

## SEED

Association of Alberta Co-op Seed Cleaning Plants Ltd.

## PLANT NEWS

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**“...if we work together we could achieve something for the common good of agriculture.”**

## 56TH ANNUAL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

In addition to the 41 plant managers and 48 delegates registered, we had 58 additional registrations and 30 ladies registered for the 56th Annual General Meeting! Total of 17 sponsors supported the 2009 AGM. In addition, 14 companies participated in our tradeshow. Your continued support is truly appreciated! Thank you to Foster Park Baskett for their sponsorship of the registration desk. A big thank you to Rob Dechant, Debbie Workun, Sarah Graff, Kevin Foster and Jocelyn Benson – the volunteers who manned the Registration desk. In addition Jocelyn Benson stepped in at the last minute and filled Carol Zuckerman’s shoes as recording secretary on Friday as Carol’s flights were delayed. Carol was able to join us for Saturday, not only to record the minutes for that day, but more importantly to accept her Outstanding Service award later that evening! Carol has volunteered her services as recording secretary for the last 28 years, a very deserving person of this award! And to Brian Trueblood who was able to join us and act as our parliamentarian – **Thank you!**

**Jason Krips, Assistant Deputy Minister** brought greetings on behalf of Hon. George Groeneveld who was unable to join us. Through a recent restructure of Alberta Agriculture, 13 new hub

offices were created to allow producers the opportunity to find information locally. The 69 Ag Service Boards throughout the province will be assigned a key contact within the department – most of whom will be specialists to assist in providing the local resources. Jason is well aware of the concerns of the lack of funding for Regional Variety Trials – they are currently under review and have a discussed a couple options – Stay Tuned. (Refer to Page 10 of this newsletter for a recent update). The new Meat & Livestock Strategy will include a feed grain strategy which is currently under development to address concerns

from producers that the Minister is focusing on the livestock sector only!

The Weed Control Act was passed this fall and is awaiting proclamation. The department is working on a couple of the regulations including Seed Control – which they hope to receive valuable input from this group!

**Steven Miller, President**

reminded delegates of the importance of continued testing of *fusarium graminearum*

prior to cleaning any lots of seed as well

as educating producers on the value of disease free seed and the benefits of seed treating. Early testing results from September to December 2008 indicate that *fusarium graminearum* has significantly increased in Southern Alberta. The percentage of wheat samples at one lab that tested positive for *fusarium graminearum* (f.g.) have increased from 4.6% in 2001/2002 to 20.4% in 2008. Barley went from 1.6% in 2001/2002



## 2009 ANNUAL MEETING SPONSOR RECOGNITION

With sincere appreciation and gratitude, on behalf of the Association of Alberta Coop Seed Cleaning Plants and the Board of Directors we would like to say THANK YOU and recognize those who have contributed to the 2009 Annual Meeting!

- BASF
- Bayer CropScience
- Syngenta
- AFSC
- ATB Financial
- BioVision Seed Labs
- Cimbria Canada
- Foster Park Basket
- Issues Ink
- Lewis M. Carter Manufacturing Ltd.
- Managers Association
- Morneau Sobeco
- Parkland Labs
- Secan
- Seed Check Technologies Inc.
- Vitera
- Wainwright Financial Group

We also had the following companies with exhibit displays at the 2009 Annual Meeting. We would like to thank you for taking the time out of your busy winter schedule to join us for the two days and hope 2009 is a prosperous year!

BASF	Bayer CropScience
Syngenta	BioVision Seed Labs
Cimbria Canada	Parkland Labs
Lewis M. Carter (Man) Ltd.	20/20 Seed Labs Inc.
Secan	Agtronics
OMEX Agriculture	Seed Check Technologies
Can-Seed Equipment Ltd.	United Agri Products

to 9.7% in 2008. This data was tabulated for clients in the 403 area code only. If the 780 area code had been included the fall provincial average for wheat is 8.7% of samples submitted testing positive for f.g. Another seed lab has indicated that the percentage of all cereal samples testing positive for f.g. increased from 1.2% in 2004 to 6% in 2008. Most of these samples were found in southern Alberta. Based upon these stats, the *Fusarium* Action Committee will be updating the *fusarium* management plan (copy provided in this newsletter) plus providing an updated economic assessment of the impact it will have on our industry.

**Lee Dechaine, AdFarm** brought together his thoughts on a common sense approach to marketing that member plants could use in their business. A marketing plan is required to do your planning, involve everyone – staff, board members, key suppliers. This is an ongoing, ever changing plan that needs to adapt or evolve as markets change. Three basic steps are required in developing your plan:

- 1) Situational Analysis
- 2) Strategy Development
- 3) Tactics/Implementation

1) **Situational Analysis** – Ask yourselves – What is the situation? Where are you right now? Who is your competition? Understand their strengths and weaknesses and yours. Identify your resources – staff, board members. Who are your customers? How well do you know your customers? How are your customers evolving, what do they want from your business to assist in their own personal growth? Which customers should you be dealing with – who are you missing? By asking these questions you are developing a SWOT analysis – Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats – a phrase most should be familiar with. Don't assume anything – talk to your customers on a regular basis to ensure you are providing the services they need!

### 2) **Strategy Development** –

- a) Positioning is that slot or area in the mind of a customer that you want to own. What you would like to be in your customers minds? Try to differentiate yourself, your business and your service – such positions may include superior knowledge/equipment/technology, price leader, service leader, committed supplier, unique process or quality control.

- b) Brand/Branding – actual customers' perception. If done correctly positioning and branding should be nearly the same. Branding starts with people. Brands are more than just ads and logos. It is the net experience of the consumer with that product or service over their lifetime, including the experience of their friends and relatives. Remember – building a brand is easy, but keeping it up is tough!

3) **Tactics and Implementation** – how are you going to do this? If you have a budgeted amount – what can you do with X # of dollars to promote your business? Possible suggestions:

- Leverage your people – make sure you keep your existing customers
- First impressions when customers walk into your place of business – appearance and conversations are valuable
- Direct marketing – mail, phone, face to face
- Special events – seminars, customer appreciation
- Publicity – community involvement, get the name of your business in the local newspapers

Lee will also provide a detailed article, later in the newsletter, on Opportunities for Plant Merchandising and Marketing. This is the second in a series, if you recall, the first appeared in the September 2008 newsletter where he focused on his first Strategy – Customer Contact.

**Larry Kitz, Project Manager, Alberta Centre of Excellence for Seed** provided an update on ACES. More details is provided later in the newsletter. ACES will be involved in all four phases of Research and Development – Developing the science – genomics, enzymes, & composition; assist in the production of forages, grains and crop residues; develop processing – fermentation, bioconversion, gasification; and finding end users for plastics, solvents, adhesive, fuel, power, etc. The ACES pilot is to invest over 2 million/year on research through contributions from the Alberta Branch, CSGA, Association of Alberta Co-op Seed Cleaning Plants and industry partners. The pilot has received matching commitment from Agriculture and Food and is waiting on federal commitments. Opportunities include selling production contracts with genetics that you own, the product delivered on these production contracts may be returned to your plant for processing. Filling both large and

niche markets for cleaning, milling, distilling and fractionating grain requires joint ventures with end users and member processing plants.

**Robynne Anderson** offered her thoughts on Is the Future Bright? Directions in Agriculture and Seed. The ratio of available land to population continues to drop and it could hit 1.8 hectares per person by 2020. That means increasing pressure to increase yield – each hectare of arable land needs to be very productive to meet global demand.

Therefore Agricultural Research and Development funding is crucial. Ag R & D spending numbers from CGIAR for 2006 totalled \$36.8 billion. If you look at the spending in industrialized countries, private funding accounts for about half the total. The funding pool from public sources has been dropping dramatically and in consequence of the transfer to private funding, food prices spiked. Commitment to agricultural innovation is critical for success. In Canada, R & D spending in agriculture totals about \$165 million per year. Of that 40% is private funding. Big companies are taking on all the R&D, the new concern is their anti trust position. This means more creative “sharing” of new traits. What does this mean for your plant? Plan, review, adjust. Do you need partners? Where are inefficiencies? Coordinate your services and integrate all your operations. Who is communicating with your exporters – i.e. ergot in the area, hail damage? Manage capital acquisitions, re examine your capital investment. Your plant was built several years ago – keep your plant current with any realized profits.

**Steven Miller, President** introduced the association’s new vision statement *TO BE LEADERS IN THE ADVANCEMENT OF A VIABLE SEED PROCESSING INDUSTRY*. He expanded on the process involved in developing a vision and mission statement, and the critical success factors/business processes in order to achieve this. The strategic review was held in October. With the assistance of a facilitator, Larry Malaxdrewicz, Common Ground Consulting, the provincial board members and managers association representatives worked through this lengthy day long process.

The first thing developed was a Vision Statement. **“To be leaders in the advancement of a viable seed processing industry”**. We represent you at various levels of government and we need to be

leaders – we were tired of nobody knowing who we are. Next a Mission Statement was developed.

**“To address issues provincially & regionally, identify, act upon & communicate upon opportunities for the association and member plants”**

We interact with provinces, municipalities, local boards looking for new opportunities and trying to work together to benefit the whole. The next step was to establish the critical success factors and business processes. These are the things that are key to accomplishing the vision & mission statements – what needs to be done. This will evolve and change as the association adapts to its changing environments. Individuals have been identified who are interested in that particular project to coordinate activities. Target dates will be set in order to track and report progress back to membership.

#### **We need to build a stronger identity.**

- Promote services of our member plants
- Trade fair display & promotional material
- seed.ab.ca – magazine & website
- Individual customer contact
- Advertising
- Trade name, marketing tag lines
- Support community events – local level
- First point of contact for seed &/or grain
- Encourage associate members to use SCP logo & association name in promotional materials, website
- Identify end use opportunities

#### **We need to provide value to our members.**

- Identify value – leadership, resources, training
- Communicate that we are providing value
- Ensure *everyone* understands what value the association provides
- Consistent message is portrayed, starting at the provincial board level
- Need to take responsibility to take action
- Explore new member opportunities

#### **We must communicate with members on a regular basis**

- SCP newsletter
- Email, fax mail distribution lists
- Seed.ab.ca website – members only section
- Provide pertinent information on key industry issues to member plants who will in turn pass this information on to their customers as part of “value added” services

## **BUILDING A STRONGER IDENTITY**



As part of building a stronger identity, a new logo has been developed and we encourage all member plants to utilize this logo in any marketing/ advertising materials. If used effectively and

consistently, these logos will help build a strong and recognizable identity. These logos are available to download in the members only section at [www.seed.ab.ca](http://www.seed.ab.ca) or by contacting the office. Three individual banner displays promoting the association and its members were on display at the annual meeting and at FarmTech this past January. These are available to member plants to help promote their plants and service at any local functions – grower meetings, customer appreciation, community events, etc. Please contact the office if you would like to book these for your next event!

## **PRESENTATIONS AND REPORTS**

Detailed copies of the following presentations and reports are available for downloading in the “members only” section of the [seed.ab.ca](http://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 Managers report
- General Insurance Update – Rob Dechant, Foster Park Baskett
- Marketing for Small Business – Lee Dechaine, AdFarm
- Health Spending Accounts – Doug Sample, Morneau Sobeco
- Aces Update – Larry Kitz, Project Manager, Alberta Centre of Excellence for Seed
- Is the future bright? Directions in Ag and Seed – Robynne Anderson
- To be leaders in the advancement of a viable seed processing industry – Steven Miller
- Managers Association Update – Ron Wirsta

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

The 57th annual general Meeting will be held January 13th – 16th, 2010 at the Westin Hotel, Edmonton, Alberta.

**Look forward to seeing you next year!**

# A BIG THANK YOU

The Managers Association would like to thank once again the following sponsors of our "Allied Trade Night" at the 2009 convention. Their contributions helped to make our evening a success. Please support these businesses whenever possible.

## Gold Sponsor

Association of Alberta Co-op Seed Cleaning Plants Ltd.

Foster Park Basket

Bayer CropScience

Lewis M. Carter Manufacturing Ltd.

Syngenta Crop Protection

Renel Construction

Biovision Seed Labs

ATB Financial

TD Canada Trust

Hank's Feed Mill Service

## Silver Sponsor

20/20 Seed Labs Ltd.

BASF

A Amyotte & Sons Welding Ltd.

UFA

## Bronze Sponsors

St. Paul Municipal Seed Cleaning Assoc. Ltd.

Westlock Seed Cleaning Co-op

MasterFeeds

Alliance Seed Cleaning Association Ltd.

Westin Hotel Edmonton

Honourable Ray Danyluk – Minister of Municipal Affairs

- Personal contact between provincial board members and their respective plant managers and local board chairperson

## We need to work together as an Association

- Encourage attendance at AGMs –
  - o Board members, managers, shareholders. Personal contact from Regional Director with chairman & manager of individual plants
  - o Reminder to directors to contact chairman & managers – what would you like to see at an AGM? Have you attended in the past – if not why? Highlight agenda items
- Utilize effective committees – delegate to individuals who have an interest in specific projects
- Encourage shareholder participation and interest at local plant AGMs and board functions
- Encourage plants to work together on export opportunities, marketing initiatives (local/regional)

**Dan Ohler, Keynote Speaker** challenged delegates by taking a look at the human aspect of the business and 4 common sense strategies – Trust, Attitude, Appreciation and Recognition.

We have "trust accounts" with each relationship. Deposits into our trust accounts include genuine smiles, being polite, listening, caring, acts of kindness. Withdrawals include scowls, rudeness, being disrespectful, sarcasm, etc. We don't intentionally make these withdrawals; unfortunately, we make the most with people we are closest to. If we make deposits, we increase the trust balance, if we withdraw, we lose trust. Look for ways to consistently make deposits into your trust accounts.

**Attitude** – thoughts, ideas, mood, feelings that are expressed outwards through posture, facial expressions, etc. Both constructive and destructive attitudes exist. Attitudes are more important than the facts. Try to focus on solutions not problems, consistently choose a positive attitude and yes, there is a correlation between attitude and results.

**Appreciation** is a state of mind. It is the highest and purest form of love. It can flourish with no attachments and affect everything we do. A balanced life allows one to give more to life, offering more satisfaction/appreciation. Stop and think of what you appreciate!

**Recognition** is the most underutilized strategy. It is a basic human need, we need to feel value, be recognized – we also need to give recognition. "What gets rewarded, gets repeated". Recognition should be specific, genuine and measurable. Differing personality dimensions/behavioural styles prefer different recognition. You need to take the time to get to know these people.

Dan Ohler offers a number of sessions plus workbooks and training DVDs on topics like "Why the heck do they do what they do?" "Thinkin Outside the Barn!" and Personality Dimensions. His website is [www.ThinkinOutsideTheBarn.com](http://www.ThinkinOutsideTheBarn.com)

**Bruce Mathieu, Manager Enchant Plant** presented a video on their recent scale expansion. The scale project has been a topic of conversation at the board table for several years – even when Bruce first started at the plant in 1986. These things take time! His motto – "Do it right, not twice" and encourages others who are undertaking projects at the plant to consider. Many reasons existed to build a large scale – an important one – to meet the needs of their customers. This was made financially possible by setting aside funds for the past 10 years and steadily increasing their cleaning rates for the past 15 years.

**Francois Hebert, Vice President** concluded the presentation portion of the annual meeting by stressing the importance of filling the **Region 2 provincial board vacancy**. "The Association of Alberta Co-op Seed Cleaning Plants was formed 56 years ago to collectively enhance the prosperity of member plants. Over the last five decades this has been accomplished by seeking diverse opportunities on behalf of this association, for example our insurance programs, affiliations with chemical suppliers, health benefits program, communicating with all levels of government, participation with seed growers in SIP, contributing to various industry related committees...Just to name a few.

You're all members of this association and so you benefit from these opportunities. I believe membership is a privilege and with that privilege comes responsibility. As you all know this association covers all of Alberta and so we have members with very different needs. It is very important to have provincial wide representation at your provincial board.

I know that when I was approached five



years ago I was a bit intimidated, but I soon realized once I was elected that my fellow directors were everyday guys just like myself. If he can do it, I can do it. I said to myself it is a commitment of time and energy but it is also rewarding. Your board needs you to step up and bring your ideas and energy to keep our association alive and well. The only qualifications to serve on this board, is caring about this seed cleaning industry.

You may feel we're putting pressure on Region 2 at this time but remember the time we serve on this board is limited. We need to keep representation on your board fresh with new ideas. So all other regions keep this in mind, be prepared to step up and take the challenge when your time comes and it will come. In conclusion I challenge anyone to care enough to participate in this process."

## 2009 DETAILED ANNUAL MEETING EXPENSES

- **Food/Beverage** – \$39,500.00
- **Audio Visual** – \$3,250.00
- **Gratuities** – \$6,800.00
- **Saturday evening entertainment** – \$5,565.00
- **Keynote speaker** – \$4,725.00
- **Awards** – \$3,000.00
- **Miscellaneous** (thank you's, ladies program, etc.) – \$1,000.00

Discussion at the annual meeting asked to have a detailed cost outline of hosting an annual meeting. We understand there are significant costs incurred with such an event, and several have raised concerns that the Westin may be too expensive of a venue to continue to host this meeting at. We have signed contracts in place, with the Westin, for 2010 and 2011 annual meetings. By signing these contracts in advance, we were able to negotiate reasonable pricing for hotelroom accommodations and the continued no charge of meeting room

rentals. Regular room rates at the Westin can be well over \$300.00 – obviously our discounted rate of \$106.00 in 2009 was most certainly appreciated! Meeting rooms rentals are complimentary – all other venues will charge for the meeting space we require to host this event! This past year, we were searching for options to host an event for the seed growers – hotel room rates were anywhere from \$135.00 to \$260.00 per night in the Edmonton vicinity, plus meeting room rentals were \$3000.00 to \$4000.00 (and this event is much smaller in size compared to what we would require). Within the next year the provincial board will most certainly provide due diligence in this area by reviewing all options available – including the Westin and other venues in Edmonton and other areas of the province. If anyone has any suggestions or preferences please forward this information to any of the board of directors or to the office.

## HONOURING WAYNE JACKSON

Saturday evening we were able to honour **Wayne Jackson** for his **14 years of service on the Provincial Board** – retiring this past June. The following comments were part of Lloyd Lidberg's heartfelt thank you to Wayne – "Wayne held the President's position for two years, served as Vice President for 4 years and was Chairman of the Diversification Committee in its existence. He represented the association at the Canadian Seed Institute for 3 years. His first plant inspection – the fall of 1969. 314 plant inspections later touring 33 plants in total. His vast knowledge of the seed industry was most welcome to the provincial board, and will most certainly be missed. Wayne's strong, commanding voice held

everyone at attention either at the board table, chairing at the annual meetings, or just even presenting an opinion. Wayne was well versed in parliamentary procedures, well skilled in chairing meetings and always addressed board members in a respectful and courteous manner. He was helpful in making new board members feel comfortable in their new role and orienting them in the activities that was expected of them. Wayne was well known and well connected through the entire Agricultural Community. On behalf of the provincial board and the association, we would like to acknowledge your contributions in the past and how appreciative we are of those!

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

## 2009 Award Recipients

Congratulations to the following people for achieving their 20 year certificates, 25 and 30 year plaques. Your dedication to the seed processing industry is truly appreciated!

	Location	Region
<b>20 Yr. Certificate</b>		
Ron Wirsta	St. Paul	5
Simon Bodurka	Clandonald	5
W Tom Hadway	Mountainview	2
Ben Penner	Carstairs	2
<b>25 Yr. Plaque</b>		
Kay Giles	Vulcan	1
Dennis Wearmouth	Balzac	2
Allan Holmes	Balzac	2
Pat Clough	Alliance	3
Mel Reid	Vermilion	5
Art Taubert	Hussar	2
<b>30 Yr. Plaque</b>		
Peter Romaniuk	Willingdon	5
Rodger Dicker	Wainwright	5
Walter Suntjens	Coronation	3
Edwin Albrecht	Lougheed	3
Joe Walisser	Balzac	2
Daniel Dubuc	Vegreville	5

# BAYER VALUE PROGRAM ANNOUNCED

Bayer CropScience recently announced the cereal side of their grower program. Coupled with the Invigor® Early book program, the new program for 2009 allows grower significant savings when purchasing products from the wide assortment of crop protection products including seed treatments. The newly enhanced program allows more growers to qualify on more acres with the unique "builder acre" portion of the program. Growers can now purchase the minimum 300 acres of either Velocity® or Puma®<sup>120</sup>, then "build" more rebate acres with popular product like Buctril® M, Thumper®, Infinity®, Centurion®, Stratego®, and IPak™ with Horizon. Please consult the grower program available at retailers, or on line at [www.bayercropscience.ca](http://www.bayercropscience.ca) for further program details.

**Velocity**<sup>™</sup>m3

**Puma**<sup>®</sup>  
SUPER

**BUCTRIL**® M

**Thumper**®

**INFINITY**®

**Centurion**®

**STRATEGO**®

**iPak**™

## 2008 GOLDEN KERNEL AWARDS!

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

There is one award for each of 5 Categories:

### Category A – Over 100,000 bushels

**Wayne Walker**, Westlock Seed Cleaning Plant

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

**Ken Williams**, Hussar Seed Cleaning Co-Op Ltd

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

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

### Category D – 7,500-24,999 bushels

**Tom Measures**, Barrhead District Seed Cleaning Co-Op Ltd

### Category E – Honorable Mention: Most Improved

**Rick Yarham**, County Of Camrose #22 Seed Cleaning Plant

Criteria for determining the annual winners are as follows:

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

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



Steven Miller (right) presenting Carol Zuckerman with the Outstanding Service Award.



Lloyd Lidberg (right) thanking Wayne Jackson for years as service as provincial director.



Francois Hebert (right) presenting Ron Wirsta – 20 year certificate.



Glen Hartel (left) accepting on behalf of Walter Suntjens – 30 year plaque. Presented by Glen Miller.

Photo credit – Ron & Corinne Wirsta

## COMMON SENSE MARKETING: WHAT CAN I DO FOR \$1000?

### Opportunity #2 – Plant Merchandising and Marketing

In over 15 years of experience in agricultural marketing, it continues to amaze me how poorly agricultural companies merchandise their businesses. Besides the one-on-one interaction with your customers, nothing says more about your organization than the appearance of your location.

#### Location, location, location

Let's look at two important factors in business merchandising. First, focus on the physical appearance of your location. Do the office, plant facilities, outbuildings and parking area reflect a professional attitude? You are running a business and it needs to reflect that. Second, you should be using your location to help you serve more customers.

The best place to start is with the current situation. Take a step back and critically look at the impression that your office leaves with people who drive up and walk through your doors.

- Are the signs faded or out of date?
- Does the gate work properly?
- Is the office inviting and welcoming for customers?
- Are the desks neat or piled up with papers?

You are in the business of cleaning seed and maintaining the purity of thousands of different seed lots. If you can't keep your desk and office clean, how confident are your customers that you can do the same for their seed?

But, as the saying goes, sometimes it's hard to see the forest for the trees. If you are having difficulty making an objective assessment, why not ask one of your customers to do a critique for you. This will provide some valuable insights into how your business is perceived by the people who matter most – your customers.

All that may be required to getting the place in shape is a can of paint and a few hours going through files, cleaning up papers and clearing off the rubbish that blew along the fence line.

#### Make your business work for you.

Now that you've got the place in tip top shape, you need to invest some time making your business work for you, not vice versa. It's strange but so many of us working in agriculture seem to ignore the hard-won lessons from other retailers.

It's a familiar refrain, "I'm not a store, I'm a service provider/business partner. I don't need

posters to sell!" True, but the same can be said of banks and financial institutions but that doesn't stop them from spending millions of dollars trying to persuade customers to ask about their latest service offer. To see the merchandising masters at work, take a walk around a grocery store. Each location is carefully arranged in order to maximize the amount of money they can extract from you before you head out to the parking lot with more than you planned on purchasing minutes before.

Yes, agriculture is a little different but that shouldn't prevent us from considering how we can best enhance our office and business locations. At the very minimum, do the following:

- Communicate what your business values are
- Highlight any new offers or changes to your organization
- Prompt customers to ask about something

The simplest exercise is to first think about what you would like your customers to ask you about – a new service, product or delivery option – and then consider ways to use your office space to prompt that question. Get creative. You can use:

- corkboards
- whiteboards
- ceiling dangles
- window decals
- posters
- computer monitor running a PowerPoint or video loop.

You can easily incorporate materials from suppliers or even do your own. The technology available today makes it easy to produce professional looking materials inexpensively.

But before you start sticking tape on the wall, make sure you have thought out where you are going to place the material. What will be most effective without appearing cluttered? Check out other retailers and see how they've used their wall space and merchandised their space. Be inspired by what works and disregard the rest.

So determine what you want to accomplish and then track and measure the success of different tactics. Start small and always keep learning. Whatever you do, ensure that it looks professional and is kept up to date.

Best of all, you can do all of these things inexpensively without a great deal of time invested. All it takes is a little forethought, some elbow grease and the ability to think from the customer's perspective.

LEE DECHANIE – AdFarm

## RAXIL MD FULLY REGISTERED ON WHEAT, BARLEY AND OATS

Bayer CropScience just received full registration of Raxil® MD on the 3 major cereal crops. Raxil MD received registration for use on Wheat in 2007, with the label expansion to Barley and Oats being received in January of 2009. Since being registered, users report better physical handling characteristics such as low odor, low dust and ease of handling through light duty pumps.

Raxil MD is quickly becoming the mainstay in cereal seed treatment technology.

# Raxil® MD

### REGISTRATIONS DELAYED

Registrations for Trilex® AL, and new seed treatment for Pulse Crops, and for Raxil® WW, a new seed treatment for Wireworm control in cereal crops have both been delayed. Updates on the status of these products will continue through out the year.

# Trilex® AL

# Raxil® WW

# ACES

(ALBERTA CENTER OF EXCELLENCE IN SEED)

Through the hard work of your association and with the Seed Industry Partnership (SIP – Alberta Branch, CSGA & Assoc. of Alberta Co-op Seed Cleaning Plants), a seed grain genetics company ACES is now a reality. The function of this company is to develop new traits and genetics and to make them available to growers to increase their profitability and competitiveness in a very competitive world. This cannot be better said than with our mission statement.

“A leader in germ plasm research, variety development, seed technology, and crop innovation, achieved by connecting consumer-driven markets to new varieties and technologies developed through joint investment in R&D by farmers, agribusiness, processors and governments.”

ACES have received from the Provincial Government the commitment to match industry dollars to pursue this mandate. Many funding models have been researched with a refundable \$2.00/pedigree acre charge to seed growers and a refundable \$.05/processed bushel at the seed plants currently on the table. These monies will be directed into targeted research, which is mainly focused on cereal trait development, by a board of our associations elected by the membership. This is a great opportunity for members to gain access to new varieties with the traits needed to add value and be competitive.

## Key Points:

- Your check-off is refundable. Once rebated, you forgo program benefits
- Through your association, you can direct your investment dollars
- The Province will match your investment
- Research in cereals is the priority
- New exciting opportunities accessing new genetics, IP production, and contracting will be available to members.

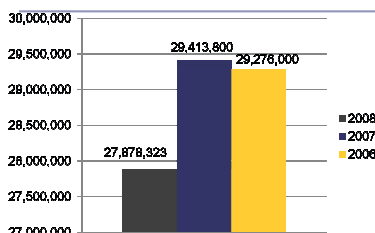
Visit our website at [www.seed.ab.ca](http://www.seed.ab.ca), link “ACES” for more information on this exciting opportunity.

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780-592-2200, 780-592-2335 (fax)  
780-275-0012 (cell)  
[larry.kitz@gmail.com](mailto:larry.kitz@gmail.com)  
[www.seed.ab.ca](http://www.seed.ab.ca) link “ACES”

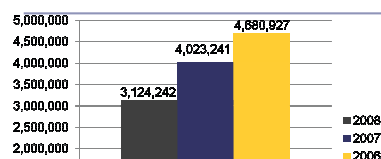
## GRAIN CLEANED VOLUME SUMMARIES

The following graphs compare volume of bushels processed through our member plants for the past three years. These were presented at the 2009 annual meeting. A detailed summary was recently made available and in upcoming newsletters we will provide additional comparison graphs.

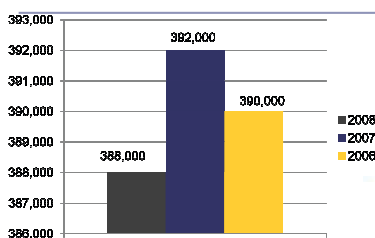
2008/2007/2006 Volume



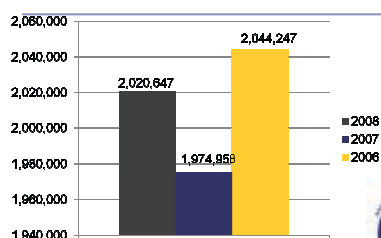
2008/2007/2006 Dockage/Separations/Export



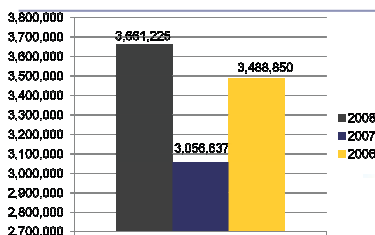
2008/2007/2006 Average Volume/Plant



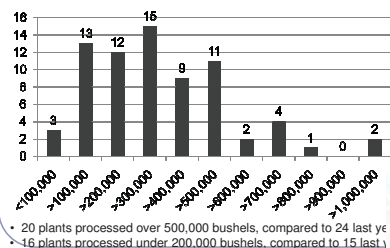
2008/2007/2006 Seed Treated



2008/2007/2006 Pedigreed Seed



2008 Volume Range



• 20 plants processed over 500,000 bushels, compared to 24 last year  
• 16 plants processed under 200,000 bushels, compared to 15 last year



## FUSARIUM GRAMINEARUM – RAISING AWARENESS

*Fusarium graminearum*, a seed borne fungus responsible for *Fusarium* Head Blight disease, was legislated a pest under the Alberta Agricultural Pests Act in 1999 due to the potential economic losses it could pose if the disease became established. *Fusarium* Head Blight can be caused by numerous *Fusarium* species, but *Fusarium graminearum* is considered the species of paramount concern due to the severe impact an infection can pose on seed quality and yield. Localized pockets of low infection have occurred in southern Alberta, but it been restricted primarily to irrigated land.



Figure 1. *Fusarium* damaged kernels (left). Healthy kernels (right).

Similar to any other given year, seed laboratories began testing the seed crop this past September on behalf of pedigreed seed growers and their partner municipal seed cleaning plants. Early in the testing season it became apparent that there was an incremental gain in the number of samples which were testing positive for the presence of *Fusarium graminearum*. Cautious alarm was raised, as it was early in the testing season and a large number of samples originated from the traditional infection area.

As testing progressed through winter it was apparent that there was a trend. This season, 7.4% of the wheat samples submitted from September 1, 2008 to February 1, 2009 from Alberta clients tested positive for the presence of *Fusarium graminearum*.

On the contrary, from September 1, 2007 to February 1, 2008 2.6% of the samples submitted tested positive for the presence of *Fusarium graminearum*.

The procedure utilized for *Fusarium* disease identification is referred to as the plated method by the seed industry. For this test 200 seeds are surface sterilized, plated onto potato dextrose agar, and then incubated for 5 days in the growth chamber. Each colony is visually analyzed and identified after the incubation process, including microscopic evaluation. The pink mycelium growing from the wheat kernel below is a classical symptom of *Fusarium* infection. To determine the *Fusarium* species, microscopic spore evaluation is conducted.

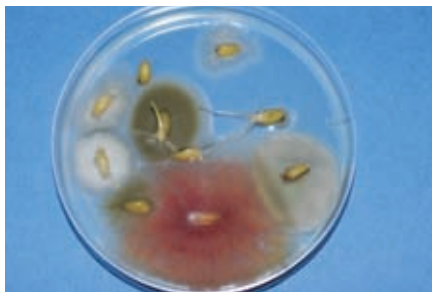


Figure 2. Plated evaluation. *Fusarium* colony (pink mycelium) growing from wheat kernel.

The next three months of seed testing will provide further clarification of the impact of this pathogen. The risks associated with *Fusarium graminearum* infection are severe and have damaged agricultural economies in other areas of Western Canada. If the fungus continues to be prevalent, awareness of the Alberta *Fusarium Graminearum* Management Plan and its tools to reduce the establishment of this pathogen are critical for a healthy and successful grain industry in Alberta.

HOLLY GELECH  
Manager – Business Development  
BioVision

## 2009 SEED & HAY FAIR SHOWS

### National Pedigreed Seed Show

in conjunction with **Northlands Farm & Ranch Show**, Edmonton, AB  
March 25-28, 2008  
Entry Deadline – March 13, 2009

### Olds College Seed Fair & Hay Show

in conjunction with **Agri Trade**,  
Red Deer, AB  
November 11-14, 2009  
**NEW** Entry Deadlines –  
Hay & Silage – September 10, 2009  
All other classes – June 1, 2009

## ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

Two Sask farmers were looking at a Sears catalogue & admiring the models. One says to the other, have you seen the beautiful girls in the catalogue? The second replies, yes they are very beautiful, and look at the price! The first one says, with wide eyes, wow, they aren't very expensive. At that price I'm buying one. The second Sask farmer smiles & pats him on the back. Good idea, order one & if she's as beautiful as she is in the catalogue, I'll get one too! Three weeks later the youngest Sask farmer asks his friend if he received the girl he had ordered from the Sears catalogue. The second Sask farmer replies, no but it shouldn't be too long now, I got her clothes yesterday.

## SUPPORT IN PLACE TO CONTINUE REGIONAL VARIETY CROP TESTING

Edmonton... The Alberta government has committed to coordinating the Regional Variety Testing Program (RVT) for cereals, pulses, and flax crops in 2009. Agriculture and Rural Development staff will continue to work in partnership with the Agricultural Research and Extension Council and the private sector to ensure that this important research work continues uninterrupted.

"This kind of crop performance testing assists Alberta farmers in making informed cropping decisions to help maximize the productivity and profitability of their farming operations," said George Groeneveld, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development. "This type of research is essential and a good investment for the future of our crop development sector."

RVT is an applied research tool that provides Alberta farmers with regional crop performance information on newer crop varieties, compared to well-established, widely grown varieties. Under the RVT program, up to 100 varieties of pulses, cereal grains and flaxes were grown on 25 test sites throughout the province to determine which thrives best in different agro-climatic zones.

Beginning this year, the government will once again assume the role of coordinating the program by providing in-kind support to its public and private sector partners. With many stakeholders concerned about the future of the RVT program, the Alberta government's direct involvement will ensure that it continues to have a strong foundation into the future.

"Building and sustaining a viable farm operation can be a challenge, and that is even more true in the present financial climate," said Dee Ann Benard, executive director of the Agricultural Research and Extension Council of Alberta (ARECA). "We are pleased that this innovative research – an essential tool for crop producers – will continue to be conducted and the results made available throughout Alberta."

ARECA has coordinated the RVT program since 2005. Prior to that, it was a joint industry-government initiative.

Results of the 2008 trials can be found at: [www.areca.ab.ca](http://www.areca.ab.ca) under the projects tab.



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

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

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