

MARCH 2023



Feds, province sign new agreement to support sustainable agriculture

BY SIERRA D'SOUZA BUTTS

The federal and provincial governments have agreed to a new five-year plan under which \$485 million will be invested for strategic agricultural initiatives in Saskatchewan, as part of the new five-year Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership (Sustainable CAP).

"The process for the Sustainable CAP started a couple

"The process for the Sustainable CAP started a couple years ago to negotiate and work through what the next five-year funding program would look like,"said Saskatchewan Agriculture Minister David Marit.

"It came to end in a formal signing in Saskatchewan last July of the overall agreement with the Government of Canada and all the provinces. Then what happened was all the provinces work out how that program money would best serve their industry and stakeholders.

"Obviously Saskatchewan would be a lot different than Ontario or even Manitoba. It's what our priorities are versus what Ontario's are. It's how they want to use their money, how we want to use our money, and if the feds would agree to how we want to use our money." The Sustainable CAP is a five-year \$3.5-billion invest-

The Sustainable CAP is a five-year \$3.5-billion investment by federal, provincial and territorial governments intended to help strengthen competitiveness, innovation, and resiliency of the agriculture, agri-food and agri-based products sector. It also includes \$1 billion in federal programs and activities, and \$2.5 billion in cost-shared programs and activities by federal, provincial and territorial governments.

Over the next five years, the Sustainable CAP will prioritize the following five areas:

- Building Sector Capacity, Growth and Competitiveness: \$176.6 million investment to build the agriculture sector capacity, ensuring growth and competitive advantages.
- competitive advantages.

 Climate Change and Environment: \$53.4 million to support the long-term resiliency and sustainability

- of the sector.
- Resiliency and Public Trust: \$40.2 million to support the sustainability of the sector by anticipating, mitigating and responding to risks while building public treet.
- Market Development and Trade: \$2 million to assist industry in expanding domestic and international trade opportunities.
- Science, Research and Innovation: \$175 million invested in research and development activities, enhancing the diversification and profitability of agriculture.

Marit spoke about how Saskatchewan will focus on the different areas over the next five years.

"The Building Sector Capacity, Growth and Competitiveness is about how we build that, how we work to be competitive globally, and how we deal with the capacity of growth," he said.

Continued on page C6 🖙



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As farmers look forward to spring, the provincial government announced \$548.2 million for agriculture in the provincial budget on Wednes-

Left: An aerial view of crops in Southeast Saskatchewan.



Budget 2023:

19 per cent increase in ag budget from previous year

Saskatchewan's 2023-24 Provincial Budget was re-leased on Wednesday. This year's Agriculture Budget is \$548.2 million, a 19 per cent increase from the previous year, with a strong investment in programs, services and agriculture research, as well as a fully-funded suite of business rich management programs.

business risk management programs.

"Supported by this year's budget, the industry is well-positioned to continue to take on the challenges inherent to agriculture and build on their success," Agriculture Minister David Marit said. "This budget will help Sas-Red or Yellow

Minister David Marit Said. This budget will riep Jaskatchewan's farmers, ranchers and agri-business remain competitive and operate sustainably while continuing to deliver safe, high-quality food."

The 2023-24 Agriculture Budget contains \$89.8 million for strategic initiatives under the federal-provincial Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership, which will be according to the budget contains the provided in the control of the budget contains the provided in the budget contains the provided in the budget contains the budget contains the provided in the budget contains the bu launch in the new fiscal year. The budget provides increased support for producers to develop sustainable agriculture water sources like wells, dugouts and pipelines,

as well as increased funding for irrigation programming.

The budget includes \$1.0 million to target invasive weed control on agricultural Crown land pastures, promoting continued productivity and stewardship of this resource and more than \$38 million for agricultural re-

There is \$408 million to fund a suite of federal-provin-There is \$408 million to tund a suite of federal-provincial risk management programs including Crop Insurance and AgriStability. Average Crop Insurance coverage for 2023 is at a record-high level of \$446 per acre due to increased commodity prices and yield coverage. The AgriStability compensation rate will increase from 70 to 80 per cent for the 2023 program year, to better support farmers in times of need.

Sackatchewan producers harvested a crop of nearly 35

Saskatchewan producers harvested a crop of nearly 35 million tonnes in 2022, with record agri-food exports valued at \$18.4 billion.



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New members welcomed to USask Strategic **Advisory Board for Livestock and Forage Centre**

Robert Johnson of Fairlight is new board chair

BY LANA HAIGHT
The new chair of the Strategic Advisory Board of the University of Saskatch-ewan's Livestock and Forage Centre of Excellence is eager to ensure the voice of producers continues to be heard.

"It's really important as an agricultural producer to be part of the conversation whether it's research or poli-cy. If you don't get involved, you are on the outside lookyou are on the outside look-ing in. You are not at the ta-ble; you are 'on the menu," said Robert Johnson, who owns and operates a bison ranch with his wife Rebecca near Fairlight, Sask. The Johnsons own about

400 bison cow-calf pairs and feed to the finishing stage about 800 animals annually that are shipped to the United States because pro-cessing capacity in Canada is limited. Some of the bison

meat is then imported back to Canada and sold as Noble Premium Bison.

As the newly elected chair of the board, Johnson will

As the newly elected chair of the board, Johnson will be involved in crafting the strategic vision of the board. "It's really encouraging to see the people who were on the board for the first couple of terms and they developed a real identity for the board. Now, we have new people coming in with new ideas. They are experienced, whether it's in governance or hands-on. We've got a really good group," said Johnson, who started his second three-year term on March 1, 2023. The chair position is a

three-year term on March 1, 2023. The chair position is a one-year commitment.

Johnson added he appreciates the support of the deans of the Western College of Veterinary Medicine and the College of Agriculture and Bioresources as well as LFCE director Dr. Scott Wright (PhD), who are exofficio members of the advisory board. Dr. Gillian Muir (DVM, PhD), Dr. Angela Bedard-Haugh (PhD) and Wright are very engaged and connect well with the producer, industry and government representatives.

At their March 1 meeting, the advisory board members welcomed three new people who will serve a three-year term.

year term.

year term.

Calvin Gavelin and his wife operate a mixed farm/
ranch with Red Angus cattle near McCord, in southern
Saskatchewan. In addition to running the cow-calf operation, they background and finish their cattle to supply
a farmgate, direct-market beef business. Four years ago, they completed a Holistic Management Course where they learned how to implement regenerative agriculture principles. He has served on many industry boards and was the reeve of the Rural Municipality of Mankota. Gavelin is currently a director-at-large with Saskatch-

Kyron Manske, Dr. Leigh Rosengren (PhD) and Calvin Gavelin joined the board, representing the beef and forage industries.





Left: At its meeting on March 1, the Strategic Advisory Board members discussed five key priorities for research at the LFCE: ecological goods and services/sustainability; discovery, innovation, research, technology; teaching, training, translation; outreach; and indigenous relations. Right: Robert Johnson, the new chair of the Strategic Advisory Board, spoke at the annual Beef and Forage Research Forum at USask on March 2.

ewan Stock Growers Association.

Kyron Manske and his wife own and operate East Poplar Simmentals, a purebred and commercial cow-calf operation near Coronach, in southern Saskatchewan. He earned his Bachelor of Science in Agribusiness

wan. He earned his Bachelor of Science in Agribusiness from USask and is a board member of the Saskatchewan Simmental Association, Saskatchewan Stockgrowers Association and South Saskatchewan Ready, as well as a councillor with the Rural Municipality of Hart Butte. Dr. Leigh Rosengren (DVM, PhD) and her husband farm near Midale, in southern Saskatchewan. She earned a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine from the Western College of Veterinary Medicine and a PhD in Veterinary Epidemiology from USask in the early 2000s. More recently, Rosengren completed a Masters of Agribusiness from Kansas State University, which was instrumental in improving the management systems of their grain farm and influential on the decision to disperse the cow-calf herd to consider other opportunities in the sector. Rosengren continues to work in the livestock industry as chief veterinary officer with the Canadian Cattle Association and as an epidemiology consultant.

industry as chief veterinary officer with the Canadian Cattle Association and as an epidemiology consultant. Stepping down from the board after serving the maximum of two terms are Duane Thompson (chair from March 2018 to November 2021), Tamara Carter (chair from November 2021 to March 2023) and Neil Block. All three have served since the board was established in March 2018. Carter will continue as an ex-officio mem-

ber for the next year, provid-ing support to Johnson.

Manske says he's always been interested in research and hopes to contribute to growing the beef industry as a member of the LFCE's advisory board. He has a particular interest in developing the use of technology in the cattle industry. "I'm a curious kind of per-

on. I'm not satisfied doing things the way they have always been done. I'm always looking to the future and new and better ways to do things." and Marsky

things," said Manske.
The Livestock and Forage Centre of Excellence is a world-class research facil-ity with a 1,500-head cattle feedlot and a 400-head cowherd, but it also has a two bi-son herds: Woods bison and

Plains bison.

Johnson says producers have much to learn from the bison.

"The Northern Great Plains exist today because of the bison. They formed the eco-system through the grazing and their hoof action as the keystone species. We keep

and their hoof action as the keystone species. We keep hearing that we need to graze (cattle) the way the bison do. Why re-invent the whee!? Let them work for us instead of us working for them."

After meeting virtually for the past couple of years because of Covid-19 pandemic restrictions, Johnson is looking forward to effective and efficient meetings where the board members can work through issues as





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Government of Canada and Saskatchewan announce 2023 Crop Insurance Program Enhancements

Federal Agriculture and Agri-Food Minister Marie-Claude Bibeau and Saskatchewan Agricul-ture Minister David Marit announced details of

ture Minister David Marit announced detăils of the 2023 Crop Insurance Program recently. "Through improvements to the Crop Insurance Program, Saskatchewan farmers continue to get coverage they can count on," said Bibeau. "We encourage farmers to use risk management tools to help them minimize the economic effects of production losses caused by natural hazards." "As we look forward to the 2023 growing season, I want to acknowledge the drive and resilience Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers continue to show year after year," Marit said. "We had some rough years and while last year was a step forward, there were still very dry areas in the West side of the province and Crop Insurance respondside of the province and Crop Insurance responded with quick action on claims. That is why it's important for producers to evaluate their current risk management options and ensure they have the right coverage for their farm."

Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation (SCIC) continues to provide Saskatchewan producers

with higher Crop Insurance coverage. The average coverage for 2023 is at a record-high level of \$446 per acre, due to increased commodity prices and yield coverage. With this increased coverage and higher insured prices, the average total premium is \$14.79 per acre, an increase from \$12.05 in 2022.



Starting in 2023, Crop Insurance customers Individual Premium calculated for each crop they insure. Premiums are individualized based on a producer's per-sonal claim history compared to the area risk zone. This adjustment (increase or decrease) from the base premium rate is calculated for each customer, and independently for each insured crop. This means, a producer's claim on one crop does not impact their premium for a different crop. Premium Discounts and Surcharges previously used in the Crop Insurance Program are discontinued

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'It's always good to review the program to ensure it continues to serve farmers and remains efficient," SaskCanola Chair Keith Fournier said. "It is important for farmers to open their insur-

ance packages, review their information and learn about their coverage options." Also effective for 2023, SCIC is increasing the maximum dollar coverage levels of the Unseeded Acreage feature. While the minimum coverage remains the same at \$50 per acre, additional Unseeded Acreage coverage levels are increasing to \$75, \$100 and \$125 per acre. Unseeded Acreage coverage, included with all multi-peril Crop Insurance coverage, helps offset costs associated with summer fallow acres too wet to seed due to excessive

spring moisture.

"We appreciate the ongoing commitment to Saskatchewan agriculture," Saskatchewan Rural Municipality Association (SARM) President Ray Orb said.

"The increases to unseeded acres coverage stands out as an example of SCIC listening and incorporating the concerns of our members.

March 31, 2023, is the deadline to apply, reinstate, can-cel or make changes to Crop Insurance contracts. Produc-ers must also select insured crops and coverage levels by this date. If no changes are made, a producer's coverage will remain the same as last year. To make changes or discuss the different features and coverage levels, producers can contact their local SCIC office or call 1-888-935-0000.

While Crop Insurance provides coverage from seeding through harvest, AgriStability provides further coverage against uncontrollable events like rising input costs or falling commodity prices. For the 2023 program year, the AgriStability compensation rate will increase from 70 per cent to 80 per cent to better support farmers in times of need. This allows AgriStability to be more responsive when a farm experiences a large margin decline, providing additional compensation to address the operation's francial shoutfall. financial shortfall.

SCIC offers a full suite of business risk management programs, including AgriStability, Crop Insurance and Livestock Price Insurance and the Wildlife Damage Compensation and Prevention Program, to help mitigate risk for Saskatchewan producers. For more information, call SCIC at 1-888-935-0000 or

visit sci.c.a.

Crop Insurance is a federal-provincial-territorial Business Risk Management program under the Canadian Agricultural Partnership. Under Crop Insurance, premiums for most programs are shared 40 per cent by participating producers, 36 per cent by the Government of Canada and 24 per cent by the Government of Saskatchewan. Administration istrative expenses are fully funded by governments, 60 per cent by Canada and 40 per cent by Saskatchewan.





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Federal government, province of Sask. agree to support sustainable agriculture

"On the Climate Change and Environment it's really looking at the whole environmental impact, the assessment side on soil and health, water quality. That all falls under that sector.

"The Public Trust one is really building on how we can engage the populace of the country to really accept what agriculture is here, what we do here, how we do it, how we're recognized globally, and to ensure that prosperity

"That overlaps and intertwines as well because we have the Market Development and Trade area. That's obviously in conjunction with trade missions and the opportunity to grow the business outside of Canada, but also finding ways that we can attract foreign investment into the province, in the value added sphere and how we can work with that.

"Then obviously research is going to be a big part of it. It is every year. You're looking at roughly about \$90 million annually between the federal and provincial governments for the program, and research is going to take almost 40 per cent of that. It tells you the importance of the research dollars, and innovation that's in there as

"All aspects fall into this whether you're a primary "All aspects fall into this whether you're a primary producer where there's grain and oil seeds or livestock, or even the value added processing as well."

With the new agreement being in effect starting April 1, Marit was asked if there were any differences from the

"No not really. The federal government was adamant on a new program. They call it the Resilient Agricultural Landscape Program (RALP) and that one really looked at water quality and bio-diversity," he said.

"We were already doing a lot of that in some of our other programs like the Farm and Ranch Water Infra-

structure Program (FRWIP) which is important to us. Soil health, all of that, dealing with the producers on crop rotation, looking at opportunities around crop develop-ment and different varieties, disease resistance, things that could really work to improve soil and health, but also improve productivity as well.

"There is an overlap in a lot of them, but we wanted to make sure that some would be strategic in one initiative, but where another one would overlap. An example would be the FRWIP because it would have an environmental impact, yet it still has the sustainability sector capacity piece as well."

Governments investment will help improve Saskatchewan's market for Ag Marit spoke about how the federal, provincial and ter-

ritorial governments investment in strategic agricultural initiatives for Canada will help strengthen Saskatchewan's competitiveness in agriculture.

"What this really does is have an impact because we

have a story to tell, and we have one of the best," Marit

"This all leads to what we're doing, whether it's improving plant health, animal health, or working with all sectors with research dollars. A good example would be working with Fertilizer Canada on the 4Rs with fertilizer placement and fertilizer emission reduction. How can we do that? We found some good ways, and we're already doing them with variable rate on feeding with sectional control. Is there new technology that we can implement and that we can fund that innovative piece, and that's where that falls in. Yet, it still falls in on an environmental

"What this really does is have an impact because we have a story to tell, and we have one of the best."

-Sask Agriculture Minister David Marit

lens as well.

"That's where we see a lot of the opportunities for growth which will really help the producers, both from livestock and grainS and oilseeds to tell the story globally. An example would be from some of the research we had done where we can actually quantify that Saskatch-ewan producers who grow canola, their carbon footprint is 60 per cent better than our nearest competitors. Sixty per cent is not a small number. That is significant.

per cent is not a small number. That is significant. Marit said he believes that Saskatchewan's carbon footprint being 60 per cent lower than nearest competitors should be explained more globally. "That's a story we have to tell as a government, as the ministry," he said.

"I've told it on trade missions and it gets the attention of the suppliers that are looking for product globally. Also because their customers are starting to question how it's growing, where it's growing, and the big one is how.

"When we met with some of the major players in the world as far as food processing, this really got their attention because they said, 'wow if that's a story to tell then we're very interested in your product."

With concerns of food security being raised recently sharing Saskatchewan's story of how producers continue to grow their production for food will continue to carry its weight over the next few years, Marit said.

"What we heard from the recent travels we've had is

food security and in light of that, it's very unfortu-nate what's happening in Ukraine," he said. "These companies are saying they want to make sure they have food secu-rity, and we need quality

rity, and we need quality insurance as well.

"Plus, they want to, quite frankly, deal with a government that adds on for trade and stuff like that. Is there challenges? Sure there is. Some of the challenges obviously is we're land low, and how do we overcome some of

do we overcome some of that, and how do we work with the railways and the shippers to make sure we still have continued sup-

ply.
"That's the one thing we've heard in our missions is some of the logistic challenges, but hopefully we can work through all of that because we see great opportu-

"I think in the next few years you're going to see some great opportunity where you're going to see companies globally come in to say, 'I want to be at the source.'" Through the five-year Sustainable CAP initiative, \$89.4

million will be invested annually in strategic program-ming for Saskatchewan farmers, ranchers and agri-businesses. This comes after a 25 per cent increase from the \$71.2 million in the previous federal-provincial partner-

ship.

Marit was asked what the Government of Saskatchewan hopes to achieve by the end of the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership initiative.

"I hope by the fifth year we have a very good program. This is a huge financial impact, obviously by the federal government, but most certainly for the province of Saskatchewan," he said.

When you look at our investment versus per capita basis versus any other jurisdiction, we're quite high. Obviously it's an investment by the people of this province to see agriculture grow and flourish. We hope by the end of the five years which would be 2028, that we hit our

growth target.

"That we've hit our 2030 growth targets, and that's hitting exports of growing over 45 million metric tons, seeing livestock receipts hit over three billion, and seeing the agri-food exports hitting well over 20 billion. We're close. We were at 18.4 billion last year.

"That's what we sort of want to do, but at the same time we want to make sure that our primary producers are prosperous and viable as well. That is key. If we're not competitive globally, and that was our key message in the whole negotiations with the federal government is before we can do anything from an environmental lens as far as that side of it, our primary producers have to be competitive and profitable. They have to be, otherwise none of this matters.

"At the end of the five years, I hope we can look back

and say agriculture is doing very well and contin-ues to grow. Then we can start all over again and hopefully find an agreement similar, or even better than this.









An additional \$405,000 for rural early learning mobile programs



Families in rural Saskatchewan with young children will have access to fur-ther mobile early learning opportunities, thanks to an additional \$405,000 investment from the Governments of Saskatchewan and Canada. Funding for KidsFirst Regional programming was \$823,500 in 2022-23. This additional investment, recently provided to KidsFirst Regional areas increases the total program funding to \$1.2 million.

\$1.2 million.

KidsFirst Regional travels to communities across the province bringing unique learning opportunities to children up to age five with programs such as take-home literacy kits, story walks and pop-up preschool events. This increase in funding will allow KidsFirst Regional to reach more children in their own communities with learning in their town communities with learning in their town communities with learning in their town communities with learning in their ways. ties with learning initiatives that focus on child development, literacy, nutrition and

child development, literacy, nutrition and health and well-being.

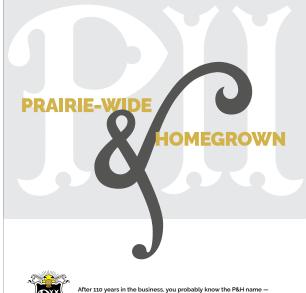
"Providing KidsFirst Regional with more funding will ensure that regardless of where children live, they can have access to high quality early learning opportunities," Education Minister Dustin Duncan said. "The variety of programs KidsFirst Regional offers will continue to support early childhood development, school readiness goals and positive social engagement in communities across Sasengagement in communities across Sas-katchewan."

There are 10 KidsFirst Regional areas across the province that received funding; Moose Jaw-Assiniboia area, Kindersley area, Tisdale area, Prince Albert area, Sas-katoon area, Southwest area, Regina area, Yorkton area and the Southeast area all received \$40,000. Lloydminster-Meadow Lake-the Battlefords received \$45,000 as

they service a larger area. KidsFirst Regional Community Devel-

This increase of \$405,000 in funding is being provided through the Canada-Sas-katchewan Bi-Lateral Early Learning and Child Care Agreement, 2021-26.
The Canada-Saskatchewan Bilateral Early Learning and Child Care Agreement was signed on August 13, 2021, for the

purposes of enhancing the quality of Early Years Family Resource Centres, improving access to early learning programming in rural and small cities and to implement a risk-based compliance monitoring system for child care for the period April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023.



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opers work collaboratively with local partners and families such as public health, Early Childhood Intervention Program (ECIP), family resource centres and libraries within smaller urban and rural com-munities. They provide activities, events and access to information for families with

and access to information for families with children up to the age of five that spark creativity, ignite imagination and allow every moment to be a teachable one. "Every family is important to us," Kids-First Regional, Regina-Qu-appelle Area Supervisor Donna Coleman-Trombley said. "If you only have 10 children under the age of five in your companity. sald. If you find the the age of five in your community - we still want to come to you and provide programming. Being able to go out into these rural communities shows these families that their children are important no matter

that their children are important no matter where they live."

Last year KidsFirst Regional supported almost 16,000 parents and young children in 343 communities. The program also distributed 8,600 early learning kits and backpacks across the province which included activities to enhance all five elements of child development including linguistic. child development including linguistic, social-emotional, cognitive, fine and gross motor skills.

motor skills.

"Every child deserves the best start in life," Canada's Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Karina Gould, said. "The additional funding to KidsFirst programs will help ensure that all families in Saskatchewan have access to high-quality, affordable, flexible and inclusive early learning opportunities no matter where they live."

To find a KidsFirst Regional mobile early learning opportunity near you visit

early learning opportunity near you visit saskatchewan.ca/residents/family-andsocial-support/community-programs-for-new-families-in-canada#kidsfirst-regional.





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SARM happy with rural support in provincial budget

The Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities (SARM), alongside their

Municipalities (SARM), alongside their member RMs, say they are encouraged by the ongoing support for rural Saskatchewan in this provincial budget.

The budget increases total investment into the province's severely strained healthcare sector by 6.7%, which is desperately needed. Service disruptions, aging facilities, and the ongoing struggle to recruit and retain healthcare staff have been further highlighted and are more critical than ever. SARM will continue to work with the provincial government to ensure this new funding and programming reaches rural areas effectively.

The total Municipal Revenue sharing pool was increased from just over \$262 million in 2022/23 to \$297.9 million in this budget. SARM is pleased with the increase,

million in 2022/23 to \$297.9 million in this budget. SARM is pleased with the increase, recognizing that RMs are a key component in driving our economy. "More funding is needed so RMs can continue to provide a level of service expected by sectors driving Saskatchewan's economy including preparing for future growth in the critical minerals sector. We are hopeful more can be allocated in the near future," says Ray Orb, SARM President.
Funding for rural road and bridge infra-

Orb, SARM President.
Funding for rural road and bridge infrastructure is imperative for RMs to continue to provide key economic sectors with
a strategic transportation network that is
effective and well maintained. "We were pleased with the continued investment of \$15 million for the Rural Integrated Roads for Growth (RIRG) program but more is needed if we want to revitalize and sus-tain this critical rural network into the fu-

ture," says Orb. Increased funding for Saskatchewan Increased funding for Saskatchewan farm support programs is also welcome news. The province is providing an additional 25 percent to further enhance programming offered via the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership. "Increased support for farmers and ranchers signals to Saskatchewan's agriculture sector that our government will be there to assist when they need it," says Orb. "This assurance is critical. It allows our agriculture sector to compete on the world market with countries like the EU and the US, who provide similar supports to their industry

SARM says they are also encouraged by new and continued funding for crime re-duction initiatives as well as \$8.9 million for the Saskatchewan Firearms Program. SARM looks forward to meeting with the RCMP and provincial government to dis-cuss how to effectively use this increased cuss how to effectively use this increased investment to fill the gaps in the current policing system, many of those in rural Saskatchewan. When so much of rural Saskatchewan is already underserved, SARM is asking for a co-ordinated effort between all stakeholders targeting crime reduction, one that ensures we aren't duplicatine efforts.

Plicating efforts.

Rural broadband is an essential service; this is something SARM has been promoting for over a decade. SARM appreciates the \$412.7 million for the SaskTel 5G and rural fibre network but substantial investment is easily at the search of these decades. ment is needed to reach the goal of broad-band infrastructure parity for all Saskatchband intrastructure parity for all Saskatch-ewan residents regardless of location. Neither people nor industry can thrive in rural Saskatchewan without reliable, af-fordable broadband. It's often the best op-tion to access, markets, banking, social ser-vices, and recently healthcare. At SARM's most recent convention their members highlighted the need for better access for

rural schools to effectively deliver educa-tion programming.
SARM says they look forward to work-ing with the province to provide input on what works best for rural Saskatchewan as these new budget investments and programs are implemented.

"They will go a long way to support the continued economic growth and livelihood in rural Saskatchewan, and the entire province," says Orb.





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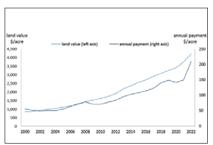


Figure 1. Canadian average farmland values vs. average annual farmland payments

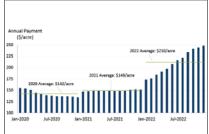


Figure 2. Impact of purchase timing and interest rate on annual farmland payment

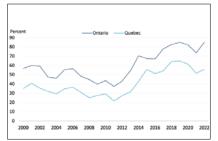


Figure 3. Annual average farmland payments as a percentage of gross crop revenue (com/soybean rotation)

Exploring farmland affordability trends through purchase timing and crop revenues

BY JUSTIN SHEPHERD, FCC SENIOR ECONOMIST

Canadian agriculture faced many challenges in 2022 but ultimately came out with strong farm cash receipts but ultimately came out with strong farm cash receipts and positive profit margins across many sectors. With the availability of farmland for sale remaining tight, average farmland values increased 12.8% in 2022, up from the 8.3% increase in 2021. Inflationary pressures led the Bank of Canada to increase its overnight rate from 0.25% at the start of 2022 to 4.25% by the end of the year.

This post investigates land affordability related to the timing of nurchase which was highly impacted by rising

timing of purchase which was highly impacted by rising interest rates in Canada during 2022. In addition, we compare annual land payments against gross revenue gener-ated by different crop rotations in western and eastern Canada. While important nuances exist across provinces, farmland is near or at its least affordable level in the last

Most farmland is purchased with a combination of eq-uity and debt, and affordability is a matter of land prices, financing costs, and farm revenues.

Consider a land purchase with a down payment of 25% and a loan amortized over 25 years. Let's use the effective average business interest rate (a weighted average of

tive average business interest rate (a weighted average of market interest rates), which averaged 44% in 2022, up from 2.3% in 2021, to estimate the annual loan payment. Farmland values and annual payments tend to evolve at the same pace (Figure 1). On average, Canada evolve at the same pace (Figure 1). On average, Canada farmland values have increased 8.3% annually over the last 10 years. In 2022, values rose 12.8%, the highest jump since 2013. Average annual payments increased 9.7% per year in the last decade, but 2022 recorded a large jump of 41% to \$210/acrd due to risine interest rates.

to \$210/acre due to rising interest rates.

Interest rates fell through 2020, so land purchased at the Interest rates fell through 2020, so land purchased at the start of the year had higher payments relative to land purchased at the end if it had the same purchase price (Figure 2). During 2021, interest rates stayed consistent, and land purchases at any time throughout the year would have resulted in similar payments.

In 2022, interest rates rose steadily, resulting in a large jump in payments depending on when the land was purchased. Annual payments would have been \$75/acre higher at the end of 2022 than on similarly priced land at the start of the year.

Assessing average provincial yields and crop prices

Assessing average provincial yields and crop prices generate an estimate of gross revenues for soybean-corn rotations in Ontario and Quebec and canola-wheat rotations in Saskatchewan and Alberta. Farmland payments as a share of gross revenues estimate farmland affordabil-

as a share of gross revenues estimate rarmiand arrordamity.

Quebec and Ontario operations recorded similar crop revenues per acre over the last decade. Farmland payments as a share of revenues differ mostly because of land prices (Figure 3). In 2022, purchasing new land in Ontario generated a land payment equal to 85% of gross crop revenue, tying 2019's record high. Meanwhile, Quebec payments equaled 56% of gross crop revenue, just above its 10-year average. Different dynamics in the farmland market explain differences in farmland prices.

Saskatchewan and Alberta farmland values are driven predominately by grain crop revenues. In what follows,

Saskatchewan and Alberta farmland values are driven predominately by grain crop revenues. In what follows, we capture a canola and wheat rotation. Land payments relative to gross crop revenue in 2022 ticked upwards (Figure 4). The Alberta ratio hit 43%, above its long-term average of 37% but below the 2019 high. Saskatchewan's ratio was 24%, above its historical average of 18% and just below the 2019 high. Gross crop revenues have been in-

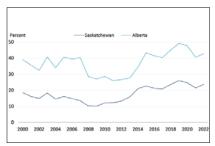


Figure 4. Annual average farmland payments as a percentage of gross crop revenue (wheat/canola rotation)

creasing in both provinces over the last decade, but farmland values and corresponding payments are appreciating at a faster rate.

After 2021's historic low interest rates, interest rates rose quickly throughout 2022, leading to sharp price jumps in payments on newly purchased land. Interest rates are

projected to remain around current levels during 2023, meaning annual land payments will remain well above a year ago. Farm cash receipts are expected to remain strong, but high farm input costs and interest expenses call for thorough assessments of the financial risks in an operation as the economic environment evolves.



Overhead door business operating in Arcola

Eagle Overhead Door is Southeast Saskatchewan's fastest growing overhead door company. They key to their growth—service.

In 2020, just as the pandemic was starting, Justin Carrier and Mickey Grimes, the company's owners, were tired of having to wait weeks, sometimes months to get someone

having to wait weeks, sometimes months to get someone to come look at their doors when they would fail.

So, they decided to start their own venture in the door industry. They hired an experienced door technician to teach them the ins and outs, the do's and don'ts and the best practices of the door industry.

It didn't take long for Justin, the working partner in the business, to pick it up. After some continued training from one of the most experienced people in the door in-

from one of the most experienced people in the door industry, Eagle Overhead Door was off and running. Specializing in commercial sectional doors and findoors, Eagle can help with any problems you may have with your doors.

with your doors.

After three years in business and hundreds of customers served, Justin says there isn't much they haven't seen. Your doors are an important part of your home and business. They not only add curb appeal to your property but also provide security and protection to your vehicles and belongings. Eagle understands the significance of a quality door and they provide reliable installation, repair, and maintenance services in Southeast Saskatchewan, and Southwest Manitoha. Southwest Manitoba

Justin says Eagle Overhead Door prides themselves on excellent and quick customer service and attention to de-tail. They take the time to understand their clients' needs and preferences and provide personalized solutions that meet their specific requirements. They also offer free con-sultations and estimates, ensuring that their clients have a clear understanding of the services we provide and the costs involved.



Justin Carrier, the owner of Eagle Overhead Door in Arcola, left, and Justin Hillier, one of the company's lead technicians, right.





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Manitoba releases spring flood outlook

Manitoba Transportation and Infra-structure's Hydrologic Forecast Centre reports a major risk of flooding on the reports a major risk of nooding on the Red River and low to moderate risk of flooding in most Manitoba basins in its March spring outlook. Spring flood risk largely depends on weather conditions from now until the spring melt.

At this time, the centre advises that due to recent precipitation events south of the border in the United States, the flood risk has increased to major on the Red River. The flood risk is low to moderate in the The flood risk is low to moderate in the Interlake region along the Fisher and Icelandic rivers, and along the Assiniboine River. The risk of spring flooding is generally low along several other rivers including the Souris, Roseau, Rat and Pembina rivers. Water levels are expected to remain below community and individual flood protection levels

flood protection levels.

There is also a low risk of flooding for most other Manitoba basins including the Saskatchewan River, Whiteshell lakes area and northern Manitoba. With the exceptions of Dauphin Lake and Lake St. Martin, most Manitoba lakes, including Lake Winnipeg and Lake Manitoba, are projected to remain within operating ranges after the spring run-off.

As in many other years, the risk of

flooding could change in any of the ba-sins depending on weather conditions between now and the spring melt.

between now and the spring melt.

Manitoba Transportation and Infrastructure, through a contract with Winnipeg Environmental Remediations Inc.,
has completed ice-cutting and breaking
work along the Red and Icelandic rivers
to reduce ice jam-related flooding. Icecutting and breaking work were not undertaken this spring on the Assiniboine dertaken this spring on the Assiniboine River, along the Portage Diversion, due to a lower risk of ice jam-related flooding.

to a lower risk of ice jam-related flooding. The centre also reports that operation of the Red River Floodway is expected this spring to reduce water levels within Winnipeg. Operation of the Portage Diversion is also anticipated to prevent ice jamming on the Assiniboine River east of Portage la Prairie and control river levels in Winnipeg and areas along the Assiniboine River downstream of Portage la Prairie.

The province, local authorities and First Nation communities are continuing to prepare for spring flooding. This includes ice-cutting and breaking on the Red and Icelandic rivers, review of existing emergency response plans, information sharing, and preparation of resources used in flood response.







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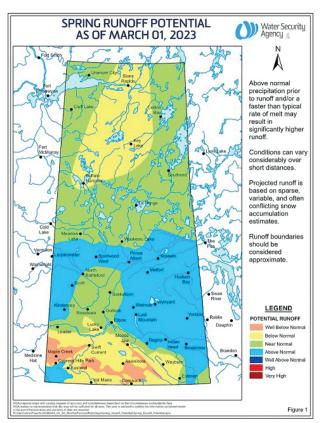


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The WSA's spring runoff potential map. Above normal runoff is expected in much of Southeast Saskatchewan.

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Above average runoff predicted

The Water Security Agency (WSA) released the Spring Runoff Report for 2023. The information gathered in this report is based on conditions as they were on March 1, 2023.

Moisture conditions across southern Saskatchewan were generally dry at freeze-up in 2022, particu-larly on the west side of the province where drought conditions were preva-lent. Winter snowfall has ranged from below normal over much of southwestern Saskatchewan (other than a small pocket in the extreme southwest south of the Cypress Hills where the snowpack is well above normal), to well above normal through much of central Saskatchewan The agency does not anticipate flood-related issues even in areas where above normal runoff expected, assuming near normal conditions go ing forward.

Warmer than seasonal

temperatures resulted in near complete melt of the snowpack over a large area of southern Saskatchewan, of southern Saskatchewan, including areas north of the Cypress Hills and much of the Old Wives Lake Watershed. With variable moisture conditions at freeze-up, mid-winter melts and a variable snow-pack, the runoff potential for the province also differs significantly.

In the north, near normal snowmelt runoff is generative to the province of the province of the province also differs significantly.

snowmelt runoff is gener-

ally expected, other than an area from Stoney Rapids down toward Buffalo Nar-rows where below normal snowmelt runoff is pre-dicted. In the south, above normal snowmelt runoff normal snowmelt runors is expected in a band extending from Lloydminster east to the border, due to well above normal snowpack. Below to well below normal snowmelt runoff is expected over much of southwest and southcentral Saskatchewan. The exception is south of the Cypress Hills where, with a heavy snowpack, above normal snowmelt runoff is expected.

expected.

It is important to note that this forecast is based on conditions as of March 1. Above normal snowfall over the next month could still produce near normal runoff over areas where be-low or well below normal snowmelt runoff is expected, particularly if it melts quickly. well below normal snow-melt runoff is expected, some water supply concerns may emerge or in-tensify. For instance, irrigation water supply in the Bigstick Lake Basin near Maple Creek is expected to experience a third consecu-tive year of shortages. The differences between

the preliminary runoff map issued in early February and the current map is the inclusion of data from late-February snow surveys, measuring snowpack water content. With the benefit of the snow survey information, there is much higher confidence in the current runoff potential outlook.

WSA monitors con-ditions throughout the spring melt and provide updates as situations de-velop. The next spring run-off forecast will be issued in early April, available on

Daryl Harrison

Member of the Legislative Assembly for Cannington Constituency

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Photographer captures grain elevator images as they fade away on the prairies



An elevator at Humboldt. Photo by Mark Zulkoskey from Tim Lockhart's Facebook page on prairie elevators.

BY NICOLE GOLDSWORTHY.

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter Tim Lockhart has made it his passion to photograph as many prairie grain elevators as he can find.

Lockhart was born and raised in Alberta and his dad was a manager at an Old Dutch potato chip plant. When he travelled with his father he gained a passion for grain elevators as each small town they pulled into had one. Lockhart was born and raised in Alber-

pulled into had one.

About two and half years ago, he saw how many were rapidly being torn down. What every small town in Saskatchewan had was slowly vanishing. Lockhart decided to start documenting as many as he could find throughout the prairie provinces. To date, he has taken pictures of 465 elevators in the three prairie provinces—275 of them in Saskatchewan alone—with 25 still to document. still to document.

Once Lockhart started to document all of the elevators, he created a Facebook page called, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Mani-toba Grain Elevators, which has just under

9,000 followers. Some of the pictures that

have been taken to conserve the history behind each elevator have almost 85,000

Lockhart names his top Saskatchewan elevators in no particular order as the Clemencaeu, Veregin, White Fox, Nut Mountain and Gronlid elevators. He mentions that these are all very rare as two of them are old red Sask Wheat Pool eleva-

them are out red sask wheat Foot eleva-tors and another being a Federal. Some communities have gotten creative in saving these elevators that seem to be fading out of Saskatchewan history. Some have turned them into studios for bands to play, museums, tea houses and libraries. Many have been purchased privately and some have been renovated so that they are still useable grain elevators.

Lockhart found out that the oldest ele-

vator in Canada was located at Elva (1897) and made the journey to see this elevator shortly before it burned down.

Lockhart says he is happy to see so many elevator enthusiasts use his page

as a means of sharing photos and history behind each elevator—a great resource for anyone interested in learning and seeing all the different types of el-

evators on the prairies. To check out this group go to: https://www.facebook.com/groups/668808844032536





















Field biologist shares passion for conservation

BY MIRANDA LEYBOURNE,
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER From the ruggedly beautiful shores of Lake Athabasca in northern Saskatchewan to the softly undulating, grassy landscape in the southern part of that province, Erica Alex's career as a field biology technician

has taken her all over the Prairies.

Alex grew up on a farm near Minnedosa, 52 kilometres north of Brandon, and sa, 32 kilometres north or brandon, and now lives in Saskatoon, where she is studying environmental biology at the University of Saskatchewan. She'll be back in western Manitoba on Feb. 24 to deliver a presentation on her adventures in field biology for Westman Naturalists. Crediting her childhood on the farm

for sparking her interest in conservation, Alex became fascinated by birds when she

was around eight years old.
"I spent so much time outside in my childhood," she said. "My grandfather was very much interested in nature and birds."

Provincials here lifetone layer of winsed.

Beginning her lifelong love of winged creatures with a Christmas bird count, Alex met many other birders in Westman who shared her passion. Eventually, she served on the executive board for Friends

of the Bluebirds, an organization dedicated to the conservation of the species.

In addition to being a student, Alex now works for Birds Canada, the country's only national organization dedicated to bird conservation.

Spending her summers working as a field technician and her winters processing data for the organization along with her studies has been a dream come true, her studies has been a dream come due, she said. Alex's job also involves counting and identifying different types of birds in the field and collecting data on vegetation and habitats. The data is then used to generate information on abundance, density, distribution and diversity among bird

"Agriculture relies on the environment being a healthy, functioning system, and without biodiversity, that system becomes really weak."

-Erica Alex

"It just seemed like the absolute coolest way to spend my life and get to work. It doesn't feel like work at all," Alex said. "I have loved every minute of it. It just gets better all the time."

Her work has taken Alex all over West-ern Canada, especially in Saskatchewan, where she has worked in remote boreal forests, expansive grasslands, on the shores of rocky lakes and across vast sand dunes. One of her favourite jobs, she said, was working as a boreal technician in northern Saskatchewan.

"I spent a week camping along the south shore of Lake Athabasca, which is a huge lake in the ... northwest corner of the province," she said. "It has the Atha-basca sand dunes, which is the largest active dunes in Canada ... it was just really, really incredible."

really incredible."

The time she spent at Lake Athabasca will be one of the highlights of her talk, which is taking place at the Brodie Building at Brandon University and online via Zoom. Alex said she's thrilled at the prospect of sharing her story. Her advice to anyone wanting to get involved in the world of conservation, whether to pursue it as a career or get involved as a hobby, is to get out into nature—even stepping out one's backdoor can open up a whole new world, she said.

Parents showing their kids some of the really cool stuff that exists in nature can go a long way in developing that inter-

To turn an interest in nature into a career, Alex recommends reading books, watching movies and talking with as

watching movies and talking with as many knowledgeable people as one can. "The biggest thing [is] ... just taking the time to learn as much as you can and meet people and make connections.

people and make connections."
While she might decide to pursue a
master's degree at some point after she
graduates, Alex said she could also see
herself taking a break from studying to
work full-time in the field in an industry

Work full-time in the field in all moustly that seems to be constantly changing.

One of the most interesting things Alex is utilizing in her work is called bioacoustics, the investigation of how animals produce, disperse and receive sound.

Part of her field work involves recording birdsong. This winter, Alex has been going through those recordings and identifying the birds featured in them.

"Slowly, people are working on artifi-cial intelligence being able to automatical-ly process those recordings, so there's go-ing to be some really cool advancements in that technology in the next few years."

Alex has also partnered with pasture managers and private landowners to sur-vey for birds on their land through a bird monitoring project. Through the project,

Birds Canada is working to support producers in making their practices more biodiverse, while also remaining profitable.

Being able to work with producers is something Alex says she finds satisfying.

"My family has an ag background. I grew up in rural Manitoba, where that's such a prevalent activity. And so being grew up in rural Manitoba, where that's such a prevalent activity. And so being able to kind of bridge science and conservation with the ag industry has been super rewarding... I really love that part."

Over the past few years, Alex has noticed that many farmers in the Prairies are becoming more and more concerned with conserving biodiversity.

conserving biodiversity.

'Agriculture relies on the environment being a healthy, functioning system, and without biodiversity, that system becomes really weak."

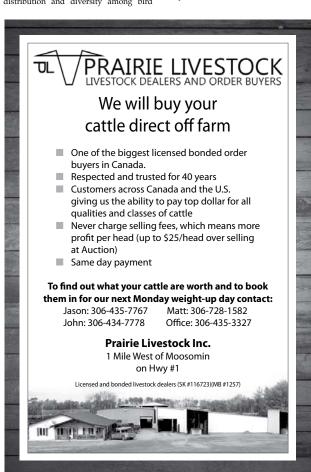
really weak."

Alex is also looking forward to talking about her first love, and what got her started down this path in the first place—birds. When asked to name her favourite, she didn't hesitate long before deciding on the great grey owl, also called the Phantom of the North, the only species of its genus to be found in both the Eastern and Western Hemispheres.
"Owls are so amazing. They're noctur-

and Western Hemispheres.
"Owls are so amazing. They're nocturnal, they have amazing hearing and eyesight, and they fly so quietly. They're just such a mysterious bird," Alex said, adding it took her a while before she was able to see one in the wild. "When I finally did, it meet in the wild." it was just such a magical moment, not one that I will ever forget.

The bird that makes her favourite call.

however, is the common loon.
"It takes me back to summers on Clear
Lake," Alex said. "No matter where I am, when I hear it, that's what I think of."





Former APAS President Todd Lewis named 1st Vice-President of Canadian Federation of Agriculture

The Canadian Federation of Agriculture (CFA) has announced their executive has been acclaimed for 2023.

Keith Currie of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture has been acclaimed President, and Past President of the Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan (APAS) Todd Lewis was acclaimed 1st Vice-President. Pierre Lampron of the Dairy Farmers of Canada joins the executive as the acclaimed 2nd Vice-President.

"It's an honour to work on behalf of Saskatchewan's farmers at the national stage," Lewis said. "Saskatchewan's leadership in Canadian agriculture is dynamic, growing, and evolving. We are innovation and environmental leaders in our farm management practices and representing Saskatchewan's perspective on the national stage is tremendously important and I am deeply humbled to have been chosen."

"Todd is a tireless advocate for Saskatchewan farm interests at the national table," APAS President Ian Boxall added. "He listens intently to all perspectives and passionately provides his view on every issue always looking for a solution that works. He is an incredible mentor to our APAS Board and we look forward to continuing working with Todd to ensure Saskatchewan solutions are heard and considered nationally."

APAS proposed seven resolutions to the CFA Annual General Meeting in Ottawa. All seven of them passed with over 90 per cent support from CFA membership. One of those resolutions includes calling on the CFA to work with member organizations to examine and support the development of a national cost-shared insurance programming for livestock, including the potential development of a cow/calf production insurance program.



Todd Lewis

APAS Livestock Summit looking to find solutions to challenges facing producers

In response to requests from Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan (APAS) members over the past year, APAS is hosting a Livestock Summit at the Saskatoon Inn on April 5 to bring together academics, producers, and industry to help identify solutions to the current circumstances impacting livestock producers—including cattle, bison, and sheep.

producers—including cattle, bison, and sheep.
"Livestock production is a vital part of Saskatchewan's agricultural landscape," APAS President Ian Boxall said. "Our members have been raising alarms about the future of this sector in our province, as producers have struggled over the past number of years with the impacts of drought, rising production costs, and large spreads between farmgate and retail prices.

Representatives at our General Meeting in December passed a resolution for APAS to bring together stakeholders to find solutions to these challenges."

Saskatchewan is the second largest cattle producing province in Canada and is home to more than a third of the country's native and tame pastureland. According to the latest Statistics Canada reports, however, the provincial cattle herd has decreased by approximately 90,000 head since January 2021. Land that is best suited for livestock production is at risk of being converted to cropland, which creates further challenges for the long-term success and future viability of the sector.

The APAS livestock summit will look at the factors causing the trends as well as policy and program op-

tions to help promote future success. These include recognition of livestock's positive ecological and environmental contribution, improvements to business risk management programs, and work being done currently to process and market livestock from Saskatchewan.

"Success for livestock producers means success across the province," says Boxall. "The more agricultural groups work together to focus our efforts and support each other, the more we can accomplish. At the end of the day, we all want success for agricultural producers."

Registration for the livestock summit is now open. Visit apas.ca/policy/livestocksummit to register.





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Author sheds light on mental health journey

LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

The joys and trials of liv-ing in a small farming com-munity, and how both can play a role in one's mental health, is the idea behind Westman author Lewellyn

Melnyk's new book.
Melnyk's new book.
Melnyk grew up on a
grain farm north of Russell,
140 kilometres northwest
of Brandon. After working as a journalist at CKX television in Brandon, Melnyk eventually returned to agriculture. She now farms with her husband in Angusville, 162 kilometres northwest of Brandon.

northwest of Brandon.
Although Melnyk's passion for writing never diminished even after her career switch, it wasn't until she'd come through a particularly difficult period of anxiety and depression—which she said she'd suffered from since she was 12 years old—that she thought about writing a book.

years old—that she thought about writing a book.
"I didn't write that much until recently, and I really, really missed it, because when I was in journalism, I really enjoyed it. I kind of had a calling on my heart to share my story, and so I decided that my skill should get put to work again. So I sat down and decided I was goine to write."

I saf down and decided I was going to write."
"Rooted"—part self-help book, part memoir—not only tells the story of Melnyk's personal mental health journey, but offers warm understanding and advice for those who find themselves struggling.
Melnyk's inspiration to write about mental health wasn't based solely on her own path. Having lost a

own path. Having lost a friend to mental illness in 2020, she believes sharing about mental health issues and what has helped her could possibly be of help to others as well.

"I wanted to write about mental health and some tips, kind of make a guidetips, kind of make a guide-book for people ... about how to stay healthy, just because I had learned so much," she said.

But deciding to write and publish a book during the COVID-19 pandemic wasn't easy. Melnyk, also a

mother, put the project on the backburner for a couple of months before she was able to return her focus to it. From start to finish, the endeavour took her about

three years.

It's also not always easy to write about such sensitive subjects as mental health, but Melnyk's desire to positively affect people and her hope to foster bet-ter mental health for rural Manitobans is what kept her going, she said. "It is difficult to write

about, no doubt, but that's why I did it, because I think it will help people." When Melnyk was diag-

nosed with depression at the age of 12, there weren't the age of 12, there weren't a lot of options for treatment or support, even though her parents made a concerted effort to help her. Thankfully, they were able to work with a pediatrician, and Melnyk found creative outlets to help her cope.

"I did lean on friends. and my writing and mu-

The Anxiety Disorders Association of Manitoba says that one in four people will experience an anxiety disorder in their lifetime. Gisorder in their lifetime. For Melnyk, hers showed up in her 30s, when her children were very young. She began having panic at-tacks and was experiencing difficulty sleeping. After getting the all-clear on a physical level from her doctor, eventually Melnyk realized that anxiety was the cause of her suffering. And though that put a name to her problem, it didn't ini-tially help her, she said. "I was told, 'it's just anxi-

ety.' And that word 'just' is kind of heartbreaking when somebody tells you that because it's not a good feeling to have panic attacks, not a good feeling to deal with anxiety. And to leave a doctor's office with a doctor telling you to go Google stuff was not helpful to me."

Although her experi-ence with the doctor she was seeing at the time was disheartening, Mel-nyk soon took her healing into her own hands. She began reading books and



'Rooted" by author Lewellyn Melnyk takes a close look at mental health and living in a small town, and how people can stay healthy in their communities.

could be enlightening and defeating in turn. In "Root-ed," Melnyk hopes she'll be able to streamline the process for others.

The book lays out how she found the resources that helped her, but also relies on experts who share their experience in treating anxiety, other mood disor ders and mental health is-

sues.

It was incredibly important for Melnyk to show people what it looks like to be dealing with anxiety and depression, including tips on how to manage it and her favourite coping skills skills

I am not a health professional, but I have lived it, and those lived experiences hold value for other peo-ple who are maybe going through the same thing," she said.

Living in a small com-munity, where everyone knows each other and gossip flourishes due to simple human nature, can be intimidating when faced with any kind of a chal-lenge, Melnyk said. But at the same time, it's that very interconnectedness makes rural living so helpful for seeking support to overcome issues.

Continued on Page B25







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SARM and cattle groups call for support

The Saskatchewan As-The Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities (SARM), along with member RMs, said in a press release recently that they are concerned for the future of livestock words are concerned in the same constitution in the saskatchewant as a second series of the saskatchewant are constituted in the saskatchewant as a second series of the saskatchewant as a saskatchewant as a saskatchewant as a saskatchewant as a saskatchewant Association of Rural Municipality and Saskatchewant Association of Rural Municipalities (SARM), along with member RMs, said in a press release recently that they are concerned for the future of livestock with the saskatchewant as a saskatchewant as saskatchewant as a saskatchewant as a saskatchewant as a saskatc producers operating in the province due to vet-erinarian shortages, low profitability, support on premiums and year-over-

premiums and year-over-year drought.

"Cattle producers have been struggling with feed concerns due to ongo-ing drought and it has taken its toll on the prof-itability of producers," SARM president Ray Orb said in the press release. "Alongside the feed concern, young ranchers are struggling to get into the industry, or find sustainability with fluctuating prices and little to no risk management support." Saskatchewan ranchers

saskatchewaii faithers are heading into one of the most important seasons, calving, and are concerned about the shortage of rural veterinarians. Livestock producers need the support of nearby vet-erinarians for the health and safety of their herds and the longevity of their

"Can we put incentives in place to attract veterinarians to consider opening clinics in our rural communities? Let's start offering opportuni-ties for youth entering the field to open clinics in our province," Orb said. "The lack of veterinarians is a chronic concern for pro-



Cattle producers have been struggling with feed concerns due to ongoing drought and it has taken its toll on the profitability of producers," SARM president Ray Orb said

ducers who are being left to travel great distances to find animal aid, or enor animal and, or enduring additional costs for mobile vet appointments. We just don't have enough services for our livestock industry."

The Saskatchewan

livestock industry."
The Saskatchewan
Cattlemen's Association
(SCA) also has concerns
about the lack of veterinarians, among other issues. SCA board chair
Keith Day said they plan
to work with SARM to
make sure those issues
are addressed.
"The aericulture sec-

"The agriculture sec-tor is fundamental to the growth of Saskatchewan's economy, and the

ewan's economy, and the livestock sector needs to be recognized for the out-sized role it plays in pro-tecting our environment while providing quality protein for a world facing a food crisis," Day said. Jeffrey Yorga, 1st Vice President Saskatchewan Stock Growers Associa-Stock Growers Associa-tion (SSGA) said the last five years of droughts ex-posed some cracks in the business of cattle. He said

the lack of business risk management tools, lack of pricing transparency, and the rapid exit of aging producers has threatened the existence of Saskatch-

ewan's beef industry.
"Economics has sped the decline in cattle numbers," Yorga said. "As well, the relative economic success in other sectors has turned the land from

has turned the land from grass to annual crops, ensuring that the cows won't return.

"While all indications point to better days ahead for producers who remain, the SSGA welcomes all industry partners to continue to work together to fix the problems that got us here so that when these situations arise the industry is more resilient industry is more resilient and able to operate on

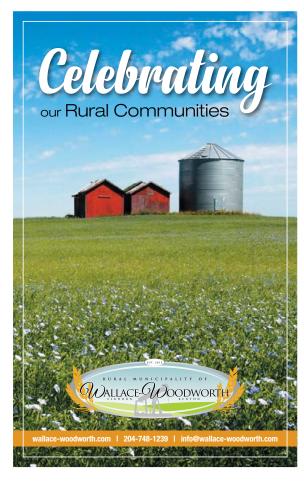
the same footing as other commodity producers," he added.

SARM, SCA, and SSGA SARM, SCA, and SSGA are invested in finding solutions and immediate support for the ranchers that make up a large portion of rural Saskatchewan. They said they want to see producers grow and succeed and to do this need support with better risk management programs, more rural vet programs, more rural vet clinics, irrigation, and consideration for a joint effort from our provincial and federal governments in cost-sharing premi-

SARM, SCA, and SSGA continue to call for action in support of cattle producers and push for discussions with the provincial government, delegates, and producers.







Budget 2023:

in international trade Increased investment

The 2023-24 provincial budget supports a strong and growing economy by amplifying Saskatchewan's presence in international markets to increase trade and investment opportunities, which in turn creates more jobs here at home.

"This budget is exactly what we need to continue leading the nation in economic

continue leading the nation in economic development," Trade and Export Develop-ment Minister Jeremy Harrison said. "Here at home, we're fostering a competitive business environment that rivals any jurisdiction in Canada, and the positive economic impacts we've seen show we're on the right

"Internationally, continuing to develop Saskatchewan's trade and investment in-terests while strengthening existing part-nerships and relationships benefits all Saskatchewan residents. As a province that is

dependent on exports, this work is invaluable to growing our economy and creating jobs.

Saskatchewan will open a new interna-tional trade office in Germany, which is the world's fourth largest economy. With the addition of Germany to the international trade network. Saskatchewan will have nine trade network, Saskatchewan will have nine international offices located in China, India, Japan, Mexico, Singapore, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom and Vietnam, as well as a dedicated US Relations Branch within the Ministry of Trade and Export Development here in Saskatchewan. "The efforts of these trade offices, working clockly with Saskatchayan progressors."

closely with Saskatchewan exporters, are paying off," Harrison said. "Saskatchewan's merchandise exports rose from \$37.0 billion in 2021 to \$52.4 billion in 2022—an increase of 41.6 per cent. More exports abroad means

more jobs here at home.
"More exports, more investment, more jobs. That's growth that works for every-

one."

Direct air connectivity between Saskatoon and the U.S. will support economic growth in the province. Budget 2023-24 provides up to \$2.2 million through a Minimum Revenue Guarantee to the Saskatoon Airport Authority to support a U.S. direct flight. This funding will increase options for the province's business community, recreational travel for residents and support provincial tour-

ism. Similar resources are also available to Regina's Airport Authority to support their efforts to attract a direct flight to a US hub

efforts to attract a direct flight to a US hub city as well.

Budget 2023-24 provides continued sup-port to advance economic reconciliation through the Saskatchewan Indigenous Investment Finance Corporation (SIIFC). Investment Finance Corporation (SIFC). Launched in 2022, the SIIFC will offer up to \$75 million in loan guarantees to support Indigenous-equity ownership of major proj-ects in mining, energy, oil and gas, forestry and value-added agriculture.



SPRING WHEAT:

AAC Brandon, AAC Alida VB, AAC Leroy VB,

SK Rush, AAC Starbuck VB

WINTER WHEAT: AAC Wildfire

FLAX: CDC Rowland **PEAS:** CDC Forest

LENTILS: CDC Simmie CL CONVENTIONAL SOYBEANS: (Non GMO, not glyphosate tolerant)

OAC Prudence

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DOKING TO BUY SOME **FARM EQUIPMENT?**

LAND **ONLINE AUCTION**

Saturday, April 1st at 8:00am -Wednesday, April 5th at 10:00^{am} Wayne & Rodney McLeod Tribune/Maxim, SK

Contact: WAYNE 306-456-2465 or RODNEY 306-891-9256 SE-20-04-1S-W2 & NE-17-04-1S-W2



LAND ONLINE AUCTION

Saturday, April 8st at 8:00am -Wednesday, April 12th at 10:00an

Barry Olney RM of Mount Pleasant #2 Carievale, SK CONTACT: 306-421-1495; 1 MILE WEST & 1 MILE SOUTH OF CARIEVALE



FARM EQUIPMENT ONLINE AUCTION

Saturday, April 9th at 8:00am -Thursday, April 13th at 10:00am McEwen Acres LTD. Ross & Eileen McEwen Francis, SK Contact: 306-245-3299 or 306-537-6276



FARM EQUIPMENT ONLINE AUCTION

Wednesday, April 12th at 8:00am -Sunday, April 16th at 10:00am Ron & Norma Luhning

Lumsden, SK Contact: 306-731-2889 or 306-536-1520 From Lumsden 6 km West on HWY 11



LAND AUCTION & OIL SERVICE REVENUE

TIMED ONLINE AUCTION

Thursday, April 13th at 8:00am -Monday, April 17th at 10:00am RM of Mount Pleasant #2 Carnduff, SK

Contact: 306-421-2928



FARM & LIVESTOCK EQUIPMENT ONLINE AUCTION

Saturday, April 15th at 8:00am -Wednesday, April 19th at 10:00am

Brian & Mariette Arthur Storthoaks, SK Contact: 306-452-8838



FARM EQUIPMENT ONLINE AUCTION

Monday, April 17th at 8:00am -Friday, April 21th at 10:00am Ross & Melody David

(R&M David Farm LTD.) Ogema, SK Contact: 306-459-7436 or 306-459-2738 From Junction HWY #6 & HWY #13 12 km West to RR 2212, 3.2 km South. 1.6 km West and North to Yard



TIMED ONLINE FARM & LIVESTOCK EQUIPMENT

Saturday, April 22nd at 8:00^{am} -Wednesday, April 26th at 10:00an

GWB FARMS LTD. (Greg Brown) Bengough, SK Contact: 306-268-7813



FARM EQUIPMENT ONLINE AUCTION

Thursday, April 20th at 8:00am - Monday, April 24th at 10:00am Marilyn Zimmerman & The Estate of Stanley Zimmerman

Estevan, SK Contact: 306-487-7815

From Estevan, 16 miles North on HWY 47, 2 miles East on HWY 361, 2 miles South





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