

## Inside Barley Country

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Mixed farmer Matt Sawyer is the fourth generation of his family to work the land near Acme, Alberta. Story page 10.

## funding

# Province poised to redirect malting barley research funding

The Alberta Barley Commission says malting barley production is facing significant setbacks in the face of new barley research priorities by Alberta Agriculture and Food.

The Province of Alberta has indicated to the Commission that it will no longer provide funds or staff for future malting barley research. As part of the Alberta/Canada Barley Agreement, the Province has provided research support for the development of new malting barley varieties since 1993.

In preliminary discussions to renew the agreement, which ends in 2008, the Province has said it is redirecting the funds previously used for malting barley research to new feed and biofuel initiatives. It will, however, complete current projects and continue to support malting barley

research projects conducted by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada at Brandon and by the crop development centre in Saskatoon.

"Still, we see this as a clear shift away from supporting primary agriculture production in Alberta – and a commitment to develop barley varieties ideally suited to Alberta's climate and conditions," says Mike Leslie, the Commission's CEO.

"A malting variety suited to the needs of Manitoba or one to Saskatchewan's soils and climate zones does not mean it will grow well in Alberta. Combine this serious impediment to success with the Province's halting of support for regional variety trials in Alberta and a pattern is emerging."

Continued on page 2...

# Province poised to redirect malting barley research funding

...continued from page 1



In an April 24 letter to Terry Young, the Commission's chairman, George Groeneveld, the minister of Alberta Agriculture and Food and MLA for Highwood, said his department "plans to discontinue the active breeding for release of malting barley varieties, . . . to focus on improvement of barley for feed and biofuel uses."

He added his department views this "strategic change as a means of focusing available resources on research programs than can impact improved competitiveness of crop and livestock industries in Alberta."

Currently, Alberta Agriculture and Food estimates malting barley varieties account for about 40 per cent of the total seeded barley area, half of which is used for livestock feed rather than malting.

"We're terribly disappointed that the Province is changing the focus of the barley breeding program," says

Bob Chappell, president, Rahr Malting Canada Ltd. "Almost half of the malting barley grown in Alberta is exported . . . and I think we're losing opportunities in malting barley exports."

~  
**We see this as a clear shift away from supporting primary agriculture production in Alberta**  
~

A premium-quality crop, malting barley has tremendous contract farming and export potential. Recent droughts in Australia, a European malting barley crop failure in 2006 and growing demand in China are all leading to increased demand for

more malting barley production in Alberta as well as skyrocketing international prices.

Quoting the Canadian Wheat Board's Long-Term Trade Forecast, Alberta Agriculture and Food's website says "world malting barley trade could increase from about 4.5 million tonnes to 6.4 million tonnes by 2011. Canada's share of world trade should also increase, from 28 per cent to 32 per cent. China's import demand is expected to increase steadily to about 3.4 million tonnes (53 per cent of world trade) by 2011."

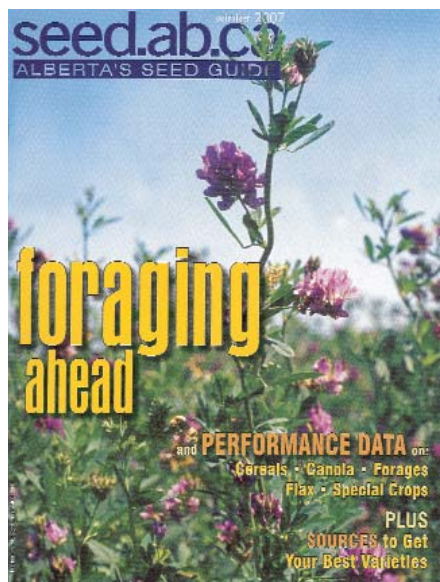
Recognizing this growth and potential, the Commission and Alberta Agriculture and Food are discussing how the possible commercialization of two highly promising new malting barley varieties (see story on page 5) currently in development could proceed.

## policy

# Government withdrawal will make seeding decisions tougher

With this year's barley crop well into production, some farmers may already be contemplating what varieties they'll grow next year. It's never an easy decision – and it's one many Alberta crop producers fear will be much tougher in 2008.

After this crop year, the Province of Alberta will no longer fund nor provide any in-kind support for regional varietal evaluation trials (known as RVTs).



RVTs compare crop varieties in actual field and weather conditions. Trial results are published annually in the Alberta Seed Guide and used widely by Alberta farmers to select the seed variety that best suits their soil zone, climate and management style.

Prior to 2006, the Province pro-

vided more than \$100,000 worth of direct annual support as well as growing sites and crop coordinators for 43 RVTs for barley varieties and more than 200 RVTs for other Alberta crops, among them wheat, oats, rye, canola, field peas and lentils.

"The resources and knowledge the Province brought to RVTs are unparalleled. The Province's participation ensured the trials were conducted using sound scientific processes, practices and analysis," says Terry Young, chair of the Alberta Barley Commission. "Alberta producers respect the expertise of the Province's field crop specialists and experts."

"Our 17,000 members rely on the results of trials because they are unbiased, independent information. The Alberta Seed Guide is one of Alberta's most trusted sources of agricultural information and helps farmers make relevant decisions to remain competitive in an ever-changing marketplace," says Mike Leslie, CEO of the Alberta Barley Commission.

Leslie likens the decision to "robbing Peter to pay Paul," saying RVT support is now funding biofuel research. "Biofuel is an important development and deserves attention, but it should be funded with new money, not the transfer of money from valuable existing crop production programs."

The effectiveness of the Alberta RVT testing program has been well demonstrated. Rapid adoption is es-

sential to meet the needs of the international value-added processing industry. Results from the RVT program provide data to all sectors of the grain industry. This ensures Alberta farmers produce what the market seeks and that producers know which varieties grow well in their local production area and how they compare to other varieties.

~  
**The Province's participation ensured RVTs were conducted using sound scientific processes, practices and analysis**  
~

Barry Grabo, president of Alberta Pulse Growers, says his producers share similar concerns. "Pulse growers consult with customers around the globe so that we understand the quality attributes the market demands. When we come home, we invest in new varieties that meet or exceed those demands. In order for farmers to invest in growing these new varieties, we need to see how they perform in each agro-climatic area. The RVT system gives farmers that unbiased information and that's why we are strong supporters of the program."

In May, the Alberta Barley Commission, Alberta Pulse Growers

and the Alberta Branch of the Canadian Seed Growers Association took their concerns public. Several media outlets covered in the issue, including AM 1140 Radio, the *Mountain View Gazette* and the *Calgary Herald*. To date, however, the Province has shown no sign it will reinstate RVT funding or support.

"We are disappointed that the Alberta government is withdrawing its funding and support of the RVT program. RVTs are a valuable decision-making tool that every farmer uses. We hope the Alberta government will recognize the value of these trials to our industry and reconsider funding for the RVT program," says Ron Markert, president of the Alberta Branch of the Canadian Seed Growers Association.

Meanwhile, the Commission is working with the Agricultural Research and Extension Council of Alberta, the Alberta Branch of the CSGA, the Alberta Pulse Growers and growers in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and British Columbia to create a Prairie-wide RVT program. But they're concerned about maintaining the results' independence and neutrality.

The four Alberta producer groups remain committed to consulting and collaborating with the Province to encourage its ongoing support of RVTs. And they're encouraging their members to contact their local MLAs and urge them to continue provincial support for RVTs.

# Province signals shift away from primary ag

This year I purchased a new air drill. It's slick, accurate and effective. But for me to get the best value out of it, I have to put the right seed into it.

For years, I've relied on the unbiased and independent results of regional varietal trials (RVTs) published in the Alberta Seed Guide – the seed variety bible of Alberta agriculture. Choosing the barley varieties that will perform best with my farm's climate and my production methods is one of the hardest, most time-consuming and important crop decisions I make every year. But at least it was one I could make knowing there was solid scientific methodology and widespread, unbiased data behind it.

That could change in 2008. After this crop year, the Province of Alberta will no longer fund nor provide any in-kind support for the trials, which compare crop varieties in actual field and weather conditions across the province.

While the Province isn't the only organization involved in RVTs, its role was instrumental. Up until this past year, it gave more than \$100,000 worth of direct annual support to RVTs. Plus it provided growing sites and crop coordinators for 43 RVTs for barley varieties and more than 200 RVTs for other Alberta crops, including field peas, lentils, wheat, oats, rye and canola.

The Province's support created a critical mass of information that the private sector will find very difficult to sustain

In real dollars, the Province's support was far from costly or massive, but it was enough to create a critical

mass of information that the private sector will find very difficult to sustain. In fact, other provinces have followed Alberta in supporting the program.

Combined with the Province's move to end funding for malting barley research, the decision signals a shift away from supporting primary agricultural production – and sends the wrong signal to our other provincial supporters of the program. If the richest of the prairie provinces doesn't see primary agriculture as a priority, what are the others to think?

I'm the first to support new initiatives for value-added products and bioproducts such as ethanol. But I view diverting funds from existing – and successful – core agronomic research programs and pumping them into new, "trendy" programs as highly counterproductive.

It's like building new roads in one area and letting the old ones crumble in another. Valued-added agriculture cannot thrive if primary



Terry Young, Commission Chairman

agriculture is neglected.

And just as my new air drill won't do a darn bit of good if I put the wrong kind of seed into it, taking away tools to help producers serve their value-added customers in a cost effective and sustainable fashion will not result in economic growth.



Alberta is Barley Country.

This province grows more barley than any other province, and Alberta's output typically accounts for half of Canada's annual crop. Barley production for feed, malt and food is an important economic activity in Alberta.

See *Barley Country* at [www.albertabarley.com](http://www.albertabarley.com)

*Barley Country* is published quarterly by the Alberta Barley Commission to inform producers of new technology and developments affecting barley production and to promote new markets for Alberta barley growers.

*Barley Country* is circulated to more than 38,000 producers, agronomists, researchers and grain industry representatives. One year subscription rates for non-members are \$15 within Canada and \$20 outside Canada.

*Barley Country* is printed on recycled paper using canola-based inks. Printed in Calgary, Alberta.

Editor: Terry Bullick, Terry Bullick Writing & Communications

Design/Layout: Sherry Mumford, Connections Desktop Publishing

Alberta Barley Commission  
#200, 3601A – 21 Street NE  
Calgary, AB T2E 6T5

ISSN: 1188-8911

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## community

# Barley-Boyko scholarship deadline Aug. 1

The application deadline for the annual Alberta Barley Commission Eugene Boyko Memorial Scholarship is August 1, 2007.

The scholarship was created in 2002 by the Commission as a salute to the late Eugene Boyko, a barley producer and longtime Commission director known for his commitment to agriculture and farming innovation.

The annual scholarship awards \$500 to recognize and encourage students in crop production and/or crop technology studies. The 2006 award winner was Jennifer M. Geddes, a graduate of the University of Lethbridge.

Applicants must be Canadian citizens or permanent Canadian residents living in Alberta. They must also be enrolled full time in their second or subsequent year of

study at a post-secondary institution in Alberta, and may receive the scholarship only once.

Recipients are chosen based on academic achievement in their previous year of post-secondary studies.

For further information, contact Alberta Scholarship Programs at:

Phone: (780) 427-8640

Email: [scholarships@gov.ab.ca](mailto:scholarships@gov.ab.ca)

Web: [www.alis.gov.ab.ca/scholarships](http://www.alis.gov.ab.ca/scholarships)



## grow this winter

at the Alberta Barley Commission's annual general meeting

December 7, 2007

Banff Park Lodge, Banff, Alberta

watch for details in the fall edition of *Barley Country*.

# Producers count days to market choice

The vote's been tallied: 62 per cent of 29,000 Western Canadian barley producers opted for choice in a federal plebiscite. And a proclamation made: the Canadian Wheat Board's monopoly on marketing food and export barley will end Aug. 1, 2007. But the fight over the CWB's role in barley doesn't appear to be completely over.

Weeks after barley producers in B.C., Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba opted for market choice, Chuck Strahl, the minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and the minister for the CWB, announced on June 12 the CWB's sales monopoly on barley would end this summer.

Strahl's open-market decision was

followed by a two-day rise in barley prices of \$12.50 a tonne on the Winnipeg Commodity Exchange, resulting in a contract high of \$168 for October barley.

The minister's move has also sparked a potential legal battle. A dozen Prairie barley producers have said they will launch a challenge in Federal Court to keep the CWB's marketing monopoly. The group's lawyer, Anders Bruun, argues the federal government should have made the change through Parliament, not a cabinet order.

In mid-June, Rosann Wowchuk, Manitoba's Minister of Agriculture, said the province had donated \$20,000 to Friends of the Canadian Wheat Board to help the group in its challenge.

"It's time for producers to call the bluff of those individuals intent on keeping barley producers in the dark and forcing them to accept low returns," says Jeff Nielsen, president of the Western Barley Growers Association (WBGA). "We are seeing clear market signals showing us barley can be profitable, and barley can provide more value-added here in Western Canada."

The WBGA staunchly maintains that "uncertainty over barley marketing has been grossly inflated" by special interest groups and the CWB's board. "The CWB Act clearly shows that barley was added by regulation and can be taken out by regulation."

Although Strahl and the WBGA are resolute that market choice will

become reality on Aug. 1, both have expressed concern about the possible effects and delays of a court case.

"The only thing that can create uncertainty is someone taking us to court. This is going ahead Aug. 1," said Strahl in a *Brandon Sun* article on June 13.

Meanwhile, the CWB has said it could withdraw completely from barley marketing, although Strahl has stated the marketing board is legally bound to offer all barley producers a pooled price for all Canadian barley sold for food or export.

On the flip side, numerous producers across Western Canada have already made plans to sell their barley to their own customers – at negotiated times, places and prices.



## Lacombe Field Day July 26, 2007

Greening of agriculture:  
Crop production practices  
and products

Hosted by: Field Crop Development Centre and Lacombe Research Centre

### SCHEDULE

Meet at the Alberta Agriculture Crop Research Station on Highway 2A, 1 mile south of Lacombe

- 8:00 – 9:00 am Coffee / Registration / Displays
- 9:00 – Noon Talks & field tours (or indoor presentations if weather dictates)
- Noon – 1:15 pm Lunch – provided with registration
- 1:30 – 4:00 pm Field tours/Talks

### REGISTRATION

\$20 per person, includes lunch, tour and refreshments  
Please forward fee with registration by July 20th

### CONTACT

Loree, Heather or Katie at  
(403) 782-8100 ext. 0 or  
Email: verquinl@agr.gc.ca

Certified Crop Advisors: CEU credits will be applied for

### SPEAKERS and TOPICS

#### Don Salmon, Kequan Xi

- Winter cereal breeding
- Stripe rust and other plagues

#### Patricia Juskiw, Joseph Nyachiro, Jim Helm, Jennifer Zantinge

- Water use efficiency and nutrient use efficiency tests
- Marker assisted selection
- Germplasm – creating diversity
- Barley breeding

#### Kan-Fa Chang, Deng-Jin Bing

- Breeding and disease resistance screening in pulses

#### John O'Donovan, Murray Hartman, Kelly Turkington, Lloyd Dossall

- New canola trial on the impact of speed of seeding, fan speed, seeding depth and dates
- Malt barley trials
- Conserving natural enemies of insect pests of canola

## Thank you to our 2006 Sponsors

- Alberta Barley Commission
- Alberta Canola Producers Commission
- Alberta Pulse Growers
- Bayer CropScience
- Gateway Research Organization
- Pioneer Hi-Bred Limited
- Reduced Tillage Linkages
- SeCan Association

## Registration Form - 2007 Field Day

Registration deadline: July 20, 2007

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of people in your group: \_\_\_\_\_ x \$20 = \_\_\_\_\_ enclosed

Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Town/City : \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code : \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

If you are registering a group, please include a list with the names, addresses and phone numbers of all attendees.

Please make cheques payable to: 2007 Lacombe Field Day

Mail to: 2007 Field Day, AAFC Lacombe Research Centre, 6000 C&E Trail, Lacombe, AB T4L 1W1

# Alberta's next malting barley could be just a 'stone's throw' away

It takes 10 to 12 years to develop a new Canadian cereal crop variety – almost exactly the number of years plant breeder Dr. Pat Juskiw has worked to create new varieties of malting barley for Alberta producers.

Juskiw joined the Alberta Field Crop Development Centre in Lacombe in 1988 as a research agronomist and took over the malt barley breeding research program in 1997. In the decade since, much of her professional time and passion



(left) A malting barley test plot at the Alberta Field Crop Development Centre in Lacombe; (top right) malting barley's best-known value-added product, beer; (bottom right) plant breeder Dr. Pat Juskiw has led Alberta's malting barley research program for a decade.

have been poured into developing commercially viable, disease- and pest-resistant varieties of malting barley ideally suited to Alberta's climate.

Throughout that time, Juskiw's research has been supported by the Alberta/Canada Barley Agreement, a joint funding program supported by the Province of Alberta, the Government of Canada and the Alberta Barley Commission.

It's been four years since Juskiw and her colleagues at the Crop Development Centre registered a new two-row spring barley variety. Ponoka (*Hordeum vulgare L.*), approved in 2003 as a feed barley, is just now hitting the market.

"We've had a lot of successes incorporating multiple disease resistance within the malting barley program but never made it completely through the registration process," says Juskiw. "As well, we have developed NIRS [near infrared reflectance spectroscopy] calibra-

tions to use in early generation selection for malting quality. It took a few years to fine-tune that process."

Today, Juskiw believes – and has the science to back it up – that two made-in-Alberta malting lines are a relative stone's throw away from making it through the rigorous fed-

eral registration process. These lines are growing today in a number of test plots in the Lacombe area.

One line, known as TR05669, is in its second year of collaborative testing. Collaborative tests are non-replicated field trials conducted across Western Canada with the express purpose of gathering samples

for rigorous malting tests. For the Prairie Recommending Committee for Oat and Barley to recommend a malting variety for registration to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, the barley quality evaluation team needs two years of collaborative test results.

The challenge with malting barley has been to get good malting traits combined with good scald resistance

The other line, TR05671, is being jointly developed with Rahr Malting.

"If TR05671 lives up to its quality traits this year, we will have a win-win situation of having a breeding program and malting company working together to produce specialty malting varieties," says Juskiw.

Plant breeding is a delicate balancing act, and in the case of malting barley, creating a variety that's highly scald resistant can reduce malting quality.

The Niobe variety, which had a single gene for scald resistance, was originally developed as malting barley but in collaborative trials didn't prove to have the low beta glucans now sought by industry users. In 2002, Niobe was registered as a feed barley and has been used in further research to increase scald resistance and malting quality.

"The challenge with malting barley," says Juskiw, "has been getting good malting traits combined with good scald resistance. We've been looking at a link between malting barley and scald, and validating genes in the field and through marker work with NIRS malting quality to see if we can break down the linkage."

This work comes down to studying and understanding how barley's seven pairs of chromosomes interact, link, divide, cross, break and reattach. It involves an enormous amount of data analysis of large sample sizes – and it takes patience.

"Science takes time," says Juskiw. "It took more than a decade to develop AC Metcalfe as a replacement for Harrington, and another decade for it to topple Harrington as the Canadian malting barley."

"Creating a malting barley breeding program in Alberta has been a great challenge. Malting barley is a premium crop and we have a mature industry that knows what it wants – and we're now at a stage in our breeding program to provide the Alberta industry with the quality product it desires."

# Study examines barley's viability as biofuel

The Alberta Barley Commission and the Western Barley Growers Association have launched a \$380,000, three-phase project to determine whether barley can be used in new ways to create and capture value in emerging markets and consumer trend.

The Barley Biofuels Opportunities Project (BBOP) will specifically study what it would take for Alberta barley growers to establish regional, barley-based ethanol production facilities. BBOP will also look at removing valuable fractions from barley prior to ethanol production such as beta-glucans and then using a byproduct of barley ethanol production – distillers grains – in commercial applications, including feed in livestock rations.

In May, the project received \$262,500 from the Biofuels Opportunities for Producers Initiative (BOPI). The funding came from the Agriculture & Food Council, which administers Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada's Advancing Canadian Agriculture & Agri-Food Program.

The WBGA and the Commission will jointly support and manage the project; Carman Read, previously a 30-year employee with Monsanto, has been hired as

project manager. As well, BBOP is supported by industry partners Syngenta (\$45,000), Ceapro (\$10,000), Wilbur-Ellis Canada (\$2,000) and Parkland Agri Services (\$1,000).

We want to give our members and their customers a good base of regional technical and business information

"We want to give our members and their customers a good base of regional technical and business information to assess their options for investing in barley – and in sustainable energy for Canada," said Terry Young, Commission chairman, at the federal funding announcement.

"Barley is already one of Western Canada's most important crops due to its role in Canada's beef industry, domestic and international malting and brewing, and agronomic rotational management," said Doug McBain, WBGA director. "Our goal



Carman Read will lead a joint research project by the Alberta Barley Commission and the Western Barley Growers Association into using barley in biofuel and other emerging technologies.

is to determine if Western Canada's barley producers can capitalize on the crop in new, profitable and sustainable ways while also continuing to provide value to barley's current users, primarily domestic beef producers."

The project's first task will be to determine the relative competitiveness of barley versus other major crops. Scientists with the University of Alberta will analyse ethanol yield and the starch and sugar extractions.

The project's initial findings will be reported in September 2007 and its final findings in March 2008.

## BBOP objectives

Barley Biofuels Opportunities Project will examine barley's viability as a feedstock platform for ethanol and other value-added products in new and emerging markets. The primary objective is to improve farm gate returns and/or to offer barley producers new and diversified business opportunities.

The project will provide barley producers, investors and funders with:

- Reliable scientific data on production processing and operations
- Reliable assumptions on costs, revenues and operating margins
- Reliable assumptions on end-use markets and market trends
- Operational management considerations, including feedstock procurement, production and product marketing.

# Low phytate barley variety tangled in approval process

Canadian barley producers and livestock feeders are increasingly frustrated that registration for a new low-phytate feed barley variety (HB379) is mired in bureaucracy.

Developed specifically to address the needs of the swine industry, HB379 has been defined as a novel feed by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency's (CFIA) feed division.

"The CFIA has issued this novel plant trait ruling without any sound scientific rationale," says Darcy Kirtzinger, coordinator, Research and Policy, Alberta Barley Commission. "For the past eight months, the CFIA has been provided all kinds of scientific rationale on why this decision should be revisited."

In Canada, and even within the CFIA, the term "novel" is inconsistently defined and applied. For example, HB379 was declared not novel by CFIA's seed division, but later declared novel by its feed division.

Throughout the rest of the world, "novel" is used to describe genetically modified organisms.

"Any Canadian variety labelled as 'novel' will be looked upon as 'Frankenfood' by any other country,"



A low phytate variety of barley developed for the swine industry is mired in a Canadian Food Inspection Agency approval process, frustrating barley producers and hog feeders alike.

says Kirtzinger. "Canada is out of step with the rest of the world and is placing Canadian agricultural products and producers at a disadvantage."

Developed for the monogastric feed industry by Dr. Brian Rossnagel, a plant scientist at the Saskatchewan Crop Development Centre, HB379's benefits include lower phytate levels and higher available phosphorus levels. In turn, the variety reduces the need for added dicalcium phosphate and/or enzyme supplementation in feed rations. Most importantly, HB379 reduces

phosphorus in animal effluent by as much as 44 per cent compared to traditional barley diets.

"Our producers have been anticipating low phytate HB379 since it received unanimous support at the Prairie Grain Development Committee," says Jurgen Preugschas, chairman, Alberta Pork. "We're perplexed as to why it's experienced so many frustrating setbacks in the regulatory process."

The Commission, Alberta Pork and a number of other industry stakeholders recognize that challenges for this new variety are just

the first example of how differing definitions and regulatory processes in Canada stifle innovation. As a result, they have jointly called upon MP Rona Ambrose, the president of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, which oversees the Smart Regulations process, to bring all departments' definitions of "novel products" into alignment and harmonize regulations within Canada.

"We need to ensure we harmonize our definitions with the rest of the world with regard to genetically modified organism (GMO) products," says Kirtzinger. "There is a need to implement a system of streamlined "smart" regulations for GMO and non-GMO products, not only at the CFIA but at other departments such as Health Canada, Environment Canada and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada."

"Agriculture is constantly being told it must be nimble, creative and innovative, but so often when it is, we're choked by arcane bureaucratic processes," says Preugschas. "Such wrangling amounts to a competitive disadvantage."

Indeed, a low-phytate barley variety has already been approved for use in the U.S. and another is scheduled soon.

# WTO talks resume with hope of agreement

In April 2006, the Alberta Barley Commission and several other groups representing key Alberta agricultural producers travelled to Geneva, Switzerland, for the World Trade Organization's Doha Round of international trade negotiations. Team Alberta, as the group was known, made the journey believing a new era in international trade was about to begin.

"Today, we're still waiting," says Mike Leslie, CEO of the Commission.

Launched in November 2001, the Doha Round of trade talks have brought developed and developing nations together to come to terms with a wide range of trade views and needs, including further substantial reductions in agricultural tariffs, domestic support and export subsidies.

Leslie and representatives of the Alberta Beef Producers, the Alberta Pork Producers, the Alberta Winter Wheat Producers Commission and the Western Barley Growers Association arrived in Geneva with the understanding that Canada was ready to support a reduction in quota tariffs and trade-distorting subsidies. The move was crucial if Canada expected other countries to relax their restrictions on Canadian imports. Unfortunately the federal government did an about face and asked for "flexibility in not reducing" over-quota tariffs on several supply-managed agricultural commodities.

Canada's new position was deemed a stalemate and the country was effectively removed from the bargaining table. Meanwhile, the other 149 countries involved in the talks have moved on without any substantial participation from Canada.

"As a country our reputation as a

credible trade partner has been seriously undermined – for a nation as dependent on agri-trade as Canada, this was a damaging blow to many exporters, especially grain and meat producers in Western Canada," says Leslie. Alberta is Canada's second largest exporter of primary and processed agricultural and food products, exporting \$5 billion worth in 2005.

"The idea of the Doha talks was to create ways for developing and underdeveloped countries to benefit from world trade," says Doug Robertson, Commission vice-chairman and director-at-large for Region 2. "But the only way they will benefit is from reduced tariffs and lowered barriers to trade – indeed all countries will benefit as a whole."

Getting Canada, or any other country, to agree to those terms has been the crux of the talks.

For example, an article in *The Globe and Mail* on June 13, 2007, said that over the past decade U.S. rice farmers got 72 per cent of their cash income from federal farm subsidies. American wheat farmers got 35 per cent; barley farmers 30 per cent and corn farmers 25 per cent.

The WTO allows the U.S. to provide US\$19 billion a year in agricultural subsidies, but *The Globe* said U.S. farm support routinely "exceeds twice this legal limit."

In July 2006, after five years of discussion, WTO Director-General Pascal Lamy shut down all negotiations. Talks have now resumed and Lamy has set a new target of December 2007 for the talks to be completed.

Canada's role and position in them, however, have yet to be defined. The federal government has officially remained hands-off follow-

ing a parliamentary motion to not negotiate any flexibility in discussions about domestic supply-managed sectors. As a result, Canada is now branded as unreasonable and talks are progressing without any significant Canadian input regarding market access.

It's important for our industry to continually renew our efforts and ensure barley is represented

Meanwhile, the Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance (CAFTA) is monitoring and participating in numerous regional, national and international WTO trade discussions. CAFTA president Alanna Koch and Shiferaw Adilu, a senior trade policy analyst with Alberta Agriculture and Food, attended several meetings in Geneva in May and June 2007.

Their trip was shortly after the release of the two "challenge" reports by Crawford Falconer, the chairman of the Committee on Agriculture for the WTO's Doha Round, recommending a number of "effective cuts in trade-distorting support."

CAFTA says Canada and other established agricultural producers such as the United States and the European Union must be prepared to find new views and solutions.

Barley is a relatively small export item: in 2005/2006, about two million tonnes of the 12 million tonnes in Canada were exported. But barley's largest domestic users are ex-

port-focused and ship beef, pork and malt around the world. Leslie noted "the successful export of malt and meat results in a stronger demand for Canadian barley here at home."

"Canada's persistent division and deadlocks over agricultural trade could diminish our opportunities and abilities to access export markets around the globe," says Leslie.

CAFTA's Koch says the WTO's recent Falconer papers "have successfully provided the spark required to reignite the negotiating process," but says her organization remains concerned "with the level of ambition shown for reductions in trade-distorting support and his ideas for market access to developing country markets."

The WTO is expected to continue a number of high-level agricultural and general trade talks throughout the summer. A draft of modalities, or targets for achieving the objectives of the negotiations, could be written by the end of July.

"After so many delays and frustrations, the WTO is finally generating some good news," says Koch.

"These negotiations are a true exercise in patience and diplomacy – it's important for our industry to continually renew our efforts and ensure barley is represented in whatever deal is struck so that we create significant opportunities for our producers," says Robertson.

If talks progress, Commission representatives will again travel to Geneva this summer to present their concerns. As well, the Commission will continue to work with a number of agriculture groups to encourage the Government of Canada to be a more engaged and flexible participant in the Doha Round.

## Said in the Legislature

An excerpt from the May 1, 2007, proceedings of the Alberta Legislature, as reported in Hansard, the official transcript of the provincial House.

**LeRoy Johnson, MLA for Wetaskiwin-Camrose:** I recently met with representatives from the Alberta Barley Commission regarding Alberta Agriculture & Food's malt barley research program, which takes place at Lacombe. During this meeting I was informed that the research program was being phased out and that fewer researchers are working on barley projects. This is of concern to the many Albertans who rely on malt barley to make a living. My question is to the Minister of Agriculture & Food. Is barley research at Lacombe being discontinued, and if so, why?

**Minister of Agriculture & Food George Groeneveld, MLA for Highwood:** Barley research at the Field Crop Development Centre in Lacombe is not being discontinued. Our current research investment is, however, being redirected to focus on barley and triticale for food and bio-fuel use. Two other organizations currently in Western Canada have malt barley programs like our current research program, so we're investing in new research projects that will set Albertans apart, and we're not going to reinvent the wheel.

**Johnson:** The barley sector is an important part of Alberta's agricultural industry. What other research initiatives relative to this sector are being conducted or supported by your department?

**Groeneveld:** . . . There's a lot of

exciting research taking place today. We've invested very heavily in genetic research to increase profit for our farmers. This research will focus on things like increasing yield and nutrition, improving water efficiency, and protecting crops from diseases and pests. Our scientists are also working on a new technology that can evaluate the attributes and the quality of a crop. This technology has the incredible potential to result in payment to grain farmers based on the quality of their crops rather than payment on the bushel or by the tonne.

**Johnson:** Can the minister tell the House what else is being done to encourage and promote agricultural research in his department, and does it really benefit the producers?

**Groeneveld:** Research is vital.



George Groeneveld, Minister of Alberta Agriculture and Food

For example, the Institute for Food and Agricultural Sciences Alberta, also known as IFASA, brings together scientists from Agriculture and Food, the University of Alberta, the Alberta Research Council, and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

# Travel notes from Argentina, a snapshot of its agricultural economy

In January 2007, Nikki Barnes, the office and project manager of the Alberta Barley Commission, joined 13 Canadians from government, industry and producer groups on an extensive tour of Brazil's and Argentina's agricultural industries. Her second report highlights her journey through Argentina.

Like Canada, Argentina exports a large portion of its agricultural products: 94 per cent of its soy, 77 per cent of its sunflower (oil), 66 per cent of its corn and 64 per cent of its wheat.

And like Alberta, Argentina is "beef country." And Argentines eat more beef than anyone else in the world: 70 kilograms a year a person, in addition to 25 kg of chicken and five kg of pork. By comparison, in 2005, the average Canadian ate 14.6 kg of beef, 10 kg of pork and 13.7 kg of chicken each year.

Typically, about 20 per cent of

Argentina's beef is exported, and despite the country's poor foot and mouth disease status its beef is known throughout the world thanks to a \$7-million annual promotion budget.

~  
**One of the government's social policy's is to keep domestic beef prices low.**  
 ~

Recently, however, the government temporarily stopped all beef exports because it deemed exports were driving up domestic prices. One of the government's social policies is to keep domestic beef prices low. This, combined with export quotas, limits the number and profitability of beef producers.

Recent governments in Argentina



Argentina has seen some 20 million hectares of cattle grazing land convert to soy bean production in recent years.



are best described as reactionary, going through cycles of crisis and development. Between 1945 and 1976, the country was under authoritarian rule. A military junta took over in 1976 and democracy returned in 1983. But political instability and economic crises are common. In 2005 the country renegotiated its massive public debt, and in 2006 it paid off its remaining obligations to the International Monetary Fund.

Despite these troubles and the lack of any long-term economic strategy to offset an unemployment rate of 15 per cent and interest rates between 10 and 15 per cent, Argentina's economy is showing signs of strength. Part of that strength comes from the agricultural sector: the country produces about 17 per cent of the world's soybeans, 20 per cent of its soybean oil and 42 per cent of its soy meal. It also produces 11.5 per cent of the world's sunflower oil and 2.5 per cent of its wheat.

Barley is grown, but is used mostly for forage; very little is used for food.

Argentina is the world's third-largest soybean producer following the U.S.A. and Brazil. Most varieties of soybeans planted in Argentina are genetically modified and are grown primarily south and west of Buenos Aires at the edges of the province of La Pampa.

Much of Argentina's land is arid or semi-arid but the La Pampa region has received significant rainfall in the past 10 years. About 20 million hectares that used to be used for cattle grazing is now primarily used for soybean production. Yields of 2.5 to 3 tonnes per hectare are similar to the U.S.A. and Brazil.

Argentina is the world's sixth largest corn producer, but salty soil yields about a third less per hectare than corn fields in the U.S.: six tonnes compared to nine to 10 tonnes in the States.

Sunflowers are another important crop – Argentina is the second largest producer of sunflower in the world, at about 11.5 per cent, following the European Union.

Wheat is Argentina's weakest crop and the area under production has diminished significantly in recent years in favour of higher-margin crops.

One of the country's agricultural success stories is El Tejar S.A., a large agri-business owned by about nine families. El Tejar began in 1987 with a dream to market branded beef in supermarkets. The subject of a Harvard Business School case study, today the company raises beef and crops (soybean, corn, wheat, barley, sugar cane, cotton and sorghum) on more than 200,000 hectares in Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia and Uruguay.

~  
**Like Alberta, Argentina is 'beef country': Argentines eat more beef than anyone in the world.**  
 ~

The company is driven by its shareholders' philosophy on human values, which include professionalism, humility, happiness and trust. As well, El Tejar concentrates on production systems.

It conducts virtually no research and development, but does generate success and results through learning, internal processes (International Standards Organization [ISO] 14,000, ISO 18,000 and ISO 9,000), customer focus and productive and financial performance.

Not all companies are as progressive, and on the whole Argentines are more risk averse and reserved than many of their South American neighbours.

The country is somewhat behind Brazil in the development and adoption of biofuels, although there is some sugar cane ethanol production in the west and soybean biodiesel in the south. And the country's potential for biofuel production is considerable. In April 2006, Argentina passed legislation encouraging small scale, non-competitive biofuel production.

The Alberta Barley Commission gratefully acknowledges the support of the Alberta Crop Industry Development Fund, which covered 45 per cent of the Commission's tour expenses.

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada    Agriculture et Agroalimentaire Canada

## \$400 Million Direct Payment

### Financial Assistance for Producers

The new federal **Cost of Production Payment** will provide \$400 million in assistance to Canadian producers to help address high production costs.

If you provided your 2004 farming income and expense information for the Canadian Agricultural Income Stabilization (CAIS) program, you do not need to apply for the payment.

If you did not participate in 2004 CAIS, or began farming in 2005 or 2006, you can apply now to receive a payment.

**The deadline to apply is September 1, 2007.**

For applications, visit [www.agr.gc.ca/cop](http://www.agr.gc.ca/cop) or call toll-free at **1 866 367-8506**.

# Province aims to make ag more competitive

The Province of Alberta wants a new steering group to make Alberta agriculture more competitive.

It has appointed 10 people to the Competitiveness Initiative Steering Group based on their experience and knowledge of industry, value chains and the global marketplace.

“New competitors and technologies, growing demand for biofuels, market changes in developing countries, labour shortages – these are just some of the things influencing the competitive environment,” said Minister of Agriculture & Food George Groeneveld in announcing the new committee in May.

The group will review existing research, address any information gaps, and provide government with recommendations to improve local, national and international competitiveness. The Province is providing \$200,000 for support studies for the livestock and crop sectors and \$250,000 for start-up work and recommendations.

The steering group will make its recommendations to the provincial government in June 2008, although some priority recommendation could come earlier.

Steering group members are:

- Art Froelich, co-chairman, a mixed-farm operator who sits

on the boards of the Alberta Agricultural Research Institute, Prince Rupert Grain, Genome Alberta and Growing Alberta.

- Brian Rhiness, co-chairman, is assistant deputy minister of Industry Development for Alberta Agriculture and Food.
- Colin Jeffares is assistant deputy minister of Planning and Competitiveness for Alberta Agriculture and Food.
- Garnet Altwasser is president of the Canadian Meat Council.
- Bob Christie owns a cow-calf operation and is past chairman of the Alberta Livestock Industry Development Fund.

- Paul Flesher is president and general manager of Crust Craft, a custom baking and co-packing company.
- Mike Hart is an egg producer.
- Cam Klapstein owns and operates a mixed grain, oilseed and forage seed farm, and chairs the Alberta Crop Industry Development Fund.
- Justin Sherwood is vice-president of the Canadian Council of Grocery Distributors.
- Jim Thacker produces and processes technologically advanced cereals, essential herbs and dried oils and is a director of AVAC Ltd.

## updates

# News from your Commission

Behind the headlines of virtually every story in this edition of *Barley Country*, the Alberta Barley Commission has been working to advance the interests of our 17,000 members.

During the past quarter ending April 30, our staff, directors and delegates have focused on:

- Barley marketing – we’ve continued to dedicate considerable time and attention to market choice and to give Alberta’s barley producers the choice of how, when and for how much they market their barley.
- Funding consortium projects – the effort we put into creating these research projects is often returned several fold because we are pooling funds and focusing on priorities with numerous partners and are able to leverage producers’ dollars by as much as \$9 for every \$1 invested.
- The information gathered by the Commission and the Western Barley Growers Association during a research trip in South America helped our organizations secure nearly \$500,000 from government and industry for our recently announced joint Barley Biofuels Opportunity Project and a joint project with Ceapro on fractionation and ethanol research.
- Working with industries across our sector, we’ve joined with others to establish an industry advisory association to assist the Canadian Food Inspection Agency’s fertilizer division in developing industry-supported “smart” regulations and guidelines.
- Our efforts to see barley receive “heart healthy” approval from Health Canada are being helped

by a coalition of 30 like-minded organizations across the country. Our most recent meeting was June 26 in Winnipeg.

- Recent strategic planning sessions with Commission staff and directors clarified where our organization is going and how we should get there. We are all “on the same page” and working toward the same goals and objectives.
- We’ve met with numerous MLAs, ministers and the provincial government’s rural caucus to give them a better understanding of our members’ expectations, concerns and needs. Among the topics of discussion: the feeding industry’s competitiveness, malting barley research, regional variety trials, biofuels and remaining competitive in the global marketplace.

Looking ahead, the Commission will return to Banff National Park – by popular demand – for its annual general meeting on Dec. 7, 2007. The meeting will take place at the Banff Park Lodge, and, as always, feature an enlightening array of presentations and discussions. This meeting never disappoints, and offers members an opportunity to shape the organization’s direction in 2008.

We have yet to finalize our agenda, but have started to develop sponsorship packages. This year, sponsors have the option of contributing 10 per cent of their sponsorship contribution to the Eugene Boyko Memorial Scholarship Fund (see story on page 3).

You can contact us about anything barley at (800) 265-9111 or email [barleyinfo@albertabarley.com](mailto:barleyinfo@albertabarley.com) – Mike Leslie, Nikki Barnes and Darcy Kirtzinger

## growing



Photo credit: Carol Dyson, Alberta Field Crop Development Centre

# Production increase expected

In the May 29, 2007, Canada: Grains and Oilseeds Outlook, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada forecast barley production will increase this year by 20 per cent. The jump is attributed to a larger seeded area and expected increased yields due to new varieties. Even so, supply is expected to remain tight, with only a slight increase in carry-over.

An anticipated increase in exports is forecast to be more than offset by lower domestic use so that carry-out stocks increase by six per cent.

A relatively strong Canadian dollar, which has remained above 90 cents U.S. for several months, could bring pressure to Canadian grain and oilseed prices, although overall worldwide demand could see export

prices remain strong or even strengthen, in large part due to the demand created by the biofuel sector in the United States.

Meanwhile in the marketplace, concerns are rising about the corn/ethanol boom in the U.S. and the higher value of the Canadian dollar will affect Canadian feedlots and hog barns. As well, the demand – and the price – for malting barley is rising; in Germany, buyers have reportedly paid C\$7/bushel.

“The world is ready for Canadian barley, but we need to balance short-term profits with the long-term needs of our customers in Canada’s feeding industry so we can succeed well into the future,” says Mike Leslie, CEO of the Alberta Barley Commission.

## profile

# Fourth-generation farmer looks to future with optimism

**M**att Sawyer counts the generations his family has farmed near Acme.

"I'm the fourth and I guess that would make my kids the fifth," says the 35-year-old father of three, who together with his wife Tara and parents Glen and Joy, will raise feed and malting barley, red spring and Canadian Prairie wheat and canola – along with 50 head of black and red angus cattle – this year on some 4,200 acres in central Alberta.

The two current generations of Sawyer farmers run separate incorporated operations but share equipment and farming approaches and divide labour.

"We try to keep it as simple as possible," says Matt, who began full-time farming after finishing college in 1993, 90 years after his great grandfather, T.M. Evans, planted his first field in 1903.

Simple isn't always possible for a business this size. In June, Matt and Tara's home quarter was flooded – twice – with the second deluge coming three days before the quarter was supposed to be reseeded to qualify for crop insurance.

"I don't know what we'll do . . .," says Matt, his thoughts trailing off with a quick shrug and glance at the waterlogged field behind his backyard.

Still, Matt says farming here is usually far "easier" than in other parts of the province, although he jokes that a flood-resistant barley would be nice.

"Usually we don't have a lot of challenges here, because we have pretty steady conditions, but we have been hailed out and had droughts and wet harvests."

These uncertainties aside, Matt is confident and optimistic about his chosen profession.

"I'm very excited about the barley 'freedom day' . . . the barley market has already responded with higher prices," he says. "All I want is the choice to sell to whomever I want, when I please."



Matt Sawyer says farming is "easier" at his family's Acme farm, but still has its challenges from year to year.

He's also intrigued by biofuels.

"I've never really thought of doing anything else, but I have always thought about getting more involved in alternative fuels somehow."

He took his first steps toward that involvement this past fall when he attended a global bio-symposium in his role as a delegate for the Alberta Barley Commission. The event gave

him a glimpse into the opportunities and possibilities farmers have in front of them.

"Farmers are due for some higher prices and good years."

And if that predicted prosperity comes to pass, a fifth generation of his family could well be inspired to work on the land.

## knowledge

# Reducing malting barley rejection due to pre-germination

**R**educing one risk can sometimes increase exposure to another. Such is the case for malting barley producers who've opted to store their 2006 crop until market conditions are more predictable. Their decision means they must carefully monitor and measure for pre-germination, could turn out they've been storing an expensive feed barley.

The early stages of pre-germination can occur before harvest, especially in moist conditions. The stages aren't visible on the kernel but can have a drastic effect on crop revenue. Pre-germination reduces the capacity

of barley to retain germination energy. Even barley initially accepted for malting may be rejected after several months in storage if it loses germination capacity and no longer has the high, uniform germination rates that produce good quality malt extract.

The Canadian Grain Commission (CGC) recently developed a method for malting barley producers and users to quickly, cheaply and accurately predict how long a crop can be stored.

Rapid visco analysis, or RVA, can reveal a "best before date" for malting barley in long-term storage, ensuring producers get top dollar for

their crop, while maltsters and brewers get quality assurance. As well, RVA gives farmers a better picture of safe storage temperature and relative humidity.

"The RVA process also shows producers when their hopes of malt are no longer valid and they can market the crop for cash flow needs to the feed industry," says Mike Leslie, CEO of the Alberta Barley Commission.

"The CGC saw a clear need for a rapid and objective test," says Peter Burnett, director of the CGC's Grain Research Laboratory. "The method we have developed will help

companies make decisions about selected barley in storage and could reduce risk in marketing for producers, marketers, grain companies and malting companies."

"This is a powerful tool to help decide if you should store your malt or sell it as feed," says Leslie. "Sampling is crucial, if you have a corner of the truck box with a few sprouted kernels left from a previous load and one kernel gets into your RVA sample, the entire load will be rejected. Similarly, if you have a leak in your bin and a few sprouted kernels are tested, this can result in an entire bin being rejected."

**For more information see [www.grainscanada.gc.ca/](http://www.grainscanada.gc.ca/) and follow the links from Quality Matters.**

# Lacombe Research Centre celebrates centennial



Test 42 plots will be among the topics of discussion at the Lacombe Research Centres centennial celebrations on June 21.

When the Lacombe Agriculture Experimental Farm opened 100 years ago, farmers turned to scientists there for research, advice and on information on crops, pests, disease, equipment and weather.

While staff and researchers haven't been able to do much about weather during the past century, they have helped farmers integrate countless agronomic practices across the province, the country and around the world.

In crop production, one of the most widespread and beneficial is direct seeding, a practice that was researched extensively at Lacombe in the past two decades.

"The perceived issue with direct seeding at the time was the thought that residue on the soil surface would automatically lead to more disease and weeds," says plant researcher Kelly Turkington. "We found that other factors like environment, rotation and variety have much more impact on disease and weeds than direct seeding."

Another major advance in all crop

research at the "farm" – now known as Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Lacombe Research Centre – during the past 20 years has been integrating all aspects of crop production.

"We look at seeding rates, weeding times, row spacing, variety performance and disease resistance together – the ultimate goal is to enhance crop health and crop yield without having to rely on a lot of external elements and inputs," says Turkington.

On July 21, the Research Centre will celebrate a century of agricultural successes, advances and heritage. Dozens of free activities are planned for everyone from serious producers to the curious public.

In addition to heritage crop demonstrations, barley producers will find something just for them, including field tours of Test 42, an impressive project based on barley/pea/canola crop rotation, higher than normal seeding rate and competitive varieties.

For details, call the Lacombe Research Centre at (403) 782-8100.

## Who knew? Barley makes ideal kitty litter

A Saskatoon-based company, LitterMate Bio-Products Ltd., is using Canadian-grown barley as the main ingredient in biodegradable – and flushable – cat litter.

An alternative to standard clay-based products, LitterMate Cat Litter is sold in Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia. Company president Mark Pickard says he developed the product after learning about a wheat-based cat litter that failed to meet standards for food or feed.

"We had access to waxy, high-quality Canadian barley and could pay farmers a fair price for it," says Pickard.

He began taking home bags of barley and testing it on his family's cats and quickly found barley's ability to absorb and hold moisture made it a natural and sustainable

choice for feline litter boxes. Barley also forms scoopable clumps that can be flushed down toilets in small quantities. Plus, the remaining used barley litter can be easily decomposed in home composters or (when disposed of in paper bags) in municipal landfills.

LitterMate is completely safe for cats and the product is mixed with baking soda to reduce odours.

To date, LitterMate is available at about 50 specialty pet stores, but Pickard is optimistic it will capture a greater share of the \$1 billion North Americans spend on cat litter every year.

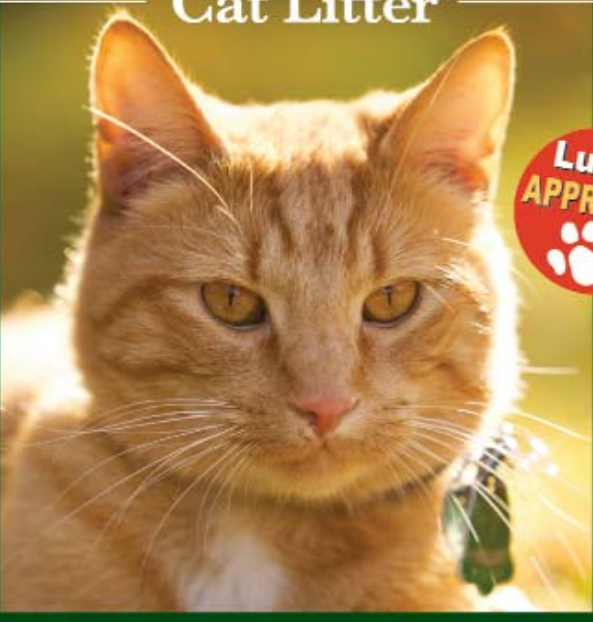
"I think we have excellent export opportunities because many countries and cities either limit or are considering limits on household waste."

For more information, visit [www.luckyapproved.com](http://www.luckyapproved.com).

Clumpable 🐾 Flushable  
Biodegradable 🐾 Compostable

# LitterMate™

Cat Litter



Lucky  
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All Natural Barley 🐾 No By-Products  
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1-800-510-1828
Product of Canada 🇨🇦

A Saskatchewan company is selling an environmentally friendly cat litter made from barley at pet stores across three provinces.

# News and events

## Promoting barley's benefits

The Alberta Barley Commission is working with more than three dozen industry groups and stakeholders to seek Health Canada's approval for promoting barley's health advantages.

The groups hope Health Canada will allow a health claim similar to one approved by the United States Food & Drug Administration in December 2005 for barley products such as whole barley and barley flakes, flour and meal. Product labels in the U.S. can state that barley plays a role in reducing the risk of cardiovascular disease.

A spring meeting with Health Canada and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada officials in Winnipeg was followed by further discussions at the Science and Joy of Canadian Barley and Beer symposium in late June, also in Winnipeg. A detailed progress report will appear in the fall edition of *Barley Country*.

## CAFTA appointment

The Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance has appointed Keith Lancaster as CAFTA executive director effective June 18. Lancaster has worked most of the past 25 years in the not-for-profit sector for a range of organizations, including as executive director of the Canadian Apprenticeship Forum. His career highlights include successes in government relations and advocacy, organizational planning, program development/management and media relations.

CAFTA represents producers, processors and exporters of agricultural and agri-food products. CAFTA's members account for more than 80 per cent of Canada's agricultural and food exports and more than 50 per cent of Canada's of farm cash receipts. And they are united in their dependence on trade and in their need for a liberalized international trading environment.

## July 6 to 15

The Greatest Outdoor Show on Earth, the Calgary Stampede, features all kinds of agricultural events, including Ag-tivity in the City. The Alberta Barley Commission is partnering with Alberta Turkey in a booth in Ag-Tivity in the City tent each day from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. As well, Brian Hinton of Calgary's Lakeview Bakery returns to the ATCO Kitchen Theatre in the Roundup Centre for baking demonstrations and consumer education on the benefits of barley.

## July 10 to 12

The Southern Alberta Diagnostic Field School is three one-day sessions at the Lethbridge Community College's animal husbandry facility at Lethbridge. Sponsored by the Southern Applied Research Association (SARA). Registration \$106 for SARA members/\$132.50 for public. For more information, contact:  
Elizabeth Tokariuk  
Phone: (403) 328-0059  
Email: sara-research@connectcomm.ca

## July 12

The B.C. Grain Producers Association's Crop Tour Day is planned for July 12 at the South Peace Research Site near Dawson Creek, B.C. This free event includes presentations on biofuel feedstock, variety trials and flax program and a barbecue. Open to all; registration requested by July 10. For details and directions, call the BCGPA at (250) 782-2557.

## July 18

Sign up today for the Chinook Applied Research Association (CARA) annual field day. The \$15-fee includes lunch, supper and an air-conditioned bus ride. Tour topics include: crops for ethanol production, crop variety trials, biological control for foxtail barley, crop rotation, scouting for crop pests and demonstrations on field pea agronomics, medicinal crops and shelterbelts. For further information and registration, call CARA at (403) 664-3777.

## July 21

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Lacombe Research Centre (6000 C&E Trail, Lacombe) celebrates its 100th anniversary with a day of all things agricultural. Dozens of events, demonstrations and tours are planned; among those of special interest to barley producers will be field tours of Test 42 plots, and heritage crop demonstrations. Everyone welcome; free to all. For more information call, (403) 782-8100.

## July 26

Lacombe Field Crop Development Centre field day sponsored in part by the Alberta Barley Commission. See page 4 for details.

## July 31 to Aug. 2

The 20th Brewing and Malting Barley Research Institute Triennial Barley Improvement Meeting convenes at the Executive Royal Inn, Edmonton International Airport, 8450 Sparrow Drive, Leduc, Alberta. Plot tours of the Lacombe Research Station follow that afternoon and a barbecue is scheduled for the evening. Meetings are planned for Aug. 1 and a tour of the Agrivalve Processing Business Incubator and the Food Processing Development Centre in Leduc is slated for the morning of Aug. 2. The gathering concludes that day with an invitational round-table session and closed technical committee meeting. Registration deadline July 6; special hotel rates available. For more information, contact:  
Phone: (204) 927-1407  
Web: www.bmbri.ca

## Aug. 1 to 2

The Mackenzie Applied Research Association (MARA) annual field tours are Aug. 1 in Manning and Aug. 2 in Ft. Vermilion. Tours begin at 9 a.m. each day and are free to all. Lunch is for members; \$10 for non-members. For more information, call:  
Nora Paulovich, Manning tour  
Phone: (780) 836-3354  
Kelly Zeleny, Ft. Vermilion tour  
Phone: (780) 927-3776

## Aug. 2

The Gateway Research Organization (GRO) field tour starts at 7:30 a.m. with a pancake breakfast at the Westlock Community Hall (adjacent to the Westlock Recreation Centre, 10450 - 106A St., Westlock). Includes stops at two sites in the counties of Barrhead and Westlock to view trials on regional varieties, barley disease, silage, canola seeding rates, pulses in rotation, and new crops. Tour ends with lunch at 1 p.m. Registration \$10 for members and \$30 for public; register by July 28. For further information, contact:  
Amy Kaut, GRO Crops Agronomist  
Phone: (780) 349-4546  
Cell: (780) 307-5219

## Sept. 18 to 21

The 55th Annual CropLife Canada Conference and Annual General Meeting in Saskatoon, Sask., examines Canada's look at Canada's opportunities in the growing global bio-economy. Bio-energy production, health and wellness, bio-materials, food, feed and rural development are all on the agenda. Full conference registration includes Tuesday ice-breaker, conference sessions, Wednesday lunch, provincial council welcome, reception and banquet. Various registration packages and additional events and programs are offered. Visit [www.croplifeconference.ca](http://www.croplifeconference.ca) for details.

## Dec. 7

Alberta Barley Commission annual general meeting at the Banff Park Lodge, Banff. See details in the fall edition of *Barley Country* or contact the Commission at:  
Phone: (800) 265-9111  
Email: [barleyinfo@albertabarley.com](mailto:barleyinfo@albertabarley.com)

To have your event listed in *Barley Country*, submit it by fax to (403) 291-0190 or by email to [barleyinfo@albertabarley.com](mailto:barleyinfo@albertabarley.com).

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