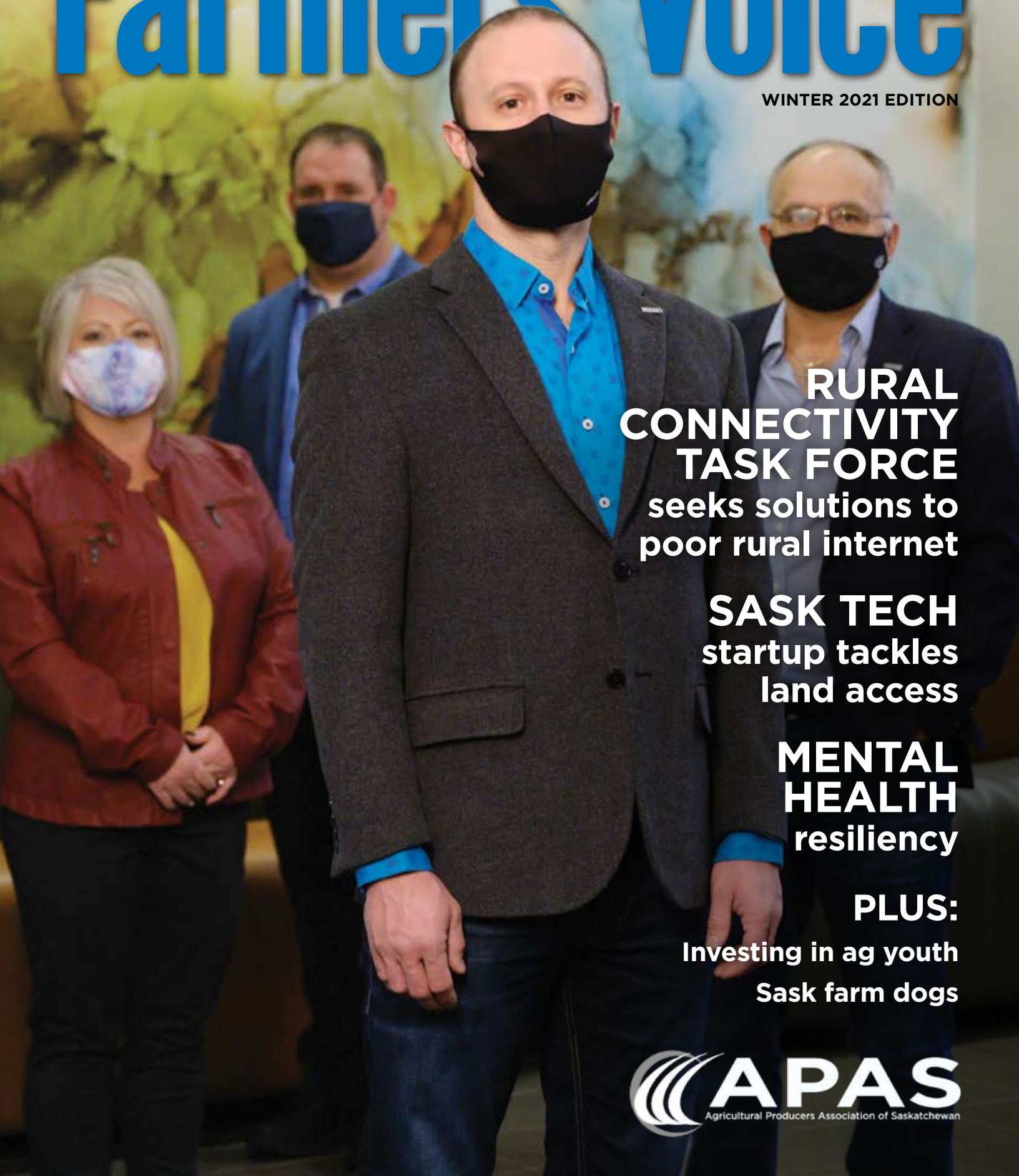


SASKATCHEWAN **Farmers' Voice**

WINTER 2021 EDITION



**RURAL
CONNECTIVITY
TASK FORCE**
seeks solutions to
poor rural internet

SASK TECH
startup tackles
land access

**MENTAL
HEALTH**
resiliency

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Investing in ag youth
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The next issue of *Saskatchewan Farmers' Voice* will arrive in your farm mailbox in June 2021. Email info@apas.ca if you are not receiving a copy of *Saskatchewan Farmers' Voice* and would like to. Check out our online edition at apas.ca/farmersvoice.

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A Year to Remember

APAS tackles carbon tax, BRM, rural internet and more in 2021

BY TODD LEWIS



APAS President Todd Lewis.

There's no doubt that 2020 will go down in history as a year that most of us are happy to put behind us. COVID-19 has tested us on many levels across our province and country, and we'll likely experience the economic fallout for years to come.

But with vaccines approved and rolling out there seems to be a light at the end of the tunnel. Hopefully by this time next

year we'll be getting together in person and the pandemic will start to be a distant memory.

For agriculture, the pandemic was a mixed blessing. Consumers started to appreciate their food in a new way. The railways transported record amounts of grain. And compared to 2019, the 2020 harvest was pretty darn good.

But despite these bright spots, COVID-19 also shone light where agriculture is most fragile. Our livestock processing sector came close to breaking, and it was clear that the programs designed to protect farmers in just such a crisis (like AgriStability) weren't up to the task.

2021 will be a very busy year, and APAS will continue advocating on behalf of our members.

Carbon tax

In December, the federal government announced that the carbon tax will increase to \$170 per tonne by 2030, which is just nine short years away. APAS quickly updated its estimates of the impacts on producers, and in the case of wheat production our costs could increase by over \$12 per acre. This is clearly unsustainable. While the government has hinted at various programs to offset this increase, we haven't seen any details.

Grains Act review

APAS members have been calling for updates to the *Canada Grain Act* and the Grain Commission, and we will be very engaged in the consultation on proposed changes.

APAS 2021 Priorities

This year we'll keep up the pressure so that governments hear and understand the concerns of Saskatchewan producers. Here's what we're working on in 2021:

- Creation of the next Agricultural Policy Framework in 2023
- Carbon tax exemptions on grain drying, barn heating, and other farm activities
- Carbon credit markets and off-set protocols
- Drought and water management for the livestock sector
- Seed royalty models and value creation
- Improving grain contracts
- Enacting provincial trespass legislation
- Greater transparency on railway performance and costing
- *Canada Grain Act* and Canadian Grain Commission reviews
- Provincial inactive orphan well program
- Surface rights protections
- Consultations on "fake meat" labelling
- Intergenerational transfers and access to capital
- Young farmer tax incentives
- On-farm natural gas infrastructure and three-phase power networks
- "Right to repair" and access to affordable machinery parts
- Farm labour recruitment and retention
- Livestock price insurance premiums and set-aside program
- Provincial meat inspection and processing capacity

“COVID-19 shone light where agriculture is most fragile.”

Seed royalties

APAS has worked hard to make sure producer voices are heard in the discussion on seed royalties, and we will continue to do so in 2021.

Rural internet and cell service

Our Rural Connectivity Task Force has been forging ahead on developing concrete proposals to help improve internet and cell service in rural Saskatchewan.

We've also heard from producers across the province about drought conditions. If dry weather continues, APAS will be ready to push the provincial government for support to help see producers through.

Todd Lewis farms in Gray, SK.



APP-Y NEW YEAR!

For us, April is the month everything starts over.

We can't make the days longer, or grow your crops faster, but we can help with an APP cash advance from CCGA. **Get a jump start on your year and get your application in now.**

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APAS at Work

Many industries worldwide have faced slowdowns because of the COVID-19 pandemic, but agriculture is not among them.

Just as Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers have struggled to keep pace with new challenges and increased demand, APAS continues to adapt our work to support producers through on-going policy and advocacy projects.

Here's an overview of our work over the past few months. For more information on APAS projects, visit apas.ca.

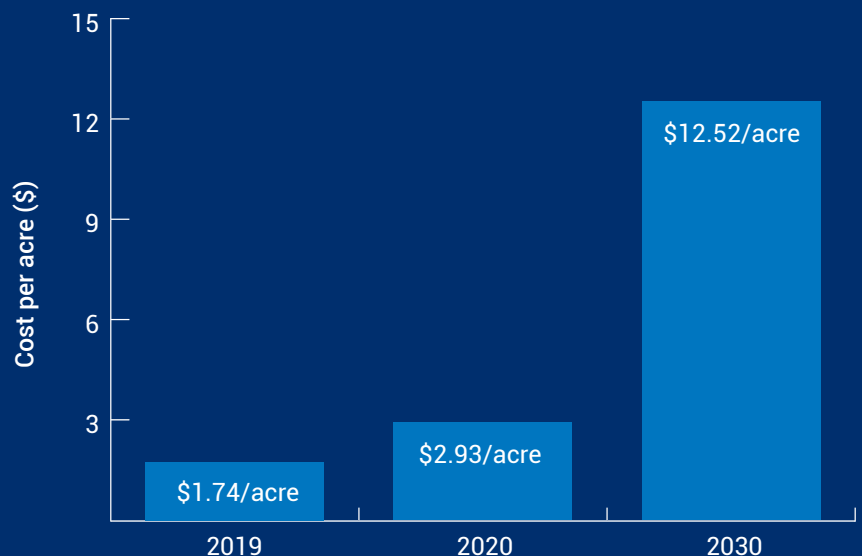
“ The cost of producing and marketing wheat could increase by over \$12.50 per acre by 2030 due to the carbon tax. ”

Carbon Tax & Credits

- In December 2020, the federal government announced the carbon tax will increase to \$170/tonne by 2030.
- In January 2021, APAS released updated estimates of the impact this will have on farmers. Our updated numbers show the cost of producing and marketing wheat could increase by over \$12.50 per acre by 2030.
- APAS estimates consider key costs that are not exempt from carbon taxation, including rail and road transportation, electricity, and grain drying.
- APAS is working with other commodity groups to develop cost estimates for other crop and livestock commodities.
- We'll continue to advocate for further exemptions and other forms of financial relief from the added costs, as well as a fair and functional policy for recognizing carbon sequestration through credits and offsets.

Find the complete calculations and background information at apas.ca/carbontax.

Additional Costs from the Carbon Tax (per acre of wheat)



APAS Representative Elections

In November 2020, APAS held elections for APAS Representatives from among the ratepayers of our participating RMs.

Elected Representatives work on behalf of members in their RMs to further the work and goals of APAS and guide the direction of the organization.

The APAS Rep elections took place at the same time as Rural Municipal elections. We welcomed 128 returning and 12 new Reps. Heartfelt thanks to all retiring, returning, and new Reps for your service to your communities. Thanks also go out to former APAS President Greg Marshall, who acted as the Returning Officer for the Representative elections.



For a complete list of participating APAS RMs and elected APAS Representatives, see page 34.

Private Rail Crossings

In November 2020, APAS issued a joint press release with Keystone Agricultural Producers and the Alberta Federation of Agriculture calling on the federal government to reconsider its decision for railway companies to impose grade crossing upgrade and maintenance

Business Risk Management

- In November 2020, a proposal was brought forward to put new money into AgriStability for the first time since 2013.
- APAS has been advocating for improvements to AgriStability since cuts were made back in 2012.
- The proposal includes removing the Reference Margin Limit and increasing coverage levels.
- This is a positive first step towards negotiating longer-term improvements as part of the next five-year agreement, which starts in 2023.
- At the time of printing, the provinces had not yet come to an agreement with the federal government to accept the proposal.

costs on private landowners, and to request an extension of the 2021 deadline.

In January, Transport Canada proposed a new approach to the Grade Crossing Regulations for Private Crossings, including an extension of the deadline and the possibility of new standards on the basis of crossing risk. While the new approach is a positive development, APAS will continue to work with affected producers and advocate to ensure that the necessary safety improvements are completed without affecting a farmer's access to their land and without costs to farmers.

APAS District Meetings

In November and December 2020, APAS Representatives met for six virtual District Meetings. The meetings gave us a chance to discuss the 2020 growing season and learn from our grassroots about the most important issues facing producers in participating APAS RMs.

Feedback from the APAS District Meetings will be circulated directly to all Saskatchewan MLAs, ensuring that provincial decision makers hear and understand the needs of Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers.

Among the most key issues raised across all six Districts were:

- Drought conditions and water management
- Unpaid oil leases, orphaned wells, and unpaid municipal taxes
- Lack of enforcement of the new Trespassing Act
- Poor, unreliable, and costly internet and cell phone service
- Need for standardized/regulated grain contracts
- Seed royalty proposals
- Carbon tax costs and lack of recognition for carbon sequestration
- Mental health and isolation due to COVID-19
- Increased grain transportation problems post-COVID-19
- Infrastructure maintenance (e.g., bridge repairs)
- Need for better access to natural gas and three-phase power
- Support for immediate improvements to AgriStability and longer-term overhaul of the program
- Ongoing concerns over impact of COVID-19 on livestock industries
- Tax implications for new producers/farm succession
- Foreign land ownership
- Rural crime
- Grain grading inconsistency
- Wildlife (moose, elk, boar) damage

“ The Rural Connectivity Task Force has collected over 26,000 individual internet speed tests from across the province. ”

APAS Policy Committees set 2021 priorities

The fall of 2020 also saw all six APAS Policy Committees meet virtually to identify priority policy areas for 2021.

Each APAS Policy Committee is made up of elected APAS Representatives, Directors, and Association Member organizations that focus on key areas of agriculture policy including Crops & Transportation, Economics & Trade, Land & Environment, Livestock, Rural Life, and Young Agricultural Producers. Their work at the committee level helps guide the work of the APAS Board and staff throughout the year.

See our 2021 priorities on page 4.

Rural Connectivity Task Force

Since September 2020, the Rural Connectivity Task Force has:

- Met with industry experts from across Canada.
- Interviewed large, medium, and small internet service providers in Saskatchewan.
- Published a discussion paper on rural internet.
- Collected over 26,000 individual internet speed tests from across the province.
- Raised awareness of the issue of rural internet and cell service in the mainstream and agricultural media.

The Task Force is now working to develop their final recommendations and report, which will be used to advocate for improvements to policy at the federal and provincial levels.

APAS is also partnering with Access Communications to produce *Connecting Saskatchewan*, a 60-minute province-wide television program on rural internet and cell service, which will air this spring.

Learn more on page 12 and at apas.ca/connectivity.



YOU CAN HELP SOLVE THIS CASE AND EARN CASH REWARDS IF THE INFORMATION YOU PROVIDE LEADS TO THE ARREST OR CONVICTION OF THE INDIVIDUAL(S) INVOLVED.

(Calls are not traced or recorded and callers can choose to remain anonymous.)

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Call the Toll-Free Turn In Poachers & Polluters Line **1-800-667-7561**
Call **#5555** from a Sasktel Cellphone (no text messages)
Report online at www.saskatchewan.ca/tipp

UNSOLVED CASE

On Monday, October 12th, 2020, Regina Conservation Officers received a TIP Call regarding a calf moose and a White-tailed deer fawn that were found dead in the ditch along Highway #10. The animals were located 4km Northeast of Balgonie on the highway to Fort Qu'Appelle. Officers investigated and determined the animals were not shot in this location but just dumped in the ditch. It is believed these animals were abandoned between the evening of October 10th and the morning of October 12th. These animals were left to waste and were not legally tagged.

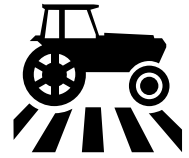


Visit www.sasktip.com for all of the latest cases.

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Succession planning is an essential part of your farming operation. You've dedicated your life to your farm's success and have a desire for it to continue after you're gone. A Co-operators Financial Advisor can help you create a succession plan to ensure an orderly transfer of your farm assets to the next generation, in a fair and tax-efficient way.

Fair vs. equal

In farming, fair doesn't always mean equal distribution of the farm property among heirs. An equal division of assets may leave the farm unviable, yet it's still important to treat all heirs fairly. In many cases, dividing assets evenly between active and inactive farming heirs can cause tension, such as:

- > **Heirs may inherit an equal portion of the farm**, but not all heirs actively maintain it or are interested in doing so.
- > **A farming heir may have to rent land** from other family members or borrow money to buy them out.
- > **Some land may be deemed more valuable** than others, which makes it difficult to split evenly.

How can life insurance help?

Life insurance can play a helpful role in farm succession planning. It can be a cost- and tax-effective way to divide an estate fairly among heirs. While farming heirs take over the farm and inherit the farm assets, non-farming heirs receive the benefit of the life insurance policy.

Here's an example of how a life insurance policy can cost significantly less over time than other farm succession options:



You purchase life insurance (for 20 years)¹

- > **\$1 million** life insurance policy
- > Monthly cost: **\$1,836**
- > Total cost: **\$447,228**



You save funds to create a legacy (for 20 years)

- > **\$1 million** (after tax on investment earnings)²
- > Monthly cost: **\$3,575**
- > Total cost: **\$857,975**



One heir borrows money to pay out other heirs

- > **\$1 million** mortgage over 20 years³
- > Monthly cost: **\$6,571**
- > Total cost: **\$1,577,100**

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¹ The Co-operators Infinity Term® insurance policy for 20 years; male, non-smoker, age 65; female, non-smoker, age 65. Premiums continue as long as the policy remains in force. Premiums are subject to change.

² 3% average rate of return over 20 years, 50% tax rate on passive income.

³ 5% average cost of borrowing over 20 years.

Life and Health insurance products are offered by Co-operators Life Insurance Company. Co-operators Life Insurance Company is committed to protecting the privacy, confidentiality, accuracy and security of the personal information that it collects, uses, retains and disclose in the course of conducting business.

NOTE THAT THIS BROCHURE IS FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY AND IS NOT A SUBSTITUTE FOR REQUIRED SUITABILITY ASSESSMENTS. LIFE INSURANCE MAY OR MAY NOT BE SUITABLE TO ASSIST WITH FARM SUCCESSION PLANNING AS INDIVIDUAL CIRCUMSTANCES MAY VARY. IN ALL CASES, ADVISORS SHOULD FOLLOW THEIR NORMAL PROCEDURES TO CONSIDER ALL INDIVIDUAL FACTORS BEFORE RECOMMENDING LIFE INSURANCE. L3005 MKT622 08/19

CFA in 2020

COVID-19, Food for Thought, and moving into 2021

In response to COVID-19, the Canadian Federation of Agriculture (CFA) launched the largest campaign in the organization's history, with the public/government relations firm Edelman Canada, called Food for Thought.



Example of ad from Food for Thought campaign.

Food for Thought – Phase 1

Phase 1 of this campaign started in June 2020 and took a two-pronged approach. It used public relations and letter-writing to push a message that would strengthen CFA's government relations work.

The campaign was a great success, with over 13,000 participants sending over 52,000 emails to MPs, and over 5,500 urban and suburban Canadians signing up to our email list to receive more updates. This created a large potential supporter base in communities that agriculture rarely reaches.

Those advocates sent a message calling on their MPs to give support to Canadian farmers in order to protect jobs and food security. CFA followed that up with our government relations proposals, providing solutions for the many problems identified by our members.

The most time-sensitive of these proposals was to quickly return the AgriStability program to the levels it held before it was weakened in 2013.

CFA and our membership believe this change would once again provide assurances to the business environment of Canadian agriculture. Improvements to AgriStability would also provide the stability agriculture needs to invest, grow and prosper.

Food for Thought – Phase 2

In response to the success of Phase 1 of Food for Thought, CFA acquired funding partners to launch Phase 2 of the campaign. The goal of this phase was to get our AgriStability ask in front of as many MPs, Cabinet Ministers, and important decision-makers as possible before the Federal-Provincial/Territorial Agriculture Minister's meeting in late November. In late October and early November, CFA had over 27 meetings with this audience, bringing our Board, Executive Committee, and local producers together with the same message.

In December, in part due to CFA's activities and those of its members and stakeholders, the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Marie-Claude Bibeau tabled a federal proposal to improve AgriStability. This was the first new money for the program in almost ten years.

As these programs are cost-shared between the federal and provincial governments, the provinces must accept these changes for them to be implemented. CFA's provincial members are pushing their governments to do so.

CFA worked hard throughout 2020 on these key objectives and many others. We will continue to work with the federal government to ensure that Canadian farmers receive both the short- and long-term supports they need to help Canadian agriculture be a powerful economic engine for Canada's recovery.

Other key priorities throughout 2021 will include:

- Development of a National Agri-Food Labour Strategy
- Development of a "Buy Canadian" campaign
- Ensuring farmers are recognized for their contributions to climate change and carbon sequestration

For more information on the CFA's work, visit cfa-fca.ca.

APAS is a proud member of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture.



Are you getting the **internet speed** you're **paying** for?

TAKE THE

INTERNET SPEED TEST

APAS.CA/SPEEDTEST



Connecting Saskatchewan

The Rural Connectivity Task Force seeks solutions to poor rural internet

WRITTEN BY NIKKO SNYDER | PHOTOS BY MICHAEL BELL



Rural Connectivity Task Force members (left to right) Ian Boxall, Bev Pirio, Jeremy Welter, and Bill Prybylski (missing: Paige Stewart).

A frozen face or garbled voice on the other end of a Zoom call has been an all-too-common part of life in the last year, especially for those living in rural areas.

Like many other rural Saskatchewan residents, the five agricultural producers that make up the APAS Rural Connec-

tivity Task Force have experienced every possible frustration that folks dealing with the challenges of poor rural internet face daily.

Insufficient internet speeds to keep their kids learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. Missed land deals and auction purchases. Inadequate connections to

fully utilize high-tech farm equipment. Difficulties working off-farm jobs from home. The inability to relax in front of Netflix at the end of a long week. You name it, they've experienced it, and there is no end to the stories they can tell.

Their unique rural perspectives, combined with APAS's credibility and solutions-focused approach, has made the Rural Connectivity Task Force a force to be reckoned with when it comes to tackling poor rural internet.

"We've identified the problem and our goal is to find the solution," says Task Force member and APAS Vice-President Ian Boxall of Tisdale, SK. "APAS's approach to all policy issues is to not just complain about them, but to find solutions that are implementable and achievable and that can work."

“The economic value of connecting rural Saskatchewan could be up to \$1.2 billion in additional economic activity for the province.”

According to Task Force Chair Jeremy Welter of Kerrobert, SK, APAS's non-partisan approach is also a huge benefit. "We have a stronger voice because when we lay something out there's no political slant to it," he says. "It's just straight common sense. And we're not



Rural Connectivity Task Force Chair and farmer Jeremy Welter.

showing up wet behind the ears. This is something APAS has been working on for the past two years."

Recognizing missed opportunities

Poor rural connectivity negatively impacts the health, education, and safety of rural residents. It also results in barriers to economic growth in rural communities, which is a major problem in Saskatchewan, which relies heavily on agriculture and other rural industries to drive the economy.

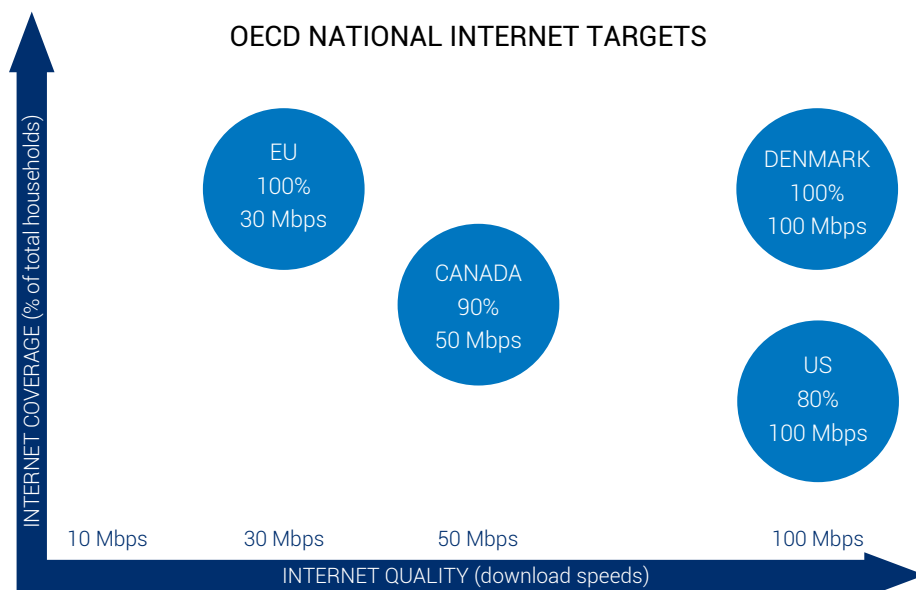
Jeremy Welter sums up the problem as a missed opportunity. "You can't be 100 per cent aware of the opportunities that are missed," he explains. "Missing out on a great deal at an online auction is something everyone could recognize. But there's more than that, and the average person isn't aware of most missed opportunities because these are projects that don't even make it to the planning stage."

There have been efforts to put a dollar value to what these missed opportunities have cost Saskatchewan. According to the Canadian Wireless Telecommunications Association (CWTA), the economic value of connecting rural Saskatchewan could be up to \$1.2 billion in additional Gross Domestic Product (i.e., economic activity) for the province.

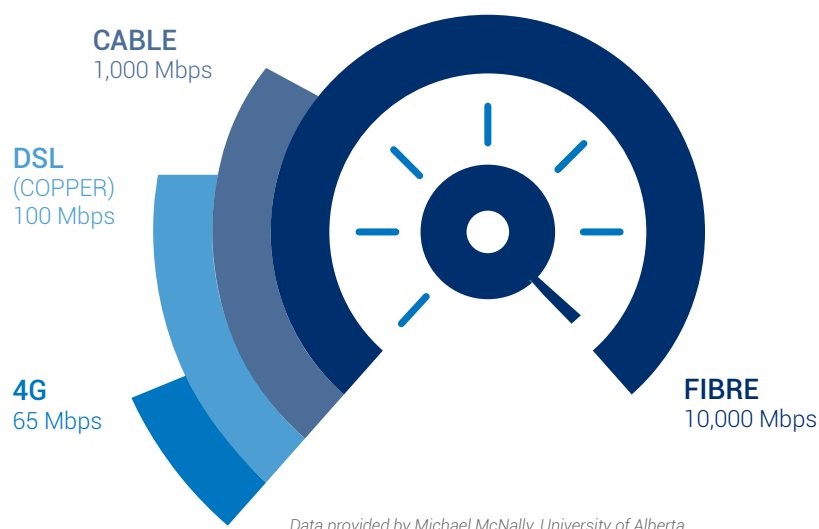
As a rural industry that increasingly relies on high-tech, connected equipment, agriculture certainly stands to contribute to this improved economic picture in a well-connected Saskatchewan.

But without adequate connectivity, there is no way for agriculture to reach its economic potential—potential that both the provincial and federal governments count on when planning for long-term economic growth.

"Agriculture is going to rise to the top in Saskatchewan as the primary driver of our economy," argues Task Force



INTERNET TECHNOLOGIES & SPEEDS



member Paige Stewart of Fillmore, SK. "If we can't keep up with making use of the technology that is offered to us, we won't be able to compete. We have to make sure that Saskatchewan farms have competitive access to keep up with the rest of the world. I want it recognized that getting growers good con-

Rural Connectivity Task Force meeting in November 2020.



nectivity is priority number one to benefit the economy."

Identifying solutions

In 2016 the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) set out a national universal internet service goal for Canadians: 50 megabits per second (Mbps) for downloads and 10 Mbps for uploads by 2030. It's known as "50/10" and is considered fast enough for Canadians to meet their day-to-day needs in a connected world, including using streaming services and cloud-based applications, and having multiple people use the internet at the same time.

So is there a magic bullet that will see all of rural Canada connected at the speeds promised by the federal government?

"Initially I thought we were going to get all this information together and fix the problem," says Task Force member Bev Pirio, who farms near Radville, SK. "But I realize now there's no quick solution."

In the case of Saskatchewan, it's unlikely that one single technology will achieve universal access for all. Instead, a combination of technologies will be needed.

For example, while fiber optic wireline is the gold standard in terms of internet speed, quality, and longevity, it's not necessarily a practical or affordable

option for individual farms and other remote locations, at least not in the short term. Rather, investments are needed in a range of technologies that make sense in a variety of contexts. In Saskatchewan that will probably look like fiber optic wireline connections for some, and wireless connections to towers or satellites for others.

When it comes right down to it, the problem is less about technology and more about economics, regulation, and collaboration.

The economics of connectivity

One of the most important things to understand about connectivity are the economics that drive it. In short, unless there is a business case to connect a community, it's unlikely to happen. And the more rural or remote the community is, the less attractive the business case will be. At the end of the day, profitable projects are the priority.

There are many solutions to this problem.

“ We need to see investments into rural connectivity as investments into local economies with important economic and social returns. ”

Letting smaller service providers play a role is one, but this requires policy changes at both the provincial and federal level. In Saskatchewan, our provincial Crown corporation SaskTel (which provides 60 per cent of wireless service in the province) needs support and incentives to be able to effectively partner with smaller providers.

Federal funding can also help if it's delivered in the right way. Right now, over \$7 billion in federal funds have been

committed towards getting connectivity projects up and running. But for rural internet service to be financially sustainable over the long term, funding for operations and maintenance is also needed. Unfortunately, ongoing operational funding isn't currently available, leaving some of the most underserved communities with few or no options.

An attractive business case isn't the only (or best) way to think about connecting rural and remote communities. We also need to see investments into rural connectivity as investments into local economies with important economic and social returns.

"I was really disappointed to learn that this is not always part of how we decide where funding goes," says Paige Stewart. "How can it not be part of a funding request to say the project is going to create X-number of jobs, or that it's going to kick back this amount of money into the economy?"

Regardless of these important economic questions, the fact remains: since 2016 high-speed internet has been considered a basic service no less important than telephone service. This means that profitability aside, every Canadian needs to be connected.

"It needs to be a right, not a privilege," says Bev Pirio.

In the Saskatchewan context, we must ask how Saskatchewan's publicly owned Crown corporations are working to ensure this right to universal high-speed internet access.

"We deserve the internet service that the government has promised us, so some of this needs to be done for the public good," says Ian Boxall. "There is a point where SaskTel has a responsibility to the public to provide this internet service to us."

“ Without adequate connectivity, there is no way for agriculture to reach its economic potential—potential that both the provincial and federal governments count on when planning for long-term economic growth. ”



Rural Connectivity Task Force meeting in November 2020.

Partnering for the public good

How universal internet access will be achieved remains to be seen, but it will certainly involve many strong partnerships. In some cases, this may look like SaskTel partnering with smaller service providers to deliver service to rural and remote communities.

"There are a lot of people out there that are really suffering because big companies look at them and go 'that's not lucrative,'" says Jeremy Welter. "But a small company might only need 100 people."

There may also be an opportunity—and a necessary one—for SaskTel to partner with other provincial Crowns to make use of existing infrastructure such as "dark fiber," which refers to fiber optic wireline that is in the ground but isn't currently being used for residential and commercial internet service.

"The dark fiber stuff blew my mind," says Bev Pirio. "The fact that there's fiber in the ground for SaskPower is so

frustrating to me. Because I feel like that's our solution to a certain degree, and the door is just shut in our face. And SaskTel and SaskPower don't work together, and that surprises me because they're both owned by the people."

Use it or lose it

Dark fiber isn't the only example of where technology and infrastructure to solve the problem might already exist. In some cases, the failure to take advantage of existing resources happens at the regulatory level, where the mechanisms to enforce accountability are lacking.

The management of spectrum, for example, leaves a lot of room for improvement. "Spectrum" refers to the radio waves that are used to send signals between a wireless device and a connecting point such as a cellphone tower, modem, or satellite. Spectrum is treated as a limited resource and is distributed by the federal government to internet service providers through auction. Spectrum auctions have raised billions of dollars for the federal government.

How spectrum is managed (or mismanaged) can make or break a region's connectivity. Although service providers agree to conditions about how and when they will use the spectrum they lease (including an agreement to "use it or lose it"), these conditions aren't generally enforced, leaving plenty of available spectrum sitting idle and unused.

“I’m really looking forward to speaking with the government about this. I’m anxious for them to know that farmers and rural people in Saskatchewan can work together, and that we will stick this out until there’s a solution.”

– Bev Pirio

“I was surprised and disappointed that the ‘use it lose it’ clause has never really been enforced, kind of like an old toothless lion,” says Jeremy Welter. “I think that is one of the biggest issues federally that needs to be addressed.”

“Companies are buying up spectrum and then never utilizing it, and there are still citizens who do not have adequate internet service,” adds Ian Boxall. “And yet they’re hoarding that spectrum. I found it surprising that the government didn’t put more emphasis on the ‘use it or lose it’ side of those contracts.”

“I’m really looking forward to speaking with the government about this. I can’t wait for that,” says Bev Pirio about the next stage of the Task Force’s work. “I’m anxious for them to know that farmers and rural people in Saskatchewan can work together, and that we will stick this out until there’s a solution.”

The ultimate goal?

“Long term I’d like to see the government’s 50/10 goals attained,” says

Jeremy Welter. “Because if they are that means that every rural resident in Canada, not just Saskatchewan, has access. And something that’s been missed a little too often is affordable access. Long term I’d like to see every rural resident have *affordable* access to the 50/10 plan that the federal government has.”

But that’s not where his vision ends. “Going out 25 or even 40 years down the road, I’d like to see our country regain the position we had off the start. Canada used to be number two in the world in terms of connectivity. What I’m talking about is really investing in the future and working hard to drive the next iteration of business growth into our economies. The need for connectivity and the continued growth through tech is not going anywhere. It’s going to continue to grow. So long-term we need to have a plan to position ourselves at the forefront of that to drive that growth into our local communities.”

What comes next for rural connectivity?

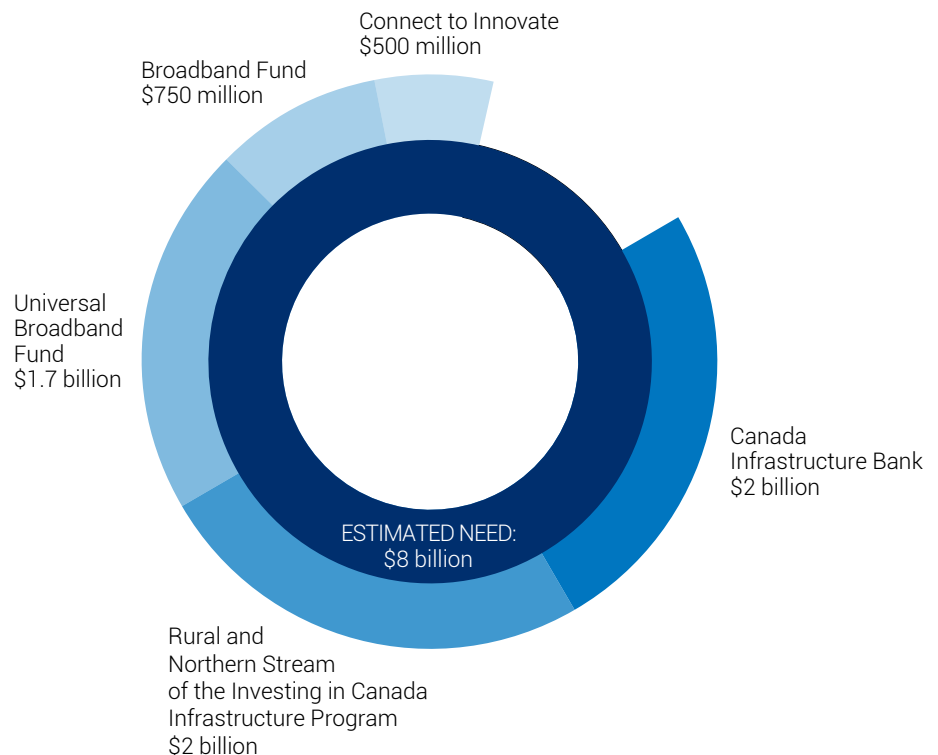
After months of interviews and careful study with the industry’s top experts and service providers, the consensus of the Rural Connectivity Task Force is that there is no simple solution.

“It’s been a real eye-opener,” says Task Force member and APAS Vice-President Bill Prybylski of Willowbrook, SK. “The complexity of the whole issue, all the different components that have to come together to provide a reliable network of internet service and cell coverage. Between satellites and fiber optics, all the different service providers, and the spectrum auctions, it’s been a real eye opener.”

And yet solutions do exist. The Rural Connectivity Task Force is developing a thorough series of recommendations that will be included in their final report, due out this year.

But it’s what happens after the recommendations are released that will be the most critical.

CANADA'S CONNECTIVITY FUNDING PROGRAMS



Glossary of Internet Terms

When it comes to the internet, there are many technical terms that can be difficult to understand. Here are definitions of some of the most common.

Bandwidth: the *maximum capacity* of an internet connection (not the speed). For example, if you have a 100 Mbps internet package, your bandwidth is 100 Mbps, meaning the most data (i.e., information) your connection can download at one time is 100 Mbps. Your actual internet speed is likely to be less than your bandwidth most of the time because of network congestion and other external factors.

Broadband: telecommunications services that allow the high-speed transmission of data at speeds of 1.5 Mbps and above.

Download speed: the time it takes to receive (i.e., download) data from a server to your computer in the form of images, videos, text, files, and audio.

Upload speed: the time it takes to send (i.e., upload) data from your computer to another device or server on the internet.

Internet Service Provider (ISP): A company that provides access to the Internet.

Last mile: the portion of the telecommunications network that physically reaches the retail customer's premises.

Latency: the amount of time it takes to send data from one point to the next. Every time you put in a request to your internet connection (e.g., search for something on Google, check social media, etc.), the information is sent to a server and then sent back to you. The delay or time you wait is the latency. It is measured in milliseconds (ms) and is also referred to as a ping rate.

LEO satellite: a low earth orbit (LEO) satellite is an object, generally a piece of electronic equipment, that circles around the earth at an altitude of 200-2000 kms. LEO satellites are being used increasingly to deliver wireless internet service (e.g., Starlink). They are closer to the earth than other types of satellites, allowing information to travel to and from them much more quickly and resulting in reduced latency (or delay).

Megabits per second (Mbps): the measurement of data transfer (used to measure internet speed).

Spectrum: the invisible radio waves that wireless information travels over. Wireless devices (e.g., smartphones, tablets, etc.) use these radio waves to transmit information. Different frequencies of spectrum are used to carry other types of information, including television and AM and FM radio.

Wireless: using radio waves, microwaves, etc. (as opposed to wires or cables) to transmit information.

Wireline: using cables, or data lines (e.g., fibre optic, cable) to transmit information.



You Can't Pour from an Empty Cup

Mental health resiliency in turbulent times

WRITTEN BY KYLE ANDERSON, M.A., BRIDGES HEALTH

It is said that the only constant in life is change, and there is no better example of this than the current COVID-19 pandemic, which has caused momentous changes in the ways we live our lives. With so many individuals experiencing fear, uncertainty, and stress, mental health concerns are on the rise.

Agricultural producers face unique stressors, including financial uncertainty, community isolation, and work pressures, all of which contribute to higher levels of depression, anxiety, and stress. It is more important than ever to make sure that mental health is a priority for ourselves, our families, and communities.

Resiliency is a skill that can be actively learned and applied to improve mental wellbeing. When considering how to improve resilience, here are a few elements that are important to consider:

Maintain connections Having supportive social relationships ensures we do not feel alone during challenging times. While some individuals have a natural reaction to withdraw and isolate, it is important to accept support from those who care about you. Displaying vulnerability and asking for help is a sign of strength, not weakness.

Focus on what you can control Highly stressful events are inevitable, but you can change how you interpret and respond to them. If we put too much focus on things that are out of our control, feelings of stress and anxiety will only multiply. Instead, put your time and energy into matters you can control, such as your attitude, your effort, and problem-solving solutions.

Nurture a positive self-view Often we are our own harshest critic. Be aware of your internal dialogue and challenge any negative self-talk. Display self-compassion by speaking to yourself the way you would talk to a loved one, use positive self-affirmations, and give yourself permission to make mistakes.

Maintain boundaries It is important to set and maintain healthy boundaries around physical space, time, and emotional energy. Not having healthy boundaries can cause us to become overwhelmed and burnt out, so do not be afraid to strengthen your "NO" muscle!

Engage in self-care "You can't pour from an empty cup." Prioritize time to look after yourself so that when setbacks inevitably occur you are in a better position to respond effectively. Exercise, healthy eating, meditation, and hobbies are a few general areas of self-care. Do what works for you!

When we strengthen these skills on a regular basis, we are better equipped to handle challenges when they arise. Try checking in with yourself each day by asking, "how do I feel right now?" This increases self-awareness and helps you identify when problems are occurring, allowing you to adjust before the situation worsens.

Bridges Health offers a wide variety of health and wellness strategies, from mental health training to injury prevention and disability case management, with technology solutions that support each area. For more information on improving health and safety within yourself, organization, or community, please email info@bridgeshealth.com.



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Investing in Our Youth

How three young agricultural leaders are making a difference

WRITTEN BY DELANEY SEIFERLING

The Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan (APAS) has long recognized the importance of nurturing the next generation of industry leaders.

This is why it launched the Youth Leadership and Mentorship Program in 2014, which aims to help young producers gain the skills and contacts necessary to lead the industry into the future.

APAS is not alone in recognizing the importance of having a succession plan for our industry. In the past decade several initiatives have been launched with the same goals, including at a national level.

Last September, federal Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Marie-Claude Bibeau announced the formation of the Canadian Agricultural Youth Council (CAYC), a group of young Canadian industry members that will provide input into future plans for the development and success of the agriculture industry.

The council is made up of 25 members (chosen from 800 applicants), of which three are from Saskatchewan. Meet them below!



Brent Kobes, APAS Policy Researcher and CAYC member.

Brent Kobes

Policy Researcher, APAS

Why did you apply to be part of the CYAC?

The council is open to young people from all parts of the agricultural industry, and with my workplace and background I figured I would be a good fit. I was honestly surprised when I was selected, and am frankly humbled by the talent that the CYAC has recruited.

What are your specific areas of interest in the Canadian agriculture/agri-food industry?

I am particularly interested in markets and transportation. My grandfather worked for the Canadian National Railway and growing up on the prairies every small town had an elevator. Understanding the interconnections and flow of goods from the farmgate to port is a truly herculean task. It interconnects my family farm to the global market and relates me to consumers across the globe.

What impact do you hope to have in your CYAC role?

My hope is that the CYAC can provide the Minister with valuable insights into

the workings of agriculture on the ground, particularly in Western Canada, while also developing another generation of young leaders within the sector that can support each other in their future endeavours.

In your opinion, what are the major challenges/opportunities for Saskatchewan's agriculture industry going forward and how can we address/exploit these?

Over the last few years Saskatchewan producers have seen a dramatic decline in their margins, which creates instability in families, communities, and the entire sector. Ensuring that producers have access to markets with competitive prices and inputs that don't break the bank is essential to ensuring stability and growth in the sector.

“My hope is that the CYAC can provide valuable insights into the workings of agriculture on the ground, particularly in Western Canada, while also developing another generation of young leaders within the sector.”

– Brent Kobes



Sameeha Jhetam, Master's Student in the U of S College of Agriculture and Bioresources and CAYC member.

Sameeha Jhetam

Master's Student, University of Saskatchewan College of Agriculture and Bioresources (Poultry Management and Welfare Lab)

Why did you apply to be part of the CAYC?

I thought it would be a great opportunity for the federal government to hear about challenges faced by youth in the industry, as we are well educated, experienced, and have many innovative ideas. I also thought I would bring a unique perspective to the CAYC as a woman of colour and immigrant with a passion for agriculture, livestock farming, and science.

What are your specific areas of interest in the Canadian agriculture/agri-food industry?

My specific areas of interest include all aspects of poultry production, animal welfare, and using science and research as a way of improving and advancing the agriculture and agri-food industry.

“As the world's population increases, we need to feed the world while continuously improving animal welfare, farming sustainably, and advancing our technologies within the industry.”

– Sameeha Jhetam

Why are you interested in these areas?

Poultry is the meat most consumed in Canada, and thus research into production practices and bird welfare is extremely important. As the world's population increases, we need to feed the world while continuously improving animal welfare, farming sustainably, and advancing our technologies within the industry. By using science and research, the agriculture and agri-food sector can continuously evolve and improve by adopting new practices and technologies. This can lead to more investment and commitment to the industry.

What impact do you hope to have in your CAYC role?

First, I hope to focus on the core ideas that we, as a council, determine are most important and work toward implementing changes in these areas. I personally hope we can improve public trust in the sector and increase the presence and credibility of the CAYC, while allowing other youth in the industry to feel their voices are being heard.

Andrea De Roo

Farmer & professional agronomist (with specialization in precision agriculture)

Why did you apply to be part of the CAYC?

As I finished my studies, started working in the industry, and invested in our family farm, I could start to feel the disconnect my grandparents and parents felt between agriculture and government. When the CAYC was announced, I saw it as an opportunity to be a part of the discussion around policies that affect the industry and my future in agriculture. I also saw it as an opportunity to connect and network with a diverse group of youth across our country, and to listen and learn about their concerns and challenges.

“I believe producers are the foundation that the rest of the industry is built around and my interests are driven by the desire to help them succeed.”

– Andrea De Roo

What are your specific areas of interest in the Canadian agriculture/agri-food industry? Why are you interested in these areas?

My interests in Canadian agriculture are really grounded at the farm level. Farming systems, agronomy, and research are where I focus most of my



Andrea De Roo, farmer, agronomist, and CAYC member.

energy, but animal husbandry, public perception of agriculture, and mental health are also very important to me. Growing up on the farm, of course, has greatly influenced my interests in the industry. But I also believe producers are the foundation that the rest of the industry is built around and my interests are driven by the desire to help them succeed.

What impact do you hope to have in your CYAC role?

Ultimately, I hope I can bring a practical perspective from the farm to the discussion and development of agriculture policy, and see the feedback from the council be implemented in a meaningful way. I would also like to see the disconnect between industry and government, urban and rural, and the various ag sectors start to narrow.

Outside of our work on the council, I hope I can inspire youth to consider all the amazing opportunities that are available in agriculture and to get involved. I think it's important to include the ideas and thoughts of youth, through the council and other means, in the discussions of decisions that are going to direct their future in agriculture.

In your opinion, what are the major challenges/opportunities for Saskatchewan's agriculture industry going forward and how can we address/exploit these?

The biggest challenges I see for Saskatchewan agriculture are the barriers to young producers succeeding or starting a farm, rural connectivity, and the disconnect between primary agriculture, government, and consumers. The opportunities I see in Saskatchewan are climate change mitigation, value-added processing, and a growing movement to support local. Most of these challenges and opportunities are not unique to Saskatchewan and their impacts can be felt across the country. That in itself is an important part of how we will address and exploit the challenges and opportunities in front of us and help the industry move forward.

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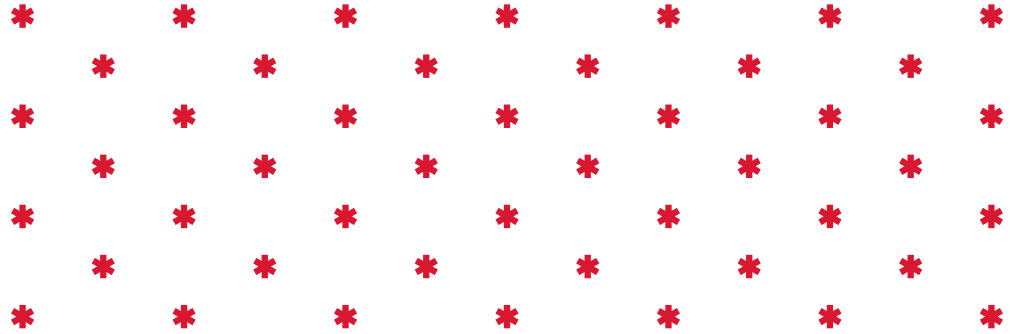


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Building SaskLander

Sask tech startup tackles the issue of land access

WRITTEN BY DELANEY SEIFERLING | PHOTOS BY DAVE STOBBE



“Saskatchewan farmers are incredibly open to adopting new technology, as long as they see value in it.”

SaskLander co-founders Sauvelm McClean (left) and Aldo Scribante (right).

Saskatchewan farmers are well aware of the longstanding conflict in our province between landowners and residents who want to access rural property for hunting, snowmobiling, and other recreational activities.

In an effort to manage this conflict (and in response to growing rural crime

rates), *The Trespass to Property Act* was introduced in 2018. It proposed penalties for anyone who sets foot on private rural land without first obtaining permission from the landowner.

Although the Act has yet to be enforced as law, in 2019 the Saskatchewan government went a step further in aiming

to address the issue – it called for help from our province's burgeoning tech sector.

In partnership with the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities (SARM), the government put out a call through Innovation Saskatchewan in early 2019 for a technology-based solu-

“One of the greatest takeaways from this project is learning how much potential there is for Saskatchewan’s technology sector to serve our provincial agriculture industry.”

tion that would connect would-be land users with rural private property owners.

One young entrepreneur heard that call.

Sauvelm McClean, who has over 12 years’ experience working with geographic information systems (GIS) and who was working for Western Heritage at the time, knew what to do right away.

“The idea came pretty quickly,” says McClean, who also has a degree in Geography and GIS from Queen’s University.

Knowing how familiar the general population has become with using mapping systems like Google maps, he immediately thought to program a web map that people could use to identify property they wanted to access. The web map could be accompanied by a system that then allowed users to request access from the property owner associated with the location identified on the map.

“That was the basic idea,” McClean says. And just like that, SaskLander was born.

“It quickly got a lot more complicated though,” he laughs. “There were a lot more factors involved.”

The development phase

Soon after winning the bid through Western Heritage, McClean was joined by Aldo Scribante, who helped found SaskLander.

Scribante, who had recently graduated from the University of Saskatchewan with a degree in electrical engineering, worked with McClean on initial research, talking to stakeholders and potential app users about the initial SaskLander concept.

This research helped them shape the direction of the app.

“Our initial aim was to make it easier for people to get access to land,” Scribante says. “We learned very early on that was the wrong place to be focusing energy.”

So, they shifted their focus to facilitating a connection between landowners and potential land users and giving landowners tools to set access permissions for their land.

This approach is what sets them apart from other apps on the market today, Scribante says.

“Other apps try to solve problems of specific groups, such as hunters, but by focusing on landowners we can help handle access for anyone who wants on,” he says.

SaskLander aims to benefit all parties involved in transactions, Scribante says.

“We are really focused on promoting good stewardship, building relationships and improving the health of rural communities.”

Finally, one of the biggest concerns the team heard in the design phase of the project was that potential app users were worried about security.

“We anticipated some concerns about this but not to that extent,” McClean says.

In response to this, they dialed up every precaution possible. Firstly, landowner names and information are kept private until they themselves grant permission for app users to access them. The names of potential land users are revealed when they make a request to the landowner.

Furthermore, for accuracy and security all landowner information submitted to the app will be verified against the Information Services Corporation (ISC) titles database.

“Most of the information that will be available on the app is already available publicly through ISC,” McClean says.

SaskLander co-founder Sauvelm McClean.





SaskLander co-founder Aldo Scribante.

Testing it out

Unfortunately, COVID-19 restrictions delayed plans for McClean and Scribante to get out to rural Saskatchewan areas themselves to promote the app.

But they were still able to launch a pilot program last spring in the RM of Shellbrook, a location chosen for its high numbers of both mixed land users and landowners, as well as its relative proximity to Saskatoon.

They have since gained some interesting insights.

First of all, McClean's initial hunch was correct – the platform is indeed an advanced solution to the problem.

"We've learned there's definitely a market for something like this," Scribante says.

Despite the minimal amount of resources they've had to date for promoting the app, they've had a substantial amount of interest, with 50 people currently testing the app as part of the

pilot program and 400 more on the mailing list or with inquiries about when it will be available in other areas of the province.

Another pleasant development for the team has been the willingness of Saskatchewan farmers – of all ages – to adopt new technology.

"There was this attitude we heard going into this that landowners don't use technology, that they're not on the Internet," McClean says. "But there's a lot of tech literacy in that group and it's growing."

In fact, he says, he has found Saskatchewan farmers are incredibly open to adopting new technology, as long as they see value in it.

"The key question was, 'Is it going to make my life easier or more complicated?'"

It seems many farmers he has talked to think the former: this solution is more amenable and efficient than fielding land access requests from door knockers and random phone calls.

"There's openness to the idea, as long as they believe it's going to be helpful."

Next steps

The team plans to roll out a partial version of the app more widely in early 2021, with a focus on helping snowmobilers access land for the heavy snow months of the year.

To help make it as efficient and effective as possible for this group, McClean and Scribante are working with the Saskatchewan Snowmobilers Association and other provincial snowmobiling groups.

Once that roll-out is complete and updates have been made based on that growth, the plan is to build it for more general use and accessibility across the province as the year progresses.

The team also hopes to do more localized marketing and promotion throughout 2021 to drive awareness and adoption rates.

Although McClean is hesitant to look too far into the future, he has considered the potential for this platform, once perfected, to be applicable in solving other ag-related problems.

"There's a lot of potential ag data sources that could be plugged into a mapping system like this," he says. "It's not our focus now but it could be a hub for that kind of information in the future."

“ The ag sector here is very ripe for innovation right now. I wouldn't be surprised if it looks completely different in 10 years. ”

– Aldo Scribante

“We are focused on promoting good stewardship, building relationships and improving the health of rural communities.”

— Aldo Scribante

Bigger picture

One of the greatest takeaways from this project is learning how much potential there is for Saskatchewan's technology sector to serve our provincial agriculture industry, the team says.

McClean, who moved here 10 years ago from Ontario (and is also a musician), says Saskatchewan in general is impressive.

“It punches above its weight in a lot of things—tech, music, talent.”

Scribante, whose family moved to Llyoldminster from South Africa when he was 12, has also been pleasantly surprised by the tech industry in Saskatchewan.

“Saskatchewan has one of the healthiest tech startup communities right now compared to a lot of places,” he says. “It's a very close-knit community, there's lots of potential funding and incentive — it's a really good spot to be.”

Currently, the team is seeing a lot of other interesting tech startup projects in the works, focused on agriculture. Scribante also says with current SpaceX developments in satellite internet, there could be potential to help solve problems with connectivity in rural areas of the province.

“The ag sector here is very ripe for innovation right now. I wouldn't be surprised if it looks completely different in 10 years.”

In the meantime, McClean hopes that SaskLander can be one part of that.

“We know this industry moves fast and things happen,” he says. “But for now we are just hoping people are willing to try something new so we can gain some momentum and help people with this important issue.”

Saskatchewan Trespass to Property Act

The revised *Saskatchewan Trespass to Property Act* was introduced in 2018 and will require anyone wanting to go onto rural land to first get permission from the owner.

However, the Act will not be formally enacted or enforced until the SaskLander app has been completed and rolled out to the public.

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Response to Our 20th Anniversary Issue

We received much positive feedback on our last issue, which celebrated 20 years of APAS. Here are a couple letters we just had to share.



Kristjan Thordarson.

“

This is for EVERYONE involved in APAS.

I just finished reading the article on Terry Hildebrandt and the founding of APAS, and I wanted to write a letter to be shared at will. Here are my thoughts on 20 years.

It was brought to my attention in mid-summer that it has been 20 years since the beginning. I was very surprised! Wow!!!! 20 years!!!! Congratulations to APAS and the people making it work!!!!

In 1999 I was 24, and the only thing I cared about was how to get the work done fast enough to get out the door in time for the next party (and of course how I could afford said party). I was not interested in policy, news, or the development of new farm groups to fight for our future in agriculture.

My dad (Evans Thordarson), on the other hand, did care about all of that. I stood on stages and podiums with him as a young kid in the eighties when he took the whole family on trips to speak at farm group meetings. Mom and the other wives would visit and prep some food, and some of the families became quite close friends. There was the Cow-Calf Associations, the Beef Stabilization Board, and the SABC in Yorkton. Dad was a thinker and visionary, but he needed great people with him to bring out his best and bring ideas and plans to fruition.

Forty years later, mom and one of those wives are still best friends. My brother and that lady's oldest son are best friends and to this day, even with dad gone, I still send pictures of my family to several of the people dad was always involved with. All of dad's best friends came from the farm groups he was involved in. I might add that these families are all at least 200 kilometers away from us. That was a big drive 40 years ago.

“ **Dad's reply was swift and clear: 'The one thing that you will learn out of all this is that it's not for you or us, it's for everyone. It's for all of the farmers and farming.'** ”

Fast forward to 1999: dad was Reeve of our RM and was telling me stuff about setting up a new farm group. Of course, I didn't care. He was going away to more meetings and taking up precious time on the phone that could negatively affect my social life. The fax machine had to get checked regularly and the one thing I did think was cool was that I saw media news releases before they were news!!

One day I was in the office talking on the phone (lining up details about one of those parties I mentioned) and I started reading one of the faxes that came across. I can't remember exactly what it was, but I do remember asking dad, "What good does this program do us? We won't see any money out of this." The reply was swift and clear: "The one thing that you will learn out of all this is that it's not for you or us, it's for everyone. It's for all of the farmers and farming."

Since that day, I paid more attention. I helped where I could and met some pretty cool guys like Terry Hildebrandt, and others like Merv Kryzanowski who picked dad up when we couldn't drive him to meetings. I didn't meet everyone, but I talked to them all at least once on the phone. I came to know all the workings of APAS as it developed. Dad was devoted to the success of APAS, to the point that he didn't run for the position of Reeve again so he could devote all his time to APAS.

He was at the APAS office almost full-time and I saw lots of cool new developments, including how he (along with others) developed the START program, which grew into ALUS. START was first talked about on a phone call with one of those family friends from way back at the beginning.

That's how everything started: it was always a phone call with a like-minded friend. A lot of great things happened with an opening like, "What if...?" or "Have you ever thought of...?" or of course "What do you think of this...?"

Dad gave his all to APAS; all the original guys did. Those guys had a passion, a sense of responsibility, a drive to make things better and accomplish goals. That is what makes the organization great. No gimmicks, no sideline bullshit, no sense of selfishness or personal gain should ever come into APAS because that is not what it's about. APAS gained ground incredibly fast and that was because of honest and open communication that came across with integrity and sincerity.

Dad took a bit of a blow while working with APAS, and the drive to give his all went with that blow. Terry kept him in the loop, and in turn dad tried to help Terry however he could. Dad's health went downhill fairly fast and all through it Terry and others kept him propped up mentally as best they could.

I was at Terry's farewell supper at the APAS AGM and I got up to say a few words. I don't remember all that was said, but there was a lot of respect given from all, and rightfully so. I realize that our family is not unique and there are probably many that have shown devotion, sacrifice, and spent money out of pocket for the greater good and the push to keep APAS moving forward.

“Dad gave his all to APAS; all the original guys did. Those guys had a passion, a sense of responsibility, a drive to make things better and accomplish goals. That is what makes the organization great.”

I am not directly involved in farming anymore. My wife and I own and operate a heavy construction company based out of the family farmyard. I have been on Council for the RM of Elfros for two years now, and it took a lot of convincing and a lot of support from a few good neighbours, including Norm Hall, to convince the rest of our Council to rejoin APAS after being out for several years.

I see agriculture every day and I hope to raise my two little girls to know what farms produce, how we eat, what it takes to be able to buy food at the store, and hopefully take part in 4-H too. One line that one of dad's buddies told me was that, "Steers don't come out of the backs of trailers, they come out of the back ends of cows." My girls will know about this line.



Kristjan Thordarson with partner Jennie and children Valentina (left) and Johanna (right).

One thing for sure is that in our family, APAS left a mark that will never be forgotten. I got a tattoo done in memory of dad after he died, and within that tattoo there are the letters for APAS. I can guarantee that there aren't many who can say that they have APAS tattooed on their chest, but I do because of my dad. He lived and breathed APAS because of the people that he worked with.

The last time that I wrote anything about APAS, it was a letter to the editor of *The Western Producer*, blasting APAS for a stupid gimmick to attempt to attract attention. The organization has come a long way since then and has since regained my respect.

From what I see, agriculture in Saskatchewan is generally going well, and there is a lot of cheap credit that is being put to work. This can change, and a strong voice is needed through both good times and especially the bad times. We don't need to keep talking to the converted or preach to the choir but more to those who don't know of all the good that has come from a group of seven people's idea of what the ag sector needed in a bad way. No one cares about needing help or change when the going is good. People have short memories, and we can't forget why there was a need for change to begin with.

Respectfully,

Kristjan Thordarson (son of Evans Thordarson, founding Vice-President of APAS)



Hello,

Congratulations on being a very important voice for Saskatchewan agriculture for 20 years. I was reading your article about the beginnings of APAS with interest, as the resolution that was passed at the 1999 SARM Midterm was written by myself (Mike Ecklund) from the RM of Silverwood #123. Evans Thordarson had penned a resolution as well and we discussed them both. He withdrew his resolution to support mine, as it had a mandatory funding formula built into it that was very important to getting APAS started. The resolution was very hotly debated for many hours. It was tabled and I feared it would be lost, but it was brought back to the floor and did pass.

Full credit goes to Terry Hildebrandt and his group for the many hours and many miles of effort that went into getting APAS started. Without them the resolution wouldn't have got any traction. A very important accomplishment of APAS (with huge credit to Terry) was getting consensus to break the Fredericton Formula, which the federal government used for years to severely limit federal funding to this province. Breaking that agreement meant tens of millions of dollars flowed into the hands of Saskatchewan producers when it was badly needed.

I was an APAS Representative for 10 years and enjoyed being part of a very important agricultural voice. Keep up the good work.

Mike Ecklund



Founding APAS Vice-President Evans Thordarson.
Evans passed away in 2004.

Canadian Food Focus

Connecting consumers to food and farming during COVID-19

CONTRIBUTED BY CLINTON MONCHUK, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, FARM & FOOD CARE SASKATCHEWAN

At Farm & Food Care Saskatchewan, our vision is to connect consumers to food and farming. You may have seen us at past events like Agriculture Month and cooking competitions in Saskatoon, or read about the farm tours that we have provided to key audiences. However, because of COVID-19 personal interactions have slowed to a trickle and large group gatherings have disappeared.

Very early in this pandemic we called an audible. For those of you who are not familiar with football terms, audible means we had to change our play and change it quickly. We realized that all our in-person events for 2020 wouldn't take place and therefore we would have to focus efforts online.

We already had a leg up for this change because we had created a consumer-focused website in the spring of 2019 called CanadianFoodFocus.org. This was a newly branded initiative that puts more emphasis on Canadian food and focuses on how that food is being produced by farmers and ranchers in this country. The site includes five main areas: In Your Kitchen, Recipes, Health, Canadian Food Stories, and On the Farm. These pillars were methodically chosen after analyzing what Canadians are actually searching for online when it comes to food.

In the first quarter of 2020, Canadians were searching for more information about their food. There were questions ranging from, "Why are dairy farmers dumping milk?" to "Will I get Covid-19 from consuming vegetables?" We engaged experts in various fields to write articles about these subjects, and we provided videos and answered ques-



tions on social media platforms. Later in 2020, we added two more sections (What's in Season and Learn to Cook) to proactively respond to consumer curiosity.

We also catered to at-home learners by informing teachers and parents of resources like FarmFood360.ca and the RealDirtOnFarming.ca, giving them factual examples of what modern farms look like and why farmers use tools like herbicides or grow genetically modified crops.

The results of our efforts have been touchdown after touchdown. Since launching in March 2019, CanadianFoodFocus.org has reached over 11 million consumers with over 2.5 million

engagements, including 600,000 video views and over 200,000 pageviews. Viewers are spending an average of 2:11 minutes per page and the vast majority of these users are from urban cities, meaning we're actively engaging with the right audience. This success is backed up by the recent Canadian Centre for Food Integrity survey results showing more Canadians than ever have indicated that the food system is heading in the right direction!

As we proceed into 2021, Farm & Food Care Saskatchewan is looking forward to being the franchise team building trust in food and farming.

APAS is a proud member of Farm & Food Care Saskatchewan.

Farm Dogs of Saskatchewan



Dogs are special members of farm families across the province. In every issue we spotlight some of the most beloved farm dogs in Saskatchewan. If you have a Good Boy or Good Girl on your farm that you would like to see featured in *Saskatchewan Farmers' Voice*, send one or more high quality photos and a bit of information about them to info@apas.ca.

Name: Farley

Home Quarter: RM of Biggar #347

Age: 6 years

Breed: Labrador/Shepherd cross

Family: The Garretts/Atkinsons

About Farley: Farley was given to us by friends. He was the largest pup in the litter and came with a bottle of Bailey's and a blanket. He has an old soul and wasn't a chewer or a mischievous guy. It didn't take any time before he won our hearts. He's great with kids and adults and seems to know when someone needs a hug.

As he kept growing, I told him he needed a job because he was so big. So I bought a harness (we had to get one custom-made because he is so long) and he started pulling. First small things (pails, bags of cat and dog food) and then square bales, kids, and me. He has such a warm loving presence and loves to please. A great addition to our family. Good Boy, Farley!

Names: Doug and Pete

Home Quarter: RM of Lost River #313

Age: 6 and 9 years

Breed: Pug/French Bulldog cross, Pug/Beagle cross

Family: The Usselmans

About Doug and Pete: Although they aren't your typical farm dogs, they fill the shoes just the same. Doug makes sure that no one drives in the yard without being announced the entire time they are there, and Pete makes sure that not one crumb of food is left behind by anyone.

All the cats adore these two and their only enemy is a Welsh pony who basically doesn't like anyone! Both dogs sleep inside at night but are always eager to start their next day's adventures each morning. What Good Boys!



Name: Oakley

Home Quarter: RM of Sasman #336

Age: 2½ years

Breed: Golden Labrador

Family: The Murrays

About Oakley: Oakley came here when he was an 11-month old puppy and he had never lived on a farm before. He was welcomed to the farm by the other farm dog, Diesel. It wasn't long after being here that his paws were sore because he wasn't used to running on the gravel. Oakley kept very busy chasing the cats and exploring the farm. He likes riding in the Side by Side and tries to ride on the back of the snow-mobile.

Oakley loves swimming in the dugout and playing fetch with anybody that will throw a rock for him. During the cold winters Oakley and Diesel enjoy laying on their beds in the shop. Oakley is a Very Good Boy!



Name: Lady

Home Quarter: RM of Moosomin #121

Age: 6 years

Breed: Border Collie (with a touch of Australian Shepherd)

Family: The Jamiesons

About Lady: Lady came to us after being surrendered to the Tisdale Vet Clinic. She is the most awesome dog. Plays fetch to no end. Chases cows, sheep and goats when asked to yet never bothers them at other times. She leaves cats alone and never leaves the yard. She goes everywhere with my nephew Levi. She rides on quad, motorcycle, skidoo, or horse with him. You could not ask for a better dog. She lives for Levi and somehow understands everything he expects of her. She makes Levi smile and he truly loves that dog. She is one of kind. What a Good Girl!

Name: Kato, Turbo, and Zoey

Home Quarter: RM of Laurier #38

Age: 5, 3, and 1½ years

Breed: Labradors

Family: The Pirios

About Turbo, Kato and Zoey: Turbo is our five-year old and is calm, solid and loves to play catch! Kato is three and is our son's boy. He is incredibly smart, well trained and OBSESSED with fetch!

Zoey is my baby! She's a handful! Timid but protective and must have 100% of my attention. She loves a good game of chewing the other dogs' legs while they play fetch and then stealing the ball when she thinks they are getting too much attention!



DISTRICT ONE

- #1 Argyle – Brenda Ryckman
- #2 Mount Pleasant – Terry Macfarlane
- #3 Enniskillen – Barry Fitzpatrick
- #33 Moose Creek – Reed Gibson
- #37 Lomond – Ryan McKenzie
- #63 Moose Mountain – Jack Wilson
- #65 Tecumseh – Thomas Breault
- #91 Maryfield – Vacant
- #93 Wawken – Blaine Ehr
- #94 Hazelwood – Kyle Kish
- #95 Golden West – Wanda Reid
- #97 Wellington – Sarah Leguee
- #121 Moosomin – Trevor Green
- #122 Martin – Steven Donald
- #123 Silverwood – Robert Dodd
- #124 Kingsley – Greg Pusch
- #125 Chester – Lee Sluser
- #126 Montmartre – Cory Stringer
- #127 Francis – James Vogt
- #151 Rocanville – Herb Park
- #152 Spy Hill – Corinne Delmage
- #153 Willowdale – Kenneth Aldous
- #155 Wolseley – Stan Jeeves
- #181 Langenburg – Mike Mitschke
- #183 Fertile Belt – Arlynn Kurtz
- #184 Grayson – Danny Ottenbreit
- #187 North Qu'Appelle – George MacPherson
- #211 Churchbridge – Cameron Wiebe
- #214 Cana – Janette Reinson

DISTRICT TWO

- #11 Hart Butte – Louis Paradis
- #38 Laurier – Bev Piro
- #71 Excel – Ron Daviduk
- #72 Lake of the Rivers – Chris Bates
- #73 Stonehenge – Vince Topola
- #74 Wood River – Vacant
- #100 Elmsthorpe – James Beingessner
- #101 Terrell – Chris Hawkins
- #103 Sutton – Vacant
- #104 Gravelbourg – James Bateman
- #128 Lajord – Todd Lewis
- #129 Bratt's Lake – Gregor Beck
- #131 Baildon – Christie Whelan
- #162 Caron – Ray McBride
- #163 Wheatlands – Kurtis Hicks
- #191 Marquis – Glen Steinhauer
- #193 Eyebrow – Dean Thiessen
- #219 Longlaketon – Scott Hegglin
- #220 McKillop – Glen Munholland

- #221 Sarnia – Aaron Bachman
- #222 Craik – Trewet Chaplin

DISTRICT THREE

- #76 Auvergne – Dale Davidson
- #79 Arlington – Kevin Gilbert
- #106 Whiska Creek – Wes Kirby
- #109 Carmichael – Don Connick
- #110 Piapot – Devin Harlick
- #135 Lawtonia – Sterling Dayne
- #136 Coulee – Greg Targerson
- #138 Webb – Bruce Gibson
- #167 Sask Landing – Dan Barber
- #228 Lacadena – Glen Collins
- #257 Monet – James Myers
- #261 Chesterfield – Leah Cooper

DISTRICT FOUR

- #241 Calder – Roy Derworiz
- #244 Orkney – Randy Trost
- #245 Garry – Bill Prybylski
- #275 Insinger – Willy Zuchkan
- #277 Emerald – Norman Hall
- #304 Buchanan – Myron Kopec
- #307 Elfros – Erling Brakefield
- #308 Big Quill – Ernest Hall
- #333 Clayton – Lorne Ball
- #334 Preeceville – Dale Parkin
- #335 Hazel Dell – Brett Spray
- #336 Sasman – Dale Redman
- #337 Lakeview – Angela Jones
- #338 Lakeside – Jason Friesen
- #367 Ponass Lake – Rick Sunderland
- #426 Bjorkdale – Glen Clarke
- #427 Tisdale – Darren Ukrainetz
- #428 Star City – Shawn Mooney
- #456 Arborfield – Robert Reavie
- #457 Connaught – Ian Boxall
- #458 Willow Creek – Brent Freedman
- #486 Moose Range – Vacant
- #487 Nipawin – Brandon Perkins
- #488 Torch River – Jerry Kindrat

DISTRICT FIVE

- #250 Last Mountain Valley – Donald Dabrowski
- #254 Loreburn – David Vollmer
- #279 Mount Hope – Ian McNichol
- #280 Wreford – Julie Mortenson
- #281 Wood Creek – Glen Busse
- #282 McCraney – Vacant
- #284 Rudy – Jean Harrington
- #309 Prairie Rose – Garth Burns
- #312 Morris – Jason Johns

- #313 Lost River – Ivan Carpenter
- #314 Dundurn – David Aldred
- #339 Leroy – Donavon Block
- #341 Viscount – Mickey Palfy
- #342 Colonsay – Marvin Lang
- #343 Blucher – Blair Cummins
- #344 Corman Park – Ken Rosaasen
- #346 Perdue – Curtis Lammers
- #369 St. Peter – Paul Ulrich
- #399 Lake Lenore – Mark Schemenauer
- #403 Rosthern – Glenn Braun
- #429 Flett's Springs – Scott Hermus
- #430 Invergordon – Wayne Bacon
- #459 Kinistino – Lindsay Dupin
- #460 Birch Hills – Vacant
- #461 Prince Albert – Richard Wilson
- #490 Garden River – Ryan Scragg
- #491 Buckland – Jason Zalewski

DISTRICT SIX

- #287 St. Andrews – Kevin Sinclair
- #321 Prairiedale – Tim Richelhoff
- #347 Biggar – Robert Danychuk
- #349 Grandview – Allen Turk
- #350 Mariposa – Jeremy Welter
- #351 Progress – Kim Herbst
- #381 Grass Lake – Bentley Sperle
- #382 Eye Hill – Greg Rissling
- #410 Round Valley – Taylor Wallace
- #436 Douglas – Nick Partyka
- #440 Hillsdale – Lawrence Olson
- #442 Manitou Lake – Karl Koch
- #466 Meeting Lake – Morris Prescesky
- #467 Round Hill – Gordon Moore
- #468 Meota – Glenn Tait
- #470 Payton – Adam Bugg
- #471 Eldon – Scott Owens
- #472 Wilton – Devon Walker
- #499 Mervin – Chris Neilson
- #501 Frenchman Butte – Leonard Larre
- #502 Britannia – Jonas Hoegl

If your RM isn't currently part of APAS, ask your Council to buy a 12-month trial membership for only \$2021.

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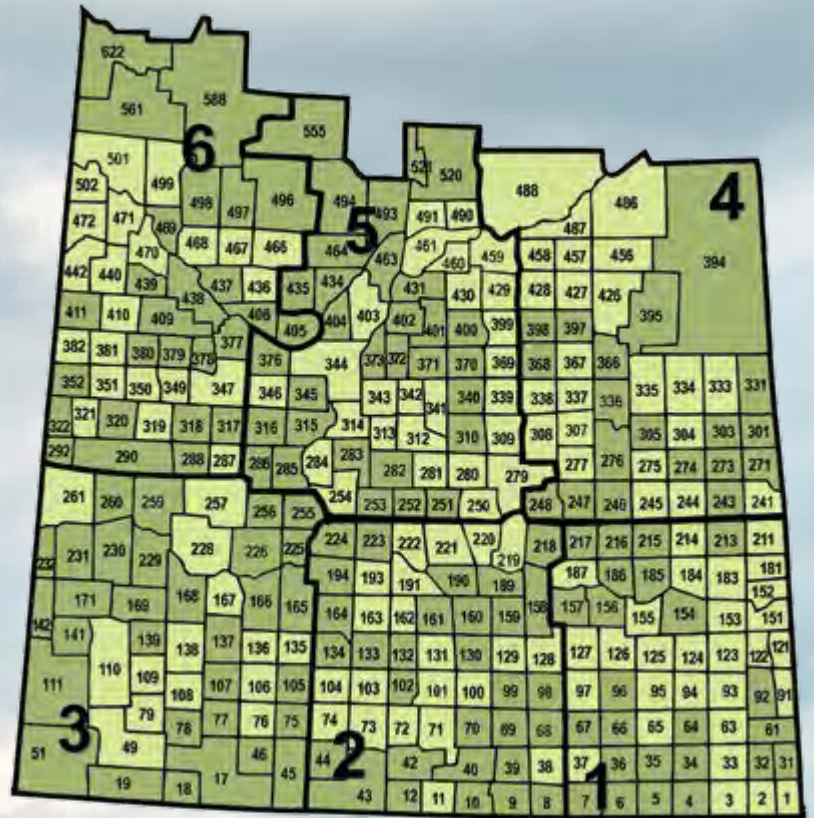
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trial membership for only \$2021.

STEP 1: The RM administrator contacts
Curtis Hemming at 306-789-7774 and
schedules an APAS presentation for the
Council.

STEP 2: The Council votes to join APAS
and pays \$2021 for a 12-month trial
membership.

STEP 3: The Council chooses an APAS
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