

CANOLA Digest

THE SOURCE FOR CANADA'S CANOLA GROWERS

MARCH 2010

THE TRADE ISSUE

Farmer panel talks exports • Fuelling canola's bio potential • Spring checklist

10^{years}
of Canola
Digest

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Exclusive
interview
with Canada's
Agriculture
Minister



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EDITORIAL OFFICE

Editor
Debbie Belanger
Canola Council of Canada
400 – 167 Lombard Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3B 0T6
(204) 982-2111 Fax: (204) 942-1841
E-mail: editor@canoladigest.ca

Production
Amanda Howard
(403) 410-7656
E-mail: amanda.howard@adfarmonline.com



ACPC OFFICE

Ward Toma
Alberta Canola Producers Commission
#170, 14315 – 118 Avenue
Edmonton, AB T5L 4S6
(780) 454-0844 Fax: (780) 465-5473
E-mail: ward.toma@canola.ab.ca



MCGA OFFICE

Bill Ross
Manitoba Canola Growers Association
400 – 167 Lombard Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3B 0T6
(204) 982-2120 Fax: (204) 942-1841
E-mail: rossb@mcgacanola.org



SaskCanola OFFICE

Catherine Folkersen
SaskCanola
212 – 111 Research Drive
Saskatoon, SK S7N 3R2
(306) 975-0262 Fax: (306) 975-0136
E-mail: cfolkersen@saskcanola.com

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CANOLA Digest

It's all about trade. From farmers' fields to international trade agreements, find out what the canola industry is doing to support healthy growth in exports.



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Cover photo: Minister of Agriculture, Gerry Ritz, and Chef Eduardo Osuna in Mexico City promoting the benefits of canola oil.

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GROWING FOR OUR CUSTOMERS

By Debbie Belanger



I had the pleasure recently of sitting down with Canada's Agriculture Minister, Gerry Ritz, to talk about the canola industry and what he sees in our future (see page 6). He is a down-to-earth man who does not mince words.

One comment he made in particular stuck with me. He said, "...when we started these trade missions a year and a half ago ... everybody around the world had one thing in common to say, 'Where have you been?' You know, where has Canada been?"

He raises an interesting point. The canola industry has done a remarkable job of improving production, yields and quality. The industry has worked hard to sell canola around the world, and our export markets have grown as a result. But until now, our central focus has not been market access. As the China blackleg situation teaches us, the world is changing. Now governments and industry need to work together to

Farmers are more aware than ever of their role in producing a product that our customers want to buy.

make sure that our core markets stay open, and that we can gain access to new markets. A new Market Access Program (see page 12) will help us do that.

In the meantime, farmers are more aware than ever of their role in producing a product that our customers want to buy. In our regular feature *Checking In* (see page 26), Manitoba canola grower Brian Chorney says, "We never use malathion in any of our bins (canola or otherwise). We do a thorough cleaning of our bins annually to prevent insect infestations. We grow registered varieties that meet export requirements, and we ensure our crop protection products are applied using label recommendations. We certainly do not want to jeopardize the quality of product we produce."

I would like to thank all the members of our *Checking In* panel for participating in these past four issues of *Digest*. I certainly have enjoyed hearing their comments and opinions.

Digest returns in the fall. In the meantime, I wish all of you a good planting season. ●



Canola Digest is grateful to Kelly Green of the Canadian Canola Growers Association, who managed production of this issue while the editor was on leave.

CANOLA DIGEST SAYS...

In November 2009, Canada exported 725,300 tonnes of canola through West Coast ports.

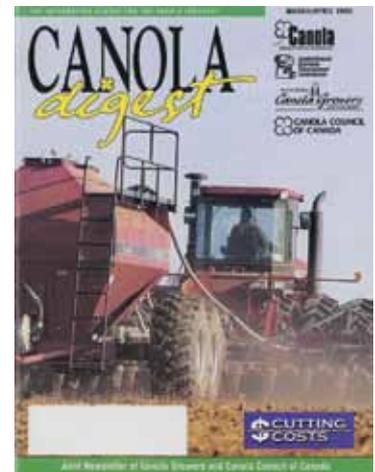
10 years ago, Digest reported new record West Coast canola exports at 565,900 tonnes.

In January 2010, the nearby canola futures reached a low of \$373.50/mt.

10 years ago, a commodity specialist told Digest readers, "This may be the verge of one of the most exciting trading/hedging opportunities in over a decade." At the time, the January low for nearby canola futures was \$247.00/mt.

Today, 84 percent of Canadians support low-carbon, home-grown renewable fuels.

10 years ago, Digest reported that a University of Saskatchewan experiment showed a canola-based biodiesel additive was the most cost-effective of 10 different additives.



10 YEARS AGO

- The New Jersey Devils win the Stanley Cup, scoring eight seconds into the second overtime of game six with the Dallas Stars.
- The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety Agreement is completed. It is the first international agreement designed to regulate international trade of genetically engineered organisms.
- Canadian-based Research in Motion releases the BlackBerry. Today, the company has sold over 50 million units.



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Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz participates in a live cooking demonstration with Mexican Celebrity Chef Eduardo Osuna to support Canadian canola sales to Mexico.

Canola Digest: I would like to start with some market access issues. First of all, what do you see as Canada's path back into the Chinese market?

Ritz: I'm hopeful China will recognize the superior quality of Canadian canola. They crush soy because they want the meal. They crush canola because they want the oil and then they have their own rapeseed. As I understand it, reading between the lines, the Government of China has subsidized rapeseed production... and the crushers didn't want to spend the same time and energy on rapeseed when they could use top-quality Canadian canola. So in their wisdom, the Government of China said okay, we are going to slow down on canola a little bit while we use up our domestic rapeseed.

As far as we are concerned, blackleg is not an issue. We've been shipping canola there for 10 or 12 years and it's never been an issue. But having said that, we have a situation where Canadian canola shipments have been held in abeyance. At this point they [China] have committed to buying more oil [from Canada], another 200,000 tonnes next year, basically doubling their oil imports from us. This is good news from a Canadian standpoint, and with new crushing facilities on line we have the capacity to do it. We also need the canola meal for our livestock industry right here.

Exclusive interview: CANADA'S AGRICULTURE MINISTER

On the day he announced a \$7.8 million Market Access initiative for the canola industry, and shortly before leaving for a trade mission to Mexico and Colombia, Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz sat down with *Canola Digest* editor Debbie Belanger for an exclusive interview.

And it makes sense from a transportation standpoint to ship a finished product as opposed to whole seed.

CD: But do you still have to approach the situation from a blackleg perspective?

Ritz: Absolutely. The customer has raised a concern. Whether we agree with it or not, we have to address it and make sure they understand that Canadian canola is safe and that it is a top-quality, world-class product. They understand that.

CD: Shortly, you will be travelling with a delegation to Mexico and Colombia. What are your interests in these two countries?

Ritz: Mexico is a NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement) partner and a large market with potential. There are issues in Mexico, as there are in any country. We are constantly bombarded with challenges that we need to work our way through. With Mexico, it's about beef, pork and canola. What I've done is sit down with industry and my own department and outline where we think we can get the most bang for our buck; we hit those areas first.

We are going into Colombia to press the opposition to move forward on the Colombia Free Trade Agreement.

We see Colombia as more than just a marketplace. It is a portal into the rest of South America. For example, there is a tremendous amount of potential in Venezuela with the cash flow from their oil sales. We've all been talking about the healthy aspects of Canadian canola, so having that in our arsenal when we go out to sell certainly makes a difference, especially when competing against the soy products of the world.

CD: I understand Colombia already has a Canadian canola brand on the shelf.

Ritz: A lot of times when we go to these countries, they line up a supermarket tour. It's amazing to see canola oil branded as Canadian product on those shelves. We have a tremendous track record for consistency in quality and supply. Constantly we are told they prefer Canadian products because they know the continuity and consistency is the same.

CD: Turning to domestic use, what do you see as the necessary steps to grow our domestic market for canola?

Ritz: I think the challenge has been that the wholesale retail food industry, to a certain extent, is not Canadian anymore. The wholesalers, based predominantly in the U.S., are mostly interested in consistency of supply. I think we need to bang on their doors a lot more than we do and assure them

that we have the quality and the consistency of supply.

I don't think we've been aggressive enough marketers, whether we are talking domestically or internationally. The Australians are aggressive marketers, the U.S., the EU and the Brazilians. You know, they're out there eating our lunch, literally. That's why we do these short trade missions. We also do a lot of domestic work and will continue to do that.

CD: We have about 50,000 canola growers who read *Canola Digest*, but of course, they don't just grow canola; they grow other crops as well. Can you talk about your view of safety nets in Canada and the statement you often make that farmers want to get their income from the marketplace, not the mailbox?

Ritz: In Western Canada, we've become complacent in allowing the Canadian Wheat Board (CWB) to continually market those commodities. That's what's driven the pulse industry, the canola industry and variations of those as far and as fast as they have. Even people that are avowed CWB supporters will say that they grow canola because they need a cash crop. There's no way that any of them shouldn't be your cash crop.

continued on page 8

You should have the right to market and pick the timing of the marketplace as much as the dollar value so you can maintain your own cash flow.

Having said that, there's still a role for governments to play when it comes to safety nets to make sure that when the markets don't work the way they should, governments are there. When a market is closed over a phytosanitary situation, governments are there. I think we have got a very comprehensive system of programs in place that are still world-trade compliant. That has been the trick. Certainly, when farmers are able to assess and make management decisions in the best interest of their own farm gate, there is less need for government programming. We always strive for stable, bankable, predictable funding from government sources and, at best,

it's a moving target. But having said that, the marketplace can be steady, can be solid.

CD: Are you satisfied with the safety net system now?

Ritz: Oh boy, that's a loaded question. I don't think that there's anything that can't be improved upon; it's whether it can be improved upon within the guidelines that we and other countries around the world have set. It's easy for governments to sign a cheque and send it out, but at the end of the day, does it help? Does it strengthen the farm gate?

I have never been a proponent of ad hoc payments. I think the problem with ad hoc is it entrenches you in mediocrity. It maintains bad management decisions, which affect negatively even the good management decisions by your

neighbour down the road. So I don't see ad hoc payments as part of the solution. Never have. Never will. Having said that, we need programs that are stable, bankable, predictable. It's a joint situation with my provincial and territorial counterparts, and we meet twice a year to assess and make sure that what we are doing hits the target.

CD: I think our readers would be interested in some of your personal observations since becoming Minister. What have you found most surprising?

Ritz: There's two things. The one that I feel most buoyed by is the resiliency of farmers. And the thing that keeps me awake at night is the resiliency of Canadian farmers. It's a double-edged sword.

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these trade missions a year and a half ago and everybody around the world had one thing in common to say, 'Where have you been?' You know, where has Canada been? That drove home the point that we have been lax in our assessment and management of our marketing files. Certainly we need to level the political playing field and that's my job. But when it comes to the day-to-day operations and the longevity of these marketplaces, that's where industry is involved. That's what leads to the type of announcement that we made today.

CD: What for you has been the most challenging part of your job?

Ritz: I think making significant changes to the CWB would be the most challenging. I am not against the Board. Our caucus and cabinet are not against the Board. We do see it as a mediocrity.

It needs to change. It has to come of age.

They have tried different programming to offer more market flexibility to farmers, but they've failed miserably; look at their contingency funding and the way they've had to manage their files. They operate best as a single desk. They operate best as a pooling system. As soon as they try to differentiate from that, they can't seem to get their heads around it. I think that's where farmers themselves can make those decisions.

I do think there will be changes coming. It won't happen in a minority government situation, and it won't happen in a situation where every time you try to do something you are taken to court. But having said that, the resolve is there from the farm gate on through to my Ministry, that significant changes have to be made at the Board.

CD: You are, of course, aware of the canola industry's 2015 target of 15 million tonnes of sustainable canola production. What's your view of what it will take for us to get there?

Ritz: Well, I think you have the right people and the right ideology in place. If I was looking into a crystal ball, I'd say your chances of getting there are very good. First off, you need to find your work and then work your plan, and I think you guys have done that. We're happy today to make this announcement to help you with the financial side of that. I think this will go a long way toward reaching that target. Certainly I think it's doable.

CD: Thank you, Minister.

Ritz: You bet. My pleasure. ●

Debbie Belanger is editor of Canola Digest.

RITZ SERVES UP HEART-HEALTHY CANOLA OIL IN MEXICO

By Angela Dansby

Survey shows canola oil offers Mexicans what they seek in cooking oil.

Cooking with canola oil can help Mexicans be more heart-smart. That was the message shared by Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz at an event hosted on January 19, 2010, in Mexico City by the Canola Council of Canada (CCC). The event kicked off the government's new Canada brand initiative to raise awareness of Canadian agriculture in Mexico and coincided with the release of results from a 2009 survey by The Nielsen Company about Mexicans' usage and knowledge of cooking oils.

"Canadian canola currently holds an astounding 30 percent of the cooking oil market in Mexico, but given its great health attributes, such as low levels of saturated fats, we know the Mexican demand can and will grow," said Minister Ritz.

The survey, conducted in December 2009 among over 600 Mexican consumers, showed that Mexicans buy oil twice a month and use it daily for cooking. Health and versatility are the

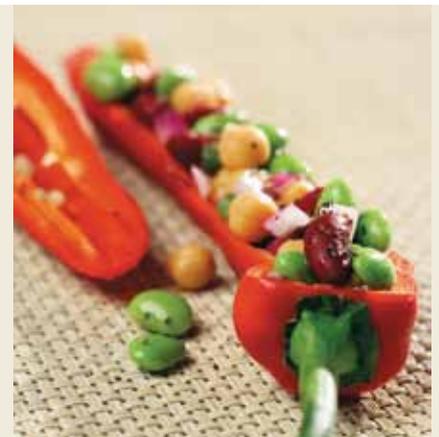
attributes they most look for in cooking oils, namely that they are low in saturated fat and contain omega-3 fatty acids. Canola oil has these benefits, but few Mexicans know it.

According to the survey, only 11 percent of the interviewees use canola oil. But after a description of canola oil's benefits was read to participants, 47 percent said they would be willing to switch to this oil.

"Given the prevalence of heart disease and diabetes in Mexico and consumers' significant use of cooking oil, canola oil is the ideal choice as a kitchen staple," said CCC president JoAnne Buth.

Canola oil has the least saturated fat of all vegetable oils and is a good source of omega-3 fatty acids, as well as vitamin E.

"Canadian canola seed is a golden opportunity for Mexico's health and wealth," Buth added. "By crushing canola seed domestically, then refining



and bottling the oil, Mexican companies contribute to the economy and the heart health of consumers."

Mexico is an important market for Canadian canola seed. Currently, Canada sells about 1.2 million tonnes of it to Mexico annually and 1.5 million tonnes are projected for 2015.

"The CCC applauds Minister Ritz's commitment to increasing public awareness of healthy fats and canola oil through the Canada brand initiative announced in Mexico," Buth noted.

Angela Dansby is communications manager for CanolaInfo.



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- Rated R for Blackleg and Fusarium Wilt

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C A N O L A

CANOLA MAP 2015

By Carla Pouteau

A contribution of \$9 million from the Government of Canada and the canola industry will put into action an international market access plan for achieving our Growing Great 2015 export targets.

12 ● In early January, federal Minister of Agriculture Gerry Ritz announced \$7.8 million for Canada's canola industry to fund a comprehensive, long-term market access strategy. The funding, made available under the Agricultural Flexibility Fund, part of Canada's Economic Action Plan, will help to address current market access issues and help to maintain canola as a profitable crop farmers can rely on.

In making the announcement, Minister Ritz stated, "Farmers will be key to Canada's economic recovery," and his government was "investing in a targeted market access strategy that will make sure Canadian canola producers have full and fair access to international markets so that they can get more buyers bidding on their product."

These funds from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada are topped up to \$9 million with a \$1.2 million commitment from industry through the Canola Council of Canada.

"We need to be out ahead of market access challenges."
— Greg Porozni, farmer

Farmers are going to hear a lot about the Canola Market Access Plan (CMAP) 2015 during the next three years. The canola industry is gearing up for



15 million tonnes of sustainable canola production matched with reliable market demand. "I absolutely believe the target is achievable," says JoAnne Buth, president of the Canola Council of Canada. "The Canola Market Access Plan 2015 will help us get there."

Greg Porozni, who farms 4,300 acres near Vegreville, Alberta, is excited about this aggressive undertaking. "I'm impressed with the proactive approach to recognizing market access challenges," he says. "I commend the federal government for taking the initiative to work with the Canola

Council. We need to be out ahead of market access challenges, and if an issue arises, resolve it as quickly as possible," Porozni emphasizes.

There are three components to the CMAP: the development of a long-term global marketing strategy; the development of a rapid-response plan in the event that market access issues arise; and the development and implementation of market access strategies in specific markets.



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Recent market access challenges to commodities, such as canola, certainly dictate the need for such a comprehensive undertaking. “Around the globe, there are socio-economic and regulatory barriers to market access. A comprehensive marketing plan will help us to predict what these barriers might be and how we might be vulnerable,” says Buth.

Under the first component, the Canola Council will identify potential short- and long-term market access barriers for canola products in existing markets. Additionally, the industry will identify potential barriers for exporting canola products to markets where the industry does not currently trade.

“Countries are continually updating policies and regulations,” says Jim Everson, vice-president of corporate affairs with the Canola Council. “To keep up, we as an industry must continue to research and analyze these market issues on a regular basis,” he adds.

Under the second component, the Council proposes to develop a rapid-response plan. This plan will be a joint industry and government protocol for dealing with market access issues. “It’s important to have a plan,” says Everson. “As an industry, partnered with govern-

ment, we need to think through the issues. There are so many parameters to trade – scientific, logistical and political – so it’s important to be united and have a sound organizational chart and solid operational plan for the time when something comes up.”

An essential part of the operational plan is to build a database with important aspects and relationships as they pertain to market access. “When a disruption in the market occurs, we need to find information quickly,” Everson stresses. “What products are we selling into that market and how is it consumed? Who else is selling into that market? If our product is blocked, who domestically in that market might be affected? They may have the ear of their own government and be helpful in working the issue out,” he adds.

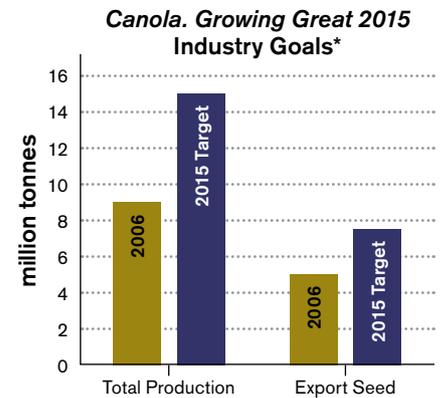
The current trade disruption with China is ongoing, and as Porozni sees it, “Within two weeks the federal government and industry had a plan in place and were on the ground in China tackling the issue.”

“There are so many parameters to trade – scientific, logistical and political – so it’s important to be united and have a sound organizational chart and solid operational plan for the time when something comes up.”
– Jim Everson

But the process wasn’t perfect; it was reactive rather than proactive. “What the rapid-response plan will allow us to do in future instances,” says Buth, “is to identify the potential for market disruption sooner and perhaps initiate preliminary talks with researchers and regulators in that market.”

It seems that in tough economic conditions, market access issues become more prevalent. Governments

around the world become focused on their own domestic economy, including jobs within their borders, and, in some instances, become more protectionist. “We are prudent to undertake CMAP now,” says Everson. “Countries are always in flux, so we need to be constantly on top of trade issues.”



*Canola. Growing Great 2015, Canola Council of Canada, 2007.

The final component to the CMAP is development and implementation of market access strategies in specific markets. The industry will continue expanding relationships with canola product importers in existing markets such as China, U.S., Japan, Mexico, South Korea and India, and with potential new markets in Southeast Asia.

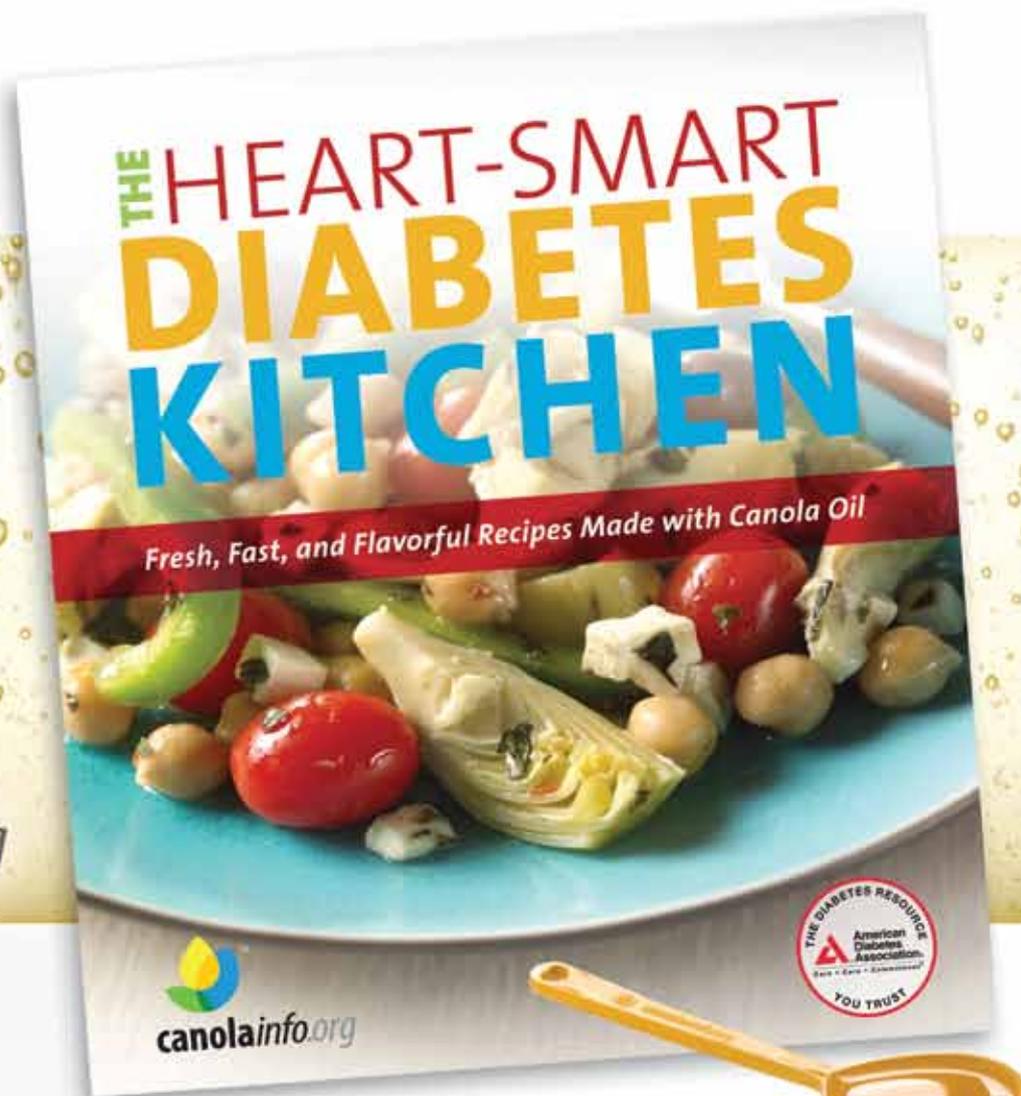
Although the acronym is simple – CMAP – its plans are complex. Producers should be excited about the deliverables and be ready to play a role in the program. “Growers have an impact on trade,” emphasizes Buth, “and CMAP will mesh nicely with our current ‘Export Ready’ communications program.” Porozni concurs, “Market access is essential to farmers; we export the majority of our production, and as growers, we should be ready to do our part.” ●

Carla Pouteau is a freelance writer and farms near Mariapolis, Manitoba.

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ON THE TRADE FRONT

By Alex Binkley

With 90 percent of farmers dependent on trade, CAFTA is making international trade in agricultural products a priority for Canada.

16 ● ● ●

Like many sectors in Canada's agri-food community, canola growers and processors depend on export markets for a hefty chunk of their income.

Even with top-grade products, international markets can be a swamp of protectionist rules and regulations. Gaining solid footing for exporters is a key goal of the current round of World Trade Organization (WTO) negotiations, which have dragged on for years.

The Canola Council of Canada and the Canadian Canola Growers Association are members of the Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance (CAFTA), formed a decade ago to lobby the federal government on behalf of export-dependent commodity groups.

Working with their partners within CAFTA enables the canola industry "to speak with a louder voice [in government circles] than if they were on their own," says CAFTA past president Darcy Davis, who operates a commercial cow-calf operation near Acme, Alberta. Livestock and field crop producers "are all in the same boat, trying to gain better international market access."

The group's support of better market access rules "brings a different perspective to trade issues," he notes. "Each CAFTA member has a representative on the board of directors, and that allows groups to exchange ideas and

information. We see common issues that we can resolve together. No one is left to fight battles on their own."

CAFTA has focused its efforts on improving trade rules and dispute resolution mechanisms through the WTO to prevent world markets from being hobbled by protectionism and overblown sanitary and phytosanitary rules he explains. "We want to make sure we get and keep established access to foreign markets."

He also wants to avoid the kind of aggravating setbacks, such as occurred in the previous round of trade negotiations that saw soybeans get preferential treatment over canola in many markets.



CAFTA has focused its efforts on improving trade rules and dispute resolution mechanisms through the WTO to prevent world markets from being hobbled by protectionism and overblown sanitary and phytosanitary rules.

"We need a good deal in the Doha round to balance this off."

With the development of hardy, high-yielding varieties, canola has become the single most valuable crop for western farmers, contributing about \$14 billion annually to the economy. For many western farmers, it's the most preferred crop.

Todd Hames, an Alberta canola grower, says export markets "are extremely important to farmers in western Canada. More than 90 percent of Canada's canola crop is exported as seed, oil or meal." In his area in the east-central region of the province, "Canola is the cash crop that keeps grain farms going. There's always a profit in canola, while other crops are close to break-even – some years they make money, some years they don't." It would be hard to find an alternative crop that was as valuable for his 4,500-acre farm.

CAFTA's work on improved international trade rules through the WTO is crucial for farmers, he adds. "Open export markets are vital for us, as is getting a level playing field in the same markets [as the U.S. and other exporters have]." Hames also stresses the importance that CAFTA can have in improving market access to countries other than the U.S. "We need a concerted effort to reduce our dependence on the U.S. market," he says.



Stan Jeeves, Saskatchewan Canola Growers Association, notes, "Continued support for sound trade agreements with many countries is critical to canola's success."

Stan Jeeves, president of the Saskatchewan Canola Growers Association, says, "Continued support for sound trade agreements with many countries is critical to canola's success." His cattle business took a big hit after BSE was found in Canada in 2003. "The canola industry has developed a much broader market, so it can withstand setbacks [such as the current phytosanitary issue with China] much better than the beef industry was able to withstand BSE." Canola plays a major role in the rotation on Jeeves' 2,400-acre operation, and he says it would be hard to replace it with a crop as lucrative.

The federal government has acknowledged the importance of canola exports to Canadian agriculture through support for the development of a comprehensive market access strategy by the Canola Council of Canada. The strategy is aimed at opening new markets, examining existing barriers to exports, and highlighting best practices that will meet the standards of importing countries.

The strategy takes on added importance with the lack of success in the Doha round of WTO negotiations after years of negotiations in Geneva. Davis says there's still no positive end in sight. "In many ways, it's going backwards." Despite repeated calls by international leaders for a substantial agreement,

negotiators keep getting stuck on changing national priorities among the 152 WTO members.

"We need the U.S. to engage in the negotiations," he adds. "It's saying all the right things, but it's not doing much. We need to get everyone onside and stop the backsliding." The main developing countries, Brazil, China and India, are taking lead roles. What is clear to CAFTA members is that unless producer organizations continue to lobby for WTO, it's less likely to move ahead.

Dismayed by the lack of progress in the Doha round, many countries have opted for negotiating free trade agreements (FTAs) with individual countries. Canada, too, has an agenda. It has concluded FTAs with the European Free Trade Association, consisting of Iceland, Norway, Switzerland and Liechtenstein, as well as with Peru, Panama, Israel and Costa Rica, in addition to NAFTA companions. It is also involved in discussions with at least 10 other potential partners including the European Union, India, and Morocco, as well as organizations representing small South American countries and Caribbean nations.

Livestock and field crop producers "are all in the same boat, trying to gain better international market access."
– Darcy Davis, CAFTA

Undoubtedly, the most significant bilateral discussions underway are between Canada and the EU – negotiations entered the second round in mid-January. CAFTA members are hopeful that breakthroughs will improve market access to Europe for Canadian farm and food products, including lower tariffs for exports to Europe and reduced regulatory barriers like delays on approvals of genetically modified products and pesticide regulations.

Canada has been negotiating FTAs in a bid to keep pace with the U.S. and other trading partners. Davis says the multilateral approach can be more rewarding for a trade-dependent country

like Canada because it can tackle contentious issues such as export subsidies and levels of domestic support for farmers and the food industry – trade rules that are difficult to secure in a bilateral negotiation.

"We want to make sure we get and keep established access to foreign markets."
– Todd Hames, farmer

"It's a lot harder to get the same kind of disciplines in free trade agreements with individual countries," he adds. "They don't always get to the issues that we want."

CAFTA's membership includes producer organizations, processors, marketers and exporters that generate almost 80 percent of Canada's agricultural exports, conducts about \$40 billion in business annually, and employ close to 500,000 Canadians directly. It operates with one Ottawa staffer, executive director Kathleen Sullivan. "Our main agenda is messaging and lobbying federal officials and politicians," Davis explains. "We get the data and information we need from our members."

According to CAFTA, more than 90 percent of Canada's farmers are dependent on exports because "their viability depends on the sale of products that are either exported or sold domestically at international prices." ●

Alex Binkley is a freelance journalist who has covered agriculture, food, transportation and rural issues from Parliament Hill since 1978.

The other CAFTA members are Alberta Beef Producers, Alberta Cattle Feeders' Association, Alberta Pork, Canada Beef Export Federation, Canada Pork International, Canadian Cattlemen's Association, Canadian Meat Council, Canadian Oilseed Processors Association, Canadian Pork Council, Canadian Sugar Institute, Malting Industry Association of Canada, Grain Growers of Canada, National Cattle Feeders' Association, Sunterra Group and Viterra.

IS THE TIME RIGHT FOR INDIA?

By Robert Hunter and Angela Dansby

Could canola displace olive oil as a healthier, more affordable alternative?

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With nearly 1.2 billion people, accounting for roughly 18 percent of the global population, India is a potential market for just about any product. But the fact that India is also the third largest edible oil economy in the world, consuming roughly 14 million tonnes a year, makes it particularly promising for canola oil.

While India produces much of its edible oil supply, it is the largest importer (about 8 million tonnes) worldwide. Prompted by the nation's ever increasing consumer demand, the Indian government lowered edible oil tariffs in 2008.

India needs healthier food products like canola oil. The country has the highest rate of diabetes in the world, affecting about 41 million of its citizens. Heart disease is expanding rapidly, and according to the South Asian Heart Center, India will bear 60 percent of the world's cardiovascular disease burden in 2010. As a result, Indians are becoming increasingly health-conscious, making now an excellent time to promote the value of heart-smart unsaturated fats.

Currently, there is only one known Canadian canola oil brand in India, Hudson, owned by Dalmia Continental Pvt. Ltd. It launched Hudson in September 2007, importing the canola oil from Western Canada. This product is sold in limited quantities to high-

end grocery stores in Mumbai, Delhi, Bangalore – the three largest cities – and Chandigarh in the state of Punjab. This state has a cultural connection to Canada, and while scarce in the marketplace, Canadian products are associated with quality.

India will bear 60 percent of the world's cardiovascular disease burden in 2010.

India is a very price-sensitive market, which will hinder canola oil from taking off with the masses in the face of less expensive, domestically produced oils. But canola oil has tremendous potential to compete with olive oil imports, particularly pomace (refined) olive oil, which is more neutral in flavour and versatile than regular or extra-virgin olive oils. Canola oil has half the saturated fat of olive oil – promoted in India for its health benefits – at a fraction of the price. On average, canola oil is half the price of pomace olive oil and one quarter that of extra-virgin.

Considering the rapid rise in popularity of olive oil among Indians who can afford it (roughly 1 percent of the population), canola oil seems well-positioned to soak up some healthy oil market share. After all, a small slice of the Indian market is still a lot of consumers.

The closest domestic competitor to canola oil regarding price and perceived health benefits is a blended oil brand called Saffola by Marico, the first Indian company to promote oil and have domestic crush facilities. Saffola is a blend of safflower (60 percent) and rice bran (40 percent) oils. There is also Saffola Gold with more rice bran oil (80 percent) and less safflower oil (20 percent). Canola oil costs about 25 percent more than these products.

ESTIMATED PRICES OF COOKING OILS PER LITRE IN INDIA

Type of oil	Rupees
Extra-virgin olive oil	800
Regular olive oil	600
Pomace (refined) olive oil	400
Canola	195
Sesame	170
Safflower-rice bran blend (Saffola brand)	150
Groundnut (peanut)	125
Mustard	95-106

* The exchange rate is roughly 44 Indian rupees to one Canadian dollar.

One obstacle could slow canola oil's market expansion in India. At this time, the oil is required by Indian law to be labelled as a product of genetic

modification (GM), as are any food products made from GM crops. The only exception is imported soybean oil, which received a letter of exemption from the government's Genetic Engineering Approval Committee because no traces of GM proteins can be detected in the refined oil. Canola oil should also be eligible for such an exemption (thus avoiding any potential negative impact that a GM label could have on consumer purchasing), but it will first have to go through the government application and review process. ●

Robert Hunter is vice-president of communications at the Canola Council of Canada. Angela Dansby is communications manager of CanolaInfo.

For more on the cooking oil industry in India, see page 38.



Robert Hunter (right), vice-president of communications at the Canola Council of Canada, meets with V.N. Dalmia (left), chairman of Dalmia Continental Pvt. Ltd., and Himani Dalmia (center), deputy manager of marketing & communications, in Delhi, India.

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FUELLING CANOLA'S BIO POTENTIAL

By Cheryl Mayer

Is there a large-scale, canola-based biodiesel plant on the horizon?



Like most Canadians, canola farmers know a canola-based biodiesel industry in Canada would benefit the environment and the economy. They also know it would mean a home-grown industry to help balance Canadian canola's heavy reliance on export markets.

"It's another market and that can only be a good thing," says Brian Wiley, an Ontario canola farmer. In addition, with the possibility for producer investment in biodiesel plants, Wiley believes biodiesel gives producers a chance to participate in value-added markets that will benefit not only them, but also their rural communities. New plants mean new jobs in relation to the plant's construction and operation.

Biodiesel's environmental benefits are also well documented. "It's cleaner and more environmentally friendly than the alternative," says Gordon Quaiattini, President of the Canadian Renewable Fuels Association (CRFA). As well as being biodegradable, biodiesel reduces greenhouse gas emissions, carbon monoxide and hydrocarbons.

With environmental concerns being top of mind with Canadians, it's not surprising public support is now solidly behind biofuels. A recent survey conducted for CRFA shows 84 percent of Canadians support the promotion of low-carbon, home-grown renewable

fuels as a major part of the shift from fossil fuels towards alternatives.

"The fact that so many people believe renewable fuels are the way to go sends an unmistakable signal to the marketplace, to farm families and to policy-makers," says Quaiattini.

Beyond the benefits of a biodiesel industry, the fuel itself provides many benefits too. Biodiesel has better lubricity than petrodiesel, which helps reduce engine friction and wear and extends engine durability. Canola biodiesel, in particular, has superior cold-flow properties that make it especially well-suited to cold weather climates. Quaiattini says some customers specifically request canola-based biodiesel because of its superior characteristics.

From a farmer point of view, Wiley cites the 2005 crop as an example of a further advantage of a domestic biofuel industry. "In 2005, Ontario had a very hot summer resulting in a large percentage of the canola crop being downgraded because of high free fatty acids. At that time, there was no other market for canola, thus a significant portion of the crop was never harvested. Biodiesel is a great market for canola that is no longer suitable for the food market."

So with all these benefits and the public now overwhelmingly supporting the

biofuels industry, why doesn't Canada have a large-scale plant using canola as its primary feedstock? Quaiattini says the biggest challenges to getting capacity built have been getting mandates in place and attracting capital, particularly in the current economic climate.

Some mandates have already been established: As of November, 2009, Manitoba began requiring a 2 percent inclusion rate. Alberta has committed to 2 percent by July 2010, and British Columbia has set 3 percent for 2010 rising to 5 percent by 2012.

continued on page 22

How can we squeeze more food from a **RAINDROP?**



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“In the absence of mandates, there is no voluntary blending,” Quaiattini says. However, he notes that 2011 will be an important year for biodiesel in Canada with a 2 percent federal mandate (B2) coming into effect.

Canada is currently producing about 140 million litres of biodiesel annually, the majority of which uses animal fat or tallow as the feedstock, but a 2 percent biodiesel mandate will require 500 to 600 million litres annually. In the short term, Quaiattini admits Canada will probably need to import biodiesel to meet the demand created by British Columbia and Alberta’s mandates coming into effect this year, but he is confident there will be enough Canadian capacity built to meet our domestic demand in the long term.

22 As part of a long-term strategy, the canola industry has set a goal of supplying 2 million tonnes to the domestic biodiesel industry by 2015.

Currently, there are two proposed canola-based biodiesel plants. BFuel Canada has said it intends to begin construction on a crushing plant and biodiesel facility near Lethbridge, Alberta, this spring. The farmer owned business will be able to produce 50 million litres and utilize 132,000 tonnes of canola annually. Canadian Bioenergy Corporation and Archer Daniels Midland Company (ADM) have also entered into negotiations to form a joint venture to construct and operate a 265-million-litre per year canola-based biodiesel production facility at the site

GLOBAL SCOPE

Currently, 30 countries are blending biodiesel, with the typical rate of 5 percent beginning to inch upward. Many of these countries are in the developing world, and they are encouraging biofuels as a means of building energy security and improving their rural economies. Biodiesel demand is expected to double between 2009 and 2015, however, current global biodiesel capacity is already large enough to supply the demand projected for 2015 of 10 billion gallons per year.



Brian Wiley farms near Meaford, Ontario. In addition to running a dairy operation, he also grows 1,000 acres of grains and oilseeds.

of ADM’s canola crushing plant in Lloydminster, Alberta.

Doug Hooper, CEO of Canadian Bioenergy, says they are currently in the process of completing a feasibility study. A decision will be made in the second quarter of 2010 on whether to begin construction on the global scale plant, which would require approximately 600,000 tonnes of canola per year and take approximately 18 months to complete construction. According to Hooper, the location was chosen primarily because of the existing crush plant, but the plant’s proximity to the petroleum industry also means it is ideal for product distribution.

However, there is much work to be done before Canadian Bioenergy can give the project the green light and begin construction. “The biggest challenge is policy and regulatory uncertainty,” says Hooper. Along with CRFA, the Canola Council of Canada (CCC) and the Canadian Canola Growers Association (CCGA) have been pushing for changes to government policies and programs that would create an economic environment where Canadian biofuel producers

can be competitive in the global marketplace. As a result of these efforts, the Government of Canada recently announced changes to the EcoEnergy program, which is designed to boost Canada’s production of biofuels.

“Having government programs in place to help incentivize the industry is critical,” says Quaiattini.

BFuel’s President, Glenn Collick, agrees. “It is essential to kick-start the industry,” he says, noting that financing has been the biggest challenge for BFuel’s plant.

In fact, in a recent speech, Bob Dinneen, President and CEO of the U.S. Renewable Fuels Association, said no nation has been able to get a domestic biofuel industry going without significant government assistance. “Canada is late to the game, so we need to follow in the footsteps of those that have already built to ensure we are competitive,” says Hooper. Long term though, Quaiattini, Hooper and Collick all agree the biofuels industry should be able to stand on its own without financial support from the government.

Looking to the future, Quaiattini sees great potential for vegetable oil-based biodiesel. Due to the limited supply of animal fat as a feedstock for biodiesel, he believes the demand for vegetable oil as a feedstock will grow as demand grows for biodiesel. “Over time, veg oil will become the feedstock of choice,” he says, predicting 70 percent of biodiesel will use vegetable oil as a feedstock and 30 percent will use animal fat in the long term.

But in the meantime, there is still work to be done to ensure canola-based biodiesel capacity is built in Canada. CRFA along with CCC and CCGA will continue to work with government in making changes to policies and regulations that will meet the needs of the biodiesel industry in the current global economic environment.

“We’d be missing a valuable opportunity to participate in this value-added market if we aren’t successful,” concludes Wiley. ●

Cheryl Mayer is a policy analyst with CCGA.



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FARMER PANEL TALKS EXPORTS

By Carla Pouteau

Meeting customer expectations means paying attention to the details. Find out what our farmer panel is doing to be export-ready.

The majority of Canadian canola – nearly 90 percent of annual production – is destined for markets beyond our borders. Now, basic marketing courses teach us to focus on meeting the needs and expectations of the customer with consistent, high-quality seed. But the business challenge for canola farmers is to find the formula that delivers what the export market demands, while delivering a profitable return for the farm. If that balance can't be found, as one canola grower put it, "We'll find something else to grow." What are canola growers doing to meet the requirements of our export customers and still turn a profit? *Canola Digest* checked in with our panel of producers and asked them to share their thoughts.

CD: WHAT ARE EXPORT CUSTOMERS LOOKING FOR FROM CANADIAN CANOLA?

Chorney: No surprises! They want consistent quality and high oil content from registered canola varieties. They also want fair value. Like it or not, the price we receive at the farm gate is a reflection of the world price, so we need to produce to market signals.

Halstead: Customers want a consistent, safe supply of seed. Some of our export customers want canola at a low price and that's all they look for. Others know the health benefits that canola offers



From left to right: **Brian Chorney** farms 1,800 acres at East Selkirk, Manitoba; **Brett Halstead** farms 3,000 acres in eastern Saskatchewan near Nokomis; and **Terry Youzwa** farms 2,400 acres in northeastern Saskatchewan near Nipawin.

so they continue to buy our canola year after year.

Youzwa: Countries implement trade policies that favour their interests. When stocks grow to excess, some countries put up trade barriers to protect their domestic market. When this carryover shrinks, these same trade problems tend to go away. To lessen the impact of these events, we have to work on expanding the domestic market for canola. Implementing the renewable fuel mandate for biodiesel is one way to increase domestic canola consumption, which will also help to lower our transportation and marketing costs and ensure fair value for our product.

Felstad: Our customers want high-quality, high-oil-content seed that

meets their phytosanitary standards. Japan is a premium market that seeks out premium products.

Auch: Customers want what they pay for – high-quality, healthy canola from Canadian farmers. It's my job to provide it!

Hames: I'd say our export customers want consistent supply and consistent quality. For them, quality is synonymous with food safety.

Schudlo: More and more, our export customers are looking for on-farm food safety protocols and identity-preserved production systems. Perhaps there is some protectionism with blackleg in China and salmonella with the U.S., but we need to investigate these issues and ultimately produce what the customer

wants. As producers, we shouldn't be shy about what we do. We should take every opportunity to tell our export customers how we grow canola.

CD: HOW DO YOU KEEP CURRENT WITH WHAT CUSTOMERS ARE WANTING?

Chorney: The Export Ready information compiled by the Canola Council is very good. It's easy to understand and it explains what we can do on-farm to support exports.

Halstead: Ag news and market newsletters are good sources. I source a lot of information through my involvement with SaskCanola and by talking with people in the industry. I had an opportunity to meet a delegation from China. We exchanged information about their long-term needs and our needs as canola farmers.

Youzwa: I receive a couple of different newsletters, but we usually know fairly fast when something is happening. Many of their requirements are common sense.

Felstad: I keep current through my involvement with Alberta Canola Producers Commission and information released by the Canola Council. I also attend local and provincial grower meetings.

Auch: The marketplace is very good at telling me what a customer wants. If there is a customer with a demand for something that I have an ability to supply, I'll grow it – if the price is right.

Hames: My most common sources include media, *Canola Digest*, and the Canola Council. I also attend a number of conferences where international customers present information about their needs and what they like about our products.

Schudlo: I listen to market outlooks and attend local and provincial producer meetings. I enjoy listening to speakers and find the question-and-answer sessions to be very useful since other producers ask a lot of good questions.

CD: WHAT KINDS OF THINGS ARE YOU DOING ON-FARM TO MEET THE REQUIREMENTS OF OUR EXPORT CUSTOMERS?

Chorney: We never use malathion in any of our bins (canola or otherwise). We do a thorough cleaning of our bins annually to prevent insect infestations. We grow registered varieties that meet export requirements, and we ensure our crop-protection products are applied using label recommendations. We certainly do not want to jeopardize the quality of product we produce.

Halstead: We use certified seed, avoid malathion and try to maximize yields.

Youzwa: We need to work individually and through our representative organizations to lobby government for open and fair international trade policies. We need to encourage governments to complete bilateral trade agreements and find resolve at the WTO.

Felstad: We only plant registered varieties, and we use best-management practices to produce a high-quality product.

Auch: Export markets are very valuable to me as a Canadian canola farmer. It's up to me to ensure that my farm-management practices don't jeopardize those markets. The Canola Council has done a good job of keeping me informed about things that support our exports such as using pesticides properly and growing the kind of healthy product that the end-user of my canola requires.

Hames: I grow identity-preserved varieties and try to produce high-quality crops that are easier to market.

Schudlo: We never spray our bins. We do a comprehensive bin clean-out (even use a vacuum if necessary) and choose bins that are well-sealed for storing canola. We buy high-yielding varieties that produce higher oil content and manage our inputs responsibly. We tend to stay away from specialty oil contracts because the varieties tend to be lower yielding and slower maturing, which can result in green seed issues on our farm. ●

Carla Pouteau is a freelance writer and farms near Mariapolis, Manitoba.

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From left to right: **Colin Felstad** farms 5,300 acres in north-central Alberta near Dapp; **Kevin Auch** farms 4,800 acres in southern Alberta near Carmangay; **Todd Hames** farms 4,500 acres in northeastern Alberta near Marwayne; and **Harry Schudlo** farms 3,800 acres in the Peace region near Sexsmith, Alberta.

SPRING CHECKLIST

By Donna Fleury

Maximizing yields and return on investment in a canola crop starts well before seeding begins. Get some help with these 10 tips for spring preparation.

A

few simple pre-seeding practices can maximize the genetic potential of your canola seed and make a big difference to your bottom line. Doug Moisey, Canola Council of Canada (CCC) senior agronomy specialist, Eastern Alberta, and Greg Porozni, farmer at Vegreville, Alberta, and CCC crop production input team lead provide a quick spring checklist.

✓ CHECK HERBICIDE/CROP ROTATIONS AND HT SYSTEM SELECTED

Over the winter and early spring, check past field records to make sure the fields you've selected and any previous herbicides you've applied will not affect canola plant populations. There is a wide range of herbicides available, so make sure your planned rotations are compatible.

For example, if a Group 2 herbicide such as Odyssey® was applied last year, then you should not use a Roundup Ready® or Liberty Link® system on that field. Select another system or field.

Also, make sure canola rotations are not too tight. Well-planned crop rotations can improve yields and are a good management strategy for disease management. (See the CCC website for residual herbicide re-cropping guidelines.)

✓ ASSESSING FIELD CONDITIONS

Check the soil conditions and residue on your fields each spring. If there are any heavy straw issues, you may be able to use a heavy harrow to break up the straw prior to seeding. When in the field, make sure to assess soil moisture and seedbed conditions.



MAKE A STAND

✓ SOIL TESTING

A fall or early spring soil test should be done to make sure the selected fertility program is adequate to maximize yields.

✓ SEEDING EQUIPMENT INSPECTION

Carefully inspect all of your seeding equipment components ahead of time. Make sure openers are running straight and check for wear, which could compromise the separation between seed and fertilizer at planting time.

Examine bushings and other components on the wings for deterioration. Check hoses for fatigue, and make sure tank lids and rubber gaskets are in good condition so that air feeds through the system properly. Finally, level your seeding equipment from front to back and side to side.

✓ PRE-SEASON SCOUTING FOR WEEDS

Scout your fields ahead of time to determine if a pre-seed burn is required; plan herbicide applications and rates in advance for the weed spectrum. Canola is not a fierce competitor until it covers the ground, so getting weed control done early is important.

A pre-season burn is a good management tool for winter annuals and emerging

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SCOUT AHEAD FOR FLEA BEETLES

“In terms of canola pests, flea beetles are the most chronic pest over the greatest area and are typically a problem somewhere every year,” explains Dr. Julie Soroka, research scientist with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. Flea beetles are even spreading to more northern areas, including the Peace region.

Almost all canola seed is pre-treated with an insecticide, but you can't rely on that alone. “If flea beetle populations are very high, then one or two foliar applications may also be required,” says Soroka. “Producers need to be vigilant and scout every two or three days, or even more often, if conditions are warm, dry and sunny. If producers observed high numbers last fall, then scouting before seeding and after emergence should be a high priority.”

There are two flea beetle species that can cause significant damage in the Prairies, the black crucifer (*Phyllotreta cruciferae*) and the striped (*P. striolata*). “The crucifer is widespread, while the striped flea beetle has traditionally been a more northerly species that emerges at least a week earlier, so start scouting early,” says Soroka. Flea beetles overwinter in sheltered areas; with last year's extended warm fall temperatures, we may see higher spring populations in southern Alberta and Saskatchewan. Areas that remained cold and wet in the fall may escape problems.

The critical stage for canola seedling damage, caused by overwintering adults, occurs from plant emergence to the three-leaf stage. When scouting, look for tiny holes in cotyledons, leaves and stems similar to a shotgun spray pattern. Carefully monitor canola and other susceptible plants such as volunteer canola, stinkweed, wild mustard and lamb's quarters.

“The threshold for foliar application is 25 percent of the leaf area eaten,” says Soroka. “If temperatures are hot and dry, there can be very rapid feeding, and damage can reach threshold levels in a day or two. Vigilance in scouting and being prepared for short notice on a foliar insecticide application are crucial.” In worst-case scenarios, re-seeding may be required.



Adult black crucifer flea beetles.



Adult striped flea beetles.

(images: AAFC, Saskatoon)

DID YOU KNOW that seeding too fast or placing seed at the wrong depth can cost losses of up to \$3,600 per quarter section? When you're planting your canola this season, take your time and measure depth to optimize your stand.

SPEED Slowing down while seeding allows for accurate seed placement and proper separation of seed and fertilizer.

DEPTH Check planting depth regularly to ensure that canola seed is planted between 1/2 to 1" deep.

STAND Optimal seed placement creates a uniform stand, making crop staging for pesticide applications and swathing timing easier to manage.



**canola
council**

For more tools and tips to get your stand off to the best start, visit canolacouncil.org.

wild oats. With last fall's moisture and warm temperatures, winter annuals are expected to be a bigger problem than usual. Remember to inspect and calibrate spraying equipment prior to your pre-season application.

✓ SEEDING EQUIPMENT CALIBRATION

Canola seed lots can vary in size, so seeding equipment must be calibrated accordingly. Small differences in seed size may not matter, but if, for example, one seed lot weighs 3.5 grams/1000 kernels and the other weighs 6 grams/1000 kernels, the equipment will definitely need to be recalibrated.

✓ SEEDING DATE

Research shows that seeding canola early usually results in a yield advantage. "Using soil temperature and weather conditions as a guide for seeding is a good strategy; trying to seed by date doesn't work in some areas," says Moisey. "A good starting point for canola is an average soil temperature of 5°C. Take soil temperature readings at 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. for three consecutive days and then average the results. You also need to factor in weather conditions."

Porozni agrees that soil temperature is important and notes that soils are often warmer than you expect. "Geography and location are also important," he says. "Growers in the southern parts of the

Prairies can probably start seeding earlier, which can help prevent heat-blasting problems during the season. However, on my farm in northeastern Alberta, spring frost can be a problem, so we usually try to seed peas first and then seed canola."

✓ SEED PLACEMENT

Once seeding begins, check and recheck seeding depth and seed/fertilizer separation – at least three times a day, at a point no less than 150 yards away from where the equipment was stopped. Check the depth at the edges and across several runs to make sure it is both even and shallow. Deep seeding and other stresses will prevent the crop from performing properly. Air drill manufacturers also recommend monitoring the air system throughout the day since changes in weather, wind or humidity can have an effect.

✓ SEED CONDITION

Inspect your seed for condition and damage. Moisey suggests using "tube sock technology." Duct tape a canvas sack or gym sock to the farthest hose on the seeder. Continue planting at normal seeding speed for about 200 feet, then stop and check the seed collected for cracking or splitting. Visible damage means that germination can be affected. If damage is observed, you can adjust the fan speed or the dampers, or you might want to slow down your planting speed.

✓ SPEED OF SEEDING

The best speed for planting is the one that places the majority of seed at the optimum depth of 0.5 to 1 inch below the press wheel furrow. Moisey explains a simple test for producers:

Step 1: Seed your first pass at your normal speed.

Step 2: On the way back, slow down one-half mph.

Step 3: On the third pass, speed up one-half mph above your normal speed.

Step 4: On the fourth pass, speed up another one-half increment.

Step 5: Mark these areas and go back 10-12 days later to check emergence patterns.

Step 6: Check again at 21 days after emergence to do some plant counts. This will indicate your ideal seeding speed.

"The genetic potential for the canola seed is there to maximize yields and profits," says Moisey. "Under normal growing conditions, we expect only 50 percent of the seeds to germinate, but that can be improved by following these few simple tips that will give that canola crop the best possible chance at achieving maximum yields." A lot of producers get in a hurry and don't want to stop, but investing a bit of time up front will pay big dividends at the end of the season. ●

Donna Fleury is a freelance writer from Millarville, Alberta, specializing in agriculture and the environment.



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Looking for Cash Flow Solutions?

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NEW MARKETING FACT SHEETS AVAILABLE

Marketing consultant Neil Blue is writing a series of fact sheets to help farmers understand the various aspects of marketing canola. The first four are now available from the ACPC.

Crop Contracts describes the different types of contracts that a grower can enter into with a buyer. Advantages and limitations of each type of contract are explained.

Canola Hedging Basics. Farm product prices change because of actual or perceived changes in supply and demand. Tight supplies relative to demand usually lead to higher prices. Attractive pricing opportunities often arise before crops are physically available to sell. Forward pricing at those relatively high prices can be done directly with a buyer by using a deferred delivery contract or, for those commodities with a futures market, by hedging. This fact sheet helps explain the basics of hedging canola.

Marketing Basics is a good guide for getting started in grain marketing. Marketing is more than just selling your stored crop for cash. Marketing begins even before your seed is purchased. By realistically estimating your revenue and cost of production for each crop alternative, and by considering rotations and other agronomic factors, informed seeding choices can be made.

Marketing Terms Defined is a glossary of the most common marketing terms.

You can download these fact sheets from the Marketing Resources section of the ACPC website at www.canola.ab.ca or call the ACPC office at 1-800-551-6652 to have a set mailed to you. ●

NEW CHAIRMAN AND DIRECTORS FOR ACPC

Alberta canola producers elected new directors to the Board of the Alberta Canola Producers Commission (ACPC). Newly elected were Lee Markert of Vulcan for Region 9 and Marlene Caskey of Oyen for Region 12. Jody Klassen of Mayerthorpe was re-elected for Region 6. Following the ACPC Annual General Board Meeting, Raymond Blanchette of Falher was appointed by the Board to represent Region 3 for one year, as no nominations were brought forward at the AGM.

Kevin Bender of Bentley will serve as ACPC chairman for the coming year, while Jody Klassen will serve as the vice-chairman.

Retiring from the Board at the end of their terms were Charles Turcotte of Donnelly, Graham Caskey of Oyen, and Kevin Auch of Carmangay, who served as chairman of the ACPC for the previous two years.

"On behalf of Alberta's canola growers, I extend my sincere thanks to these gentlemen for their dedication and commitment to the canola industry and to the producers they represented so professionally at a regional, provincial and national level," said Bender. "We look forward to working with the new directors as we strive to increase the long-term profitability of canola growers in Alberta." ●



Back row (l-r): Elaine Bellamy (Region 8), Nolan Robertson (Region 1), Kevin Bender (ACPC Chairman – Region 7), Colin Felstad (Region 5), Lee Markert (Region 9), Marlene Caskey (Region 12). Front row (l-r): Greg Porozni (Region 4), Jody Klassen (Region 6), Jack Moser (Region 11), Todd Hames (Region 10), Harry Schudlo (Region 2). Missing: Raymond Blanchette (Region 3).



Jody Klassen, chair of the ACPC market development committee, congratulates Karen Schlyter for her winning recipe.

“BE A STAR! BE A WINNER!” RECIPE CONTEST WINNER

The Alberta Canola Producers Commission, the Manitoba Canola Growers Association and the Canadian Paralympic Committee have chosen Karen Schlyter’s Wild Rice and Potato Pancakes with Corn Salsa recipe as the winner of the *Be a Star! Be a Winner! With Canola Oil!* recipe contest. This recipe uses canola oil and demonstrates star-making qualities.

“Congratulations to Karen on her winning entry,” said wheelchair basketball paralympian Ross Norton. “This recipe is great because it features locally made canola oil and provides the nutritional benefits needed for athletes like me and all Canadians reaching for their personal bests.”

Second place went to Joan Airey’s Angel Wings Pasta Salad recipe, and third place to Sharlene Stanley’s Saskatoon Bars. Honourable mention was given to Donna Kingsley’s Aunty Mary’s Buns.

“These recipes are proven winners because they’re created by Prairie families, using Prairie ingredients, to raise winning athletes and Canadians,” said Simone Demers Collins, marketing development and promotions co-ordinator for ACPC. “The entries were chosen based on their appeal to a variety of ages, their use of locally grown products, and because they are delicious. They also recognize that the nutritional benefits of canola can help Canadian paralympic athletes ‘Go for Gold’ at Vancouver 2010.” ●

WILD RICE AND POTATO PANCAKES WITH CORN SALSA

Pancakes

3 cups (750 mL) washed, **grated potatoes** (preferably Russet)
 1 Tbsp (15 mL) **lemon juice**
 1 cup (250 mL) **cooked wild rice**
 1 **egg**, slightly beaten
 1/2 cup (125 mL) **whole wheat flour**
 1 Tbsp (15 mL) **prepared mustard**
 2 Tbsp (30 mL) **fresh dill**
 2 Tbsp (30 mL) **canola oil**
 1/2 tsp (2 mL) **salt**
 1 tsp (5 mL) **freshly ground pepper**
 3-5 Tbsp (45-75 mL) **canola oil** for frying



- 1 In a large bowl, place grated potatoes. Cover with cold water and add lemon juice to prevent darkening. Just before making pancakes, drain water from potatoes; place potatoes in a clean, dry dishtowel and squeeze out all excess water.
- 2 Return potatoes to large bowl and combine with rice, egg, flour, mustard, dill, canola oil and salt. Mix well to combine ingredients.
- 3 Heat 1 Tbsp (15 mL) of canola oil in a large non-stick skillet over medium-high heat. Place about 1/4 cup (50mL) of the potato mixture into the hot oil and gently flatten with a spatula.
- 4 Fry for 3-4 minutes until edges are crisp; carefully flip. Fry 3-4 minutes until golden brown. Drain on paper towels and repeat, adding more canola oil as needed, until all the mixture is cooked.
- 5 Keep warm in oven until ready to serve.

Yield: 12

Roasted Corn Salsa

2 **cobs of corn**
 2 Tbsp (30 mL) **canola oil**
 1 **small white onion**, finely diced
 2 **garlic cloves**, minced
 1 **chilli in adobe sauce**, chopped
 1 **small red pepper**, finely diced
 2 Tbsp (30 mL) **fresh dill**, finely chopped
salt and pepper to taste

- 1 Preheat grill or set oven to broil.
- 2 Husk the corn, brush with 2 tsp (10 mL) of the canola oil and broil (or grill) until kernels are slightly charred. Cool, then cut kernels off ears.
- 3 Heat remaining oil in large non-stick skillet over medium heat. Add onions, garlic, chilli in adobe sauce, and red pepper. Cook until just softened.
- 4 Add the corn and cook until vegetables are heated through. Add the dill, salt and pepper and remove from heat.
- 5 Serve the salsa over the pancakes.

Yield: about 4 Tbsp (30 mL) per pancake



POD SEALANTS – DO THEY WORK?

Experience has taught us that straight cutting is not necessarily easy nor does it in any way guarantee positive results. Officially, it is not recommended; however, those who wish to try are given hints such as: only try on limited acres; only try on a healthy, even stand that has a bit of lean and well-knit pods; be careful with your timing – don't wait too long.

Pod sealant technology offers producers the possibility of improving canola yields when straight cutting canola. But do these products really work under Canadian Prairie conditions? In 2009, supported by Saskatchewan canola producers through the levy, four Saskatchewan Agri-ARM (Agriculture-Applied Research Management) organizations decided to find out.

The study was repeated at the four sites by Chris Holzapfel (Indian Head Agricultural Research Foundation), Sherrilyn Phelps

(Western Applied Research Corporation, Scott), Cecil Vera (Northeast Agricultural Research Foundation, Melfort), and Bryan Nybo (Wheatland Conservation Area, Swift Current).

The two products, Pod Ceal DC (Brett Young) and Pod-Stik (United Agri-Products), were compared to a no-pod-sealant straight cutting treatment and a swathing check. In addition, five cultivars were included: Liberty Link® 5440 and 5020, Roundup Ready® 45H26 and 4362, and canola *juncea* Clearfield XCEED™ 8571.

Some of the results are included in the graphs. Although only one year of data, it is remarkable how consistent the statistically significant differences are at four diverse locations.

Some of the early findings point to:

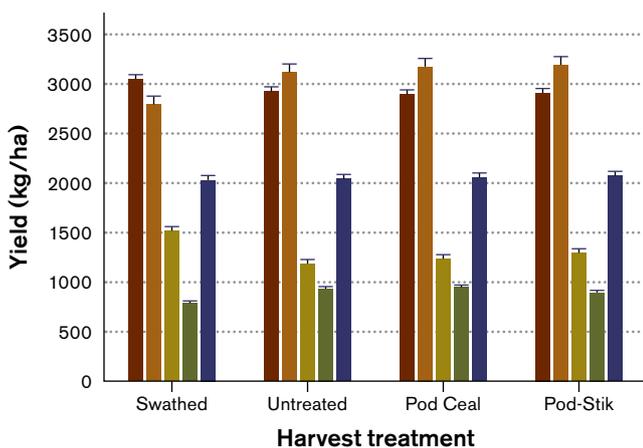
- Straight cutting yields were equal to or greater than swathing in all cases.
- There was no observed increase in yield (measured by reduction in pods

dropping, pods shattering or total seed losses) when either pod sealant product was applied.

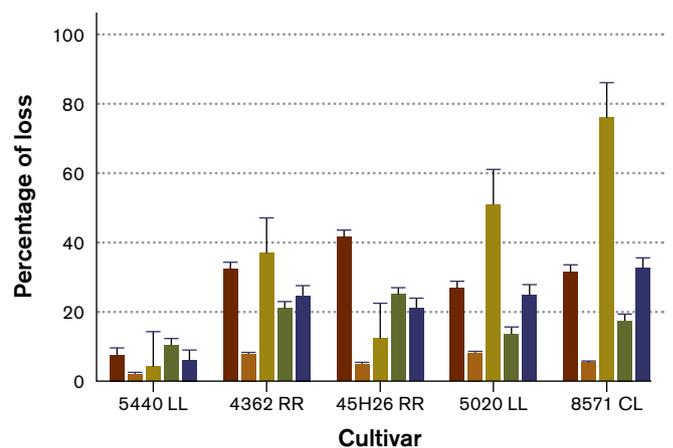
- Contributions from dropped pods were always significant but typically lower than contributions from shattered pods.
- All cultivars are reasonably well-suited to straight cutting, especially when harvested at an optimal time.
- The impact of cultivar choice had a greater impact on yield than either pod sealant.
- *Juncea* canola did not appear to be better suited to straight cutting than modern *napus* hybrids.

How about you, have you tried straight cutting your canola? Did you include a check strip for an in-field experiment? What made straight cutting successful or a dismal failure for you? Share your experiences with any of the four Agri-ARM site managers or Pat Flaten at the SaskCanola office (1-877-241-7044). ●

All locations – Grain yield by harvest treatment



All locations – Seed loss (%) by cultivar



IH Scott Melfort Swift Current all sites



Catherine Folkersen, SaskCanola executive director, shows education materials to the Duchess of Cornwall.

A TASTE OF CANOLA FOR ROYALTY

It's not every day that you get to meet royalty, let alone introduce them to the health benefits of canola oil, but that's exactly what Catherine Folkersen, executive director of SaskCanola, had the opportunity to do during the recent canola showcase held at the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair in Toronto. For 10 days in November, SaskCanola and its partner associations talked with Canadians about the benefits of canola.

This year the "Royal" was officially opened by His Royal Highness, Prince Charles, and Her Royal Highness, Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall. After the opening, the Royal couple toured the fair. "To our great surprise, the Duchess stopped at our booth to greet children and staff, and she even tasted one of our signature Betty's Gingersnap cookies," says Folkersen.

The canola industry is represented at the Royal through a 50-foot booth that highlights the importance of canola in agriculture, the nutrition and health benefits of canola oil, and the benefits of canola meal.

"Participation at the fair is a major Canadian market development and education initiative for our industry," says Folkersen. "It offers us the opportunity to promote the canola industry and enhance consumer awareness of canola's health and nutrition benefits." ●

SaskCanola thanks everyone who supported and staffed the booth: Graham and Marlene Caskey, ACPC; Bill Ross and Liz Hiebert, MCGA; Jeff Kobe, Carrie James and Craig Reid, OCGA; Wayne Thompson and Sally Germshied, SCGA; Derwyn Hammond, CCC; Kelvin and Shelley Meadows, Brett Halstead, Joan Heath, Catherine Folkersen, Pat Flaten, Candice Lajeunesse and Betty Anne Stevenson, SaskCanola.

FEDERAL RESEARCH FUNDS LEVERAGED BY PRODUCER LEVY

The Growing Forward program, through the Developing Innovative Agri-Products initiative, has matched canola levy funds to support four research projects at Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada in Saskatoon.

Producers are talking about potential cost savings, and yield and quality gains that might be achieved from straight cutting canola. However, pod shatter and pod drop make straight cutting a risky decision. Funding provided to Vicky Roslinsky and Dr. Kevin Falk will support their work to provide improved pod shatter tolerance for canola.

Another way that producers can increase their profitability is through disease resistance. Drs. Lone Buchwaldt and Dwayne Hegedus will research sclerotinia resistance, while further work on blackleg resistance will be carried out by Dr. Derek Lydiate.

The fourth project will study the Camelina genome, which could ultimately provide a basis for innovations in canola. ●

SASKCANOLA APPLAUDS FEDERAL MARKET ACCESS PROGRAM

At a news conference held in Saskatoon on January 11, 2010, Federal Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz announced a \$7.8 million Canola Market Access Plan that will address global market access and trade issues for the canola industry.

Addressing the news conference on behalf of SaskCanola, past chair Kelvin Meadows extended appreciation for the funding, which will be used to develop a market access plan for canola.

"The Saskatchewan canola industry is the largest of its kind, globally speaking. Millions of acres are grown in our province, which in turn produces tremendous financial returns to our farmers, their communities and our economy," Meadows said.

In 2008, more than 26,000 Saskatchewan producers generated \$2 billion in farm cash receipts. It is estimated that the provincial canola industry generates \$5 billion in

economic activity and supports thousands of jobs in the province.

Confirming that international market access for canola is an imperative, Meadows stated that farmers, and the industry, must be vigilant in tackling the trade and market access issues that directly impact farm cash flow and the economy. "Securing and maintaining export markets into the future is vital to the livelihoods of producers and our local and provincial economies," he said.

Increased canola production in Saskatchewan, spurred by an extensive export marketplace, has attracted new processing businesses and allowed existing processing operations to expand. Research and development companies are also relocating and centralizing their operations in Saskatchewan, further enhancing canola farming opportunities.

"The outlook for the Saskatchewan and indeed the Canadian canola industry is dynamic," concluded Meadows. "The additional support to secure, maintain and, in some cases, reopen the export market for our products is welcomed by our producers. We are proud to be a part of this thriving Canadian agriculture success story, both today and in the future." ●

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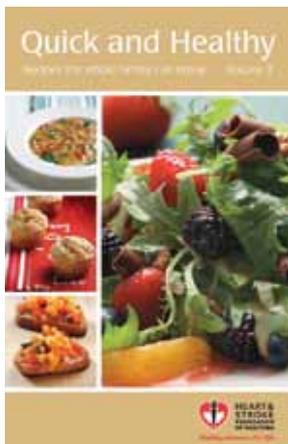
SaskCanola past chair, Kelvin Meadows, and Minister of Agriculture, Gerry Ritz.



CONNECTING WITH CONSUMERS ON HEART HEALTH

Cooking with canola oil is a healthy-heart solution. That's the message that the MCGA wants consumers to embrace, so the organization is spreading the word with consumers at trade shows, through printed materials and with digital media.

The free cookbook is distributed during Nutrition Month. The accompanying video series (hosted by the Foundation's nutritionist and dietitian) was created to show consumers how to prepare the recipes. The four videos can be seen in March on Shaw TV, at www.canolarecipes.ca or on the CanolaOil Growers YouTube Channel.



20,000 copies of this heart-healthy cookbook were printed, with support from Cargill, the Manitoba Canola Growers Association and CanolaInfo.org.

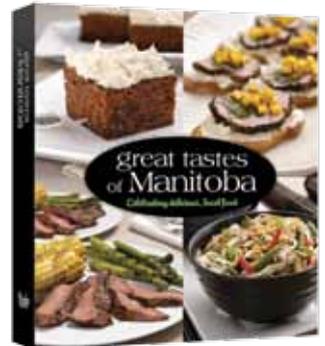
MCGA heart-health digital resources:
www.facebook.com/canolagrowers
www.twitter.com/canolagrowers
www.canolarecipes.ca/blogspot

GREAT TASTES OF MANITOBA NOW A HARDCOVER COOKBOOK

If you've enjoyed the *Great Tastes of Manitoba*, the longest running TV cooking show in Manitoba's history, you'll love this latest venture – a 20th anniversary hardcover cookbook entitled *Great Tastes of Manitoba: Celebrating delicious, local food*.

This book features more than 85 recipes, along with stunning photography and local tidbits from the past 20 years of the TV show. Each recipe was hand-picked by the food experts from eight Manitoba producer associations. The cookbook was produced by Studio Publications and is available at McNally Robinson Booksellers, Chapters, Wal-Mart and Safeway for \$29.99.

The Manitoba Canola Growers Association has been involved in the TV program for over 10 years, reaching over 40,000 viewers weekly. Ellen Pruden, education and promotions co-ordinator, demonstrates great, delicious recipes while explaining the health attributes of canola oil.



Watch Ellen Pruden and Great Tastes of Manitoba on CTV March 6 and May 1, 2010, at 6:30 p.m. and check out www.canolarecipes.ca for past episodes.

If you missed getting your copy of the 2009 MCGA Annual Report at Ag Days or our Annual General Meeting, call the office or go to www.mcgacanola.org to download a copy.



MCGA ELECTS OFFICERS FOR 2010

The Manitoba Canola Growers Association held its reorganizational meeting on Thursday, February 11, 2010 at the Victoria Inn in Brandon, Manitoba.

- Rob Pettinger from Elgin was elected as president.
- Ed Rempel from Starbuck was elected as vice-president.
- Bruce Dalgarno from Newdale was elected as treasurer.
- Barry Chappell from Hamiota was elected as secretary.

MCGA is a member organization committed to maximizing net income from canola.

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DEALING WITH SCLEROTINIA

by Anastasia Kubinec

Business Development Specialist – Oilseeds, Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives

Sclerotinia has become a yearly concern for most Manitoba canola growers. Many pencil in the potential cost of a fungicide treatment with the assumption that it is probably going to be another risky year.

Manitoba tends to have the right weather (moderate temperatures and good moisture during flowering) that favours infection and development. Additionally, other crops used in rotation with canola (sunflowers, dry beans, soybeans, and other canola) can provide inoculum to infect canola later on in the rotation.

In 2009, a canola disease survey was conducted in Manitoba by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Brandon; Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives; the Canola Council of Canada and supported by the Manitoba Canola Growers Association. The survey looked at 140 fields across Manitoba to visually assess sclerotinia infection.

Researchers found that 91 percent of fields had sclerotinia symptoms (similar to the

2008 survey at 94 percent), but on average, only 18 percent of plants within those fields were infected. Why were only some plants affected and what can we learn from this?

In 2009, the sclerotinia infection was most prevalent on the top branches, which prematurely ripened and shelled out. Yield impacts were lower than usual because most of the plant remained healthy with good seed set. Farmers were left wondering why the infection occurred in this manner and if their fungicide program had performed as effectively as in previous years.

Most probably, the infection occurred late in a year that saw an extremely long flowering period (up to six weeks in some fields). If a producer sprayed at the 20 percent bloom stage, they would have provided control for the sclerotinia at that time. However, flowering continued for another two to three weeks, and weather became warmer with more frequent rains. That created ideal conditions for subsequent infections.

Based on the 2009 experience, should you change your sclerotinia fungicide plan for 2010? The recommendations for scouting, bloom staging and fungicide application

are based on several years of data, which include a wide range of weather conditions, and remain the standard for 2010.

The warm period of early July is the normal window to look for sclerotinia infection. Fungicide application should occur at 20 percent (14-16 flowers open) to 50 percent (20+ flowers open) bloom. The fungicide should coat as many petals as possible (occurring between 20-50 percent bloom) to provide protection for potential infection sites as the petals drop. ●



AGM RESOLUTIONS

On Thursday, February 11, 2010, the MCGA held its 40th Annual General Meeting in Brandon. Forty-one members were present and five resolutions were passed.

1) Therefore Be It Resolved: That all MCGA directors commencing in 2010 file all their expenses such that this information is available to the entire Board of Directors on a current monthly basis, and also that the individual Board of Directors MCGA expenses be publicized and printed in the annual financial report to foster transparency, accountability and good governance of the MCGA.

2) Therefore Be It Resolved: That the MCGA, in accordance with good governance, commence in 2010 to invite a term of three years for the following services, whereby there will be at least a minimum of three legal and accounting firms that

must bid for the MCGA business activities. The awarding of the legal and accounting services for MCGA activities has not met any ongoing competitive "means" test. This process would ensure competitiveness and accountability in the future.

3) Therefore Be It Resolved: That in future MCGA elections, MCGA, at conclusion of the election count, release the poll by poll results (MNP has referred to this as an audit trail of ballots) to each candidate directly and to MCGA public via the website, providing the preference voting results for each individual ballot (poll) in electronic format, namely Excel and CSV format, and

Therefore Be It Further Resolved: That for the 2009 election, these results be published on MCGA's website within the specified formats no later than within a few days of the February 2010 AGM.

4) Therefore Be It Resolved: That at any MCGA member meeting involving resolutions, MCGA shall distribute a copy of the "whereas" section together with the "be it resolved" section in recognition of all the effort put in by MCGA members to provide a context for their resolutions and thereby use up less time during the AGM, and

Therefore Be It Further Resolved: That MCGA post all submitted resolutions (the "whereas" and "be it resolved") on the MCGA website within three working days of the deadline to submit resolution or within two weeks of submission, whichever is the earlier.

5) Therefore Be It Resolved: That effective immediately, MCGA shall post the minutes of any MCGA member meeting on the MCGA website within four weeks of the meeting, notwithstanding the fact that the minutes will not be subject to approval until the next member meeting. ●

COOKING OILS AT LARGE

About 70 percent of oils in India are sold at retail and 30 percent to food service – almost the opposite of Canada. At retail, about half of the oil is “packed” (bottled) and half is sold “loose” or in bulk to small communities. Oils and ghee (clarified butter) are traditionally sold in plastic bags, though a full range of plastic bottles exists at retail, as well as five-litre containers – a testament to Indians’ love of cooking oil.

All types of edible oils are produced in India, except canola and olive. Still, India imports soybean, sunflower and other oils to boost its own supply. Mustard, peanut and sunflower oils are the top domestically produced oils.

Health claims about the types of fat (i.e., trans fat-free, contains omega-3s), vitamins and other oil components are well-utilized on packages, even though the public seems to have little understanding of what the claims mean. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration’s qualified health claim for canola oil and reduced risk of heart disease is used to promote the Hudson brand. Another oil brand even touts oryzanol, a plant antioxidant. While there are no laws regarding health claims on food labels at present, the Indian government intends to implement regulations.

Indian consumers recognize brands more than types of oil, but this is changing with the promotion of commodities. The International Olive Council, for example, has been promoting olive oil in India since 2007. Today, there are entire sections devoted to olive oils in high-end grocery stores. Hopefully, more canola oil will land in those same grocery stores, and CanolaInfo can go “CanolaIndo” in promoting the health benefits of canola oil in India.

HEALTHY LIVING



GINGER CHICKEN WRAPS

INGREDIENTS

1 Tbsp (15 mL)	seasoned rice vinegar
1/4 cup (60 mL)	low-sodium soy sauce
1 Tbsp (15 mL)	granulated sugar
2 Tbsp (30 mL)	canola oil
1/2 cup (125 mL)	green onions, finely chopped
2 cloves	garlic, minced
1 Tbsp (15 mL)	fresh ginger, minced
2 Tbsp (30 mL)	sesame seeds, toasted
1 lb (500 g)	boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cut into 1/4 inch (.5 cm) strips
2 Tbsp (30 mL)	canola oil
1 head	iceberg lettuce
16 oz (398 mL)	kimchi
2 to 2-1/2 cups (500-625 mL)	white stick rice, steamed

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 In a large bowl, stir together vinegar, soy sauce, sugar, canola oil, green onions, garlic, ginger and sesame seeds. Add chicken and toss to coat. Marinate 2-4 hours in refrigerator. Discard marinade.
- 2 Heat 2 Tbsp (30 mL) canola oil in a large frying pan. Add chicken and stir-fry until browned, cooked through, and juices run clear, about 5 minutes. Transfer to a platter.
- 3 Meanwhile, wash and separate lettuce leaves. Pat off excess water with paper towels. Place in a serving bowl.
- 4 To serve, allow guests to wrap their own portions of chicken, kimchi and rice in lettuce leaves. Serve immediately.

Yield: 6 servings.

Digest wants to hear from you. Share your comments or story ideas. editor@canoladigest.ca

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*PCVT are weed free replicated trials coordinated by the Canola Council of Canada and measure the yield capabilities of all canola products entered. Since its inception in 2003, InVigor hybrids have always been number one in the PCVT. Always read and follow label directions. InVigor® is a registered trademark of Bayer. Bayer CropScience is a member of CropLife Canada.