



SEED PLANT NEWS

Association of ALBERTA Co-op Seed Cleaning PLANTS Ltd.

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Seed plant news is now published four times annually to member plants, the executives and the managers of the Association of Alberta Co-op Seed Cleaning Plants Ltd.

President's Message

Wayne Jackson

Activity at our plants is starting to pick up so I hope everyone has a reasonable year. It would be nice to have a year when volumes are fairly steady throughout the year rather than a massive volume in just March, April and May.

Our convention is approaching rapidly and it promises to be an interesting one so please make plans to attend. The major topic will be the creation of the Alberta Centre for Excellence in

Seed (ACES). There will be a presentation about the concept and we will then be asking our membership for support. Hopefully everyone will feel the idea is good enough to take forward. There is an information package about ACES in your convention portfolio so take time to review it and come ready with your questions and comments.

A second major topic will be a Notice of Motion to change our by-laws allowing for auxiliary members. We debated this topic last year and it was turned down but the provincial board felt that a year of reflection might result in a different vote. With membership on the decline, maybe this is a way we can keep our association viable. We will also have presentations on insurance, our benefits plan, and the spotlight will be on the Warburg plant. This is a small plant that has done a good job of maintaining the building and equipment while providing quality service to their clients. I

look forward to their presentation.

The spouses program will feature presentations on growing some of the popular shrubs and flowers for Alberta conditions. Jim Hole will be the guest speaker and he has a wealth of knowledge in this area.

We have some interesting entertainment in store also so this convention should have something of interest for everyone. Please make plans to attend.

I recently had a CSI meeting in Winnipeg and spoke with producers from Ontario. They told me the *Fusarium* levels this year were very high and several corn crops suffered severe losses as a result. They said any program that tries to prevent the spread of *Fusarium* should be considered. I still feel our policy of having *Fusarium* tests prior to cleaning helps prevent the spread and is a good policy to have.

We have been working with the Seed Growers this



summer to finalize a new Seed Industry Partnership agreement. I believe we have reached the stage where an agreement can be signed allowing us to go forward with locating a general manager and starting a new era. This will be a major step in securing our future.

That's the news for now. Best wishes to everyone for a happy and peaceful holiday season.

General Manager's Report **Bill Witbeck**

Over the last few months, we have received a number of inquires on whether or not an Auditor's report is required by our member plants. In referencing the new Cooperative Director's Handbook, issued in April 2004 my interpretation was that it was not required. I passed this along to a couple of plants. One plant forwarded the info to their accountant who in turn called me and advised an audit is required. I then contacted Alberta Government Services for clarification. Here is what they said, "regarding the appointment of an auditor, while it could be possible for an auditor to not be appointed for more than one year (reference

sections 235(1), 236 (1) (a) and 236 (2) it would not be good practice for the cooperative to do so and it is not recommended.

Dispensing with an auditor generally is only considered by relatively small cooperatives having little or no financial activity and even then it should only be done cautiously. Cooperatives can, as provided for in section 244, set up an audit committee of at least three committee directors, a majority of who are not full-time officers or employees of the cooperative or its affiliates to undertake a form of audit of the cooperative's books and records.

Requirements set in the Act for Directors to place before the membership at every annual meeting of members, as per section 228 (b), includes the 'report of the auditor, if any'. Again it is prudent that larger cooperatives with substantial financial activity would engage the services of an independent outside auditor. Cooperatives, similar to business operations, need to determine themselves the extent of the audit to be done that would satisfy the needs set out by the members".

If you are wondering where you fit, you can checkout the website at: www.governmentservices.gov.ab.ca or contact

Janice Ryan at (780) 427 – 6100.

The information I have researched is confusing. We have had some discussions with a couple of firms doing the books for our members. We have asked them to provide us with any information that may help resolve the issue. We realize that the methods of doing audits are changing, as are the costs. The bottom line is that you, as member cooperatives are governed by the Cooperative Act. Further clarification at this time will have to come from Alberta Government Services or your accountant.

The Annual Meeting is just around the corner and I look forward to seeing you there. At this time on behalf of the office, Irene and I would like to extend a very Merry Christmas to you and yours and express our sincere appreciation for all of your assistance in the past year.



In Memoriam

Gary William Fink passed away December 8, 2006 at the age of 53.

Gary was a Director of the Forestburg Seed Plant for 18 years and was Chairman for the last 12. Gary loved farming with his family and could hardly wait for spring.

He is survived by his loving wife, Brenda; two daughters, Linda Kells and her husband Shane of Forestburg and Holly Fink of Red Deer; one son, Shawn Fink of Forestburg; two grandchildren, Brook and Austin; his parents, Alvin and Jean Fink; one sister, Bev Bownes and her husband Alan; one brother, Terry Fink and his wife Nicole; as well as numerous nieces and nephews.

Memorial donations in memory of Gary may be made to the Canadian Cancer Society.

Drug Dispensing Fees

By Doug Sample,
CEBS

Have you ever purchased a drug at one pharmacy, then discovered upon filling the same prescription a few weeks later at a different pharmacy that there is a considerable

price difference? The likely culprit is the dispensing fee the pharmacists are levying for their services.

The cost of a prescription drug is made up of the cost of the medication plus the professional fee the pharmacists add for their services. The professional fee is commonly referred to as the dispensing fee.

Dispensing fees in Alberta range from approximately \$5.00 to \$11.50, depending on the pharmacy that fills the prescription. In general, the large "big box" retailers such as Costco, Superstore and Wal-Mart have pharmacies that tend to be at the low end of the range while the more traditional drug stores tend to be at the high end. Grocery and department store pharmacies typically fall somewhere in the middle.

Given that the cost of employer sponsored health insurance plans is directly impacted by the dollar value of prescription drug claims, savings as a result of lower dispensing fees can have a significant impact on the cost of these programs over the long term.

By "shopping around", individuals that regularly make prescription drug purchases can assist in reducing the cost of health insurance programs and help sustain their viability into the future.

Foraging Ahead

The forage and turf seed industry is valued at over \$100 million dollars annually in Canada, and this industry is a key component of Alberta agriculture. The winter issue of **seed.ab.ca** will take a look at forage variety selection, helping growers examine the factors to consider when they make their seeding decisions.

By investing time in planning a forage program, whether for hay, pasture, or alternate grazing, growers can achieve better quality feed, improved livestock performance, and more flexibility for their farm. Certified forage seed will guarantee your growers are getting varietal purity, virtually weed-free seed, and excellent germination.

Growers are also awaiting the winter edition of **seed.ab.ca** to access the performance trials, a regular feature in the winter issue of **seed.ab.ca**, as well as the Grower Directory which helps Alberta farmers **research and locate the varieties they want**.

As members of the Alberta Seed Industry Partnership, Alberta Co-op Seed Cleaning Plants have access to special advertising rates in **seed.ab.ca**. For more information about advertising in **seed.ab.ca**, contact Lindy Norris at (403)



256-6709 or e-mail issues@issuesink.com. For more information about the Alberta Seed Industry Partnership, log onto www.seed.ab.ca.

Happy Holidays from the Staff at Issues Ink.

Treating Tips & Tricks

Agitation of all seed treatment products whether they are mixed with water or not is always a good idea. Many plants now have systems that are hooked to timers that turn agitations on/off to ensure agitation takes place even when the product is not being used. Care must be taken not to OVER-agitate. Over agitation can result in foaming and in the worst cases, products may sheer; or separate beyond repair to

render them impossible to use.

Foaming on the other hand, creates an unstable formulation, which results in widely variable application rates. Return lines used for agitation, or otherwise are recommended to reach the bottom of the premix tank, to ensure air does not get induced into the formulation.

Classifieds

Please contact Stephanie at (403) 410-7664 to post a classified ad for free!

*Merry Christmas
and Happy New
Year to everyone!
From your Seed
Treatment reps,
Monica Klaas
and Kent Hall*





Technology Tidbits

By Lynette Lefsrud, Lefsrud Communications

Seed.ab.ca Website

Did you know that over 100 people visit the seed.ab.ca website every day?*

Use this to your advantage. Advertise in the online classified section. If you have equipment to buy or sell, or if you need to hire a new employee, the classified section on the Seed.ab.ca website is your chance to advertise for free via the website. All it takes is a quick email to lynette@lefsrud.com, or phone call to 403-337-8068. Items will be listed for a one month time period unless otherwise stated.

Please note: No seed will be listed in the classified section – as Seed.ab.ca already has the Seed for Sale section that is available online. Nor is this service intended for personal sales – sales of a personal nature will not be accepted on the site. This free listing service is not available for non-members.

Seed for Sale

The Seed for Sale section is updated frequently with the latest information. This enables you to have your seed for sale viewed by the people coming to the site each month. Be sure to tell your customers to check out www.seed.ab.ca/seed_for_sale/ when they want to know what is for sale in their area.

Check out Links

Do you have a link that you use regularly and want to share with others? We can add this link to the seed.ab.ca website. Our links section has lots of amazing links to government sites, associations, weather, market information and much more. Check it out today at www.seed.ab.ca/links/.

If you have any comments, questions or suggestions for the site, please feel free to send them to lynette@lefsrud.com. Have a great holiday season!

**Stats based on numbers from November 2006.*