



NEWS RELEASE

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Participants needed for summer storage of canola research

HUMBOLDT, SK – Researchers at the Prairie Agricultural Machinery Institute (PAMI) are continuing their work to help develop best management practices for summer storage of grain and are looking for producers with canola in storage to participate.

Dr. Joy Agnew, Project Manager at PAMI, is leading the project, a continuation of the work that began in 2014. “The earlier project was in direct response to phone calls from producers asking what they should do to manage their stored grain over summer” Agnew says. “The 2014 project generated some interesting results and the preliminary conclusion that leaving the grain alone was the best bet. But more work is needed to validate that conclusion for a wider range of conditions”.

The previous project evaluated three different management strategies: leaving it alone, turning the grain, and aerating the grain to even out the temperature profile. The grain temperature and relative humidity were monitored in each bin throughout the summer using a specially designed system of bin probes. The data was posted live on an online display throughout the summer and a blog was used to disseminate the preliminary results and findings.

“Based on the results in 2014, leaving the bin alone resulted in the most stable conditions throughout the summer” Agnew explains. “We didn’t see evidence of spoilage in any of the bins, but there were some unstable conditions in both the aerated and turned bins when there were zones of cold grain directly adjacent to warm grain. When you have a sharp change in temperature like that, that’s when you’re most likely to see condensation. The bin that was left alone experienced a large temperature gradient, but the gradual temperature change resulted in generally stable conditions and no evidence of moisture migration”.

The main limitation of the 2014 study was the fact that the canola was very dry to begin with. “The moisture content of the canola at the start of the study was 6.5%, so even though we didn’t see any moisture migration, that may have been due to the fact that there was very little moisture to migrate” says Agnew.

One of the recommendations from that 2014 study was to repeat the study using canola with a higher moisture content. Thanks to funding from the Canola Agronomic Research Program and Saskatchewan’s Agriculture Development Fund, PAMI is getting ready to do just that. The plan is to

repeat the controlled testing conducted in 2014 (one bin is left alone, one bin is turned, one bin is aerated) with canola that has a moisture content of at least 8%. The study will also evaluate the temperature in bins with existing temperature cables. These bins will not be monitored as intensively, but they will provide additional data for a wider variety of conditions, bins sizes and practices. PAMI is asking producers in Saskatchewan with canola in storage to get in touch with Dr. Agnew if they're interested in participating in the study.

“We realize that a bin of canola is an investment and the participating producers will always have control over what happens in the bin” Agnew says. “We will be intensively monitoring the temperature and relative humidity inside the bin throughout the summer and, if there are any issues, the producer will have the option to move the grain if they wish”.

“We are looking for producers in Saskatchewan with canola in storage that will remain in storage until at least August” says Agnew. “After their initial contact with us, there will be very little requirement for involvement on their part. We will come out and install the instrumentation and collect all the data. If they're interested, we can provide the producers with updates on the data we collect”.

PAMI's team hopes to get started on data collected by the end of May, so any interested producers should get in touch with Joy Agnew in the Humboldt office as soon as possible. She can be contacted by phone or email.

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