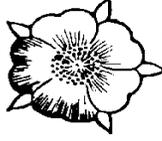


WILD ROSE



NEWS

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

HIGHLIGHTS OF PRESIDENTS REPORT TO CONVENTION 2003 BY NEIL WAGSTAFF

2002 was a year of too's

- Too dry and too wet
- Too cold and too hot
- Harvest was too late: For those who were fortunate enough to have a crop to harvest.
- Prices were too high for those who were buying and too low for many who were selling.
- For too many, it was just too much like last year!

I don't think it's necessary to continue to outline all the frustrations that Alberta farmers have had to face in the last year but it has been one the most difficult years ever faced by many farmers. Hopefully this is the end of the terrible twos.

Importance of Safety Net Programs

On more than one occasion reporters have asked me; "Is this the worst year that farmers have ever faced?" I at times have had difficulty dealing with this question because certainly records show that we have experienced some of the most adverse weather in the past 100 years but at the same time so far we have not experienced the financial devastation that happened to many during the 1930's. This is partly due to the fact that

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT – CONT'D

our current agricultural practices are quite different but I think we must acknowledge that despite the inadequacies of our Safety Net programs they have provided a lot of important support.

Stop and think for a moment about what the impact of the past few years adverse conditions would have meant to many producers if we had not had; Crop Insurance, NISA, disaster assistance programs such as FIDP and CFIP, as well as other ad hoc government support programs and payments.

During the winter of 1996 when I traveled in Queensland Australia I personally observed what can happen when you have 4 years of consecutive drought conditions and very little government support. There were huge areas where the majority of the modern farmsteads had been abandoned. By 1996 the drought was over but these areas had been totally devastated and no one wanted to take the risk of re-establishing these farms. There are many parts of Alberta where these same circumstances could have happened by now if we had not had government supported Safety Net programs.

For those of us who have lived in Alberta for any length of time, we know that the weather in Alberta is extremely variable. History has shown us that we can have periods of adverse weather and drought followed by periods of ideal growing conditions. The marketplace can also have surprises brought about by conditions totally unexpected and out of the control of producers. September the 11th last year made us realize this even more.

I'm very troubled when I observe government officials and some farm organizations who do not understand the importance and value that our safety net programs provide to the long-term security and viability of rural communities on the prairies. Yes, there are some senior people in government, and yes, there are some so called farm organizations, who would like to significantly reduce or eliminate all government support to agriculture in Canada.

The future of Wild Rose Agricultural Producers

There is another too I would like to talk about that has to do with the future of Wild Rose Agricultural Producers.

- **Too little resources to do all the things that should be done on behalf of Alberta farmers.**

This is primarily the result of our inability to significantly expand our membership under our existing voluntary membership structure. This has been an ongoing and

continuous frustration.

Before I go any further, I want to make it very clear that I believe that Wild Rose has been able to do a tremendous job with very limited financial resources. When you study our financial statement you'll realize just how precarious and limited our financial capabilities are. Your board has had to operate in a very frugal manner and all too often have had to decide to not participate or to not do things because we merely could not afford to do them. During the past year Wild Rose has had a lot of pressure on us to do things that we were just not able to do. However, when I see what many other provincial general farm organizations are doing across this country, I realize there is far more that could and should be done. For the past two or three years I have been expressing concern about our organization's long-term financial security. For some time now it has been obvious that we need to significantly increase our membership if we are going to maintain our current type of operation level or before we can undertake new endeavors.

With new legislation in Prince Edward Island, **Wild Rose is now definitely the only major provincial general farm organization in Canada that strictly relies on voluntary membership for its financial resources.** It may now be time to rethink whether the individual farm unit, voluntary membership structure we currently have, will ever be capable of supporting a strong general farm organization in Alberta like every other province has in this country.

Now a quick review of some activities during the past year

The effect of the continuing and more widespread drought and other plagues that most Alberta farmers have had to deal with to some degree has had a big impact on Wild Rose's operation during the past year.

There should be no doubt in anyone's mind after this past summer and fall that **Wild Rose is truly the voice of agricultural producers in this province.** The media has continually relied on us for comments, Agricultural story ideas and arrangements for interviews. This is a very important role for Wild Rose Agricultural Producers because the public needs to better understand agricultural issues but at times it has overwhelmed us.

During early summer we were approached by many individuals wondering how they could help farmers in their own small way financially. This inspired us to contact several other Alberta commodity groups, which ulti-

PRESIDENT'S REPORT – CONT'D

mately led to the establishment of the Drought Aid 2002 Fund.

A very significant event for agriculture in this country took place in June when the federal and provincial Ag ministers undertook the signing of the Agricultural Policy Framework (APF). This is the first time in Canada that we have ever had such a long-term financial commitment for Agricultural Program funding and support. Unfortunately, the amount of money committed may still be inadequate and the development of new programs generally agreed to has had a lot of problems. A tremendous amount of my time during the spring, summer and fall has been dedicated to representing Alberta farmers interests in the ongoing negotiations and development of the Business Risk Management component of the APF. I want to spend a little time talking about this.

I'm not going to get into the particular details of the so-called new or enhanced NISA program other than to say that there is a huge difference between what government officials believe is an appropriate new program and what farm organizations across this country want as a beneficial program for producers. Provincial general farm organizations and National commodity groups have been working hard together to try and make sure that we don't end up with an unsatisfactory new Safety Net program. To date this has not yet been fully accomplished.

The consulting, negotiating and lobbying that has been required to get a Producers perspective incorporated into new programming is a real good example of why it is necessary for primary agricultural producers to participate in and support strong provincially based general farm organizations. ***On many occasions, I have found myself in circumstances where I have been the only Alberta farmer representing farmers' interests at important national decision making meetings! Unfortunately, there have also been times when Alberta farmers have had no representation at very important meetings.***

I just have to keep asking myself and I ask you, ***why do Alberta farmers continue to let our fellow farmers from other parts the country control and dominate the Agricultural agenda in Canada when we produce 25% to the agricultural production?***

Our Membership in the Canadian Federation of Agriculture

Wild Rose is fortunate to be involved with the Canadian Federation of Agriculture as an associate member. We have a special status that allows us to participate almost as a full member but at a reduced associate membership fee. At times this has become an irritant with other CFA members and should be an absolute embarrassment to Alberta producers and the Alberta government.

The Canadian Federation of Agriculture (CFA) membership directly represents all commodities produced in Canada except for beef cattle. Also, each province's general farm organization is a member of CFA. With this in mind, **CFA really represents all primary agricultural producers and is recognized nationally and internationally as the voice for Canadian agricultural producers.**

We rely on CFA to represent Alberta farmers on many issues at the federal and international level. Led by CFA president Bob Friesen, CFA staff and other member representatives are doing a remarkable job of representing the interests of Canadian farmers at International trade negotiations.

It has been a privilege and an enjoyable experience serving as your president for my third year. It certainly has its challenges and involves a lot of time away from home and away from the farm. I've had the opportunity to get to know leaders of farm organizations from across the country and internationally. I have traveled from one corner to the other of this great province during the past year and I have met farmers both large and small who produce many different commodities.

I would like to end my report by thanking our executive director, Rod Scarlett, and all the other Board of Directors for their support and help during the past year. It has again truly been a team effort.

Our annual general meeting is an important event because it provides policy guidance and direction to your board directors for the coming year. It gives members an opportunity to give your board of directors feedback on issues that are significant to Alberta farmers and ranchers.

(On February 25, 2003, Vice-President Keith Degenhardt presented the following at the request of the Senate Agriculture and Forestry Committee)

Wild Rose Agriculture Producers is the general farm organization in Alberta. It represents farm families from all over Alberta who are involved in all types of agriculture.

Alberta farmers have experienced unbelievable extremes in weather over the last decade. The latest affront was 2002 with the worst drought in 120 years in the majority of Alberta, and flood conditions south of Highway 1, which had seen devastating drought for the previous 3 years.

The most common observation of farmers over the last decade, other than summer weather extremes, has been our unusually warm dry winters. To farmers, the concept of climate change and how it will affect our livelihood is what we live with season to season.

The international community and our federal government have accepted the premise that our climate is changing. I see evidence of this in the signing of the Kyoto protocol, the work being initiated on best management practices that reduce greenhouse gases, and the plans for a Domestic Emissions Trading (DET) system. These, along with the extra pressure resulting from extreme weather, are issues farmers will have to deal with over the next decades.

Farmers will want to work with the scientific community, governments, and agri-industry in trying to develop technologies to offset the risks related to climate change. Working with farmers, and making use of their on-the-ground knowledge will be very important. An example of this gone

wrong occurred in southern Alberta this past year. The Alberta Government, with financial assistance from Ottawa, utilized satellite imagery to determine vegetative production on pastures in southern Alberta for pasture insurance. Producers with pastures devastated by drought for more than 3 years grew abundant, dense crops of tansy mustard, which is unpalatable to livestock, but very little grass with this year's rain. They found that under the pasture insurance program they did not qualify for pasture insurance because the satellite imagery showed they had tremendous production. The word "ground truth" had not occurred to the people administering this program. Agriculture is a high-risk business that does not need lack of communication and practical knowledge to impede it.

We do, however, need to determine, with strong support from government and agri-industry, the impacts of climate change in agriculture. If we can obtain this knowledge, we then need to incorporate the information regionally in order to minimize the effect of climate change. One example of this is the ongoing studies showing N₂O release on the prairies to be significantly less than previously reported from research in Eastern Canada. Soil scientists think the drier prairie climate may explain the lower emissions. The discrepancy could increase with climate change.

The new carbon market may have both positive and negative effects on agriculture. In developing this market there will have to be some major thought put to developing incentives to encourage industries that purchase carbon credits to look first at reducing CO₂ and second at purchasing CO₂ credits. Farmers involved in carbon trading will have to be rewarded in some manner for early adoption of soil conservation

and CO₂ sequestration, otherwise carbon trading may be a disincentive resulting in farmers changing away from minimum or zero-till and perennial forages, then returning to it for credit. Finally, there is the question of ownership. Wild Rose's policy is that the farmer should own the rights to carbon stored in his soil. For the farmer, this is a "no-brainer" since they have management responsibility over the soil carbon stocks.

With greater risks to farmers from climate change, our safety nets need to be strengthened, not weakened. Farmers are being asked to invest more in their safety nets, but are not convinced that they will be getting better or even equal coverage from their investments. Programs need to be effective and affordable to the farmer. While saving money from the public purse may be commendable in the short term, the long-term effects may be very negative if the viability of the family farm is lost. With the new program farmers will be looking at obtaining the best bang for their buck.

In minimizing the impact of climate change farmers will cooperate and adopt both technology and best management practices at ever increasing rates, especially when it is in their long-term best interest. With our much milder winters, and drier, hot summers this past decade we have had different pests increase dramatically. We have had the orange blossom wheat midge move north to the Canadian prairies, grasshopper numbers increase dramatically, and a change in fungal, bacterial and viral disease complexes. This has and will result in an increase and greater flexibility in how farmers, agri-industry and governments are investing in research. An example of the increased flexibility is the major dollars being invested federally, provincially and by

AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY COMMITTEE—CONT'D

farmers through the Western Grains Research Foundation Wheat and barley check-offs on fusarium and wheat midge research. With climate change, farmers will be looking more than ever at research directed at reducing their inputs while increasing their returns. Research aimed at long-term rotations, drought tolerant crops and varieties, and the interactions between annuals, perennials and livestock in weed control will need to have greater emphasis.

In mitigating climate change farmers will be very quick to adopt alternative energy sources. Farmers are using both solar and wind energy in remote locations at pre-

sent. Many of them with rising energy costs are studying the feasibility of being net suppliers of energy. If there is the political will and investment by all parties, alternative energy production in rural Canada could be a great boon to all and have a major impact on our Kyoto commitment.

Climate change is going to put a great deal of pressure on agriculture. Hopefully our responses will help to alleviate these pressures. It will be in the best interest of humanity.

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CANADIAN FEDERATION OF AGRICULTURE AGM BY NEIL WAGSTAFF

President Neil Wagstaff, Vice-President Bill Dobson and Executive Director Rod Scarlett attended the Canadian Federation of Agriculture (CFA) Annual General Meeting held in Vancouver on February 25th to 28. This year's theme was, Agriculture: Beyond Canada's Borders which was very appropriate considering the time that was spent on international trade issues and the recently released World Trade Organization chairman's Agriculture Modalities' Paper. The other issue which received considerable attention was the proposed in new safety net program referred to as the enhanced NISA program.

The chairman of Agriculture Negotiations for the World Trade Organization (WTO) Mr. Harbinson released a first draft of an Agreement for Negotiations on Agriculture on February 17. There were a number of suggestions contained in this proposal that could seriously affect or change Agriculture in Canada. Two significant parts of Canadian agriculture that would be impacted if this paper were adopted would be our supply management system and the Canadian Wheat Board.

Other topics related to trade that were on the agenda were:

- The Canadian Grain Commission proposal to

change our grain classification system.

- The United States plan for Country of Origin Labeling.
- The North American Free Trade Agreement which was the topic of a guest speaker, Jeffrey Jones who is Senator for the state of Chihuahua, Mexico.

The Canadian Federation of Agriculture is very involved in representing Canadian farmers at international trade negotiations. CFA President, Bob Friesen, is well respected around the world when it comes to international trade issues. This demonstrated by the fact that he is the Chairman of the Trade Committee for the International Federation of Agricultural Producers.

Throughout the convention there was considerable ongoing discussion concerning proposed changes to Safety Net programming. All CFA members seemed to be highly concerned about the structure and details of the new enhanced NISA program being put forward by the federal and provincial governments. A number of resolutions were passed concerning safety nets including requests to maintain NISA and disaster assistance programs as they currently are for the 2003 production year in order to provide time to properly designed effective

ANALYSIS OF THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA'S "STRAIGHT AHEAD—A VISION FOR TRANSPORTATION IN CANADA"

On February 25, 2003 Transport Minister David Collenette released a long awaited transportation policy document. Wild Rose, along with many other farm groups in Western Canada, had been hoping for some significant changes as it pertains to rail transportation. Many of these changes date back to the Kroeger process where Wild Rose had been a major player in bringing forward a revenue cap, a cap whose effectiveness is contingent on competition in the rail sector. The following is a synopsis done by the Canadian Wheat Board on what was requested by shippers and what was announced.

WHAT SHIPPERS REQUESTED IN THE NEW LEGISLATION

Running Rights

1. The running rights provisions of the *Canada Transportation Act (CTA)* must include the right of an applicant railway to solicit business along the lines of the host railway to ensure its effectiveness as a competitive access remedy.
2. The definition of applicant contained in the legislation must be broadened to include any person to ensure that a customer seeking lower rates and/or better service is not placed in the position of relying on a short line railway to apply for running rights.
3. A reverse onus public interest test for the granting of running rights must be incorporated into the legislation.
4. Access to running rights provisions must not be contingent on a pre-existing service or rate problem.
5. If the host railway and the applicant railway are unable to successfully negotiate reasonable access fees, the Canadian Transportation Agency must be responsible for determining access fees. These fees should be based on the cost of the service being provided by the host for that particular line plus a reasonable profit.

WHAT SHIPPERS RECEIVED IN THE PROPOSED LEGISLATION

- The Government of Canada (GOC) recommends retaining the current running rights provisions. This means that applicants will not be allowed to solicit traffic and that non-federal railways or non-railways will be excluded from applying for running rights. In addition, the onus to prove that running rights is in the public interest remains with the applicant railway.
- The GOC's news release notes that "the Canadian Transportation Agency has determined that running rights are available as an extraordinary remedy if there is evidence of market abuse or failure and that the current provision does not allow a guest railway to solicit traffic on the line of the "host" railway. If this opinion is upheld, it is of serious concern to shippers, as it reduces the usefulness of running rights as a competitive tool.

WHAT SHIPPERS REQUESTED IN THE NEW LEGISLATION

Level of Service (LOS)

1. Current legislative provisions are generally satisfactory and should be retained in the legislation.
2. The requirement that a shipper prove "substantial commercial harm" as a precondition to seeking recourse through these provisions must be eliminated.

WHAT SHIPPERS RECEIVED IN THE PROPOSED LEGISLATION

- The GOC recommends retaining the current level of service provisions.
- LOS provisions could be more effective for shippers in the new legislation if the GOC's recommendation that the requirement for the shipper to prove "substantial commercial harm" be removed is acted upon. This would ensure that recourse is not predicated on a shipper proving substantial harm.
-

WHAT SHIPPERS REQUESTED IN THE NEW LEGISLATION

Revenue Cap

1. Retain the revenue cap until effective competition is introduced between the railways.
2. Repeal the legislative provisions that allow the railways to deduct items, such as Industrial Development Funds

ANALYSIS—CONTINUED

(IDF) which are not shared with farmers, from railway revenues.

3. Legislate the Agency to undertake a costing review to ensure that appropriate costs are included in the determination of the railways' revenue caps and that productivity savings are passed back to shippers.

WHAT SHIPPERS RECEIVED IN THE PROPOSED LEGISLATION

- No removal of the revenue cap is recommended at this time nor does the GOC recommend any changes to the legislation governing the revenue cap.
- The GOC notes that it will continue to monitor the impact of its May 2000 grain policy reforms before making decisions on further policy changes.

WHAT SHIPPERS REQUESTED IN THE NEW LEGISLATION

Rail Infrastructure

1. The definition of 'railway line' (as defined in Legislation) must be amended to include yard tracks, sidings where farmers load producer cars, elevator tracks, switches, and interchange track required for the continuation of effective railway operations.

Legislation must also provide for a process whereby interested parties could purchase this infrastructure if economics supported retaining the siding.

WHAT SHIPPERS RECEIVED IN THE PROPOSED LEGISLATION

The GOC recommends requiring the railways to publish a list of sidings available for loading grain producer cars and to give a 60-day public notice before removing such sidings from operation. The recommendation does not require the railways to follow a formal process when discontinuing service to these sites (as is required for grain-dependent branch lines).

- Furthermore, this recommendation applies only to producer loading sites and does not apply to other railway infrastructure, such as switches, interchange track, etc., that is critical to providing future railways service to western communities.
- There is no recognition of the importance of maintaining existing rail infrastructure to the preservation of competition in the handling sector (via producer car loading) and to future value-added industry in western Canadian communities.

WHAT SHIPPERS REQUESTED IN THE NEW LEGISLATION

Final Offer Arbitration

1. Shippers generally find the existing final offer arbitration (FOA) provisions to be satisfactory. No changes to these clauses should be contemplated in the new amendments to the Act.

WHAT SHIPPERS RECEIVED IN THE PROPOSED LEGISLATION

- The GOC recommends amending existing FOA provisions to make shipper access to alternative, effective, adequate and competitive means of transportation a factor in the arbitrator's decision in FOA disputes involving freight valued at under \$750,000. Shippers fought to have this requirement removed in the Kroeger process. Adding this provision back into the legislation places another hurdle that shippers must overcome in order to seek recourse against the abuse of railway market power.

HIGHLIGHTS OF PRESIDENTS CLOSING REMARKS – 2003 CONVENTION

WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD FOR WILD ROSE?

BY NEIL WAGSTAFF

I will first respond to the questions and comments about the need to investigate the possibility of re-organizing our Provincial General Farm Organization in some fashion similar to what they have done in Saskatchewan.

Over the past two years Saskatchewan has gone from having no general farm organization to having a well funded, well-organized and effective Agricultural Producers' Association of Saskatchewan commonly called APAS. APAS was organized when a number of municipal districts decided it was important to form a general farm organization. Each individual municipal district decides whether they will become a member of APAS either by a plebiscite of producers or by a municipal council decision. Each municipal district looks after the selection of a delegate and contributes a membership fee to the provincial organization. The membership fee is raised from an acreage levy or through regular property taxes. The amount of the levy varies but is equivalent to between 5 and 10¢ per acre. Keep in mind that municipal districts in Saskatchewan are very small compared to Alberta. Currently nearly half of the municipal districts in Saskatchewan have decided to participate as members of APAS.

APAS has become a full paid a member of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture. They have an office and a staff of five and have engaged other individuals on consulting contracts.

It is important that Alberta producers better understand the implications to them of not having as strong a farm organization as our neighboring province and other provinces like Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec. Alberta definitely needs a better funded and more broadly supported farm organization that has similar capabilities as our equivalent organizations do in other provinces.

The coming months will be very busy and challenging for Wild Rose. At the top of the agenda will be the development of a new Safety Net program. It will be important to get this right for producers because it will be the program we have for the next five years or more.

During the next few months, there will also be program development for the other components of the Agricultural Policy Framework. Two big issues will be in the area of on farm food safety and environmental protection. These issues will make it even more necessary to promote and protect the rights of landowners and producers.

The oil and gas industry will continue to flourish in Alberta and will continue to create conflict with surface owners and/or farm operators.

There will continue to be a need to better inform the non-farming public about agricultural practices and issues.

Wild Rose also needs to continue to take a leadership role in getting the many other farm groups in Alberta working together on issues of common concern.

All levels of government will continue to be involved in agriculture and will continue to propose new legislation and regulations that affect farmers and ranchers. **We need to be constantly vigilant in looking out for the best interests of all Alberta farmers.**

The big challenge that we face as an organization is:

CLOSING REMARKS—CONT'D

How do we strengthen our resources so that we are better able to tackle more of the issues facing agricultural producers in Alberta?

In the short term, it is critical for us to improve our financial position. We somehow have to figure out a way to get a larger percentage of Alberta farmers as supporting members. During the early winter months we must undertake an aggressive membership campaign. To be successful this will require some special effort by all existing members.

So as I have done in the past two years at this time, I plead with you to please make an effort to get your neighbors and friends to support Wild Rose Agricultural producers by becoming members.

We must also continue to try to convince the legislators in this province that it is important for Alberta farmers to have a general farm organization in Alberta that is as strong as the farm organizations are in other provinces.

We will also need to continue to review and assess our organizational structure and way of operating.

We have a big job ahead of us to maintain and strengthen Alberta's' general farm organization. The board of directors and myself cannot do this alone. We need the help of all dedicated members when it comes to expanding membership and convincing government what is best for Alberta farmers.

2002 was certainly a challenging year for Alberta farmers and I hope that 2003 will be a lot better and more prosperous year for all.

Attention Wild Rose Members

We are very pleased to once again set up an information booth at the Northlands Farm and Ranch Show March 26 to 29, 2003. Please stop by and talk to one of our representatives on issues that concern you.

Alberta Farm Income (\$ Thousands), 1998-2002

	1998	1999r	2000r	2001r	2002f	Five-Year Average 1998-2002
	\$Thousands					
Total Farm Cash Receipts (1)	6,429,804	6,488,906	7,527,603	8,307,051	8,079,107	7,366,494
- Farm Operating Expenses (2)	5,118,956	5,524,258	5,981,758	6,188,171	5,753,527	5,713,334
= Net Cash Income	1,310,848	964,648	1,545,845	2,118,880	2,325,580	1,653,160
+ Income in Kind	14,490	16,117	16,020	16,904	15,774	15,861
- Depreciation Charges	965,439	998,209	1,005,036	1,030,461	1,037,624	1,007,354
= Realized Net Income	359,899	-17,444	556,829	1,105,323	1,303,730	661,667
+ Value of Inventory Change	-26,804	450,863	-128,073	-330,211	-893,105	-185,466
= Total Net Income	333,095	433,419	428,756	775,112	410,625	476,201
	% Change From Previ- ous Year					
Total Farm Cash Receipts (1)	-0.5	0.9	16.0	10.4	-2.7	
- Farm Operating Expenses (2)	2.7	7.9	8.3	3.5	-7.0	
= Net Cash Income	-11.2	-26.4	60.2	37.1	9.8	
+ Income in Kind	-9.1	11.2	-0.6	5.5	-6.7	
- Depreciation Charges	5.4	3.4	0.7	2.5	0.7	
= Realized Net Income	-37.6	-104.8	3,292.1	98.5	18.0	
+ Value of Inventory Change	-74.1	-1,782.1	-128.4	157.8	170.5	
= Total Net Income	-29.6	30.1	-1.1	80.8	-47.0	

r - revised

f - forecast estimates released by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada on November 21, 2002 (actual 2002 estimates will be released on May 27, 2003).

(1) Includes direct program payments.

(2) Expenses are after rebates.

Source: Statistics Canada; Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada; and Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development

WILD ROSE AGRICULTURE PRODUCERS RESOLUTIONS FROM THE CONVENTION

2003 – 1

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the existing Net Income Stabilization Program (NISA) be maintained until appropriate changes can be made that are acceptable to producers.

2003 – 2

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Wild Rose Agricultural Producers, in conjunction with other general farm organizations across Canada, produce a comparison of crop insurance in the different provinces to identify the best program possible.

2003 – 3

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Wild Rose Agricultural Producers lobby the Federal government for the following changes to taxation policy:

- a) Bring back the full first-year depreciation rates on capital cost allowance for items used to grow food and produce.
- b) Increase the deduction for small tools to \$1000 from the present \$200 and index it to inflation for future years
- c) Reinstate the five year block averaging provisions in the income tax for farmers.

2003 – 4

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Wild Rose Agricultural Producers investigate the feasibility of developing a province-wide data base on oil and gas leases to include initial and rental compensation payments. This data base would serve as a reference resource for land owners in dealing with oil and gas companies.

2003 – 5

BE IT RESOLVED THAT

- a) the WRAP web site, www.wrap.ab.ca, be maintained current and active;
- b) sub-sections of the web site have:
 - v chronological information on issues being addressed by the executive of WRAP;
 - v a diary of significant meetings attended by provincial executive members;
 - v monthly 'electronic newsletters', with each 'electronic newsletter' having brief and concise commentary from the President;
- c) news information be regularly circulated to members via e-mail;
- d) members be given the opportunity to express concerns on issues, and to respond to fact finding questionnaires, via e-mail.
- e) Resolutions passed at the Annual Convention be made available to members through the web site and through e-mail communication with members
- f) members be encouraged to give input to the substance of the resolutions via e-mail, and other means of communication, including an open request for input and questionnaires.

2003 – 6

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Wild Rose Agricultural Producers request Agricultural Financial Services Corporation to actively market the Canada-Alberta Crop Insurance program for 2003, with marketing to include effective advertising, holding informative sessions for groups of farmers, and providing individual farmers with relevant data to enable them to make informed assessments regarding the benefits of Crop Insurance in their individual Risk Management Plans.

2003 – 7

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Wild Rose Agricultural Producers lobby the Federal Government to reinstate the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration/Act - Rural Water Development Program (PFRA - RWDP) with it's historic function of assisting individual farmers in Alberta, both monetary and technically, with their water development projects.

CONVENTION CONT'D

2003 – 8

BE IT RESOLVED THAT at the Summer Council meeting of Wild Rose Agricultural Producers, an “open session” be advertised and held for farmers and other interested parties, with the “open session” to include opportunities for attendees to voice issues and concerns relevant to Wild Rose Agricultural Producers, and opportunities for WRAP Executive Members and Directors to inform attendees of the business being conducted by the association on the behalf of Alberta farmers.

2003 - 9

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Canadian Grain Commission be required to carry a bond or some type of insurance so that producers will be fully protected when a company licensed by the Commission goes into receivership.

2003 –10

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Wild Rose Agricultural Producers encourage the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development to enact the recommendations of the Alberta Crop Insurance Review Committee done in 2000.

2003 – 11

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Wild Rose Agricultural Producers urge the provincial government discontinue the current exemption policy for farm residences on the condition that farmland would no longer be taxed for educational purposes.

2003 – 12

BE IT RESOLVED THAT if new Agricultural Policy Framework programs for Business Risk Management are not in place by February 1, 2003, then existing safety net programs need to stay into effect for 2003.

2003 – 13

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Minister of Agriculture and Agrifood ensures that carbon credits are owned by the landowners.

2003 – 14

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Wild Rose Agricultural Producer ask the Alberta Government to implement a program whereby if the grasshopper forecast done by Alberta Agriculture indicates a severe outbreak is possible in any certain municipal districts counties and special areas, that, at the request of the municipality, a cost shared program of grid based grasshopper control be implemented, by the use of a bait based system The aim of such a program is to reduce the overall numbers of grasshoppers in a affected area.

2003 – 15

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Wild Rose Agricultural Producers ensure that in cases where Agriculture Financial Services Corporation uses GPS technology to reduce the acres insured under a producers contract, where it can be shown that if the producer has not changed the configuration of the insured property, then AFSC be obliged to honor the original contract and acres insured, or, refund the portion of the producers premium overpaid and adjust the producers index of production accordingly.

2003 – 16

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Wild Rose Agricultural Producers lobby the Provincial and Federal governments to promote programs to assist young farmers with start up costs in farming; for example low or no interest loans, interest forgiveness or grants.

2003 - 17

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Wild Rose Agricultural Producers petition the Alberta Government and the Agricultural Financial Services Corporation to reconsider the July 31st, 2002 price adjustment that was determined for Wheat acres insured under the variable price option.

CONVENTION RESOLUTIONS—CONT'D

2003-18

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Wild Rose Agricultural Producers calls upon the federal and provincial governments to introduce a disaster aid program for farmers, ranchers and agribusiness who have been impacted by severe weather conditions.

2003 – 19

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Wild Rose Agricultural Producers encourage the Provincial Government to initiate a study to determine the ground water reserves of Alberta.

2003 – 20

BE IT RESOLVED THAT because of the tough financial conditions due to the drought that WRAP lobby the provincial government to reinstate the Crop Insurance premium reduction program that was dropped for the 2002 crop year.

2003 – 21

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Wild Rose Agricultural Producers encourage the Official Languages Commission to change the delivery format of the secondary language of Environment Canada's radio weather broadcasts.

PRODUCER FEEDBACK WELCOME ON WHEAT AND BARLEY CHECK-OFF FUNDING AGREEMENTS

Western Grains Research Foundation (WGRF) welcomes producer input as part of its review process toward developing new long-term funding agreements with wheat and barley breeding institutions. Producer comments received until mid-June 2003 will be considered in the review process.

The Wheat and Barley Check-off Funds managed by WGRF support wheat and barley breeding programs toward new varieties with higher yields, improved quality, greater disease resistance and other key traits for Western Canada. Wild Rose Agricultural Producers are one of 17 WGRF member organizations.

When the Check-off Funds began in the 1993/94 crop year, WGRF developed long-term funding agreements with breeding institutions that outline specific funding allocations and breeding targets. These first long-term agreements will expire in 2004 and WGRF is in the process of developing new agreements to begin in 2005.

Independent teams anchor review

To anchor the review process, WGRF has selected two independent Review Teams – one for wheat and one for barley – with a broad base of experience. "Teams will evaluate current breeding agreements and provide analysis to assist the WGRF Board in developing new agreements that best meet producers' check-off goals amidst changing production and market demands,"

says Dr. Keith Degenhardt, WGRF Chairman.

Producer comment form available

Additional comments from individual wheat and barley producers are encouraged, he says. Comments received by WGRF no later than March 15 will be passed on for direct consideration by the Review Teams, which will prepare their reports by March 31. However, producer comments received by WGRF no later than June 15 will still be considered in the overall review process. Comments can be forwarded by e-mail on the Western Grains Web site, www.westerngrains.com, by fax: (306) 975-0316 or by surface mail to: Western Grains Research Foundation, 210-111 Research Dr., Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7N 3R2.

The Western Grains Web site includes a producer comment form. Questions include:

- § Are breeding targets on track to meet the needs of Western Canada's grain industry?
- § Should check-off rates increase?
- § Should the check-offs be expanded to include feed production?
- § Should WGRF consider supporting private breeding programs?

General comments are also welcome.

CALENDAR OF BOARD ACTIVITIES

January 7-8:	Wild Rose Annual Meeting
January 16-17:	Bill Dobson attended a Co-operators Board Meeting
January 19-24	Brent McBean Attended Combine to Customer course at CIGI, Winnipeg
January 27:	Wild Rose Teleconference - all Board members
January 29:	Bill Dobson participated in an On Farm Food Safety Teleconference
January 30-31	Brent McBean sourced 2 of three delegates for CYFF conference Vancouver. Facilitated travel and conference arrangements with FRAQ for all Alberta delegates.
February 4:	Bill Dobson participated in an On Farm Food Safety Teleconference
February 5:	Bill Dobson attended the REA reception in Edmonton
February 6:	Bill Dobson spoke at AGM of Alberta Vegetable Growers, had an interview with Medicine Hat News, and met with Ken Graumans and group of local farmers in Medicine Hat Rod Scarlett attended a CFA Safety Net Committee Meeting in Ottawa while at a Canadian Agricultural Safety Committee Board meeting, also participated in a Farmer Rail Car Coalition teleconference call
February 10-14:	Bill Dobson attended a Co-operators Board Meeting
February 18	On behalf of Robert Filkohazy, Rod Scarlett attended the official launch of the Environmental Farm Plan in Nisku
February 19:	Brent McBean made a presentation to the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee and attended the CGC focus meeting on variety declarations, also interviewed by CBC on budget Bill Dobson was interviewed on CKSA TV regarding federal budget
February 20:	Bill Dobson attended the Canadian Grain Commission meeting in Nisku on Variety Eligibility Declarations
February 21:	Wild Rose Board Meeting—all Board members Brent McBean had a conference call with the Barley Sub Committee Western Grains Standard Committee
February 24-25:	Bill Dobson had a On Farm Food Safety Teleconference, Poultry Convention Trade Show and spoke at Alberta Hatching Egg Producers AGM
February 26:	Keith Degenhardt presented a paper to the Senate Agriculture and Forestry Committee Bill Dobson Attended Co-operators Regional Meeting,
February 26-28:	Neil Wagstaff and Bill Dobson attended the Canadian Federation of Agriculture Annual Meeting, Rod Scarlett launched Canadian Agriculture Safety Week in Vancouver
March 3	Rod Scarlett attended the Rural Safety Network of Alberta meeting
March 6	Robert Filkohazy, Brent McBean and Neil Wagstaff attended a District meeting hosted by Peter Hoff in Standard
March 12	Neil Wagstaff attended a provincial safety nets meeting in Calgary. Bill Dobson and Keith Degenhardt met with the Hon. Lyle Vanclief to discuss the APF

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2002 BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S REPORT BY KEITH DEGENHARDT

The Board was kept very busy this past year with both Wild Rose activities and what the environment (human and natural) threw at us. I will give a brief overview of our various activities and welcome questions to either myself or other Board members on any issues.

The major story of this year was our physical environment, from tremendous rains in the south to the worst drought in 120 years in much of the rest of Alberta. For many producers, the fluctuations in temperature were unbelievable. A very warm Jan and Feb, the coldest March and April on record, a record heat wave in late June and early July, a cold August and September, and a warm October to December. Wild Rose was quite involved in publicizing the problems producers had.

Directors, Regional Directors and many members gave newspaper, radio and television interviews. We hosted a tour by CFA president, Bob Friesen, in east central Alberta. Neil, Terry and Bill took Bob to some of the worst effected areas, where cow herds were decimated, grasshoppers flourished, and grain bins remained empty. While grain farmers with empty bins will have no grain to sell next year, it was the plight of the livestock producer who really struck a cord across Canada and Hay West became daily news. Whatever your feelings towards Hay West, or Drought 2002 that Wild Rose spearheaded, it showed that fellow Canadians do care about agricultural producers.

With the weather sensations as a backdrop, your Board spent a tremendous amount of time and effort working in the Safety Net area. Your Board attended all the Agriculture Policy Framework (or APF for short) discussions in Alberta. The APF is setting the Federal agriculture policies over the next five years. Some Board members, along with grass roots members, attended and presented to the Federal Standing Committee on Agriculture when it toured the province. We are looking at some major changes in the Safety Net area and are trying our best to ensure they are positive changes for producers.

Our goals as producers are shared world wide, as is illustrated by the letter sent by Jack Wilkinson, President of the International Federation of Agricultural Producers (Jack was elected as president this past summer), to the chairman of the special session of the WTO Committee on Agriculture. He says: "Our ambitions for the Doha Round are simple. These are:

1. to ensure that farmers everywhere are able to achieve a reasonable standard of living for the work that they do, in both exporting and importing countries.
2. To develop WTO trade rules that accommodate the diverse situations of agriculture in different countries, and the diverse aspirations of the people of those countries.
3. To rectify the serious imbalances in the agricultural trading system against farmers in developing countries". End of quote. We need sound domestic agricultural policies adapted to our specific conditions to ensure the long term viability of Canadian Agriculture.

A group of us on the Board, led by Neil, spent a considerable amount of time lobbying both AFSC and Minister McClellan to undertake a review of the variable price option of crop insurance to include all types of wheat for increased price coverage. We had limited success in this area, but hopefully our effort this year will mean a better program next year. We are hoping to hear shortly a major announcement by Agriculture Financial Services Corporation on improvements to crop insurance.

Your Board members represent you on many different committees and other Boards. There are written reports on some of these activities in your registration package. Of some others I'll give you a brief summary.

Brent McBean represents you at the Canadian Grain Commission, Western Standards Committee, and Barley and Other Cereal Grain Subcommittee. Claude Smith represents you on the Oilseeds Subcommittee. If any of you have questions or points you wish to discuss on our grading system, they would like to hear from you.

Robert Filkohazy represents you on the Board of Directors of the Alberta Environmental Farm Plan program. It has taken 2 years to develop a program that can be used for any type of farm operation in the province. With the final draft of workshop binders complete, the facilitators in place and the issues around liability resolved, the EFP program will be officially launched on Feb 18 in Nisku. This voluntary program will give producers an opportunity to take responsibility for environmental stewardship of their farm operations by implementing environmental farm plans.

THE AGRICULTURAL OPERATION PRACTICES ACT—CONT'D

Robert also represents Wild Rose on a committee of interested western farm organizations and the CWB concerned about the potential impact of new genetically engineered varieties on our markets. We are concerned about the market acceptance of the technology and factors affecting grain handling and transportation costs. Robert is also a member of the Sponsorship Committee on the team organizing Farm Tech 2003, Alberta's premier crop production and farm management conference to be held Jan 29-31 in Edmonton.

Bill Dobson was nominated by Wild Rose (as a member owner of the Cooperators group insurance companies) to run for the Cooperator Board and was successful in being elected. As a major insurer in the farm community, Cooperators takes great interest in the health of our sector and is committed to serving our communities. Another area Bill has focused on is the feasibility study of an On Farm Food Safety Program for grains and oilseeds. He has been involved since 2001 on the steering committee developing a pilot project to address that question. He sees his role in this project as monitoring the process and ensuring such a program is farmer-friendly, affordable and effective. Along with this, Bill spearheaded the membership drive again this year.

I have continued my involvement in Alberta Farm Animal Care (AFAC). Seed money from the Drought 2002 Fund, for which Wild Rose has taken a leadership role, went to AFAC for the purpose of supplying feed and bedding for animals in distress that have been seized by Alberta SPCA. AFAC has been involved in making sure Bill C10 (Cruelty to Animals) will not adversely affect livestock producers practicing good animal husbandry standards. AFAC has been quite involved in developing transportation codes of practice for the different livestock sectors, as well as procedures to follow in livestock transportation accidents.

I also represent you at the Western Grains Research Foundation. This past year I was elected Chair of WGRF which I'm finding takes a lot of time. The wheat and barley check-off administered by WGRF is nearly 10 years old. The Board is undertaking a major assessment of the check-off and the research results it has obtained. By doing the assessment the WGRF Board hopes to improve upon its efforts over the next term of wheat and barley research agreements. We welcome any input producers have on where you feel research efforts should be directed. The WGRF research funding from the check-off will not be affected by this year's drought, because both barley and wheat have a reserve fund. The endowment fund, on the other hand, because of low returns in the investment market place will be reducing its level of funding.

There have been many other activities Wild Rose has been involved with such as hosting CWB election forums, attending meetings on Kyoto, representation on the Clean Air Strategic Alliance of Alberta, participating on the crop loss coalition, a founding member of the Rail Car Coalition and promoting farm safety. Members of the Wild Rose Board and members at large are representing us in over 20 different organizations. This past year Wild Rose, Keystone and Agricultural Producers of Saskatchewan (APAS) informally decided to work together and have a united voice on issues of prairie wide concern.

Wild Rose is in the midst of another membership drive. We at the Board are very aware of the limitations of our budget. Our voluntary membership is what fuels our budget and we need more members in order to accomplish more as an organization. Currently there are many volunteer hours and out of pocket expenses donated by your Board of Directors. Coming to you by way of resolution, is a proposal for a service for which Wild Rose could charge that we would like your feedback on.

We on the Board are pleased to have served you this year. I'd like to thank all the Board and members for their dedication to agriculture during such a trying year. We hope this coming year brings improved weather, strong prices and high production.

CANADIAN FEDERATION OF AGRICULTURE AGM

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(Continued from page 5)
new programs.

A teleconference session with Canada's lead Agricultural negotiator Steve Verheul, a video conference with federal Agricultural Minister Vanclief, and the support demonstrated by Farm Credit Canada president John Ryan were good examples of the recognition the federal government gives to CFA as the voice for Canadian farmers. This annual meeting again reconfirmed to us why Wild Rose Agricultural Producers needs to become a full member of CFA.

CFA is an excellent forum that represents all facets of Canada's divergent Agriculture. In one way or another every major commodity is represented at CFA. Each provincial general farm organization is a full member of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture except for Wild Rose Agricultural Producers. It is an absolute shame and embarrassment that Alberta's general farm organization can only afford to be an associate member. Alberta produces nearly one-quarter of Canada's agricultural production and we should be a significant influence at an organization such as the CFA. All the other provinces are entitled to 15 delegates at the CFA annual meeting and unfortunately Alberta is only entitled to 1 delegate! This is one other reason why many more Alberta farmers should be Wild Rose members and is perhaps one of the strongest arguments for the necessity of having some type of check-off or stable funding mechanism for Alberta's general farm organization.

The Canadian Young Farmers Forum was held in conjunction with the CFA annual meeting. Wild Rose Agricultural Producers arranged to have three delegates to the Young Farmers Forum. We were pleased to have the opportunity to have a visit with these delegates: Jaret Neil from Morrin; Lisa Anderson from Lamont; and Monty Bauer from Thorhild.

The Environment and Science Committee meeting dealt with a broad range of topics, which included:

- manure management
- On farm environmental programs
- The need for tax credits to farmers who forgo income by undertaking conservation and environmental preservation activities on their land
- The need for compensation to farmers protecting Species at Risk
- The impacts of the Kyoto Accord on Agriculture
- Cruelty to animals legislation

- The need for Harmonization of pesticides
- Concern about the Canadian Environmental Protection Act adding ammonia to the list of toxic substances
- Environment Canada weather forecasting services

Some of the topics discussed at the Rural Committee meeting were

- Intergenerational farm transfers
- The need to increase the level of restricted farm losses in the income tax act
- The need for a return of the five-year block averaging of income provision
- The need to increase the Capital Cost Allowance rates for farm buildings and equipment especially for the first year and for on-farm environmental capital expenditures
- A number of railway issues including: railway crossings; federal hopper car fleet; siding leases; running rights; level of service provisions; and shipper protections
- Child care allowance for single income farm families
- Concerned about bank amalgamations and their effect on rural communities
- The need for the Canadian Grain Commission bonding to cover Farmers grain in Condo storage

Some other topics that were discussed included:

- Canadian water exports
- Concerns about the need for registration of certain pesticides
- The need to maintain unbiased yield and agronomic data as a vital component of variety registration
- The need to establish market acceptance prior to registration of glyphosate tolerant wheat

If you have managed to read this far you will realize that there are no shortage of topics that are of general concern to many farmers. There should be no question about the need to have strong general farm organizations working for the best interests of all agricultural producers. In order to strengthen Alberta's general farm organization we must somehow figure out how to get significantly more Alberta producers financial support. Our only way of doing this at present is to encourage more farmers and ranchers to become members of Wild Rose Agricultural Producers.

AD

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WILD ROSE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCERS

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