

OCTOBER 2024

Students learn about agriculture

BY NICOLE TAYLOR

Elementary school students from Moosomin and Wawota learned about agriculture at an Experience Agriculture field day at Hebert Grain Ventures Wednesday.

Kristjan Hebert of Hebert Grain Ventures said he believes events like this are important to let young people know about agriculture, and he hopes some of the students on the tour consider agriculture as a career when they grow up.

"Some of these kids grow up in town and don't know a lot about farming, so this is a chance for them to see what it's like on a farm, and for some of them it might spark an interest."

The students toured four different stations to understand more about farming.

Valuable experience

MacLeod School Grade 5 students all went to the farm for the event.

MacLeod Vice-Principal Scott Sully says it's valuable for the students to get first-hand experience with agriculture outside the classroom.

"Getting out of brick walls is important," he says. "We can do Ag in the Classroom and things like that, and talk about agriculture resources in class, but getting out to see people out in the field, do the job, hear from professional experts beyond the teachers is pretty valuable to them."

He says he hopes the students learn more about agriculture by getting out of the classroom.

"Hopefully they can learn a little bit about the farm lifestyle and the importance of farming in our agricultural province here, and see agriculture in action. It's really nice to see people they know, people who are hockey coaches and parents of their friends working in that environment."

AgraTactics

One of the companies presenting at the event was AgraTactics. Maria Stachura, an agronomist at AgraTactics, says their business takes a different approach to soil sampling. "The unique

thing with our company, is with other companies there's not as many soil samples per field and they're divided into bigger sections, whereas with us, it's very specific, and done in smaller sections. Every 5 acres, we do a soil sample. We also do a lot of scouting in the summer, that's a big part of our job."

AgraTactics has been working with Hebert Grain Ventures for nearly two decades, says Katie Borkell.

"We've been sampling for Heberts for close to 20 years probably, so they can look back on the data and see how their soil has changed since we've started sampling."

Hannah Nagy with AgraTactics said the students were eager to use the hand probes.

"They were pretty occupied and interested in the soil probes and seeing the sampler truck. We showed the kids our sampler, and the equipment that we use, and let them try out the little hand probes, which is kind of funny because it's really dry right now so the soil is very hard."

She said kids in different areas have different levels of agriculture knowledge.

"We're from Yorkton and it's a bigger city than Moosomin. I think Moosomin kids kind of get it a little bit just because it's a small town, everybody knows someone from a farm," said Nagy.

Katie Burkell of AgraTactics says the students were curious to learn about their jobs. "The students asked how many samples we did in a year, which is around 13,000."

"It was nice to show them how hand probes are used to sample, compared to what we use now. It used to be a lot more difficult than it is now. With technology and a GPS system, it makes everything a lot easier for us," Stachura explained.

Stachura says she enjoys how every day at work is a little bit different. "I like the variability of the job, it's not always the same thing throughout the year, it's nice to go scouting in the summer, getting to go out to all the different fields, and seeing different parts of the countryside. It's nice to get out, it definitely beats sitting in the office some days."

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Students from MacLeod Elementary School and Wawota School learned about agriculture at Hebert Grain Ventures Wednesday. **Above:** Eliette Taylor, Dawson Dyke, Zee Dodds, Presley Setrum and Josie Skulmoski. **Right:** Joshua Kopacz Knelsen from Wawota School. **Below:** Soryn McWhirter, at left, and Colt Hall (in red), along with other students at the field day.

Nicole Taylor photos



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Nicole Taylor photos

Top of page: Students from MacLeod Elementary School and Wawota School stand for a photo in front of bus.

Left: Students were given lunch to eat while visiting Hebert Grain Ventures Wednesday.

Right: Oliver Puskas, Kason Day, and Joshua Kopacz Knelsen.



“

It was definitely the horses that **inspired** me to want to take over and be more involved with the farm and the breeding program that my **dad, grandfather, and great-grandfather** worked on.”

Charity Martin Thevenot
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Martin & Thevenot Family

Students learn about agriculture at HGV

Continued from front

"We hopefully try to teach them something. It matters as long as one of them took away something from what we said."

Nagy says she loves the clients she gets to work with on a daily basis. "We get to meet some really good people, all of our farmers are awesome."

Burkell says that working with AgraTactics means always learning new methods of farming. "It's interesting seeing so many different ways to do the same thing. There's not one right way to farm, so we get to see a lot of different approaches."

Parrish & Heimbecker

Kendall Pratchler from P&H who was there to give presentations to the students says there were hands-on activities for the kids to help them learn more about soil.

"They learned the difference between sand, silt and clay, and how water infiltrates between all the layers of soil. We have a little experiment going on where we had a couple kids per group, sand, silt, and clay. We set timers and let them run water through to see what soil is the best. They were pretty interactive actually. It got competitive!"

Pratchler says she was surprised by some of the knowledge of agriculture the kids had. "One of them was asking about erosion, so that was pretty good. I didn't expect them to ask about erosion."

Kendall says she has been to Hebert farms the last few years to give presentations and host activities for the students. "Heberts usually ask us to come out every year. It's cool watching their faces, and they're pretty competitive about the activities, too. There's a lot of yelling and 'we're winning'."

Pratchler says knowledge of agriculture is important for young people. "I think agriculture is a bit of a grey area for kids. I wish there were more people that taught them about this kind of thing. There should definitely be a course on agriculture at school."

Jade Jaenen from P&H says that even the schools that are fortunate to offer an agriculture class aren't able to teach in-depth lessons.

"One agriculture class is not big enough to carry everything, it's not just crop farming, you could go into multiple types of farming, the course just doesn't seem big enough."

Jaenen and Pratchler say that they were never given the option to take an agriculture class in high school. "We never had that option growing up, so it's cool that they are incorporating it now," said Pratchler.



Agronomists from AgraTactics teach students from Wawota Parkland school how to take a soil sample with a hand probe.

More ag education

Kristjan Hebert, owner of Hebert Grain Ventures, says that although more farms are starting to host school field trips, he would like to see more.

"There's getting to be more and more farms that do this, but not enough," he said. "This is the biggest field trip. We always do one every year. This is the first one where multiple schools have come. We seem to find that once the teachers know we do it, they are interested in visiting the farm."

Hebert says that part of the reason there aren't a lot of farms that host schools is they don't know how to go about it.

"I think a lot of farms don't really have a template. They think it's a lot of work, which it is, but if you reach out to four or five of the companies, you don't have to do everything yourself, P&H and AgraTactics are doing presentations. We pull out all of the equipment for the kids to see and provide the food and drinks for lunch."

Hebert says more schools should be taking their students to local farms to learn about agriculture first-hand.

Blake Weatherald, a chaperone and parent of a student visiting Hebert Grain ventures, says this is great opportunity for young kids to learn about Saskatchewan's agriculture. "It's good for the kids to see this sort of thing, especially the in-town kids."

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APAS warns against trade consequences of Bill C-282



The Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan (APAS) has expressed its concerns about the risks posed by Bill C-282, An Act to amend the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Act (supply management), to the broader agricultural community, despite its ongoing support for supply-managed commodities.

While APAS stands behind the crucial role of supply management in ensuring Canadian food security, it cautions that Bill C-282 may inadvertently introduce risks that could affect the stability of other agricultural commodities.

"The supply-managed

commodities are vital elements of the agricultural industry, and they are also key to securing Canada's food sovereignty," stated APAS President Ian Boxall. "We unequivocally support these sectors and acknowledge their im-

portance in safeguarding the interests of Canadian consumers and producers. However, Bill C-282 is not about the virtues of the supply-managed system, it's about trade."

APAS says Bill C-282 is generating unnecessary

tensions within the agricultural community, and emphasizes the importance of protecting the interests of all farming sectors.

President Ian Boxall stated, "Bill C-282 is a protectionist law that could provoke a negative reaction from our most important trading partners, particularly the USA. With approximately two-thirds of Canada's economy relying on trade with the U.S., this Bill introduces unnecessary risks that could destabilize our agriculture sector. This isn't about sup-

ply-managed commodities and APAS would be equally opposed to legislative protections for any commodity or industry."

APAS's main reservations regarding Bill C-282 center on its potential to create market distortions and administrative burdens that could hinder the growth and competitiveness of other commodities not under supply management. "The bill seems to overlook the intricate dynamics between different agricultural sectors and the need for harmonious poli-

cy frameworks that propel the entire industry forward," Boxall explained.

APAS says they believe that moving forward with such legislation could divert attention and resources from more pressing issues facing agricultural producers and calls for a closer examination of the Bill's intent and utility, urging lawmakers to focus on initiatives that genuinely advance the interests of Canada's agriculture sector rather than complicate and cloud the current and future trade landscape.

FOR SALE BY TENDER

Sealed, written tenders to purchase the land in the Rural Municipality of Ellice-Archie and the Rural Municipality of Moosomin described below will be received by:

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110-11th Street

Brandon, Manitoba R7A 4J4

Attention: **Stephen K. Branigan**

Property:

- Parcel One (Title No. 1806320/2) NW 1/4 19-14-29 WPM1, EXC All Mines and Minerals, located in the RM of Ellice-Archie (Manitoba) consisting of approximately 154.17 acres of farmland.*
- Parcel Two (Title Nos. 106093289 and 106093278) SE 1/4 24-14-30 WPM1, located in the RM of Moosomin (Saskatchewan) which consists of approximately 100 acres of Arable Land, 35 acres of Pasture Land and 25 acres of Waste Land.* Parcel Two includes a Conservation Easement held by Ducks Unlimited Canada and registered as Interest Register Number 124999150 which limits the use of the land.**

all acreages have been taken from the most recent Manitoba Property Assessment Report or Saskatchewan Assessment Management Agency

** a copy of the Conservation Easement registered as Interest Register Number 124999150 can be provided upon request.**

CONDITIONS OF TENDER

- Interested parties must rely on their own inspection and knowledge of the property and not on the above or any other particulars or representations made by or on behalf of the vendor.
- Interested parties may submit a tender for the purchase of both parcels together or one parcel individually. If tendering on both parcels, the tenders shall set out the price tendered for each parcel separately.
- The seller shall, in their sole discretion, decide whether the parcels will be sold together to one purchaser or individually to separate parties.
- Tenders must be received at or before 3:00 pm on **November 15, 2024, at the offices of Meighen Haddad LLP, 110 - 11th Street, Brandon, Manitoba, attention: Stephen K. Branigan.**
- Bidders shall rely on their own inspection of both parcels, which shall be sold in "as is, where is" condition.
- The successful tender shall enter into an Offer to Purchase with the seller by **December 1, 2024**, and the closing date of same shall be **December 16, 2024**, or a such date to be agreed upon (the "Closing Date").
- Each tender must be accompanied by a cheque payable to Meighen Haddad LLP representing 5% of the tendered purchase price. Deposits accompanying unacceptable tenders will be returned following the close of tenders.
- The highest or any tender will not necessarily be accepted.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF SALE

- The bidder or bidders whose tender is accepted will be required to complete an agreement covering terms and conditions of sale by **December 1, 2024**.
- In addition to the deposit, the balance of the accepted tender must be paid on or before the Closing Date. If the balance of the accepted tender is not paid by the Closing Date, or no evidence is provided that the balance will be available under conditions acceptable to the vendor, the deposit paid may be forfeited as liquidated damages and not as a penalty.
- Possession is not authorized until acceptable arrangements for full payment are made following acceptance of tender.
- Meighen Haddad LLP will prepare a formal Offer to Purchase with standard provisions for the purchase and sale for the accepted tender.
- Successful bidders will be responsible for real property taxes commencing January 1, 2025.
- Successful bidders will be responsible to pay G.S.T. or to provide a Declaration and Undertaking to self-assess if registered for G.S.T.
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- The Mines and Minerals Rights for Parcel One will be retained.
- Successful bidders shall be responsible to pay Land Transfer Tax (if applicable).
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For further information, please contact **Stephen Branigan** at 204-727-8461 or sbranigan@nhlaw.ca

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The role of agriculture and food businesses in tackling growing food insecurity among Indigenous peoples

BY BETHANY LIPKA,
BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE ANALYST
AND ISAAC KWARTENG,
SENIOR ECONOMIST, FCC

Canada is considered one of the wealthiest economies in the world, recording the 10th largest national GDP in 2023. Despite this fact, food insecurity has remained prevalent nationwide, and has also trended higher in recent years due to a wide variety of challenges. Most notably, rising food costs attributable to adverse weather conditions, rising input costs, and disruptions in global supply chains have impacted all Canadians. The national prevalence of food insecurity increased by 4.5% between 2021 and 2022 and Indigenous people grapple with the realities of food insecurity at significantly higher rates compared to non-Indigenous people.

The situation is also worsening. At the end of 2022, over a third of the Indigenous population reported varying degrees of food insecurity – 37%, compared to a rate of 23% for the Canadian population overall. It is estimated that almost 50% of households on-reserve are food insecure. And across Canada, households where the primary income earner is Indigenous are nearly twice as likely to be food insecure as households where the main income earner is Caucasian, even after controlling for socio-economic factors like income, source of income, and home ownership.

If food insecurity among Indigenous populations were reduced to a level similar to that of non-Indigenous populations, this would translate into 165,000 fewer food insecure people. Several initiatives and programs have been aimed at closing this gap but have had muted success. The Canadian agriculture and food industry is uniquely positioned to be a catalyst for positive change in this area.

Before outlining the role of agriculture and food businesses, let's discuss the drivers behind food insecurity among Indigenous peoples.

Why is there such a striking gap?

Significant and persistent socio-economic gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada are well documented. Colonialism; the impacts of intergenerational trauma, discrimination and institutional racism; barriers to education and workforce participation; and the long-term consequences of residential schools have all had inter-generational impacts on the socio-economic status of Indigenous peoples, households and communities.

Indigenous peoples have been stewards and cultivators of the land now known as Canada since long before the arrival of European settlers. But the historic and contemporary impacts of colonial policies have restricted the ability of Indigenous peoples and communities to engage in both traditional and contemporary agriculture and food systems, posing challenges to achieving Food Sovereignty, and generating far reaching negative economic, cultural and health impacts. On average, there is a 65% disparity in median farm operating revenue between Indigenous and non-Indigenous farmers.

Income inequality between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples is pronounced. There was an \$11,800 (23%) gap in average total yearly income between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in 2022, according to Statistics Canada. Factors including barriers to education and employment and the geographic remoteness of many Indigenous communities have led to less-than favourable employment outcomes such as lower labour force participation and higher unemployment rates.

Given the remoteness of some communities, the price of food is also disproportionately high compared to the rest of the country. High transportation costs and limited food retail options in remote communities can drive up food costs significantly. Generally, food prices are roughly twice as expensive in northern communities, and the impact of food inflation is felt much more severely in those communities.

Bridging the gap: The role of the agriculture and food sector

Indigenous food insecurity is a complex and multi-faceted issue, and working to address it requires efforts from actors across the agriculture and food sector. Numerous government programs exist with the goal of improving Indigenous food security through subsidies, emergency funding, infrastructure, and capacity building among Indigenous people. At the community level, across Canada Indigenous peoples are working to revitalize their food systems and share cultural knowledge about their lands and the harvesting and cultivating of traditional foods. It's important to acknowledge and promote these community-led efforts to enhance food sovereignty.

Agriculture and food business owners are uniquely equipped to enhance employment opportunities and income levels for Indigenous people. Where are some opportunities for businesses to improve food security outcomes of Indigenous peoples?



1. Encourage physical and digital rural infrastructure investment

Strengthening rural infrastructure provides an important avenue for economic growth. Physical infrastructure investment generates jobs, strengthens supply chains, provides opportunities for business expansion, and improves access to labour and consumer markets. Digital infrastructure expansion, specifically, increased broadband access, improves rural accessibility to remote education, job training, and employment opportunities. Indigenous communities are often remote. Improving rural infrastructure can play a critical role in improving access to education and labour markets, improving incomes, strengthening food supply chains and improving food access and affordability.

Agriculture and food businesses can advocate for infrastructure investment in and around Indigenous communities, for improved road access, rural transit systems, and broadband access. Your businesses will benefit from improved supply chain efficiency, increased market access, and greater reliability in connectivity.

2. Invest in Indigenous recruitment

Labour shortages are a longstanding challenge across the agriculture and food sector, hindering productivity and growth. Indigenous people are underrepresented across the sector, and represent a significant under-engaged labour pool. Increasing efforts to recruit Indigenous people can help your business meet labour needs, while also increasing job opportunities and incomes for Indigenous people. Improved rural infrastructure will aid in this process.

Several companies, including FCC, have identified that the creation of an Indigenous sales team helps increase market opportunities within Indigenous communities. Increasing Indigenous representation in your business also supports future recruitment and retention of employees.

Increasing opportunities for hybrid and remote working environments for higher paying roles where possible will make these roles more accessible to Indigenous people living in more remote areas. This will increase access to highly motivated professionals, and lower labour training costs.

Businesses of all sizes across Canada – including FCC – have incorporated varying hybrid work models which have supported strong business results and improved employee experiences.

3. Invest in human capital

Invest in skills training for Indigenous staff once recruited. Create clear pathways for career advancement and income growth for Indigenous workers once hired. Promote education and jobs training opportunities in and around Indigenous communities. Once again, improved physical and digital infrastructure can help to facilitate this. Investing in human capital will make it easier for your business to attract and retain talent, on a path to benefit from productivity gains and innovations that come from multi-skilled employees.

4. Invest in Indigenous communities

Current and future expansion plans should look for mutually beneficial opportunities to partner with Indigenous communities. Investing in Indigenous communities, will promote economic development opportunities with the potential to create jobs and improve incomes. At the same time, economic development can have the positive spillover effect of attracting other businesses to the area, stimulating further economic growth in the community.

If, for example, your fields are near an Indigenous community, consider building storage buildings, grading facilities, or maintenance and repair shops within the community. If your food processing business needs warehouse storage, a packing facility, or a retail shop, investigate building within the Indigenous community. This could be a potentially cost-effective means of expansion, opportunity to open new markets, or improve access to

labour.

5. Support Indigenous entrepreneurs

Make a commitment to purchase goods and services from Indigenous businesses. Check with local Indigenous business associations for nearby services and keep those businesses in mind when you're looking for professional services. You could leverage IT services to build and maintain a website for your operation, bring in marketing to boost sales, contract an accountant to help maximize expenditures, or use a local transportation service to save on gas expenses. Using local services could end up being a money-saver for your business.

Supporting Indigenous-owned agriculture and food businesses, especially those operating in Indigenous communities, will boost local food sovereignty and support local job creation, whether

the support is through infrastructure, training, or investments. One immediate opportunity for you to consider is your approach to procurement. Creating strategies, like FCC's Indigenous procurement program increases diversity of thought for your business, supports Indigenous entrepreneurs, and advances economic reconciliation.

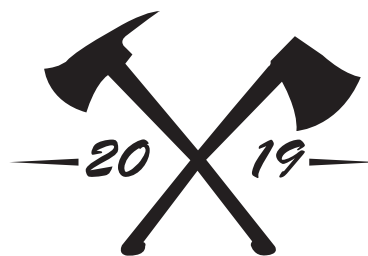
6. Seek joint venture opportunities

These types of collaborations may enable you to expand your operations and access new markets, while providing valuable resources, mentorship, and skills training to Indigenous entrepreneurs. Joint ventures can take various forms. Arrangements that are structured to allow the Indigenous co-owner to purchase the company over time support transferring wealth back into Indigenous communities.

Collaborations with Indigenous businesses can enhance your capacity through shared resources, knowledge, and expertise. Indigenous knowledge around local and sustainable food production can enhance innovations around environmental stewardship and sustainability.

Your move

Agriculture and food businesses collaborating with Indigenous communities can boost employment and incomes, and promote equality and inclusivity, while also enhancing profitability. Get to know your Indigenous neighbours and seek out resources on doing business with Indigenous partners. You may find opportunities you previously had not considered. We all have a role to play in building a more equitable and accessible agriculture and food sector for all Canadians, helping to make food insecurity a thing of the past!



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Local growers saw profitable year despite some challenges

BY RYAN KIEDROWSKI
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Harvest is fully wrapped up across the southeast, and grain producers are saying this will be a profitable year overall despite some of the challenges thrown their way. According to the most recent provincial crop report, topsoil moisture is drying with the longer than usual fall season.

"Only the Wapella area reported rainfall this week and they only received 10 mm," said Crops Extension Specialist Meghan Rosso of the southeast region in her report. "These dry conditions, paired with strong winds caused topsoil moisture levels to decline. Cropland topsoil moisture is now 48 per cent adequate, 45 per cent short and seven per cent very short."

The same trend is true for hayland topsoil, which noted 45 per cent adequate, 46 per cent short, and nine per cent very short.

The final days of harvest for most producers were punctuated with late-season storms, which wreaked havoc on canola crops in particular.

"We lost 13 quarters, down to 13 bushels an acre," said Gerald-area farmer Kevin Hruska. "But the other stuff, we had another 20 quarters left out in the wind, and it survived quite well, so that was kind of surprising, actually. But some it was battered pretty good from wind this year. So our canola was kind of poor in the end. I guess we're lucky to have a 35 bushel per acre crop, is really what ended up happening."

While Hruska noted his wheat was good and canola poor, securing decent pricing saved the day in the end.

"A lot of our canola we pretty much all sold at \$16, \$17 a bushel," he said. "We did capitalize on that."

Blake Duchek from the Atwater/Stockholm area illustrated how elusive it can be to secure pricing.

Continued on Page B10




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Saskatoon pathogen testing company launches products online

BY RYAN KIEDROWSKI

LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

It's been a very busy summer for Tayab Soomro, co-founder and CEO of Saskatoon-based PathoScan. Soomro and co-founder/chief scientific lead Ethan Done created a pathogen test kit that can provide lab-quality results for producers in a matter of hours, instead of the traditionally longer timeframe of up to two weeks.

Since the spring, PathoScan has taken their test kits to fields across the province in order to truly see how the system would work out in the wild.

"This year's field trials went really well," Soomro said. "We conducted over 70 tests, primarily in Saskatchewan, though we also received interest from other parts of the prairies like Alberta and Manitoba, which we're excited to explore next year. It was great to see how well PathoScan performed in real-world conditions. Generally, the tests worked just as expected. Our customers saw the benefit of this right away, and we were able to make sales."

Through those trials, Soomro and Done can continue to fine tune their technology. Recent greenhouse trials have also been a source of valuable information for the PathoScan team.

"We learned a lot about how different operations work between row crops and greenhouses," Soomro explained. "Each has its own approach and varying tolerance for false negatives (i.e., misinformation). Understanding these differences has been incredibly helpful in tailoring our solutions to better meet the specific needs of each type of operation. This experience has led to some tweaks to the product, making it even more efficient and reliable for producers."

Between 20 and 25 per cent of global crop production is lost annually to preventable plant diseases, which have a very diagnostic window. Currently, producers can bring a sample to a lab, but results are measured in days and weeks through that method. What Done and Soomro real-



ized was how shrinking that timeline and bringing the lab to the field was important. Their result was a rugged, easy to use kit small enough to bounce around in a pickup truck and quick enough to provide results in about two hours.

"As for the greenhouse trials, we're just getting those underway," Toomro said. "The pathogen problem in greenhouses is critical and in dire need of a tool like the PathoBox due to the moist conditions. We'll be working closely with one of our early adopters—a greenhouse producer, and conducting disease testing with them from transplantation to harvest to figure out when diseases emerge and the best

time to control them."

Next year will be another round of field trials, where producers from right across the prairie provinces are welcome to participate.

"Once we wrap up the greenhouse trials, we're planning to open up for more field trials next year," Toomro said. "We'd love to have more producers involved and are already planning to reach out for participants soon."

International possibilities and online presence

Soomro was recently meeting with in-



Above: PathoScan co-founders Tayab Soomro (left) and Ethan Done attending the Uniting the Prairies conference.

Left: Ethan Done leads an orientation session for newly hired student interns.

vestors in the UK, noting that the overseas market shares the same level of enthusiasm as found closer to home.

"There definitely is a chance," he said when asked about expanding to the international market. "We're still validating our technology, and we're going to be doing it in Canada for at least a few years. It's definitely important to have early conversations, and so we did that, so ultimately, that's definitely something that we're considering."

Continued on page B12





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Local growers saw profitable year despite some challenges

Continued from Page B6

"Some of these contracts, you got to be locked in for a year almost," he said. "If a guy wouldn't have done that, you'd be out by \$20 a ton, out by 50 cents a bushel."

In fact, Duchek is considering locking in next year's numbers already.

"It's so hard to predict, if we should be locking some basis contracts in already for next year," he said. "You can kind of tell, like LDC in Yorkton, once their basis level gets up to that negative 25, negative 30, that means they're pretty much bought up and they don't need any canola. Now, they're

showing that negative 25 out to June and July already. If you don't start doing a basis contract and securing a delivery spot, you're done. And then how much do you do?"

Rosso also noted the arrival of waterfowl and wildlife in general caused some damage, but being the tail-end of harvest, crop damage was minimal.

"Harvest went smooth," said Rylar Hutchinson, who farms near Rocanville. "After those wind storms we had at the end of August, it was smoother then expected. Definitely slower picking crop off

the ground, but could have been worse."

Overall, Hutchinson called the 2024 crop "average, not great, but not terrible."

Jeff Warkentin with Herbert Grain Ventures in Moosomin agreed, reporting a few delays due to rain events, but nothing that was significant enough to downgrade produce.

"We're very pleased with our cereals, and canola was about average," he said. "Mother Nature kind of threw a wrench into things, but all in all, we had a pretty good fall and we got completed in good time."

Post-harvest work in full swing

Now that the grain is off the field and moving to points around the world, producers can take advantage of the warmer fall weather to not only wrap up annual duties, but get a possible jump on spring preparations.

"The mild and dry conditions allowed lots of fieldwork to get done," Rosso noted. "Producers were busy getting harrowing, spraying and applying fall fertilizer. Producers are hoping to receive more rain soon for anhydrous ammonia applications and to improve soil moisture conditions for next year. Livestock producers are moving cattle and preparing their livestock for market."

Sometimes hours spent in the cab yield the most meditative moments while being productive.

"I'm in a track hole right now, just kind of blowing off some steam here and catching up on a project," Hruska said when the World-Spectator caught up with him last week.

The tasks are never-ending, and ultimately dependant on what the weather dictates.

"Fall work never ends, you usually always get stopped by mother nature whether you want to or not," Hutchinson said. "Perfect time to clean up fall equipment and do field work, drain sloughs, bury piles, etc."

Warkentin noted they're also monopolizing on the bonus days, already eyeing up the 2025 growing season.

"We've had a great fall. It's allowed us to do a lot of fall work and preparation for next year," he said. "We're tidying up some fall work—we're putting machinery away, and we're hauling grain. We're starting to plan for next year and get plans in place so we're trying to figure all that stuff out."


Duchek has spent the last little while ditching fields, but aside from spreading fertilizer, every day is a countdown to frost hitting the ground.

"It looks like it's cooling off a little bit," he said. "Next week, we'll probably run to Tuesday, Wednesday and call it quits, because once the dirt starts freezing at night, you can't do too much."



Kevin Weedmark photo


World-Spectator reporter-photographer Nicole Taylor shows a photo to some of the students touring Hebert Grain Ventures to learn about agriculture Wednesday.



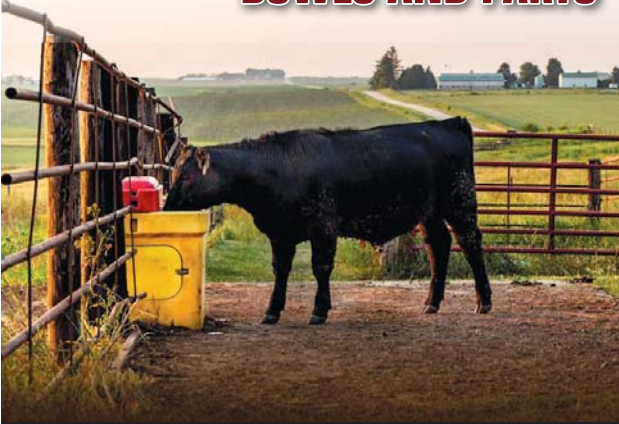
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Seeds of success in Manor

KBI Seed Processing to feature online sales soon

BY RYAN KIEDROWSKI

LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

The ability to pivot and strike out in another direction is a path many agricultural producers have embarked on, and sometimes those big gambles pay off. Such is the case with KBI Seed Processing—a family business going four generations strong and counting.

"My dad moved to the farm in the early '80s, and he got his pedigree seed growers license," said Tamara Hildebrandt of her father, Brian Kennett. "To go along with that, he built a small seed cleaning plant to clean both his own pedigree seed and then local farmers' bin-run seed."

"I grew up on this yard where the seed cleaning plant is, me and my four siblings. Dad grew it over time."

Back then, the seed cleaning business was known widely as Sunny K Seeds, officially established in 1984 on the family farm near Manor. Fast forward to 2010, and the operation also became organic certified and de-hulling of ancient grains was added into the mix at the busy processing plant.

A decade further along the timeline, another major change came to the family business. With a global pandemic creating uncertainty for everyone, and Brian contemplating retirement, Hildebrandt, Brian's brother Daren Kennett, and Darren's son Mason Kennett joined forces under the newly-minted KBI Seed Processing banner.

"We've since worked on our food certification and expanded to have a colour sorter machine and a bagging line so that we can go directly to mills and bakeries and sell our locally grown grains as food for both human consumption and for animals—feed or pet food," Hildebrandt explained.

"It was a pretty long process of doing research studies, and we had to have a third party come in and do an assessment on the efficiency and the efficiency analysis of what it would be if we did the expansion," Hildebrandt recalled.

Taking over the family business during Covid made for interesting times, as Hildebrandt pointed out. But it was drawing on the unique skillsets of all involved that brought KBI Seed Processing to the success it now enjoys.

Daren, for example, made his career in the feed business, initially with Cargill—his Bachelor of Science, Agricultural Economics from the U of S in hand—then Nutreco and later Viterra before being a founding shareholder in Hi-Pro Feeds.

Hildebrandt was accustomed to a much different world before returning to the farm.

"My background is more human resources and not-for-profit, and in 2020 that was turned upside down—really affected by Covid," she said of her 14-year career. "Not everyone just coming from an agriculture background also has a huge benefit to our value-added, because I think especially for farmers, all the paperwork and things like that can be very overwhelming, because that's not usually their wheelhouse."

Future steps

Next on the horizon for KBI is entering the retail world with their ready to mill products available to consumers. Interest in ancient grains such as spelt, einkorn, hard red spring wheat, rye and flax has been on the rise for many years, mainly due to health-conscious individuals.

"We are just launching in the next handful of weeks here, our small packaging," Hildebrandt confirmed. "This is the first time we've had a product put on the shelf, so it will be whole grains and flax that people would mill at home, a ready-to-mill [product]. We're going to do an online store, and available for pickup as well from our farm, and then shipped out anywhere in Canada."

The idea to branch out to a different market rose from



Employees Jeff Cuarlo (left) and Jonah Brownlee operate a colour sorting machine at KBI Seed Processing.

the fact that all the inputs were already set up, it would just be on a smaller scale.

"We thought, 'well, we have all the certifications, we're doing all of that stuff already, let's try to take it one step further and see how that goes,'" Hildebrandt said. "Maybe we'll end up doing markets, or getting into local stores, or maybe we'll just stick to online. It all depends on what the consumer is looking for."

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Right: Another fall morning breaks at KBI Seed Processing.



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Seeds of success in Manor

KBI Seed Processing to feature online sales soon

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Another huge bonus is the ability to know exactly where the product came from—right down to the land location, if need be.

"The traceability for the consumers—we can trace exactly where every product came from, tracing the growers, and having that connection—the farm-to-table idea," Hildebrandt said. "Saskatchewan is good at growing things, but we're usually pretty good at just exporting it and not getting all the value-added pieces."

The foray into retail sales also introduces a wider benefit to producers from miles around where that grain is sourced, helping to bolster the local economy around Manor and sharing success with neighbours.

Looking to the next generation

So what does Brian think of all this advancement to the seed cleaning business he started 40 years ago?

"He's pretty excited," Hildebrandt said. "He's moved up to Cochrane, Alberta. He's enjoying his retirement, but I always refer to him as my free consultant! You know, 35 years of grain processing, you learn a lot, and you know a lot of details about how everything runs, and he had built

lots of it by hand. He's a great resource."

The future of KBI looks bright as Hildebrandt eldest son, 13-year-old Eli, has taken a keen interest in farming life.

"He loves farming," Hildebrandt said, adding that Eli was a big help with farming operations again this year. "School got in the way there at the end, which he wasn't overly happy about!"

She recalls how even as a small kid, Eli would join his dad in the air seeder or combine, happily spending the day in the field.

"He'd be just in his car seat strapped in there, and that was his happy place," Hildebrandt described. "He absolutely loved farming."

As with most farm families, some kids seem to catch the bug right off the bat, while the seed needs to grow a little bit for others.

"The other two, they enjoy it, but they maybe don't have quite the same early love for it," Hildebrandt said. "But I didn't either. I never thought I'd be back in agriculture, and what appealed to me actually is the business side of agriculture, and it's becoming more and more of a big business."



Some of the final product in a variety of sized packaging—small enough to carry by hand, or in some cases with the help of a forklift.

Canadian farmland values rise

5.5% in first half of 2024: FCC report

Canadian cultivated farmland values rose by an average of 5.5 per cent in the first half of 2024, according to the mid-year farmland values review by Farm Credit Canada (FCC). Over the 12 months from July 2023 to June 2024, there was a 9.6 per cent increase, representing a slowdown compared to the previous 12-month period (January to December 2023).

"Farmland values increased at a slower rate, yet 5.5 per cent growth in six months is still a very strong number," said J.P. Gervais, FCC's chief economist.

For the second consecutive year, Saskatchewan and Quebec have recorded the highest average six-month increases in the country, at 7.4 per cent and 5.4 per cent, respectively. The rates in New Brunswick, British Columbia, and Alberta all settled in the same range, 5.2 per cent, 5.0 per cent, and 4.6 per cent, respectively. Manitoba recorded a growth rate of 3.9 per cent, closely followed by Nova Scotia at 3.8 per cent. Ontario recorded a lower increase at 2.1 per cent, with Prince Edward Island concluding the list at 1.7 per cent.

Elevated borrowing costs, lower commodity prices and the increased price of land hasn't deterred some buyers. Looking ahead, declining borrowing costs and a limited supply of available farmland should sustain the current high prices for farmland.

"The continued rise in farmland values highlights a positive and robust long-term outlook for the agriculture sector. As we move into the latter half of 2024, the trends in farm revenues and interest rates will be key indicators of where farmland values might head next," said Gervais.

Gervais noted that farm cash receipts are projected to decline overall in 2024 by 3.3 per cent as commodity prices show few signs of a quick rebound, possibly limiting farmers' willingness and capacity to assign higher valuations to farmland.

"Understanding economic and financial trends is essential for making informed decisions. FCC is committed to providing the industry with data-driven insights that can help producers and investors navigate the current economic headwinds," added Gervais.

Saskatoon pathogen testing company launches products online

Continued from B7

Expanding to outside markets would not be a huge leap for PathoScan's technology. Soomro pointed out that there are common plant diseases found in both the UK and Canada, but the strains are different.

"For example, club root is one of the devastating pathogens for canola," he explained. "It has different pathotypes even within Canada—the club root that you see in Eastern Canada is different than the one that you see in Western Canada. So there's definitely different pathotypes, and we will definitely expect to see those differences."

PathoScan has also recently made their test kits and accessories available online through their website (pathoscan.com), currently on reduced pricing.

"That's one thing that is still in the works," Soomro said. "We currently have a person that's revamping our website to make the messaging correct, and things like that. But yes, ultimately, that's the goal, that farmers would be able to purchase it right from their homes. We're trying to incentivize farmers to get it early and get the benefit of their tests very early, but at a very steep discount."

As with any business, financial resources help speed up development, and PathoScan currently has a Crowdfunder campaign with a \$50,000 goal. Money raised from crowdsourcing will be split between material investment, continued research and development, and funding additional trials.

"We're really hoping that these funds will help us do more outreach and do more developments in the R&D so that we can bring the prices down for trials and bring the device out to many people," Soomro said. "That component is there,



Tayab Soomro takes a few moments from a recent business trip to check out the sights of London.

but we're also looking for funding as well through our investment partners."

Winter will not slow the PathoScan team down as they—like Saskatchewan producers—prepare for another growing year.

"We've brought on two new advisors who will help strategize our business development and financial aspects," Soomro said. "We had our initial in-person meeting in the UK during my trip, which was really productive. We're also in the process of securing additional funding to ramp up our unit production and expand our business development beyond Saskatchewan into other critical regions."

Growers interested in signing up for a field trial can do so at pathoscan.com/signup.

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A legacy of stamina passed down from generation to generation

Fall brings with it, at least after the fall work is more or less done, a bit of time (at least for me) to do some things I don't usually do. One of those things this fall has been searching out some family history on both our sides. When I read about some of the hardships of the displaced German families who ended up in Russia and then tried to leave from there in 1930, it was incredibly overwhelming to think of them getting on that last train out of Moscow (in this particular case, only 5,000 out of 13,000+) to get to Germany before getting on a ship to Canada. In my hubby's family's case, the journey cost them the lives of their baby and their toddler to disease in a refugee camp.

And so, as I read some of this history, I couldn't help but think of the perseverance of these people who made their way to Saskatchewan to seek out a living on farms on the barren prairies. At the start of the 30's no less. As I think of hubby's family, and mine as well, who left their homeland for a new land, I had to ask myself if I could have done what they did? Would I have had the determination, the fortitude, the strength to overcome the many challenges they faced in a new country?

When I am building something (think catco, cat house, tiny toy wooden cabins, etc.) as I often do, I think of my Grandma particularly and how she made do with what she had and how she had to know how to do a bit of everything, carpentry included I am sure. Oh how I wanted to take Industrial Arts in high school (mid-70's). Alas girls were not allowed, which left me having to take cooking, crocheting and sewing (sad face here). Something makes me think though that the women of those early years on the farm had to become adept at just about everything out of necessity. Perhaps some of stamina of our farming grandparents was passed down to us as we farm in this day and age.

This fall has been fabulous in that harvest was complete (near end of September), the combines were cleaned up (sort of—I fell a little short on the window cleaning as the exterior man was making way too much dust for me to get a good clean window), the RV was cleaned out and winterized, the basic yard cleanup at the farm was tidied up and so it was that we decided to take a mini trip over the US border for a post-harvest weekend away and to celebrate my birthday.

We did a bit of shopping on Saturday morning but since we needed next to nothing, we didn't exactly fill the cart in any store we went into. But it was fun just the same, especially when we hit the lumber store where I could check out all sorts of things for projects I have in mind. Oh, and smell the lumber (my favourite thing to do)! My mind was swirling. I had made some mini toy cabins (think bird-house sized) for the grandkids, complete with doors and one with shingles made out of large sized popsicle-type sticks, so I was all over the 2'x4' pieces of plywood at Menard's. I was so excited about actually getting these little toy cabins built, I even began to wonder if I could build some cupboards in my laundry room. That thought lasted only for a second or two because that is most certainly beyond my wheelhouse of abilities. I was however, very excited about the little oscillating tool I bought to cut windows out for my toy cabins (P.S. it works great).

Our Saturday plan down in Minot that weekend was to shop in the morning, relax in the hot tub in the afternoon, enjoy some time checking out travel destinations and project ideas (moi) online. And wouldn't you just know? The high winds that day caused some problems and the pool was closed for the afternoon and wi-fi was non-existent for essentially the entire afternoon and evening. After a lovely supper out, we settled in for back-to-back ER re-runs for the person in the family (moi) that is not much of a TV watcher.

The challenges of harvest on the other hand, one and a half weeks after finish day, were all but forgotten by the trip-to-Minot weekend. In fact, it wasn't until I was looking through my texts for a specific date, that I saw one of my texts where I had been complaining about being stressed over the death of my washing machine. Let's not even talk about the leak that made a bit of a mess on my laminate floor (and only because I pulled the machine out of the laundry closet and managed to break the tray it sat in). What really affected me for a period of four or five days in the middle of harvest was not being able to keep hubby's dirty old farm clothes washed. I am so OCD about that and even though he tells me he has enough pairs of work jeans for five days, there's something in me that makes me want to wash a small load of farm clothes every day. As it was, we (he) survived without issue and my OCD had to take a back burner.

This particular stressor (for me) was in no way comparable to our friends' fire-in-the-field moment when they

The Lighter Side of
Life...
DOWN ON THE FARM
by donna beutler
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worked hard, as did firefighters and neighbours, to control the spread of fire on one of those extra hot and windy September harvest days. As it was, everyone returned home safely and uninjured and though that's what counts most, it is pretty scary when flames are running rampant and machinery and people are in potential danger.

We have gone a month since my last column and you can tell hubby still doesn't know about that little fire the kids had under their Grandpa's side-by-side. Usually one trip to the Co-op grocery store or the inland terminal will net Grams some info gleaned from this column that he doesn't yet know about. Usually I will hear something like this as he walks in the door from the elevator.... "What did you write about me this time?" Ha! That will teach him for not reading it himself!

As I write (some of) this, it is not quite the middle of October. The weather has been beyond marvelous and I am so caught up on my outdoor projects that it feels a bit weird. Usually it's a mad dash on whatever nice day appears. This fall, it's more like every day has been beautiful and every fall outdoor job is already taken care of. And we aren't racing against bad weather to get something done.

My farm catco has taken on a bit of a new look as we

get closer to the inevitable cold days of winter. The catco is rather crude to begin with but functional and 'my farm kitty' is safe inside but now, a couple of small openings to the outdoors lets her roam around outside as well. Since I finished the project a month or so ago, I added on to the crude little building that a human can actually stand up in. It has been joined onto by the insulated, straw-filled cat-house, now sporting a swinging cat door. A little hallway with a sunroof allows cats to be able to see well as they make their way from one 'building' to the next. If it sounds remotely glamorous, let me assure you it is not.

Furthermore, my desire to ensure this little abandoned kitten is comfortable led me to attach a clear plastic covered "sunroom" to the catco. I didn't have to wonder long whether she would use it or not because you will find her stretched right out in this 'cube,' soaking up the rays whenever the sun is shining.

It's a good thing I have so many important projects on the go that continue to keep me away from the stove and away from those farm financial books. It's really no wonder I find so many ridiculous projects to do!

The best part of my away-from-the-farm days right now are my noon hours which have been filled with teenaged grands and their friends looking for a good strawberry and whipped cream crepe. This also has my husband stock-piling strawberries when he sees them on sale! I will treasure these days while they last because I am pretty sure it won't last forever! And every single day, like a broken record, as the five or six of them head off down the back alley on their way back to school I say: "Do the best you can in everything you do! And be kind to everyone you meet!"

Well, it's off to check on the strawberry supplies at the local Co-op grocery store. Here's hoping all our farmer friends are finished in the field and finished prepping for your livestock for the coming winter days. Take care out there no matter what you're doing and in the meanwhile our paper will do its best to keep you informed to the best of our ability—and throw in a bit of life-down-on-the-farm tidbits for you to enjoy!

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A cost-effective way to crank up your composite soil samples

BY WARREN WARD
CANOLA COUNCIL OF CANADA

The most common soil sampling practice is to collect one composite sample per field. This article will describe a low-cost way to take your composite samples to a new level.

An appropriate composite is based on 12-20 sub-samples or "cores" collected from the most productive areas of a field. These are usually mid-slopes. For this one primary composite sample, you want to avoid collecting from hill tops, low spots and saline areas. This mid-slope composite will help you select an appropriate fertilizer blend and rate that supports those most productive areas.

However, by avoiding the low-producing areas—the hill tops, the low spots—you may be missing critical insights to boost yield potential in those areas.

You can't blend samples from low-producing areas into your primary mid-slope composite. The resulting average will produce soil test results that are almost useless. So you need more samples. The extra cost of a second, or third, targeted composite from that field may reveal some interesting issues that could be solved, or at least improved, with localized management.

A few potential target sample sites:

- An area always subject to lodging. Does it have high organic matter that kicks out a lodge-inducing nitrogen boost? It may be possible to reduce nitrogen rates in that area.

- Hill tops. High ground often has low organic matter and retains less moisture. These factors will reduce yield. But perhaps low sulphur, or some other nutrient shortage, is also a factor in lower canola yields. Some targeted sulphur could help hill tops.

- Low areas with low yields. Is salinity the problem? Or something else? With a targeted sample, you may find a low-yielding area critically low in potas-



When soil sampling, divide each core into two or three soil depths and put them into separate pails. Submit separate composite blends for each depth.

sium, for example, while salinity is fine. You never know until you test.

As shown in these three examples,

targeted samples could prompt some low-tech, targeted nutrient applications that could boost yield results. With a

few hundred dollars' worth of extra samples, you could greatly improve the productivity of acres not benefiting from the blanket nutrient application based on one primary composite sample from your top-producing mid slopes.

Composite sample techniques

Here are the steps to collect composite samples from a field. If hiring someone to collect your samples, they will usually follow this practice:

- Take 12-20 sub-samples or "cores." If just doing one sample per field, gather these cores from the most-productive areas. This is usually mid slopes. If you are also targeting a problem area with a second composite sample, collect a separate set of cores from that specific area.
- Divide each core into two or three soil depths and put them into separate pails. Have a pail each for 0-6" and 6-24" soil depths, or a three-way split of 0-6", 6-12" and 12-24".

- With the 12-20 sub-samples separated by depth, blend those samples to create one composite sample per depth. Do not blend these with your second set of composites from a targeted area. Keep them separate.

- Submit each composite and each depth in its own sample bag.

The benchmark composite: Farms could GPS-locate one "average acre" in the field and use that pin as a sample point each year. This can provide for more accurate comparison of samples year after year and is faster for the sampler.

Warren Ward is an agronomy specialist with the Canola Council of Canada. To learn more about soil sampling, check out the nutrient management chapter at CanolaEncyclopedia.ca, or the Canola Watch fundamentals article "Soil sampling – timing, technique, interpretation" at CanolaWatch.org.



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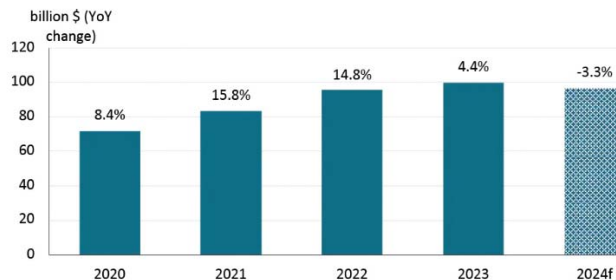
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Provinces	Average % change Jan 2024 - June 2024 (6 months)	Average % change July 2023 - June 2024 (12 months)	Average % change Jan 2023 - Dec 2023 (12 months)
B.C.	5.0	6.6	-3.1
Alta.	4.6	8.1	6.5
Sask.	7.4	12.0	16.7
Man.	3.9	9.6	11.1
Ont.	2.1	6.1	10.7
Que.	5.4	8.2	13.3
N.B.	5.2	5.8	5.6
N.S.	3.8	9.6	7.8
P.E.I.	1.7	3.4	7.4
Canada	5.5	9.6	11.5

Source: FCC calculations

Table 1: Average farmland values changes in the first half of 2024 by province.



Sources: Statistics Canada, FCC Calculations

Figure 1: Farm Cash Receipts.

2024 mid-year farmland values increase despite lower revenues and elevated interest rates

BY CORBIN CHAU

DATA ANALYST, VALUATIONS, FCC

Canadian cultivated farmland values rose by an average of 5.5% in the first half of 2024 (Table 1). Over the year from July 2023 to June 2024, there was a 9.6% increase, representing a slowdown compared to the previous year, likely the result of lower commodity prices and elevated borrowing costs.

For the second consecutive year, Saskatchewan and Quebec have recorded the highest average 6-month increases in the country, at 7.4% and 5.4%, respectively (Table 1). The rates in New Brunswick, British Columbia, and Alberta all settled in the same range, 5.2%, 5.0%, and 4.6%, respectively. Manitoba recorded a growth rate of 3.9%, closely followed by Nova Scotia at 3.8%. Ontario recorded a lower increase at 2.1%, with Prince Edward Island concluding the list at 1.7%.

The dance between interest rates, farm profitability and farmland values

Interest rates are always a major driver of major investment decisions. The economic environment of the previous two years has been characterized by high interest rates due to persistent inflation. The Bank of Canada recently proceeded with reductions in its policy interest rate, with the initial adjustment occurring a little less than a month before our analysis period ended (January 1st to June 30th, 2024). While actual interest rate decisions of the Bank did not likely matter much, expectations of lower interest rates might have played a role. By late January 2024, financial markets were fully pricing in the first rate cut of the Bank of Canada to occur in June. And the expectation at the time would be that the Bank of Canada policy rate would be lowered by 1% by the end of the year. These expectations pushed down interest rates in financial markets and lowered borrowing costs slightly.

Lower interest rates, or expectations of lower borrowing costs, enhances buyers' willingness to pay, thereby driving up demand. Yet farm revenues matter too. High input costs squeeze profit margins, possibly limiting farmers' capacity to invest in new land and moderating farmland value growth. In the short term, 2023's strong farm cash receipts (Figure 1) likely contributed to the growth we are reporting now. The limited availability of farmland for sale is also a crucial driver of farmland values.

Provincial trends

In British Columbia, farmland values have risen by 5.0%, with the Peace-Northern region exhibiting the most significant growth in the province. Additionally, the Okanagan and South Coast regions are also experiencing value increases. The provincial average is largely impacted by the Peace-Northern Region, which contains the majority of the province's arable land. The most recent 12-month average growth rate recorded a rebound (6.6%) after the previous 12-month period registered a decline (-3.1%).

In Alberta, the trend has been toward selling smaller parcels of land, as large holdings are divided into smaller groups to attract more buyers. Additionally, land

transactions are increasingly occurring through private sales, live auctions, and sealed tenders. We have observed a 4.6% rise in land values during the first half of 2024, with the most significant increases noted in the northern parts of the province.

Saskatchewan's farmland values keep rising, leading the nation in appreciation. From January to June 2024, the average increase is 7.4%. Northern and central areas are nearing double-digit growth, while southern regions show smaller but positive gains.

Manitoba's 3.9% growth is primarily fueled by the Westman region, with additional support from the Parkland region. The other regions fall below the provincial average. Although Manitoba ranked high in the 2023 Farmland Values report and year-over-year growth, it has dropped to sixth place nationally in this mid-year report.

In Ontario, high-quality farmland remains in demand and sells well, while average to lower quality land either struggles to attract buyers or fetches lower prices. The Central West region has seen the highest increase in land values, unlike the Mid Western region, which shows no growth. Overall, farmland values in Ontario are stable with minor changes across most areas, leading to a provincial average growth of 2.1% at mid-year.

This economic pressure of higher interest rates and lower commodity prices has resulted in a much less pronounced increase in Quebec's land values compared to recent years. Nonetheless, Quebec is reporting the second highest rate of growth in the country after 6 months. The reported rate of 5.4% is near the national average of 5.5%. The province's rise is primarily due to growth in the central regions of the province (Mauricie-Portneuf, Centre-du-Québec and Chaudière-Appalaches). This strong expansion, however, is counterbalanced by only a modest growth in the regions with the highest per acre farmland values (Montérégie and Laurentides-Lan-au-dière).

Similar to Quebec, New Brunswick's growth rate is near the national average at 5.2%. The market for potato-producing land there is limited, with larger operations purchasing land at record prices. Nova Scotia continues to attract a few out-of-province buyers, but interprovincial migration has slowed. From January to June, Nova Scotia's growth was 3.8%. Prince Edward Island has seen minimal changes with growth reported at 1.7%.

Summary

Comparing the 2024 figures with the most recent 12-month period and the 2023 Farmland Values Report clearly reveals a small national deceleration in the growth of farmland values. The recent interest rate cuts and anticipated further reductions in the policy rate for the remainder of 2024 (two cuts of 0.25%) and into 2025 (five cuts for a total of 1.25%) should provide support to buyers' valuations of farmland. Yet farm revenues should remain severely constrained as commodity prices show no signs of rebounding. Check back with us when we release our annual 2024 report in March 2025 for a detailed regional analysis of farmland values.



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