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Learning from COVID-19

Pandemic opportunities and challenges for Saskatchewan agriculture

BY TODD LEWIS



n Saskatchewan's agriculture industry, which is so diverse, there is a real opportunity to recognize and learn from the challenges that COVID-19 has introduced.

Some things have been positive in unintended and unexpected ways. If we look at the grain side of things, the shutdown of the economy has made additional capacity available in the rail network, and grain farmers have been able to take advantage of this. We had a huge backlog because of the strike in the fall, bad weather in January, and of course the blockades in February and March. With COVID-19 there's actually been an opportunity to get some of this backlog addressed because of excess capacity in the rail systems.

Our partners in the grain handling industry, be it the grain companies or the railroads, have done a very good job of fulfilling that opportunity. We have a system that—when it's allowed to work—can be a very reliable source of grain for our customers around the We have a system that — when it's allowed to work — can be a very reliable source of grain for our customers around the world. There's an opportunity, as we come out of COVID-19, to recognize how well grain can perform when we have that capacity available to us.

world. There's an opportunity, as we come out of COVID-19, to recognize how well grain can perform when we have that capacity available to us.

On the negative side, we *must* learn from what we're seeing right now in the livestock sector. Processing is going to be the pinch point going forward. It doesn't matter what part of agriculture it is, if processors are shut down due to worker safety and worker sickness, that affects primary producers very quickly. We're the first to feel the pain and economic hardship brought on by these plant closures.

Livestock is in a very serious situation. In the beef sector particularly, we have a lot of centralized processing. The plants in Alberta process over 70 percent of Canada's beef, and at least 75 percent of the cattle herd from Saskatchewan. When they have problems, Saskatchewan suffers immediate pain and economic uncertainty.

Going forward, we need to have plans to ensure that workers have a safe workplace, and when they do get sick that there's a Plan B in place. It's a lesson to be learned coming out of this that we need to decentralize and ensure that we can do more processing within the province of Saskatchewan.

It's not about politics, it's about practicality. If we look at other sectors, poultry processing for instance, they are far less centralized. Every province has their own poultry processing industry, and they're not being hit nearly as hard as far as plant shutdowns are concerned.

Processing of livestock is a cautionary tale for the rest of our industry. As the



pandemic continues, all parts of our industry are at risk for sickness, and it's important that all members of the supply chain make worker health and safety their number one priority. This is going to be a long-term situation until we see a vaccine, and that seems to be a number of months ahead of us yet.

We're going to quickly recognize that food security is based on how well we can keep our workers safe, healthy, and working. It's paramount for this nation's food security that we have answers to the processing plant issues, because if we end up with all our processors closed, Canada won't have food.

It's very disconcerting for Canadians to go to a grocery store and see empty shelves. Prior to March that was something most of us had never experienced in our lifetimes.

The good news for agriculture is that in most cases demand is the same. But when we have these disruptions in the chain, be it transportation or these issues with our processors, it makes it more and more difficult to fill that demand.





We're seeing that food security is a worldwide problem. Producers in other parts of the world are experiencing the same issues that we are in Canada. The availability of food from countries Canada imports from will be impacted by COVID-19. There are going to be problems with supply chains around the world, and we may well end up in situations where if the product isn't grown in Canada, that food won't be available to Canadians.

Food shortages are painful to live through. We need to recognize, and quick, that if we don't get Canadian ground planted and Canadian fruits and vegetables produced, then by fall and next winter, there's a good chance that certain food may not be available to consumers in Canada. provincial governments, and our memberships across the country on a daily basis throughout the crisis.

We've really struggled to get the federal government to recognize the consequences of what is happening on the ground in agriculture. To be fair to the government, there have been record unemployment numbers and unprecedented health issues. The constantly evolving public health issues take focus away from other parts of the economy.

Agriculture and food security are emerging as national priorities, and they will stay priorities for the foreseeable future. As COVID-19 plays itself out, cooperation at national, provincial, and even municipal levels is going to be key. We need to see good communication

Primary producers are the first to feel the pain and economic hardship brought on by processing plant closures.

A lot of work has been going on behind the scenes during this time, and APAS has had good communication with the federal government. APAS is Saskatchewan's representative to the Canadian Federation of Agriculture (CFA), where I sit on the Executive Committee with seven other members from across the country. At this national level we've been meeting by phone three times a week, and the CFA has also been in contact with the federal Ministry of Agriculture, so that when problems arise, they are recognized and dealt with as quickly as possible.

Like always, APAS is speaking loud and clear on behalf of Saskatchewan producers during this crisis, and we'll continue to do so.

Todd Lewis farms in Gray, SK.

Business Risk Management Gets a Failing Grade

Better supports needed in the face of urgent and recurring crises

APAS POLICY STAFF | PHOTOS BY NATHAN JONES



S askatchewan's agriculture sector has an important role to play in maintaining food securityboth at home and abroad-during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is also well-positioned to play a central role in the post-pandemic economic recovery that is already in its early stages.

Unfortunately, many producers have faced financial difficulties this spring not only with COVID-19, but also with challenges related to falling prices, weather, trade, and transportation over the last two seasons. What we're seeing is clear: the Business Risk Management (BRM) programs currently available to producers are not reducing the sector's risks and uncertainties.

The 2019 season was extremely difficult for Saskatchewan grain farmers. Now 2020 is shaping up to be an equally challenging year for cattle producers. (See page 10 for a detailed look at impacts to the livestock sector.) Of the 263 producers who responded to the Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan (APAS) COVID-19 Farm Survey, 53 percent reported having immediate cash flow needs. A further 18 percent reported difficulties accessing credit to acquire inputs and pay outstanding bills. The financial situation is expected to worsen as the season progresses.

Rising costs and falling incomes

These financial issues are not solely related to COVID-19, but are part of a longer-term trend of declining farm incomes and rising costs.

In Saskatchewan, net farm incomes have decreased every year since 2015 (see Graph 1). At the same time, farm expenses have continued to rise by an average of three percent annually since 2010. As their profit margins narrow, farmers are more reliant on stable production and commodity prices (neither of which are guaranteed) to keep their businesses viable.

The BRM programs intended to help manage these conditions are simply not working, with support payments remaining stagnant or decreasing. In 2018, farm incomes fell a whopping 22 percent, and direct payments to producers also decreased by 31 percent in the same year, reaching their lowest level since 2009 (see Table 2).

This lack of BRM response in the face of income declines has undermined the credibility of Canada's BRM programs and limits the sector's capacity to cope with major events like COVID-19.



Graph 1 – Saskatchewan Farm Income and Expenses (in 000's) Source: Statistics Canada

Repayable loans increase the risk

Part of the federal government's COVID-19 response to farmers has been to increase available credit and extend repayment deadlines for federally administered loan programs.

This is the second year in a row that the federal government has used repayable loans as the primary response to a farm sector crisis. No longer a temporary measure, this approach is ineffective in the face of recurring crises and dropping farm profit margins.

The use of repayable loans as a support measure to farmers only increases their risks. And while governments recognize the huge economic benefits of agriculture when planning for economic growth, they continue to reduce their own share of risk by withdrawing support for BRM programs.

Canadian producers are at a disadvantage

The reduction of agricultural supports in Canada comes at a time when the US federal government has dramatically increased direct payments to its own farmers. In 2018, US farmers received \$13.6 billion in government support payments. These payments are forecasted to increase to \$23.6 billion in 2019. In addition, the US federal government has announced a \$19 billion Emergency Relief Program for COVID-19, of which \$16 billion will be provided directly to farmers.

Comparing these numbers to Canada's farm support levels is stark. In 2018,

when US farmers received an 18 percent increase in direct payments, Canadian farmers received nine percent less in direct payments, with Saskatchewan farmers receiving 32 percent less.

American farmers are receiving about double the direct payments they were five years ago, while support payments in Canada remain stagnant. As this gap continues to grow, American farmers are in a better position to manage COVID-19 disruptions and help contribute to their country's economic recovery.

On May 5, 2020 the federal government announced an investment of \$252 million to support the Canadian agri-food industry during COVID-19. Although this is a first step, much more will need to be done to ensure that Canada's farms and food supply remain stable. There is an urgent need for improvements to BRM programs. The following recommendations would relieve immediate financial pressures, restore confidence in the programs, and help level the playing field with our international competitors.

	Farm Cash Receipts	Direct Payments	Direct Payments % of Receipts
2006	6,681,616	1,267,191	19%
2007	7,803,887	870,544	11%
2008	9,427,015	680,446	7%
2009	9,244,398	461,569	5%
2010	9,117,555	911,823	10%
2011	11,026,690	1,217,617	11%
2012	11,781,972	948,495	8%
2013	12,287,612	654,803	5%
2014	13,179,865	611,628	5%
2015	14,468,584	585,455	4%
2016	14,208,152	666,624	5%
2017	14,155,852	749,294	5%
2018	14,011,406	511,440	4%

Table 1 – Saskatchewan Farm Cash Receipts and Direct Payments (in '000s) Source: Statistics Canada

Recommendations:

1. AgriStability: Restore coverage to 85 percent (i.e., a return to 2013 levels); eliminate Reference Margin Limits; allow for grain and livestock margins to be calculated separately; and extend participation deadline to August 2020.

The inability of AgriStability to effectively respond to recent farm income declines is a clear indication that current coverage levels are too low to provide meaningful assistance. Without changes, we can anticipate that participation rates among producers will continue to decrease.

At the current 70 percent coverage levels, AgriStability payments make up a very small portion of total direct payments to farmers (see Graph 2). This lack of coverage means farmers have little protection against the economic risks (declining prices and increasing costs) that are causing incomes to fall.

2. Agrilnvest: Provide one-time financial top-up relief of no less than five percent of Agrilnvest Allowable Net Sales as bridge support until enhanced AgriStability coverage levels are available.

This would provide financial assistance to cover short-term needs, while helping bridge the gap until enhanced AgriStability coverage is available. An AgriInvest top up recognizes that a historical margin-based program like AgriStability (which provides support based on past years' results) is not well-suited to de-



liver timely support during crises like the one we have faced this spring.

3. Allocate AgriRecovery budget to respond to emerging supply-chain and market disruptions arising from COVID-19.

Funds available through the AgriRecovery program are meant to cover extraordinary costs such as those associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, including severe supply chain and market disruptions. The initial investment of \$125 million is a first step but will not be enough to cover the losses in the cattle and hog sectors, which total about \$850 million so far in 2020.

4. Form a Farm Financial Support Working Group of producers, farm organizations, and provincial governments to assess the need for emergency measures and oversee the implementation of programs.

This would allow industry and government to assess the needs of the sector on an ongoing basis and develop additional programming as required. The working group would help ensure the programs fulfill their objectives and are administered in a fair and efficient manner across the country.

Graph 2 – Direct Payments by Program (in '000s) Source: Statistics Canada



Table 2 – Direct Payments US vs Canada (in 000's) Sources: Statistics Canada, US Department of Agriculture

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019F
United States	9,766,845	10,804,486	12,979,677	11,531,611	13,669,010	23,653,908
% Change		10.62%	20.13%	-11.16%	18.54%	73.05%
Canada	2,120,698	2,134,784	2,442,148	2,435,937	2,218,876	
% Change		0.66%	14.40%	-0.25%	-8.91%	
Saskatchewan	611,628	585,455	666,624	749,294	511,440	
% Change		-4.28%	13.86%	12.40%	-31.74%	

Note: Unlike in Canada, crop insurance payments are not classified as "direct payments" and are not included in the US figures above

What comes next?

Canada's existing BRM programs do not meet the needs of producers, particularly in the face of urgent and recurring crises. Whether farmers are facing a global pandemic, volatile climate conditions, or trade and transportation disruptions, adding to producers' credit limits or extending repayment terms only serves to exacerbate the financial pressures.

For the Canadian agriculture sector to be viable and contribute to a stable and secure national and international food supply, federal and provincial governments must be willing to share the risk with producers. It is time that both federal and provincial governments step up to the plate and support Canadian farmers and ranchers.



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Responding to the Livestock Crisis

Livestock producers need urgent income support during COVID-19

APAS POLICY STAFF | PHOTOS BY MICHAEL BELL

OVID-19 has significantly impacted Saskatchewan's livestock industry. Disruptions to Cargill and JBS facilities in Alberta have led to a substantial drop in beef processing capacity; similar shutdowns in the United States and Quebec are impacting hog prices; and concerns are being raised about potential disruptions to poultry processing.

Cattle prices have dropped by as much as 20 percent in recent weeks, leaving producers unsure how long they will need to hold onto stock, and whether enough government support will be available to help manage price declines and rising feed costs.

Although the federal government's May 5 announcement of \$252 million in financial support to the agri-food sector is a first step, much more will need to be done to secure Canada's food supply and address the financial difficulties facing Saskatchewan farmers. To date, 2020 losses in the Canadian cattle and hog sectors total \$850 million.

The APAS Livestock Policy Committee has developed the following policy recommendations to reduce the impact of COVID-19-related disruptions at the farm gate.



Access to Credit

Changes to Farm Credit Canada's (FCC) lending capacity and Advance Payment Program limits will provide little assistance. Producers are reluctant to take on more debt, and the availability of operating credit may already be shrinking due to reduced value of livestock inventory.

Of the livestock producers who responded to the APAS COVID-19 Farm Survey, 60 percent were facing cash-flow challenges and 20 percent were having difficulties either managing existing loans or securing new financing. The situation will worsen with continued price declines and increased feed costs.

There is a lack of confidence in existing business risk management (BRM) programs, which were not designed to address supply chain disruptions of the magnitude seen during COVID-19.

APAS recommends:

- That FCC develop clear, targeted lending criteria for farm businesses producing commodities or holding inventory that has lost 10 percent of market value due to COVID-19related market decline.
- These criteria must ensure additional FCC lending capacity is available to farm businesses banking with other financial institutions.

Emergency Relief Programs

APAS supports the Canadian Federation of Agriculture's (CFA) request for an Emergency Relief Fund to help the agricultural sector cope with COVID-19 disruptions. For the livestock sector, this fund should be used to develop programming that protects farm margins and helps producers recover from extraordinary costs.

Although there is urgent need for direct financial support at the feedlot and processing levels, it is clear that support is also needed for producers at the farm-gate.

APAS supports financial assistance for primary farm operations, including:

- A direct grant to help producers keep heifer calves for breeding stock rather than sell them into the meat market. This will help reduce the glut of finished animals.
- A direct grant to producers to offset feed costs required to maintain cull animals when there is inadequate processing capacity.



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- The Canadian Pork Council's request for \$20 per head compensation for hog producers selling into markets below production costs.
- A financial stimulus of no less than five percent of AgriInvest Allowable Net Sales (ANS), without matching producer contributions.
- Ongoing Federal Tax Deferral Program to give producers greater flexibility to manage market volatility.

APAS supports disaster assistance support for feedlots:

• APAS called for the reintroduction of a Set Aside Program that provides feedlots a per animal/per day payment to keep the animal on feed for up to 90 days until they can move into the slaughter facilities. APAS acknowledges the federal and provincial government's early May announcement providing support.

APAS supports the development of a federal Food Procurement Strategy:

• The federal purchase of Canadian-produced food products will support economic recovery by maximizing processing output and encouraging Canadians to consume Canadian meat and other excess produce (e.g., potatoes). Purchased foods can be made available to Canadian schools, food banks, and households in need.

APAS supports increased domestic processing capacity:

A lack of processing capacity and competition is a risk for both the Canadian food supply and the economic viability of primary livestock operations. Changes are required to protect and enhance processing capacity in Canada.

- Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) should immediately focus on increasing local meat processing capacity. This should include resuming operations of federally inspected plants currently sitting idle, such as the one in Moose Jaw, SK.
- CFIA needs to work with provincial meat inspection agencies to eliminate barriers to provincial abattoirs (e.g., more shifts, on-site inspection, etc.). This would expand retail sales and market access both within Saskatchewan and interprovincially.

Business Risk Management (BRM)

There is a lack of confidence in existing BRM programs, which were not designed to address supply chain disruptions of the magnitude seen during COVID-19. The increase in Western Livestock Price Insurance Program (WLPIP) premiums have made the WLPIP inaccessible for most producers. Few are participating in AgriStability due to low coverage levels. It is suspected that cow/calf and mixed operations are disproportionately affected by the coverage limits that further reduce payments based on previous years' expenses.

APAS recommends immediate changes to BRM programs targeted at the livestock sector.

- APAS recommended government-producer cost sharing of WLPIP premiums at the same level provided for crop insurance, and acknowledges the provincial government's May 14 announcement committing to sharing the WLPIP premiums.
- Allow AgriStability livestock margins and coverage levels to be calculated separately from other commodities produced on farms.

APAS recommends permanent structural changes to AgriStability:

• An increase in AgriStability coverage to 85 percent of historical reference margins and an elimination of Reference Margin Limits.

The past year has made it clear that both federal and provincial governments must improve programs so producers can access meaningful support when they need it most.

COVID-19

Resources for the Agriculture Sector

As the COVID-19 pandemic evolves, it's difficult to keep up with the latest and best information.

We know you're busy, and that tracking down relevant and reputable resources takes time. That's why we are recommending the following organizations as the very best sources of curated, agriculture-specific COVID-19 information.

APAS is an active member of these organizations and is participating in their ongoing COVID-19 responses.



CANADIAN AGRICULTURAL HUMAN RESOURCES COUNCIL (CAHRC)

cahrc-ccrha.ca

CAHRC is a national non-profit organization focused on addressing human resource issues facing agricultural businesses across Canada.

Their COVID-19 resource page is updated regularly and includes ag-specific HR information related to foreign workers, on-farm protocols, mental health resources, government programs, and much more.

CAHRC has also developed the Agri HR Toolkit, which offers everything you need to develop key resources to help find, retain, and support your employees.

The Agri HR Toolkit (valued at \$99) is always free to APAS members. However, during COVID-19 the Toolkit is available to all at no cost. Simply visit their website to access it.



CANADIAN AGRICULTURAL SAFETY ASSOCIATION (CASA)

casa-acsa.ca

CASA promotes farm safety in the agricultural sector. As a national non-profit organization, they partner with government, business, and farming organizations (including APAS) across the country to help make farms a safe place to live, work and play.

CASA's extensive COVID-19 Resources List was developed and fully vetted by occupational health and safety experts.



CANADIAN FEDERATION OF AGRICULTURE (CFA) cfa-fca.ca

CFA is a national umbrella organization comprised of provincial general farm

organizations (including APAS) and national and interprovincial commodity groups. They represent producers of all commodities and farms of all sizes – that's approximately 200,000 Canadian farm families from coast to coast.

The CFA's COVID-19 resource page is thorough and current, and includes sections on the federal government's response, farm-specific guidance, general resources, resources for employers, livestock-related information, supply chain impacts, and province-specific information.

You can find links to the above resources at apas.ca.

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

Workplace guidance for sector employers and employees

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) has released COVID-19related public health guidance that may be applicable in responding to commonly asked questions from the agriculture and agri-food sector. The guidance provided will be updated, as necessary, to respond to the impacts of COVID-19. It includes sections on:

- How the virus spreads in a workplace
- Reducing the risk of COVID-19 in a workplace
- Operational changes to reduce the risk of COVID-19 in a workplace
- Guidance for carpooling
- When minimum physical distancing is not possible
- Employee with an underlying health issue
- Screening employees' health prior to entering the workplace
- If COVID-19 symptoms develop at work
- Access to COVID-19 testing
- Business closure
- Return to work protocols
- Protocols for contact with a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19

Find the information online at agr. gc.ca/eng/workplace-guidance-forsector-employers-and-employees.

Embracing Opportunity

Young producer and APAS Board member Devin Harlick talks sheep, technology, and the future of Saskatchewan agriculture

WRITTEN BY NIKKO SNYDER | PHOTOS BY MICHAEL BELL

f there's a single individual that represents the exciting future of Saskatchewan agriculture, it might be Devin Harlick. At only 34 years old, he gets more done in a day than most, and demonstrates all the best qualities of a 21st century farmer: a desire to innovate and embrace technology; a respect for the past; professionalism, education and continuous improvement; and a commitment to building his local community and the industry he cares so deeply about.

It's an understatement to say that farming is in Devin's blood. He's a fifth-generation rancher and co-owns (with his brother Travis) the Cypress Hills ranch that his great-grandparents established after emigrating from Montana in 1905. Travis still lives on the land, along with Devin's mother, grandparents, and over 300 cattle.

Devin himself now resides near Herbert, SK, where he and his partner Tavis Schroeder operate another century farm alongside Tavis' parents. Tavis is also a fifth-generation farmer, his family having immigrated to Canada from Russia in 1904.

The Schroeder family farm is a large mixed operation with a four- to five-year crop rotation that focuses on grain. In addition to their grain operation, Devin and Tavis have also started a side venture, keeping a flock of approximately 200 Rideau Arcott sheep that they hope to grow significantly over the next five years.

In addition to juggling two large farm operations, Devin serves as a Councillor for the Town of Herbert and is a member of the Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan (APAS) Board of Directors. He's also studying to complete his Bachelor of Science in Agriculture through the University of Saskatchewan (where he's majoring in Environmental Science and minoring in Soil Science) and hopes to eventually pursue a Master of Business Administration. When asked how he balances it all, Devin admits that sometimes he doesn't, but that in general it means putting most of his evenings and weekends into the farm.

"The balancing act has been interesting," he explains. "I've basically had to learn how to do it properly—learning how to manage time more effectively and cutting out things that aren't essential."

"I don't watch much TV," Devin continues. "But I'm very lucky with the farm. There are a lot of different people working on the farm that can help out if I can't pull my weight with certain things."

Seeing opportunity in crisis

As someone so plugged in to his community and industry, I was curious to hear Devin's perspective on the COVID-19 pandemic and its impacts on Saskatchewan agriculture, both in terms of what he's hearing on the ground, and the ways agriculture could be impacted longer term.

"Some people are adapting to it well. Some are frustrated with all the regulations that have come in. And some are really stressed about market access and looking forward into the future and what the implications will be for them. Drought for the last two years, last year with trade disruptions, rail blockades, and now this. They're wondering what the outcome will be."

For his part, Devin sees plenty of opportunity in the crisis. "I think there are going to be a lot of positives that come from it. I think the biggest thing is the awareness of where people's food comes from. People will be appreciative of their food."

Rideau Arcott lambs at Devin Harlick's farm near Herbert, SK.





Devin Harlick (left) and partner Tavis Schroeder (right) with their Rideau Arcott lambs on their farm near Herbert, SK.

"For rural areas too, I think there will be a lot more infrastructure put into all of Canada, so you can work from home," he continues. "I think there will be a lot of opportunities to not work in the city to work in a small town or out in a rural area and have the job you once weren't able to have."

The future of ag

Devin's optimism extends to his outlook on the future of agriculture. When asked where he hopes to see agriculture in 20 years, his enthusiasm is evident. "I get a lot of satisfaction thinking about this," he says, elaborating on his love of technology and his awe over how much it is changing agriculture. "I think it's just going to continue evolving. On the farming side of things, people are going to look less at the whole field, and they're going to get down to the details. There will be spot spraying, and satellite imagery that will be able to identify crop health."

"We see it in the livestock industry too. Dairies are moving to robotic milkers. I anticipate cattle producers will be able to know where their cattle are at all times using technology. And they'll be able to assess their pasture health and know the best time to move their cattle just with that data. That's the biggest thing tech is going to change ag, and it's going to change at a more rapid pace."

Devin is also realistic about the challenges on the horizon for agriculture. He sees rural infrastructure as a major hurdle, whether it is internet and cell service, or the transportation and shipping infrastructure necessary to get products to the consumer. But even here he sees the bright side, noting that the provincial government's commitment to invest in the value-added sector will likely help.

"With the Province of Saskatchewan's mandate to do more value-added, I think there will be a lot more raw product processed in Saskatchewan and then shipped out to the consumer, which could reduce some of the density of the bulk being sent out."

There are going to be a lot of positives that come from COVID-19. I think the biggest thing is the awareness of where people's food comes from. People will be appreciative of their food.



Devin Harlick prepares for 2020 seeding near Herbert, SK.

Why APAS?

Devin has been actively involved with APAS since 2015, and has been teased (for example by me, during our phone interview) that he makes the perfect APAS poster child.

Before becoming directly involved with the organization, Devin had long been aware of APAS through his Rural Municipality, which has held membership in APAS since it was formed in 2000.

In 2015, Devin applied for and was accepted to the APAS Youth Leadership and Mentorship Program (YLMP), where he spent a year working with mentor Don Connick and learning more about APAS governance and Saskatchewan and Canadian agricultural policy.

Following his participation in the YLMP, Devin was elected as the APAS Representative for the RM of Piapot (#110), and in 2018 was elected to the APAS Board of Directors, where he continues to be actively involved.

"APAS is extremely important to me because it's an organization that is a frontrunner in influencing the future of agriculture," he explains, when asked why he makes time for APAS in his busy life. As a young producer, Devin has also been pleased to see the demographics of APAS shift to reflect more younger producers and the evolving face of agriculture, and to have younger farmers working together with more experienced producers and learning from each other.

"I've seen the transition since I started with APAS," he says of the changing demographics around the APAS table. "Every year the demographics become younger and younger. It's good to have that mix, because you have people that have been involved in farming and involved in APAS that have experience and can guide [the ones] that are coming in that will eventually be replacing them."

"It's good to learn from that and have that mix. Because you want it to be gradual—you don't want it to be sudden. And it's the same with agriculture. That's been gradually changing too," he says, referring to the 2016 census data, which saw the number of young producers increase for the first time since 1991.

Happy Birthday APAS!

APAS is at an important milestone this year, celebrating its 20th anniversary as Saskatchewan's general farm organization and the voice of the province's farmers and ranchers. When asked where he'd like to see APAS go from here, Devin explains that he'd like to see the organization continue the trajectory that it's already on.

"I'd like to continue the grassroots movement we have," he says. "I'd like to see the membership continue to grow, with possibly all the RMs becoming members. And the relationships that we have with government and industry, I'd like to see those continue. And being a frontrunner in advocating for the farmer."

APAS is extremely important to me because it's an organization that is a frontrunner in influencing the future of agriculture.



Devin Harlick with Cooper (left) and Tavis Schroeder with Scout (right)

Names: Cooper, Scout, Sadie, Sam & puppies Home Quarter: RM of Piapot #110 Age: 6 years, 3 years, 1 ½ years, 1 year, 8 weeks Breeds: Border Collies; Great Pyrenees Family: Harlick/Schroeder

About Cooper & Scout: Cooper is a great cattle and sheep dog. He's also a traveler, and has traveled all over western North America! In 2014 I spent part of the winter in California and I took Cooper with me. He loved the dog beaches in Long Beach. Cooper is a Very Good Boy! Scout started out as a cattle dog, but she was a bit scared of cattle. She's the reason we purchased sheep—so that we could train

About Sadie, Sam & family: Sadie and Sam welcomed five furry balls of puppy cuteness in March. The pups are learning the ropes when it comes to guarding their sheep and enjoy wrestling both each other and various farm cats! Sadie, Sam and family are Very Good Dogs!

her. She's a Good Girl!





Sam and Sadie's puppy wrestles with a farm cat

Sadie does her best to remain patient with her pups

Farm Dogs of Saskatchewan

ogs 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.

Names: Jenny (left) & Nala (right)

Home Quarter: RM of Tecumseh #65

Ages: 4 years & 8 years

Breeds: Coon Hound & Pitbull

Family: The Shiels/Dubois

About Jenny & Nala: Jenny is a free spirit rescue dog that does not take orders well, comes if she feels like it, can help sometimes, but greets us with a howl that warms our hearts. Her best bud is Nala. Nala was cautious on the farm at first but it did not take long for Jenny to teach her how to hunt gophers! Nala is a gentle Pitbull who is terrified of cows but loves the freedom of the farm and snores loudly at the end of each productive day.





Name: Sadie Eclipse Home Quarter: RM of Paddockwood #420 Age: 2 years Breed: English Shepherd Family: The Palibrodas About: English Shepherds are a heritage breed known for

About: English Shepherds are a heritage breed known for intelligence, athleticism, and eagerness to please their people. Sadie Eclipse is a devoted friend and a perfect portable size. One of her favourite phrases is "Do you want to go...?" As much as she loves adventures, she loves her farm even more and watches over our flocks of chickens, turkeys, pigs, cats, the machine shop, farmyard, and house. She delights in chasing ravens off the yard but never goes past her boundaries. She also enjoys tracking and can find people, cats, and hidden turkey nests. She once even tracked a neighbour's missing cow! Sadie Eclipse is a Very Good Girl.

Name: Turbo

Home Quarter: RM of Antler #61

Age: 8 years

Breed: German Shepherd-Husky cross

Family: The Hainsworths

About Turbo: A big friendly guy, nothing makes Turbo happier than heading out for a walk with his human (or a run if the human takes the quad). Now that he's getting older, Turbo also appreciates a ride home perched on the back of the quad. He guards us from all kinds of evil things (both real and imagined), but his arch nemesis is the school bus with its blinking light on the road a mile away.





Names: Pyshka (right) & Shelby (left) Home Quarter: RM of Grant #372 Ages: 6 years & 2 years Breeds: German Shepherd & Shepherd cross Family: The Semchysens About Pyshka & Shelby: Pyshka has the be

About Pyshka & Shelby: Pyshka has the best personality and is always happy. He loves going for walks and riding on the back of the half-ton. His favourite things to do include racing us down our long driveway with the quad and chasing after balls. His eyes always light up when he sees his humans. We are grateful for such a loyal and happy-golucky family member. We got Shelby two years ago from the Humboldt SPCA after she was surrendered for the second time. She is fiercely loyal and loves going for walks. Both she and Pyshka always accompany me to the barn at chore time and usually come back to the house with their very own "poopsicles."

Names: Pal (left) & Bobby (right) Home Quarter: RM of Baildon #131

Ages: 12 years & 11 years

Breed: Border Collie-Pyrenees cross and English Pointer

Family: The Swensons

About Pal & Bobby: Pal and Bobby are great protectors for our farm and yard. Pal loves to keep the cattle in line and on occasion is known to chase the odd calf that strays from the main herd. Bobby likes to chase anything that moves—birds, squirrels and even porcupines! They both love to go for truck rides. Even though they are now senior dogs, they still manage to patrol the yard and protect us and then relax in the sunshine. Pal and Bobby are both Very Good Dogs!





Mary Robinson, CFA President

CFA Update

APAS is an active partner in the Canadian Federation of Agriculture's response to COVID-19

S ince COVID-19 was declared a pandemic on March 11, 2020, agriculture advocacy groups have been working hard to ensure its impacts on agriculture are understood and effectively responded to by all levels of government.

The Canadian Federation of Agriculture (CFA) has led the charge, acting as a direct conduit to the federal Ministry of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) by communicating the needs of agricultural producers across the country.

The Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan (APAS), as Saskatchewan's representative to the CFA, has been actively involved in identifying and communicating the needs of Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers. APAS President and CFA Board member Todd Lewis has played a central role as a CFA spokesperson on behalf of Western Canadian farmers.

A primary role of the CFA has been to identify the impacts of COVID-19 on Canadian farmers and communicate them directly to the federal government. On April 16, 2020, CFA President Mary Robinson held a virtual press conference to emphasize the unprecedented challenges to farmers and the risks to Canadian food security.

Highlighted were the labour crisis facing producers as they enter the 2020 growing season, and the unexpected and increasing costs to farmers resulting from COVID-19.

Robinson warned that without immediate assistance from the federal government, the Canadian agriculture sector would not be able to ensure the security of the domestic food supply for the immediate and long-term benefit of all Canadians.

"As farmers, we have carefully considered this message today," said Robinson on April 16. "We do not want to create panic. At the same time, it would be irresponsible not to sound the alarm about the realities Canadian farmers are facing."

CFA has calculated the financial damage to the agriculture sector, and has identified a need for \$2.6 billion and long-sought improvements to AgriStability.

Unfortunately, the federal government's May 5 announcement of \$252 million in support fell far short of that request, leaving the CFA and member organizations (including APAS) with more work to do to convince the federal government that further support is needed to avoid serious food insecurity for Canadians and financial hardships for the nation's agricultural businesses.

An overview of the changes announced on May 5:

- Commitment to AgriRecovery programming for cattle and hog farmers, leaving provinces to opt in with the 40 percent portion they would normally provide. This includes:
 - \$50 million for a cattle set aside program
 - \$50 million for pork producers to cover costs associated with holding onto animals, depopulating, and other associated costs. This addresses equipment, infrastructure and other recovery measures, but not lost revenue.
- · Labour shortages will now be eligible as a cause of crop losses under AgriInsurance
- \$77.5 million to modernize, adapt, and reopen processing plants
- \$50 million to purchase surplus agricultural products and distribute them to vulnerable communities across Canada
- The Canadian Dairy Commission has had its lending capacity increased by \$250 million, to \$500 million in total
- Producers are being called upon to use AgriInvest funds available to them and subscribe to AgriStability, to capitalize on available support and help clarify gaps that remain
- AgriStability interim payments have been increased to 75 percent of projected AgriStability payments, with each province having to opt in and approve this measure

Although the CFA welcomes this government support and is thankful for the Minister's continued advocacy on behalf of the agri-food sector, the commitments fall very short of what farmers need and will not be sufficient to avoid the looming crisis for the Canadian food supply.

Specific concerns include a reliance on existing programs, as these programs provide inadequate support, are slow, and have gaps and inequities in coverage between commodities. In addition, Canadian farmers are competing with US farmers who have access to considerably more government support.

Waiting for these inadequacies to become apparent before rolling out additional support could cause support to arrive too late to prevent avoidable issues.

Domestic food security is critical to Canada's national security, and supporting Canada's agri-food industry needs to be a top priority during this pandemic.

We understand many different industries are asking for government support during this crisis, but it would be a national tragedy if the government fails to make the necessary investments in Canada's agriculture sector.

Canadian farmers feed Canadians and the world, and our industry is a major economic driver of the economy, with one in eight Canadians employed in this sector. Agriculture has pulled the country through recessions before and we can do it again, if the government provides meaningful help.





CCGA: 35 YEARS OF Helping Farmers Succeed

here have been many developments in Canadian agriculture over the last three and a half decades, but one thing has never changed: Canadian Canola Growers Association's (CCGA) vision of Helping Farmers Succeed.

The CCGA story started in 1984, when a group of canola farmers from Western Canada came together to give farmers access to the same financing program that had been available on cereal grains for many years.

35 years later, more than 10,000 farmers across Western Canada look to CCGA to support their grain marketing and farm financing plans with a cash advance through the Advance Payments Program.

The Advance Payments program is a federal program delivered and administered by CCGA. Under the program, the Government of Canada provides the loan guarantee, funds the interest-free portion of advances, and helps to make low interest rates on the remainder for Canadian producers.

"Our devoted team is constantly striving to deliver better customer service to our cash advance customers, including improving our phone and online services, as well as streamlining the application process and making the program more accessible for those who use it," says Rick White, President and CEO of CCGA.

The experience that CCGA has cultivated over the last 35 years, coupled with a grassroots farmer voice at the CCGA board, helps the organization affect policy changes for the benefit of canola farmers.

Winnipeg Office

T: 204.788.0090 TF: 1.866.745.2256 F: 204.788.0039 **ccga.ca**

Homegrown Innovations at the University of Saskatchewan

An interview with Angela Bedard-Haughn, newly appointed Dean of the College of Agriculture and Bioresources

WRITTEN BY NIKKO SNYDER | IMAGES COURTESY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN



Angela Bedard-Haughn, Dean of the College of Agriculture and Bioresources, University of Saskatchewan.

PAS had big plans this past March to hold our annual Policy Conference in Saskatoon. That is, until COVID-19 stopped all large gatherings in their tracks and the event was canceled.

At the time we were disappointed to miss out on a keynote address by Angela Bedard-Haughn, the newly appointed Dean of the College of Agriculture and Bioresources at the University of Saskatchewan. So we decided to catch up with her by phone to learn more about the research currently taking place at the College, and what she thinks are the biggest challenges and opportunities facing agriculture.

APAS: Let's start with some background about you and how you came to be in your current role.

Angela Bedard-Haughn: I'm originally from Saint-Brieux, Saskatchewan. I did both my undergraduate and my Master's degree [in Soil Science] here at the U of S. And then I moved on to the University of California at Davis where I did my PhD in Soil Science.

I returned to the U of S and joined the Soil Science faculty in 2006. Most of my own research programs focus on land management and nutrient dynamics, with a lot of emphasis on wetlands and sloughs. I recently developed the Saskatchewan Soil Information System, which is an online portal for accessing the soil survey information.

I provide oversight on research activities and research facilities at the College. But really the best part of this job is that I get to review all the research grants before they go in. It's sort of like a sneak preview of the next great thing, because our faculty has so many amazing ideas. It's a lot of fun.

APAS: So what is the most important and exciting research taking place at the College right now?

ABH: One of our researchers, Ryan Brook, works with invasive wild pigs. That's been emerging as a major crisis for both crop and livestock producers in Saskatchewan and across Canada.

[Wild pigs] were brought into Saskatchewan in the 1980s and 90s to diversify agriculture, and a lot of them have either escaped or been released, and they've really expanded out of control. They're damaging crops, harassing wildlife, and one of the big concerns now is that they might serve as reservoirs for African Swine Fever, which could really cripple the domestic swine industry in Canada. Ryan tracks the movement of these wild

The best part of this job is that I get to review all the research grants before they go in. It's sort of like a sneak preview of the next great thing, because our faculty has so many amazing ideas. pigs and looks at how we might manage and mitigate this risk.

Another area that there's been tons of media on over the last year or so is plant-based protein. In addition to all the cool work we have related to protein extraction and protein formulations, we have one of the leading pea breeders, Tom Warkentin, in the Crop Development Center.

He's been doing work to take field pea protein to the next level. His Pea Protein Omics Determination (P-POD) project looks at ways to increase the protein concentration and quality in field peas, so the protein has higher concentration and you need less volume of peas to get the same kind of protein.

Along with that, in order to get to more protein, they're trying to get more nitrogen fixing in the peas. And they're looking at biofortification; in particular can we get more iron into peas to support people-for example female athleteswho are often iron deficient? They're also trying to bring down the glycemic index for folks that have issues related to blood sugar.

As field pea acreage expands we have to make sure we're managing disease risk, so they're looking at ways to increase resistance to things like Aphanomyces. Tom Warkentin is working in

Ryan Brook places a tracking collar on a wild pig in Texas during a project in collaboration with the United States Department of Agriculture.





Ryan Brook leads a project near Melfort, SK to net wild pigs from helicopters in order to place tracking collars on them.

partnership with Sabine Banniza, one of our Plant Pathologists, on these types of issues. The whole space around pea protein has a lot exciting work going on at the moment.

Another project I'll mention is the Livestock and Forage Center of Excellence out in Clavet. A lot of neat work is happening there both in terms of animal nutrition and also gut microbiome–looking at different types of forage feeding trials and how they relate to weight gain, different cropping mixes, that type of thing.

That is also coupled with making sure our livestock management practices are adhering to the highest standards in terms of minimizing potential risk to the environment. That includes monitoring water quality, but there's also great work happening around greenhouse gases and ways to mitigate the emissions from the animal excrement. There are also food supplements that can be given to cattle to reduce the amount of methane that's coming out the other end. The Livestock and Forage Centre of Excellence was designed to be a place where multiple disciplines could come together to look at cattle production systems, and it's really starting to deliver on that promise in terms of how it's bringing together researchers from different areas.

APAS: It's our 20th anniversary this year, so we've been reflecting on agriculture over the last 20 years, and also looking forward to the next 20 years. Can you speak about some of the most important innovations of the last 20 years, and what you think are the biggest challenges and opportunities facing agriculture in the years ahead?

ABH: When we look back at the last 20 years, one of the major advancements in agriculture has been conservation agriculture. While I know its roots go beyond 20 years ago, in terms of the number of acres affected it's enormous, and what it's done in terms of making agriculture in Saskatchewan more resilient is really key.



Importantly, this goes beyond conservation tillage practices. It encompasses other aspects of conservation agriculture like thinking carefully about your crop rotations. What are the cropping sequences you put in place to minimize your risk of disease or weed infestations? What are some of the things you can do to maximize your yield year after year?

While that one's not particularly flashy, it's widespread in terms of its impacts. And it feeds in to the next one, which is crop breeding. In the last 20 years we've had tremendous enhancements in terms of the toolkit that's available to our crop breeders.

The genetic tools, the mapping of the wheat genome, the mapping of the pea genome-these advances are really tremendous in terms of the ability it creates for us to target where we want to go, for disease resistance, for yield improvements, for nutritional advancements. We've been starting to work with that over the last 20 years as the technology has developed, but now it's really getting into full swing. It's not that these changes weren't possible with traditional breeding techniques, but [these genetic tools] allow traits to be isolated and identified, and for us to get to the desired end point faster.

The other piece to highlight is that those genetic tools are being used not just for crop breeding but also extensively in our livestock production systems. They're being used to look at desirable traits in the health of the animal and its growth characteristics. Can we identify those and incorporate them into our livestock production systems?

There's a lot of interesting work looking at the microbiome the microorganisms that live in the gut of these animals. What are the implications in terms of animal nutrition? Or in the case of cattle, what are some of the implications of the gut microbiome on methane emissions?

All of these genetic tools have been absolutely exploding over the last number of years and are allowing us to look at the genetics of everything from the bacteria and fungi in the soil right up to the overall herd health. So you can look at this on so many different levels. These



Tom Warkentin, professor in the Department of Plant Sciences and the Ministry of Agriculture Strategic Research Program (SRP) Chair in Field Pea Breeding and Genetics, University of Saskatchewan.

tools have really transformed how we think about and do agriculture.

Looking ahead, I think some of the biggest challenges are going to be [related to] the need for more resilient systems in the face of tremendous climate volatility. It's going to be really important for us to think about designing [our production] systems to make sure we're better able to bounce back from droughts, from really wet years, from disease outbreaks.

The need for resilient systems is going to become even greater when we think about food security challenges. We're just at the point now where we're either not producing enough food, or there's a distribution issue, but we're right on the edge. As the population continues to grow, the human costs of crop failure become much greater.

So we really need to think about our systems and try to build more resilience into them. That extends to everything from the health and quality of the soil through to the crops. Can they adapt, and what is the range over which they can produce before you have a complete failure? If you've got a complete crop failure in this part of the world, what are the implications for other parts of the world? Can we manage that? Can we absorb that? The same principles apply to animals. What is the range of conditions over which they are able to stay resistant to disease?

And embedded in that is the question of food security, and importantly nutritional security. It's not enough to have systems that can produce great quantities of food, but [we need to make sure] that food is nutritionally dense. Is there actually good human or animal nutrition in it to ensure the health of those that consume it? So it's understanding not just quantity but quality, and I think those are going to be important pieces.

In terms of what allows us to contribute to these grand challenges, the key is collaboration. It's really rare now to see projects that have a single researcher or even a single discipline. Increasingly there are multiple disciplines involved in Genetic tools have been absolutely exploding over the last number of years. These tools have really transformed how we think about and do agriculture.

a project because there's a need to have a systems approach.

So we've got soil scientists and plant scientists and animal scientists looking together at forage production systems, from the perspective of the forage growth, the growth of the animals that are grazing on it, and the environmental mitigation of greenhouse gases. We're really coming at challenges from multiple perspectives because there's a recognition that no one discipline will be able to address these things on its own.

We're here to help.

If you're facing financial hardships due to COVID-19 or the economic downturn, call us to discuss how we can help.

1.800.667.7477 **conexus.ca**



Farm Fire Prevention

7 ways to avoid costly losses

TEXT AND IMAGES COURTESY OF THE CO-OPERATORS

ith organic materials like hay and feed, plus large mechanical equipment that generates heat and exhaust gases, a typical farm has several potential fire hazards. Losing property, livestock and equipment in a fire can lead to long periods of downtime that can be devastating to your farming operation. It can also result in insurance premium increases in the future.

Use these farm fire prevention tips to avoid costly losses to your farm business

Preventative maintenance for barns and other farm buildings

NO SMOKING

Never allow smoking in farm buildings. Discarded cigarettes should not be left on the ground or in potted plans. Potting soil becomes combustible in dry conditions.

CLEAR THE CLUTTER

Keep barns and yard areas clear of brush and other flammable debris. Move flammable items away from heat sources, and clear away dirt and dust buildup from appliances and equipment to prevent overheating.



LET THE AIR FLOW

Provide adequate ventilation to prevent buildup of chemical vapours, silo gases, and other hazardous byproducts. Proper airflow helps dissipate flammable gas and vapours, preventing heat buildup.

INSPECT ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT

Maintain electrical equipment and keep wires safely enclosed in metal or PVC pipes to protect them from exposure to weather and animals. Once per year, have a licensed electrician inspect the electrical equipment in your farm buildings.

REFUEL OUTSIDE

Refuel equipment outdoors, away from open flames and as far from any buildings as possible. Make sure engines are not running or still hot before refueling. Keep fuel and other combustibles away from livestock in a different building.

HEAT WITH CARE

Keep heaters out of the reach of livestock and well away from bedding and other combustible materials. Avoid us-



ing heat or solar lamps, trouble lights, heated watering bowls or other heated devices to warm outdoor pet shelters. Instead, use borrowed heat that provides warmth from a separate building – such as through a hot water heating system that circulates water with potable antifreeze to buildings via underground piping.

KEEP EXTINGUISHERS READY

Portable fire extinguishers should be properly maintained, regularly inspected and easy to find in each building, especially near mechanical equipment and storage areas that contain flammable materials. Train your employees how to properly use extinguishers and where to find them.

Keep in touch with your Financial Advisor

There are many things that happen on a farm every day. Maintaining an open line of communication with your Financial Advisor can help ensure that you're appropriately covered and there are no surprises for either party. Make sure to regularly update your Financial Advisor on changes to your farm. Your insurance policy requires regular maintenance to be effective!





The new **Marginal Areas Program** increases your profits while farming fewer acres. It provides a financial incentive to seed those hard-to-access/poorly-producing areas to perennial forages.

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APAS Members and Representatives

Get to know your APAS Rep

DISTRICT ONE

#1	Argyle – Brenda Ryckman
#2	Mount Pleasant – Terry Macfarlane
#3	Enniskillen – Barry Fitzpatrick
#31	Storthoaks – Elissa Henrion
#33	Moose Creek – Reed Gibson
#37	Lomond – Ryan McKenzie
#63	Moose Mountain – Jack Wilson
#65	Tecumseh – Thomas Breault
#91	Maryfield – Jeffrey Chambers
#93	Wawken – Trevor Branvold
#94	Hazelwood – Kyle Kish
#95	Golden West – Wanda Reid
#96	Fillmore – Cam Hart
#97	Wellington – David Beach
#121	Moosomin – Marion McBride
#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 – Jim Ross
#156	Indian Head – Lorne Scott
#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 Pirio
#71	Excel – Ron Daviduk
#72	Lake of the Rivers – Chris Bates
#73	Stonehenge – Vince Topola
#74	Wood River – Duane Filson
#98	Scott – Tim Devereaux
#100	Elmsthorpe – James Beingessner
#101	Terrell – Vacant
#103	Sutton – Richard Nagel
#104	Gravelbourg – James Bateman
#128	Lajord – Todd Lewis
#129	Bratt's Lake – Gregor Beck
#131	Baildon – Terry Anthony
#162	Caron – Ray McBride
#163	Wheatlands – Kurtis Hicks
#191	Marquis – Glen Steinhauer
#193	Eyebrow – Dean Thiessen
#220	McKillop – Glen Munholland



MEMBER

NON-MEMBER

- #221 Sarnia – Carl Erlandson
- #222 Craik – Rodney Obrigewitsch

DISTRICT THREE

- #49 White Valley – Daryl Allemand
- Auvergne Dale Davidson #76
- #79 Arlington – Kevin Gilbert
- #109 Carmichael – Don Connick
- #110 Piapot – Devin Harlick
- #135 Lawtonia - Sterling Dayne
- #136 Coulee – Greg Targerson
- Webb Vacant #138
- #167 Sask Landing - Dan Barber
- #228 Lacadena – Megz Reynolds
- #257 Monet – James Myers #259
- Snipe Lake Glen Collins #261
- Chesterfield Leah Cooper

DISTRICT FOUR

#241 Calder	– Roy Derworiz
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- #244 Orkney - Randy Trost
- #245 Garry – Bill Prybylski
- #275 Insinger - Willy Zuchkan
- #277 Emerald – Norman Hall

#304	Buchanan – Don Skoretz
#307	Elfros – Gwen Burko
#308	Big Quill – Ernest Hall
#333	Clayton – Lorne Ball
#334	Preeceville – Dale Parkin
#335	Hazel Dell – Jim Ashworth
#336	Sasman – Vacant
#337	Lakeview – Angela Jones
#338	Lakeside – Jason Friesen
#367	Ponass Lake – Rick Sunderland
#426	Bjorkdale – Glen Clarke
#427	Tisdale – Ian Alan
#428	Star City – Shawn Mooney
#456	Arborfield – Robert Reavie
#457	Connaught – Ian Boxall
#458	Willow creek – Brent Freedman
#486	Moose Range – Spencer Maxwell
#487	Nipawin – Brandon Perkins
#488	Torch River – Jerry Kindrat
DISTRIC	TFIVE
#250	Last Mountain Valley – Kelly Holbrook
#254	Loreburn – David Vollmer and Douglas T
#279	Mount Hope – Ian McNichol
#280	Wreford – Vacant
#281	Wood Creek – Glen Busse
#282	McCraney – Vacant

- #284 Rudy Jan Konst
- #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 Vacant
- #430 Invergordon Wayne Bacon
- #459 Kinistino Vacant
- #460 Birch Hills Vacant
- #461 Prince Albert Richard Wilson#490 Garden River Ryan Scragg
- #490 Garden River Ryan Scragg

DISTRICT SIX

- #287 St. Andrews Kevin Sinclair
- #292 MIlton James Loken
- #321 Prairiedale Tim Richelhoff
- #322 Antelope Park Bill Warrington
- #347 Biggar Robert Danychuk
- #349 Grandview Allen Turk
- #350 Mariposa Jeremy Welter #351 Progress – Kim Herbst
- #351 Progress Kim Herbst#381 Grass Lake Bentley Sperle
- #382 Eye Hill Greg Rissling
- #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
- #471 Eldon Scott Owens
- #472 Wilton Devon Walker
- #499 Mervin Tom Brown
- #501 Frenchman Butte Leonard Larre
- #502 Britannia Jonas Hoegl

Join APAS and help fix the problems facing Saskatchewan agriculture!

If your RM is not an APAS member, ask your Council to try a 12-month membership for only \$2020!

Joining APAS is easy:

STEP 1: The RM administrator contacts Curtis Hemming at 306-789-7774 or chemming@apas.ca and schedules an APAS presentation for their Council.

STEP 2: The Council receives a presentation about the projects APAS is working on.

aylor

STEP 3: The Council votes to join APAS and pays \$2020 for the 12-month trial membership.

STEP 4: The Council chooses an APAS Representative to participate in all APAS activities (the Representative can be any ratepayer from the RM).

STEP 5: After the 12-month trial membership ends, the Council votes whether to stay in APAS as a full member.

APAS Activities



APAS President Todd Lewis (left) with His Excellency Cong Peiwu, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Canada (right).

ike most organizations, APAS has found itself preoccupied with the COVID-19 pandemic for the last few months. That said, we continue to work just as hard (albeit from home) on behalf of Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers. Here is a look at what we've been up to.

Livestock Policy Committee Recommendations

The APAS Livestock Policy Committee met on April 24, 2020 to address the urgent needs facing livestock producers as a result of COVID-19. The committee, in collaboration with APAS policy staff, developed a comprehensive set of recommendations, which were released to the media on May 5. For details on these policy recommendations, see page 10.

APAS survey investigates the impacts of COVID-19 on Saskatchewan producers

APAS launched a survey in late March 2020 to hear from the province's farmers and ranchers about the impacts of COVID-19 on Saskatchewan agriculture. The information gathered was shared with federal and provincial governments, as well as the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, to highlight the region-specific impacts of the pandemic.

Responses indicated a high degree of concern about the financial impacts of the crisis, with cash flow being specifically flagged.

In the first weeks of the survey (March 24-April 5), the number of producers that anticipated – or were already experiencing – financial hardship as a result of COVID-19 was significant. Over 70 percent of respondents said they expected the crisis to result in reduced commodity prices, lower revenue, and reduced cash flow; and close to half expected they might not be able to pay their bills. Additionally, 53 percent of respondents indicated that cash flow was an immediate financial need for their operation.

Between April 6 and 13, at a time when nearly 40 percent of respondents reported still having 2019 crop in the field, a full one third indicated that they were experiencing COVID-19-related disruptions to the purchase and delivery of farm inputs, as well as to the sale and delivery of their farm production.

Respondents also reported concerns with declines in the cattle market, sharing that they were grappling with falling prices and difficult marketing decisions.

The impact of poor and unreliable telecommunications was another theme that came out loud and clear in the survey results. Fifty-one percent of respondents reported higher than average disruptions to cell and internet service, a trend that shines light on a long-standing problem.

Although we decided to put a pause on the survey during the busy seeding season, APAS is keeping a close ear to the ground to understand emerging issues related to COVID-19, and invites Saskatchewan producers to contact us directly with your experiences and concerns.

Canadian Federation of Agriculture Annual Meeting

A delegation of APAS representatives traveled to Ottawa in late February to participate in the Canadian Federation of Agriculture (CFA) Annual Meeting. Not only is the event a crucial opportunity for APAS to highlight Saskatchewan-focused policy issues at the national level, but it is also important training ground for the next generation of homegrown agricultural policy leaders.

APAS was proud to send members of this year's Youth Leadership & Mentorship Program (YLMP) to Ottawa as members of the APAS delegation. It was a wonderful learning opportunity and a chance for these young leaders to represent Saskatchewan and participate in the CFA's democratic process.

This year APAS brought forward several resolutions to the CFA that were passed with broad national support. Key among these were the following:



Pictured here (left to right) are YLMP participants Jocelyn Velestuk, Reid Daley, Michelle Ross, and Devon Walker, with APAS President Todd Lewis (centre).



APAS Representative Elections

Participating APAS RMs elect a representative from among their ratepayers to contribute to APAS policy development and governance.

Vote to elect your APAS Representative on November 9, 2020.

Shape Saskatchewan agriculture by running to become an APAS Rep!

Elections take place during rural municipal elections.

Learn more at APAS.ca **Trade War Mitigation Program:** Be it resolved that the Government of Canada work with farm organizations from trade exposed sectors to develop a trade war mitigation program that is:

- Federally funded;
- Compliant with Canada's international trade commitments;
- Equivalent to the demonstrated hurt cause by trade actions;
- Production neutral to prevent market distortions and influence on individual management decisions;
- Provided for the duration of the trade injury, or until Canada's existing programs are redesigned to address trade risks.

Reserving word "meat" for products produced from non-lab based animal protein: Be it resolved that the Canadian Food Inspection Agency be directed to enforce the requirements that cultured or manufactured protein products be labelled to reflect that they are simulated, contain no meat products, and are not meat replacements.

Remove carbon tax from all propane and natural gas used for grain drying and animal production: Be it resolved that the CFA lobby the Government of Canada to exempt propane and natural gas, used on farm for the drying of grains and the production of animal agriculture, from the carbon tax and reimburse the tax incurred during the 2019 production year.

APAS works closely with the CFA year-round to ensure that Saskatchewan agriculture is effectively represented at the national level. This has been especially crucial during the COVID-19 pandemic, during which time APAS President and CFA Board member Todd Lewis has worked tirelessly to advocate for appropriate supports for all Saskatchewan producers.

APAS President meets with Chinese Ambassador Cong Peiwu

During his trip to Ottawa for the CFA Annual Meeting, APAS President Todd Lewis met with His Excellency Cong Peiwu, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Canada. The two met at the Chinese Embassy in Ottawa on February 24 to discuss the longstanding trade relationship.

"Saskatchewan and Canada have a longstanding trade relationship with China," said Lewis following the meeting. "Their market is incredibly important to Saskatchewan farmers."

The meeting was cordial, with Mr. Lewis expressing a deep appreciation for the People's Republic of China as an agricultural trading partner.

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e are extremely saddened to share the news that APAS Board member and Representative for RM #138 (Webb) Rick Jensen passed away in a tragic house fire on his farm on March 15, 2020. Rick's son Kevin also passed away in the fire.

On behalf of the entire APAS community, our deepest condolences go out to Rick's surviving sons, Bradley and Mark, their families, and everyone shaped by Rick's friendship and community service.

Rick was born in 1949 in Swift Current. The eldest of four siblings, Rick had a passion for farming and went on to own and operate the 1,700-acre mixed farming operation that his grandfather established in 1909. Also an avid aviator, Rick became a pilot in 1968.

Rick married Yvonne Ferner (of Sedley, SK) in 1974, and together they settled on the Jensen family farm near Webb, SK. They raised three children – Bradley, Mark, and Kevin – and were married for 40 years. Rick and Yvonne loved to visit with friends and neighbours, help out at community events, travel, and spend time with their grandchildren. Yvonne passed away in 2014.

Rick was a lifelong leader and advocate for agriculture in Saskatchewan. He became a Saskatchewan Wheat Pool

A Tribute to Rick Jensen

Respected APAS Board member lost in tragic farmhouse fire

delegate in 1984 and served as a Pool Director from 2004 to 2008. In 1988, he became Secretary-Manager for the South West Saskatchewan Forage Co-operative Association Limited.

He joined APAS as an elected representative in 2012 and was elected to the APAS Board in 2016. He held both positions until his passing and was a respected member of the APAS team who always brought wisdom and thoughtfulness to the table.

Rick will be remembered for his ongoing commitment to community. His community involvement included being the first President of the Autumn House Independent Living facility in Gull Lake, first President of the Swift Current Bingo Association, a 4-H leader for beef, and the Exalted Ruler of the Webb Elks Club for 15 years.

Rick was also an enthusiastic Rider fan, an avid reader and card player, and (in his youth) a curler. Rick was a friend and mentor to many and gave a lifetime of incredible contributions to his community and to agriculture in Saskatchewan. We will continue to feel his loss deeply.

Rick is survived by his sons Bradley and Mark, their partners, and their children. The Jensen family plans to hold a memorial for Rick and son Kevin in late July 2020, but these plans may change due to COVID-19.







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