

SEED

Association of Alberta Co-op Seed Cleaning Plants Ltd. PLANT NEWS

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"...our website seed.ab.ca will have a new updated look starting mid-March."

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Well it looks like spring is just around the corner and I'm sure that all of our plants are gearing up for the annual seeding rush that happens each and every year.

Just an update on some of the things that the provincial board has been working on this past year.

Last year, our participation with the seed plant booth in Lethbridge Ag-Expo, Red Deer Agritrade, and Farmtech in Edmonton was deemed to be a very effective way to raise our profile as a provincial association. We feel that it is important to attend these events to remind everyone who we are as an association and to promote our facilities and all of the services we have to offer. This year we will be in attendance at these same events. A big thank you to all of the volunteers who have taken the time to be present at the booth and help promote our industry.

The provincial board continues to take an active role in the provincial Fusarium Action Committee. This year the committee structure has been redefined to get input from 12 stakeholder groups affected by the fusarium issue. At the February 1st meeting we were presented with

the results of the province wide field survey done last fall. The results of the survey indicate that fusarium continues to be a problem in those areas that have had high levels of infection in the past and that those areas may be slowly expanding northward. As to whether or not any changes can or will be made to the Pest Act with regards

to *fusarium graminearum* (f.g.) is currently being investigated. The most important thing that we can do to help prevent the spread of f.g. is to make sure that all seed used is free of f.g. For those in areas where infection is already a problem the use of best management practices can help limit the potential economic losses that may occur.

An excellent source of all the up-to-date information regarding f.g. is our new website fusarium.seed.ab.ca. Please take the time to look

at the site and to refer all of your customers to it as well. The best way that we have to prevent the spread of f.g. is to make sure everyone knows of the risks and the best ways to prevent the introduction of f.g. to their own farms.

Speaking of websites, our website seed.ab.ca will have a new updated look starting mid-March. Please check it out, I know that you will



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GENERAL MANAGER'S TIDBITS

(AS PRESENTED AT 2011 ANNUAL MEETING)

- Created a comprehensive membership directory, of which each of you have received a copy in your registration packages. Please review your plant's information and make note of any changes before additional copies are made available.
- A video of our member plants has been developed with many thanks to the creative talents of Samara McBain! This interactive video will be used at various tradeshow and will be posted on our website. If you have any updated pictures or videos, please send into the office!
- With many thanks to the volunteers from the provincial board and member plants, we had three successful tradeshow appearances at FarmTech in Edmonton, AgExpo in Lethbridge and AgriTrade in Red Deer. Plans are to continue in 2011 and I cannot stress enough the importance of having involvement from the local member plants – both staff and board of directors! After all the audiences that attend are your customers!
- With thanks to Ron Wirsta and Wayne Walker the association had a display during Career Days at Lakeland College in Vermilion. Both reported great success promoting the member plants and the job opportunities within our industry. We look to expand this program with several colleges throughout Alberta and appreciate input and assistance from the membership.

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT CONTINUED

find it much more interactive and easier to use. Also remember to visit the member only section for all the latest information regarding the provincial association. Let us know what you think of the new website and please pass on any suggestions or ideas that you may have on how to make it even better.

As you all know, many of our plants have or are in the process of installing colour sorters. Just a reminder that under the Growing Forward program there is up to 20% of the cost of the sorter available. I also know that initially, the process for applying for this money and the time it took to get it could be painful. Last week, I was informed by the people at Growing Forward responsible for the funding of the colour sorters, that they have made changes to the process to approve the purchase sooner. Hopefully, this will help. So if you haven't talked to them yet, or you talked to them in the past and gave up, give them another try. Please let me know how this works out for you, so that we may help this process work to your advantage.

In the past, the provincial board has taken it upon themselves to review some of the programs that are offered to our member plants. Two years ago we reviewed the health benefits program that we offer. By looking at a proposal from another provider, we learned that the program offered by Morneau Subeco was good value and was very competitive. This year the provincial

board has asked a third party insurance provider to come to us with a proposal for our physical insurance needs. The intent of this request is to give us a way to evaluate the cost and the services provided by Foster Park Baskett. We will review this proposal at our March board meeting. We will let you know what we find out.

It is good to see that so many of our plants have or are in the process of doing upgrades to their facilities. In some cases the plants are receiving financial support from their local counties for these upgrades. In some other plants the local counties are offering support in a variety of different ways. At the other end of the spectrum there are counties that are removing their representation from the seed plant boards. I would urge you not to let them do this. It is up to us to continually remind our locally elected officials that they have a vested interest in both the co-op seed plants and agriculture as a whole. If we fail to keep agriculture uppermost in their minds they will soon forget about us all together. Remember, all of the other groups in your communities are also demanding their attention and their money.

As always if you have any concerns or suggestions that we should know about please pass them on to us. We are here to help in any way that we can.

MANAGERS' ASSOCIATION UPDATE

We had a very interactive managers' meeting in Edmonton with 50% of the plant managers in attendance. Our participation as a group is to discuss provincial issues and plant operations, and stay united as an association.

We discussed our business as an association which includes financial for primarily scholarships and training.

Scholarship recipients were:

- Andrew Yarham
- Brittany Benoit
- Kally Hartel
- Kelsey Shura
- Nicole Harder
- Zac Walker

Long Service Awards

(See photos on page 4 and 5)

- Dale Benoit 30 years
- Keith Reynolds 30 years

- Brian Esak 25 years
- Bruce Mathieu 20 years
- Ed Tschetter 20 years
- Joe Hansen 20 years
- Ron Wirsta 20 years
- Cecil Donagoni 15 years
- Ed Schudlo 15 years
- Glen Hartel 15 years
- Stacey Bell 15 years
- Todd Enslin 15 years
- Ron Balderson 10 years

Convention Planning

This year we had a presentation from Jim Ewing with The Business Link.

He presented an in depth look of how to put a good business plan together. His presentation left everyone with good information on where to begin and what was needed. He also included his contact information for anyone who would like help getting started.

We are always looking for information and topics to present at our annual meeting in Edmonton. If you have any suggestions please contact me.

Allied Trade

The Managers' Association looks after the Friday night entertainment at the convention. This is facilitated by the trades businesses associated with the convention and local plants with sponsorship. When putting all of these funds together we are fortunate enough to bring in some very good entertainment for a very fun evening and provide some decent door prizes for all to win. Our sponsors continued support on this event is very much appreciated. The Trades businesses include the following:

Gold Sponsors

- Association of Alberta Co-op Seed Cleaning Plants Ltd.
- Bayer CropScience
- BioVision Seed Labs
- CanSeed Equipment
- Cimbria Canada
- Foster Park Basket
- Hank's Feed Mill Service
- Lewis M. Carter Manufacturing Ltd.
- Renel Construction
- Syngenta Crop Protection

Silver Sponsors

- 20/20 Seed Labs Ltd.
- BASF
- United Farmers of Alberta (UFA)

Bronze Sponsors

- Alliance Seed Cleaning Association Ltd.
- Bob Ware's Agri Services Inc.
- MasterFeeds
- St. Paul Municipal Seed Cleaning Assoc. Ltd.
- Westlock Seed Cleaning Co-op

The balance of our meeting is held to discuss in a closed meeting the general operations of each individual plant and provincial issues as they come forth.

This gives each plant manager present the opportunity to discuss anything that they have a concern with, all of the managers agree that this is beneficial to bring forth any concerns and problems the managers face.

In closing the managers through meeting in Edmonton have made some decisions in regards to the following:

- We will be conducting a wage survey this year and it is very important for every plant to participate.
- Our Managers' Association dues will be increasing by \$50.00 per Manager
- Your Managers' Association will be hosting safety seminars, places and dates to be announced at a later date. One will take place in the south and one in the north.

We try to constructively address all concerns and keep all managers as current as we can with this continual changing business that we operate. I cannot stress enough to each and every board, it is very important to keep your manager growing and learning with your business this helps him stay current in this ever changing business of agriculture.

Ron Wirsta,
President, Managers' Association

- This past year we reviewed potential annual meeting locations between Red Deer and Edmonton as 2011 was our last signed contract with the Westin Edmonton. The Capri Centre in Red Deer was unavailable to host our meetings during the week specified due to a previous longstanding commitment with another association. We also reviewed tenders from the Mayfield Inn & Suites, the Delta Edmonton South and of course the Westin in Edmonton. The Westin Edmonton once again came through with offering free meeting room rentals and greatly reduced room rates that still include the cost of parking. We have signed another four years with the Westin Edmonton – 2012 to 2015.
- Once again we requested pre registration of all delegates for this annual general meeting. In addition to this we also implemented an early payment discount by December 17, 2010. With an early payment we hope that it encourages delegates to be more committed to actually attending this event as we had far too many last minute cancellations in 2010, and it can be costly to this association. I sincerely thank those who were able to send us their information and payment as it certainly assists in the organizing of this event as far as numbers for meal counts and it allows the registration process on Thursday and Friday to be a much speedier experience! Expect the same for 2012 and I really encourage all plants to assist by sending in their information on time as requested!

SERVICE AWARD RECIPIENTS



Glen Hartel, Manager of Coronation Seed Cleaning Co-op Ltd., accepting Long Service Certificate from Terry Howe, Region 3 Managers' Association Representative. (Photo by: Ron Wirsta)



Joe Hanson, Region 1 Managers' Association Representative presenting Long Service Certificate to Bruce Mathieu, Manager of Enchant Co-op Seed Cleaning Association. (Photo by: Ron Wirsta)



Nick Markovich accepting the 2011 Outstanding Service Award from Steven Miller, President. (Photo by: Ron Wirsta)



Joe Hanson, Manager of Taber Seed Cleaning Co-op Association Ltd. accepting Long Service Certificate from Terry Howe, Region 3 Managers' Association Representative. (Photo by: Ron Wirsta)



Bevin McNelly, Westlock accepting his 25 Year Service Award from Steven Miller, Director Region 6. (Photo by: Ron Wirsta)



Keith Reynolds, Strathmore accepting his 30 Year Service Award from John McBain, Director Region 2. (Photo by: Ron Wirsta)



Mel Reid, Vermilion accepting Don Fadden's 45 Year Service Award from Elwin Dziwenka, Director Region 5. (Photo by: Ron Wirsta)



Howard Woodrow, Clive accepting his 30 Year Service Award from Lloyd Lidberg, Director Region 4. (Photo by: Ron Wirsta)



Terry Howe, Region 3 Managers' Association Representative presenting Long Service Certificate to Keith Reynolds, Manager of Strathmore Seed Cleaning Plant Ltd. (Photo by: Ron Wirsta)

AGCOLLECT: A GREAT WAY TO SUBMIT

There are a number of retailers in Canada that, for a variety of reasons, are not particularly fond of submitting their transactional data to AgCollect. However, there are many positive reasons why this third party company is useful to both manufacturers and retailers alike. This article will discuss who AgCollect is, what they do and the steps to ensuring that the information submitted is as accurate as possible.

Who they are and why they do it

Based in Cambridge, Ontario, the primary goal for AgCollect is to accumulate grower level transactional data on behalf of participating manufacturers from independent retailers and distributors across Canada. The outcome is to provide retailers a seamless data submission process at a single site, to reconcile and distribute data to the correct participating manufacturer and the administration of Privacy Act legislation and contractual obligations. Basically, AgCollect is a "one stop shop" for retailers to send and confirm their information so rebate programs can be completed by manufacturers as timely as possible.

Submission

AgCollect receives information in a number of ways and formats (i.e. email, fax, etc.). However, the optimal way to submit is an extraction directly from your financial system using the secure file transfer protocol (SFTP) process. Simply put, AgCollect prefers having data pulled directly from the retailer's financial system so the data they receive matches

the data the retailer has. This really is the best way to cut down on problems that can result from human error. Also, the SFTP is a way to securely drag and drop your information from your computer to the AgCollect server. If a retailer location has any problems with submitting their data, the AgCollect representatives are more than happy to assist.

Data Issues

In a perfect world, every transaction that is sent to AgCollect is problem free. However, in order for a transaction to be legitimate, it must contain things such as an invoice date and number, complete grower demographics, etc. As a result, the AgCollect system completes a number of issue checks on every transaction to ensure accuracy. This means that if the system sees a potential problem, it is the AgCollect representative's responsibility to follow up with a retailer to determine a solution. Completing these issues is necessary as manufacturers only make payment on transactions that are fully validated and issue free.

Validation

One of the most common questions heard from new retailers submitting to AgCollect surrounds validation. That question is "why do I validate? I have submitted my data so of course it is correct." Well, many would be surprised at the amount of discrepancies we find with data. Problems could stem from missing data in our system to incorrect amounts submitted. The point is that

validation is our tool to confirm that the information being sent is indeed accurate. If it is not correct, there are a couple of ways to review. You can logon to our website or have a fax sent to you so the retailer can determine the issue or the retailer can send a reconciliation file to AgCollect in order to confirm these totals. The reason that AgCollect requires a reconciliation file as opposed to using the original that was sent is mainly because if the amounts are not accurate, then the original file may not be completely accurate. If a reconciliation file is sent then the AgCollect representative can see exactly where the amount is off. The end result being that what the retailer sees as a proper total in their financial system is exactly what is shown in AgCollect's validation statement. This way, the manufacturer is getting a proper representation of the retailer's sales data.

At the end of the day, the purpose of AgCollect and its representatives is simple; to assist the retailer in reporting the most accurate information possible to the manufacturer. This way, retailer's and growers alike can receive optimal benefits from these programs.



AgCollect Team



Francois and Elizabeth Hebert and family accepting recognition for serving six years on the Provincial Board. (Photo by: Ron Wirsta)



Hugh Baier, Provost accepting his 20 year Recognition Certificate from Colin Wager, Region 3 Director. (Photo by: Ron Wirsta)



Gilbert Soertart, Morinville accepting his 30 year Recognition Award from Steven Miller, Region 6 Director. (Photo by: Ron Wirsta)



Ed Schudlo, High Level accepting his 20 year Recognition Certificate from James Obniawka, Region 7 Director. (Photo by: Ron Wirsta)

ASSOCIATION OF ALBERTA CO-OP SEED CLEANING PLANTS LTD.

2011 Award Recipients

(See photos on pages 4 and 5)

45 Years of Service Plaque

Don Fadden Vermilion

35 Years of Service Plaque

Art Gibson Holden
Art Speelman Blackie
Keith Irving Three Hills

30 Years of Service Plaque

Dale Benoit Vegreville
Brian Esak Willingdon
Ted Leliuk Willingdon
Phillip Leonty Willingdon
Eldon Phoenix Rycroft (Forage)
Keith Reynolds Strathmore
Gilbert Soertart Morinville
Ed Toker Nampa
Howard Woodrow Clive

25 Years of Service Plaque

Bruce Mathieu Enchant
Bevin McNelly Westlock
Brian Johnson Bonnyville
Nick Yanitski Myrnam

20 Years of Service Plaque

Hugh Baier Provost
Ernie Newman Fairview
Ed Schudlo High Level
Dick Weist Enchant

Outstanding Service Award

Nick Markovich

58TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Board of Director's Report – Steven Miller

Steven ensured that all board activities are focused on achieving the association's Vision Statement, to be *Leaders in the advancement of a viable seed processing industry*. The four critical success factors that are important in achieving this vision statement, the need to provide value to our members, the need to build a stronger identity, the need to work together as an association and the need to communicate with our members on a regular basis, are reviewed at each board meeting to ensure that we are focused on achieving our goals. The Board continues to meet with the Managers' Association regional directors on a yearly basis to receive their input in this process.

At the Board of Director meeting held this last November Francois Hebert let it be known that he would be retiring as director for Region 5. Francois has served as director for six years and has held the position of Vice President of this association for the last three years. His leadership skills and his dedication to the betterment of the association have certainly helped us move forward. Steven thanked Francois on behalf of the provincial board indicating that his presence and contributions will certainly be missed.

This year the Fusarium Action Committee (FAC) has been tasked by the Minister of Agriculture to come up with a plan that has the acceptance of all 12 voting members of the FAC. Many grain producers are still unaware of the potential cost of *fusarium graminearum* (f.g.), and the co-operative seed cleaning plants will continue to take a leading role in creating this awareness. The most effective way to prevent the spread of f.g. to areas that do not have the disease is not to plant it. It will now be even more important for everyone to know that their seed is free of f.g. Steven urged all seed plants to continue to insist on having a f.g. test done on all lots of seed before they are processed. Please continue to educate your producers to the value of disease free seed and the benefits that a seed treatment may offer.

Steven then highlighted some of the areas where the association supports agriculture.

- Alberta Regional Silage Variety Trials – sponsorship

- Alberta Regional Variety Trials – sponsorship and committee representation
- FarmTech – Bronze Sponsorship for 2011
- Fusarium Action Committee – committee representation
- Managers' Association – funding for training opportunities and scholarship
- Olds College Seed Show and Hay Fair – sponsorship and committee representation
- Seed and Crop Tech Workshop, Olds College

Steven offered congratulations to the following seed plants who celebrated 50 years of service to their shareholders and communities this past year.

Barrhead **Provost**
Holden **Rycroft**
Milo **Stettler**

Succeeding in Business Succession – Merle Good, Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development

Merle has spent the last few years looking at financials and developing a Farm Health Check. It is a physical for your farm financials and includes some key indicators as follows.

- Operating loan + AP <50% current value of unsold inventory + AR.
- Operating expenses <65% gross revenue (averaged over past four years).
- Machinery investment <1.5x gross revenue per acre, with maximum 40% debt to book value.
- Debt paid <5 years if all net farm income directed towards payments.
- Net revenue >1.5 to 2x cash rent depending on size of farm business.
- Retirement plan = 80 to 90% rule
 - If you are farming rented land, how old are your landlords? Will the people who inherit the land farm? Do you know who your landlords' successors are? Get to know them and find out what they are planning. If the landlord is 65 and hasn't sold yet, they aren't going to – you need to understand what will happen.

Marketing Tactics – Shawn Brook, Issues Ink

Shawn reviewed why marketing is so critical, the different marketing channels available and tactics that one can implement immediately.

Know your Branding Basics (W5) – Who? What? When? Where? Why?

Determine your unique value proposition:

- What makes your business unique?
- What differentiates you from your competitors?
- Why do people choose you?
- What do you do better than others?
- How do you reach your customers?
- How do customers find you? Earning new business, how do you recruit new customers?

Various marketing channels are available:

- Websites
- Email marketing
- Tele-marketing
- Social media
- Direct mail
- Industry events
- Word of mouth (referrals)
- Media ads
- Radio customer meetings
- Face to face discussions

Keynote Speaker – Joan McCusker

Joan had a lot of wit and wisdom to share using her experience as a gold medalist at the 1998 Nagano Winter Olympics. Her topic let her share some stories and draw some parallels between all achievers. She selected five characteristics, one for each Olympic ring.

- Believe – perspective, perseverance.
- Attitude – we all choose our attitude and it is ours to control. Find a role model and if all else fails, fake it! What is in a positive attitude? Stay in the moment, and remember “We will either find a way or make one.”
- Pursuit of Excellence – winners believe that they haven’t hit their ceiling yet. They understand that success is a journey. “The enemy of great is good,” from Jim Collins’ book “*From Good to Great*.”
- Teamwork – “I choose this team. I am part of its success and failures.”

Teams are everywhere. Successful teams have a shared team goal to the same level. They also have individual goals, but these are never “outcome goals”. Understand how the individuals on your team work. Put your goals in writing or speak them. Make them real. Teammates – listen to your goals and make you accountable. Let you know they are working on changes too. How can I help? Build your team – role clarity. Communication hierarchies – listen to those

below you and get their input. Help others be their best. Be honest.

- Laughter (the fun factor) – you work harder when you are having fun. Learn to laugh at yourself.

Words to live by from John Ruskin “Your reward for your toil is not what you get, but who you become.”

If I Can Do It, You Can Do It

This year we had three member plants participate in a panel discussion providing an overview on recent upgrades/changes to their facilities. Clive Seed Cleaning Plant Co-op Ltd. took us through their planning stages and implementation of a new colour sorter along with bins, conveyor and seed treating equipment. Fairview Co-op Seed Cleaning Plant Ltd. addressed their need to expand if they plan to remain viable in the agriculture community – their physical space is at capacity and explored options for building a new plant. Discussions surrounded funding availability and engineering designs and hope to be building in the very near future. Westlock Terminals (N.G.C.) – our auxiliary member – reviewed their present facility and opportunities given to their producers and have several initiatives to enhance their services in 2011.

Regional elections were held immediately following end of business day on Friday. Elwin Dziwenka, Vegreville was elected for a three year term for Region 5; Steven Miller, Westlock was elected for another three year term in Region 6 and James Obniawka, Sexsmith was elected for another three year term in Region 7. Further information on our “newly” elected provincial board member can be found on page 8. Following the regional elections, the provincial board held their reorganizational meeting where Steven Miller was re elected as President and John McBain, Region 2 was elected as Vice President.

We truly appreciate and value any feedback you may have from the 2011 annual meeting – agenda content, speakers, venue, etc. either forward them to the office or let your regional director know!

2012 Annual Meeting will be held at the Westin, Edmonton, Alberta on Thursday, January 12th to Saturday, January 14th, 2012.

PRESENTATIONS AND REPORTS AVAILABLE ONLINE

Detailed copies of the following presentations and reports are available for download 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
- 2009-2010 Grain Cleaned Volume Statistics
- General Insurance Update – Rob Dechant, Foster Park Basket
- Succession Planning, Merle Good
- Health Benefits Update – Doug Sample, Barb Harlow, Morneau Sobeco
- Managers’ Association Update – Ron Wirsta
- Characteristics of Successful People – Joan McCusker
- 2011 Budget
- 2010 Annual Report
- 2010 Audited Statement

Other information available online – members only

- 2009-2010 Annual Grain Cleaned Summaries
- Plant Breeders Rights Updates
- Membership List
- Association logos to be used for marketing purposes
- Scholarship application and criteria
- Health benefits forms
- Previous years AGM info and presentations

ELWIN DZIWENKA REGION 5 DIRECTOR

My name is Elwin Dziwenka and I was elected as your Director for Region 5 at the annual conference. I was born and raised on a farm just southwest of Vegreville. After completing high school I attended Northern Alberta Institute of Technology where I completed a heavy duty and auto mechanics apprenticeships which are helpful on the farm. My wife, Margitta, and I along with our three children run a mixed family farm. On the farm we grow everything from alfalfa, brome, wheat, canola, peas, to a little oats and barley.

For the past 14 years, I have also run a mechanical repair business. Margitta operates a veterinarian toxicology business which comes in handy with the beef operation of the farm. I presently sit as a Director on the Vegreville Seed Plant Association and have for the past nine years. I also sit as a Director for our local Co-op, which also has provided me an education in management assessment, parliamentary procedure and business assessment. I also Chair the Parent Council for A.L. Horton Public School in Vegreville. I look forward to my new position on the provincial board and can be reached at 780 632-7264 or email at psent@telus.net.

SEED TESTING HAS NEVER BEEN MORE IMPORTANT

"The 2010 harvest has been one of the most challenging years for seed quality since 2003," says Sarah Foster at 20/20 Seed Labs. Let's take a closer look at the biggest quality and disease issues seed labs are seeing.

At the beginning of the season there was a lot of dormancy in wheat, which was successfully broken with the use of longer pre-chill periods and growth promoters such as potassium nitrate and gibberellic acid.

Barley and oats have been affected by frost damage, often severe enough to drop the results below grade standards. Labs have been re-testing to ensure that these germination results remain stable, and spend a lot of time with each client ensuring that they are satisfied with the results and understand the situation.

Chemical damage, which can be a direct result of pre-harvest desiccation at the wrong time, has affected some barley and wheat samples. Again, ensuring that a re-test is conducted with soil can reduce the symptoms. In these instances, labs will call the client to discuss their options.

Perhaps the most problematic issue seed labs across the Prairies are seeing right

now is the high incidence of seed-borne diseases. A fungal scan can identify all of the pathogens that can cause significant economical losses.

"Seed treatments should be used if the seed germination is strong," says Foster. "However, low germination caused by pathogenic infection cannot successfully be compensated with a seed treatment. All too often a seed treatment is used hoping that it can work miracles. We consult carefully and encourage a new source of seed if this is the case."

The take-home message is to tell growers to get their seed tested as close to seeding as possible, as results can and have changed. Also, make sure the grower's seed germination report is current and that they have read the remarks carefully.

Also, don't miss out on the opportunity to deliver your marketing message to these producers by placing a member ad in the Fall 2011 issue of *seed.ab.ca*. For more information about marketing opportunities in *seed.ab.ca* contact Craig Armstrong, Pat Fenn or Paige Collette at 1.877.710.3222, or email marketing@issuesink.com.



2011 – 2012 Provincial Board: Left to right bottom row. Henk Vos Thomas (Region 1), Ron Wirsta (Managers' Association), Steven Miller (President and Region 6), Colin Wager (Region 3), Lorena Pahl (General Manager). Left to right top row. John McBain (Vice President and Region 2), James Obniawka (Region 7), Wayne Walker (Managers' Association), Lloyd Lidberg (Region 4), Elwin Dziwenka (Region 5). (Photo by: Ron Wirsta)

2010 SEED CROP CHALLENGES AND THE NEXT STEP

The two primary seed quality issues in Alberta this past testing season have been *low germination* and *high disease infection*. Let's take this time to review the quality of the 2010 seed crop and bring awareness to the visual symptoms accredited analysts have observed.

Germination

- **Frost Damage** – Wheat and oat seed originating from central Alberta have been impacted by frost. Seedling symptoms of frost damage are twisted coleoptiles, and more importantly the absence of the first true leaf. The images below demonstrate that sprouting often occurs with frost damaged seed but no leaf emerges, thus terminating the ability of healthy plant establishment.
- **Dormancy** – Cereal crops, predominantly wheat, across central and southern Alberta, are showing signs of dormancy. Winter storage may break dormancy, but this is not always the case. As shown in the image below, dormant seeds imbibe water, appear healthy, but fail to sprout. It is believed that this phenomenon is perhaps on account of inhibitor presence, which appears under harsh weather conditions at crop maturity. Dormant seeds are classified as "FRESH SEEDS" on the Report of Analysis.



Frost Damage



Dormancy

- **Stability** – Moisture, in the form of rain or heavy dew, can greatly impact the stability of barley seed. Growers must be aware that enzyme activity in barley may have started this past fall without visual signs of sprouting. If this is the case, there is a risk that the germination may deteriorate during the course of the winter. Other cereal crops may be impacted by stability, but by far barley is the most susceptible crop due to breeding efforts aimed at improving malting.

What to do next?

1. If preliminary testing showed a high percentage of "FRESH SEEDS" on the Report of Analysis, it is recommended that the sample be retested in March or April, as it is suspected to be affected by dormancy.
2. Barley seed should be tested close to planting to ensure it has not deteriorated while in storage.
3. Consider Cool Stress Tests which offers growers the option to evaluate their seed

lots under harsh growing conditions (moist and cool conditions).

It is recommended that a new representative sample be drawn directly from the bin for testing this spring.

Diseases

- **Ascochyta** – Peas are exhibiting *Ascochyta* infection ranging from 0.5% to 19.0%, which is not surprising considering the in-field disease symptoms. The average provincial infection is 4.8%. The image below demonstrates *Ascochyta* observed growing on the seed during a germination test (black circular infection). The best practice for *Ascochyta* testing is the culture method.
- **Fusarium graminearum** – This disease continues to be present in the traditional geographic areas of detection and impacts both wheat and barley. Infection levels tend to range from 0.5% to 3%, but the odd infection is above 10%.



Ascochyta observed on germination test



Fusarium graminearum

What to do next?

Moving into the 2011 crop year, producers should consider how their decisions this winter will affect the disease cycle and weigh in on options that are controllable.

1. Manage crop rotation with disease in mind, as there will be heavy pressure from the infected residue.
2. Choose seed varieties and seed lots carefully.
3. Consider seed treatments, as they are a wise choice to optimize health during early seedling development and emergence.

Positive Seed Trends

There are a few positive trends in the 2010 crop that have been observed by BioVision analysts.

- **Germination in Peas** – The average pea germination across Alberta at 92%, which is slightly higher than the 2009 seed crop.
- **True Loose Smut in Barley** – The provincial True Loose Smut infection average is similar to the 2009 crop year, and there are very few samples exceeding the 2% maximum infection as outlined in the GRADE TABLES for the Certified No. 1.

Holly Gelech, B.Sc.

**Manager – Business Development
BioVision Seed Labs**

MANY THANKS TO OUR AGM SPONSORS!

With sincere appreciation and gratitude, on behalf of the Association of Alberta Co-op Seed Cleaning Plants and the Board of Directors we would like to say THANK YOU and recognize those who have contributed to the 2011 Annual General Meeting!

- **20/20 Seed Labs**
- **AFSC**
- **ATB Financial**
- **Bayer CropScience**
- **BASF**
- **BioVision Seed Labs**
- **Can-Seed Equipment Ltd.**
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- **SeCan**
- **Seed Check Technologies Inc.**
- **Syngenta**
- **United Agri Products**
- **Viterra**
- **Wainwright Financial Group**

HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT SEED TREATMENTS?

Put your knowledge of seed treatments to work and you could win an Apple iPad!

iTreat is an on-line training quiz and contest from Bayer CropScience that is designed to test everyone's knowledge about seed treatments during the month of March. Here are a couple of questions to get you started:

1. What is the rate of application of Raxil® WW?

- A) 485 ml/bu.
- B) 300 ml/100kg
- C) 300 ml/bu.
- D) 365 ml/100kg

2. Raxil WW provides the following:

- A) early season disease control of smut diseases, seedling blights, seed rots and root rots caused by Fusarium, pythium and other pathogens and protection from wireworm damage.
- B) protection from wireworm, cutworm, grasshoppers, centipedes, millipedes
- C) Fusarium head blight control all season long
- D) smut control only

Answers: 1. D; 2. A.

The iTreat quiz focuses on the three innovative seed treatment formulations from Bayer CropScience for pulses and cereals – Raxil MD, Trilex® AL and new Raxil WW, which provides cereal growers with a powerful new tool in combating wireworm damage.

The contest is open to employees, retailers and growers with separate iPad's available to be won by each group. To take the quiz and enter for your chance to win a **new Apple iPod**, visit BayerCropScience.ca.

SEED QUALITY...OR LACK THEREOF

According to BioVision Seed Labs, Seed quality in Western Canada has deteriorated in comparison to last year. Here are some average germination numbers that indicate germination is variable, and lagging behind germination levels of last year.

Alberta Germination			
	Range	2010 Average	2009 Average
Wheat	37-100%	92%	95%
Barley	19-100%	88%	95%
Oat	1-99%	67%	92%
Pea	47-99%	92%	90%
Lentil	20-99%	83%	95%

Fusarium Graminearum Alberta Testing		
	Infection Range	Detection Rates
Wheat		
403 Area Code	0-15%	29% of samples
780 Area Code	0%	Rare detection observed
Barley		
403 Area Code	0-9%	26% of samples
780 Area Code	0%	None detected to date

Here are some key points when dealing with seed of questionable quality.

1. Always KNOW the quality of seed. Because of harvest conditions, seed from different fields can have a wide variety of quality parameters.
2. Use an accredited lab to do seed analysis. 'Germinating' seed in wet paper towel on the top of your refrigerator may give you

an indication if the seed is even viable, but that's about it. Seed labs have Canadian standards that govern how germination tests are conducted, ensuring test results are accurate.

3. Consider additional seed quality testing such as disease (fungal) screening, and vigour (also know as, cold-stress). These additional tests tell the "rest of the story" relating to how the seed may perform under stress conditions.
4. Always use the best seed possible. Seed treatment such as Raxil and Trilex AL definitely provide protection from early season disease, however, seed treatments make good seed better, and help poor seed survive.

Fusarium: still the ugly stepsister...

Seed testing has shown that seed-borne levels of Fusarium have continued to show up in Alberta. Research by Agriculture Canada (Turkington et. al. 2003) has shown that there is no documented seed to head transmission of the disease. Meaning that if an infected seed is planted, the disease does not grow systemically up through the plant to produce a plant with head blight. Infected seed does have an agronomic impact in the following ways:

- disease inoculum (introduces the disease pathogen to the field)
- causes seedling blight, seed decay

Using Raxil brand seed treatments can help control the disease to limit the adverse affects of this disease, ensuring healthier seedlings resulting in better stand establishment.



Dick Berreth, K.I.B.A. – Beisker accepting Golden Kernel Award from Monica Klaas. (Photo by: Ron Wirsta)

SEED QUALITY UPDATE FOR SPRING 2011

At Seed Check Technologies, we think of a seed as a small package of hope. A seed is capable of producing a mature plant, a crop, a meal, and eventually help feed the world one way or another. This testing season has certainly been one of the most disheartening we have seen in our 10 years as a company. It is likely the poorest seed quality we have seen in the countless years our staff have been involved in seed testing. We just cannot stand to give out as much bad news as we have this year! The saving grace of our work is that it is better to know what you have before you place that hope into producing a crop.

So what is going on this year? Well as producers know areas that are normally wet were extremely dry and areas that are mainly dry got more moisture than they can stand. To top it off seed that was not quite mature got hit with frost. Seed that was mature stood in the field or lay in swaths in damaging weather. This caused the following issues: frost damaged seedlings, high numbers of dead seed, pre-sprouted seed, increased fungal contamination and dormancy.

Seed testing reports are filled with information about dormancy breaking techniques this year. Seed that is trying to mature under cool moist conditions produces high levels of a plant hormone called Abscisic acid or ABA. It tells the plant to start bringing in all the nutrients and storing them then dropping leaves, flowers and seeds. It sends a message signaling the survival mechanism of primary dormancy. Primary dormancy is when a seed will not germinate when shed from the mother plant, kind of like a child not ready to leave home. Secondary dormancy is when a seed is ready to germinate then finds the conditions inappropriate, like a child that returns home. Dormancy breaking techniques

are used to get the plant to grow in the lab so we can determine its germination potential for spring. In cereals they include: Potassium nitrate or KNO_3 , Gibberellic acid or GA_3 , Pre-chill, Pre-dry or Preheat. These all help decrease the levels of ABA and get that seed to start thinking it's time to grow.

Should you put your seed in the freezer to help break seed dormancy? Absolutely not! A freezer is a faster shock of cold than a bin full of seed ever experiences. It takes time for cold to even penetrate a bag. Freezers that are frost free will desiccate the seed. A sample in the freezer will not represent the lot. It is not recommended by Canadian, American or international seed testing rules. It has never been found to break dormancy. Seed must be moistened and placed at a prechill temperature 5-10 degrees above zero to lower the levels of ABA and kick start the germination process.

As for the high number of abnormal seedlings, will they grow into a mature productive plant? Sadly the answer is no. Will seed treatments increase germination? They help only if the abnormal seedlings are caused by disease agents. Can seed germination drop? Yes, when seed is weakened by poor harvest conditions and possibly moist storage it's ability to store is compromised. This is an appropriate year for a recheck before planting.

Hang in there and keep up the hope, however, there is still good seed out there, it just may take some pre-chilling, mid-chilling and extending of tests for us to get you the correct result. We are not afraid of hard work!

Morgan Webb,
Seed Check Technologies Inc.

GOLDEN KERNEL AWARD

The Golden Kernel Award recognizes excellence and growth in the seed treatment business amongst AASCPL member plants.

There is one award for each of the five categories: each award is \$300.

Categories:

(See photos on pages 10 and 11)

A: Over 100,000 bushels

2010 WINNER

Myron Felzien

Forestburg Seed Cleaning Plant Ltd.

B: 50,000-99,999 bushels

2010 WINNER

Jack Krenzler

K.I.B.A. Seed Cleaning Plant Ltd.

C: 25,000-49,999 bushels

2010 WINNER

Herb Harder

Vulcan Seed Cleaning Association Ltd.

D: 10,000-24,999 bushels

2010 WINNER

Steve Mobley

Innisfail Municipal Seed Cleaning Plant

E: Honorable Mention

2010 WINNER

Tom Luethi

Warburg Seed Cleaning Co-op Ltd.

Criteria for determining the annual winners are as follows:

1. loyalty
2. future business plans
3. increase over previous year
4. increase over the average of the prior three years
5. record keeping
6. delivery of proper rate
7. acceptable distribution
8. marketing activities
9. business improvement
10. technology improvements

Each winner in Category "A-E" receives a cheque for \$300 and a plaque recognizing the achievement. 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.



Howard Vincett, Forestburg accepting Golden Kernel Award from Monica Klaas.
(Photo by: Ron Wirsta)



Tom Luethi, Warburg accepting Golden Kernel Award from Monica Klaas.
(Photo by: Ron Wirsta)

Mountain View Seed Cleaning Plant Employment Opportunity

The Mountain View Seed Cleaning Plant, in Carstairs, is looking for a full-time assistant to help with the daily operation, cleaning and maintenance of the plant. Some shift work is required during busy seasons. Experience, computer literacy and industry certification are all assets but training can be supplied. Wages commensurate with experience and certification acquired. Please contact: mvsp.seed@gmail.com with a resume.

TIPS FOR A GREAT BOARD MEETING

(Excerpt from Agri-Business Forward Spring 2011)

- Have a clear agenda (created by the Chair and the General Manager – with input from other board members) which allows sufficient time to cover the agenda items.
- Ensure that the agenda focuses on the board's work rather than the staff's work. Board does the "what"; staff does the "how".
- Circulate the meeting materials to all participants well in advance of the meeting.
- Come prepared to the meeting – read the materials prior to the meeting rather than opening the package for the first time when arriving at the meeting.
- Start the meeting on time – even if everyone is not there yet.
- Allow plenty of time for meaningful dialogue and debate (there should be different opinions around the table – that is healthy!)
- Have a time for connection – have a meal together, schedule a time for short "check ins" where directors give an update about something significant going on in their life.
- Be respectful of others input – listen to what they are saying.
- Ensure that motions are well understood – ask the secretary/record keeper to read the motion prior to the vote.
- Discuss expectations about the meeting (what the Chair's responsibility should be in keeping discussion on track, how participants are "recognized" by the Chair before they speak, etc.).
- Allow time for evaluation – what went well in the meeting, what could be improved and then discuss this as a group.
- Schedule meeting dates at least six months in advance.



Trilex AL

GROWERS, START YOUR PULSES.

Trilex[®] AL seed treatment takes the checkered flag for seed and seedling disease protection in pulses and soybeans. In addition, it clears the track to allow your pulse inoculant to supercharge nodulation.

Led by trifloxystrobin and metalaxyl, the finest pit crew on tour, Trilex AL has been engineered for high performance disease protection. This high level of disease protection and synergistic benefits with inoculants provides growers with their best return on investment. Now that's a winning formula.

GET YOUR PULSES RACING.

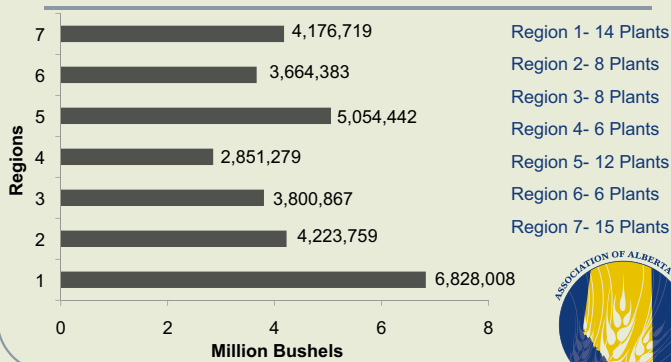
Bayer CropScience

BayerCropScience.ca or 1 888-283-6847 or contact your Bayer CropScience representative.
Always read and follow label directions. Trilex[®] is a registered trademark of Bayer. Bayer CropScience is a member of CropLife Canada.

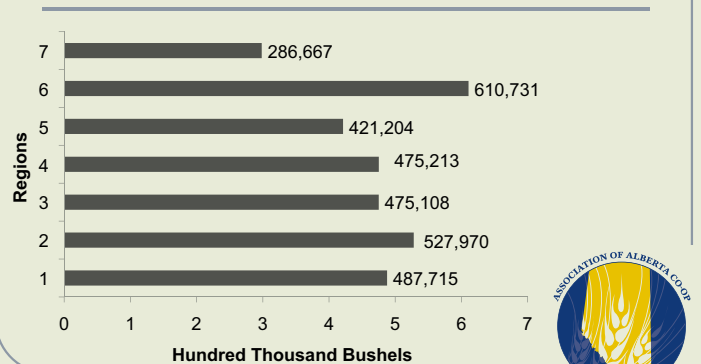
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2009-2010 GRAPHS SEED CLEANING BY REGION

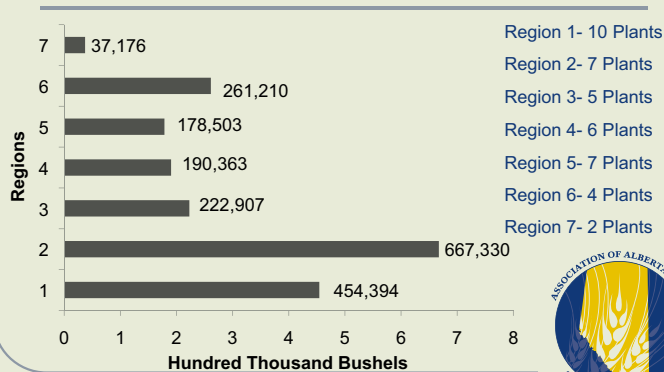
09/10 Total Volume Cleaned by Region (Million bu.)



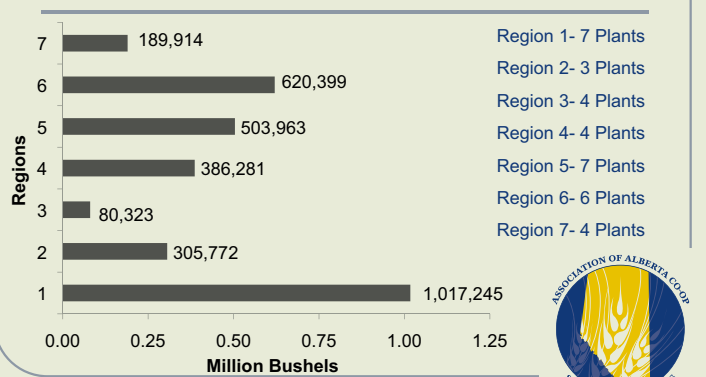
09/10 Average Volume/Plant Cleaned by Regions (100,000 bu.)



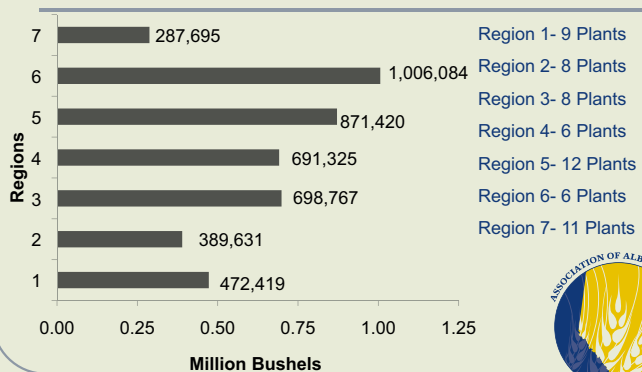
09/10 - Seed Treated by Region (100,000 bu.)

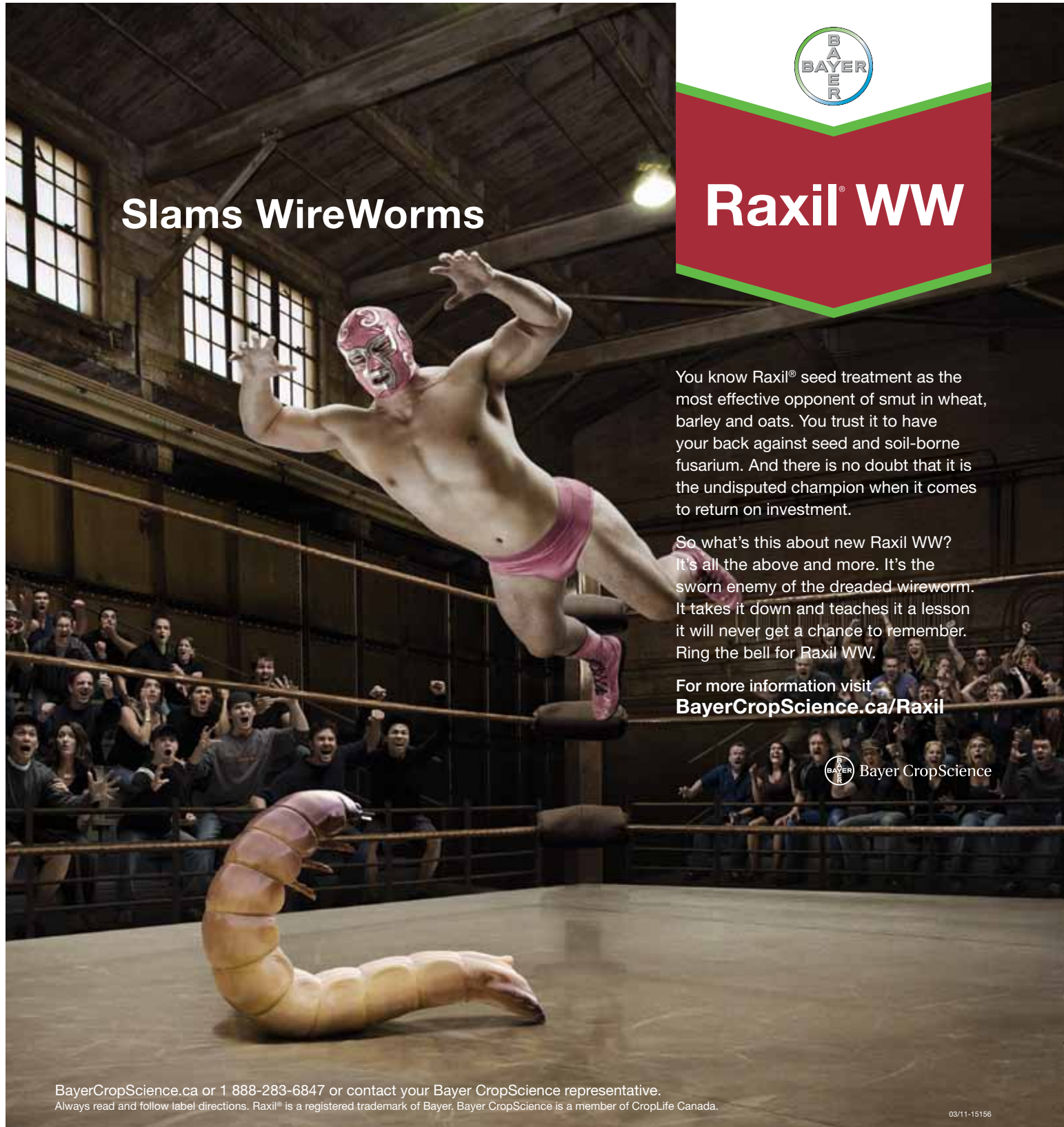


09/10 - Pedigreed Seed Cleaned by Regions (Million bu.)



09/10 - Dockage/Separations by Regions (Million bu.)





Slams WireWorms



Raxil® WW

You know Raxil® seed treatment as the most effective opponent of smut in wheat, barley and oats. You trust it to have your back against seed and soil-borne fusarium. And there is no doubt that it is the undisputed champion when it comes to return on investment.

So what's this about new Raxil WW? It's all the above and more. It's the sworn enemy of the dreaded wireworm. It takes it down and teaches it a lesson it will never get a chance to remember. Ring the bell for Raxil WW.

For more information visit BayerCropScience.ca/Raxil



Bayer CropScience

BayerCropScience.ca or 1 888-283-6847 or contact your Bayer CropScience representative.
Always read and follow label directions. Raxil® is a registered trademark of Bayer. Bayer CropScience is a member of CropLife Canada.

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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 or phone 403-782-8022.

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