

Plain & Valley

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Covering Southeast Saskatchewan and Southwest Manitoba



Premier Moe visits southeast Sask.

Saskatchewan Premier Scott Moe visited the area. At Redvers Ag, he spoke with Perry Dangstorp, left, and Cannington MLA Daryl Harrison, right.

Visits Redvers Ag: Scott Moe visits southeast Saskatchewan

BY ASHLEY BOCHEK

Premier Scott Moe visited southeast Saskatchewan on August 27. He toured the town of Redvers and local businesses, along with other communities in the Cannington constituency. Ashley Bocek and Kevin Weedmark met with the premier at Redvers Ag.

The premier started by saying the World-Spectator stands out as a media outlet. "It is a great business and there is not a lot of vibrant young people in it. Your paper is one of the exceptions to what has been happening in the last five years. You have to report the news and reporting what the people want to read, not all the papers are doing that. It is a struggling market, but there are ways through that and the World-Spectator shows that it can be done, and a few others are as well," Moe said.

The full interview follows:

Why are you here in Redvers today and what is the purpose of this tour?

We have been out in a number of communities from corner to corner to corner of this province. Redvers today is just a continuation of that, greeting and talking to people about what is working well in their community and how the province can continue to support the work that is happening in many of our communities including today in the Cannington constituency. Then, also asking where do we need to do some additional work together and there is always good answers, but how you learn and how you can ultimately bring some better information to the decisions the government makes is to listen to people just like we are in this constituency today, talking to the

people here in Redvers.

When you do tours like this and talk with different communities and hear their issues, does it go back to the government to be discussed on the provincial level? Does it make a difference?

It goes back in three different ways. First, is the specific issues that will be raised and Daryl Harrison, the MLA here, has to raise this with the relevant minister and have a discussion about what is the best path forward from the perspective of the community, what are some of the hold-ups or why it is the way it is from the perspective of the government and then let's chart a path forward. There are specific issues that are raised that we are trying to navigate through with the MLA and the relevant minister.

Secondly, it provides myself and the MLA both with new macro information on what is happening in rural communities and RMs in this part of the province.

Then the third way, I have the opportunity to visit a number of different communities. For example, two weeks ago I was in Fond-du-Lac, a week before that I was in Frontier, Saskatchewan, and then I live about in the middle of the province, just outside of Prince Albert. Then to bring all of that together for a summary for both our cabinet and caucus to know what is on the minds in certain areas.

We are a very diverse province from our urban centres, to our rural communities, to our northern communities, and this area of the province which is not only focused on agriculture, but has one of the strongest oil industries in not only in Saskatchewan and Canada, but the world

and starting to look into things such as lithium and other resources. You get up to Moosomin and you're in the potash mines as well as pipeline transfers, so there is diversity in our province and we are able to bring that together through visiting the various communities.

What have you heard in the Cannington constituency today?

I have heard a lot on agriculture today with where we are, and the weather the last few days which is typical in a rural area. I know that we have got about three inches of rain over the last few days and a few areas that had quite a bit of wind, but the crops are starting to come off around average and we wish everyone a safe and prosperous harvest in this area.

Access to health care is always a concern in rural communities and I would say there are some pretty innovative models down here where the community is very much involved in not only physician recruitment, but actually employing physicians and everything else. It's always nice to get down and come talk to the leaders, not only town councils, and RM councils, but community leaders. Communities are heavily invested in their health care operations and access to health care for the people they represent and that is extremely helpful for myself, personally, but also for Daryl who will be communicating as well back to the health minister where a few challenges are, but also where a few things are working and working well. Those are the two things that came up.

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Visits Redvers Ag: Scott Moe visits southeast Saskatchewan

Continued from front

Also, highways questions as well. We haven't been able to fix all of the highways in the province as hard as we have attempted, but we are going to keep trying and there is more work to do.

The other one that was interesting, we were just at the Southeast Butcher Block, and that was interesting to talk to them—he actually has global market access. The epitome of value added where they are taking animals from the area and making them into prime cuts and selling it back to people in the area, the region, and then also shipping them off to some of the grocery stores of the area—what a value-added resiliency measure for local producers. Then, we were talking about how global cattle prices really have an impact on the profitability of that business and the profitability of the farms, so they're insulating themselves and making themselves more resilient from an operational local value added perspective. Then, I was talking about some of the work our global trade offices are doing, in ensuring we have market access for their products in not only the US, but some other countries around the world as well. I found that interesting how the two are very different initiatives, but very much working in tandem to ensure the market access, the profitability, the efficiency of our local ranchers in this case. That's an example of things that are working well.

Last year the provincial government came on board with funding Moosomin's airport with a unique four-way funding partnership. The runway is now completed and the Air Ambulance is serving the area as well as corporate jets. What do you think about this project and do you think that unique structure is a way forward for a lot of rural projects?

It is outside the parameters of our general funding structure, but we looked at it as a one-off pilot project because we were asked to by the community. It's a rare situation where we had an industry partner come forward and we had a community come forward to look at doing this funding formula that really hadn't been done before to address the needs of the area. Not only Moosomin many other places in the province are changing. They're changing all the time. We have Nutrien that is a



Ashley Bochek of the World-Spectator interviewing Premier of Saskatchewan Scott Moe in Redvers.

Kevin Weedmark photo

world-class mining company and we have some of the world's largest mining companies that are actively investing not millions, not hundreds of millions of dollars, but billions of dollars right here in the province of Saskatchewan. Connectivity and access is an important discussion for our province, but it is an equally important discussion for many of our communities that are connected to these companies that are working in the global space.

When you look at our agriculture industry, and look who is investing in that space, when you look at our mining, you look at the companies that are investing in the potash space as well as the uranium and copper space, those are globally invested companies and companies with global stature. The same holds true for our energy industry down in this part of the province.

Saskatchewan very much is a global player that is why we have a provincial presence on the ground in nine different countries. That is why you see the Saskatchewan government in Washington, DC, and other areas of the US advocating on behalf of the industries that are creating wealth in our communities including the community of Moosomin. That is why I think it is important and a

credit to the folks in Moosomin that really initiated this project by coming forward and putting together the partnership group that ultimately funded it.

It was a good project, but not one that fit in the parameters of what government has traditionally done, but a very beneficial project for not only Moosomin, but for the surrounding area. It was a good project for this province as well.

In Grenfell the nursing home project is awaiting retendering. What would you say to the people of Grenfell regarding the future of this project?

There are a lot of variables in tendering any project right now. As we have in excess of 20 schools that are either in the planning stages or actually being constructed as we speak. We have a number of long-term care facilities, a few hospitals, highways and all sorts of other provincial infrastructure in the planning stages. What we are finding is a high degree of variability in the tenders that have been issued. So at times—and this isn't the first time and I doubt it will be the last time—when some of those tenders fall outside the parameters of what is reasonable, we get back together and regroup and then retender with some different parameters so that we can ensure the project is being built, but in the parameters the SHA (Saskatchewan Health Authority) has, and the expectations of the community.

Ultimately the community of Grenfell can know that the government is committed to this project, we're building this project, and it will be back to tender as quickly as possible.

The Moosomin District Healthcare Foundation has been working on a proposal for a CT scanner for the Southeast Integrated Care Centre and there was some indication from the province earlier this year there might be a unique solution to that issue. Do you know where that process is at right now or what do you think in general of the need for advanced diagnostic equipment in rural Saskatchewan?

I think there is an opportunity for this. There are a number of different ways it could move forward.

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A tour of Nutrien Rocanville, the world's largest potash mine

BY ASHLEY BOCHER

The Nutrien Rocanville mine held the first family tour since before Covid on August 23. Family members of miners and two representatives of the World-Spectator toured underground and learned about how the mine operates.

Justin Young, General Manager of the Rocanville Mine, explains his position at the mine.

"I am the General Manager at Rocanville. I have been with the company since 2011. I have worked in various capacities over the years. I started as a mining engineer, then took over the completion of the Rocanville West expansion. I went and worked in the mill in the maintenance department. Then, I became the assistant GM where I oversee the mine and the mill, and then most recently, for about the last year I have been GM. As general manager duties, I am responsible for the operation in its entirety for Rocanville—mining, hoisting, milling, and loadout—a little bit of everything. You have to know a little bit about each department, not a lot about one thing. You have to surround yourself with good people that manage the day-to-day operations. The way I see my job, is I am the filter between the corporate office and the site. They have certain initiatives and agendas and I filter that to make sense for our site in Rocanville and then I am also filtering out information from the site to corporate."

"Typically I am in Saskatoon likely once every three weeks, but I am stationed in Rocanville either on the Scissors Creek side or I am at the mill side. I have an office in each and I try to split my time 50/50 between the two."

Mining potash

Young explains Rocanville's approach to mining.

"We start with our ore body and before we even start mining, we do a 3D-seismic of the area to make sure we know what we're expecting for geology because you never want to get into a situation like we

did in the '80s where we didn't know what we were up against and we ran into anomalous ground, which was water bearing and risked flooding our mine. Thankfully they were able to stop it."

"After 3D-seismic, the mine engineer takes a look at the body of reserves and what is the most efficient and effective way to mine it. Then, we create our mine plans—it is handed over to mining operations and they execute. They will set up their panels, we call them, and they're mining off a panel belt onto an extensible belt back to the shaft. Our mining method is long room and pillar—that means we cut three passes. You cut the first pass with the mining machine and you're building the belt behind the miner. Then we anchor what we call a tail-pully—you turn the miner and go back the direction you came from, that is the second pass. Then, we jump the belt and cut the third pass to the end of the room and then just turn the miner back. How big the rooms are depends on the geology and the area you're in. On average, about 5,000-6,000 feet."

Young explains they use conveyor belts to send the potash from the mining machines to the mill, several kilometres away.

"From there, it goes onto the belts. We have a network of conveyor belts that is approximately 75 kms of mainline conveyors throughout the mine to get it back to the mill. The mill is 17 kms as the crow flies back to the east and there we have two hoists, where we hoist it to the surface. It is stored in bins underground—similar to a grain bin on surface except this is cut in rock—we dump it in those bins and then hoist it to surface through those two skips. Then, it goes through the milling process, where it is crushed, sized, cleaned, dried, and then it goes into a storage bin on surface or it could get loaded out right away, typically it goes right into those large storage bins and then we load from there into trains."

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Justin Young the General Manager of Nutrien mine in Rocanville.



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Above, Premier Moe shaking Jenna Dangstorp's hand. At left, Premier Moe with Redvers Town Council members and MLA Daryl Harrison.

Visits Redvers Ag: Scott Moe visits southeast Saskatchewan

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There is public partnerships, private partnerships, public commitments, there are public MRIs that could be placed in communities as well. We just went through a similar discussion with an MRI in the community of Estevan and a CT discussion a few years ago in the community of Melfort.

What is important here is three things, one is for the community to continue to work with the Saskatchewan Health Authority on what model they feel is best going to serve the community, and then have the Saskatchewan Health Authority weigh in as well with some of the data they have. Then work with the locally elected representatives as well to ensure that we are satisfying both those demands as we look forward to whatever that model may be. I think it is very real that we would move forward with some type of diagnostic model in the community of Moosomin. The need has been put forward by the community again and we're thankful for that. I think the SHA is finding a way to incorporate their data into it. Now it is just a matter of what model is going to work best for everyone else involved and we'll find a place for that. Certainly I think we will move forward with it in the not so distant future.

We are very fortunate in a community like Moosomin which is experiencing population growth and experiencing economic investment in the area, and it is very indicative of what is happening in the province. As we grow our services to the people that live there, like diagnostic services—that is only possible through the strength of a growing and vibrant economy and so we are very fortunate as Moosomin is kind of a litmus test as to what is happening in the rest of the province of Saskatchewan. We're so very fortunate to live in what I think is the best province, in what I still believe is the best nation in the world.

In communities like Redvers, retention of health care professionals is an issue. What can the provincial government do to help in rural communities facing this issue?

Those are some of the discussions we had not just in Redvers, but in Stoughton and other communities on various medical health professionals whether that be physicians, access to nurse practitioners, RNs that are providing services and we do have a provincial health and resource action plan which is one of the most ambitious in the Canada, but we also need to remember and ensure that we are working closely with the needs in each community

and Redvers is among them.

One of the pieces of our health care human resources plan is the Saskatchewan Healthcare Recruitment Agency. We want this group to be a focus on recruiting any health care disciplines that we need. We have the SHA which is the employer, the local communities which have their own recruitment committees—I was on one in my community before I was elected—for the provincial recruitment agency to come in and really overlay with the local community so that our supports are complementing some of the local communities so that we're more successful. It is different from community to community some are providing some housing, some are providing some incentives, and we just want to make sure that we are not trampling on one another, but we're actually working together.

With the general election coming up this fall, what are the main messages the Saskatchewan party is going to be trying to get out to the people of the province?

Each of us that have served in government and on both sides, opposition or government, we're certainly imperfect individuals and we haven't been perfect as a government and we understand that. Where we have made errors what we try to do is get on tours like this, listen to people, and change the direction we may have taken. We're always working to make the best decisions. That being said, when election time comes around whether that be municipal, provincial, or federal, it is not about perfection. Elections are about choosing and a choice of who is going to make those very decisions on behalf of you

at the provincial level over the course of the next four years so we will be running on the record that we have which has been a growth-focused record and what we do with the growth of our economy, growth of our population, and the growth of our communities is we reinvest that, buy into the very communities that we represent, a water-treatment facility in Redvers for example, an airport in Moosomin, possibly a diagnostics centre in the future in the community of Moosomin. Those are examples of the investments that are only possible when there is a strong, growing, vibrant economy in our communities and in our province. That is what is attracting young people to stay here and to live here, and to raise their family in the same way that I was so fortunate to be raised in this province and you can contrast that with other parties that are running. They just simply don't have that record of growing the Saskatchewan economy and growing our own opportunities for people to stay here and growing the opportunity we have as a province to reinvest back into our communities.

What we are hearing in our travels is that we have some work to do when it comes to access to health care in all communities, access to surgeries, to primary health care in some of our rural and remote and northern communities and we are working very hard on that through investments.

There is over \$100 million in the most ambitious health human resource plan in the nation of Canada. Investments we are making in capital infrastructure to make sure the people that are offering those services to our communities have a reason-

able place and adequate place they can work in. We have heard about the very real challenge around mental health and the all-too-often subsequent addictions and you're seeing what this government is doing in building out our recovery spaces, but also building out some of our law enforcement to ensure that the drugs—which are not the drugs of yesterday they're literally poison that is being presented in our communities today and it is not a community away, it is our community members, our friends, and all too often our family. Those drugs need to be taken away from the drug dealers and the drug dealers need to be removed from our communities, and the way forward in that space is to increase some of our law enforcement presence.

We're hearing about affordability, but we are also hearing and realizing that Saskatchewan today is the most affordable province in Canada to live. Our inflation rate is also the lowest in the nation of Canada. We understand that the cost of living and our paycheques are just not going as far as they did a few years ago. Relative to other provinces, we are doing much better as the most affordable place, but it still doesn't change the fact that a paycheque is buying less than it did years ago, and certainly talking to Saskatchewan people about that as well. It is an exciting time, but a time where there is more work to do and we're committed to doing that and that will be the value proposition that we put forward to the people of Saskatchewan as we enter into the next election. We will invest and continue to grow our economy in Saskatchewan so we can build a brighter future for the younger generation.



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A tour of Nutrien Rocanville, the world's largest potash mine

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Background of mine

Young says the Rocanville mine employs many people from surrounding communities. "Underground and surface combined we have about 860 people from the area and others from all over."

He says the mine was built 54 years ago. "The Nutrien mine in Rocanville was built in September of 1970, that is when the first rail car was loaded. We started operations at Scissors Creek in November of 1976. We announced the expansion and the new shaft in 2007 for Scissors Creek, and we completed it in 2016. We sunk the Scissors Creek shaft, and we also built mill two at the same time back at the original site. It was all part of that expansion, but then we also had to add to our underground network. We had to get more mining machines to double our throughput. It was 26 conveyors underground throughout to set up panels and then build shops and all the electrical infrastructure," Young said.

Huge local operation

Young explains the Nutrien Rocanville mine ships large amounts of potash by train every day.

"We are shipping close to on average 20,000 tonnes a day. We could load a little more than that. Typically on a good day if the demand is there, we will load out what we produce because if we didn't, we would fill our barns. We average 16,500 tonnes a day and then loading close to 20,000 if the demand is there. We are slated to produce about 5 million tonnes this year and our nameplate capacity is about 6.5 million tonnes."

Young says the mine ships many tonnes of potash to the west coast to be shipped to other countries.

"For us at Rocanville, 70-80 per cent of our product is domestic. Some goes to Canada, but mostly to the United States. It is shipped via rail to the states. The remainder of it goes through what we call, Canpotex, and that goes for the most part out to the west coast port in Vancouver. It is sold to China, India, whoever Canpotex has contracts with."

Challenges underground

Young says there are challenges that come when working underground.

"In mining, you are mining into the unknown a lot of the time—there is seismic, but you really don't know what you have until you're mining into it. You know that you're not hitting anomalous ground, but sometimes you don't know how the ground is going to react to mining so there are always those concerns, the geological formations you're mining into. Thankfully, we have a strong mining engineering team that manages that with the support of operations. There are so many moving parts, there is 75 kms of moving conveyor and if one of your conveyors goes down toward the shaft you aren't mining anywhere else because you can't get the raw material off, so there is always maintenance that you're up against. We have superintendents that manage that for us now. Then, you have a workforce of 800 some people so there's always the people you're managing. It takes all kinds of people to run a potash mine."

Young says that transportation is one of the biggest challenges for the mine.

"If you were to ask me yesterday what the biggest challenge is, I would have said the rail strike because that has a huge impact on our business. The majority of our material is shipped by rail, and it seems like every year we have one of those type of disruptions. It is either on the rail or on the port so that is always something we are watching. We do understand there are a few other contracts coming up."

"We are seeing strong demand for potash right now, but with that the price is somewhat soft so that is a bit of



Kevin Weedmark and Ashley Bocek of the World-Spectator touring about a kilometre underground of Nutrien mine at Scissors Creek north of Rocanville.

a challenge. Based on forecast, we are expecting strong demand again next year because potash is pretty affordable right now. Looking at some of our competitors, at some point we are going to see the war on people, where you're fighting over skilled and qualified tradespeople and professionals. We haven't quite seen that yet, but I anticipate in coming years that will be more of a challenge."

New mines means competition for employees

Young says with the new mines coming to Saskatchewan Rocanville mine hasn't seen an impact on recruitment yet, but that might change.

"For our operation we haven't really seen much of a draw from our resources to BHP. It is probably more of a concern for Lanigan because they're neighbours up there. We haven't seen them hire many full-time people. They are still a couple years away from production so it is obviously a concern of ours, but right now we haven't seen too many people leave. I am sure once we get closer to the fourth quarter of 2026 or the first quarter to 2027 when it comes online. Prior to that you'll probably see more of a pull, but I think our northern mines up by Saskatoon will be most impacted. Certain positions are harder to come by. It is trying to attract young engineers, young professionals that is tougher especially if they go to school in a bigger centre like Toronto or Saskatoon where you have friends and you don't want to leave that. We have been fortunate, we have a few folks that are somewhat from around the area then we get them on board and sometimes they may have a significant other who is also a professional and we get them on board so we were pretty lucky here last year. Then, there is some competition for talent in terms of mechanics and electricians."

Tours encourage a learning experience for all

Young says the mine is a lot bigger than what people think.

"I don't think people understand how big of a footprint we actually are

underground, and understand what goes on to make it all work, but that is why we do tours, to get our younger generation from the area that we anticipate the kids that we tour may work at the mine at some point, but it also gives an opportunity for kids like my own son to see what dad does and where dad works. Thankfully, we are allowed to do this, because we haven't been able to do these tours for awhile."

He said because of the location of the mine not everyone is aware of the operation and how significant it is.

"It is an awareness thing—it is hidden underground. It is hidden north of Rocanville, unless you were to drive by it you would never really know it is there."

Young says the mine's footprint is as big as the city of Saskatoon. "We use lots of tactics to explain the rough size of the mine, but a good comparison is if you overlaid our mine over the city of Saskatoon map you would see it is about the same size and as we continue to expand to the west, the overlay of our mine would almost overlay the city of Calgary so if you put it into reference of how big Calgary is or how big Saskatoon is that is the footprint of our mine."

He says Nutrien Rocanville mine has more than a dozen mining machines.

"We have 15 miners in our fleet. Typically for us to hit our production plan we're running about nine in a day depending on the mining sequence some are turning, some are down for preventative maintenance."

Largest potash mine in the world

Young says the mine at Rocanville is the biggest potash mine in the world.

"The Nutrien mine at Rocanville, in terms of volume, ranks number one in Saskatchewan, and is the world's largest potash mine."

"Mosaic did claim that they were the largest, but it didn't pan out with their Canpotex numbers. They have the biggest footprint of a mine, but we produce more."

He explains, "The Nutrien assets alone produced around 13-14 million tonnes last year and global demand is around 68-72 million tonnes. We have seen growth about 2.5-2.7 per cent year-over-year. There are years that is down, but always seems to be

followed by a year or two where it is up."

Not what people expect

Young explains the mine is different from what most people may think.

"Everybody pictures a mine where you go into this little tunnel, it is really dark, you can touch the walls on either side, there are rocks falling everywhere, it's wet and it's cold, and then you come to Rocanville and it is actually quite the opposite. Our rooms are 8-9 feet tall, 26 feet wide would be our narrowest room, some are up to 66 feet wide, you get off the cage (the shaft) and it is almost 30 feet high by 40 feet wide. It's a lot more open and a lot more air moving than people would expect. I think that would be the biggest wow factor. People never picture this underground. They're expecting they're going to go into this small little hole and they get out in an open area."

Future expansion

Young says the mine sees increasing global demand for potash going forward.

"We're seeing the global growth in demand equal to what the tonnes are coming online from other competitors or other people in the business. By the time we see BHP coming online the global demand for potash—based on 2-3 per cent growth—will be able to absorb those tonnes. So for us, I see our site running roughly about the same going forward. You would have to spend a lot of capital expenses to upgrade things and it probably makes more sense to invest in some of our other facilities at this point. I see steady as it goes right now and we will be continuing to move to the West."

He says the Rocanville mine will see future expansion at some point.

"There are lots of considerations for a shaft, it is a very large capital investment for that type of infrastructure—when you're spending that kind of money you're doing a lot of feasibility studies to make sure you're spending the right money, at the right time, on the right things. There are other solutions to power, we have things called power wells that is an encased hole and you stick your power feed down. Then, you're seeing the push for electric vehicle fleets. If you're moving to electric vehicle fleets you're depleting the amount of diesel particulate matter in the air so you need less ventilation ultimately. There are certain things that can bridge us to the point where you would need to do a new shaft so I think we are a long way from announcing anything like that, but in a mine our size, you're always looking at all of the alternatives."

Young explains the growth to the west. "We can't go to the east because that is Manitoba. We can't go to the north because that is Mosaic, and as you go to the south the ore body dips and as you go south it gets too deep to mine you would have to look at solution mines for mining a deeper ore body because you get so much pressure on the ground from all the overhead burdens so the deeper the ore body gets, the more pressure on the ground, so at some point there is a line that it doesn't make sense to mine."

What makes the difference in Rocanville to make it the world's largest potash mine?

"The quality of our ore body," says Young. "We have very stable ground which allows us to do three pass mining. The ore grade is strong, but it really comes down to the ore body. Three pass mining is very efficient to do versus stress-relief chevron mining which is what some of our other sites do, so just the efficiency and the operating costs are very low. There are less hazards because there are no clay seams. When you run into those you're doing a lot of bolting which is another added cost."

Young says the Nutrien mine has operated outside of Rocanville for many decades.

"It has been here for 54 years and based on our public disclosures we will continue to be here for the long term. We do have more land to the northwest as well, so we'll see."

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Expanded TMEI funding aims to grow Sask mining industry

BY RYAN KIEDROWSKI
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Saskatchewan is growing to become a mineral exploration hot spot, and the government is keen on attracting more new business development. Recently, the Ministry of Energy and Resources' Targeted Mineral Exploration Incentive reported an increase in its annual funding cap—up from \$750,000 to \$4 million, also expanding the program's scope in the process to include all hard rock minerals in any region throughout the province.

"We're open for business and proud of it," said Energy and Resource Minister Jim Reiter. He credits competitive exploration support programs like the TMEI as being attractive to perspective companies looking to set up shop in Saskatchewan.

The incentive is designed to focus specifically on mineral exploration, and even more specifically on drilling. Companies that have drilled for hard rock minerals over the past year can submit an application to the TMEI and would be eligible for a 25 per cent grant towards drilling costs, up to a maximum of \$50,000 per year for uranium and \$150,000 per year with all other hard rock minerals.

The TMEI program first launched back in 2018 with a goal to diversify the provincial mineral sector. At that time, it was a route to help bolster drilling and exploration, but with last year's Critical Minerals Strategy, one goal was to increase Saskatchewan's share of national mineral exploration spending to 15 per cent by 2030. This target doubles the number of critical minerals produced in the province, in turn growing production of potash, uranium and helium, plus establishing Saskatchewan as a rare earth element hub.

"It is a lofty target, but we think we're going to get there, or at least very close to it," Reiter replied when

asked about the 15 per cent by 2030 goal. "The program is pretty new, but it's been working. In 2022, we had eight per cent of all the Canadian exploration spending; last year we were at 10.2 per cent, so we had a big jump there. Our projections are showing that by the end of this year, it's supposed to hit 10.8 per cent.

"It takes these kinds of programs a little bit of time for industry to be aware and to take advantage of them. So we think we're definitely moving in the right direction," he continued. "There's the traditional minerals that have always been important in Saskatchewan—potash and uranium—we're seeing a lot of exploration still in those, but we're also seeing it in other areas too. So we think this is going to just keep growing."

Another indication of growth is in the number of companies getting involved in the TMEI program—up from five in 2023 to 28 this year. Those 28 exploration projects made \$62.3 million in overall drill project expenditures, which is a huge gain from \$9.8 million in the year previous.

In terms of production numbers (in volume), the most recent data from 2023 showed potash accounting for 63 per cent, while a variety of other minerals such as gold, copper, zinc, silver and sodium sulphate, bentonite, and coal made up another 32 per cent with salt and uranium comprising the remainder.

So why is mineral exploration so important in Saskatchewan right now?

"That's what the companies look at before they actually develop the mines, which is an important part of the process," Reiter said. "Then that sort of begs the question, 'well, why do you want to enhance the mining industry anyway?' It's simply because it diversifies our economy. It creates revenues for the province, it creates jobs for our

citizens, and that's what it's all about—the revenues for the province is used for things that all our citizens want—for healthcare, for education, for our highways, for social services."

Potash and uranium have been important to the province for many years, but rare earth elements are also prevalent—often found in uranium deposits. Thanks to continued work by the Saskatchewan Research Council, extracting REEs from those deposits is becoming more economical, poising the province for a potential boom as other markets decline. China is the world's largest producer of REEs at 95 per cent, meeting around 97 per cent of global demand. But their market has noted decrease in exports over the past decade.

"It's expanding in a lot of areas. It's not just the existing ones we're used to getting larger—that's happening—but we're also seeing development in areas we've never had before," Reiter said of overall development in the province, also pointing to Foran Mining's McIlverna Bay copper mine in northeast Saskatchewan as an example.

As for the southeast corner of the province—a land traditionally known for oil and gas—Reiter sees potential for the area. None of the 28 approved projects this year are based in the southeast, but there is interest nonetheless.

"I think the southeast part of the province, we are going to see expansion there," Reiter said. "We're used to it being an oil and gas area, but we're seeing a lot of interest in that area because of helium and lithium."

Businesses interested in the TMEI can apply through the provincial government website, or as Reiter advises, by contacting the Ministry of Energy and Resources.

"Or they can contact my office," he added. "We'll direct them to the right folks. It's very easy to get their questions answered and help with doing that."

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Ashley Bocek photo



Kevin Weedmark photo

At left, the photo Ashley Bocek took of RCMP draping carver Stan Hunt with a star blanket, that will be part of a museum exhibit at the Canadian Museum of History based on the Residential School Memorial created by Hunt. At right, Ashley Bocek.

Residential School Memorial now at Canadian Museum of History

Photographer Ashley Bocek's work part of exhibit in national museum

BY KEVIN WEEDMARK

A photo by World-Spectator reporter and photographer Ashley Bocek will be part of a display at the Canadian Museum of History.

On September 30, the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, the museum will unveil a display built around the Residential School Memorial, a carved totem pole created by carver Stan Hunt. The display will be up at the museum in

the Ottawa area for a year.

Part of the display will be a photo Bocek took at the RCMP Heritage Centre last September.

Following is an interview with Bocek on having her work selected for the museum exhibit.


For people who don't know you, tell me about yourself and how you came to be taking photos for the World-Spectator

that day.

I've lived in Moosomin my whole life. I grew up there, my whole family lives there and I went to school at MacLeod Elementary and McNaughton High School. In my Grade 11 and 12 years I started out working at The World-Spectator as the student employee. I started off working at The World-Spectator just doing whatever they needed—a couple of calls here and there for advertising, washing their

vehicles, getting fuel, picking up signs and stuff like that. Then Kevin brought me along on some stories and interviews and showed me a little bit about that.

Then I was also asked to take photos for The World-Spectator so then that kind of intertwined with the stories—I would go and do a story and take photos for the article.

Continued on page 14 



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NATIONAL DAY FOR TRUTH & RECONCILIATION

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This day honours the children who never came home, the survivors of residential schools, their families and communities. Join us as we reflect upon the historical and ongoing trauma caused by the residential schools so that we may move forward together in reconciliation.

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Residential School Memorial exhibit opens Sept. 30

Honouring the lives of Indigenous children removed from their families and sent to residential schools, Indian Residential School Memorial Monument by Kwakwaka'wakw artist Stan Hunt passed through Saskatchewan last year, and ended its journey from the West Coast at the Canadian Museum of History, where it will become part of the national collection.

An exhibit featuring the memorial opens on the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, September 30, at the museum. Inspired by the history of residential schools and the customary tradition of memorial monuments, Hunt carved a series of 130 unsmiling faces, each representing an individual child.

"The faces are outlined in orange as a reminder that every child matters, and the 18-foot Monument has been painted black to mark a dark time in history. "This powerful memorial is a tangible reminder of events from our shared past," said Caroline Dromaguet, President and CEO of the Canadian Museum of History. "Its acquisition and display in 2024 gives us new opportunities to spark national conversations related to reconciliation and the residential school system."

"We hope that visitors will not only be moved by the monument's rich symbolism, but also be inspired to engage in thoughtful discussion and reflection around a difficult chapter in this country's evolving story."



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Steven Bonk, MLA for Moosomin Constituency

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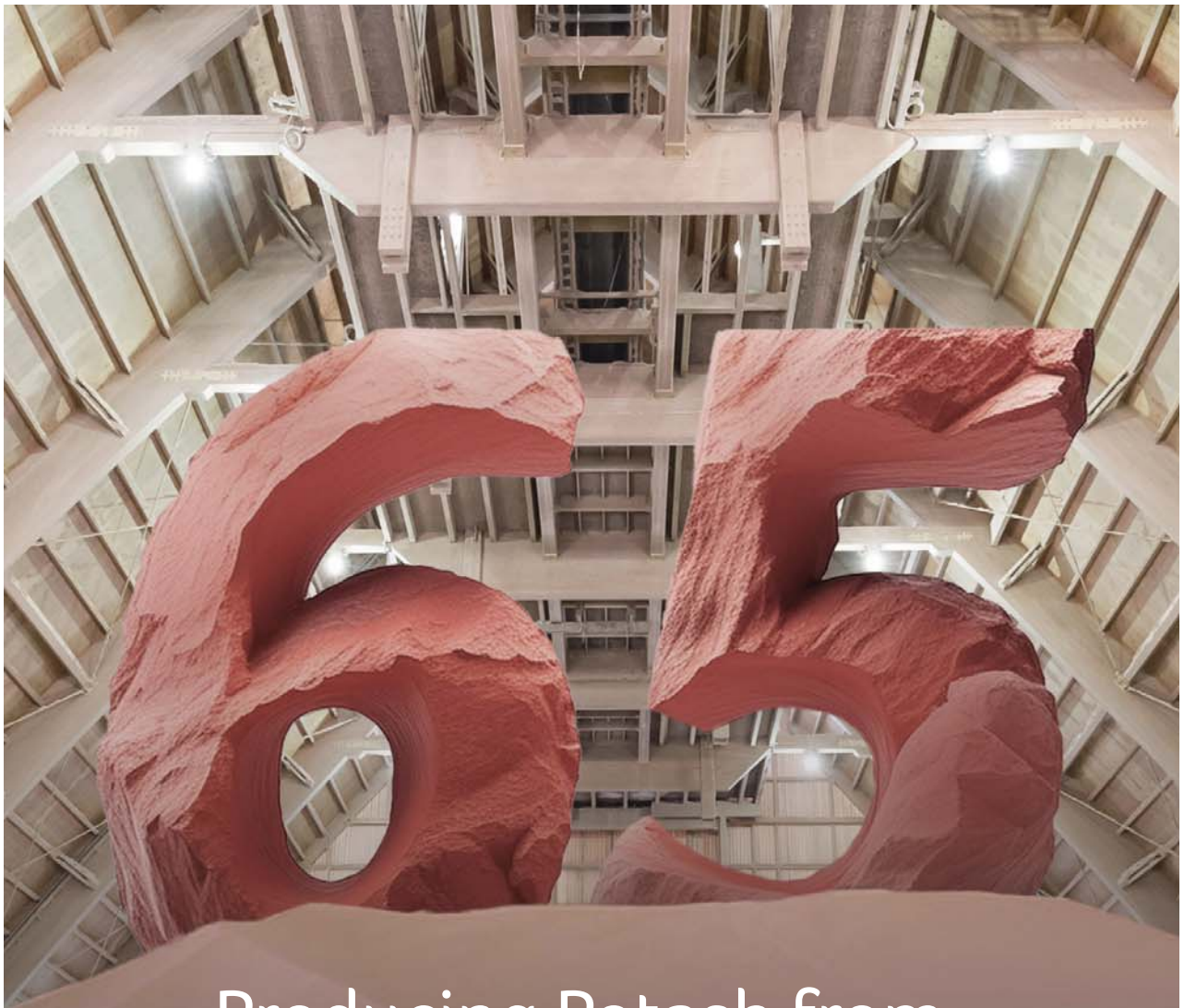
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Nutrien

65 Years of Potash in Saskatchewan: Celebrating our Indigenous Partners

Discover how Nutrien's potash business unit Indigenous Procurement Strategy fosters meaningful partnerships and promotes inclusivity within our global supply chain

BRAND AND CULTURE COMMUNICATIONS

Since our Patience Lake mine began shipping potash in 1959, Saskatchewan and the world has benefited from this resource and the important role that it plays in Feeding the Future. As we celebrate 65 years of potash mining in Saskatchewan, an important part of that story includes the way in which Indigenous communities have—over the last several decades—played a role in the development of the potash industry and its impact on global food security. Nutrien's Potash Indigenous Procurement Strategy tells a part of that story: the way in which it helps create Indigenous impact within Saskatchewan.

Nutrien's Potash Indigenous Procurement Strategy is designed to create meaningful relationships that benefit all stakeholders. As part of the strategy, we ensure that all contract evaluations within the potash business unit prioritize a minimum of 10% towards Local Indigenous Content (LAC) commitments, increasing Indigenous impact through our supply chain. This strategy is designed to promote long-term Indigenous impact, fostering sustainable growth and development for Indigenous businesses, communities, and people by supporting our Nutrien teams, thoughtfully engaging external stakeholders, and seeking to lead in this space within industry.

"During the development of our strategy, we worked closely with our Indigenous and non-Indigenous supply chain, as well as a large cross-section of internal stakeholders," says Josh Dodd, Director, Procurement, Potash. "This ensured we created a framework that spoke to the realities of their experiences and expectations, while aligning with a vision for continued growth and sustainable impact."

In 2020, Nutrien set an ambitious target, that by 2025 we would achieve 25% relevant procurable Potash spend with local Indigenous Suppliers, or Suppliers who have a minimum of 15% Indigenous employees. This goal, known as 25x25, has been exceeded ahead of schedule, demonstrating the Nutrien team's commitment to creating positive impact, and the vibrant economic achievements of Indigenous businesses in Saskatchewan. As of September 2024, Nutrien has already reached over 30% local Indigenous impact in our Potash business unit and spent over \$900M CAD cumulatively to-



Photos taken at the 2024 SIMSA Saskatchewan Mining Supply Chain Forum



wards this goal. Approximately half of that total has been spent with Indigenous businesses competing through our sourcing processes.

"Our Potash Indigenous Procurement Strategy is vital for fostering inclusive economic growth and supporting the communities where we operate," says Chris Reynolds, EVP & Chief Commercial Officer at Nutrien. "By

partnering with Indigenous businesses, we not only enhance our supply chain but also contribute to the broader goals of reconciliation and economic participation."

Our journey with Indigenous procurement is marked by collaboration, respect, and a shared vision for the future. As we look to the future, Nutrien remains committed in our dedication to supporting Indigenous commu-

nities and fostering local business growth.

This anniversary not only celebrates Nutrien's history but also our strong relationships with communities and people. Through initiatives like the Potash Indigenous Procurement Strategy, we are driving positive change, creating opportunities, and building a more inclusive and prosperous future for all.

Residential School Memorial now at Canadian Museum of History

Photographer Ashley Bocek's work part of exhibit in national museum

Continued from page 9

Last September, I was asked to go to the RCMP Heritage Centre for the reception of the Residential School Monument. Kevin asked me to go cover it because I had moved to Regina for the fall to go to university and I kept writing while I was in the city. Stan Hunt had made a totem pole, he was the carver, and Kevin wanted to put it in the World-Spectator Truth and Reconciliation feature, so I took a couple of pictures and stayed for the ceremony which was really nice and it was really good to see everything.

So what did you think of the event that day? What was that like?

Honestly, I didn't know what to expect because I had never been to anything like that before. They unveiled the totem pole. It was actually quite a big event and it went on for quite awhile and it was very cool to see. They did a couple of speeches and Stan brought his family along on the tour that the totem pole was going on and they did some ceremonies. It was really cool and I got to take a couple of pictures and it was honestly very interesting to all see and kind of learn about too.

I look back at some of those pictures again and then I look at some of the other media pictures—you seem to capture the spirit more than the other photos, with the expressions on the faces, with the moment the star blanket is being lifted over Stan's shoulders. What's your approach to photography and how did you capture those images? Compared to what other people published that day, yours are outstanding.

I've always liked taking pictures and I thought that day that it's all about the ceremony, and how important it was to Stan and his family that they created something so beautiful, not just for the B.C. First Nations but for all of Canada, for all of the Indigenous people in Canada.

When I was taking pictures I wanted lots of pictures of Stan himself but also of his family because it shows that they're all there supporting one another but this is all there to celebrate them and their culture. They were very easy to take pictures of, too, just because you could tell that they were at so much peace and they were so happy and that made the photos.

I just focused on the special moments like hugging and the star blanket specifically. I just wanted to get those because those pictures show what the whole day was about just from one shot.

That other one is a great one too where Sgt Kelly and a member of Stan's family are embracing. That's another great shot.

After taking the photos, I was thinking that's a good one too but I never thought a lot about it until now looking back at it a year later when the museum asked me about the picture. I looked back at all the rest of them and I thought, 'Wow, they really do emphasize and portray what that day was all about.' And I love that, actually. It shows a lot about what people were thinking that day and what was in people's hearts and on their minds.

Did you know that day that you'd captured something special?

No, I was honestly very surprised by all of this. That day I realized that it was such a great event going on and I remember seeing the pictures after and thinking that they would be good for the paper but I never thought that they would be so good that they'd want to use them in a museum to highlight the story behind the totem pole.

That exhibit is going to be unveiled on September 30 on Truth and Reconciliation Day. What was your reaction when you heard that the Museum of History in the Ottawa area selected your picture out of all of the ones that were taken around the country to use as part of the museum exhibit?

I thought, 'Oh my gosh. They want my picture out of a whole bunch of other pictures taken along its journey.'

To me it was kind of crazy because I thought they were good pictures but I didn't think they were as good a quality as the ones used in museums. I've been to museums and seen the pictures that are there to highlight different objects and artifacts. Those always look like fantastic pictures and I honestly just didn't think that mine were as amazing and they'd want to use it.

How does that make you feel that somebody totally unbiased who doesn't know you is saying, 'This is museum-quality work. This is amazing work.'

I honestly just makes me so happy because I knew that I always like taking pictures but I just never thought that anything like this would ever come of it. It's a very cool thing to happen to me. I'm just surprised that mine was chosen and it does make me really happy and excited and I want to go see it with my family. I would love to go see it and I want to go to the Canadian Museum of History anyway because I've never been—but to go in and see my name in there is really cool.

What do you like about photography?

I always like the way you take a picture and instantly someone can connect with it and knows what it's about



One of Ashley Bocek's other photos from Stan Hunt's Residential School Memorial in Regina last year.

it, but honestly I don't even know where it comes from. It's just kind of cool to me that I do have that eye, that can pick up on things. It's the most random things sometimes too where I think it would make a cool picture. It could mean nothing but to me it's still a really cool picture. Then people can see it and know and feel it and have a sense of connection to it.

What do you enjoy about being creative and communicating in that way? Photography is one form of communication but creative people always want to communicate in different ways it seems.

To me it kind of comes as a surprise that I am somewhat decent at photography and see things that are different and want to take a picture of it.

This picture shows me that I do have a bit of a talent that I never thought anything of. I do think it's kind of cool that way to kind of connect in a world like that. So maybe I'll dive into it a little bit more.

This is an important display—the unveiling is on September 30 on Truth and Reconciliation Day in the nation's capital and you have a part in it—how does that make you feel?

I'm so excited that I was chosen and I'm happy to be a little part of something that's so big.

It makes me smile. I'm so excited that my name gets to be a part of something bigger than just the picture I took. It's really cool to think about it and know that I get to be a part of this big ceremony and a big part of Indigenous culture. My picture is there and it's really cool to me. It's for all of Canada and that's really special. I can't wait to go take my picture there because I would cherish that forever.

I have been able to be a part of so many cool experiences working at the World-Spectator and this is just another example of that!



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Keller Developments has two apartment buildings under construction in Moosomin that will benefit from the community's new residential construction housing incentive. (Kevin Weedmark photos)

As a result of \$30,000 housing incentive plan: Massive interest in construction after incentive

BY KEVIN WEEDMARK
Moosomin Economic Development Officer Casey McCormac says the response to Moosomin's \$30,000 residential construction incentive has been overwhelming.

She's had calls from across the country, and even from outside the country.

In addition to people looking to move to Moosomin to build a house because of the \$30,000 incentive, McCormac has taken calls from developers, RTM builders and construction companies looking to set up in town.

"It's been even more successful than we could have even hoped," says McCormac.

"The reason we did the \$30,000 was to get the publicity for Moosomin and I think it worked 10 times better than Council even knew it was going to. It hit national news and I've had calls from Ontario, Quebec, the Maritimes, Germany, the United States.

"It's crazy the amount of coverage it's gotten, and not just for the residential incentive. It's really good publicity for Moosomin in general."

"There have been some calls from businesses, so hopefully there's some more businesses that are going to come out of this. Definitely construction companies are looking at the area. I've heard from lots of different modular home builders because that seems to be the way that things are going with the cost of construction. I've also heard from people who are interested that own their own businesses—like from one person that owns a bakery and random little stores and businesses like that. I'm just hoping that this publicity helps push us forward towards our goal of becoming a city."

McCormac says she has taken more than 100 calls on the housing incentive.

"When it first started



Moosomin Economic Development Officer Casey McCormac has handled more than a hundred inquiries about a \$30,000 residential construction incentive designed to help housing catch up with commercial development in Moosomin.

hitting national news, all day, all I did was answer the phone. I had four lines ringing at once and my cell phone and the office was fielding calls for me."

She said she has no doubt the target number of units will be built under the program. "I have no doubt that we're going to hit that target," she said. "We have three years to hit it and I think we're going to hit it in one to two years instead. Everyone is excited about it, but I do think that it will lead to long term growth because it shows that the town of Moosomin is willing to invest in the people and invest in bringing those people to town and invest in the residents' wellbeing."

McCormac said she believes the program can be replicated elsewhere.

"I definitely think that this is something that could be replicated in oth-

er places. I think that it is important that the town is forward thinking and realizes the importance of it but I definitely think that it's something that can be replicated. I've actually had phone calls from different towns asking many, many questions. One guy that I was on the phone with yesterday for half an hour was asking me questions about how we came up with our incentive. I think that it's very interesting and has definitely caught the attention of people so I think that it's something that could be replicated by people who think the same way as Moosomin.

"Investing in housing is huge because we can bring in all of the businesses that we want, and bring in all of the different companies and whatever else, but without the people to run them, they won't work.

the end. They're very intrigued by it."

'Is this real?'

McCormac said the most common question she's getting is whether the \$30,000 payment for a new house is real.

"A lot of people call and say, 'Is this real? Are you sure that this is real?' I say yes and then they ask, 'What's the catch? Do I have to make a specific-looking home or does it have to be 2,000 square feet or can it be a modular home?' I say, 'No, it can be any kind of home. As long as that's what can be put on that lot, you're good to go.' People are just amazed and a lot of people think it can't be real,

we can't be giving out \$30,000 to everyone who builds a home, but we are, because it's an investment in the future of our community."

McCormac says she is proud of the role Moosomin Economic Development had in crafting the incentive.

"I'm so proud because it shows how forward-thinking Moosomin is and how willing our town is to invest in our future. I think the EDC did play a big role in coming up with this plan, along with the CBA, and it's just super cool to see that people all over Canada realize how up-and-coming Moosomin is and are starting to look differently at rural Saskatchewan."



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Moosomin Shriners hold annual fundraiser

BY ASHLEY BOCHER

The Moosomin Shriners will hold their annual fundraising supper Friday, October 25. The supper will raise money for Play Fair Daycare and the local Shrine group to support children in Shriners Hospitals.

Jim Moore, a member of the Moosomin Shrine Club says this is the 11th year for the Shriners fundraising supper.

"This is our 11th annual fundraiser with dinner and a show. We start with dinner and then we have an update from our own club as to the different fundraising activities for the year, also some of the donations we have made locally to various groups, and there will be a couple other speeches before we have a band playing afterwards."

Details for the event

Moore says an '80s band will be playing at the fundraiser.

"Rock Candy will be the band playing later on in the night. It is classic rock—'70s and '80s music that people are familiar with. I think people will enjoy it."

He explains the fundraiser will include an auction that night.

"We are going to have an auction as well. We have various sponsors that donate prizes including two WestJet tickets again this year. We will be auctioning those off as well."

Moore says there will be speeches after supper.

"Our club president Leo Ilustrismo will give an update of our club and then usually we have the Potentate from Wa Wa Shriners, the Saskatchewan Shriners and he usually does a presentation as well. We're securing a Shrine family that will come and do a talk as well as to how the Shriners have helped them out."

Moore says the Shriners will be serving a roast beef supper.

"The event is at the Conexus MCC Centre October 25, it is a Friday night. The doors open at 5:30 pm, we have dinner at 6:30 pm and then the entertainment comes on around 8 pm that night. It will be a roast beef supper we are serving this year."

Fundraising goal

Moore says the Shriners hope to have a good crowd to help support the families and groups that use Shriners Hospitals.

"We hope we raise some funds for the local groups that we contribute to. A lot of them are children with special needs and we have donated to various families locally that way and different community groups as well we have made donations too. We just want to get the message out and be a reminder to folks what the Shriners is all about and what our purpose is. It is a major fundraiser for the year for us so we hope to raise funds to continue that philanthropy."

Fundraising for Playfair Daycare

Moore says half of the proceeds from the supper will go to Playfair Daycare.

"We see the day care as a much needed service in the community to help young families who maybe want to relocate to Moosomin and that is definitely an advantage having day care facilities that can accommodate that, and it is geared around children as well which is the Shriners' main focus so we thought the day care would be a good cause to donate some of the funds to this year."



The band Rock Candy performing at Rock n' the Park at Esterhazy last year. The band will be playing at the Shriners Fundraiser Supper on Friday, October 25.

Tickets sell out fast!

Moore says the fall concert is the Shriners' main fundraiser of the year.

"It is important that we continue to get the message out of what the Shriners do. It is one of our main fundraisers of the year so we do rely on it for funds to carry on our philanthropy throughout the year."

Moore says tickets sell fast every year for the supper.

"We usually sell out, and very quickly. This year we have 46 tables of 8 people per table so we will be close to 370 people that attend. We get fantastic support from the community as far as attendance. A lot of local businesses will contribute items for the auction as well so we are very fortunate to have good community support to make this event happen."

"Tickets go on sale September 1 and for those folks that do purchase a table of eight for \$480, we do include a round of drinks as well if they purchase a table by September 30. It is best to get tickets early when they come on sale, because they do go quickly."

If you're interested in buying tickets this September 1, text Margaret of the Shriners.

The main contact for tickets will be one of our committee members, Margaret Fuchs and her phone number is 306-434-8112. Anyone can phone or text Margaret for tickets."

Local support

Moore says the supper takes a lot of time to organize and they receive help from local volunteers and community groups.

"It takes a few months. We have a committee of seven of us and we meet monthly initially and then every couple of weeks as the event gets closer. We have a lot of work to do in terms of arranging the entertainment, the meal, securing the

venue."

"There are a lot of volunteers involved—about 40-50 volunteers between Shrine Club members, one of the local restaurants helps us out for the meal, and the Kinsmen and Kinettes are a big help as well helping sell tickets for the event and working the bar that night. Then, our audio and visual production is done by the audio visual class at McNaughton High School. Sherrie Meredith and the kids involved in that class are a big help to us as well."

The fundraiser also keeps the Shriners visible in the community.

"We just want to remind folks of everything the Shriners do and what we are all about," Moore said. "Our main purpose is to help community groups, but also children that have special needs. If we can contribute financially or through the Shriner system then that is really our main focus and purpose and we just want people to have fun at the supper and see the community support."

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Nutrien marks 65 years in Sask with special grant for communities

Application deadline September 30

BY RYAN KIEDROWSKI
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Usually on a birthday people receive gifts, but Nutrien is celebrating their 65th year in Saskatchewan by sharing with the communities the company calls home. The Nutrien Building Stronger Communities Together Grant will see 65 organizations in Saskatchewan and Manitoba receive grants, with each successful group receiving \$2,500 from the company.

"The creation of the grant came out of Nutrien's desire to mark the occasion by giving back to the communities where we operate," said Renee Glushyk, Nutrien Manager of Community Relations and Investment. "Nutrien is proud to call Saskatchewan home, we wanted to help others make an impact by providing this grant as a way to support projects, programs, initiatives or events in communities across the province."

Charities, non-profits, community organizations and even municipalities throughout the two prairie provinces are welcome to apply, with priority placed on communities and surrounding areas where

Nutrien operates. Applications are to be submitted online through the Saskatchewan Community Foundation deadline before the Sept. 30 deadline. Successful applicants will be announced in early October.

"The Saskatchewan Community Foundation stewards funds on behalf of individuals, families and organizations and shares in our desire to support communities," explained Glushyk. "We have partnered with them on a number of projects in the past, so it was a natural fit for us to partner with them on this grant to celebrate our 65-year legacy."

Nutrien has been well-known locally for their continued contributions back to the region, supporting several initiatives of various sizes and scope.

"It's important to us that we make a positive and lasting impact in the communities where we operate, and our employees live," Glushyk explained. "We're proud to have been part of the fabric of Saskatchewan for 65 years and even though we now have a global presence, we will always be committed to our roots and to the people who are so critical to our operations as we

continue our purpose of Feeding the Future."

With headquarters in Saskatoon, Nutrien employs 4,300 people in Saskatchewan that ultimately help supply potash to farmers around the globe.



Nutrien Scissors Creek

Kevin Weedmark photo

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MAX Power Uncovers Canada's Largest Natural Hydrogen Target Area

MAX Power Mining Corp., utilizing proprietary methods and data modelling, has identified a prospective naturally occurring hydrogen resource play in southeast Saskatchewan featuring dozens of historical hydrogen showings, including grades up to 96.4%, within a compelling geological context.

As a result, through a series of permit applications, MAX Power initially assembled a 1,244 sq. km land package, which is called the Rider Natural Hydrogen Project, situated within the 200-km-long Torquay-Rocanville Corridor. The company has since added an additional 2,112 square kilometers of mineral rights.

Multiple high-priority target areas exist across five separate large claim blocks and include evidence of potential upward migration of hydrogen to surface, possibly through serpentinization or fracture zones, making the Rider Project the largest known area in Canada for the potential discovery of naturally occurring accumulations of hydrogen gas. MAX Power's staking covers almost all of the available Crown land as well as the premier Natural Hydrogen targets within the Torquay-Rocanville Corridor.

Two blocks at the Rider Natural Hydrogen Project include very high concentrations of hydrogen from the wellhead, supported by historical drill stem tests from old wells, indicating that Natural Hydrogen may have migrated to surface.

Two additional high-

grade showings from the wellhead also occur within 800 meters and 200 meters, respectively, of MAX Power land claims.

Given the limited number of wells (45) in the data set covering the Rider Natural Hydrogen Project, vs. the number of total wells believed to have been drilled in the region for which data is not available, the fact that seven of these wells showed hydrogen grades >10% at varying depths takes on added significance (the other 38 showed hydrogen grades between 1% and 10%).

MAX Power Special Advisor Denis Briere, VP-Engineering for Chapman Hydrogen and Petroleum Engineering commented: "My involvement in the world's first discovery of a naturally occurring hydrogen gas accumulation in Mali, West Africa, over a decade ago was tremendously gratifying, especially since it quickly powered an entire village with low-cost, emissions-free electricity. This news from Saskatchewan—the scale of the opportunity and the very high historical grades—represents a watershed development for the world in the rapidly emerging Natural Hydrogen sector. Chapman is looking forward to working with MAX Power to take the Rider Natural Hydrogen Project to the next level."

Geologists are designing a near-term program to verify and validate the existence of a naturally occurring hydrogen trend at Rider.

MAX Power continues to

review an extensive array of datasets in Saskatchewan and elsewhere with an aggressive plan to further build on its first mover advantage in the Natural Hydrogen sector in Canada and the United States.

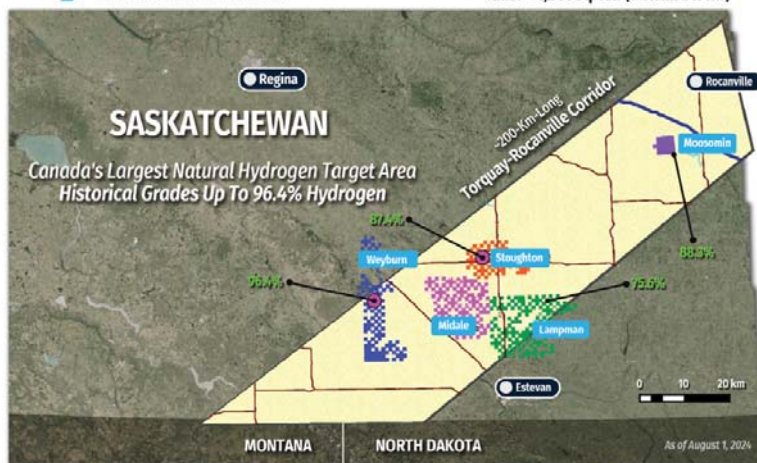
"Pro-energy and pro-business Saskatchewan is exceptionally positioned to become the first jurisdiction in North America to produce Natural Hydrogen given a combination of highly favorable geology and a clearly defined policy framework for exploration and development of this important new alternate energy source," the company said.

MAX Power CEO Rav Mlait added: "The acquisition of key permits to form the Rider Natural Hydrogen Project in Southeast Saskatchewan is a major development for MAX Power as we hit the ground running with the largest target area in the country for Natural Hydrogen in one of the best jurisdictions globally for exploration and resource development."

"The efforts of the MAX Power team are to be commended as we have used proprietary methods and state-of-the-art data modelling to uncover best-in-class targets. I recently met with top government officials in Saskatchewan and we are very enthused to be working in this forward-looking province."

MAXPOWER
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Rider Natural Hydrogen Project
Rider = 1,244 Sq. Km (5 Claim Blocks)





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Volunteer appreciation and recruitment fair Sept. 24 in Virden

Volunteers are the backbone of our community, and on September 24, from 6-9 pm, the community is invited to attend a Volunteer Appreciation and Recruitment Fair at Tundra Oil and Gas Place in Virden. This event is hosted by Volunteer Manitoba, in partnership with S.A.I.L. and the Border Regional Library.

The fair is an opportunity to celebrate the contributions of volunteers who have given their time and energy to improve the community. In addition to recognizing existing volunteers, this event will individuals and families connect with local organizations about how they can get involved.

Attendees will be able to:

- Celebrate the legacy of volunteerism of Shirley Kennedy.
- Meet local organizations actively seeking volunteers.

Those looking for more information or assistance with registration can contact Tawna at sail.cao.2023@gmail.com or call 204-851-2761.

The Volunteer Appreciation and Recruitment Fair is a chance for everyone—whether they are seasoned volunteers or simply interested in learning more—to come together, connect, and celebrate the spirit of giving that helps make our communities thrive.

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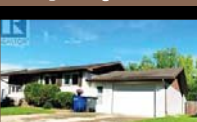


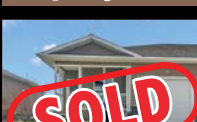







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September 2024 • Page 21

Covering Southeast Saskatchewan and Southwest Manitoba



Harvest photos

Harvest is in full swing! At top is a drone photo taken by Kevin Weedmark, above left is a photo of a wheat field, and above right is photo of a corn field both taken by Ashley Bocek.

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9th Annual Wilson Old Tyme Harvest



Volunteers feeding sheaves into the threshing machine.

by ED JAMES

The Wilson Farm is located about 10 miles south of the community of Wawota and it's the time of the year for the family's old-time threshing bee which displays their own restored vintage farm machinery and equipment. To add to the display, other farm equipment restorers from the area bring along some of their equipment.

The day-long event attracts all ages, with many of the older visitors enjoying the sights, smells and sounds of the farm machinery of their youth. In the old B/A gas station shed that was moved from Wawota, there were displays of miniature tractors, grain samples, gasoline station collectibles, tractor engine parts and vintage household artifacts, to name a few. At the end of the day Ken Wilson hooked up a people-mover to his tractor and gave people a tour of the Wilson family farm site and explained the history of the area.

Other than the displays, the day was divided into three main events with the first being the parade of antique tractors from the Wilson family's collection and from other vintage tractor builders. The parade

was a showcase of the improvements in farm technology equipment, and while looking at some of the older machinery, you would wonder how they ever did their job.

Later in the morning there was a display of antique combines working in a field that is specially planted each year for the event. These older combines are a far cry from today's modern machines with all their technology. The older machines had no enclosed cab, which put the operator under the hot sun and in the blowing dust and chaff. Oh yes, they also had those hard steel tractor seats—however I have seen a few living room cushions on some!

The main event was the threshing display with three vintage machines all lined up with the related gear. The tractors were adjusted so that the long pulley belts were just the right tension. Volunteers from the crowd climbed up onto the hay racks with thick leather gloves and pitchforks and began to feed the sheaves into the machine. As for the machine, it was a spinning and clanking mass of wood and steel, eating up the sheaves.

From one pipe, out came a rain of golden straw that streamed into a vintage high-sided grain wagon that filled slowly with golden seeds of wheat. There were always people climbing up onto the wheels of the grain wagon to watch it fill up, while at the threshing machines there were people checking the RPM of the gears or adding a bit of oil to a wheels.

Continued on page 27

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Biofuel expansion promising for producers and consumers

BY JILL MCALISTER, CORPORATE COMMUNICATION, FCC
As Canadians fill up their fuel tanks this summer, they are also powering a growing biofuel sector.

According to Farm Credit Canada (FCC), Canada's oil-seed producers are set to benefit from the current biofuel boom across North America.

Ethanol vs. biodiesel and renewable diesel

Ethanol is the most produced biofuel globally and in Canada with plants producing nearly 150 million litres per month. While no new ethanol plants have been built recently, existing ones have boosted productivity by extracting more ethanol from each tonne of grain. Ethanol also enhances gasoline octane, making it a valuable fuel additive.

"Ethanol production in Canada is steady, with a focus on efficiency, ensuring a reliable supply," said Justin Shepherd, senior economist at FCC.

Biodiesel, made primarily from vegetable oils, has limitations in cold weather, leading to seasonal fluctuations in blending. Renewable diesel, however, can be used year-round due to its chemical similarity to traditional diesel,

offering higher carbon credit prices and easier integration.

"Higher ethanol blends in gasoline are a positive development for both the environment and the economy," Shepherd noted. "Renewable diesel's versatility makes it a game-changer for consistent biofuel blending."

Increasing biofuel use

Canadian fuel blenders are increasing ethanol content in gasoline, with ethanol now accounting for 10 per cent of finished gasoline. Future increases will comply with provincial and federal mandates, though the rise in electric vehicles may affect long-term demand.

Biodiesel blending peaks in summer, reaching nearly four per cent of the diesel blend, while renewable diesel use is expected to grow consistently due to new produc-

tion capacity.

Vegetable oils as primary inputs

Increased renewable diesel production relies mainly on vegetable oils, up to 51 per cent in early 2024. Canadian canola oil exports to the U.S. are on track for a record year, driven by U.S. biofuel policies.

"Canadian oilseed producers are positioned to capitalize on the growing demand for biofuels in North America," Shepherd added. "It demonstrates the potential for biofuels to contribute to cleaner energy solutions."

Canada's oilseed producers stand to gain from the North American biofuel boom. Rising blend rates, increased oilseed crush capacity, and government support enhance the sector's prospects.




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Nearly ready for harvest 2024!

With combines beginning to roll, we went from thinking (during the wet, cool seeding season) harvest would likely start a bit later than usual to (after a hot, dry summer season) let's roll or at the very least, let's get ready to roll at any moment!

I personally am not ready. Maybe I am never ready, to be honest. I don't have a single frozen meal tucked away. I haven't dug out my handy-dandy notebook full of frozen meal and harvest-handy casserole recipes and ideas. Our RV on the farm has yet to be stocked with groceries for the season. On the other hand, the grass is cut around the camper and the weed-whacking has cut back the overgrowth around the RV deck that sort of got away on us during 'lake time.' The bed is freshly made and the water tank is full. So there's that.

To be fair, it's been a crazy but wonderful summer season. Lake time, though hot, gave us time to fish and spend time with the grands. Time in Calgary for our niece's (Kaylyn) wedding, though hot, was wonderful and beyond beautiful. Of course there were a million memories popping up in my mind on her wedding day because this beautiful young gal is one of two nieces who grew up on the farm next to ours and spent mega hours with us. Barely half a mile across the field from us, she was a delight for us to enjoy and we couldn't begin to count the times she came to our place, went to the city with us, and took off on vacation with us.

When we were in Calgary, we had an opportunity to visit with Kaylyn's "other side of the family" from Whitewood. When I asked Kaylyn's cousins that farm near Whitewood how they were enjoying Calgary, I couldn't help but laugh at one of their answers: "Only one mile into this city and I would give anything to be driving on a gravel road!" Ah yes, country life runs deep.

I have to say that even though Kaylyn has been in Calgary for the past dozen years or so, I couldn't help but be a tad emotional at her wedding. As for driving away from her house when we left Calgary, yep, pretty emotional yet again and I was reminded of when she left home for the city after high school graduation. Oh man, those times were tough on me but oh how proud I am of all of these kids I have had the privilege of watching grow and mature into such wonderful adults.

This past summer, I received many texts about poster design and Facebook posts and what not from another niece, Kathryn, as she is working at the museum in Whitewood on her summer hiatus from U of C. One day, Calgary niece (just prior to her wedding) texted me to ask about printing something and I saw the 'K' in the name and just presumed it was my 'museum' niece. And so I asked her if there was black ink in the printer and

The Lighter Side of Life... DOWN ON THE FARM

by donna beutler
FREELANCE PHOTOJOURNALIST
dl_beutler@yahoo.ca



cardstock (heavy paper) for printing only for her to respond no, she didn't even have a printer let alone ink or cardstock. My initial reaction was, what the heck, of course the museum has a printer and ink. Long story short, I finally realized which niece I was talking to and that she wanted me to do some printing for her. And literally at that moment, as I was printing something for someone else, my printer said, "out of black toner." Talk about a mad scramble to order a refill and then cross my fingers that it would arrive before I headed west. And yes, it ended up being one of those "get it done the night before" moments, but it all came together just fine!

One of the highlights of our summer was an opportunity to spend a few days at a fly-in/boat-in fishing camp. There's nothing quite like a quick getaway just before harvest is set to begin, and this was one of those last minute-planned moments. Pine Point Lodge is technically in Saskatchewan although you reach it by coming in from Cranberry Portage or Flin Flon, Manitoba.

And so it was, joined by a couple of our kids and their kids, that we made our way north to the forests and lakes of northern Manitoba. I can only describe it as incredibly beautiful. This remote little spot where only the sound of the loon can be heard at night was so peaceful and so delightful that I didn't want to come home. Not only did it feel like the NW Ontario forests of my childhood home, it gave us an opportunity to see our grands enjoying the lakes of the north.

Fishing may not be my thing, but to see my hubby and my family enjoying the fishing and having a whole lot of fun away from the hustle and bustle of our usual life totally warmed my heart. We enjoyed lots of laughs around the fire at night (the amount of mosquito repellent required—not so much) and to see the joy in the kids' faces as they recounted their fishing stories and

other stories as well.

The twins (13) who were on the trip up north have this dream to being outfitters (imagine!) and when I saw Wyatt take Gramps out in the little boat and head across the bay, I couldn't help but think that may be sooner than you think! The twins also took their younger cousin (10) out fishing in the bay, dropping anchor and casting away. And last night when I asked the 10 year old what the best part of going north was, unsurprisingly his answer was, "Us kids going out on the boat by ourselves."

One night, around the fire, the boys were recounting being left at the auction barn in Whitewood after 4-H one day. "What do you mean," I asked them. "How could you get left at the auction barn?"

"Well," said one, "Dad thought we went home with Mom."

"And," said the other, "Mom thought we went home with Dad."

And that's the story, short and simple. They had been left at the auction barn after the third consecutive day of 4-H back in early July. Of course I asked if they had been a tad worried. "Nope," they both responded. And apparently, not even when the last 4-H family still at the market couldn't reach the twins' parents by phone, they were cool. And patient. And by the looks of it, they eventually made it home!

We have had a handful of kids during our usual August daycare days. It's been great to do some museum visits, swimming, crepe eating, go for ice cream treats, go out to great Grandma's to gather dill and eat apples off the tree, golf cart here, there and everywhere, take in the local rodeo and allow the kids to overload on cotton candy and popcorn and just enjoy some time together. It's busy, it's crazy and it's loud and I have come to the conclusion that keeping throws and pillows neatly on the couch is impossible with children. But it's wonderful and I wouldn't have it any other way!

Last week I dug a few potatoes from my garden and proceeded to cut them into French fries. Our youngest granddaughter (8) asked what I was doing. "Making home fries for lunch," I said. "Oh Grandma, no," she said. "You don't make French fries from potatoes. You get them from a package at the store." The minute I try to re-tell that story, her ears perk up and she says, "No, no, no, don't tell that story, Grandma!" But told it has been!!

Now it's off to the farm—just to make sure everything is in place in our tiny home away from home, so when that first combine rolls out of the yard, I'm ready to be some sort of support system for my guys in the field. Happy harvesting y'all!!

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Turning over a new leaf: Tackling tan spot disease in wheat

Perhaps one of the most recognizable scenes on the Canadian Prairies is fields upon fields of golden wheat. Long a symbol of agriculture in the Prairies, wheat is Canada's largest field crop, with an average of about 30 million tonnes harvested annually. That's about seven times what Canadians typically consume, and much of our wheat is destined to feed families around the world. Highly valued worldwide for its high quality and protein content, our wheat is exported to approximately 80 countries, making it an important economic crop. So, we must ensure wheat crops in Canada continue to thrive.

Like any type of plant, wheat faces harm from disease. As one of our earliest and most iconic cereal crops, researchers have long been exploring new breeds and ways to protect this important food staple. In fact, Canada has a rich history of studying wheat, all the way back to the late 1800s.

Spotting the problem: the worldwide emergence of tan spot disease

One of the more recently discovered diseases that threaten our wheat crops is a fungal infection called tan spot disease. In infected crops, if you look closely at the green leaves of wheat, you may see tan-coloured lesions, or spots, covering the leaf surface. These lesions are symptoms of infection by the fungus *Pyrenophora tritici-repentis*. The fungus is a specialized necrotroph (a parasite that rapidly kills its host and feeds on the dead tissues), and since its emergence about 50 years ago it has become one of the most destructive leaf diseases of wheat worldwide.

Like most fungi, the fungus that causes tan spot thrives in wet conditions. While spring rain helps wheat grow, it may also be creating the right conditions for infection. The fungus will release its spores, spreading the disease across fields, infecting crops and causing significant damage.

If left unmanaged, severe tan spot infection can drastically damage the foliage (leaves) of the wheat crop. As in most plants, the leaves on wheat capture light and convert it into the chemical energy that helps the plant grow. It sounds simple, but for those who remember science class in school, you may recall that it's actually a very complex process called photosynthesis. The leaf damage that tan spot causes impacts the wheat plant's ability to photosynthesize, stunting its growth and decreasing yield and grain quality. If the damage occurs on the upper leaves, it has the potential to reduce yield by 60% or more. In addition, if the pathogen progresses from the leaf to the wheat head, it can cause further damage known as red smudge – a reddish discolouration of the grain which can reduce its grade quality and value. This makes tan spot a serious economic threat to wheat production, with potential



Dr. Aboukhaddour in the field.

losses estimated at millions of dollars annually.

Most growers use fungicides to control tan spot, but given the danger this disease poses, more work must be done to identify effective management strategies and cultivate new, resistant wheat varieties.

A team of researchers at AAFC is leading a national and international collaboration (with Europe, North and South America, North Africa, India, Japan, and Australia) to understand how the disease has evolved globally – and how we might be able to slow its progression. This diverse team of experts is led by Dr. Keem Aboukhaddour of the Lethbridge Research and Development Centre, also collaborating locally with Dr. Kelly Turkington of the Lacombe Research and Development Centre and Dr. Myriam Fernandez of the Swift Current Research and Development Centre.

Getting to the (genetic) root of the issue

The team is analyzing the pathogen's entire genetic

makeup and changes in its chromosomes using multiple areas of science including: pathology, the study of disease; genomics, the study of an organism's genetic material; and bioinformatics tools to help understand the complex biological data sets. The focus is understanding how disease-causing genes have shifted and moved across various strains of the pathogen. The team is also looking at how these genes vary in different populations globally, and which local variables or conditions can cause the fungus to survive and reproduce.

"It's so important to get a clear picture of how the pathogen that causes tan spot disease is evolving. This will help us spot trends, environmental conditions and other factors that enable the disease to thrive, and hopefully discover solutions that help manage it effectively," says Dr. Aboukhaddour.

Researchers have identified mutations, duplications, and transposons as key factors driving the evolution of this fungus.

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9th Annual Wilson Old Tyme Harvest

Continued from page 22

On one of the threshing machines there was a bit of a clog but there was no shortage of helpers or advice to get it going again.

During the day, if you needed a break from the action, the Wawota United Church Group had a lunch on with lots of seating to sit and enjoy it and to visit with friends.

There were some other events that day such as a demonstration of vintage baling machines and a very popular

hand-operated grain cleaning machine.

Said Kevin Wilson, "The event is a family affair put on with the help of several neighbors and friends and is held almost every year depending on the weather."

"The introduction of the PA system has been a big help, as it explained to the crowd what and how something works or why it is being done. Every year we try to improve upon the event and what we are showing—getting further back in history and also to improve or drop

items that did not work out well.

"Next year will be our tenth year and we are hoping to come up with some new ideas that show the history of the machines and how farming has changed over the years."

This year I was able to stay long enough to see a tradition done by Mr. Wilson Sr. at the end of the threshing display, where he takes off his hat and throws it into the machine—with the parts flying out the pipe to mark the end of the Old Tyme Threshing event!



Grayson Olvera of Kipling and Hale Smythers of Manor playing in the straw from the antique threshing machines.



Three vintage threshing machines at work, which are powered by the long canvas pullet belts and tractor power.



Some of the Wilson's vintage tractor collection lined up on a bright fall afternoon.

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EMILI and FCC renew Innovation Farms partnership

BY JACQUELINE KEENA
MANAGING DIRECTOR, EMILI

EMILI is pleased to announce the renewal and enhancement of its partnership with Farm Credit Canada (FCC) at Innovation Farms powered by AgExpert. This partnership will be celebrated during Manitoba 4R Day along with a ribbon cutting ceremony to celebrate the recent opening of Innovation Farms Centre.

The partnership between EMILI and FCC was first established in 2022 to support strategic projects at Innovation Farms, a smart farm near Winnipeg that creates space for industry innovators and researchers to test, validate, and demonstrate agtech solutions to help producers maximize efficiency, profitability and sustainability in their on-farm practices.

"EMILI is grateful to FCC AgExpert for their visionary support," said EMILI Managing Director Jacqueline Keena. "Since launching, we have partnered on close to 50 projects on Innovation Farms, welcomed hundreds of visitors, and opened an 8,500 square foot Innovation Farms Centre. FCC's multi-year commitment allows us to collaborate on more projects to increase the development and adoption of on-farm technologies to effectively solve prairie issues at a prairie scale."

Innovation Farms launched in 2022 to enable farmer-centric innovation, advance sustainable technologies and techniques, and increase digital agriculture skills and knowledge. With access to over 5,500 acres and more than a decade of historical farm data, EMILI is able to share a wealth of resources and information with collaborators to increase adoption of digital tools and bring innovative solutions from pre-commercial into the market.

"EMILI's commitment to Innovation Farms powered by AgExpert is a testament to what can be accomplished when the agriculture industry comes together," says Darren Baccus, FCC executive vice-president, agri-food, alliances, and FCC capital. "We can meet the challenges facing the agriculture industry by putting our energy and resources into projects that deliver results, like EMILI's Innovation

Farms.

"We are driving the future of agriculture and food by connecting the people, ideas and opportunities that harness the true potential of this industry."

Canadian organizations and entrepreneurs, many of them located in the prairies, are recognized as world leaders in digital agriculture and are poised to play a major role in increasing the productivity and sustainability of our agricultural food systems. The continued success of Canadian agriculture relies on its ability to focus on adopting technology, attracting a skilled and diverse labour force, and embracing sustainability, all of which supports profitability on the farm.

With a limited number of harvests in their careers, producers need assurance that new technologies will optimize resources and increase productivity and sustainability on their farms. Innovation Farms provides that assurance.

"The technologies we are testing and validating at Innovation Farms allow us to support entrepreneurs and agtech innovators as they develop real-world digital agriculture solutions to give Canadian producers the edge in a quickly changing industry," said Keena.

Through Innovation Farms, EMILI is able to provide the acres needed to advance innovation and research, getting new digital tools confidently into the hands of producers.

"We are thankful to FCC AgExpert for their ongoing commitment to this work," said Keena. "Their support ensures we can continue to build a sustainable and economically resilient digital agriculture sector for generations to come."



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USask farm shoulder study shows research in action at Ag in Motion

BY CCRAH COMMUNICATIONS

The Canadian Centre for Rural and Agricultural Health (CCRAH) at the University of Saskatchewan (USask) partnered with industry to conduct much-needed research at the recent annual Ag in Motion outdoor agricultural show near Langham, Sask., July 16-18, 2024.

Dr. Angelica Lang (PhD), faculty lead of the musculoskeletal and ergonomics lab at the centre, is researching shoulder movement during basic farm tasks to better understand how common shoulder injuries develop in farmers.

"At first, I thought I'd go to Ag in Motion to recruit farmers. We've been visiting farmers on their own farms to conduct the study, so I thought the event would be a great opportunity to recruit participants," Lang said.

One of the limiting factors for the study is that it requires one major piece of agricultural machinery: the air cart for a seed drill. These are usually found on farms.

"But then, Morris Equipment came forward. They let us set up the research study right on their site at Ag in Motion and use their air cart on site. That way, we could recruit farmers and have them do the study immediately," Lang explained.

Morris and its sister company, RiteWay Manufacturing, sell agricultural equipment including air carts and seed drills. Garth Massie, Canadian sales and marketing manager for Morris, provided the research group space on their site, and access to the air cart.

The research team ran each farmer through a series of questions, then put sensors on their arms, sternum, and shoulders and made sure the sensors were calibrated. Each farmer then did three repetitions of four regular on-farm tasks: drilling a screw into wood at eye level, shoveling some dirt, carrying a 30-pound bag up the seed drill tank, and then (pretending) to pour the seed into the tank.

"Our customers are farmers. It made sense to have the centre researchers set up on our site, so the farmers could run through all the tests," Massie said.

"As a scientist, I think they'll get really good data from doing the study at our Ag in Motion site, maybe even better than going farm-to-farm. All of them used the same drill, the same shovel, and walked up and down the same air cart."

Lang said the partnership came together quickly. Morris supported the idea of running the study at Ag in Motion and made sure there was space on their site



View of the 2024 Ag in Motion outdoor farm show near Langham, Sask.

Katie Thompson photo

for a small tent and access to the air cart. The Ag in Motion organizers also supported the plan.

The CCRAH, via their Agricultural Health and Safety Network, has regularly attended Ag in Motion, sharing health and safety resources with farmers. Those working at the booth helped to recruit farmers for the study and sent them over to the outdoor Morris booth.

Lang said that the study was able to recruit nearly 20 male and female farmers, which was a great opportunity for the study, and for her lab.

Continued on page 32

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A farmer shovels dirt as one of the three tasks in the farmer shoulder motion study at Ag in Motion, with PhD student Denise Balogh capturing data.

USask farm shoulder study shows research in action at Ag in Motion

Continued from page 30

"The students had a really active role, connecting with farmers, answering questions, and walking them through the tasks," she said. "It was a learning opportunity for everyone."

Dr. Shelley Kirychuk (PhD), director of the CCRAH, said that this partnership showcased the important relationships between agricultural industries and the centre's health research.

"There is no agriculture without farmers," she said. "Our Centre is founded on supporting rural and agricultural people to live and work healthy and safe. Industry knows that our work is central to a thriving agricultural industry not just in Saskatchewan, but across Canada and around the world."

"We are thankful for, and proud of, the great research partnership with Morris Equipment at Ag in Motion," she added.

Turning over a new leaf: Tackling tan spot disease in wheat

Continued from page 25

Transposons – sometimes called "jumping genes" – are pieces of DNA that readily move around within the genome or across different genomes, carrying disease-causing genes as they go. Finding a novel class of transposons from which this fungus spreads its virulence was an important discovery and may help researchers unlock the key to controlling the disease. The team also found unusual new forms of the pathogen in various places around the world – including Canada – that cause increased damage to durum wheat. Ongoing research aims to identify virulence factors in these new forms, helping researchers find ways to effectively control the disease in wheat crops.

Laying the path forward

While research continues, the team has already provided invaluable resources to the research community, such as fully sequenced genomic data of this pathogen using a diverse set of *P. tritici-repentis* fungus from Canadian and worldwide sources. Scientists hope that this AAFC research will one day lead to solutions that could reduce the incidence



Dr. Aboukhaddour in the lab.

of tan spot in wheat fields around the world – ultimately helping farmers protect their fields from the damaging disease and severe economic threat.

Key Facts

- Canadian wheat is highly valued worldwide for its high quality and protein content. It's also exported to about 80 countries, making it an important economic crop.

- Tan spot is a fungal infection that damages the leaves of wheat, affecting the plant's ability to pho-

tosynthesize, stunting its growth and decreasing yield and grain quality.

- Since its emergence about 50 years ago, tan spot disease has become a serious economic threat to wheat production, with potential losses estimated at millions of dollars annually.

- AAFC researchers, lead by Dr. Reem Aboukhaddour, are conducting a national and international collaboration to understand how the disease has evolved globally – and how we might be able to slow its progression.



Tanner Lewis
Financial Advisor
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BACK-TO-SCHOOL BUDGETING: TIPS

As summer ends and a new school year begins, parents face the challenge of back-to-school expenses. From supplies and clothing to extracurricular activities, these costs can add up. With careful planning and smart shopping strategies, parents can manage these expenses effectively. Here are practical tips to help you save money on back-to-school:

- 1. Create a back-to-school budget**
with categories like supplies, clothing, and activities. Set realistic amounts to avoid overspending and make informed purchases.
- 2. Take Inventory of what you have**
Before shopping, check what school supplies and clothing you already have to avoid duplicates and save money.
- 3. Plan back-to-school shopping**
around sales and tax-free days to get discounts on supplies and clothing. Watch for flyers, online ads, and store promotions for the best deals.
- 4. Use Coupons & Cashback Offers**
Utilize coupons and cashback offers from apps like Honey, and Flipp to save on back-to-school shopping. Combine with sales and loyalty programs for maximum savings.
- 5. Shop Second-Hand & Thrift Stores**
Consider pooling resources with other parents to buy school supplies in bulk and share costs.
- 6. Shop Second-Hand & Thrift Stores**
Many thrift stores offer special discounts on certain days. Shopping second-hand not only saves money but also promotes sustainability by reusing items.
- 7. Plan for Extracurricular Activities**
Plan for extracurricular activities by prioritizing your child's passions and value. Consider community or school programs for cost-effective options.
- 8. Teach Kids About Budgeting**
Get kids involved in budgeting to teach financial responsibility. Include them in decision-making, comparing prices, finding deals, and understanding trade-offs to develop good financial habits.

Back-to-school expenses can be significant, but with careful planning and strategic shopping, Canadian parents can save money without sacrificing quality. By creating a budget, taking inventory, shopping smartly, and involving your children in the process, you can manage these expenses effectively and set a positive example for financial responsibility. Happy back-to-school!

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VOLUME 1, ISSUE 5 / 2024 26 AUGUST, 2024

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Provinces call on federal government to reverse capital gains changes for the ag sector

At the annual conference of Federal, Provincial, Territorial (FPT) Ministers of Agriculture in Whitehorse, Yukon in July, the Ministers of Saskatchewan, Alberta, Ontario, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and Manitoba expressed serious concerns about changes to the capital gains tax proposed in the 2024 federal budget and the impacts they will have on the agricultural sector.

The changes to the capital gains tax was not a topic on the agenda of the annual meeting of FPT Ministers of Agriculture. Provinces raised the topic during roundtable discussions, and noted that these changes will inadvertently, disproportionately and unfairly target producers and their succession plans.

"Agriculture is the backbone of our economy," Saskatchewan Minister of Agriculture David Marit said. "We must work with our producers, ensuring their success and the proposed changes to capital gains taxes will make it harder for us to do just that. It is our position that the federal government reverse this harmful policy and work with producers and provinces to keep our agriculture sector strong and vibrant."

"The proposed changes to the capital gains tax are deeply concerning for Alberta's agricultural community," Alberta's Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation RJ Sigurdson said. "These changes will unfairly burden our farmers and ranchers, who are

already facing significant challenges. The federal government must reconsider these measures as they threaten the long-term viability of Canada's agricultural sector and the livelihoods of those who depend on it."

"The Ontario approach has always been to reduce taxes and red tape for farmers, agricultural employers, and agribusiness stakeholders," Ontario's Minister of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness Rob Flack said. "Raising capital gains taxes at a time when so many farmers are approaching retirement and managing farm succession planning is a serious mistake and our government opposes it unequivocally."

Intergenerational transfers play an integral part in succession planning for family farms. According to the ag ministers, increasing inclusion rates from one-half to two-thirds for individual capital gains above \$250,000, and from one-half to two-thirds for corporations, will penalize farming operation transfers. Farmers and ranchers who rely on selling their assets for retirement will also see their retirement plans diminished.

The ministers say the changes to the capital gains tax will jeopardize the long-term viability of family farms who are unable to keep pace with federal tax measures, in addition to other increasing costs associated with the farming industry.

A recent study from the Royal Bank of Canada sug-

gests that 40 per cent of farm operators will retire by 2030.

"The New Brunswick government has always been supportive in providing resources for farmers to assist with succession planning," New Brunswick's Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries Minister Margaret Johnson said. "At a time when the average age of farmers is 57, we must provide policies which encourage our young people to engage in the sector. We must make farming more enticing and eliminate the obstacles impeding entry by supporting the succession of farmers."

"Island farmers like their colleagues across the country have worked tire-

lessly to produce top quality food feeding the nation and the world," PEI Minister of Agriculture Bloyce Thompson said. "A driving force for most farmers is to provide an opportunity for the next generation to carry on the family tradition. Changing the capital gains structure will harm the farming industry by stripping value from the family farm through increased taxation. Now is the time we should be investing in our agricultural industry and make it easier to farm. The changes to the taxation of capital gains adds to their burden and should be reconsidered."

"Everyone can agree that local food production and food security are vitally important," Nova Scotia's

Agriculture Minister Greg Morrow said. "With an aging agricultural workforce, now is the time to encourage young people who are interested in farming and food production. The federal government's proposed capital gains tax could have a significant impact on farms and farmers and their succession plans."

"Manitoba stands with producers who are especially being hit hard by these changes to the Capital Gains Tax," Manitoba's Agriculture Minister Ron Kostyshyn said. "After years of succession planning, long-time producers should be able to retire knowing that their children have the opportunity of becoming the young

farmers that will feed the next generation of Canadians. Manitoba has gone to great lengths to reduce costs for producers, including lowering the cost of crown lands and freezing the provincial gas tax, and this change will only increase costs for producers who are already facing enormous challenges."

The ministers urged the federal minister to make agriculture a priority around the federal Cabinet table, and ask that the proposed changes to the capital gains tax impacting the broader agriculture and food industry be immediately reversed.

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