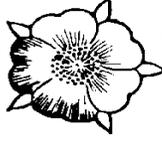


WILD ROSE



NEWS

PUBLISHED BY WILD ROSE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCERS

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WINTER 2001

PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO THE 2001 CONVENTION BY NEIL WAGSTAFF

I started off my first term as president by taking a holiday that Mary and I had planned for quite some time. While I was away, board members and in particular Keith Degenhardt filled in for me very well. I was able to keep in touch by phone, wrote and faxed letters and articles, and was a guest on Jim Fisher's Agritalk show while I was traveling. I was only home for a few days when I was off to Ottawa for the Canadian Federation of Agricultural annual meeting.

Canadian Federation of Agricultural Annual Meeting

On the morning of February 24th the Prime Minister announced special funding for grain and oil seed producers in Manitoba and Saskatchewan. Later that day I publicly asked Minister VanClief how the Government of Canada could justify treating Producers of the same commodities differently in some provinces? This of course led to extensive media coverage where I also questioned why the province of Alberta was not at the table with Manitoba and Saskatchewan when this deal was made. To rub salt in the wound, Eastern reporters were using terms such as; Western Canadian farmers and Prairie farmers when referring to where this program was being delivered. I always thought that Alberta was part of the West and one of the Prairie Provinces.

This was the beginning of what has become Ad Hocery with safety net programs and farm income assistance. All farmers should be treated fairly and equitably no matter where they reside when it comes to providing farmer income assistance. This was a prime example of why Alberta farmers need a strong voice in Ottawa.

National Safety Net Advisory Committee

In early March I was asked to sit on the National Safety Net Advisory Committee. Terry Lee Degenhardt had a lot to do with this happening. Now that I have mentioned Terry Lee, I would like to pay tribute to her. For the past three years, Terry Lee has been the Western women's rep on the board of directors of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture. She has chaired the Environment and Science Committee for CFA, and has taken a very special interest in safety nets. Terry Lee is also a member of the National NISA Committee. Terry Lee goes about her business in an unassuming manner and Alberta farmers have been fortunate to have Terry Lee working on their behalf.

Alberta Safety Nets Coalition

For the past couple of years, the Alberta Safety Nets Coali-

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tion has been struggling to be effective. At the end of March, Wild Rose offered to provide for the administration of the Alberta Safety Nets Coalition and I was asked to be their interim chairman. In November a combined meeting of the Ag Forum and the Alberta Safety Nets Coalition was held with good attendance and it was a productive meeting.

In April I was busy with safety net meetings, Ag summit meetings, and the Cooperators annual meeting. During seeding and harvest I participated in conference calls on safety net concerns, farm income, and grain transportation.

Canadian Federation of Agriculture Summer Convention

In July I attended the Canadian Federation of Agriculture summer convention in Winnipeg. The more I am involved with CFA the more I realize how important it is for Wild Rose to be an active participant with CFA. Many political decisions affecting Alberta farmers are made in Ottawa and as I said before, Alberta farmers need to have an effective voice at the federal level. Wild Rose has limited resources to use towards lobbying in Ottawa. Our association with CFA gives us an opportunity to work with other farm organizations from across this country to develop and put forward policy positions that can benefit all farmers in Canada. It is important that the perspective of Alberta producers is communicated to other provinces and Ottawa; and this on its own should be a good enough reason for more Alberta farmers to become members of the Wild Rose Agricultural Producers.

Crop Insurance Review Committee

In August I made a presentation to the crop insurance review committee. Two of my five recommendations have been partially proposed as changes for next year. The other three suggestions were recommended by the Committee but are not being implemented for the 2001 crop. More significant improvements needed to be made to Alberta's crop insurance program but I am afraid that only minor changes will be in place for this coming crop year. Farmers in Alberta have been waiting far too long for needed improvements to crop insurance and should not have to wait for another year.

Fall Meetings, Conventions and Conferences

During November and December I attended the annual general meetings of; UGG; Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties; Agricore; and the Alberta Cattle Commission. I attended Wild Rose regional meetings for regions 6, 8 and 10. While I attended the Grains 2000 conference in Grande Prairie, I was able to meet with some local farmers and get a sense of how serious the farm income situation is in that part of the province.

Canadian Wheat Board Elections

In mid December I had the privilege of being one of the scrutineers for the Canadian Wheat Board elections. Over all, the election was conducted in a fair and reasonable manner without any significant problems. But some groups, who are constantly critical of the Wheat Board, have still expressed criticism of how this election was run. It is my opinion that these criticisms are unfounded. In fact some of the same organizations who have made these criticisms may be guilty themselves of violating the rules governing this election.

Unfortunately even with very clear instructions, some voters clearly had difficulties completing the preferential ballot. However, the preferential ballot is a very fair and democratic way of selecting the person who has the support of the majority of voters. It is unfortunate that less than 42% of the eligible voters actually cast a ballot. I still believe that for communication purposes some type of an impartial delegate body structure is needed in each of the CWB districts.

A few comments about your organization

I want to assure you that Wild Rose Agricultural Producers is well recognized by government, politicians, media, and the Ag industry as the organization that represents the best interests of all farmers and ranchers in Alberta.

Our membership has continued to grow slowly. At times we are questioned as to how we can claim that we represent Alberta farmers when our membership represents less than 10% of those who claim farm income on their income tax. It would certainly be a lot better if far more farmers were members of Wild Rose. However, I want to remind you that we do have a strong base from which Wild Rose can operate with credibility. Our membership is very widespread and diverse by geography and by commodity. When I study our membership list, nearly every community in Alberta has more than one farm unit that is a Wild Rose member. Member farms produce nearly every type of commodity that you can imagine.

When you look at the financial statement you will realize that we have had to operate in a very frugal manner. One of the more frustrating aspects of being president is that there have been many issues that we should have taken action on but were unable to do so because of a lack of resources. There have been things that we should have communicated to our members and to the public. There have been issues on which we would like to have done more substantial research. There have been meetings, seminars and occasions that we have not attended. The unfortunate reality is that we cannot afford to do everything and we often do not have adequate manpower or volunteers available.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT — CONT'D

Farmer Income Concerns

During the past year the major issue facing many Alberta farmers has been historically low incomes and the concern about the viability of their farm operations. In some parts of the province, this has been compounded by poor crops. Certainly the grain sector is hurting the worst but when you analyze the financial returns on investment of nearly every other commodity the returns are unacceptably low.

Low farm income over an extended period of time is contributing to changes in rural communities that also contribute to increased farm input costs. Many businesses that provide services to the farm community are struggling to survive.

A large proportion of our farm production in Alberta is exported and we are forced to compete in an unfair international market place. Reducing subsidies is a long-term desirable way to allow the supply and demand of the marketplace to properly reflect commodity prices. However, in the short term farm enterprises need to be able to have adequate net income in order to survive.

Provincial and federal governments must be constantly reminded of how serious the situation is and I believe if they do

not soon increase their financial commitment to farm income stabilization we're likely to see a serious collapse in many rural economies.

Every farmer in this province must personally take action to make sure that the public and government decision makers fully understand the implications of allowing low net farm incomes to continue. No one else is going to do it for us.

We have many resolutions to deal with but in my opinion the most important ones are those that deal with safety nets and farm income.

Final comment

The adoption of resolutions at the annual meeting provides your board of directors with policies that sets the direction for the organization during the coming year.

It is also important that members continue to provide Directors of Wild Rose with feedback and guidance on issues and policy.

YES! I wish to join Wild Rose Agricultural Producers



Name: _____

Spouse: _____

Address: _____

Town: _____

Postal Code: _____ Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

I enclose - Membership fee :	Producer	\$ _____	(\$110.00 + GST = \$117.70)
	3 - Year	\$ _____	(\$300.00 + GST = \$321.00)
	Associate	\$ _____	(\$ 55.00 + GST = \$58.85)

Wild Rose Agricultural Producers, 14815 - 119 Avenue, Edmonton, AB, T5L 4W2
Telephone: 780-451-5912 Fax: 780-453-2669 e-mail: wrap@planet.eon.net

CONVENTION 2001 SEMINAR HIGHLIGHTS

BY TERRY LEE DEGENHARDT

The first day of the Wild Rose Agricultural Producers meeting was one of information seminars.

Neil Thurston, director of the Canadian Transportation Agency (CTA) described the duties and nature of the CTA. Created in 1996, it is an independent administrative tribunal. One of its functions is to assist in resolving disputes between shippers and railways, either through mediation, or through final offer arbitration. Mediation strives to find a happy medium for both parties, whereas arbitration chooses one side or the other.

The second seminar brought together the 3 players in the grain transportation/grain-tendering dispute that is much in the papers. Ross Goldsworthy spoke on behalf of CNR. CN's car unloads at the West Coast are up 14%, and 60% of their grain cars are servicing the high throughput elevators. He said that CN is working to maintain a low cost advantage, and that competition does exist, so there is no need for joint running rights. He cited Australia and Europe as examples of places where joint running rights have not lowered transportation costs. He explained that coal freight rates in Australia had dropped because the world price of coal had dropped, so rail cost went down to keep it competitive. As he spoke, I was remembering a seminar hosted by AWP a number of years ago at which an employee of Burlington Northern (BN) railway told how he had been hired by BN after a career in the grain industry. His experience with grain allowed him to raise freight rates to capture most of any increases in world grain prices, allowing just enough incentive to the shipper to encourage them to make the sale, and use BN lines.

Neil Silver, Agricore president, presented numerous arguments from Agricore's perspective, regarding why Agricore has

chosen not to tender grain for CWB sales, primarily pointing to unacceptable risk. Agricore's understanding of the intent of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), signed by the government and the CWB, is to ensure that the grain companies are the shippers.

Adrien Measner, the executive VP of marketing, spoke on behalf of the CWB position. The CWB believes that the MOU gives the CWB the right to be the shipper of the grain, and that there are millions of dollars that will go back to producers through the pooling account because of their right to be the shipper. In a newspaper quote, Ralph Goodale, the government minister responsible for the CWB, agreed with their interpretation.

Jim Laws, Executive Director of the Canadian Farm Business Management Council (CFBMC) described what the council is and what it can do for farmers. It has videos on succession planning, dealing with employees, business plans, farm stress, etc. It can be reached on the Internet at www.farmcenter.com or at 1-888-232-3262 for more information.

A Safety Nets panel, featuring Bob Friesen, CFA president; Charlie Mayer, chairman of the crop insurance review committee; Rick McConnell, research and information & development, AFSC (crop insurance); and Gilles Lavoie, representing the federal government on safety nets. Gilles stressed it takes time to develop a good safety net program that works, using the example of NISA which is 10 years old, and still evolving. He also restated the often-quoted remark, that when there is no net margin, a program based on reference margins can not work for producers. His candor was refreshing. Rick discussed the changes to crop insurance for this year, with the possibility for more next year. He made a very important point that their

"customer" is the two levels of government, and the producer, because it is these three who put up the money for the program. Bob Friesen stressed the need for credible programs that meet the farm gate needs. CFA continues to work hard to achieve that. NISA, income disaster programs, and crop insurance programs are demand driven – that is, the farmers needs decide the usage of them, and none of them should be constrained because there is a cap on available money.

A panel on greenhouse gases and carbon credits highlighted the potential for value in sequestering carbon. Before value can be realized, however, soil and forests/woodlots need to be recognized as carbon sinks, and rules established for the trading of carbon credits. In the meantime, the government is looking at setting up incentives for reducing emissions – for example, by land set aside, and reduced tillage.

Roelof Heinen, a member of the Sustainable Management of Livestock Industry Committee, briefly described the committee's agenda and mandate. They will be dealing with the approval process, monitoring and compliance issues, but not technical issues. Jack Hayden, President of the Alberta Assoc. of MD's and Counties gave the municipalities' point of view. Because there is a wide range of topography, soil types, operation sizes, etc., municipal viewpoints vary. But all want the province to have regulations to ensure sustainability.

Just over 100 people were present, and found the sessions informative.

CAIRNS GROUP FARM LEADERS CONFERENCE

BY TERRY MURRAY

As second vice president of the Wild Rose Agricultural Producers I was pleased to attend the Cairns Groups of Farm Leaders, in Banff October 10-13, 2000. Held in conjunction with the XXIst Cairns Group Ministerial Meeting, delegates from eighteen to twenty countries gathered to discuss liberalized world trade and non-tariff concerns, such as labour, environment, intellectual property rights and biotechnology.

The round table discussion for Canadian Agri-Food industry stakeholders with The Honourable Lyle Vanclief, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, afforded Wild Rose Agricultural Producers the opportunity to express concerns and issues to the Minister.

The key points expressed by Wild Rose Agricultural Producers were with regards to providing hope and opportunity for new entrance into the industry of Agriculture in Canada and to further identify strategies that account for the struggle that Canada has to compete with in European and U.S. treasuries.

Counties attending the Cairns Group farm meeting were Brazil, Argentina, Chili, Fiji, Indonesia, Philipines, South Africa, Malaysia, Uruguay, Paraguay, Thailand, Columbia, Bolivia, Costa Rica, Guatemala, New Zealand, Australia and Canada.

It is interesting to note that the Cairns Group speaks for 750 million people in the world. This block represents a level of intellectual debate that supports liberalized trade in the world, based on over 200 years of economic analysis in support of free trade. The Cairns Group has put compelling arguments forward to support freer agricultural world trade. Malcolm Bailey from New Zealand stated "It is just as well that world commerce moves faster than world trade organizations, because at their speed a simple merger between two companies would take fifty years". In the future the Cairns Group has a vital role to play

To widen the reach of the message of liberalized world trade To increase the transparency of the real cost of world trade protectionism, for example in Canada there may be a net 2.5 billion-dollar gain as a result of liberalized trade.

One of the best statements that captures the Cairns Group mandate is they still are and will continue to be primal to agricultural trade and liberalization and improved global welfare. As Albertans this will certainly take time, but we in agriculture will reap the benefits of these types of initiatives.

The conference concluded with a farm tour organized by the Wild Rose Agricultural Producers.

LETTER OF THANKS

A thousand thanks for the notes of good wishes and encouragement from the Wild Rose Agricultural Producers Convention for January, 2001 forwarded to me by Mr. & Mrs. Hartmann Nagel. It was so nice to be remembered by so many that assisted me in the discharge of my duties as your president. Your wishes for improved health will help my determination to win the fight.

The state of health is fairly good as I can still maneuver and do some travelling. The medical profession is able to keep cancer under control and hopefully, new medication will be developed in the near future.

Many ask which career I enjoyed the most and my consistent reply is working with farm people and their farm organizations.

Thank you again for the notes from a group of considerate people that I really enjoyed working with.

PAUL, MILLI BABEY & FAMILY

ADR HELPS PEOPLE DEVELOP LOCAL SOLUTIONS TO LOCAL PROBLEMS

People who live and work on the land in rural Alberta welcomed the news that the Alberta Energy and Utilities Board (EUB) has now outlined principles supporting its new Appropriate Dispute Resolution (ADR) program for Alberta's energy sector and provided guidelines for using it.

This January, the EUB issued *Informational Letter (IL) 2001-1: Appropriate Dispute Resolution (ADR) Program and Guidelines for Energy Industry Disputes*. These documents are available on the EUB Web site at www.eub.gov.ab.ca or by calling 403-297-3700 (toll free by calling 310-0000) to have a copy mailed.

Alan Holt, a Bashaw area farmer, represented Wild Rose Agricultural Producers on the multi-party stakeholder steering committee that helped the EUB research and develop the ADR program, and he continues to be actively involved on the standing committee to help with its implementation and evaluation.

"The fact that this process is endorsed by other organizations such as the Calgary Chamber of Commerce, the Alberta Environmental Network, the Sunde Petroleum Operators Group, the Farmers' Advocate, the Surface Rights Board as well as several industry associations is evidence that we have been on the right track as we negotiated this agreement among stakeholders" says Alan.

The main goal of the EUB's new ADR program is to help people explore and understand each other's interests and develop acceptable solutions together to improve landowner-industry relations. ADR approaches will enable people to develop their own local solutions to local problems rather than have solutions imposed on them, if that can be avoided.

ADR is an extension of the EUB's public disclosure and consultation expectations of a company during the application process. It's at that point that a dispute with the public or landowner is likely to arise.

Dean Lien, the Farmer's Advocate, who was with Alan on the multi-stakeholder committee that helped the EUB design the program, readily agreed to distribute an EUB pamphlet called "What About Appropriate Dispute Resolution?" in the package that he requires landmen to provide to the landowner on first contact. "Farmers are too busy to find out about something until they need to," says Dean "but when the need arises, the more they know about the options open to them the better."

Alan adds: "This method of dispute resolution is rapidly becoming more acceptable due to the many successes that have resulted recently. Word-of-mouth is the best advertisement for

any product, and I believe this 'product' – which we have fine-tuned to meet the needs of both energy companies and landowners, based on the ADR template used by others – will save time, money and frustration for all parties involved in developing agreements."

The EUB has a regulatory role regarding oil and gas wells, pipelines, production facilities, electrical substations, and transmission lines. It also has a role in resolving issues and disputes between affected parties, such as between energy companies and landowners and their neighbours.

Thus, the EUB has given people who are affected by energy development "another tool in the toolbox" for resolving disputes or, as one landowner once described it, "something between the kitchen table and an EUB hearing."

By using "appropriate dispute resolution" approaches, a conflict can be resolved in a number of ways. People in dispute are able to choose which option to use. Some options allow people control over the process used to find a solution and make the final agreements. These range from those options where agreements are made with no outside involvement (e.g., negotiations) on to facilitation and then to mediation.

Other options include arbitration or engaging an administrative tribunal (e.g., EUB Board hearing or the court system). These ways of resolving disputes involve established, formal procedures that result in a decision being made for the people in conflict.

Committee members understand how intimidating many rural people and environmentalists find the EUB hearing and how unequal they feel in the face of the experts and legal advisors arrayed against them. Nevertheless, an EUB hearing may be the appropriate way to resolve a dispute in some instances. But if it can be avoided with some good, old-fashioned talking, than most folks would agree it's the right thing to at least try.

Well beyond the oilpatch, there is a societal shift towards more conflict resolution by people talking to each other. Many Alberta government departments have been very successfully using ADR. In fact, the United Nations has recognized how important that talking to each other is and has declared 2001 as International Year of Dialogue Between Civilizations.

For more information, please call:
Bill Remmer, EUB ADR co-ordinator
403-297-8172

PRESIDENT'S CLOSING COMMENTS FROM 2001 CONVENTION THE FUTURE OF WILD ROSE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCERS (WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE)

During the *recent Federal election* hardly any attention was given to agriculture. I believe that was an indication of why it is important to have a strong general farm organization, which can represent the needs of Alberta farmers.

Farmers in Alberta should not underestimate the value of a strong lobby in Ottawa and for this reason alone should be willing to be members of Wild Rose Agricultural Producers. Who else will speak out on behalf of Alberta farmers?

There seems to be *no shortage of issues* facing Alberta farmers:

- The economic viability of many well-established and well-managed farms continues to be a concern.
- Conflicts with urban and industrial development are becoming a bigger and bigger concern for many farmers.
- The active oil and gas industry is creating many conflicts with the surface owner and/or farm operator.
- There seems to be less and less recognition of private property rights.
- There is a clear need to better inform the non-farming public about agricultural issues.
- International trade agreements can have a big impact on Alberta farmers.
- There are going to be many environmental and scientific issues facing farmers in the near future.

- Governments will continue to propose new legislation and regulations that affect farmers.

No matter how hard we try to foresee emerging issues, *unforeseen things will come to the forefront*. It is sometimes difficult to know what position we should be taking on emerging issues. We need to develop better ways of getting ongoing feedback from our members.

Will members respond to questionnaires and return them by fax or mail?

For those who have access to the Internet, our upgraded web site has a chat room capability, which so far has had very little use.

In Alberta we have many commodity specific organizations who all are doing a very worthy job on behalf of Producers of that particular commodity. However, *there are many issues facing Alberta farmers that are not commodity specific*. As Alberta's general farm organization, Wild Rose Agricultural Producers needs to take a leadership role in getting the many farm groups in Alberta working together on issues of common concern.

The big question is, can we do all of this?

The need for membership growth

Our biggest challenge will continue to be; how do we significantly increase our membership?

This is the fifth Wild Rose convention that I had attended. Every year some effort has been made to have the dedicated members who have attended the convention, take the initiative to encourage their neighbors and friends to become Wild Rose members. Everyone leaves with enthusiasm and good intentions, but for many reasons we do not fulfill this obligation.

The need for membership growth is becoming critical for the longer-term viability of your organization. I believe that Wild Rose cannot continue to effectively operate for longer than two or three years with the same membership base as we presently have. If we do not increase our membership by 200 to 300 members per year for the next two years, we will be forced to scale back our mode of operation when in fact we should be expanding.

Wild Rose has become well recognized as Alberta's general farm organization and it would be a shame if it were to fail because of lack of farmer membership growth. Every farmer in this province is benefiting from the work being done by Wild Rose.

Alberta farmers who are not members of Wild Rose should be ashamed. In many ways they are freeloaders.

Farmers often ask me, why should they become members? I believe we need to turn that question around and *ask Alberta farmers the question, why should you not be a member?*

So, again I plead with you to please make an effort to get your neighbors and friends to support Wild Rose Agricultural Producers by becoming members. *By becoming a member they will be objectively informed on farm issues and they will be helping to advocate what is best for Alberta farmers.*

I hope 2001 will be a prosperous year for you.

WILD ROSE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCERS RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT THE FIFTH ANNUAL CONVENTION - 2001

The Kyoto Agreement and Carbon Sinks

BE IT RESOLVED that Wild Rose Agricultural Producers lobby our governments to insure that agricultural practices that remove carbon from the environment be recognized by present and future environmental agreements and that agricultural producers receive the credit for carrying on such practices.

Membership Fees

BE IT RESOLVED that the membership fees in Wild Rose Agricultural Producers be set at \$110.00 plus GST for full producer membership and \$55.00 plus GST for Associate members.

NISA and Cattle

BE IT RESOLVED that Wild Rose Agricultural Producers lobby the Alberta and Federal government so the cattle sector in Alberta would be given voluntary access to participate in the NISA program.

NISA

WHEREAS NISA is to be reviewed this year and cattle sales are still not eligible for NISA and many mixed farmers with cattle want the option of including them in NISA calculations;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Wild Rose Agricultural Producers lobby to have cattle sales included in NISA in Alberta.

Safety Nets and Linkages

BE IT RESOLVED that Wild Rose Agricultural Producers lobby for linkage between safety net programs that allow producers access to the maximum benefits from all the programs.

Provincial Fertilizer Rebate

BE IT RESOLVED that Wild Rose Agricultural Producers request our provincial government to reinstate the farm fertilizer rebate program to offset the increases we are seeing in nitrogen fertilizer due to high natural gas prices.

Lower Energy Costs

WHEREAS the high cost of farm fuel and the high cost of fertilizer as a result of high natural gas prices has created a hardship for farmers at a time of low commodity prices; and

WHEREAS the province has reaped great financial benefits from these high prices;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that some of the windfall benefit from these high prices be used to lower energy related costs to farmers.

Property Rights

WHEREAS trespass by hunters, snowmobiles, etc. can result in legal suits if one of them is injured on farm property and the property has not been posted NO TRESPASSING; trespassers should do so at their own risk;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that farmers should not be required to post their land for no hunting or trespassing in order to be protected from liability.

Grain Inspection

BE IT RESOLVED that Wild Rose Agricultural Producers lobby the Canadian Grains Commission to provide grain inspection services in the Peace River region of Alberta and B.C. without delay.

RESOLUTIONS – CONT'D

Canadian Wheat Board Membership in Canadian Federation of Agriculture

BE IT RESOLVED that Wild Rose Agricultural Producers support the Canadian Wheat Board in its request to participate in CFA as an Associate Member, provided CWB can fit CFA criteria for such membership.

Intensive Livestock Operations

WHEREAS the health of our air, water, soil, livestock, and people need to be considered when animals are confined, and manure disposed of, and

WHEREAS there is much confusion over the development of intensive livestock operations within our province, and

WHEREAS the local municipal bodies are presently required to set the regulations;

BE IT RESOLVED that our provincial government develops scientifically justifiable regulation to protect our environment and the community's quality of life, while facilitating the development of intensive livestock operations.

Intensive Livestock Operations

BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta government together with municipalities, establish strong guidelines for the establishment of large intensive livestock operations.

Farm Income Crisis

WHEREAS fertilizer prices have increased;

WHEREAS natural gas prices have increased;

WHEREAS diesel fuel and gasoline prices have increased;

WHEREAS power prices have increased;

WHEREAS most farm input costs have increased;

WHEREAS machinery and repair costs have risen;

WHEREAS transportation costs have risen;

WHEREAS commodity prices (grain and oilseeds) are the lowest they have been in years;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that it is imperative that the Alberta government address the farm income crisis in Alberta.

Definition of Genetic Modification

The Canadian General Standards Board (CGSB), which is part of the federal government, has established a committee to make recommendations to help industry develop a standard for the voluntary labeling of foods containing genetically modified ingredients. It is a large committee made up of producer, user and consumer groups including farm, industry, consumer, and public interest groups. To develop a standard the committee must agree on a definition for "genetically modify". There are two definitions being considered. The one definition is quite broad and would include some products of conventional plant breeding. The other definition is narrow and would only include products developed by means of r-DNA technology. The narrow r-DNA definition is the accepted international definition of GMO and is the type of technology that is of concern to consumers and environmental groups in Europe, Japan and elsewhere. It would cause great confusion and be a significant international marketing problem if Canada adopted a definition for genetically modify that was not in harmony with the definition in the countries to which we are exporting our agriculture and food products. We would have a situation where we would be labeling food as genetically modified for the domestic Canadian market based on the Canadian definition and then attempting to market that same food in the international market as a non- GM product based on the international definition. Common sense indicates it would be a foolish move, create confusion and mistrust of our products in international markets and be a marketing disaster. There would also be no way to segregate the so-called GMOs under a broad definition.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Wild Rose Agricultural Producers send a letter to the Canadian General Standards Board indicating support for the narrow r-DNA definition of genetically modify. This means to change the heritable traits of a plant, animal or micro-organism used as food or any ingredient in a food by means of recombinant DNA technology.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Wild Rose Agricultural Producers seek to advance this position by either being directly involved on the CGSB committee or through CFA representation.

RESOLUTIONS – CONT'D

Provincial Railways Act

WHEREAS approximately one third of all rail lines operating in the Province of Alberta are provincially regulated; and

WHEREAS any agreement and or recommendations by the Canadian Transportation Agency concerning running rights do not include provincially regulated rail lines;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province of Alberta be urged to examine and adopt policies that would encourage competition between and amongst both federally and provincially regulated rail lines; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Province of Alberta review the yet to be proclaimed Railway Act and regulations with a view to more closely mirror the federal acts and regulations as it pertains to abandonment notification.

Railway Fencing

BE IT RESOLVED that Wild Rose Agricultural Producers support the Canadian Federation of Agriculture in its efforts to ensure that federally regulated rail lines remain responsible for fencing of private lands adjacent to rail lines; and

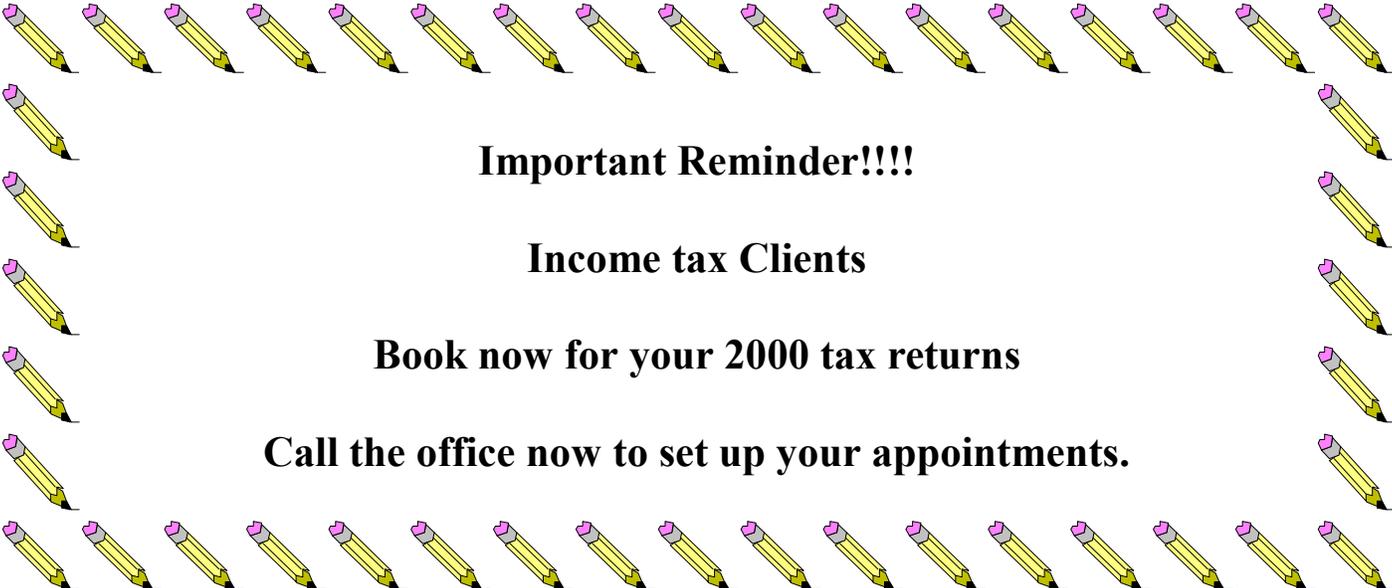
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Province of Alberta be encouraged to propose regulations that would make provincially regulated rail lines responsible for fencing private lands adjacent to rail lines.

COMING EVENTS

February 23-25, 2001
Canadian Federation of Agricultural
Annual Meeting
Ottawa, Ontario

March 28-31, 2001
Northlands Farm & Ranch Show
Northlands Agricom
Edmonton, Alta.

Please note: If you have an event you want promoted, contact the office.



Important Reminder!!!!

Income tax Clients

Book now for your 2000 tax returns

Call the office now to set up your appointments.

RESOLUTIONS – CONT'D

Grain Transportation

BE IT RESOLVED that Wild Rose Agricultural Producers strongly encourage all those interested parties involved in grain handling and transportation to quickly resolve their differences and introduce a system that encourages competition, cost effectiveness and improved service and maximize financial returns to producers.

Chemical Advertising

BE IT RESOLVED that WRAP urge the chemical companies through the Crop Protection Institute of Canada, to cease advertising on radio and television .

Rail Access and Competition

BE IT RESOLVED that Wild Rose investigate the possibility of requesting a split of each Class 1 Canadian Railway CN/CP into a road bed company and a rolling stock company under the anti-trust federal legislation.

Rail line Deterioration

WHEREAS rail movement of grain from the Peace Country is seriously hampered by deterioration of tracks;

BE IT RESOLVED that Wild Rose Agricultural Producers write a letter to Rail Link requesting that the track be upgraded before something more serious than the two derailments of the past year occur.

Input Costs

WHEREAS the deregulation of the power industry has apparently caused a dramatic rise in the cost of electricity; and

WHEREAS electricity represents a significant input cost to a number of agricultural producers;

BE IT RESOLVED that WRAP lobby the provincial government to shield agricultural electrical users from the rising electrical costs.

**Now call the office Toll-free at
1-877-451-5912
Or visit us on the web at
www.wrap.ab.ca or
e-mail at wrap@planet.eon.net**

RECENT HIGHLIGHTS OF WILD ROSE ACTIVITIES
By
NEIL WAGSTAFF

February 6th is Food Freedom Day - a Day For Action

By February 6th, Canadians will have earned enough income to pay for the entire year's food supply. By January 9th the farmer's share for this food has been paid for. In 1998 Food Freedom Day was February 12th. Canadian consumers have one of the safest and most affordable food supplies in the world and less and less of their disposable income is needed for food

The Canadian Federation of Agriculture asked farm organizations and individuals Producers to take some type of action on February 6th that would bring attention to the alarming gap between consumer food expenditures and the amount that farmers are receiving as income.

A request for an emergency meeting of Agricultural Ministers

In mid January, Wild Rose along with other farm organizations across the country, requested that the Prime Minister and ministers of agriculture hold an emergency-planning meeting. The purpose of such a meeting would be to plan a joint farm support strategy that would quickly stabilize the income levels of the many farm enterprises that are continuing to experience an income crisis.

Federal election comments

During the recent Federal election, hardly any attention was given to agriculture. This is a clear indication of why Alberta farmers need an effective non-partisan voice in Ottawa. Many political decisions affecting Alberta farmers are made in Ottawa and Alberta farmers should not underestimate the value of a strong lobby at the federal level

Canadian Federation of Agriculture

Wild Rose has limited resources to use towards lobbying in Ottawa and unfortunately, Alberta is weak in this area compared to all the other provinces. Our association with the Canadian Federation of Agriculture gives us an opportunity to work with other farm organizations from across this country to develop and put forward policy positions that can benefit all farmers in Canada. It is important that the perspective of Alberta producers is communicated to other provinces and Ottawa; and this on its own should be good enough reason for more Alberta farmers to become members of the Wild Rose Agricultural Producers.

Annual meetings of farm organizations in Alberta

It is important that Wild Rose maintain good relations with the many other organizations who are working for the betterment of Agricultural Producers in Alberta. For this reason, I made a special effort this fall and early winter to attend the annual meetings of the following organizations:

- UGG
- Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties (AAMD&C)
- Agricore
- Alberta Cattle Commission
- Prairie Oat Growers & Grains 2000 conference
- Alberta Canola Commission
- Alberta Pulse Growers Commission
- Alberta Winter Wheat Producers Commission
- Alberta Sugar Beet Growers

We have also had representation at the Alberta Service Rights Federation annual meeting. I recently attended the annual meeting of the Federation of Rural Electrification Associations.

Call: 1-800-506- CARE (2273)

Animal Care Alert Line

If you have concerns regarding the care of livestock;

If you are experiencing management problems

BOARD OF DIRECTORS REPORT

JANUARY 2001

BY KEITH DEGENHARDT

Wild Rose is five years old and still growing. The Board had a very busy and eventful year and so did most of our members. We saw some of the highest prices ever for cattle and some of the lowest ever for grain. Alberta had fire, drought, tornadoes, hail and amongst all this some farmer's even had record yields. By years end though as can be seen by our resolutions farmers felt even more squeezed by ever tightening margins and diminishing communities. We at the Board are awed at the need for our organization while frustrated at the apathy amongst many of our fellow farmers in supporting Wild Rose or any other farm organization. We look to Saskatchewan's efforts through the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities (SARM) to fund and form a general farm organization and hope our farmers will support what we have!

We were very sad to be informed at our summer regional Director's meeting by Florence Trautman President of Women of Unifarm that they had at their annual convention decided to disband. Our association with Women of Unifarm has been long and productive. They have served the rural communities in Alberta long and well. We applaud their Achievements. At the Women of Unifarm's request we are continuing their efforts in the rural safety areas. Rod Scarlett our Executive Director will give you more information on these efforts. We sincerely hope to have more representation on our Board from the women who farm! We are losing one Board member Jennifer Boccock with the dissolution of Women of Unifarm but our first By-law amendment is to bring the Board back up to 9 members.

I will now give you a brief report on some of our efforts on your behalf in the last year. Hopefully among Neil, Rod, and myself we will cover most issues. If we miss something ask one of us or the rest of the Board and we will try to

bring you up to date.

We started out our year heavily involved with the farm income crisis and safety nets and grain handling and transportation. As these issues developed through the year we had some successes and some disappointments. Through numerous individual and conference calls, meetings with the railway grain handling organizations, CWB, and government; Wild Rose participated in the grain transportation negotiations. In the end the government seemed to accept many of the concepts proposed in the producer's paper that Keystone Agricultural Producers (KAP), Wild Rose, and SARM had developed. However as you all know this did not end negotiations and members of the Board are still spending considerable time in this area. This has allowed members of the Board to network with individuals from the participating organizations. At this point the negotiations seem to be about money and power, as it is very difficult to obtain an easily understood answer from the participants.

We have seen many developments in the farm income crisis and safety nets area over the last year. I gave a presentation to the Senate Agriculture and Forestry Committee in February on the farm income crisis. The Senators stretched my 1 hour presentation into a very worthwhile 3 hour discussion. We were greatly disappointed with the changes made to AIDA by the agricultural ministers; it was a step backwards. We were also disappointed when the federal government chose to leave Alberta out in their program to the other two Prairie Provinces. Wild Rose was pleased when the Alberta government stepped up to the plate with their payment. The summer brought the severe drought in the south and Wild Rose and other organizations were invited to be present when the Ag minister announced the fall payment. We appreciated both the invitation and the payment but it was interesting that the Alberta Safety Net Coalition of which Wild Rose and the ma-

jority of other farm organizations in Alberta belong was not contacted prior to the announcement. Since then both members and non-members who wonder how this payment was developed have contacted Wild Rose. During the year Wild Rose met and discussed with the Crop Insurance Review Committee changes to improve crop insurance. The year has ended with the Alberta Cattle Commission requesting that cattle income be included in NISA. A change which Wild Rose and its members have endorsed for a period of years. Unfortunately efforts in the farm income crisis and the safety nets area are a continuing struggle.

During the past year your regional Directors, Board Directors and Executive Director have been involved in the Ag Summit meetings. Coming out of those meetings Terry Murray was chosen Chair of the Centers of Excellence committee. Rod Scarlett chairs the Infrastructure committee. Wild Rose also hosted and ran CWB candidate forums in Districts 2 and 4 with the assistance of our Regional Directors and members. We were disappointed with the turnouts although the candidates were pushed by the questions asked. Adam Campbell chose to run as a candidate in district 2 learning first hand of the diversity of opinions farmers hold. In review we will improve in running these forums and we did run a lot more cost-effective forums than the Alberta Grain Commission.

In last year's Board report, Neil reported that we were to participate in a steering committee of which we were the only farm organization to develop an appropriate dispute resolution (ADR) process by the Energy Utilities Board (EUB). Alan represented us there and reports key to the new dispute resolution methodology is: 1) it is less intimidating to landowners than a formal EUB hearing with many lawyers and 2) all reasonable costs to the

BOARD OF DIRECTORS REPORT — CONT'D

landowner are paid by the energy/utility company.

The USA consulate staff invited Wild Rose (Robert Filkohazy and Adam Campbell attended) to meet with them and some USDA representatives in the spring. They felt it was a very useful meeting with some good exchanges giving the Alberta farmers perspective especially on the US-Canada grain trade. One of the important aspects of this meeting is the further contact that we have with the US consulate.

Our membership in the Canadian Federation of Agriculture (CFA) has been invaluable over the last year especially with the aid it gives us in dealing with the federal government. Elaine Jones, Neil Wagstaff, and I attended the summer CFA meeting in Winnipeg. Being there gave us the opportunity to volunteer to host the farm tour for the CAIRNS group held this fall as well as to host next year's summer CFA meeting in Calgary. Terry Murray attended the CAIRNS group meeting as a participant and really enjoyed the opportunity to contribute to discussions on International agricultural trade and agricultural production in general. Robert Filkohazy and Neil Wagstaff attended the farm tour and worked hard to convey how our agricultural production worked and relate it to the differences in the other countries production. CFA, Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA), and Quebec's general farm organization Union des Producteurs Agricoles (UPA) put a lot of effort into a farm rally held at and during the federal leadership debate in Ottawa. Wild Rose along with other farm organizations across the country supported their efforts. It was quite disappointing how little response it and agricultural got during the debate. Wild Rose greatly appreciates all CFA's efforts.

Wild Rose is involved with the following organizations on an ongoing basis and the Board would like to recognize the following Board members and members at large representing us:

The Cooperators Insurance Group – 2 delegates Neil Wagstaff, Alan Holt
AFAC (Alberta Farm Animal Care) – 1 Board member Keith Degenhardt
Western Grains Research Foundation – 1 Board member Keith Degenhardt
CASA (Clean Air Strategic Alliance) - Ralph Smith, Jennifer Bocoock (alternate)
AAMD&C (Alberta Association of Municipal Districts & Counties) – Fraternal Membership Neil Wagstaff
Alberta Surface Rights Federation – 1 representative Tom Nahirniak
Hopper Car Ownership Committee (Farmer Rail Car Coalition) – 1 representative Barry Marshall
Land Agents Advisory Committee - Dean Chessor
National Safety Net Committee-Terry Lee Degenhardt, Neil Wagstaff (alternate)
Alberta Safety Net Coalition- Neil Wagstaff, Terry Lee Degenhardt
Ag Forum – Neil Wagstaff

On our behalf Adam Campbell and Rod Scarlett attended the Green House Gas Conference in Nisku. Adam attended the AGM of Surface Rights in Camrose and Earthkeeping in Nisku. Where possible on issues of joint concern we are cooperating with Earthkeeping, AAMD&C, CWB, Agricore, Sask Pool, KAP, and SARM. Gordon Smillie, Neil Wagstaff, and Rod Scarlett attended the Agricore annual meeting and held discussions with some senior management on the transportation impasse. Various Board members were invited and attended meetings the CWB held over the year. Wild Rose referred names of farmers to attend CIGI courses when offered. From the Board Adam attended a course this spring. All participants have greatly appreciated this opportunity.

The Board members have put time and effort into improving our communications with farmers, the agricultural media, and other participants in our agricultural environment. As Terry Murray says "The sowing of seeds, whether in the field or in the boardroom, represents the beginning for renewed growth and sustainability. The Board as a whole has a tremendous depth of experience and knowledge relating to the agricultural sector and others. This source of valuable networks combined with the principles and values supported by Wild Rose will help this organization into the future. So as a member please continue to be involved as advocates and champions for agriculture." A good example of this is the interaction and discussions that occurred among the board directors, regional directors, and members who manned the booths at the trade shows we attended and the farming and general public. The Board is quite proud of our Internet Web Site (www.wrap.ab.ca) Please use it.

Our staff of two is hard working and very dedicated. We greatly appreciate all their efforts. Most importantly we thank you our members for you're continuing support.



RESEARCH PROGRESS FROM FARMER INVESTMENT WESTERN GRAINS RESEARCH FOUNDATION

Wild Rose Agricultural Producers is one of 18 agricultural organizations that comprise the farmer-funded, farmer-directed Western Grains Research Foundation.

Western Grain Research Foundation (WGRF) has become a powerful driver of wheat and barley variety development on the Prairies. Investing over \$4 million annually in crop research, the farmer-directed WGRF now provides about a quarter of all funding for wheat and barley variety development in Western Canada. This level of investment gives farmers a huge equity position in one of the pivotal aspects of their business – the genetics of their crops.

This influence is compounded by the fact that farmer support, commonly referred to as “high-mileage dollars” by the research community, attracts more investment from other sources. Most WGRF contributions are matched by other funding agencies, such as the Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) Matching Investment Initiative.

As a partner in the research process, the Foundation brings together representatives from 18 major, widely diverse farmer organizations to direct farmer funding on a non-political basis that gains results for farmers.

This investment by western Canadian farmers is helping their industry keep pace with the global marketplace. Farmers in countries that compete with Canada, such as Australia, USA and Great Britain have significantly increased their check-offs for variety development research and now contribute at much higher levels than farmers in Canada.

Wheat Breeding Progress

The WGRF Wheat and Barley Check-off is actually two funds, one for wheat and one for barley. Breeding is a long-term process, with new varieties usually taking eight to 12 years to reach farmers. However, there is already significant progress from farmer funding including:

- New white-seeded wheat
- Resistance to Fusarium Head Blight
- Resistance to wheat midge
- New extra-strong durum
- Sprouting-resistant Canada Prairie Spring
- 10 to 15 percent higher yields
- New wheat nursery to screen lines for Fusarium Head Blight resistance.

Barley Breeding Progress

The WGRF Barley Check-off is \$0.40 per tonne, deducted

from CWB final payments to farmers in Saskatchewan and Manitoba. In Alberta, The Alberta Barley Commission administers its own provincially refundable check-off. In 2000, about \$0.6 million was allocated to barley research from the WGRF Check-off.

As in wheat, breeding barley in a long-term effort. Some of the major developments to date spurred by WGRF funding include:

- Superior malt successors to Harrington
- Hulless Barley with major yield and threshability gains
- Feed types with nutrition tailored to today’s livestock needs
- 10-15 percent high yields
- Resistance to scald net blotch
- New nursery to screen barley lines for Fusarium Head Blight resistance

WGRF Endowment Fund

Besides managing the Check-off, WGRF also administers the organization’s longest running research effort, the Endowment Fund. Those Fund projects are supported through the interest on a \$9 million nest egg turned over to western farmers by the federal government. Since 1983, the Endowment Fund has supported close to 200 projects worth nearly \$17 million. It currently generates up to \$750,000 annually. Nine new projects were recently approved for 2001.

Endowment funding is awarded based on two main considerations. One is the research priority of farmers and the second is where farmer dollars are most needed. The Board decides which projects are funded with advice from the Endowment Fund Advisory Committee, made up of farmers, researchers and other industry leaders on which your representative Keith Degenhardt sits.

Endowment Fund Progress

Some current projects underway:

- Report on the economic impact of herbicide tolerant wheat
- New quality criteria for developing high quality food oat
- Application of plant tissue culture to improvement of tolerance to Fusarium Head Blight toxins in barley
- Transfer of midge resistance in wheat
- Agronomic and greenhouse comparison of different nitrogen fertilizer management practices
- Identifying genome regions in wheat responsible for increasing yield

Representing Farmer Interests

The Foundation’s mandate is to fund research that benefits farmers. All funding decisions are made by farmer represen-

RESEARCH PROGRESS - CONT'D

tatives on the WGRF Board. Administrative costs are minimized in order to focus more money toward research. The Board also has an established process to monitor research progress.

As well, the Foundation is active in several other efforts in the goals of efficiency, effectiveness, fairness and equity in farmer-funded research. One example is the Foundation's effort to secure a tax credit for producers who contribute to research. The Foundation has pursued the issue with Revenue Canada for several years and is now working with that agency and other agriculture research funding organizations on the tax credit.

Get more information

The federal legislation that established the WGRF requires a significant communications effort to ensure accountability and help producers make informed decisions on their role in research. As a result, WGRF has developed an extensive communications program:

News releases and research reports – produced regularly and distributed to WGRF member organizations, media, extension, the research community and others in the industry.

Industry Report – Bi-monthly newsletter distributed to member organizations, extension, media and the research community.

Annual Report – outlines all Foundation activities and provides a financial breakdown; distributed to member organizations.

Web site: www.westergrains.com - includes all Foundation information and regular updates. Producers can access the site 24 hours a day.

Special Reports – independent reports on issues of impor-

tance to Prairie farmers are produced with WGRF support. “The New World of Wheat Breeding,” “The New World of Barley Breeding” and “A Special Report on Fusarium Head Blight” is available as well as the most recent report “How Western Grains are Registered.” Western Canadian farmers can receive these reports by sending a request stating name, mailing address, and phone number to the WGRF address at the bottom of this page.

Western Grains Research Foundation

Western Grains Research Foundation is funded by farmers and run by farmers. The organization is committed to sound fiscal management that will maximize dollars available for research by keeping administrative costs as low as possible. It is also committed to communications, keeping producer members aware of developments that have occurred as a result of Founding funding.

If you would like more information on where research funding has been allocated, projects funded, or further information on any aspect of WGRF, check the WGRF Web site at www.westergrains.com or contact the WGRF office. We welcome your comments, questions and suggestions.

Western Grains Research Foundation
210 – 111 Research Drive, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7N 3R3
Telephone: 306 975-0060
Fax: 306 975-0316
Web Site: www.westergrains.com

If you would like further information, you can also contact me, Keith Degenhardt either through the Wild rose office or directly at 780-856-2383 or e mail at kjdegen@telusplanet.net.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

IF YOU HAVE AN E-MAIL ADDRESS, PLEASE TAKE THE TIME TO LET THE OFFICE KNOW AND YOU CAN RECEIVE THE NEWSLETTER, NEWS RELEASES AND OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION THROUGH THIS METHOD.

**CALL NOW TO GET ON THE LIST.
PHONE: 1-877-451-5912 OR
E-MAIL: wrap@planet.eon.net**

AG SUMMIT 2000 – UPDATE

When Her Honor, the Honorable Lois Hole read the Speech from the Throne just prior to the announcement of the provincial election, the most important reference to agriculture consisted of follow-up to the Ag Summit process. Many of you participated in Ag Summit by attending local meetings. You heard that there was a need for the province to immediately address certain issues such as ILO's, land stewardship, lower taxes, adequate infrastructure along with longer term issues such as increased research and development and better consumer awareness.

A year has passed since the initial meetings took place and two reports have been generated, the latest seems to bear little resemblance to the issues that were raised in the producer attended meetings. Producers should avail themselves of the opportunity to contact their MLA's and obtain a copy of the most recent report and read through to see if this represents what you heard at the meetings.

GRAIN HANDLING AND TRANSPORTATION UPDATE

Studies, research, clarification and negotiation are the buzzwords when talking grain handling and transportation. Railways, the CWB and grain companies continue to define their roles while the CTA continues to try to catch up with proper regulations and interpretations. Freight rate reductions that we thought we would see have yet to occur, thereby highlighting the need for productivity sharing, a component the federal government rejected. Producers put a great deal of faith in the revamping of a system that would provide a revenue cap as well as competition in the rail and grain handling sectors. For the most part, the only item truly adopted has been the revenue cap, but without the other provisions to accompany it, it has become a revenue target with no method of encouraging either system efficiencies or economic savings.

There is much work that needs to be done. For example, there has been no appointment of a monitor and guidelines of authority for that monitor has yet to be determined. Fortunately, there has been no significant delays in the grain handling and transportation system to date this year as the volume of board and non-board grains delivered to port is above average.

DID YOU KNOW ...

- ◆ Input costs in Alberta have risen by 20% over the past five years, 6% above the national average.
- ◆ In 1998 Alberta's contribution to the GDP was \$2.7 billion or 21% versus \$3.3 billion or 26% for Ontario.
- ◆ A 454 g loaf of bread costs about \$1.00 and is made from 500 g of red spring wheat comprising about 60-65% of the total ingredients and worth about \$0.06.
- ◆ There were 59,007 farms in Alberta in 1996, a 30% decrease from 1951.
- ◆ Between 50 and 60% of government expenditures on agriculture in Alberta have been federal expenditures
- ◆ If a farmer were able to combine a strip of malt barley from BC to Ottawa and that malt barley was sold to a brewery, for each bushel sold to the brewery the farmer would receive about \$4.00 (before expenses). The governments would collect \$213 in tax retailers would receive \$193 per bushel. The breakdown would be 52% taxes, 47% to the retailers and 1% to the farmgate. In total about 5700 acres would have harvested generating approximately \$133 million in beer sales.
- ◆ Over 70% of the farms in Alberta reported gross sales of under \$100,000 in 1995.
- ◆ The average farm size was 881 acres in 1996, compared to 527 acres in 1951.
- ◆ Net farm income accounted for 21% of an average farm operator's total income in 1995. The other 79% was from off-farm employment and other sources of income.
- ◆ Since the late 1980's, Alberta's total farm debt has been the highest of any province in Canada.
- ◆ In 1999, for every dollar per capita Canadians spent on agriculture, the United States spent \$2.14, European Union residents \$2.06 and Japan \$3.47
- ◆ Of a glass of milk priced at \$1.50 in a restaurant, a producer receives only 16 cents
- ◆ In 1999, Canadians spent less than 10% of their personal income on food. This compares to 13.1% in France, 14.1% in Australia, 14.8% in Germany and 33.2% in Mexico.
- ◆ In 1999, farmers spent \$1.3 billion on pesticides, \$1.9 billion on fertilizer

ALBERTA FARM ANIMAL CARE (AFAC) ASSOCIATION

2000 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

AFAC Member & Industry Contact

Communication contacts with AFAC members, the ALERT Resource Team and industry contacts included several mail outs of brochures, reports, program notices, info releases and individual enquiries. The AFAC website (www.afac.ab.ca) was expanded and is continually upgraded.

Classroom Resources: Phase I and II

The Elementary Resource package was marketed at Teachers' Conventions in Calgary, Grande Prairie and Red Deer, and at Free and Easy in Edmonton. These were all booked in conjunction with Ag in the Classroom.

I CARE Program

AFAC's I CARE program and interactive display was set up at 10 major fairs and exhibition events throughout the province, reaching large numbers of children and adults with a clear message.

Animal Welfare and Transportation Research Project

AFAC received \$200,000, from the AAFRD Industry Development Fund, livestock-related research. The board decided to direct the funds to transportation research, an update of our 1994 Humane Transportation Review and industry-applied projects.

Bill C-17; Criminal Code Changes to Animal Cruelty

AFAC solicited legal input to the proposed federal legislative changes and prepared a position that was adopted by our counterpart organizations in Manitoba and Saskatchewan. The federal Minister of Agriculture later put forth a position based on this position. Several other national groups requested the background work and position statement for their groups.

Several of AFAC's key projects are funded by the Alberta Livestock Protection System (ALPS) program grant, together with industry support.

Livestock Care Conference, January 12, 2000 – Animal Welfare: the pressures, the legislation, the realities, (ALPS < AAFRD and Alberta SPCA funded)

The conference featured Dr. Temple Grandin, who highlighted her involvement with the new McDonald's animal welfare audits and protocol program and Dr. John Webster, who explained the developments in the EU.

ALERT Line (ALPS and industry funded)

AFAC continues to operate the 1-800 – 506-2273 line to respond to animal care concerns, 40 calls (compared to 44 in 1999, 35 in 1998, 37 in 1997 and 46 in 1996) were received and handled by the volunteer resource Team members throughout the province.

Farm Animal Welfare News (ALPS and other funding)

AFAC sought shared funding from a national animal welfare foundation to produce a report style newsletter that focuses on relevant research, issues and initiatives in farm animal welfare.

Alberta Livestock Protection System Workshop and Farm Tours

AFAC organized a workshop in March. It highlighted the accomplishments of ALPS and featured a round table discussion with Alberta SPCA constables to learn more about what they face on the front lines.

Benchmarking and Data Collection (ALPS funded)

Preliminary data for 1998 on the animal welfare performance of Alberta's livestock industry was completed. The inconsistency of the data sources made it difficult to interpret so no effort was made to release the information.

Alberta SPCA Enforcement Liaison (ALPS funded)

AFAC received and circulated, to respective livestock members, the 66 Warning Letters and Prosecution Summaries sent out by Alberta SPCA constables. These letters provided AFAC board members with an indication of the type and frequency of concerns regarding unfit farm animals at auction markets and provincial meat plants. AFAC maintains a database system to tabulate and cross-reference these letters.

Guidelines for Humane Handling of Unfit Livestock (ALPS and industry funded)

As a direct result of information gathered from the warning letters, 2 of AFAC's founding members (Alberta Pork and Alberta Milk Producers) are developing, with AFAC, specific guidelines and a communication strategy to improve the handling of unfit and cull animals.

Education and Training (ALPS and industry funded)

AFAC's Livestock Emergency Response Course is in demand throughout the province. It was featured on RDTV. Tim O'Bryne continues to offer the Cattle Hauling and Handling Course in Alberta. With AFAC staff, he helped develop and pilot the Hog Hauling and Handling Course manual and video, in partnership with Alberta Pork.

Issue Research and Reports (ALPS and industry funded)

The three reports completed in 1999, are now available on the AFAC website. The purpose of these reports is to provide the industry with a situational analysis of animal welfare concerns.

If you have any concerns or would like further information, please contact me, Keith Degenhardt, either through the Wild Rose office or directly at 780-856-2383.

Alberta Crop Break Even Tables—Revised

In the last edition of Wild Rose News there were a number of tables prepared by Alberta Agriculture pertaining to crop production in various counties throughout Alberta. I have taken the liberty of added some specific dollar figures to the cost and revenue projections. The important numbers are that for wheat there is a shortfall between \$20 and \$62 per acre. For barley, the shortfall is between \$30 and \$45 per acre. For canola, the shortfall ranges from \$66 to \$87 per acre.

The shortfalls are based on typical yields for 2000. It is important to note that the shortfalls can be more significant using the past 10 year average yields. Some input costs will have increased significantly for 2001 and projected commodity prices are about the same, or moderately increasing.

It is going to be very important for grain farmers to do a thorough analysis of their input costs prior to this coming spring. These numbers strongly present a case for the need of some type of floor price. The more I analyze the situation, the more I believe we need something comparable to the US loan deficiency program.

Canola Breakeven 2000	County of Foremost		County of Leduc	
	\$/Acre	Breakeven Bu/Ac to cover expenses	\$/Acre	Breakeven Bu/Ac to cover expenses
Seed	\$12.00		\$18.00	
Fertilizer	\$16.00		\$40.00	
Chemicals	\$20.00		\$25.00	
Other variable costs	\$59.61		\$62.13	
Total Variable costs	\$107.61	20.7	\$145.13	27.9
Total Fixed costs	\$41.50		\$67.00	
Total costs	\$149.11	28.7	\$212.13	40.8
Expected market price (\$/Bu.)		\$5.20		\$5.20
2000 estimated yield Bu/Ac		12.0		28.0
2000 return \$/ac	\$62.40		\$145.60	
shortfall based on 2000 yields	\$86.71	16.7	\$66.53	12.8
10 year average yield (1990-99)		21.5		29.1
10 year average re- turn \$/ac	\$111.80		\$151.32	
shortfall based on av- erage yield	\$37.31	7.2	\$60.81	11.7

Source: Economics Unit - Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development

Alberta Crop Break Even Tables—Revised

Wheat Breakeven 2000	County of Foremost		County of Leduc	
Direct Expenses	\$/Acre	Breakeven Bu/Ac to cover expenses	\$/Acre	Breakeven Bu/Ac to cover expenses
Seed	\$7.00		\$10.00	
Fertilizer	\$13.00		\$33.00	
Chemicals	\$15.00		\$25.00	
Other variable costs	\$57.63		\$60.77	
Total Variable costs	\$92.63	23.2	\$128.77	36.8
Total Fixed costs	\$41.50		\$67.00	
Total costs	\$134.13	33.5	\$195.77	55.9
Expected market price (\$/Bu.)		\$4.00		\$3.50
2000 estimated yield Bu/Ac		18.0		50.0
2000 return \$/ac	\$72.00		\$175.00	
shortfall based on 2000 yields	\$62.13	15.5	\$20.77	5.9
10 year average yield (1990-99)		32.2		45.2
10 year average return \$/ac	\$128.80		\$158.20	
shortfall based on aver- age yield	\$5.33	1.3	\$37.57	10.7

Source: Economics Unit - Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development

PROVINCIAL ELECTION

As the provincial election unfolds, all members are encouraged to take the time to ensure that the candidates in their riding realize the importance of agriculture. Wild Rose Agricultural Producers have sent the following questions to each of the parties and will be attempting to make public the responses during the campaign. Please feel free to use these as a basis for your discussions with the candidates.

Net Income Stabilization Program (NISA)

The Alberta government has not participated in the NISA program since 1997. All the other provinces have continued to cooperate with the federal government by sharing government matching contributions to NISA. More than 25,000 producers in Alberta continue to participate in NISA. With the recent inclusion of cattle sales the number of NISA accounts is likely to increase. Wild Rose Agricultural Producers believes that these producers should be supported by the provincial government participating fully in the NISA program.

Question:

Will you and your party support the Government of Alberta becoming a full participant in NISA as they were prior to 1997?

Occupiers Liability Legislation

As the respect for private property rights declines and more people trespass on private farmland, landowners should be protected from being liable when an injury or damage is sustained by the trespasser. Wild Rose Agricultural Producers believes that the Government of Alberta has a responsibility to protect deeded landowners harmless from liability actions when someone trespasses on their property.

Question:

Will you and your party support the introduction of occupier's liability legislation that will adequately protect all landowners in such circumstances?

Farm Safety Nets

Farming involves a lot of risks. On their own, farmers have no ability to protect themselves from some of these risks. Since the mid 1980's Alberta's total farm debt has been the highest in Canada. In the last five years, Alberta farmers faced the largest increase in input costs, rising over 20%, that is 6% above the national average. Acreage payments for all farmers are acceptable when addressing low commodity prices and the low farm income crisis in general. They do, however, highlight the shortfalls of the current safety net package.

Question:

Will your party make a commitment to Alberta farmers that they will quickly make changes in the safety net programs that will give farmers the opportunity to adequately protect themselves from rising input costs, low commodity prices and unpredictable weather circumstances?

Educational tax on farmland

Farmland is no longer an appropriate method of raising taxes for educational funding.

Question:

Will your party make a commitment to exempt farm land from educational property-tax?

General Farm Organization funding

Commodity specific farm organizations in Alberta are eligible to obtain check-off levies from producers. Farm organizations that are not commodity specific have no ability to do something similar. Alberta is the one of the few provinces where a general farm organization does not have some sort of check-off levy.

Question:

Will your party support the introduction of legislation that would provide for stable funding for general farm organizations in Alberta?

Fertilizer Rebate Program

Nitrogen is a necessary nutrient for crop production. The cost of nitrogen fertilizer has skyrocketed during the past year in large part due to increased natural gas prices. When addressing input costs such a fertilizer, acreage payments should not be used because of different farm operations and consumption. When similar circumstances occurred in the early to mid 1980's the Alberta government had an effective fertilizer the rebate program.

Question:

Will your party support the reinstatement of a farm fertilizer rebate program effective for the 2001 crop?

Surface Rights

There has been, and will continue to be significant seismic, oil, gas, and pipeline activity impacting agricultural lands.

Question:

Will your party review surface rights legislation and regulations with a view to ensuring land values more accurately reflect industrial versus agricultural, and that inflation, inputs costs, productivity, and environmental concerns are more adequately addressed in compensation?

Intensive Livestock Operations

If Intensive Livestock Operations as promoted by Alberta Agriculture are a major component of a thriving agriculture industry are you and your party willing to support this industry by ensuring steps are taken to give all stakeholders confidence in the approval, monitoring, and compliance process? Further with the perceived conflict in Alberta Agriculture between promotion and being involved with monitoring, compliance, and enforcement are you and your party willing to commit financially to a third party to carry on these roles?

SUBMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE LIVESTOCK OPERATIONS

BY DR. KEITH DEGENHARDT

The Code of Practice needs to address, in a meaningful, scientifically justifiable and sustainable manner, the issues pertaining to the health of our soil, air, water, livestock and people. If this occurs, the stakeholders in the ILO industry will have the confidence to proceed and the industry will grow.

Basic premises:

- 1) The Code of Practice should be scientifically justifiable and sustainable. In some areas the 2000 Code of Practice is still inadequate. E.g.: 100 years separation between manure storage sites and the water table could be more acceptable than the current 1 to 10 years. By having this degree of separation, the code would confirm that Alberta producers are serious about being in the industry for the long term, and they are serious about maintaining water quality within the area. This could calm the concerns many have of ILO".
- 2) Technical recommendations from Alberta Agriculture must be supported by the appropriate professional expertise. For example, engineers should be making recommendations on engineering aspects, and agronomists on agronomy aspects. Although this may sound like a "no brainer", it has not always been the practice in the past. In the approval process, all sides should be prepared when questioning specific technical issues, to have it examined by, and recommendations given by experts in that area. Then, if further disagreements occur, these could be resolved by referring to the appropriate peer body.
- 3) Compliance to the ILO's permit, and monitoring of the ILO in the construction, operation, and future expansion phases has to be part of the sustainable management of the livestock industry. At this point there is no consistency of who monitors or even if monitoring occurs across Alberta. In the intensive livestock industry, as with any industry, when there is no consistency, the players are very hesitant to comply. By having a set of standards the industry has to meet, or exceed, with monitoring in place, the ILO industry will succeed. The monitoring must look at soil, water and air quality before and during construction. Once the ILO is operating, this information will supply a baseline to compare to when monitoring for compromises to the health of air, water, or soil. The baseline will allow the permitting authority to give guidance on acceptable nutrient application rates.
- 4) On-going education and training through municipal and provincial courses to foster cooperative attitudes among the stakeholders in the ILO industry, to ensure a thriving industry. By having the industry operators, the monitors, and interested parties involved with on-going training, there will be secondary benefit of the participants getting to know one another, which enables better working together. The courses should be geared to give everyone a working knowledge of the present state of the industry. From this stepping stone, courses could look at the different advances made to improve the system.
- 5) If non-compliance occurs in construction, operation, or expansion, there has to be known consequences. At present, consequences are relatively unknown, administered by different agencies, and inconsistent from incident to incident. This has resulted, for example, in some situations such as contamination of a stream where there has been a relatively large financial consequence which was both unexpected and resulted in hardship. The stakeholders in the ILO industry need to be brought together to develop known, logical consequences that they can relate to.
- 6) To ensure confidence of the stakeholders, there has to be a consistency between the code of practice and any municipal regulations to set the standards in the industry. Without this consistency, the stakeholders will often end up at odds with each other. As has been shown in the present approval process, it can be long, drawn out, expensive for all parties, and highly disruptive of community relations, yielding results that stakeholders question.
- 7) There has to be a knowledgeable, well-trained group of monitors that stakeholders will have faith in. This would ensure the long-term viability of the ILO industry by reducing friction among the stakeholders. This group should be able to draw on the resources of Alberta Health, Alberta Environment, and Alberta Agriculture to test for soil, air and water quality. They would also be responsible for establishing the baselines for the different ILO's and maintaining a data stream on the ongoing operations. If they find non-compliance there should be a well-defined set of procedures for them to go through with the ILO to obtain compliance.
- 8) The local governments need to retain the ability to make the final decision on the ILO's in their jurisdiction but also require the tools and knowledge to make a decision that will stand the test of time. Further they need the tools to monitor and enforce their decision.

WILD ROSE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCERS DIRECTORY OF OFFICIALS

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