Jolla State Marine Conservation Area. The six live lobsters, which by the way do not have pinners in this area, were released back into the sea.

• A thief broke into a cemetery in Deland, Fla, and drained a 250-gallon fuel tank. He thought he was getting gasoline but lugged away 200 gallons of water instead. Maintenance had started storing water in the tank because it was being broken into frequently. The thief or thieves did cause about \$600 in damages by breaking a meter attached to the tank.

• Kaseberg notes that Congress grilled Richard Fuld, the ex-CEO of Lehman Brothers, as to why he took a \$480 million dollar bonus while many Lehman's investors lost their life savings. "Apparently Fuld was instructed to do so by his father: Satan."

• In Warren, Mich. police said a strong-arm robber got locked in a chokehold by his intended victim and ended up \$30 in the hole. The robber approached a 36-year-old man and demanded money. The victim turned over \$50, but then tackled his attacker, demanding his money. The robber was so scared he gave the man \$80, instead of the \$50.

• In Des Moines, a man who is accused of taking another man's property from his house in a recent burglary, has now challenged the victim of the crime to a fight. The one rule: The winner takes all. At stake are two laptop computers, a desktop computer, a fax machine, VCR and some tools. Seymour Gray, 66, said he

## Gene Hauta

knows who did it. When contacted by police, the thief said he would give the property back only if the Gray challenges him to a fight.

• A judge in Iowa City, Iowa, has ordered Rucha A. Patel, a bride-to-be, to stay away from her man after she bit him after running over his foot with her car when he tried to take away her keys. Patel, 23, was charged with domestic abuse causing injury. Patel promptly asked Judge Stephen Gerard if her fiancé could drop the charges because they plan to marry in two weeks.

• Chuck Shepherd entitled this tidbit, Not Ready for Thugdom. Police in Wilmington, N.C. arrested Anthony Mallette, 30, and Capria Rouser, 28, driving a stolen car, after they had allegedly tried to extort money from the owner for its return. They wanted all of \$40.

• Australian Wool Innovation recently introduced a washable business suit that can be cleaned in an ordinary shower and will dry overnight. The suit, which is virtually wrinkle-free, is headed for the Japanese executives' market.

• Urban Detroit continues to decline, with an estimated 5,000 residents leaving the city every year. However, it is not just living people who leave. Dead bodies are also leaving at a rate of 500 a year. Reportedly, that is because relatives are unwilling to travel to the crumbling city's cemeteries so they are having their loved ones disinterred and relocated.

• Kokomo, Ind., pastor Jeff Harlow attempted to illustrate a sermon on "unity" by riding a dirt bike onto the stage. Unfortunately, he lost control in front of the congregation at Crossroads Community Church, fell off the stage and broke his wrist.

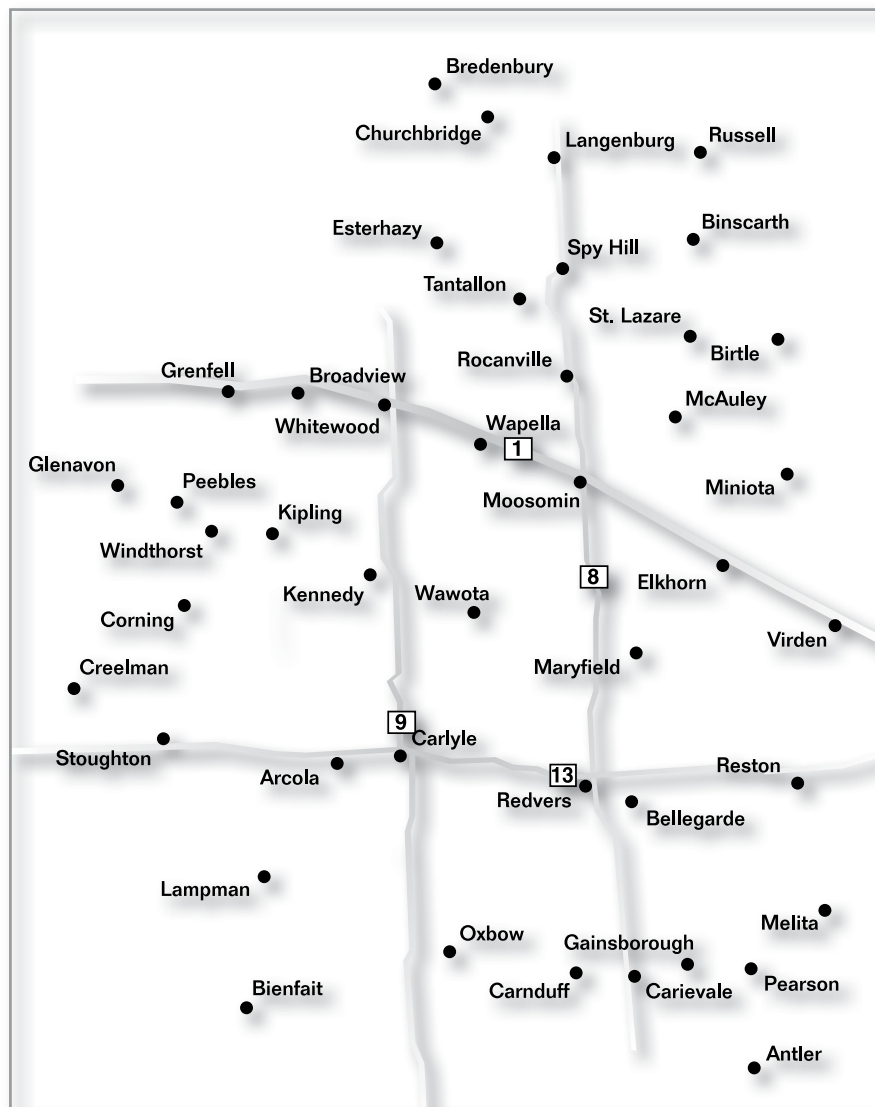
• Matteo Fedeli, 36 is a concert violinist who travels extensively with his \$14.65 million Stradivarius violin. Fedeli travels all around Italy and has been given police permission to protect the violin with a .357 Smith & Wesson magnum. He also has a team of bodyguards.

• Until next time . . . keep reading between the lines . . .

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<p>2006 Ford F-150 XL</p>  <p><b>\$17,900</b> \$0 Down \$187/b/w 66,000 KMS, 4X4, 8FT BOX</p>	<p>2007 Chevy Silverado SL</p>  <p><b>\$19,900</b> \$0 Down \$208/b/w 52,000 KMS, 8FT BOX</p>
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# Plain & Valley

Covering Southeast Saskatchewan and Southwest Manitoba

November 2008 • Volume 1, Number 1 • Page 17

## Bethlehem Live will retell nativity story

BY KEVIN WEEDMARK

For two nights at the end of November Moosomin, Saskatchewan won't look like your typical Prairie town.

There will be the sight of Roman soldiers on horseback, the sounds of donkeys and goats, the bustle of an ancient marketplace and, in the middle of it all, a tiny stable.

The second annual Bethlehem Live is coming up Friday and Saturday, November 28 and 29.

The nativity experience will take place in and around St. Alban's Anglican Church, but members of all local churches are involved in the event.

Bethlehem Live is a new way of telling a 2,000-year-old story.

Members of the public arrive at the church and are assigned to one of the tribes of Israel. They are entertained by local musicians and entertainers while awaiting their turn to take the tour.

Once they are called, each group is led out the doors to begin their journey to Bethlehem.

Along the way they encounter beggars, Roman soldiers on horseback, and the types of people you would expect to encounter on a lonely road in a far off place 2,000 years ago.

After entering the city gates, visitors are ushered into a crowded, noisy marketplace where people are selling everything from pomegranates and figs to pottery and trinkets.

After meeting the money changer, the tax collector, and one very grumpy innkeeper, the tour group ends up at the manger, see the miraculous scene, and hear a brief message from one of the local clergy.

The actors, set designers and everyone else involved worked hard to make the experience as authentic as possible last year, and as a result many people had tears in their eyes when they approached the manger scene on those two crisp, clear nights.

Last year's inaugural event started as a dream of one person, Marie Everett. By the time it came together, the event involved scores of volunteers. There were actors, tour guides, set designers, set builders, background painters, costume designers who put together an amazing array of costumes, and of course Mary, Joseph, and a few



A scene from last year's Bethlehem Live in Moosomin. This year's event is set for November 28 and 29 at St. Alban's Anglican Church in Moosomin. Tours can be booked by calling 306-435-3933.

farm animals.

Hundreds of people saw and were inspired by the first Bethlehem Live, and this year organizers hope to repeat the success.

This year they are building permanent sets and have purchased a trailer to store the sets and props.

Tim Hovdestad and Lorna Woods are working on the sets for the production.

Isabelle Dietrich has taken the lead role in bringing together this year's Bethlehem Live. She said she is amazed at how well everything is coming together.

People are encouraged to book early for tours. Bethlehem Live will run Friday, Nov. 28 and Saturday, Nov. 29 in and around St. Alban's Anglican Church in Moosomin.

"We encourage people to book early," Isabelle says. "It helps us to organize it all."

People can book a tour by calling Judy Gibson at 306-435-3933. Bookings are already coming in.

The production proved to be a lot of work last year.

Was it worth it?

"Absolutely it was worth all the work," Dietrich says. "It drew the community together, it put people into the Christmas Spirit, it got the Christmas message out to a lot of people—I thought it was wonderful."

Dietrich said she expects the event to continue to come together smoothly.

"We had 800 people through last year, and we're hoping to have even more this year," she said.

"We have the experience of last year, so things should go much more smoothly this year. The first year is always the hardest year. You have to convince people and try to get them to see your vision. After the first year, it should be easier. It feels good to work on this. It's nice to be able to show people the true meaning of Christmas. We look forward to that."

The first Bethlehem Live came in the middle of a cold snap, and organizers are hoping the weather is a bit warmer this time.

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# Plant pathologist recognized for outstanding research

Dr. Karen Bailey of the Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada Research Centre in Saskatoon is this year's recipient of the Canadian Phytopathological Society (CPS) Award for Outstanding Research. The award is CPS's most prestigious. It recognizes Canadian research involving new concepts, discovery of new phenomena, new principles in plant pathology or novel application of existing principles.

Dr. Bailey and her team pioneered AAFC efforts to develop "reduced-risk" alternatives to conventional herbicides. Her discovery and use of naturally occurring microorganisms for weed control are leading to new bioherbicide products for registration in Canada and abroad. For the last 15 years, Dr. Bailey's research focused on how fungi can suppress weeds, especially those having significant economic impact.

Dr. Bailey identified the phytotoxic effects of a fungus called *Phoma macrotoma*, which can be used to control dandelions, Canada thistle and other broad-leaved weeds. These weeds are predominant in turfgrass (lawns, golf greens and public grounds), agriculture (field and horticultural crops) and agro-forestry (re-forestation nurseries).

*Phoma* is now being developed as a granular bioherbicide for soil application. It will be a "green" substitute for 2,4-D type herbicides and can deliver the same weed

## Saskatoon scientist furthers research and development of bioherbicides



Karen Bailey

control as the chemical standard.

Efforts are well under way with industry partners to bring this bioherbicide to market. The calibre of Dr. Bailey's R&D, from discovery and efficacy testing to formulation and environmental assessment, has attracted the world's largest marketer of branded consumer lawn and garden products – The Scotts Miracle-Gro Company.

Dr. Bailey is internationally recognized for her expertise in biological control and inte-

grated pest management of plant diseases and weeds.

Working with plant breeders during the past 15 years, she contributed to the registration of 13 barley and five wheat varieties with improved resistance to common root rot. Common root rot can cause millions of dollars in losses across the Northern Great Plains.

Dr. Bailey has championed the benefits of integrated pest management. Her work played an important role in establishing reduced tillage

and crop diversification in Canada. Her findings have led to improved recommendations and new tools for managing pests in cereals, pulses and oilseeds. Collectively, these contributions help to reduce the use of pesticides on crops, thereby decreasing pesticide loads in foods and the environment.

During her 25-year career with AAFC, Dr. Bailey has brought in over \$4 million of external funding and has published 134 peer-reviewed documents and 119 miscellaneous papers. In addition, she has two patents filed in seven countries and seven invention disclosures on file with the Government of Canada.

Dr. Bailey was honoured at the joint regional meeting of the Alberta and Saskatchewan Plant Pathology Societies held in Saskatoon on October 21. CPS named its Outstanding Researcher for 2008 at the annual national meeting in Charlottetown last June. The mandate of CPS is to promote research and education in plant pathology, public awareness of the importance of plant diseases and discussion of all aspects of plant pathology in Canada and internationally.

## Tried and True Recipes

by Sandra Johnson



### Cindi's Chicken Stir Fry

1 Tbsp oil	2 Tbsp soy sauce
1 lb chicken breast, boneless, skinless cut into strips	2 Tbsp cornstarch
1 1/2 cups chicken broth	1 tsp garlic powder
4 cups altogether broccoli, red peppers and celery, chopped	3/4 tsp ginger
	4 servings of long grain rice

In wok or wok frying pan, stir-fry chicken in hot oil until browned and cooked. Add vegetables, cook and stir until tender-crisp. In a small bowl, mix broth, soy sauce, cornstarch and spices, stir into skillet. Bring to boil, boil for 1 minute. Serve over rice. Serves 4.

### Banana Crumb Muffins

1 1/2 cups flour	1/3 cup margarine, melted
1 tsp baking soda	Topping:
1 tsp baking powder	1/3 cup brown sugar, packed
1/2 tsp salt	1 Tbsp flour
3 large ripe bananas, mashed	1/8 tsp cinnamon
3/4 cup sugar	1 Tbsp margarine
1 egg, lightly beaten	

In a large bowl, combine dry ingredients. Set aside. Combine bananas, sugar, egg and margarine, mix well. Stir in dry ingredients, just until moistened. Fill greased or paper-lined muffin tins 3/4 full. Combine the first three topping ingredients, but in margarine until crumbly. Sprinkle over muffins. Bake at 350°F for 18 to 20 minutes, or until muffins test done. Cool in pan for 10 minutes before removing to a wire rack. Yields 1 dozen.

To order a copy of *Tried and True*, send \$12, plus \$5 postage and handling, to Sandra Johnson, Box 1072, Moosomin, SK, S0G 3N0.

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# The hunter takes on the cunning duck

In mid-October my family and I spent the weekend in Yorkton. After a salvage-related detour to Regina—we aquired the most beautiful gothic windows for one of our renovation projects—we pulled into the Howard Johnson parking lot at around 7 p.m.

Youthful indiscretion and imperfect eyesight have contributed to a certain glitch in my brain's function; my cerebellum is always eager to leap to the most creative interpretation of what my eyes see, not necessarily the most reasonable. This malfunction is not without benefits; there is a particular stretch of road in the Slocan Valley where, without fail and regardless of the time of day or the weather, I see a 30 foot crocodile on the side of the road, giant jaws agape and leathery eyes closed in reptilian bliss... I am fond of that crocodile.

Of course, I have also completely humiliated myself on several occasions. Most memorable is fending off a shadowy "attacker" that leapt out from behind a Sun paper box on Broadway Avenue in Vancouver many summers ago, or the time I swore to the entire welding crew I was working with that I saw a lynx saunter into our lunch trailer. It was a pretty big house cat. Needless to say, I now most often keep what I see to myself, and while remembering to wear my glasses can take some of the fun out of life, they also make me a much safer driver.

I wasn't driving that Friday night in Yorkton, and as we were pulling up to the parking space in front of our room, what I thought I saw didn't seem very far fetched at all. In the space next to ours was a white travel trailer, like a customized U-Haul. In black gothic script "Death Row Calls" was emblazoned across the back. Silhouettes of menacing crows decorated what else I could see of the trailer.

"We're next door to a death metal band," I announced to Keith as we pulled up. "Umm, I don't think so," he answered, leaning across me to check out the side of the trailer. It was one of those few times when what was really there was even more bizarre than what I thought I had seen.

They were not menacing silhouettes of crows. They were menacing silhouettes of ducks.

There was another black cut-out on the side of the trailer, the hero; a baseball-cap-wearing, rifle-bearing man crouched in reeds, taking brave shots at the dramatically depicted fowl. "Death Row Calls," indeed.

It was a matter of some debate whether it was indeed better to be stationed in a room next to 18 men in camouflage, armed with rifles, beer, and duck calls, as opposed to a death metal band with a couple of local gigs. In the end the hunters, no doubt due to the early morning habits of their intended prey, really weren't that bad. I heard the last strangled "quack" at around ten that night. Actually, it turned out we were the undesirables; Danan was cutting his eye teeth and



## Monique McKay

when we returned the next evening, we discovered that the duck hunters had relocated to the other side of the motel. How did we discover this? Well, we were looking for them.

Keith had gone out the night before to pick up something for dinner. I had stayed in the room with the kids. When he returned he told me that the sides of that trailer folded down, revealing a full gas range, and that our neighbors were boiling dozens and dozens of dead ducks in huge stainless steel pots.

I didn't believe him, wondering quietly about his own errors as an adolescent, perhaps repressed, but when we set out early the next morning the parking lot was covered in snowy clouds of down. "See?" said Keith. It was surreal. I was still surprised when, cruising around the parking lot that night, I saw the camo-flaunting men unloading clear garbage bag after clear garbage bag filled with dead mallards next to their galley on wheels, the cook-elect setting up the industrial sized pots Keith had mentioned to me.

I am a true French girl. That means I will eat almost anything at least once. And at least once a year, I enjoy duck. Roasted, not boiled. Not by the dozen. But, as I am sure this article reveals, I am not at all familiar with duck hunting culture.

A couple of weeks later Keith and I were sitting in the family room on the Brandon Health Centre's maternity ward. We were deciding whether to give birth there and were waiting for one of the nurses to give us a quick tour.

We did what lots of people do in waiting rooms; flipped through magazines. One in particular caught my eye; I can't remember what it was called, but the cover featured an intent looking man in fatigues, crouched down in a marsh, one hand gripping a telescoped rifle and the other resting lightly on the back of a tense, alert dog. They were both peering at something with intense and murderous resolution. I nudged Keith. "Want to guess what they're staring at?" I asked him.

Once again, I am not at all familiar with duck hunting culture. I was amazed, however, as we looked at this piece of propaganda together, at how technical it can become.

The gear! Clothes, boots, guns, calls, blinds, scent, GPS, and more. The lore; where ducks are, when they'll be there, what they should be doing. The dogs; what breed, how to train them, how to reward them.

A full page advertisement, for exactly what I was unable to determine, featured a man and his dog, both in camouflage, their faces streaked with grease paint, both wearing that look of unsettling intensity that I have come to associate with duck hunting, under the words "Out here, there are no days off" written in a font I had last seen on the front of a hard-core rap album.

Honestly, I had no idea ducks were such cunning beasts.

It might be easy to assume that I'm some kind of anti-hunting, defender of the poor trembling forest creatures, west coast animal rights type chick. Well, you wouldn't be totally wrong. But you wouldn't be totally right, either. I'm all for organic, free range food that's lived a natural life and is consumed within that ideal "hundred mile" area, in order to cut down on pollution caused by excessive transportation. Sounds like a wild duck or deer to me. As my husband will tell you, I even reserve particular venom for deer, which I refer to lovingly as "vermin." I figure every deer taken out legally and humanely by an experienced hunter is merely what one (wo)man can do to help keep the cost of car insurance down. I've even been hunting.

It's true. I was 13 and vegan. Maybe 14 and macro-biotic vegan. My father took me out with four of his buddies. It was one of the most magnificent dawns I've ever seen, breaking out in fluorescent pinks and oranges over the jagged hematite colored mountains. I had a great day trekking quietly through the early morning with my dad, studying signs, drinking scalding coffee out of battered steel thermoses and building a smokeless fire for lunch.

It remained unsaid between us that part of the reason I had been invited out was so my father had an excuse not to shoot at the mulies he had in his sights several times that day; after 20 years or so he had lost his appetite for the kill and, he confided later

that night as we camped out on the frozen ground, would have been just as happy to bring his camera.

I did not escape before being "blooded." Far from it. One of my father's buddies had brought down an eight-point buck on the first day of the hunt. He had gutted it and hung it high in a tree at the bottom of the valley where he had so judiciously shot it. The valley was a mere nine miles from the nearest access road. In an area where ATVs are banned. Guess who got to drive the wheel barrow, as the buck's head went bump, bump, bump, over the hard ground, half-frozen gore hanging from its nose. I can't even guess where the flies came from in that weather.

Vegetarian I might have been, I certainly wasn't going to be branded a wimpy girl on that trip by my dad's cronies, and if it's one thing I sported at that time in my life, it was a huge chip on my shoulder. I wheeled that deer out of the bush grimly and silently, my muscles as stiff as his hide, with no eyes for that beautiful morning; each rock in the path of the wheelbarrow seemed to grow to a mountain as the day progressed.

I know when guys are having a little fun with a self-righteous, preachy food nazi, and it was very clear they were trying to get me going when they used my body weight to strip the skin from the hanging carcass, back at one of their homes. Really, it's amazing that I'm not violently anti-hunting after that experience.

Amazing or not, I am not anti-hunting, provided it's safe and legal. I enjoy a bit of moose or venison, and believe it is a healthy and natural alternative to say, hormone-laden beef. There is a huge cultural precedent for eating such beasts in this country, and like I said, it keeps them off the highways.

As far as the duck hunters go, well, I've nothing against that either. I just never realized that the duck was such devious and wily prey.

After checking out those dudes in Yorkton and then further educating myself in the waiting room in Brandon, I'm really only left with one burning question; have they tried bread crumbs?

*Monique MacKay is a writer from Fleming, Sask. who moved to the Prairies from B.C. recently.*

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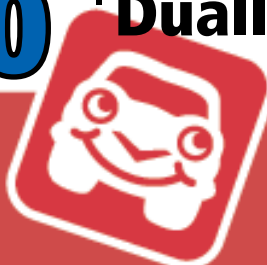
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In June, the Gateway REDA distributed a 10-page full color newspaper section to 290,000 households in southern Alberta, focusing on opportunities in southeast Saskatchewan and southwestern Manitoba and on the stories of people who have moved here. This section was designed by the World-Spectator. Check it out at gatewayreda.com

We are now working on a section that will reach households in Windsor and southwestern Ontario in the new year.

This section will focus on

- A. Regional business investment opportunities
- B. Careers & job opportunities
- C. Real-estate (home and lot opportunities)
- D. Opportunities in the trades
- E. Stories of people who have moved to the region
- F. Regional quality of life
- G. Community profiles
- H. Regional profiles

Our first project was assisted with a financial contribution from the REDA Enhancement Fund. We have applied for funding for this second phase, which keeps advertising costs down. We are targeting an area of Ontario where there have been layoffs in the automotive sector, and where the future of remaining jobs in the industry is in doubt.

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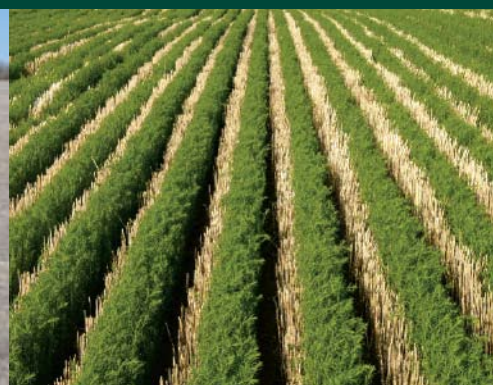
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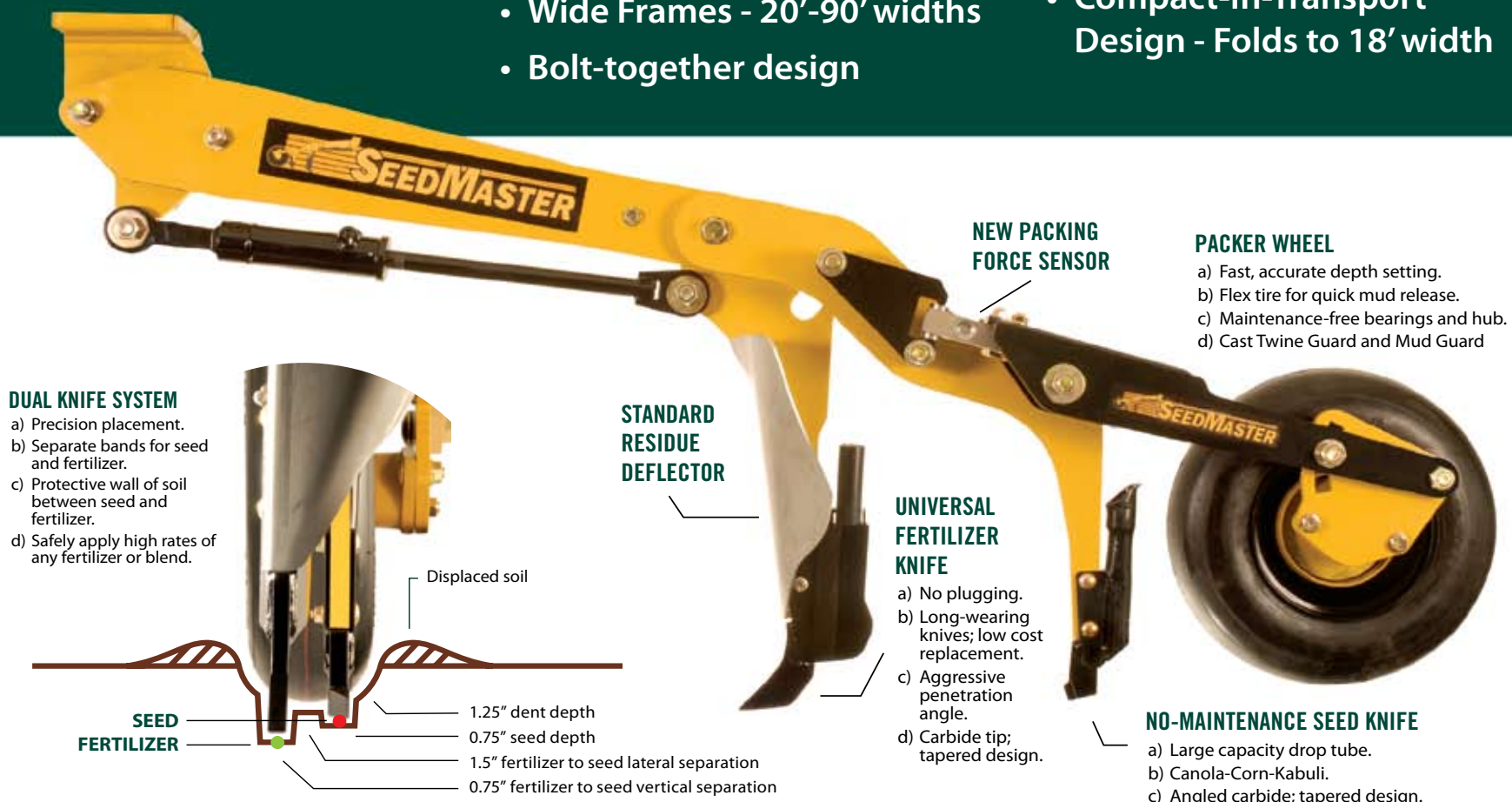


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