



SPRING 2022 Mining, Energy & Manufacturing



The sprawling Vaderstad manufacturing plant at Langbank

Vaderstad looking for workers as it expands

BY KEVIN WEEDMARK

Nigel Jones, CEO of Vaderstad Industries Inc., says the company is looking for more workers as it continues to expand production at its sprawling Langbank manufacturing plant.

"We started out as Seedhawk in Langbank in 1992. This year will be our 30th year for Seedhawk," Jones said in an interview.

"It started out as a very small operation, built up around the Seedhawk opener. On the back of that were the development of the seeder, the toolbar, and then the tank. From those humble beginnings it grew fairly steadily for the next few years.

"The product development was on site as well, so the business wasn't only about manufacturing, it also had some development capability on site at the same time. Then, around 2006 is when Vaderstad first got involved, Vaderstad being a Swedish privately owned company. They were

looking at expansion into North America and Seedhawk was exploring with opportunities for expansion maybe into Europe even. There was a good fit and good synergies between the companies in terms of their objectives.

"At that time Vaderstad took a 49 per cent position in the company. Over the next few years it continued with a steady growth, nothing spectacular, just steady. It grew to somewhere north of just about a hundred employees.

"Then around 2014 is when Vaderstad finally bought all of the company, and at that point it became a part of the Vaderstad company.

"Then in 2015 was the launch of the iCon, which was the new product development. At that time it was more technological in terms of the equipment.

"Since 2015 we have seen much more rapid growth in terms of the growth trajectory. In 2017 was when the brand actu-

ally changed, the colours changed and the Vaderstad name was on the product. It was a big year in terms of product transition, marketing of branding. Since then, we have had steady growth trajectory, we have increased from the 100 employees to just about 250 now, so that is a significant increase and the sales revenue has grown substantially as well along with that.

"In 2015, we made about \$50 million and this year we will be somewhere closer to \$160 million."

He said a combination of factors have led to higher sales.

"We have made a lot of efficiency improvements over the last five years. We have gone down the LEAN manufacturing path, we are working towards world class manufacturing."

A year ago, a second shift was added. "We have done a lot of improvements in terms of efficiency but obviously the addition of the second shift just gives you that

extra boost," said Jones. "The second shift is a half shift, it only needs to operate on the toolbar line. The cart line is still effectively one shift."

Employees needed

Jones says many new employees have been hired by Vaderstad as it ramped up the second shift, and more are still needed.

"We could hire 40 people tomorrow," he said. "That would be 20 to fill the vacant spaces and 20 would be to fill contract labour. We are still relying on contract labour which basically flies in from the East Coast."

He said Vaderstad is looking for a number of skills.

"We are looking for a combination of skills," Jones said, "from assembly work to welding, and we are now seeking people who can manage and operate robots."

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Sask aims to attract hydrogen investment

The Government of Saskatchewan is ramping up development work on a potential hydrogen hub in the Regina-Moose Jaw region.

The Ministry of Energy and Resources, Whitecap Resources, and Federated Co-operatives Limited (FCL) will support a foundation report study, developed by the Transition Accelerator and the Saskatchewan Research Council (SRC), to provide investors with a thorough analysis of commercial-scale hydrogen opportunities and synergies with carbon capture utilization and storage (CCUS) infrastructure in Saskatchewan.

"We're a world leader in CCUS and enhanced oil recovery, which have natural connections to blue hydrogen," Energy and Resources Minister Bronwyn Eyre said. "We expect this report to accelerate the private sector's interest in Saskatchewan's emerging hydrogen economy."

The hydrogen market is expanding globally, with increasing use in power generation, transportation fuel, and feedstock in the chemical industry. 'Blue hydrogen' projects are enabled using CCUS technology.

In September 2021, the Government of Saskatchewan announced several new policy commitments to advance CCUS projects, including advancing opportunities for an infrastructure hub in the Regina-Moose Jaw industrial corridor. A hydrogen/CCUS hub in this region could allow for the development of an entire, commercial scale hydrogen supply and demand chain in Saskatchewan.

In October 2021, Whitecap Resources and FCL signed a memorandum of understanding to explore opportunities around CCUS, enhanced oil recovery and CO2 transportation infrastructure.

"Saskatchewan has played a prominent role in establishing CCUS as an industry and we expect it will leverage this expertise to take a leadership role in the new hydrogen economy," Whitecap Resources President and CEO Grant Fagerheim said. "Whitecap and FCL have the opportunity to accelerate the transition to a lower carbon economy through our proposed CCUS infrastructure, which will enable blue hydrogen production at a commercial scale. We are excited to advance this study to support further expansion across the private sector."

"The potential for a Hydrogen and CCUS Hub in Saskatchewan is exciting as it would create new opportunities for local industry right here in Saskatchewan," Federated Co-operatives Limited CEO Heather Ryan said. "We know that CCUS will play a prominent role in the future of transportation fuels. The research we are investing in will identify the role that hydrogen production will play in the transition to the low carbon economy. We are excited and proud to partner with the Government of Saskatchewan and Whitecap Resources on this important research project."

The Transition Accelerator (TA) is a pan-Canadian charity that creates positive, transformational system changes that solve societal challenges while moving Canada to reach net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. TA launched Canada's first two hydrogen hubs in the Edmonton's Industrial Heartland Region and in the southeast Alberta Region.

The Ministry of Energy and Resources will support the Transition Accelerator with a grant of \$100,000 to complete a Foundation Report. An additional \$50,000 in funding will be provided by Whitecap Resources and FCL.

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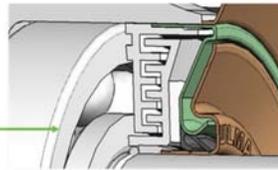
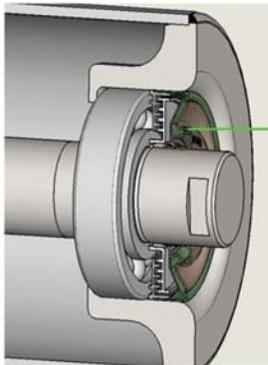


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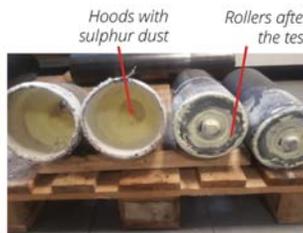
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Carbon capture an opportunity for Canada to lead the world

Canada's largest oil sands producers are "in full-scale development mode" on a major joint project designed to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions and propel the sector down the path to net-zero.

The companies have planned one of the world's largest carbon capture and storage (CCS) projects. It's a key piece of what could become a new large-scale industry for Canada that reduces the environmental footprint of multiple sectors, including oil and gas, fertilizer, steel and cement. "[CCS] could be a major source of employment and I

think position us to be leaders in the world," said Jackie Forrest, executive director of ARC Energy Research Institute, on a recent ARC podcast.

Canada is already a leader in what could be seen as the first generation of global CCS development, where carbon emissions are captured from industrial processes and stored deep underground.

There are 26 commercial-scale CCS projects in the world, and four are in Canada – including the largest CO2 pipeline on the planet, the Alberta Carbon Trunk Line.

Since 2000, CCS projects in Canada have safely stored more than 44 million tonnes of CO2, or the equivalent of taking more than 9.4 million cars off the road.

The first phase of the Oil Sands Pathways to Net Zero project, expected to be operational by 2030, would add capacity to store an additional 8.5 million tonnes or 1.8 million cars worth of CO2 per year, safely removing the emissions from the atmosphere.

The Oil Sands Pathways to Net Zero foundational project is a major carbon capture and storage system in northern Alberta.

Before giving the final go-ahead, the six companies in the project will require additional clarity on factors including the federal government's new CCS investment tax credit, future carbon taxes and access rights to deep underground pore space for storage. But they're proceeding with the work to make it



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happen.

"We are in full-scale development mode right now at Pathways," Cenovus Energy CEO Alex Pourbaix told a recent call with investment analysts.

He said the companies have started preliminary engineering on the project, which would capture CO2 emissions from eight oil sands facilities and transport it to a storage hub in northern Alberta.

"We are in the process of making the application to the Alberta government for pore space, and we have kicked off significant environmental work and other studies that are required for the application for the permits to ultimately develop and construct that project," Pourbaix said.

"There is actually a huge amount of work going on. The Pathways partners have seconded literally dozens of people into the organization, with more to come."

CCS in Canada has already influenced major projects globally, such as Northern Lights in Norway. The 1.5-million-tonne-per-year project is owned partly by Shell, which since 2015 has operated the Quest CCS project near Edmonton.

"Northern Lights has incorporated lessons from Quest, which has been sharing knowledge and lessons learned over the last five years to encourage more widespread implementation of CCS," the company said in a statement.

Working together to advance new technology is in the DNA of Canadian companies, says Joy Romero, executive adviser for innovation with Canadian Natural Resources.

"We can learn from each other, building on what others know rather than doing it in parallel," she says.

"That is how we can, in fact, accelerate and deliver these projects in these very ambitious time periods."

Deborah Jaremko is director of content for the Canadian Energy Centre, an Alberta government corporation funded in part by taxes paid by industry on carbon emissions.



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Vaderstad looking for workers as it expands



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"We need people who can work with robot welders in particular at the moment, but we are looking at more developments and more automation in the plan," said Jones. "We need people who can program and maintain robots and automation. We are looking for a range of skills."

He said there are benefits and challenges to operating a manufacturing plant in a rural area.

"The benefits are we are close to the community," he said. "Our equipment is used in rural locations. It is a good place to be in terms of being close to the people who use it, the farmers. We do develop quite large equipment so it is good we do have a large facility and a large site to be able to be close to the conditions, the actual areas where the machines are used. Those are advantages."

"One of the challenges is that it's difficult to attract people to the area. We realize we have a lot of small

communities around us as opposed to being in a larger center such as Regina or Saskatoon, but it's still a challenge to find all the staff we need. That is the downside for us in terms of managing the growth."

How is Vaderstad trying to overcome that challenge?

"We are aiming to be an employer of choice," says Jones. "We work a lot on our benefits and our work environment. Safety is first in terms of our values. We focus a lot on the employer branding side of things. We want to be attractive to employees, we want employees to join, and we want them to stay. We spend an awful lot of time on the employer branding and work environment side of things. We invest a lot in the local communities, so we can build the brand so people know who we are, and so they understand what it is they would be walking into if they did come to work at the facility."

Vaderstad now has an

operation in Wahpeton, North Dakota in addition to the Langbank site. "In Langbank we are Vaderstad Canada now and in Wahpeton they are Vaderstad U.S.," says Jones. "We do have our own independence in terms of legal entities, but we do share some resources as well. For instance if we look at HR, finance and IT, we share resources in those areas so we can have some consistency. On the operational side we collaborate a lot and work together and learn from each other, and share lots of ideas."

Need for further growth

There is still a need to further grow the operation in Langbank.

"We have a five to ten year plan which is continued growth," said Jones. "The challenge in the Langbank facility will be there is only so much dollars to invest before you

need to hire more people again, and that's where there is a challenge. The challenge for us at the moment is to create that

pipeline now so we have enough workers later. If we can attract the right people with the right skills and qualities, then we can

spend some dollars on investments. There is definitely potential for it and plans to try and exploit those opportunities for growth."

Working with communities

Jones said Vaderstad is working with local communities to ensure everything is in place to attract more workers.

"We're working closely with the communities in terms of how can we attract workers to the area. In Moosomin and Whitehead in particular, we have had some good conversations in terms of opportunities, housing projects, schooling, health care, training and daycare. Those are the main things. Those are kind of our challenging criteria. If we can work with communities on those issues, there's room for further growth."



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Sask releases latest oil and gas emissions report

Provincial oil and gas sector has reduced green house gas emissions by 60 per cent since 2015

On May 18, the Ministry of Energy and Resources published its second Oil and Gas Emissions Management Regulations (OGEMR) Annual Emissions Report.

In 2021, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from vented and flared gas at upstream oil facilities in Saskatchewan totalled 4.4 million tonnes (Mt) of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e).

This represents a 6.5 Mt CO₂e, or 60 per cent, reduction from 2015 levels and a 0.8 Mt or 15 per cent reduction from 2020 levels.

"A 60 per cent reduction is a significant achievement and clearly demonstrates that Saskatchewan is a jurisdictional leader in methane reduction and its energy sector is one of the most environmentally responsible in the world," Energy and Resources Minister Bronwyn Eyre said. "Saskatchewan's comprehensive regulations target both methane

from venting and carbon dioxide from flaring. This is more comprehensive than the federal approach, which targets only methane emissions."

Multiple factors contributed to the provincial emissions reduction in 2021- primarily, the Saskatchewan oil and gas sector's investments in new equipment and/or infrastructure at key locations, which resulted in reducing company-level emissions.

Several of these infrastructure efforts were supported through the Saskatchewan Petroleum Innovation Incentive (SPII), administered by the Ministry of Energy and Resources. SPII offers transferable royalty/production tax credits for innovative, made-in-Saskatchewan projects at a rate of 25 per cent of eligible costs, including capital and operating expenditures, up to a maximum of \$5 million in credits.

In 2019, the Government of Saskatchewan released its Methane Action Plan (MAP) and OGEMR's goal to reduce GHG emissions by 40 to 45 per cent from 2015 levels by 2025. The latest results demonstrate Saskatchewan's continued regulatory leadership and ongoing innovation of the upstream oil and gas sector.

Emission reductions outlined in Prairie Resilience: A Made-in-Saskatchewan Climate Change Strategy have been achieved and will likely be exceeded in 2025.

OGEMR is part of an equivalency agreement on methane emissions signed in 2020 with the federal government. The agreement established a five-year timeframe and expires on December 31, 2024.

OGEMR provides flexible, results-based regulations that allow industry to achieve greater emissions reduction at a significantly lower cost than the federal equivalent.

Surging global coal use highlights opportunity for Canadian LNG

There are 2,449 coal-fired plants operating around the world, 189 are under construction and a further 292 are planned for the near future

Coal use around the world is rising in what the head of the International Energy Agency (IEA) calls "a sobering reality check" for targets to reduce emissions.

Against that backdrop, global demand for liquefied natural gas (LNG) is soaring, in part because it can help displace coal power and reduce emissions by half – or more, if the LNG comes from Canada.

"Global electricity generation from coal this year will be

the highest ever in history," IEA executive director Fatih Birol said at the virtual launch of the agency's latest report on the state of global coal in December 2021.

"The numbers are really worrying when you look at it from a climate change point of view," he said.

Total global coal consumption is now well above where it was before the Covid-19 pandemic, reaching a record 7.9 billion tonnes in 2021 compared to 7.8 billion tonnes in 2019, the IEA reports.

The growth is expected to continue, with consumption reaching a new high of eight billion tonnes in 2024.

IEA says it will be driven by India and China, where coal power is expected to increase despite the roll out of "impressive amounts" of solar and wind capacity to generate power.

There are 2,449 coal-fired power plants operating around the world, according to Global Energy Monitor. Another 189 are under construction, and a further 292 are in "pre-construction" or planned for the near future.

"This is a major challenge," Birol said. "In particular from the perspective of emerging and developing countries, where you see coal might be playing a critical role in providing electricity and keeping the affordability of electricity prices."

A solution is LNG or the global trade of natural gas by ocean tanker.

According to Shell's latest report, even with COVID lockdowns, world LNG demand rose to 380 million tonnes in 2021 from 360 million tonnes in 2020. That's expected to nearly double and cross 700 million tonnes by 2040.

Using natural gas instead of coal to fuel power plants reduces emissions by about 50 per cent on average, IEA says.



Deborah Jaremko

LNG from Canada can deliver an even more significant decrease, reducing emissions by up to 62 per cent, according to a 2020 study published in the Journal of Cleaner Production.

That's partly because Canada's LNG projects are expected to have the lowest emissions intensity – or emissions per unit of LNG—in the world.

The LNG Canada project under construction, for example, is expected to have emissions of 0.15 per cent CO₂ per tonne of LNG, less than half the global average of 0.35 per cent, according to Oxford Energy Institute.

Proposed LNG projects in British Columbia that would use more hydroelectricity from the province's power grid are expected to have even lower emissions intensity: 0.08 per cent for Indigenous-led Cedar LNG and 0.03 per cent for Woodfibre LNG.

"We do have cheap, plentiful supplies of natural gas both in northeast B.C. and throughout Alberta, and we do have shorter shipping distances to Asia," says Ian Archer, associate director of gas, power and climate solutions with S&P Global.

"But what we have is very limited infrastructure to connect those two points."

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In February 2017, Business Elite Canada wrote about Mosaic when the company's facility in Esterhazy, Saskatchewan hit a significant project milestone in the Esterhazy K3 project, touted to be the largest, most competitive underground potash mine in the world. Nearly five years later, and the K3 project's newly completed south shaft headframe is operating at full hoisting capacity; production officially began November 8 following successful commissioning of the headframe and ore handling system in October, 2021.

As planned, hoisting capacity of the south shaft headframe started at 10,000 tons per day and increased to 40,000 tons per day in December.

Combined with the north shaft headframe, which has been in operation since 2018, this will bring K3's hoisting capacity to more than 80,000 tons per day.

K3—The future of potash

The K3 mega-project includes Saskatchewan's first new underground potash mine in over a half-century. This \$3 billion-dollar project, which kicked off in 2009,

is an investment in the long-term sustainability of Mosaic's operations, Esterhazy, the Province and the vision they have for Mosaic's North America Business. It also brought significant capital investment and contract work to the area.

"Potash has a rich history in Esterhazy, and this project represents Mosaic's commitment to continuing that success for decades to come," says Dustin Maksymchuk, General Manager, Esterhazy. "We're proud of the future we're building for Mosaic, for our employees and for the communities we live in."

The importance of potash

According to United Nations estimates, the world needs to grow 70 per cent more food by 2050. Canadian potash is helping make that possible and currently leading the world in global potash production.

Potash is the second most valuable metal/mineral product in Canada—trailing only gold. "The industry contributes more than \$5.5 billion annually to Canada's Gross Domestic Product and more than \$500 million in federal, provincial and local taxes," says Maksymchuk. "There are more than 5,000 jobs in the potash mining industry and for every one of those jobs, there are at least two in the mining supply and service sector. These jobs provide more than one billion in wages annually. Mosaic and other potash producers also invest millions of dollars annually in local communities." The K3 project required in excess of 12.5 million person-hours to execute, and there were up to 500 people on site per day during peak construction periods, says Bernie Boutin, Director of Capital Projects -K3. "With a project of this magnitude and duration, safety is always top of mind. Thousands of contractors and Mosaic employees have worked on different aspects of the project, and we are truly grateful for their hard work and dedication. The

focus has always been on safe project execution so everyone can return home safely to family and friends."

So how did Mosaic manage to sink shafts 20-foot in diameter 3,500 feet into the ground? A combination of sinking winches and hoists located at surface, and the respective hoist ropes operated through the permanent north headframe, and the temporary south sinking headframe, is the answer.

"A five-level galloway structure was utilized in both the north and south shafts, and it functioned as a working stage for both personnel and equipment," Boutin explains. "The conventional drilling and blasting method was used to sink the 20 ft diameter shafts through the bare earth. An excavator suspended below both galloways and was used to load the blasted muck into buckets that were hoisted to surface. When the shaft wall was exposed, a shaft wall liner was constructed as the shaft sinking advanced."



Esterhazy K3's North shaft headframe began production in January 2019. It is used to move potash ore to the surface and transport people and equipment, says Boutin. The K3 South shaft headframe, which is used solely to move potash ore to the surface, began production in November 2021. As of the end of March 2022, there are a total of nine mining machines cutting underground at K3 that can provide an average of 50,000 ore tons per day. Another mining machine is nearing production, and three more mining machines and more underground conveyors will be added over the next couple years.

"A fully operational Esterhazy K3 is improving the profitability and competitiveness of our business—solidifying our position as an industry leader and allowing us to find new, innovative ways to deliver on Mosaic's commitments to our customers, communities, employees and other stakeholders," says Maksymchuk.

Mosaic is among the most reliable, sustainable producers of potash fertilizer in the world, and completion of the K3 project will allow Mosaic to fully leverage existing assets and make the best possible use of Esterhazy's rich potash ore reserves.



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Indigenous-owned Canadian LNG project advances

BY DEBORAH JAREMKO

There's been a big step forward for a major proposed Canadian liquefied natural gas (LNG) project that's seen as an opportunity for economic reconciliation with Indigenous communities and help to reduce global greenhouse gas emissions.

Partners in the Ksi Lisims LNG project, including the Nisga'a Nation, have applied for a 40-year LNG export licence and filed a detailed project description with regulators.

"The project has the potential to support the Nisga'a Nation and other Indigenous nations' goals of responding to climate change while allowing for economic development," the project description says.

Ksi Lisims would be a floating LNG project on B.C.'s northern coast, about two km from the Alaska border.

Its partners also include a consortium of British Columbia and Alberta natural gas producers called Rockies LNG and a subsidiary of Houston-based LNG developer Western LNG.

The project includes a natural gas pipeline originating in northeastern B.C. At full capacity, it would produce 12 million tonnes of LNG per year for exports primarily to Asian countries like China, Japan and South Korea.

That makes it only slightly smaller than the LNG Canada project under construction at Kitimat, B.C., which will have capacity of 14 million tonnes per year in its first phase.

The Nisga'a Nation has been working since 2014 to develop an LNG project in its treaty territory, it says.

"The Nisga'a Nation, like most rural Indigenous communities, struggles with consistently lower employment and labour force participation rates. Currently, a number of employment barriers exist for Nisga'a citizens living on Nisga'a lands including geography, low population density, and jobs which are typically lower-income, lower-skilled, and more vulnerable to economic downturns," the project description says.

"The direct and indirect economic benefits provided by the project will reduce social and economic disparities, improve the quality of life for all Nisga'a citizens, and enable the Nisga'a Nation to pursue economic self-determination."

Initial estimates are that across Canada the project will provide 21,000 employment opportunities, \$890 million in annual provincial and federal tax revenues, and approximately \$2.5 billion in annual gross

domestic product.

The Ksi Lisims LNG project will be designed to operate with net-zero greenhouse gas emissions, which is important to the Nisga'a Nation, it says. This will be achieved by using renewable hydro-power from B.C.'s electrical grid, using low-carbon Canadian natural gas that's subject to strong methane

emissions regulations as LNG feedstock, and the short shipping time to Asian markets.

Global LNG demand is expected to nearly double in the next two decades, crossing 700 million tonnes in 2040 compared to 380 million tonnes in 2021, according to Shell's most recent outlook.

Startup for Ksi Lisims

LNG is targeted by the end of 2027. The project is expected to require federal and provincial review, as well as an assessment under the Nisga'a Treaty.

Deborah Jaremko is director of content for the Canadian Energy Centre, an Alberta government corporation funded in part by taxes paid by industry on carbon emissions.

Saskatchewan potash mining facts

Saskatchewan potash is a critical mineral used worldwide as a replenishing agricultural fertilizer to feed the growing global population that is soaring towards an estimated 9.7 billion by 2050.

The potash industry

contributes \$8.3 billion to the GDP and pays \$526 million in federal, provincial and local taxes.

For every direct job in the Saskatchewan mining industry, there are at least two jobs in the mining supply and service sector.

The industry directly employs 6,000 people in Saskatchewan with a total payroll of \$800 million in salaries. The 2019 national average salary of employees in the Canadian mining industry was \$123,000.

Saskatchewan potash companies invest in community initiatives, programs, and causes that enhance quality of life across the province.

\$10.5 million has been invested in various communities and Indigenous partnerships.

Potash is a valuable resource that has a significant positive impact on the economy of Saskatchewan and its communities.

Saskatchewan has the largest and richest potash resources in the world, and could supply the needs of farmers worldwide for several hundred years. Saskatchewan has approximately half of the world's potash reserves.

Not only does potash nourish the Earth, it's also used to make industrial products and pharmaceuticals.

Three producing companies—K+S Potash Canada, The Mosaic Company and Nutrien Ltd.—operate 10 mines in the province. Seven mines are underground and three are solution operations.

21.8 million tonnes of potash were mined in 2020.

Mining is one of the safest industries in Saskatchewan, and in Canada. Total Recordable Injury Rate for Saskatchewan potash sector are 1.9.

Saskatchewan potash is made with 50 per cent lower GHG intensity than potash produced by global competitors.

\$1.4 Billion in goods and services is procured from Saskatchewan businesses, and \$160 Million in goods and services is procured from Saskatchewan Indigenous businesses.

Saskatchewan did \$5.5 billion in sales in potash in 2020, making it the number one potash producer in the world.



Seasonal Pipeline Work

From June through October, small Enbridge work crews will begin decommissioning of the Line 3 pipeline in southern Saskatchewan.

With the new, replacement pipeline providing commercial service since late 2019, this essential field work will take the old Line 3 pipeline out of service safely and permanently.

The work will take place south of Regina to Cromer, Manitoba, and will require a peak workforce of about 60, including crews of between seven and 10 construction and contract personnel.

Line 3 decommissioning will involve cleaning, disconnecting, segmenting, filling the pipeline at strategic points and ongoing monitoring, even after decommissioning is complete.

To learn more about how we plan to safely decommission the old Line 3, please visit enbridge.com/l3d.



To contact Plain & Valley call 306-435-2445
or email world-spectator@sasktel.net
Next issue: July 15



Mosaic Esterhazy surpasses one million tons mined in first-pass automation

After years of collaboration, development, testing—learning from trial and error along the way—the Esterhazy team is now successfully running K3's mining machines autonomously in all three "passes" they make to mine an area. The team began testing first-pass automation in April 2021 at K3, and they surpassed an impressive milestone in March—mining one million tons in first-pass automation. Six of the ten machines in K3's fleet can operate autonomously on the first pass, and all have been operating autonomously on the second and third "side" passes.

Running these machines with minimal human intervention reduces risk for our employees and eliminates downtime, as they can safely operate 24/7. Automation allows employees who previously worked in close proximity with mining machines to operate and monitor them from a distance—providing better, safer working conditions for employees, while also providing an opportunity to increase production.

"Two of our main goals when we formed Esterhazy's automation team in 2015 were to automate the steering of our mining machines in first pass and build the conveyor belt automatically," explains Anthony Sparvier, K3 Automation Superintendent.



"We've accomplished both those goals, but there were significant challenges to overcome along the way."

Esterhazy's automation team worked closely with third-party experts throughout design and development—performing extensive tests to confirm the accuracy and reliability of various systems. They also worked with Esterhazy's geologist to confirm autonomous mining would not have any geological impacts.

Building operators' confidence and trust in autonomous operations took some time. "The

same control aspects were in place, but the newer mining machines and the Human-Machine Interface (HMI) screens were quite a bit different than what our people were used to," explains Sparvier. "All our operators mine differently but our mining algorithm mines the same regardless of who is at the machine, so there was also some confusion and misunderstanding about how the machine steers."

Sparvier says the key to building that trust and confidence was involving the operators, transparently sharing about success and

challenges along the way, and providing training. "We developed a training presentation with all of the operators from each crew who were at the mining machine when we were initially testing first-pass automation," says Sparvier. "The training goes over the method, algorithm and what to expect with cutting in automation. It also provided answers to some of the typical questions we were getting about steering."

There are still some challenges to overcome, but the Esterhazy team is excited about the progress they are making. "We couldn't

have accomplished all we have without support from all levels of our organization—from our operators to senior leaders," says Sparvier. "It truly has been a team effort, and we're not done yet. We still have more training to do, and more projects are on the way to make our automation program more robust, reliable and intuitive."

Mining machines make three "passes" when mining an area. On the first pass, they set the direction and forge a new path through rock while another automated machine follows behind them installing hardware to build a

conveyor belt. During the second and third passes, the machines follow the path of the conveyor belt to mine ore—first on one side of the belt, then the other.

The control center on the surface being designed as Esterhazy's Integrated Operations Center is equipped with communications and cameras that employees use to monitor progress of the machines from the surface. They can stop and start the mining machines to manage ore flow and schedule in-person checks as needed to ensure safe operation and support the mine plan.

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North American Energy Choices leading to disaster

There are geopolitical effects of obstructing and penalizing the North American production and supply systems

A few weeks ago, there was a violent First Nations-climate extremist attack on a Coastal GasLink natural gas pipeline construction site in British Columbia.

In a seemingly unrelated development, German leaders decided last year to rapidly phase out nuclear energy with nothing to replace it.

Also last year, the United States chose not to approve two pipelines.

These three major events in energy politics were propelled by the global warming crusade, which seeks to end the production and use of fossil fuels.

A powerful green campaign against resource extraction and transportation has left Canada and the United States with very limited energy options, options that are getting fewer as time passes.

In addition, the world is becoming increasingly dependent on unsavoury regimes—such as Russia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Saudi Arabia, Iran and Iraq—for natural gas and oil.

While climate activists and their allies in militant First Nations may cheer when oil or natural gas assets in North America remain undeveloped, the world demand for energy remains high and is satisfied by sales from antidemocratic regimes. Of course, the low production in North America aids them in selling their resources.

No matter what happens in the U.S. and Canada, fuel is still produced and consumed, with limited influence from those governments that only indulge the 'net-zero' fantasies of virtue-signalling crusaders in North America and other Western countries.

Also, increasingly these products are transported by trucks and trains because fewer pipelines are being con-



Ian Madsen

structed, greatly increasing environmental and safety risks.

The result is that Western nations are increasingly dependent on unstable, unreliable, and despotic nations and regions for these resources. All of the autocratic states producing large quantities of oil and gas are undemocratic and repressive, with less reliable rule of law or environmental protection than Canada, the U.S. and European nations with the potential to produce oil and gas.

Clearly, human rights are less important to the crusader activists than their goal of 'climate justice' in the consuming nations.

In 2020, the United States was net energy independent and supplied other countries with refined oil and natural gas. Hydraulic fracturing and other techniques that unlock the potential of shale and other 'tight' formations produce prodigious quantities of natural gas and oil. But since 2020, production has declined rapidly as permits expired. More wells need to be drilled, but the U.S. government of President Joe Biden is opposed to this.

The moratorium imposed by the Biden administration on drilling lease sales on federal lands has drastically reduced potential U.S. output. Also, the cancellation of the

Keystone XL pipeline and the court challenges facing the Dakota Access line limit exports from Canada, so more Canadian oil can't enter the U.S.

Meanwhile, in Germany, the panicky decision to end nuclear power meant increasing reliance on wind and solar power and, ironically, on coal and natural gas when wind and solar energy fail to satisfy demand. As well, German dependence on the mercies of Russian President Vladimir Putin previously led Germany to approve the Nord Stream 2 pipeline, a decision it recently rescinded, reversing its reliance on Russia.

The recent spike in oil and natural gas prices in North America has resulted from the restrictions on production in the U.S. and Canada. This has, unfortunately, filled Russia's coffers with massive foreign currency reserves because the cost of oil and gas has increased internationally, giving Putin the resources he needed to invade his neighbour.

This was foreseeable, as similar energy price increases preceded the Russian invasion of Georgia in 2008 and the invasion of Crimea and the Donbas in 2014.

These are the geopolitical effects of obstructing and penalizing the North American energy production and supply systems. Climate fanatics wish for global net-zero use of fossil fuels, but dictators like Putin seek to satisfy the energy needs of many nations while boosting their cash, and thus fund their militaries.

The future doesn't look promising for Canada and the U.S. unless they change their attitudes and strategy quickly.

Ian Madsen is the senior policy analyst at the Frontier Centre for Public Policy.

SRC looking into micro-reactors for Saskatchewan

The Saskatchewan Research Council (SRC) and Westinghouse Electric Canada have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to advance very small modular reactors (vSMRs), also known as micro-reactors, in Saskatchewan.

Westinghouse and SRC will jointly develop a project to locate an eVincim micro-reactor in Saskatchewan for the development and testing of industrial, research, and energy use applications. The eVinci micro-reactor is safe and easy to transport creating a customized solution for Saskatchewan's unique reliable clean energy needs.

"For 38 years, SRC was the licensed owner and operator of a SLOWPOKE-2 nuclear reactor, and we look forward to building on that experience with Westinghouse," Minister Responsible for SRC Jeremy Harrison said.

"The hands-on experience SRC gained can be applied to emerging nuclear technology, such as SMRs as we consider how to best power our future."

"Modern nuclear reactors have the ability to provide the safe, clean, and baseload power that Saskatchewan people rely on for their everyday needs," Minister Responsible for SaskPower Don Morgan said.

"The advancement of nuclear power in our province will not only modernize our power grid, but result in billions of dollars in additional economic activity."

"We are proud to work with SRC to provide customized solutions to Saskatchewan's clean energy needs with our eVinci micro-reactor technology," Westinghouse Electric Canada President Edouard Saab said.

"Building on decades of innovation, the eVinci micro-reactor brings carbon-free, transportable, safe and scalable energy, while creating jobs in local communities and advancing Canada's Net Zero goals."

The eVinci micro-reactor and surrounding infrastructure is approximately half the size of a hockey rink. It is classified as a micro-reactor capable of producing five megawatts of electricity, over 13 megawatts of high temperature heat, or operating in combined heat and power mode.

The eVinci micro-reactor nuclear battery provides power solutions at a different scale than centrally generated utility-scale power. It can support various applications including remote mining operations, remote communities, individual industrial heat and power scenarios, distributed hydrogen generation and integrated energy solutions.

ABOUT WESTINGHOUSE ELECTRIC CANADA

Westinghouse Electric Canada is shaping the future of carbon-free energy by providing safe, innovative nuclear technologies to utilities globally. Westinghouse supplied the world's first commercial pressurized water reactor in 1957 and the company's technology is the basis for nearly one-half of the world's operating nuclear plants. For over 130 years, innovation makes Westinghouse the preferred partner for technologies covering the complete nuclear energy life cycle. For more

information, visit www.westinghousenuclear.com.

ABOUT SASKATCHEWAN RESEARCH COUNCIL (SRC)

SRC is Canada's second largest research and technology organization. With nearly 300 employees, \$137 million in annual revenue and 75 years of experience, SRC provides services and products to its 1,500 clients in 27 countries around the world. SRC was the owner and operator of a SLOWPOKE-2 nuclear reactor that was operated safely for 38 years before being decommissioned. SRC also has extensive expertise in the nuclear and uranium sectors. Additional details are available on SRC's website at www.src.sk.ca.



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Sunset at the Red Lily Wind Farm

The Red Lily Wind Farm is just west of Moosomin and produces 26 megawatts of power.

The wind farm is owned by Concord Pacific group and managed by Algonquin Power and Utilities Corp. There are 16 turbines in total, and each blade is 82 metres long.



Why Canada will have the world's cleanest LNG

Canadian LNG exports are expected to replace coal power, primarily for growing markets in Asia, particularly China and India

In the world's race for cleaner energy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, liquefied natural gas (LNG) from Canada has an advantage.

To start with, it comes with a smaller footprint – the lowest emissions intensity of LNG projects in the world. But why?

Canada leads among countries able to export natural gas to displace coal, with LNG that has a demonstrably cleaner environmental footprint.

This was affirmed by regulators in Washington state in 2019 when the permit for the new Tacoma LNG project included the requirement for it to source natural gas from B.C. or Alberta.

The Puget Sound Clean Air Authority found natural gas from Canada to have a cleaner footprint than natural gas produced in the United States, stating that methane emissions in the U.S. "may be as much as five times higher than those from Canada."

The Tacoma LNG project will enable container ships that transport goods between Washington and Anchorage, Alaska, to switch fuel from diesel to natural gas, and displace diesel used in the Puget Sound area electrical grid during periods of high demand.

Globally, Canadian LNG exports are expected to replace coal power, primarily for growing markets in Asia, particularly China and India.

Switching from coal to natural gas for electricity generation reduces emissions by half on average, according to the International Energy Agency. LNG from Canada can deliver an even bigger decrease, reducing emissions by up to 62 per cent, according to a June 2020 study published in the Journal for Cleaner Production.

"Not all LNG is created equal," researchers from the University of Calgary and the University of Toronto wrote in a report presented at the industry event GeoConvention 2021.

They compared the emissions intensity – or emissions per unit of LNG – of the LNG Canada terminal under construction at Kitimat, B.C., with American competitors, finding a lower footprint for the Canadian project.

According to Oxford Energy Institute, the global average emissions intensity for LNG is 0.35 per cent CO2 per tonne. Once operating after 2025, LNG Canada is expected to have emissions intensity of less than half that, at 0.15 per cent CO2 per tonne.

The proposed Indigenous-led project Cedar LNG would have emissions intensity of 0.08 per cent. Wood-fibre LNG, which recently received the go-ahead, would have emissions intensity of 0.03 per cent.

There are four key reasons why Canada has the advantage: shorter shipping distances to customers, a colder climate, the use of hydroelectricity and methane emissions reduction.

Colder climate

Creating LNG from natural gas in cold climates is comparably easier than in warmer regions, saving energy and reducing emissions, the University of Calgary and University of Toronto researchers noted.

For example, the average temperature in Kitimat is much cooler (7C) than the U.S. Gulf Coast (22C in Corpus Christi, Texas), they wrote.

Shorter shipping distances

According to Natural Resources Canada, West Coast LNG projects in Canada are about 10 shipping days from Asia, compared to 20 days for shipments from the U.S. Gulf Coast that transit the Panama Canal.

Proposed projects in Eastern Canada are six to eight shipping days from Europe, the shortest distance of any



Deborah Jaremko

North American LNG projects, Natural Resources Canada says.

Less time for LNG tankers in the water means less fuel use and lower greenhouse gas emissions.

Use of hydroelectricity

More than half of Canada's electricity comes from hydropower, helping reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the country's power grid, according to the Canada Energy Regulator.

LNG projects are expected to connect to the grid to use hydroelectricity to fuel either part or all of their operations, particularly as the new Site C project in B.C. comes online and makes more hydropower available.

Methane emissions reduction

Canada's oil and gas producers are leaders globally when it comes to reducing methane emissions.

Canadian Energy Centre research found that between 2000 and 2018, methane emissions from Canada's oil and gas sector fell by 16 per cent. Compare that to China and Russia, where methane emissions increased by 133 per cent and 47 per cent, respectively, at the same time.

The government of Canada expects oil and gas producers to meet the target of reducing methane emissions by 45 per cent in 2025 compared to levels in 2012.

A reduction of 34 per cent compared to 2014 has already been achieved in Alberta.

Canada's LNG could be preferred in the world, says Greg Owen, vice-president of Calgary-based GLJ Ltd.

"With our environmental and regulatory standards, I think we have a great LNG product. So let's get it done."

Deborah Jaremko is director of content for the Canadian Energy Centre, an Alberta government corporation funded in part by taxes paid by industry on carbon emissions.



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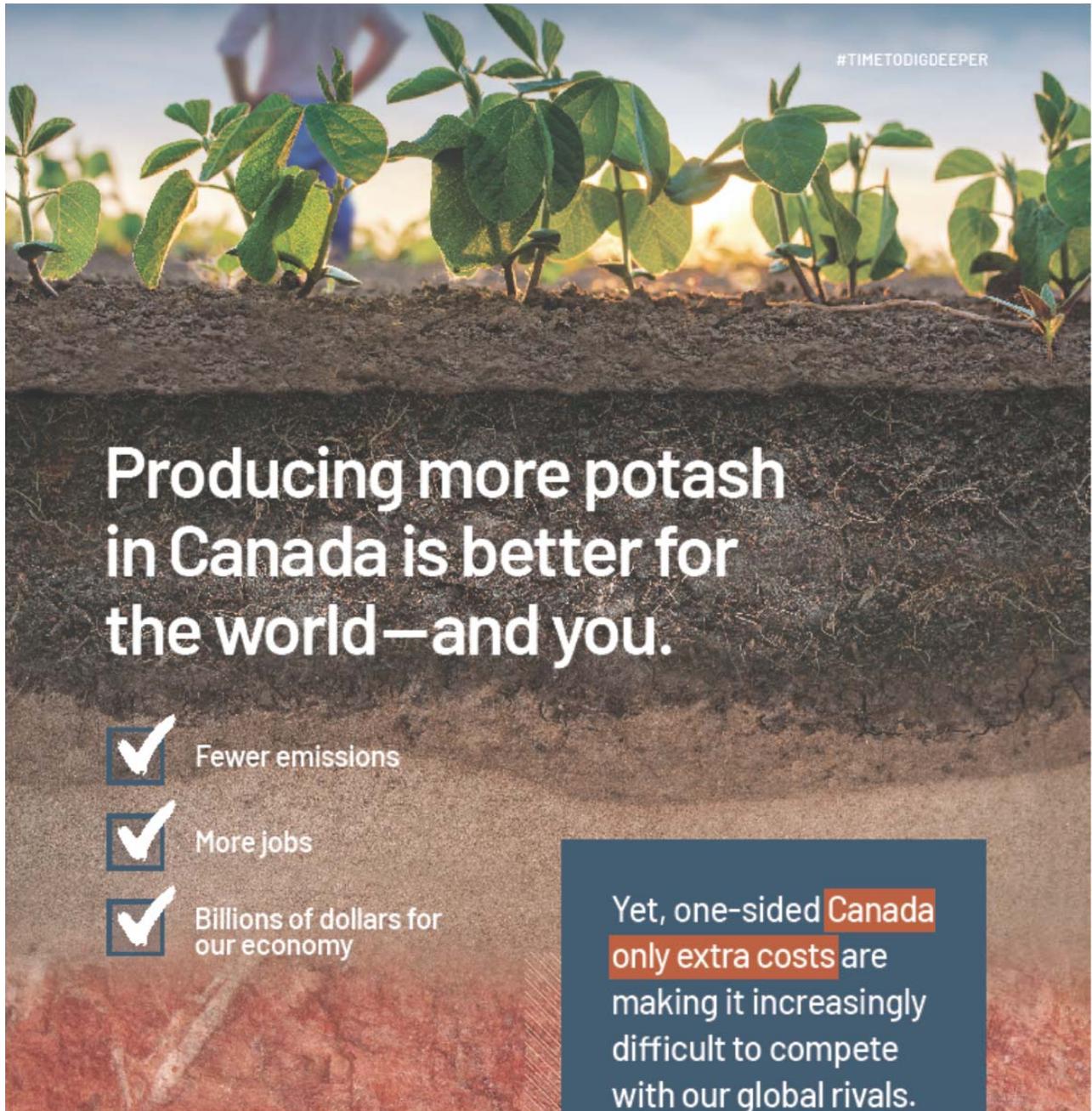


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Farmers 'mucking it in' with late seeding

BY SIERRA D'SOUZA BUTTS
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Local farmers in South-east Saskatchewan share their experience of what it is like seeding in wet conditions during late spring.

"It's slow going, a little frustrating. I've been stuck multiple times, we have to keep an extra four-wheel tractor out with us all the time just to pull the tractor out, rather than unhooking all the hydraulic lines," said Mark McCriston, a grain farmer who farms west of Moosomin.

"We're probably losing 10 to 15 per cent of the cultivated acres on average because those acres are too wet, they either have water lying in them or they're just muddy and wet. Other than that, we're trying to keep moving forward but it's slow going, lots of overlap, lots of turning and small necks, islands and stuff like that this year."

McCriston said he and his team have been working long hours every day in order to finish their seeding by early June.

"In a typical day, we try to meet at the farm for 5 a.m., and usually between 9 p.m. and 10 p.m., we quit and head back," he said.

"It's long days and it's hard on everyone because you get tired, you're usually frustrated and may get a little grumpy, but everyone just tries to work their best and move forward."

In addition to the snowstorms in April, a major rainfall hit the southeast area on May 13. McCriston was asked what the best case scenario would be for this year's crop.

"Unfortunately we're the definition of what my dad would call, 'mucking it in.' I'm still hoping for maybe below or average yield, but it's unfortunate that what



A farmer seeding between Moosomin and Rocanville last week. Despite snow and rain just a few days earlier, farmers were out in their fields.

grew our best crop last year, some of those low areas are just lying in water now," he said.

"It's hard when you know that you're missing your most prime wetter land that grows good crops, and unfortunately we're running out of time. It's past the May long weekend, and we've decided to just try keep moving ahead."

"If it was a couple weeks earlier I would like to just sit back and let it dry up a bit so we could do a better job, but with the crop insurance deadline lingering, we just have no choice but to keep moving forward," said McCriston.

He also added that the Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation (SCIC) which provides insurance for crops

experiencing a loss in yield, does not help him drastically.

"The unseeded acreage from crop insurance, I feel is inadequate. In order to qualify for unseeded acreage on crop insurance, you have to have a minimum of five acres that you leave behind because you can't seed it, I find that frustrating because depending on what neck of the woods you're farming in, it can really change," McCriston said.

"We have land over by Fleming and it has small potholes that you just go around, well no matter how many times you go around them you can't leave an area large enough that fits five acres, but then let's say you move north of Moosomin, north of the airport, there's giant areas that are saturated."

"I feel like the program has its points, but it's not tailored to fit each individual and the area you farm in. I find that as you go in different areas, the five acres minimum does work in some areas, and

in other areas the plan doesn't work at all because you just go around these little spots, but they'll never add up to five acres individually, they would need to be lumped together."

McCriston said he will be applying for Crop Insurance for the areas that are eligible on his farm.

"I'll be applying. On average, for example, I've got one field that was 1,066 seeded acres last year, this year we have 907 acres," he said.

"It's an unreal amount of land that is not going to be seeded this year and I'll be putting in a claim for unseeded acres on the land, it's just not all of it will qualify unfortunately, but I feel it should."

Continued on page 47



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FCC supports beef sustainability program

Farm Credit Canada (FCC) has created a new offering to attract and recognize Canadian beef producers certified to sustainability standards set by the Canadian Roundtable for Sustainable Beef (CRSB).

The FCC Sustainability Incentive Program will provide a payment to FCC customers who are CRSB Certified through CRSB's certification bodies including Verified Beef Production Plus, Where Food Comes From Canada, and the Ontario Corn Fed Beef Quality Assurance Program.

"Canadian producers are already expert stewards of the land and livestock, and the beef sector has been a leader in demonstrating their sustainable practices through the CRSB," said Todd Klink, FCC's vice-president of marketing. "We are pleased to work with the CRSB to recognize FCC customers who have already achieved their certification and to encourage additional producers to become certified."

The payment to customers, made by FCC, will be calculated as a portion of their lending with FCC to a maximum of \$2,000 per year. Certified producers are welcome to re-apply for the incentive payment each year for the life of the FCC Sustainability Incentive Program.

For customers who are already CRSB Certified, applying for the program is a simple process at fcc.ca/sustainabilityprograms. That is also where producers interested in becoming certified and taking advantage of the incentive payment can find more information.

"The Canadian Roundtable for Sustainable Beef applauds FCC for seeing the benefits of CRSB Certified beef production practices," said Anne Wasko, CRSB chair and co-owner of Bar 4 Bar Land and Cattle Inc.

"The Canadian beef industry is continually evolving for the benefit of people, animals, and our planet. Thanks to the sustainable practices demonstrated by CRSB Certified beef producers, we have seen tremendous environmental stewardship and a high standard of animal care, which leads to a thriving beef industry today and for future generations. Sustainable practices will help achieve the ambitious long-term goals set by the industry," she said.

In a group of certified beef producers who participated in an earlier pilot of the Sustainability Incentive Program there was high praise.

"This will be a great program for producers like us and



for the cattle industry," shared one FCC customer who entered the program. "We invest a lot in our operation, and it is important to be recognized with something in return."

The CRSB certification program involves an on-going audit process with its partners to ensure operations are meeting its sustainability standards based upon five principles, including natural resources, people and community, animal health and welfare, food, and efficiency and innovation.

"There is an increasing demand from consumers for certified assurances of sustainably-raised beef," Wasko noted. "Canadian farmers and ranchers care about the environment, and we will continue to do what's right to conserve our land and our animals, and to meet the needs of the present without compromising those of the future."

"FCC already has lending solutions to support our customers' sustainable practices. Launching this program with the CRSB is another way to support the industry on its sustainability journey," said Klink. "While collaborating with the CRSB on this program is the first partnership of this kind, FCC has the intention of building incentive programs for other sectors in the future."

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The Canadian Roundtable for Sustainable Beef (CRSB) advances Canadian beef industry sustainability through multi-stakeholder engagement, collaboration, communication, and science. The CRSB drives recognition and continuous progress in Canadian beef through sustainability performance measurement, and projects and initiatives aligned with strategic improvement goals. The CRSB Certified Sustainable Beef Framework, known as CRSB Certified, is a voluntary third party-audited sustainability certification program that recognizes sustainable practices in beef production and processing and enables sustainable sourcing, delivering credible, science-based assurances for consumers about sustainable beef production in Canada. Learn more at crsb.ca

Saskatchewan Agriculture student scholarship recipients announced

On May 10, federal Agriculture and Agri-Food Minister Marie-Claude Bibeau and Saskatchewan Agriculture Minister David Marit presented four agriculture scholarships to students from across the province.

"There is a wide variety of trades and careers associated with the agriculture sector, from the farm to the lab to technology companies," said Bibeau. "Encouraging young people to pursue careers in agriculture will provide a strong foundation for the future of the industry. This scholarship program will help our young leaders pursue their studies and embark on rewarding careers in agriculture."

"We received many outstanding applications this

year in the form of both essays and video," Marit said. "It's great to see Saskatchewan youth talk so passionately about agriculture and transparency, and we're very proud to support them and their career plans. The future of our industry is in good hands."

Emily Sebastian of Montmartre was awarded \$4,000 toward her post-secondary studies as the grand-prize winner of the 2022 Agriculture Student Scholarship. Emily's video submission discussed the various ways that farmers and ranchers can effectively communicate with consumers in a transparent and honest manner. Emily will be furthering her education at the University of Saskatchewan at the College of Agriculture and Bioresources.

"The scholarship is a great way to express your ideas and gives you an opportunity to make a difference in the agriculture industry," Emily said. "More than that, though, it makes you think about what you can do to become more transparent about your, or your family's operation."

Kristie Pedersen from Lockwood, Grace Waldenberger from Marquis and Kate Axten from Minton were all awarded \$2,000 as runners up for the scholarship.

Kristie's essay explored how communication and education is key to bridging the gap between the farm and the plate. She focused her transparency essay on the whole supply chain and the need for everyone to share their

story. Kristie will be furthering her education in Moose Jaw where she will be studying in the Agriculture and Food Production Program at Saskatchewan Polytechnic.

Grace's essay highlighted the important role that agriculture plays in people's lives, whether they are directly connected to the industry or not. She spoke about the impact that social media influencers can have on people and the importance of educating youth. Grace will be taking her post-secondary education at either the University of Saskatchewan or the University of Lethbridge.

Kate Axten's video submission focused on what transparency is and how farmers can be more trans-

parent. Her video showcased the work that her family farm has done to improve transparency with their consumers. Kate will be attending Dalhousie University in the fall where she will be studying International Food Business in the Faculty of Agriculture.

The Agriculture Student Scholarship Program is funded through the Canadian Agricultural Partnership, a five-year, \$3 billion commitment by Canada's federal, provincial and territorial governments that supports Canada's agriculture, agri-food and agri-products sectors. This includes a \$2 billion commitment that is cost-shared 60 per cent federally and 40 per cent provincially/territorially for programs that are designed and delivered

by provinces and territories.

For more information on the scholarship winners and their submissions, visit www.saskatchewan.ca/ag-public-trust

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Farmers 'mucking it in' with late seeding

Continued from page 43

"It was all viable farmland for the last three or five years that has been planted every year, now this year we have to leave it behind. I'm hoping more farmers speak up and maybe they can tailor the program to actually fit the farmers' needs."

McCriston said he started seeding a couple weeks ago, but had to stop and continue, in between cold weather conditions.

"You have to pick and choose your fields, you kind of have to dance around. Plus the costs for diesel fuel, it's near two dollars a litre and it's just extra expense in an expensive year," said McCriston.

He was asked if the moisture conditions have benefited producers this year compared to the drought they faced last year.

"We needed some moisture most definitely, but from a grain farming perspective we got too much," said McCriston.

"It would've been a lot better, as my grandpa would say, 'to seed in the dust and let your bins bust,' we wanted and needed the rain, I just wish it didn't happen quite so fast. I thought we would have more of a transition period where we would have a dry year, then it would slowly get a little bit wetter. I didn't think we'd go from dealing with too dry to too wet, but Saskatchewan is the land of extremes and I did anticipate it would be this wet again, I just didn't think it would be, a year right after the drought."

"For a livestock farmer, my wife and I have 250 cows as well and the grass is green. Before, the pastures were really suffering over the last couple of years, it's nice from a cattle farming aspect, because the pastures were really taking a beating and I'm hoping this year, with the extra rains and an early start to green grass, maybe the pastures will make a rebound."

McCriston said he is concerned about the weather conditions being adequate throughout the summer.

"One of my biggest fears—and I've seen it happen before—is we get all this rain in the wrong season then Mother Nature forgets about us in the summer time when we can appreciate or use some rain," he said.

"In June or July or August, I'm always scared we won't get rain, but it's one of those aspects of dealing with agriculture, Mother Nature dictates those terms and you have to deal with them and do your best."

Wet conditions have benefitted cattle farmers

Scott Mannle, who farms on the border between Silverwood and Willowdale, said the wet conditions from the weather has benefitted his cattle.

"The pastures are definitely green and started growing, the biggest benefit is our water sources, the dug outs and the sloughs the cattle use to drink from in the summer time, are all full," Mannle said.

"That's put us in really good shape because we haven't had any runoff for the last two springs, and people had to haul water, there were water issues with cattle in the summer because the levels of the dugouts and sloughs were so low."

"Everything is full right to the brim, we just need some heat and then we're well on our way for the grass situation, which is a welcome relief after a long winter of expensive feed, and limited amounts of it, too."

Mannle shared his thoughts about what he thinks the year will be like for cattle producers.

"For the summer I think we'll need some rain in June and July when it gets hot, and we need that for the crop and everything else, but as far as things go right now we're in pretty good shape," he said.

"We shouldn't have any water issues this summer because the dugouts started full, whereas last spring they started half full to begin with, and by the end of the summer without any rain, we were empty."

"I think even if we have a summer with limited moisture we would still have enough water, it wouldn't be one of our main concerns."

Looking back to last year's cattle season and the drought that the prairies faced, Mannle was asked if this year's moisture conditions will be an advantage for the season.

"For us as cattle farmers, we're still looking at high feed grain prices come fall time, based on what contracts are available right now, that is still a concern for us," Mannle said.

"We're hoping for a big crop, to have a little more access to grain, which will help feed grain prices and ultimately help feed cattle prices."

"Things are somewhat optimistic in the agriculture industry as a whole, I wish that all western provinces were getting the rain we've gotten, and the moisture everywhere because I know there's still some places that are extremely dry, but we need a two-week stretch of weather to get this crop in and get it going. The later we get it in, the less optimism there is for bumper crop going forward."

Hruska says it's not too late for a good yield

Kevin Hruska, who farms in the north of Esterhazy, Bredenburg and Langenburg areas, shared his thoughts on seeding starting in late spring of this year.

"We started late because of the moisture and when you do get going it's slow, you just don't have the coverage you normally do because you're struggling with wet conditions and you're still trying to do a good job, it's sort of double jeopardy I guess," Hruska said.

"I think everyone has started seeding now. We are well on our way, we're approaching half way, we're quite not there yet but we'll be there fairly soon. I would say we're a little ahead of the norm for our area, what we did is when it seemed like it was going to be wet, we started fighting the rain off the start, we didn't wait for it to dry up."

Hruska said he and his team started seeding almost two weeks ago, but had to shut down because of the rain and continue after.

"We're working 16 hour days, we don't work around the clock because we don't want someone getting stuck in the middle of the night," he said.

"We're putting in big days, but we always did. At the same time, these conditions aren't totally unusual, once in a while these things come around. This isn't like a one-in-a-hundred years type of thing, unfortunately it happens too often."

Hruska plans on finish seeding in about 10 days. He said the best case scenario for this years crops is for it to stop raining.

"For the rest of the year we need it to stop raining now, and put our seeding in. You've seen crops be seeded two weeks late and it's only one week late at the end," he said.

"It catches up a little bit, you might lose a little yield or something, it's not the end of the world yet, it all depends how the summer goes. If we get good rain, the frost might be a risk, but if it stops raining in the summer and the sun is burning, then we won't be concerned about frost in the fall."

Compared to last year's drought, Hruska said there was an upside to seeing moisture this year.

"Rain makes grain, I think when it rains it indicates that we're not in a big drought trend, I think it's an indicator that it can rain," he said.

"When there's a little bit of moisture around, moisture brings more moisture. We didn't get as much precipitation as our friends who are south and east of us, which we're grateful for that and wish them luck."

Hruska said the weather temperatures is what will dictate this year's yield being good.

"I think the biggest thing is not the precipitation we got, but the lack of warmth. The lack of warmth and the late disappearance of the snow is the harmful part," he said.

"I seeded through a snow bank today. That's the thing that's different about this year, not the inches of rain, but

the fact that we had no heat when the snow came.

"I wish all my farmer friends good luck for this year, please tell them that."

Excess moisture has helped some grain farmers this year

Trevor Green, APAS representative, said some farmers have reached out to him about seeding in recent wet conditions.

"I haven't heard too many guys getting stuck, but there's always issues getting trucks on wet fields and equipment getting stuck and stuff, but I haven't heard too many people," Green said.

"As long as we miss the rains that are supposed to come in the next couple of weeks, it's going to be good. There's nice seeding conditions in a lot of areas right now, but there's still potholes filled with water too, there's going to be a lot of potholes that are not going to get seeded this year because of that."

With the excess moisture from the wet weather conditions, he said there is an advantage for farmers.

"The crops are going to have a better start I think this year than last year, last year it was really dry this time of year," he said.

However Green pointed out that producers who do not have sectional control for their seeding equipment will lose on input costs.

"It's definitely a year where sectional control is going to pay off because of all the overlap, for anyone who has a big drill and doesn't have any sectional control there's definitely going to be some increased costs for fertilizer overlap and seed overlap," Green said.

"It will be a year that will definitely show where the benefits of sectional control on larger seeding is. Let's say you have an 80 foot drill and there will be eight sections on that drill, it will shut off in 10 foot sections, if that drill runs over a spot that is already seeded, the machine using the GPS will shut those sections off so you're not double seeding and double fertilizing."

"If you have an 80 foot drill and it doesn't have that sectional control, if you go and seed a 20 foot strip, you're seeding another 60 foot area over again. It increases the costs pretty quick, especially with the price of fertilizer now, it's almost become a necessity on large drills."

He said the anticipated time for producers to finish seeding should be in mid-June.

"With the weather now, the odd guy might finish in 10 days or so, but there are also farmers who are just starting now, they'll be done in about two or three weeks."

Green was asked what the best case scenario would be for this year's crops.

"You never have a crystal ball, but it looks like it's going to get a good start, we're still going to need some timely rains to come at the end of June, and end of July," he said.

"Timely rains will be the difference between an excellent crop and an average crop, you have good soil moisture to get it going, but it needs timely rains to make an above average crop. As long as we get those, it could be a good average year."



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Pronghorn antelope sighted in area

A pronghorn antelope was sighted in the Rocanville-Welwyn area recently by a number of people.

Left: Dennis Hack shot this photo of a pronghorn antelope west of the Webster cemetery near Rocanville.

Right: Sunnette Kamffer captured a photo of the antelope on the corection line northeast of Moosomin and southwest of Welwyn.

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Oh, the smell of freshly tilled dirt!

Oh the smell of freshly tilled dirt!

There is nothing quite like it and I have loved it forever. Today, as the air drill makes it way around the field, not only is it the smell of freshly tilled dirt, but of very damp freshly tilled dirt, so damp in fact that I am praying the guys don't get stuck.

What a difference from last year—I didn't have to guess then where the men were working for the dust that rose up behind them; this year not so much. And while the timing may be later than our usual end-of-April start, we can say we are rolling!

With the heavy snows and rain we have experienced, we definitely needed something to take our minds off of not getting onto the land in good time. Hubby was incredibly antsy and was a tad, shall we say, worried about whether "start day" would ever come.

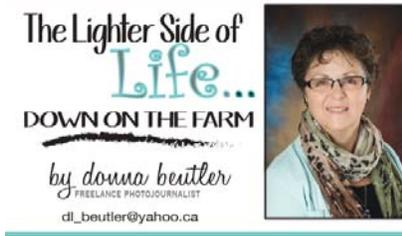
And then out of the blue came a reprieve from worrying about late seeding. I received an early and unexpected call for surgery saying, "Can you be here in a week?" And without a second's hesitation I was all in because getting that second new hip was without question something I was not going to say no to. And hubby was just going to have to put aside thoughts of seeding to be, as it was, my right-hand man.

I was barely nervous this time around but once they put the IV into the back of my hand, I had other thoughts—as in "how am I gonna escape this place?" It was at precisely that moment that my surgeon walked in (I had not seen him for two plus years due to Covid) and there I was, flat on my back, throwing off the covers, saying, "I'm getting very hot, I'm gonna faint, I'm gonna be sick." Well so much for my planned "how are you Doctor?" reunion sort of meeting.

Without any hesitation, my surgeon lifted my legs toward the ceiling and lowered the head of the bed. It's a picture that will never leave my mind. As the blood returned to my head, I immediately felt better physically but was certainly feeling pretty embarrassed about it all. Oh well, there was no time to get all worked up about it because by then they were wheeling me into the OR.

Despite that awkward little moment, I am so eternally grateful for all that my medical team did for me that day, although I do believe they missed the memo about sedation. I may have been frozen waist down, but I was definitely wide awake through it all. There were a couple of moments when I nearly raised my hand to ask if they had missed sedating me, but in the end, I simply laid there and listened to the reciprocating saw (it's smaller than my reciprocating saw) doing its thing and the hammer doing its thing. I felt like I was in my little workshop, the only thing being that I was the piece of wood they were cutting apart and hammering back together.

Some of my grands came for a visit and it was wonderful to see their smiling faces. I personally think they came for the swim at Grandpa's hotel room next to the hospital but when they walked in, it made my day. The youngest (5) not



only loves crafting but all things numbers and she handed me a get well card she had made. "Get Well Soon Grandma" they read on the front. On the inside of one, there was a large "63" and while my first reaction was what's the 63 all about, I quickly realized she had written down my age—in 6-inch print no less.

Well, we have just gotten through the May long weekend and many die-hard campers were out camping despite the snow and cool conditions to start. We personally weren't at some RV resort or campground but we did set up camp at our favourite spot—right next to the shop on the farm with our bird's eye view of the chicken coop and the dog house.

The twins (11) greeted my arrival at our camper with a wheelbarrow full of logs, ready to get that first campfire started. "Did you remember the Toblerone and strawberries?" their sister asked. Alas, I did not and we settled for roasted marshmallows versus their favourite campfire treat, melted chocolate and fruit.

With my guys happily seeding on the holiday Monday, the twins and I took a little side trip across the field that I said was the first one we seeded last year. No, they told me, this was the second field seeded last year. "Remember Grandma, the field beside it was seeded first last year because that was pea stubble." Really? Well, whatever, and off we went, through the creek where we saw a moose, a fox and several ducks out swimming. Fortunately, we did not see any bear, always a plus I figure. And lastly, as the boys picked up a set of antlers, they shouted, "There's woodticks on here—female ones and male ones." Okay, so I have pulled a lot of woodticks off a lot of kids, cats and dogs, but I have never held one up close enough or long enough to take that close of a look. Who knew?

With seeding now in full swing (well, until it rains again), the twins have planted their own crop of wheat. It's a patch about four feet by six feet, not far from the dog house. They carefully fenced it off with some sticks and chicken wire, though not quite enough chicken wire apparently. "Grand-

ma, do you have any chicken wire at your house in town?" they came running to ask. "Sorry, guys, I am presently all out of chicken wire," I told them and then suggested they finish off with baler twine. And off they went in the side-by-side to who knows where, returning moments later with a handful of twine that very quickly was wrapped from post to post at several different heights to create a barrier to dogs who might dig up their 'crop'.

And so, as I watched these two young farmers at work and at play, I couldn't help but think how their whole world revolves around the farm. They had popped into my RV at 8:00 one morning, ready for a snack since breakfast had been an hour or two before that and they had been out 'working' since then. Their day was filled with pedal-biking, side-by-side, gathering cut wood for the fire, feeding 4-H steers, cutting lawn (oh that old-style environmentally friendly push mower they got for their birthday was a big hit), playing ball, picking woodticks off the dogs, picking twine and a multitude of who knows what. If those boys didn't have to go inside to eat, they would have spent the entire day outdoors just as their dad did on this same farm back in his day.

At the end of the day it was obvious to me that the twins had found the day too short to get everything in that they had hoped to because there was this dual groan from them when their mom called them in Monday night at 8:00. "It's not even dark yet," one said. "Wish there was no school tomorrow," said the other, both nodding at that sentiment as they trekked slow-mo from the campfire towards the house.

As I contemplate the enthusiasm these young farmers show on the farm, I can't help but think of the amount of information they absorb as they go about their day and about the huge differences the farming industry has undergone since I was their age. Remember seeding with the old press drill? The days spent summerfallowing? Oh and how about the days picking square bales by hand and then getting them up the bale elevator into the loft? I am pretty sure my legs still carry the scars of the old alfalfa bales we would pick every haying season.

Yes, everything has changed and it's not all bad, I figure. After all if we had had a choice to work smarter and not harder in our day, maybe we would have! Advances in technology will keep on growing exponentially and will be the norm long after we are no longer farming. I am pretty sure we will leave agriculture to very smart, tech-savvy, work smarter/not harder farmers who will one day look back and chuckle on how "it used to be done in the olden days."

As we work our way through spring seeding 2022, here's hoping our farmer friends stay high and dry and that all those in the ag industry, whether in sales or parts or buying grain or manufacturing or input supplies or whatever it is will keep on seeing agriculture as an industry well worth being part of.

Happy seeding folks!



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Changes to PST will benefit farmers and ag industry

Amendments to the Provincial Sales Tax (PST) regulations will provide greater clarity to farmers and help ensure that PST is applied fairly and consistently to farming and agricultural goods and services.

"After speaking with agricultural organizations in our province, we heard concerns that PST was inconsistently applied to farming and agricultural activity," Deputy Premier and Finance Minister Donna Harpauer said. "The changes to the PST regulations will be more equitable, consistent and protect farmers against perceived 'PST creep' in farming activity."

Effective April 1, 2022, new PST exemptions were made through regulation changes. These exemptions include:

- prefabricated wind breaker panels for use in the protection and handling of livestock
- insulators for electrified livestock fences
- certain farm equipment attached to a registered vehicle
- on-farm dugout excavation and for trenching (in specific circumstances related to farming)

Additionally, it was clarified that the following prod-

ucts are also exempt from PST and are retroactive to April 1, 2016:

- water storage tanks used in spraying or irrigating crops
- storage tanks for weed control chemicals, insecticides, fungicides, herbicides, liquid fertilizer
- adjuvants that improve their efficacy or application
- portable seed cleaners used on-farm by farmers in preparing their crop for storage or market (farmers in the business of seed cleaning must pay PST on their seed cleaning equipment)
- farm tractors

"While inflation and operating costs have been rising the last couple of years, cattle producers, and all farmers, simply cannot pass along higher costs including taxes," Saskatchewan Cattlemen's Association Chair Arnold Balicki said. "The recognition of this by the Government of Saskatchewan when it comes to PST on several important farm related goods and activities is appreciated by Saskatchewan's cattle producers. Keeping this tax out of the industry helps keep it on a level and fair playing

field, making us more competitive in the long run."

The estimated, annual cost of these changes is about \$1 million. The Ministry of Finance is also beginning discussions about modernizing the agriculture and farming section of PST legislation, to potentially be considered in future budgets.



"And who, planting time and harvest season, will finish his forty-hour week by Tuesday noon, then, pain'n from 'tractor back,' put in another seventy-two hours. So God made a farmer."

~ Paul Harvey



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FCC ready to work with customers affected by widespread flooding in Manitoba

Farm Credit Canada (FCC) is prepared to work with Manitoba customers concerned about financial hardship due to the flooding caused by torrential rainfall, snowmelt and waterway ice jams.

"Widespread flooding along the Red River, combined with heavy rain that recently blanketed parts of western Manitoba, has not only forced the evacuation of some communities, but has also disrupted some farm operations during this critical planting season," said Shannon Weatherall, senior vice-president of FCC's Prairie operations. "We want to assure customers who find themselves financially vulnerable as a result of these circumstances that FCC will work with them to explore all options for addressing any short-term cash flow problems."

It has been an extremely challenging time for many producers across southern Manitoba, since many of the same areas also faced adverse growing conditions last year due to drought or a lack of moisture in some regions that reduced yields and created higher input and feed costs for livestock producers.

FCC may consider additional short-term credit options, deferral of principal payments and/or other loan payment schedule amendments to reduce the financial pressures on producers affected by the flooding. FCC will also offer flexibility and a combination of options based on the individual needs of its customers, since each farm financial situation is unique.

"The risk of extreme weather is always top of mind for producers, but

there are times when compounding circumstances can overwhelm even the strongest risk management plan," Weatherall said. "FCC is here to provide the flexibility customers need to make it through these situations and get their businesses back on track."

Customers affected by flooding are encouraged to contact their FCC relationship manager or the FCC Customer Service Centre at 1-888-332-3301 as soon as possible to discuss their individual situation and options.



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