Ian Boxall
Building a long-term future for the ag industry
## RENN Bag Unloader

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>9’</th>
<th>10’</th>
<th>12’</th>
<th>Discharge Auger</th>
<th>Unload Capacity bu/hr</th>
<th>Minimum HP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Farm Boy*</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td></td>
<td>14” lift, 12” folding</td>
<td>9,000</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1214 CD*</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>14” lift auger, left or right discharge</td>
<td>9,000</td>
<td>60</td>
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<tr>
<td>1218 CD*</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>18” lift auger, left or right discharge</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Patented bag unloading system

All RENN Bag Unloaders are available with our Onboard Recycle-Ready bag recovery system which uses a unique hydraulic ratchet mechanism to wind the spent bag onto spools keeping the plastic clean and out of the way. The plastic is rewound into a recycle-ready package after unloading has been completed.

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MEMBER PROFILE

IAN BOXALL

Building a long-term future for the ag industry

Ian, a fourth-generation farmer, is working to build a more financially sustainable agriculture industry for the future, mindful that his children may very well carry the farm on for a fifth generation. Back row: Ian and Lisa with two-year-old Riley. Front: twins Aaron and Grace with one-year-old Bryce.
For Ian Boxall, farming is more than just a job — it’s a legacy.

Representing the fourth generation to live and farm on his family’s land in the Tisdale area, Ian also extends the family tradition of being the youngest son to farm the land on which his great grandfather homesteaded in 1904.

“My grandpa was the youngest son, my dad was the youngest son and now I’m the youngest son to live and farm here,” he says. “I pride myself on the longevity of the farm, the fact that it’s a 100 years old and I’m the fourth generation.”

After finishing high school Ian took some time away from farming, running a bulk field delivery operation in Tisdale and working in the logging industry in Alberta for several years. He also attended university for a short stint but he realized it wasn’t a fit for him. He finally settled back on the farm full-time in 2010 with his wife Lisa and their young family.

“I always knew I wanted to farm — that’s where my heart is — but I also believe you have to go experience life, and it doesn’t hurt to leave and see what else is out there,” he says.

Ian and Lisa currently farm 8,500 acres with Ian’s brother and sister-in-law, and this year they are growing wheat, canola, oats, faba beans, and canary seed.

Ian and Lisa are also raising their four children on the farm — 12 year-old twins, Grace and Aaron, two-year-old Riley, and one-year-old Bryce. Ian is mindful that this next generation may very well carry his farm onto a fifth generation.

This is why he has a marked interest in building a more sustainable future for the agriculture industry in Saskatchewan, and has prioritized his duties as not only a producer, but as a farm leader in the province.

In 2015, Ian decided to participate in the Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan’s Youth Leadership and Mentorship Program, with encouragement from his district’s APAS representative at the time, David Spencer. Around the same time, he had discovered within himself a drive to learn more about how agriculture policy worked on all levels.

“What enticed me to the program was seeing it right from a local level up to a federal level — that was the most intriguing part,” he says.

After completing the program, Ian was hooked on the idea of farm policy and being a part of the ongoing work.

“After being in it and seeing the importance of the work being done, I just wanted to make sure I maintained the work that APAS had already done,” he says. »
For this reason, Ian went on to become the APAS representative for the RM of Connaught. He was later elected to the board of directors, where he currently sits on the grains and oilseeds policy committee and the resolutions and finance working committees.

All of these experiences have only fueled his passion for agricultural policy in Saskatchewan, he says.

“Ag policy isn’t always exciting, and actually some of it is right dull, but I believe it’s necessary for the longevity of the business,” he says. “I believe that good policy, and making sure that the stakeholders and government understand where the producers are coming from, is important.

“With a producer-run organization like APAS, that’s exactly what we’re trying to do.”

Ian believes that one of the most pressing issues for young producers in Saskatchewan these days is financial sustainability.

“Costs are going up and we have no control, to a certain extent,” he says. “We can’t control the costs of inputs or what we get for the product. We really truly don’t control a lot in our business.”

He believes that the work APAS has done, and continues to do, is working to address this area of uncertainty for producers and improve the financial sustainability of the industry.

For example, APAS has led initiatives promoting the registration of more chemicals for the province, to increase options and cost-effectiveness for producers. As well, it has worked with the government to ensure that business risk management programs are in place to benefit producers that need them.

Earlier this year APAS did a survey of producer satisfaction with Growing Forward 2 programs — including AgriInvest, Agrilinsurance and AgriStability — and passed the results on to the provincial and federal governments for consideration as they make plans for the next phase of programs in a new agricultural policy framework.

“I don’t want a handout but I want to make sure I’m covered,” Ian says. “All this work will help achieve this, by developing good ag policy and programs, such as BRMs. Keeping
those policies current will help producers manage their financials.”

Another major issue on Ian’s mind these days is social license and the growing gap between food consumers and food producers.

“Every generation we get further removed, especially as farms get bigger and bigger,” he says. “One generation the kid’s dad farmed, now with the next generation it’s his grandpa that farmed.”

Even in a small town such as Tisdale, which is primarily a farming community, the gap is evident, he says.

“Even here there are kids that know nothing about farming. Their whole life is based on farming but they don’t understand it. There’s already a big disconnect.”

“We need to make sure the general public is educated on the facts of agriculture and I don’t think that happens. We talk social license at every meeting but somewhere in there there’s a communication fail.”

Luckily Ian’s own children are not part of the problem. His oldest son loves helping out on the family farm and has already decided he would like to have a career in the industry one day.

“If he can’t be a producer, he wants to sell the parts or buy the grain,” Ian says, adding that he would approve this career choice. “I’d be happy if any of them want to be involved.”

And until that day comes, Ian will continue to work towards building a long-term future for the industry so that his kids, and maybe their kids, and so on, can take it over one day. FV
Interesting times last year; coming year also looks challenging

BY NORM HALL, APAS PRESIDENT

Welcome to the first edition of Saskatchewan Farmers’ Voice.

This publication comes to you on behalf of the Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan, the province’s general farm organization that is the voice of all producers and ranchers. Through its pages, we hope to keep you informed about what APAS is doing to address the issues the ag industry faces, give you background on these issues, provide information that’s relevant to your farm, and help you meet some of our members.

I’D LIKE TO LOOK BACK ON THE LAST 12 months — and I can say they’ve definitely been interesting on many fronts. Last fall, while waiting for the Canada Transportation Act review committee to finish writing its report, Saskatchewan producers harvested the second largest crop in history.

Early in the harvest, Prime Minister Harper announced the date of the next federal election, which meant one of the longest election campaigns ever.

Once harvest was finished, we all held our breath. We knew much of the rail traffic that took up the extra capacity during 2013–14 had diminished, along with the follow-through during 2014–15. We wondered uneasily if the railways could move this impressive crop.

As it turned out, year-over-year comparisons with 2014–15 showed total rail traffic for other (non-grain) movement was down 225,000 cars, while grain was only up 15,000 cars — and the grain seemed to move at whim. All of this happened while we were waiting for the federal government to move on the CTA review report recommendations.

During the federal election, we worked with fellow members of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture to organize a televised debate focused on agriculture issues. This was the only time that agriculture received this attention during the election, and we were proud to bring these important issues to the forefront.

In terms of Saskatchewan’s provincial election, we had one of the shorter campaigns allowable, but APAS still managed to draw provincial attention to agriculture issues. We produced Why Ag Matters, a document which featured 10 key areas that are important to Saskatchewan producers and ranchers going into this election.

APAS also partnered with The Western

“"This was the only time that agriculture received this attention during the election, and we were proud to bring these important issues to the forefront."
Producer to organize a televised dialogue around agriculture issues, featuring representatives from the five main political parties participating in the election. This event garnered much attention among producers and ranchers, industry stakeholders and provincial media.

In July and August of this past summer, APAS attended transportation meetings on behalf of producers to reaffirm to the federal government the need for the changes we requested in our submission to the CTA review committee. This is especially important right now as we anticipate another above-average crop across the Canadian prairies. (See page 27 for related article.)

Over the last two years, we have accessed funding from the Growing Forward 2 program for the Youth Leadership and Mentorship Program. It aims to help active producers under the age of 40 learn about leadership and ag policy — and we have had great success with it. We are now accepting applications for this year’s program. (See page 19.)

Going forward, there are a number of areas APAS is focused on, including the next ag policy framework, climate change/carbon pricing, water management, landowner surface rights, environmental goods and services, infrastructure (roads, cell coverage and Internet), young producer mentorship, and enhancement of the livestock sector.

We are actively discussing all of these issues with both levels of government — in individual meetings with ministers and staff, and at larger ‘roundtable’ meetings that include industry players at the provincial and national level.

Our membership continues to grow at a steady pace, both on the municipal level and at the associate level. We have welcomed six new transitional members as well as four more associate members so far this year. This brings us to 105 municipal members and 24 associate members.

Municipal members are rural municipalities who join on behalf of their ratepayers, and elect a ratepayer to represent them at the district and provincial level at APAS meetings. Associate members are organizations that join to further their lobby efforts or contribute to the direction of APAS. For a complete list of our current membership, see page 16.

In closing, I look forward to the coming year, to continue work on the issues that will make Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers more successful and profitable.

I wish you all a safe and prosperous remainder of the harvest. FV

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MAYBE IT’S TIME FOR A FRESH SOIL TEST

There’s a list of reasons why | BY JOHN DIETZ

COUNT ON IT. The nutrient balances in your fields will not be the same as they were last year. Fields flood. Salinity comes up. New crops like soybeans take out more phosphorus. High-yielding crops remove more nutrients.

There are a lot of reasons why you should get fresh soil tests.

However, a survey of producers last year by Pulse Canada and research partners showed that only 33 per cent of farmers in Manitoba who responded said they soil tested every year. In Saskatchewan, that number is half.

John Heard, crop nutrition specialist with Manitoba Agriculture, challenges negative attitudes to soil sampling.

He says, “Soil sampling is just very good for a number of reasons. I think it gives us a good, true picture of our nutrient inventory.”

There’s a cost to soil testing, but Heard won’t call it expensive.

He asks, “Who cares? It’s just something you do. It’s like taking inventory. The cost, compared to the fertility program, is modest.

“We’re blessed today. A number [of professionals] are set up with the proper equipment for doing the [essential] two-foot depth. Years ago, people were cheating on the two-foot sample because of convenience and time. Today we’ve got a good farm service industry, better equipment and better-trained agronomists who know the importance of sampling.”

Heard believes farmers need to know, at the least, current nitrogen and sulfur availability in every field they plan to seed.

“Realistically, one might do a complete analysis every five years. In the interim, they might focus on nitrogen and sulfur, the nutrients that change the most annually,” he says.

“In the olden days, people would focus on nitrogen because it does vary year to year, and it’s a big ticket item. We missed the importance of...
monitoring nutrients like phosphorus, potassium or sulfur,” says Heard.

Nitrogen still heads the list, but as one of several nutrients now on the radar.

“A basic test today is N, P, K, S, pH and salinity,” he says. “That’s bare bones. That would be a target, for every field, but not every year. Growers will find they have fields that behave similarly where they treat them similarly.

“Some of us are greatly concerned with phosphorus. Over the last five years, we’ve been observing that our phosphorus levels are slipping to a lower range. That’s basically because of greater crop yields and more removals, and from being a little slow to adjust our phosphorus levels up to balance our removals.”

Nutrient removals by very good crops need to be matched, at least, by fertilizer inputs. Heard points, for example, to high-yielding new lines of hybrid canola and to rapidly increasing soybean acres.

Soybeans are a high consumer of phosphorus, which may leave a field short for the next crop in the rotation.

“Studies confirm that soybeans don’t respond very much to applied phosphorus fertilizer because they do a very good job of tapping into the soil reserves,” he says. “They will draw soils down. Usually, for soybeans, the best management is simply a phosphorus replacement strategy.”

The rate of change in a field, he notes, can catch a producer off guard.

“We want to make sure farmers sustain good productivity over the long term,” he says. “All we’re trying to do is help farmers raise their fertility levels into a better working range where they can more easily match inputs and removals.

“That’s why a soil test is so important, so you know your starting place. If you have depleted soils, then you know whether you should be doing replenishment or doing a maintenance program. In all situations, when the soils are out of balance, it is incumbent to do that.”

At the University of Saskatchewan, Jeff Schoenau has been teaching soil science for more than 25 years. He, too, advocates frequent soil testing as essential.

“The soil test is the basis for a fertilizer plan,” he says. “Farmers need to get >>
“Fields can vary from one another. Different crops have different nutrient requirements. It’s important to account for that.”

Above: Jeff Schoenau, a soil science professor at the University of Saskatchewan, says farmers need all the information they can get from a soil test — it’s like money in the bank.

Schoenau says, “There are more types of tests today. There are different approaches. More people employ someone — an agronomist, consultant, advisor, nutrition planner — to do the tests. You can look at soil assessment from a short-term or a long-term management viewpoint. It’s very useful, either way,” he says.

“You get what you pay for. Generally, the more you pay, the more information you get — for example a wider suite of nutrients and soil properties, a dynamic assessment rather than a static measure. The investment in soil testing is pretty small, relative to the dollars that will be spent on the fertilizer.”

Lack of time, Schoenau believes, sometimes causes producers to move the time for soil tests to the back of the bus as a priority, especially during the spring. It’s understandable, but not a good idea to let that happen, he says.

“Soil testing lets you know where you are on the fertilizer response curve, which allows appropriate economic principles to be applied,” he says. “The first few pounds give you lots of additional bushels per increment of fertilizer added. On the part of the curve where the response is starting to level off, the extra pounds you add give you less payback.

“The economic optimum is close to the point where the last dollar spent on fertilizer gives you a dollar worth of increased yield.”

And risk has increased because the basics are changing. Farmers frequently pick up land to manage without knowing the field history. They introduce new crops and new crop genetics, and achieve higher yields — with higher nutrient requirements to achieve the yield and greater nutrient removal when the crop is harvested.

It may not be safe to assume the pH, the salinity, and the organic matter will be right for the next crop in a given field.

“On land that’s being rented or [newly] purchased, a soil test is a very good tool to help determine the ability of that land to supply nutrients, and how much fertilizer is going to be needed, as opposed to just guessing what’s been done in the past or just going with whatever you already do on the rest of your acres,” Schoenau says.

“How that land has been managed in the past can very much affect its ability to supply nutrients for crops. That’s one thing, among a lot more unknowns out there.”

Like farms and farmers, soil tests are different than 20 years ago.

Left: John Heard, crop nutrition specialist at Manitoba Agriculture, says soil testing gives a good, true picture of nutrient inventory.
APAS Activities

See what APAS is doing for members and for all Saskatchewan farmers

BY DELANEY SEIFERLING

WHAT IS APAS?
› The Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan may represent a diverse mix of thousands of agricultural producers in the province, as well as a wide variety of agricultural industry stakeholders — but it has one simple goal. Its mission is to provide a respected, unified voice that positively influences governments, communities and industry in order to build a thriving agricultural sector.

Formed in 2000, APAS is a democratically elected, producer-run organization that acts on behalf of all its members and the entire agricultural industry.

“We lobby and advocate for producers of all commodities — from grains and oilseeds, to livestock, to specialized commodities,” APAS president Norm Hall says. “We take everyone into consideration and make sure policies don’t disadvantage one commodity over the other.”

APAS brings value to its members, Hall says, with actions that will encourage a sustainable industry over the long term.

“It may not put dollars directly into producers’ pockets in the next 12 months, but over the long term we create change that benefits the entire industry,” he says.

WORKING ON THE NEW AG POLICY FRAMEWORK
› Earlier this year, APAS conducted a survey to gauge producers’ experiences and satisfaction with Growing Forward 2 programs, including AgriInvest, AgriInsurance and AgriStability. Upon completion, APAS made the results of the survey available to the general public through its website, and also sent the results to federal and provincial government agriculture departments.

A key finding of the survey points to declining enrollment in AgriStability, with respondents indicating uncertainty and the lack of predictability in the program design. As a result, APAS has made the re-design of AgriStability a priority for the future.

“We’ve been in discussion with the provincial government about the future of these programs, talking about what we’re looking at bringing forward and where they see that going,” Hall says. “Through the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, we have also been in discussion with the federal government.”

Work on this file is critical, as Growing Forward 2 expires in March 2018 and the government is currently conducting consultations and preparations to design the next generation of policy and programs.

BRINGING AGRICULTURE FORWARD DURING THE ELECTION
› In March, APAS teamed up with The Western Producer to host the Why Ag Matters — Agricultural Leaders Dialogue event, which provided an opportunity for producers and industry stakeholders to better understand the agricultural and food platforms of the five provincial political parties going into the provincial election.

Alongside this televised event, APAS also published an election document which highlighted the organization’s positions going into the election, and promoted discussion of key positions developed by its representatives. Political parties at the event were asked to respond to these producer priorities and recommendations.”

Norm Hall thanks Agriculture Minister Lyle Stewart, who represented the Saskatchewan Party, at the Why Ag Matters televised event in March. Darrin Lamoureux (left behind Norm) attended on behalf of the Liberals, Rick Swenson on behalf of the Progressive Conservatives, Ryan Lamarche on behalf of the Green Party, and Cathy Sproule on behalf of the NDP.
The overall goal of this campaign was to raise awareness among candidates and voters about the importance of the agriculture sector, and to highlight important issues. This allowed voters to make educated decisions related to agriculture in Saskatchewan.

The campaign was a major success, garnering considerable media coverage and participation from APAS representatives, associate members and sponsors.

CONTINUING TO LOBBY GOVERNMENT

- APAS staff and board members meet regularly with MPs and MLAs, along with and federal and provincial government officials, to advocate for our members’ priorities.

In February of this year APAS staff and elected officials, including president Norm Hall and vice-president Todd Lewis, met with a number of federal government members in Ottawa. They included federal Agriculture Minister Lawrence MacAulay, Conservative ag critic Chris Warkentin, and NDP ag critic Ruth Ellen Brosseau.

Issues discussed included grain transportation and the Canada Transportation Act review report, carbon tax, business risk management programs, water management, the Indian Head tree nursery, the future of federal community pastures in Saskatchewan, and rural broadband Internet service.

APAS staff also met with Saskatchewan MPs Randy Hoback, Cathay Wagantall and Sheri Benson to discuss the same issues.

EXTENSIVE WORK ON GRAIN TRANSPORTATION

- APAS has done extensive work on the transportation issues that affect Saskatchewan’s agriculture industry. See page 27 for complete details.

ENGAGING MEMBERS AND THE INDUSTRY

- Each year APAS holds a variety of events for its representatives, members and associate members, designed to provide them with networking opportunities and keep them informed about issues and policies affecting them.

APAS brings in renowned speakers and experts at each meeting to speak to the issues.

These events include the annual general meeting, held each December in Regina, regional meetings in the spring and fall in each of the six districts, and a mid-term meeting each summer in Saskatoon.

At the most recent event, the mid-term meeting this past July, speakers included, among others:

- Mark Hemmes of Quorum Corp., who provided insight into the most recent transportation issues and developments.

- Monica Hadaritis of the Canadian Roundtable on Sustainable Beef, who spoke about the organization’s purpose and work.

- Dr. Henry Janzen from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, who discussed carbon conservation in prairie soils.

For a list of upcoming APAS events, visit www.apas.ca.

PROVIDING VALUABLE MEMBER BENEFITS

- Creating and driving innovative solutions to address issues currently affecting agriculture.

- Connecting with other provincial farm organizations across Canada to ensure everyone is on the same page.

- Representing Saskatchewan producers at the national table, through the Canadian Federation of Agriculture.

- Lobbying all levels of government on behalf of Saskatchewan producers.

- Continually enhancing the member rewards program to assist producers with their health, insurance, security, telecommunications and equipment needs.

For more information, visit www.apas.ca.

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Working to make agriculture a higher national priority

BY RON BONNETT CANADIAN FEDERATION OF AGRICULTURE PRESIDENT

Congratulations to the Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan for launching its new magazine! This initiative demonstrates a strong dedication to keeping farmers updated on key issues and connected with other organizations seeking to advance our industry. Efforts to raise the profile of farmers’ successes and challenges is a top priority for both APAS and the Canadian Federation of Agriculture.

That’s why working together as AGvocates is so important — especially as critical policy discussions are taking place in Ottawa, and in each province, on future business risk management programs and other shared focus areas such as international trade, climate change, and how to best support young farmers.

We look forward to continuing our work this fall as Members of Parliament return to Ottawa, and we set the stage to make agriculture a higher national priority.

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- RM of Poplar Valley No. 12
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- RM of Marquis No. 191
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DISTRICT 3
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- RM of Bone Creek No. 108
- RM of Carmichael No. 109
- RM of Piapot No. 110
- RM of Lawtonia No. 135
- RM of Webb No. 138
- RM of Big Stick No. 141
- RM of Sask Landing No. 167
- RM of Lacadena No. 228
- RM of Chesterfield No. 261

DISTRICT 4
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- RM of Garry No. 245
- RM of Emerald No. 277
- RM of Big Quill No. 308
- RM of Hazel Dell No. 335
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- RM of Bjorkdale No. 426
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- RM of Arborfield No. 456
- RM of Connaught No. 457
- RM of Willow Creek No. 458
- RM of Moose Range No. 486
- RM of Nipawin No. 487

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- RM of Wood Creek No. 281
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Updated on July 25, 2016
How membership works

RM COUNCILS DECIDE TO BECOME
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Transitional membership
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Mentorship program training ag leaders for tomorrow

BY DELANEY SEIFERLING

Statistics show that a large number of Saskatchewan producers are at or nearing retirement age, which means that it will be up to the younger generation to fill in the gap.

And this is not only specific to on-farm operations, but also for agriculture leadership and policy development in the province. And the latter is an area where the learning curve is steep, says Norm Hall, president of the Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan.

“Farm leadership doesn’t just happen,” he says. “It takes years of training and experience for younger producers to become knowledgeable and confident enough to move forward. This takes an awful lot of work.”

And that’s why two years ago APAS embraced the Youth Leadership and Mentorship Program that the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture provides, with funding from Growing Forward 2. Hall credits the government with recognizing the need for such a program.

“No groups were taking this sort of project on, and the province saw this and so put this program forward — and we jumped on it,” he says.

Currently, the program takes on five young producers a year, targeting those with an interest in agricultural policy, and aims to provide them with the necessary training and experience to hone their skills to eventually take over for the older generation.

Participants are matched with seasoned mentors from their districts, and over the course of six to eight months they attend APAS committee, district and board meetings, professional development opportunities, and the Canadian Federation of Agriculture’s annual meeting in Ottawa.

Jeremy Welter, a producer from west central Saskatchewan and the current APAS rep with the RM of Mariposa, is one of the nine mentees that have now completed the program. He says it has given him an entirely new perspective on farming in Saskatchewan.

“It’s so important to remove yourself from your bubble of comfort and surroundings and see what else is out there,” he says. “I was most surprised at the differences in agriculture in Saskatchewan — and there’s such a huge variety of things going on across the country in agriculture.”

“No groups were taking this sort of project on, and the province saw this and so put this program forward — and we jumped on it.”
A major highlight of the program for Welter was the networking opportunities that came out of the CFA annual meeting, which brings together 24 agriculture organizations from across Canada to discuss and debate farm policy issues, and allows participants to network and to attend Parliament Hill functions.

For him, this was a valuable exposure to a whole new group of people with diverse perspectives about agriculture in Canada.

“I had the chance to meet and converse and visit with people such as politicians, bureaucrats, and our counterparts in other provinces,” he says. “This definitely gave me more of a chance to forge some of those relationships that benefit you further down the line.

“It’s great to be able to surround yourself with people that have different thoughts and opinions than you do, and to have the ability to voice opinions and learn about other people’s opinions. It forces me to question why I have the beliefs I have and think the way I do. Sometimes you change your mind and sometimes it reinforces that you’re right about something.”

Devin Harlick, who owns a farming operation with his brother but works full-time as an agrologist in Kyle, is another graduate of the program. He initially got interested in participating because of his interest in the political side of the industry. For him, one of the biggest benefits was the professional development opportunities that came from interacting with his mentor.

“Actually seeing first-hand from mentors how to conduct business as a professional, at the meetings and at the CFA conference, was one of the biggest benefits,” he says.

Harlick also says the program was an eye-opener for him in terms of learning the politics of the industry.

“It was a mindboggling thing when I got to Ottawa,” he says. “It was nothing that I expected and totally different than what I imagined.”

For Hall, this type of feedback is common — but the way he measures success is in the number of producers that come out ready to take on leadership positions within the industry. So far four of the past participants have done so within APAS, and several of the current participants are looking to stay on board as well.

“We are seeing it as a great success,” Hall says. 

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**Want to take part?**

APAS is currently accepting applications for the 2016-17 year. If you meet the following criteria, you’re welcome to apply.

- Are between 18 and 39 years old as of November 1, 2016.
- Have clear leadership goals and objectives.
- Are an active agricultural producer who exhibits leadership potential.
- Have land in an APAS member rural municipality.
- Are available from November 2016 to August 2017.
- Are able to dedicate approximately 12–14 days to the leadership program over the 10-month period.

To learn more about the program and how to apply visit: [http://www.apas.ca/youth-leadership-program](http://www.apas.ca/youth-leadership-program).

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“I was most surprised at the differences in agriculture in Saskatchewan — and there’s such a huge variety of things going on across the country in agriculture.”

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“...”
Farm leaders at the Canadian Federation of Agriculture are masters at thinking ahead. It’s a critical skill for any farm operator and doubly so for anyone involved in farm policy work. Right now, with two years remaining in the country’s current ag policy framework, Growing Forward 2, the CFA and its member organizations (including KAP and APAS) have been working hard to ensure that the 200,000 farm families they represent get input into the next one.

Growing Forward 2 is a $3-billion-dollar investment in agricultural programs and services, and is set to expire in 2018. This partnership between the federal, provincial, and territorial governments includes everything from business risk management programs to initiatives in ag research, market development, and climate change adaptation.

The new framework will cover much of the same ground, and will have an enormous impact on Canadian farmers’ success and stability. In other words, it’s something producers would want a say in.

CFA leaders weren’t entirely satisfied with their involvement in the development of Growing Forward 2, feeling their role was largely in responding to the government’s proposals rather than initiating their own.

“I think it’s fair to say the consultation process really fell apart,” recalled president Ron Bonnett. “As farm organizations we really had a hard time getting ahead of the discussions. We were in the middle of an election campaign at the time and by the time that was over, we didn’t have a lot of time left to consult with members.

“By that point it had become more of a government-driven initiative, where they made their plans about where they thought things should go, then called us in and said, ‘Here’s what we’re planning to do.’”

Bonnett and his team had no intention of repeating that scenario this time around.

They began consulting with their members well over a year and a half ago, analyzing existing programming for gaps and gathering information about what programs and initiatives were most important to farmers.

As an umbrella organization made up of farm groups across the country, CFA was able to tap into the knowledge of B.C. horticultural producers, Manitoba and Saskatchewan grain farmers, Quebec dairy producers, and everyone in »
The new framework will have an enormous impact on Canadian farmers’ success and stability. In other words, it’s something producers would want a say in.

between. It began the project by creating a steering committee of 10 producers from a variety of regions and commodities.

Beneath that it formed two major working groups — one to focus on business risk management programs like AgriStability and AgriInvest, and one to focus on strategic investments in research, environment, training, and labour management. A third group, chaired by Dan Mazier, president of Keystone Agricultural Producers, looked at how market development programming could be improved.

“The challenge is you’re taking a whole array of different producers with different needs, and trying to create as simple a set of programs as possible to meet all of those needs,” said Scott Ross, CFA’s director of business risk management and farm policy, and part of the BRM working group.

In addition to the working groups, CFA designed consultation surveys to reach individual farmers across the country. Over 350 producers completed a survey on AgriInvest, sharing their experiences with the program and their feedback on its effectiveness.

They also relied on their member organizations for outreach. APAS, for example, conducted a survey to gauge producers’ experiences and satisfaction with Growing Forward 2 programs, including AgriInvest, AgriInsurance and AgriStability. A key finding of the survey points to declining enrollment in AgriStability, with respondents indicating uncertainty and the lack of predictability in the program design.

Mazier notes: “During a discussion of the problems with AgriStability at one of our advisory council meetings last year, we called for a show of hands to see who was still participating. It’s really been declining and we’re hearing the same reasons why. People think it’s too com-

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POLICY CHANGES
plicated, the accounting costs are too high, and they just don’t see a reason-able chance of actually triggering a pay-ment.”

A number of CFA members are calling for AgriStability’s reference margin to be restored to 85 per cent from its cur-rent 70, and CFA included this request in its final recommendations to government.

Another theme that came up repeat-edly in the consultations was the impor-tance of programming for young and beginning farmers.

“Young and beginning farmers have less equity in their operation, so they’re more vulnerable to the income declines that the industry faces,” Mazier explained. “One disastrous year has a different effect on a new farmer than on someone who has 15 years of experience and equity.

“Also, high land values right now affect all farmers, but if you’ve been acquiring your land little by little over the years, the cost per acre for your operation even out over time. If you’re buying all your land right now, like many beginning farmers are, your costs are going to be very high.”

The ideal agricultural policy frame-work, members say, will give special consideration to newer farmers by waiving administrative fees and build-ing grants and breaks into its program-ming.

Climate change, grain transportation, labour management, and social license were other big topics that emerged dur-ing the months of discussion and input.

Alongside the criticism of the current framework known as Growing Forward 2, CFA and its member organizations also received plenty of positive feed-back, and lots of practical tweaks to oth-erwise good initiatives.

“Overall many of the current pro-grams are working and we’d like to see them continue,” said Reg Ens, executive director of the B.C. Agriculture Council and co–chair of the strategic investment working group. “Most of the sugges-tions were around administrative improvements. Programs have to con-tinue for multiple years; starting new programs April 1 of each year doesn’t work for farmers — they are out in the field by then — and does not encourage good business planning.”

With the directives they received from their membership, CFA leaders and pol-icy analysts drafted a set of recommen-dations for government. After presenta-tion and revisions at their AGM in February, these were launched in spring of 2016 as the policy document Position-ing Agriculture for Continued Success. The paper is 53 pages of detailed proposals on everything related to the ag sector.

The next step, obviously, was to pres-ent it to government. CFA leaders met with federal, provincial, and territorial agriculture ministers during July at the annual industry–government round-ta-ble in Calgary.

“I think by and large we heard support for the work that we did, and a strong sense of appreciation that so much con-sultation had been done,” Ross said. “There was really engaging discussion on elements of the report, particularly around the issue of young farmers.”

“The other thing I think we did is really present the case for agriculture as a priority investment,” added Bonnett. “When you look at the discussion around investing in other strategic sec-tors like mining or aerospace, and what the government’s role should be in ensuring the health of an industry, I think you can make a compelling case for agriculture as a priority for strategic investment, as well.

“We see a demand for food increasing around the world in the coming years and we think that Canada is one of the few countries that is really going to be able to take advantage of all those open-ing markets.”

The CFA and its member organiza-tions will continue to meet with govern-ment to advocate for their recommen-dations as 2018 approaches. Steering committee and working group members remain in regular contact to respond to questions and concerns, and to make sure they are continuing to take a coast-to-coast approach to the issues.

“It’s important to be able to keep that broad perspective that this process brought about,” said Mazier. “We learned so much from working with producers in other parts of the country.

“With BRM programs, for example, you think about the perils that western Canadian grain farms face — usually weather. But then you look at an Ontario turkey operation, for example, and their risks are more along the lines of animal diseases, inconsistent commodity prices, things like that.

“It shows how difficult it is to create programs that truly work for everyone and how critical it is to have that cross-country scope.” PV
Positioning agriculture for continued success

Summary of CFA proposals for the next ag policy framework

The business risk management suite
• Restore AgriStability’s payment trigger to when program year margins fall below 85 per cent of a farmers’ historical reference margins.
• Eliminate AgriStability’s reference margin limitation provisions, and explore alternative approaches that limit payments for producers in profitable situations while ensuring coverage of allowable expenses for those facing negative margins.
• For beginning farmers, establish mechanisms such as premium credits, kickstarts to AgriInvest, waived AgriStability fees, and enhanced access to capital.
• Establish a supplementary program to the existing AgriStability program to address the lack of support currently available to diversified farm operations.
• Enhance and amend the outcome of the AgriInvest program to reflect its role in managing all financial risks, not limited to ‘small’ risks as it currently stands.
• Amend AgriRecovery to cover multiple years of extraordinary costs/losses resulting from the short-term impacts of a single event or recurring events that could not be effectively mitigated.

Climate change adaptation and mitigation
• Increase funding for best management practices overall, and prioritize those that can contribute to mitigation and adaptation to climate change.
• Collaborate with governments, producers and industry to develop a national baseline for the Environmental Farm Plan, and launch an enhanced and strengthened EFP.
• Develop a means of verification within the EFP program that would help assess whether the EFP could meet environmental assurance of sustainable sourcing requirements.
• Explore additional support that could be offered for ecological goods and services, and in conjunction with federal and provincial departments and industry, determine what considerations and support would be needed for a national EGdS program.
• Incentivize best management practices by reducing participation fees for business risk management programs. Governments partner with industry to determine practices that are best-suited to receive these incentives.

Investment in agricultural research
Increase investments in public sector research to ensure increased funding is allocated on basic research and internal AAFC capacity is maintained in areas unlikely to be supported by industry funding.
Develop a human resources plan that maps out the sustainability of AAFC’s current research expertise to ensure that key knowledge gaps are not created and/or exacerbated as researchers retire.
Provide additional funding for new clusters to ensure that they are not receiving their funding at the expense of existing clusters.
Establish a two-tiered funding matching formula for commodities to maintain a research cluster in areas that do not receive significant research funding.
Authorize lower levels of management and regional offices to award funding to improve timeliness.
Launch a new funding stream to focus on the knowledge translation and dissemination needs of researchers so their information can reach producers and processors.
Recognize farm safety as a research priority, and explore improved working conditions through better knowledge.

Trade
• Implement a cost-sharing framework to support the development of provincial brands that illustrate the diversity of Canadian products included within the Canadian brand.
• Branding support must not be limited to promotional materials, and must include investments in the long-term capacity of the Canadian industry to develop and maintain recognition as a trusted, consistent and preferred source of safe, quality agri-food products.
• Market development policies and programs must pursue a strategic focus on building industry’s capacity for market development, ensuring a positive impact for primary producers and incorporating such considerations into the decision-making process for funding proposals.

Investment in value-added production
• Any investments made into value-added production must provide a clear benefit to Canadian agricultural producers.
• On-farm processing must be a priority, funded through expanded support for processing. But importantly, it must be coupled with infrastructure investment to support expanded on-farm processing.
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Dodge Grand Caravan CVP – 29E $8,700
Dodge Grand Caravan (Excl. CVP – 29E) $9,600
Dodge Durango $6,700
Dodge Charger (Excl. SRT8, Hellcat & Shaker) $6,500

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www.cooperators.ca/MKT520_APAS (09/16)
APAS advocating for changes to improve grain transportation

BY DELANEY SEIFERLING

FOR THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS, the Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan has been working tirelessly to advocate on behalf of Saskatchewan producers during the federal review of the Canada Transportation Act.

The act features comprehensive legislation covering various modes of transportation, including rail shipment of grain. Although there are provisions within the act for periodic reviews, the current review was launched ahead of schedule in 2014 to address recent issues on grain movement in Western Canada.

In February of this year the federal government issued a report on the review, which included a number of recommendations that would negatively impact producers — particularly the elimination of the maximum revenue entitlement (MRE) within seven years.

The report also recommended the federal government allow Bill C-30, the Fair Rail for Grain Farmers Act, to expire in August 2016.

Bill C-30 had been introduced as a set of temporary measures in 2014 to respond to the grain-shipping crisis, and included a number of provisions. The expanded interswitching provision, in particular, provided grain shippers with more competitive options through enhanced access to interswitching points. Other important provisions included stronger arbitration and dispute settlement rules, and the authority for government to set minimum volume requirements for grain movement.

APAS responded quickly to the report on the CTA review by developing a proposal it took to the federal government. First, it recommended that the MRE needs to be recognized as a protective measure, unrelated to service, that serves to safeguard producers against excessive freight rates.

Secondly, it recommended the government act quickly to renew Bill C-30 before the August 1, 2016 deadline. As well, APAS requested further consultations to address the longstanding service issues that were not included in the CTA review recommendations.

In March, APAS issued a news release in partnership with Sask Wheat and SaskBarley, outlining the group’s collective disappointment with the CTA report, as well as their plans to continue to work together to defend the interests of Saskatchewan producers and respond to government on CTA review issues.

That same month, APAS sent a letter to Federal Transport Minister Marc Garneau, demonstrating that the report did not address the main underlying transportation issues that uniquely affect western Canadian agriculture. The letter also called for a renewal of Bill C-30, a commitment to maintain the MRE, a full costing review, and more.

In April, the federal government announced that certain provisions of Bill C-30 would be renewed, including the extension of railway interswitching —
limits and government authority to set minimum volume requirements.

In June, APAS sent a letter to members of the Saskatchewan senate, urging them to consider Bill C-30 issues a top priority. Around the same time, APAS president Norm Hall met with Federal Agriculture Minister Lawrence MacAulay and other federal government representatives to discuss the matter.

On June 15, Bill C-30 was brought forward in a House of Commons motion and was extended by unanimous vote. “This extension will mean western Canadian producers can rest assured knowing they’ll be protected for the coming shipping season,” Hall said, following the announcement. “This was an important issue for our members and we raised it with both the transport and agriculture ministers, MPs and senators. We are glad to see that all parties listened, and agreed to address our concerns.”

The renewal of Bill C-30 was a victory for APAS, although there is still much work to be done. As of August 2016, APAS was preparing another detailed written submission to the federal government representing the views of Saskatchewan producers.

For more APAS news and events related to the CTA review, visit www.apas.ca.

Saskatchewan coalition

APAS president Norm Hall is pleased with the results of APAS work on the grain transportation file, including the creation of a farm coalition that got together once the CTA review was announced in 2014. It includes Sask Wheat and SaskBarley, as well as the Saskatchewan Pulse Growers.

“One of our biggest achievements was the formation of the coalition group, which brought together one of the only ‘producer-only’ voices to the review panel,” Hall says. “We are still working together.”

The coalition created a submission and list of producer recommendations on the future of the CTA, which were forwarded to the review panel in December 2014. The recommendations included keeping the MRE program in place, facilitating a full costing review, and further consultations to resolve longstanding service complaints.

The coalition’s submission was also one of few that highlighted the important role of producer car shippers and other small shippers, and the need to support the expansion of shortline rail in Western Canada.

“Although only a very small portion of our recommendations were put into the final report, we are continuing to take this message forward to the federal ag minister and to other federal and provincial government reps,” Hall says. “We are also continuing to work as a coalition to ensure the producer voice is always a part of this conversation.”

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