

# SEED PLANT NEWS

Association of Alberta Co-op Seed Cleaning Plants Ltd.

**IN THIS ISSUE**

55th Annual General Meeting Highlights	1
Regional Meetings	2
2008 Golden Kernel Awards	3
2008 Award Recipients	4
Dispensing with the services of an Auditor	5
Hazard Prevention Program	6
Top 10 Reasons to use Certified Seed	7
Facts on PBR	8
2008 Seed & Hay Fair Shows	8

*“Times are changing. There are fewer and fewer producers in a community to do more jobs.”*



## 55th Annual General Meeting Highlights

In addition to the 51 plant managers and 51 delegates registered, we had 52 additional men’s registrations and 29 ladies registered for the 55th Annual General Meeting! Total of 16 sponsors supported the 2008 AGM. In addition, 11 companies participated in our tradeshow. Your continued support is truly appreciated! Thank you to Foster Park Baskett for their sponsorship of the reception desk. A big thank you to Rob Dechant, Debbie Workun, Sarah Graff, Kevin Foster and Carol Zuckerman – the volunteers who manned the reception desk. Special thanks to Carol Zuckerman for coming from Kelowna to Edmonton in January! Carol has volunteered her services as recording secretary for the last 25 years. And to Ken Ditzler who was able to join us this year and act as our parliamentarian – Thank you!

The **Honorable George Groenvelde, Minister of Alberta Agriculture and Food** opened up the event this year and shared with us the following comments...

- Marketing choice for Alberta Producers. Again, Alberta was granted intervener status with respect to the federal court’s action around new regulations which would have allowed for marketing choice for barley. Encouraging the federal government to introduce legislation immediately for the complete deregulation of barley effective August 1, 2008.
- Calls for the elimination of KVD from the livestock, grain, ethanol and wheat producers. If we want to innovate and stay ahead of our competitors, we have to make more domestic use of our wheat. We need, of course, to be able to develop new varieties unconstrained by KVD. Fortunately the federal government has heard these pleas and plans to remove KVD by 2010.
- The high Canadian dollar and high feed prices are a reality beef and hog producers have to deal with. The Alberta government has provided some short term relief (\$165,000,000). The industry needs to

come up with its own long term solutions and the government is here to help them. The \$165MM is just to help them through where they are right now but the government has charged them to come up with long term solutions. The day of government handout money is over.

**David Beckman**, our keynote speaker, took us beyond what we traditionally think of as “the” global agricultural boundaries with his **“Farming on the Periphery of the Periphery”** presentation. He examined agriculture in the member countries of the Circumpolar Agricultural Link being Siberia, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Canada, Greenland, Iceland and the Faro Islands. Members all share the fact they hold land in the Arctic Circle and have citizens and First Nations people making a living at agriculture. The Arctic Circle is 67 to 68 degrees latitude. For comparison sake, Edmonton sits at 52 degrees. Today, sub-arctic is taken to mean anything north of 60.

**Ron Wirsta** provided us with a **Manager’s Association update** highlighting 4 key areas:

- Labour Canada Safety Code – all plants must now have a Hazard Prevention Plan. Wayne Walker outlined sections in the Westlock Seed Cleaning Plants Hazard Prevention Plan, which will be made available to use as a template to other plants. Detailed information appears later in this newsletter and on the seed.ab.ca website.
- CSI requires an authorized sampler on staff.
- Pesticide Applicators need education to maintain their licenses and there are classes available through Olds College, online, and through chemical reps.
- Manager and employee issues include the difficulty of finding staff. There are fewer people entering the industry.

**Blair Peregrym, Manager of the Stony Plain Seed Cleaning Plant** presented this year’s **If I Can Do It, You Can Do It Plant Innovation**. Blair explained the process his plant took and gave his thoughts on how to handle the labour crisis. “Getting to these answers is a process. First you need inspiration but 90% of all ideas are silly. 10% are good so you have a 10% chance of success if you work alone. If you put it on a board table and seven people tweak the idea, that

*continued on page 2*

## Detailed copies of the following presentations and reports are available for downloading in the "Members Only" section of the seed.ab.ca website.

Please contact the Lacombe office for username and password. If you do not have access to the internet and wish to receive hard copies of any of the reports or presentations please contact the Lacombe office directly.

- Board of Directors & General Manager's Report
- Foster Park Baskett Insurance Update – *Rob Dechant*
- Morneau Sobeco Group Benefits Update – *Doug Sample*
- Hazard Prevention Plan – *Wayne Walker, Westlock Seed Cleaning Plant*
- Opportunities in Carbon Offsets – Making it Work on the Ground – *Tom Goddard*
- How Big is Big? *Robynne Anderson*
- RU UP 4 IT? Get the Latest Tech Trends – *Lynette Lefsrud*
- Dispensing with the Services of an Auditor – *Brock Ketcham* (summary of his presentation appears later in this issue)
- If I Can Do It, You Can Do it – *Blair Peregrin*
- Farming in the Periphery of the Periphery – *David Beckman*

As always, your provincial board of directors appreciates any feedback, comments &/or suggestions you may have with respect to your annual meeting.

## The 56th Annual General Meeting will be held January 15th, 16th & 17th 2009 at the Westin Hotel, Edmonton Alberta.

Look forward to seeing you next year!

## General Meeting Highlights

*Continued from page 1*

idea is then transformed. Work as a team; involve everyone in your business plan. Take your potential ideas to your staff. They know what will fit, so let them play with it. Morale and dedication will improve as they put their own program into play. Now you have a team of leaders and a business venture. That should give you a 90% chance for success. Stony Plain is succeeding because the staff is dedicated to keeping one step ahead of the future as a team. We need to keep managers, staff and our industry alive!"

**Wayne Jackson, Director Region 2** presented the provincial board's thoughts and discussion pertaining to **regional meetings**. "Your provincial association is constantly evaluating and reviewing policies and programs in an effort to provide you, the membership, with improved and more efficient service. One such aspect of the business that has been questioned lately is the value of, and use of regional meetings. During the years I was president, I had an opportunity to travel across the province and attend regional meetings in each region. Based on this experience I was asked to make a presentation on my observations and outline the resulting board decisions. During my travels, I met many involved in seed plant operations (board members, managers, staff and fieldmen) and listened to your comments and suggestions. I certainly learned a lot about the industry and was appreciative of your comments. The following observations were noted:

- Attendance of managers and staff was excellent. I think they valued their time together and had fruitful discussions.
- Overall attendance dropped each year. Each year had 1 or 2 fewer people.
- The directors of the host plant supported the meeting well and in each case provided wonderful hospitality – good meeting rooms and food. This was appreciated.
- Director attendance was very inconsistent. Regions 3, 4, and 5 generally had good director attendance. Region 6 was fair, Region 7 had only a few, and Region 1 and 2 had one director.
- When questioned about lack of directors, the underlying theme seemed to be that the regional meetings were becoming irrelevant. The comment most often heard was "each year, it's the same people saying the same things". The same people speaking but I don't agree that the message is always the same. However, my view is not the important one – it is your view that matters most. Most frustrating to me was when asked what they wanted on the agenda, the response was "I don't know". We had the fieldmen participate last year but it didn't seem to make much of a difference.

### Reasons why the 2008 Regional Meetings will be the last ones held.

**COSTS:** This cost is borne by you, the membership, as part of doing business. The total cost to the

association has been approx. \$7930.00. This does not include wages for the general manager, costs incurred by the host plant, or costs to each plant for sending delegates to the regional meetings.

**TIMING:** Many complain that the timing of the regional meetings is wrong – right in the middle of spraying. We realize that but pick a better time. Any time in the winter is close to convention, April-May is seeding, July-August is haying and holidays, September-October is harvest. No time is ideal. June is about halfway between conventions and maybe, if we are lucky, we can hit a rainy day.

**MEETINGS:** Times are changing. There are fewer and fewer producers in a community to do more jobs. Time is short and valuable. Attending meetings is becoming a less popular way of communicating. Phone, fax, email, etc. are being used increasingly more as it fits the users schedule much better and is instantaneous. Part of the problem, I believe, is just the culture of change in the way we communicate.

**DECISION:** After the last regional meetings, we had quite a long discussion at the July board meeting as to what we should do. We finally decided that if directors were not finding value in these meetings, then there is no longer a reason to hold them. Therefore, the decision is that the 2008 regional meetings will be the last ones held. If you find this decision is wrong, you must convince us otherwise with sound arguments and firm action, especially this June by increasing your participation. Saying that the regional meetings are valuable but then not attending will not alter this decision.

### RESULTS:

- 1) There will have to be a change in the bylaws to accommodate the election of regional directors. This will occur at the 2009 convention. There are several ways the elections can be done but the most likely scenario would be to do it at the convention.
- 2) Managers could have their own meetings at a time more convenient to their schedule and may include training or getting credits toward their pesticide applicators license. A social function could be part of it too as this is important.
- 3) There should be some reduced costs to the provincial association.
- 4) Communication links between local boards and provincial Association would need to be strengthened. We must continue to have dialogue about issues and concerns. Some directors do not see value in the provincial board now and if communication lessens, this perception would increase.

**Further discussion will occur at this year's regional meetings – please bring forth any thoughts, ideas, comments and/or suggestions.**

Under new business a **Late Payment Policy** was introduced. This was outlined in your 2008 Membership Dues. The schedule reads as follows:

- April 1* additional \$100.00 added on to the 2nd Notice of Fees Due
- May 1* additional \$200.00 added on to the 3rd Notice of Fees Due
- June 1* additional \$300.00 added on to the Final Notice of Fees Due

**Reminder: ALL DUES MUST BE PAID IN FULL TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR MEMBERSHIP IN THE ASSOCIATION.**

The **MANAGER'S ASSOCIATION** would like to thank our Sponsors whom helped with the Allied Trade Night Entertainment at our Convention in January. The Casino Fun Night was well received and we look forward to another great night in 2009. Thanks Again!

### 2008 Sponsors

- Association of Alberta Co-op Seed Cleaning Plants Ltd.
- Foster Park Basket
- Renel Construction
- Hank's Feed Mill Service
- LMC Manufacturing
- BioVision Seed Labs
- Bayer CropScience
- Syngenta
- Bob Ware's Agri Services
- BASF
- MasterFeeds
- 20/20 Seed Labs
- Cimbria
- Westlock Seed Cleaning Co-op Ltd.
- St. Paul Seed Cleaning Co-op Ltd.
- Enchant Seed Cleaning Co-op Ltd.

## From Field to Fuel – A Practical Guide to Bio Farming

MARCH 25-26, 2008 • PADDOCK THEATRE – NORTHLANDS SPECTRUM

Biofuels. It's the topic of the decade and Northlands is hitting it head on. As part of the popular Northlands Farm & Ranch Show (March 26 to 29), we're featuring From Field to Fuel – A Practical Guide to Bio Farming. This symposium will educate and inform the livestock and feed producer about the latest in bio-fuels technology with a focus on methane, ethanol and bio-diesel production and the challenges and opportunities it presents. It will include a full-day speaker session as well as a half-day field trip to witness Highmark Renewables' Anaerobic Digestion System (March 25-26).

Northlands is meeting the challenges facing us in agriculture today by bringing this hot topic to you. Included in the sessions we'll settle the 'Food VS Fuel' debate and discuss subjects ranging from Selling to the Grid, and Federal and Provincial Incentives, to the Bio Refinery Concept, and Cellulose VS Starch Based Ethanol. The symposium will give you the bare bones data about the industry, and equip you with the tools to help you make an informed decision about your future involvement.

To register, visit [www.farmandranchshow.com](http://www.farmandranchshow.com)

## 2008 GOLDEN KERNEL AWARDS

The Golden Kernel Awards presented by Bayer CropScience recognizes excellence and growth in the seed treatment business amongst AAC SPL member plants.

There is one award for each of 5 Categories:

### Category A Over 100,000 bushels

*Keith Reynolds*, Strathmore Seed Cleaning Plant

### Category B 50,000-99,999 bushels

*Ken Williams*, Hussar Seed Cleaning Coop Ltd.

### Category C 25,000-49,999 bushels

*Duane S. Trottier*, Mountain View Seed Cleaning Coop Ltd.

### Category D 7,500-24,999 bushels

*Simon Bodurka*, Clandonald Co-op Seed Cleaning Assoc.

### Category E Honorable Mention: Most Improved

*Ron Wirsta*, St. Paul Municipal Seed Cleaning Assoc. Ltd.

Criteria for determining the annual winners are as follows:

1. loyalty; future business plans
2. increase over previous year, and an increase over the average of the prior 3 years
3. record keeping
4. delivery of proper rate
5. acceptable distribution
6. marketing activities
7. technology improvements: (Category E)

Each winner in Category "A-E" receives a cheque for \$300.00 and a plaque recognizing the achievement. Winners for the awards are nominated by Bayer CropScience, with the final decision being made by the Sales Manager. The awards are intended to be granted on an annual basis, however, should a suitable candidate not be available, the award will not be granted.



Ron Wirsta, St. Paul Cleaning Plant receiving Golden Kernel award from Monica Klaas of Bayer CropScience.

# ASSOCIATION OF ALBERTA CO-OP SEED CLEANING PLANTS LTD.

## 2008 Award Recipients

### 35 Yr. Plaque

Dale Collison                      Holden

### 30 Yr. Plaque

Rod Thirsk                              Edgerton

### 25 Yr. Plaque & Pin

Herb Harder                              Vulcan

Ron Meszaros                              Three Hills

Henry Field                              Holden

Mark Kaese                              Paradise Valley

Wayne Walker                              Westlock

Larry Craik                              Rycroft (Forage)

### 20 Year Certificate

Brian Tamminga                              Coaldale

Ray Yaremchuk                              Myrnam

Pam Brooks                              Nanton

Neil Greenfield                              Westlock

Richard Lorensen                              Myrnam

Jim Jones                              Enchant

Arden Ziegler                              Vegreville

### Outstanding Service Award

Monica Klaas                              Claresholm

### Retiring Director

Nick Markovich                              Spirit River

## Managers Association Scholarship

Application deadline for the Managers' Association Scholarships is July 30, 2008. Do you know of anyone who might be interested – please read the following requirements to determine eligibility...

- Scholarships are limited to dependents of members of the Managers Association.
- Students must attend full time secondary education.
- Value of scholarship is \$1000.00
- For further information or to apply please contact Keith Reynolds, Manager of the Strathmore Seed Cleaning Plant at (403) 934-3421 or fax (403) 901-0392.
- Applications can also be mailed to:  
Strathmore Seed Cleaning Plant  
9 Bayside Place  
Strathmore, Alberta T1P 1C8  
Attention: Keith Reynolds

Photo by Bruce Mathieu.



Steven Miller, President (Right) presenting 25 year service award to Wayne Walker from Westlock Seed Cleaning Plant.

Photo by Bruce Mathieu.



Wayne & Pauline Jackson (Left) presenting Nick & Ruth Markovich (Retiring Director).

Photo by Bruce Mathieu.



Monica Klaas, along with her husband & daughter receiving Outstanding Service Award from Steven Miller, President (Right).

## Dispensing with the services of an Auditor

BROCK KETCHAM

Director of Cooperatives and Project Advisor  
Consumer Services Branch

Recently, Lorena Pahl and, if my memory serves me correctly, Bill Witbeck of the Association of Alberta Co-op Seed Cleaning Plants posed the question to me about whether the Cooperatives Act requires co-ops to hire an auditor for their financial statements.

Just days previously, I happened to have reviewed those sections of the Act. Section 236 indeed allows coops to dispense with the services of an auditor provided that certain criteria are met.

I'll get to that in a few minutes. But first, a bit of background:

### **Fundamental to membership in a cooperative is the right to access to the enterprise's books, records and financial statements.**

- Coops must be transparent where their finances are concerned, and
- members as well as interested outside parties such as suppliers and creditors must be able to rely on the accuracy and integrity of the financial records and statements.

### **The records and financial statements should be seen as being maintained and prepared by an independent party, preferably an auditor.**

### **Financial statements must be prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles, and use a format that is consistent with that used for the preceding financial year, if any, unless a note attached to the statement indicates otherwise.**

- An audit of each cooperative must be prepared for its membership every year.
- The coop's financial records will be the basis of the audit
- The auditor should be able to certify that all the statements in the report fairly represent the financial position of the cooperative
- Section 234 of the Act stipulates the qualifications for an auditor. The chief qualification is that that person must be independent of the coop.
- An auditor can include a firm of accountants.

### **How does an audit work? Here's how the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission describe the process:**

- During the audit, the outside auditor obtains an understanding of the enterprise's internal controls and then applies "auditing procedures."

- These procedures may include inspection of the business's books and records, observations, enquiries and confirmations.

The SEC concludes by saying "an audit provides the public with additional assurance—beyond managements' own assertions—that a business's financial statements can be relied upon.

Good Governance and Best Practices dictate the hiring of an auditor. However, it is possible under the Cooperatives Act for a coop to dispense with the services of an auditor.

This is made possible in section 236 of the Act. This section says that a coop that has not issued a public distribution of shares may resolve not to appoint an auditor by:

- special resolution of the members, and
- special resolution of all investment shareholders, including those who do not otherwise have the right to vote.

### **What is a "special resolution?"**

A "special resolution" is a resolution that is submitted to a meeting of the cooperative or a meeting of the directors and passed at the meeting by at least 2/3 of the votes cast.

Section 236 goes on to point out that such a resolution is valid only until the next annual general meeting.

### **What this means:**

- Think about the point in the agenda of your AGM at which the meeting addresses the reappointment of auditors. Someone stands up and moves that the members reappoint the auditors for the term of another year.
- The same mechanism would be used if your coop has decided to dispense with the services of an auditor. Instead of voting to reappoint the auditor, your members would have to vote again at each annual meeting to dispense with an auditor for the next year.

### **CONCLUSION:**

Your managers have indicated to me that seed cleaning coops in Alberta are having a difficult time locating and hiring small accountants in the rural regions of the province to do audit work.

This has raised questions of whether it is necessary to have auditors at all.

The Alberta Community and Cooperative Association has firm views on this issue, and these are consistent with the principles of best practices and good governance, ie: the financial stewardship of an organization should be seen to be above reproach in addition to being actually so.

*continued on page 6*

## 2008 Annual Meeting Sponsor Recognition

With sincere appreciation and gratitude, on behalf of the Association of Alberta Coop Seed Cleaning Plants and the Board of Directors I would like to say THANK YOU and recognize those who have contributed to the 2008 Annual Meeting!

- BASF
- Bayer CropScience
- Syngenta
- Agriculture Financial Services Corporation
- ATB Financial
- Cimbria Canada
- Encana
- Foster Park Basket
- Issues Ink
- Lewis M. Carter Mfg. Canada Ltd.
- Managers Assoc. of Alberta Coop Seed Cleaning Plants
- Morneau Sobeco
- Seed Check Technologies Inc.
- Viterra
- Wainwright Financial Group
- Westin Hotel Edmonton

### **2008 Exhibitors were as follows:**

- BASF
- Bayer CropScience
- Syngenta
- Bob Ware's Agri Services Inc.
- Cimbria Canada
- Seed Check Technologies Inc.
- Lewis M. Carter Mfg. Canada Ltd.
- 20/20 Seed Labs Inc.
- Secan
- Agritronics
- BioVision Seed Labs

## HAZARD PREVENTION PROGRAM

At the convention a signup sheet was provided for those plants who wish to be supplied with a general guideline for your plant to implement. A cost of \$60.00 per plant should offset the cost of development and distribution. Please be aware that our plant did not develop this manual with the idea of making money. Once all expenses are covered, any money left will be funnelled to the Manager's Association Scholarship Fund. Be aware that you may have to add or delete items in the plan which may or may not be pertinent to your Plant Manual. Please remember that this plan is required by Labor Canada and is law as of November 2005. If you were not at the convention and would like a copy of the plan that was developed, call Wayne at 780-349-3944 or email to [wscp@telus.net](mailto:wscp@telus.net).

A list of plants that have indicated that they require a copy (as of January 28th, 2008)

VULCAN  
SEXSMITH  
PARADISE VALLEY  
STRATHMORE  
RYCROFT  
PROVOST  
LOUGHEED  
BEISEKER  
VEGRVILLE  
SPRING COULEE  
MILK RIVER  
BALZAC  
ENCHANT  
CARSTAIRS  
WARBURG  
STONY PLAIN  
ROSEBUD  
MORINILLE  
EDGERTON  
GRANUM  
ST. PAUL  
RADWAY  
INNISFAIL  
ALLIANCE  
FALHER  
CLANDONALD  
WILLINGDON  
CLIVE  
PONOKA  
THREE HILLS  
FORESTBURG  
BARRHEAD  
INNISFREE  
DAWSON CREEK  
VERMILLION

## Dispensing with the Services of an Auditor Continued from page 5

Dispensing with an auditor would likely raise the following objections and concerns:

- If the coop cannot afford to hire an auditor, is it viable? Should it remain in business in the first place?
- Having nobody in town who does audit work is no excuse. In today's high tech world, a coop in Gumshoe, northern Alberta can hire an auditor anywhere in Alberta and, subject to jurisdictional issues, anywhere in the world.

### ***"A qualified auditor ensures accountability by providing a review of the handling of the coop's financial affairs"***

- What are the coop's managers or directors trying to hide?
- The lack of a local auditor is no excuse.
- At the very least, if the coop must dispense with an auditor, it should at least hire a bookkeeper to maintain some semblance of order with the books and records.

### ***Cooperatives by their very nature face a very high degree of need for accountability.***

- Members are entitled to ask the question, "how is my cooperative accountable to me?"
- When a member asks to review financial information, he or she is entitled to be able to rely on the information with confidence, and not continue to have doubts about whether some of the information is made up.

It all boils down to accountability. A qualified auditor ensures accountability by providing a review of the handling of the coop's financial affairs by its directors and managers. Look at this way: would you want to be in the position of telling your member or your banker that you have reviewed your own handling of the coop's financial affairs and you pronounce the work exemplary?

Also, look at the issue of independent auditor vs self-audit by a manager or executive from the point of view of a court of law. A dispute between a member or members and the coop's management comes before a judge. Best practices become an issue. How impressed is a judge likely to be if he or she learns that Joe Slick, Esq., co-op president, did the financial statements himself and pronounced them a true and sound reflection of the coop's finances?

### ***Handing the auditing function to an independent professional effectively eliminates such concerns.***

## BAYER VALUE PROGRAM

The BAYER VALUE PROGRAM was recently announced, with incredible savings on nearly all Bayer CropScience products. Including up to \$2/acre savings off Vitaflor 280 and/or Raxil products. Check out our website at [www.bayercropscience.ca](http://www.bayercropscience.ca), or contact your local territory sales manager for additional details.

## Raxil MD

### **NEW SEED TREATMENT from Bayer CropScience!**

Bayer Crop Science is pleased to announce the release of the newest product in the RAXIL family of products: Raxil MD, some user's report that the MD should stand for "the doctor is IN; all your application issues are cured". However the "MD" in Raxil MD stands for "micro-dispersion", which is new formulation technology that brings an easy to handle and apply product. Additionally, Raxil MD contains a different co-fungicide: metaxyl. Metaxyl is a systemic fungicide offering superior protection from the pythium pathogen in addition to most of the diseases that are on the Raxil T label. Raxil MD is one of the first truly different seed treatment formulations to assist in applicators and users to handle a REAL easy to apply product. For the 2008 season, Raxil MD will be directed toward the commercial application sector, with product being available in 200, and 1000 litre container sizes.

## INFINITY

Now.... That's pretty big.... INFINITY, is the latest addition to Bayer CropScience's line of weed control products. The first herbicide to be isolated in a unique group of chemical families in 20 years. INFINITY brings hard to control weeds like cleavers and kochia under control, and helps control group 2 resistant biotypes. Further information about this exciting new breakthrough in herbicide technology, visit our website: [www.bayercropscience.com](http://www.bayercropscience.com).

For further information contact your seed treatment specialist:  
Monica Klaas  
403-625-7027  
[monica.klaas@bayercropscience.com](mailto:monica.klaas@bayercropscience.com)

## Sowing Success

Although the weather may not indicate it, spring and seeding are just around the corner. With producers visiting your seed plants to prepare for the new crop year, it is time to spring into action. They may be having seed cleaned, looking to source certified seed, or seeking the advice of a local seed expert over a hot cup of coffee.

Whatever the case may be, the local seed plant is a staple hub in rural communities, and rightfully so, due to the many services offered by Alberta's seed plants. So while you are chatting with producers here is some food for thought to pass along. Certified certainty.

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## Top 10 Reasons to Use Certified Seed

Certified seed is the starting point to a successful crop as well as an important risk management tool. Here are the top 10 reasons to use certified seed:

### 1) You're getting clean seed.

Certified seed is grown under stringent production requirements and must not contain any weed seeds or other matter.

### 2) You're getting varietal purity.

Certified seed uses systems to maximize genetic purity – making sure you get the variety you want. At the same time, off-types, other crop seeds, and weeds are guaranteed to be minimized. And in an era of herbicide tolerant varieties, can you afford to have anything less than the highest possible purity?

### 3) You're getting guaranteed quality assurance.

Third-party inspections in the field and at the processing plant ensure that all quality assurance requirements have been met. You can rest easy knowing your seed is what you expect it to be and can back up your assurances to others.

### 4) You're getting access to new opportunities.

Many end-users are requiring specific varieties for their products. Using certified seed can open the door to new opportunities and greater sales by providing proof of varietal identity.

### 5) You're getting new genetics.

Improved traits like better yield, pest resistance, drought tolerance, herbicide tolerance, and much more are delivered to farmers in certified seed. Years of research and development went into these traits and they can only be reliably accessed through certified seed use.

### 6) You're getting substance behind your word.

The blue tag is proof that you used certified seed to maintain the value traits of the crop. It's your assurance to grain buyers and others that what you are delivering is what you say it is.

### 7) You're getting a better deal on crop insurance.

Certified seed use can, in some cases, allow you to get a better deal on crop insurance premiums. Insurers know that certified seed means increased crop viability.

### 8) You're getting maximum use of other inputs.

You want the best genetics and purest fields to ensure you are making the most of your input dollars. Certified seed means you're not wasting time and other inputs on a crop that won't make grade.

### 9) You're getting access to premium markets.

Proper inputs make for a good crop, but seed is the only input that can get you more than higher yields. Use of certified seed can be your ticket to premium markets like tofu soybeans or high oleic canola and MORE.

### 10) You're getting traceability.

Food safety and traceability are important considerations in agriculture. You can only be sure of your product if you know its origins. Certified seed is the key to that knowledge: production of this seed is carefully controlled under a quality assurance system right from the very beginning. Using certified seed will allow you to capitalize on a whole history of traceability measures.

## Technology Tidbits

BY LYNETTE LEFSRUD, LEFSRUD COMMUNICATIONS

### New Members Only Section

The seed.ab.ca now has a members' only area for all seed plant members. This new section has an easy to remember address – [www.seed.ab.ca/secure](http://www.seed.ab.ca/secure). It will contain documents of interest to seed plant members such as the 2008 Foster Park Basket Presentation from the AGM and the Hazard Prevention Plan.

To access the member's only area, contact the Seed.ab.ca office for the username and password.

### Update Your Seed Plant Site

There are 32 seed cleaning plants which have a website as part of seed.ab.ca. You can see if your plant has a website by visiting this page:

<http://www.seed.ab.ca/links/plants.asp>.

Take a look at your site today and send any updates to me either by phone, fax, email or mail. Updating your site is easy and hassle free. Call 403-337-8068 or email [llefsrud@telusplanet.net](mailto:llefsrud@telusplanet.net).

If you have any comments, questions or suggestions for the seed.ab.ca site, please feel free to send them to me at [llefsrud@telusplanet.net](mailto:llefsrud@telusplanet.net). I look forward to hearing from you.

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**Reaching over 65,000 Alberta farmers, *seed.ab.ca* continues to be the best way to reach your target audience and get your message heard. With content that is consistent and informative, farmers rely on *seed.ab.ca* to help them make their planting decisions. Consider the benefits of placing a member ad, which many Alberta Co-op Seed Plant members have taken advantage of in the past. To learn more about placing a member ad, contact Issues Ink at 1-877-710-3222 or email us at [issues@issuesink.com](mailto:issues@issuesink.com)**

## 2008 Seed & Hay Fair Shows

### North American Seed Fair/AgExpo

February 27th – 29th, 2008

Entry Deadlines

Hay & Silage February 8th, 2008

Other Classes February 15th, 2008

Exhibition Park, Lethbridge, AB

For further information contact (403) 382.4491

### Peace Country Classic AgriShow

March 6th – 8th, 2008

Entry Deadlines for Seed Show

All classes February 29th, 2008

Evergreen Park, Grande Prairie, Alberta

For further information contact (780) 532.3279

### Northlands Pedigreed Seed Show

March 26th – 29th, 2008

Entry Deadlines

All classes March 7th, 2008

Northlands, Edmonton, AB

For further information contact (780) 471.7210

### Olds College Seed Fair & Hay Show

Open House April 5th, 2008

Entry Deadlines

Hay & Silage January 31st, 2008

Other Classes February 28th, 2008

For further information contact (403) 556.4668

## Pesticide Applicator Tutorials

*\*for a complete listing of events please visit*

*www.environment.alberta.ca/2171.html*

*\*\*seed protectant class may or may not be included depending on enrolment #s, please check with the college*

### Olds College

February 25th- 26th, 2008 • Olds

March 25th-27th, 2008 • Calgary

Phone 1-800-661-6537 ext. 4677

### Lakeland College

March 11th – 14th, 2008 • Sherwood Park

Phone 1-866-853-8646

### Lethbridge College

February 19th – 22nd, 2008

March 31st – April 3rd, 2008 • Lethbridge

Phone 1-800-572-0103

### NAIT

March 17th – 20th, 2008 • Fairview

April 14th – 18th, 2008 • Grand Prairie

Phone 1-780-835-6600

## THE FACTS ON PBR

**Plant Breeders' rights (PBR) creates investment in varietal research to ensure that new and improved varieties continue to get into farmers' hands.**

The federal government has been consulting the industry regarding possible amendments to the current Plant Breeders' Rights legislation which was introduced in 1990. The amendments would bring Canada's version of PBR into line with the world. A lot has been said in the farm media about PBR lately, but the real facts about amending PBR are a good news story. Farmers are the real beneficiaries of PBR since supporting variety development ensures access to competitive, new, and improved varieties.

### MYTH

**Farmers will never be able to save their seed again.**

### FACT

**Proposed amendments to the Plant Breeders' Rights Act will actually enshrine the right for farmers to save seed on varieties granted a PBR certificate.**

That will allow farmers who have legitimately obtained their seed to clean and replant seed for their own farm without having to pay additional royalties on that seed or the subsequent crops it produces.

### MYTH

**Farm saved seed was meant to include selling it.**

### FACT

**The amendments will do very little to change farmers' lives.**

Today farmers are not allowed to sell their farm saved seed of PBR protected varieties. Potential changes to the PBR legislation will not change this. Common seed of non-PBR protected seed can be sold, but the Canada Seeds Act prohibits common seed from being sold by variety name.

### MYTH

**PBR doesn't work.**

### FACT

**Businesses have been caught violating PBR and have had to pay a lot for illegally selling seed.**

PBR does work. It works better when everyone is protecting the value that rests in seeds. Farmers and retailers can both benefit by ensuring everyone is treated equitably and as many parties as possible are making their fair contribution to variety development.

### MYTH

**PBR results in higher seed prices.**

### FACT

**Studies show that over a ten year period after the introduction of PBR there have been significant improvements in the yield and quality of many crops and an expansion of the area under production.**

During the same period, seed costs in the cereal and oilseed industry actually increased at a slower rate – between 1990 and 1999 (8.6%) – than they did between 1980 and 1990 (24%) Statistics Canada Table 328-0001-Farm Input Price Index

### MYTH

**Private sector plant breeding is the only beneficiary of PBR.**

### FACT

**31% of all of the agricultural varieties protected under PBR were developed at public institutions and receive royalties on seed sales.**

Universities, provincial research facilities, and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) have received royalties from private organizations to help fund their plant breeding programs. For example, about \$2.9 million per year in royalties is collected by seed growers through sales from one organization and reinvested into AAFC research stations. The private sector in both the horticulture and agriculture industries has increased its investment almost three-fold since the passage of PBR in 1990.

### MYTH

**Patents and PBR are the same.**

### FACT

**Patents and PBR are not the same thing.**

Genetic traits are patentable in Canada, but varieties are not. Conversely, only varieties are eligible for Plant Breeders' Rights. The rules for patent use are different than PBR, so if a farmer is planting material containing patented traits, it is not eligible for replanting. In the same way, if a farmer signs a contract like a Technology Use Agreement (TUA), that says he/she won't replant, he/she must live up to the contract. Only PBR allows replanting on a farmer's own land.

### MYTH

**Seed companies aren't investing in Canada.**

### FACT

**The private sector will invest \$56.7 million in plant breeding in 2007 and plan to double that by 2012.**

Private investment in crops like canola, corn and soybeans have given farmers access to tremendous new innovations and opportunities.



Association of  
Alberta Co-op Seed  
Cleaning Plants Ltd.

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## What do you think of our exciting new look?

Do you have an idea for a Seed Plant News story? Or is there something you would like to see featured in this publication?

Please send your ideas, submissions or feedback to Lorena Pahl at [lorena.pahl@seed.ab.ca](mailto:lorena.pahl@seed.ab.ca) or phone 403.782.8022.