FIELD NOTES

JULY 2016 EDITION

Message from the Chair





First of all, let me take this opportunity to introduce myself to those of you that don't know me, as this is my first Chair's message for Field Notes.

My name is Jason Skotheim and I was elected the Chair of the SaskBarley Board in January. I farm with my brothers on a farm north of Prince Albert, where we grow barley, wheat and canola. I am also a founding owner of Horizon Manufacturing Inc., Saskatchewan's only premium dry pet food manufacturer.

Since January, the Board has been carrying out our mandate derived from SaskBarley's strategic plan created in 2014. Our mandate is focused on creating value for barley farmers in Saskatchewan and nurturing long-term growth for our industry. In terms of research, this means: making investments that ultimately

aim to increase yields and agronomic efficiencies; to enhance desirable characteristics for end users in malt, feed and food; and to establish best management practices for farmers.

In this issue you'll find

updates on our progress, primarily in the area of research. We know that breeding new varieties suitable to Saskatchewan's growing conditions and current markets is a top priority. This is why we have taken a leadership role in ensuring there is long-term funding for the plant breeding program at the University of Saskatchewan's Crop Development Centre. We have been working closely with our partner commissions including Alberta Barley and the Manitoba Wheat and Barley Growers Association, to get commitments for the core breeding agreements agreements and just recently announced a funding commitment of more than \$2.4 million over five years. A profile of the CDC's barley breeder, Aaron Beattie, is on page 6 of this issue.

SaskBarley is also a member of the Wheat and Barley Variety Working Group (WBVWG), which includes several other Western Canadian farm associations. We are all working together to assess and determine the best, long-term path forward for funding variety development programs in Canada. See page 7 for an update on this project.

Another current focus for SaskBarley is exploring barley feed research, as this is a key to growing our industry. We are currently reviewing several proposals that focus on the benefits of feeding barley and we hope to make some research funding announcements in the near future.

Finally, over the past year our Board has been working towards the cessation of the Western Canadian Deduction (WCD) which is set to occur on July 31, 2017. We have conducted regular consultations with other cereal organizations from across Western Canada that are most affected by these changes, and are working with them to create a seamless transition. We feel this change will offer many benefits for farmers, including increased efficiency and effectiveness of the system, more direct representation by farmers, greater accountability to farmers, and longterm stability for funding important projects that will

grow our industry. Page 4 has an update and more information will be made available as this progresses.

If you have input on any of these topics – or any SaskBarley business – please always feel free to get in touch with myself, any of our directors, or our staff.

Finally, I hope you all had a safe and productive seeding season and wish you all the best on your farms this summer!

Jason Skotheim





Message from the Executive Director



Growth and opportunity in barley. Run into your nearby liquor store or stop at a brew pub and you might see what I mean. The choices and range available for beer is at an all-time high, and the market demand for craft brewing and speciality beers continues to rise.

This is a good thing for barley farmers, especially as those craft brewers will typically use at least 25-30% more malt to make the same amount of beer. And not only do craft brewers use more barley, the number of breweries continues to rise. In 2015, there were 640 licensed breweries operating in Canada. That is a 108% increase in the past five years!

DYK: A 12-ounce bottle of craft ale or specialty beer would use 47 heads of six-row barley, 123 heads of two-row barley, or 2,950 to 3,375 kernels.

The positive story doesn't end there. Record exports of barley went to China during the 2015-2016 year. While different factors contribute to the increase in exports, we know that in some cases Chinese importers are specifically looking to Canadian barley for its higher protein levels as compared to our competitors. With strategic investments in variety development programs, such as the one at the University of Saskatchewan's Crop Development Centre, the Canadian barley industry can continue to offer world-class barley varieties, capitalize on our competitive advantage and meet buyer demands.

Through collaborations with other groups such as the Barley Council of Canada (BCC), SaskBarley is also able to effectively leverage check-off dollars and resources to further develop these market opportunities. We have been involved in

funding malting trials of new varieties in China and most recently took part in the Grower to Glass campaign, which connected consumers with beer pairings and food (learn more about it at www. gobarley.com). Provincially, we have partnered with Farm and Food Care Saskatchewan and BCC to highlight barley in a series of upcoming farm media tours, and we are sponsoring the YXE Beer Festival in Saskatoon August 28-29, to promote locally grown barley as a key ingredient in quality beer. Flip to page 3 for a list of other market development initiatives we are supporting in coming months.

In our efforts to improve these important market development initiatives and better communicate with farmers, stakeholders and collaborating organizations, Delaney Seiferling, has joined the staff of SaskBarley as the Communications Manager. Delaney has extensive

experience working in the agriculture industry, and I feel very lucky that she has joined our staff. See below for Delaney's full profile.

Wishing you all some warm, dry weather and a safe harvest!

Jill McDonald

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Delaney Seiferling: Delaney has nearly ten years' experience in media, communications and marketing, having worked in the Saskatchewan agriculture industry for five years, most recently as Communications & Marketing Manager for Sask Wheat. Delaney has an undergraduate degree in English from the University of Saskatchewan and a post-graduate diploma in Journalism from Mount Royal University. In 2014 she completed her Master's degree in Communications and Public Relations through

McMaster University and her thesis project focused on Saskatchewan's agriculture industry. Delaney grew up in Saskatoon and is a proud ambassador for Saskatchewan and our agricultural industry.



Upcoming Events

CropSphere

CropSphere 2017 January 10-11, 2017 Prairieland Park, Saskatoon

The fourth annual CropSphere agricultural conference will be held in Saskatoon January 10-11, 2017, with host group AGMs taking place Monday January 9.

New this year, the event will take place at Prairieland Park, in conjunction with the Western Canadian Crop Production Show.

Hosted by SaskBarley, Sask Wheat, SaskOats, SaskFlax, SaskPulse and SaskCanola, CropSphere features sessions on grain marketing, research and agronomy, as well as more general topics related to agriculture. Various breakout sessions ensure attendees can pick and choose a program that best supports their business operations. Networking opportunities throughout the day make it possible for attendees to connect.

Watch for more information about speakers and registration this fall at www.cropsphere.com

SaskBarley AGM 2017 January 9, 2017 Prairieland Park, Saskatoon

SaskBarley's 2017 annual general meeting (AGM) will take place Monday, January 9, 2017 from 1:30-2:30PM at Prairieland Place. Watch for more information about this meeting from SaskBarley later this year.



Market Development Initiatives

YXE Beer Fest 2016 August 28 & 29, 2016 Rotary Park, Saskatoon

SaskBarley is a proud sponsor of the second annual YXE Beer Fest, Saskatoon's first outdoor beer festival. This year's event will feature beer from more than 35 breweries, as well as local food trucks and musical entertainment on the scenic Saskatchewan riverbank.

For more information on the festival visit www.yxebeerfest.com

Saskatchewan Trade and Export Incoming Mission

September 14, 2016 Saskatoon

SaskBarley will be representing barley farmers from Saskatchewan at an upcoming Saskatchewan Trade and Export (STEP) buyer's mission, which will bring together European food manufacturers, processors, and food service buyers to learn about sourcing food products and ingredients from Saskatchewan. The event will also serve to connect buyers with Saskatchewan food exporters and their organizations.

Farm and Food Care Saskatchewan Food Influencer's Tour Fall 2016 Saskatoon/Regina

SaskBarley will be supporting the Farm and Food Care Saskatchewan's Food Influencer program this fall, which brings together food writers, journalists, dietitians, chefs and other food experts to tour Saskatchewan farms and experience where and how food is produced in the province. This year's tour will also feature a component targeting.



Changes ahead for barley check-off collection and administration

The end of the WCD brings opportunity for increased efficiency and long-term stability



Currently, barley farmers in Saskatchewan pay two check-offs but in 2017, the Western Canadian Deducation check-off will expire.

As of August 1, 2017, barley farmers in Saskatchewan may see a change to the way their barley check-off is administered. This change will not mean an increase or decrease in the amount of check-off paid, simply that farmers will begin paying one check-off instead of two.

Currently Saskatchewan barley farmers pay two check-offs. The first is the SaskBarley check-off, of \$0.50 per tonne, which is used to fund research, market development and communications administered by SaskBarley. The second is the Western Canadian Deduction (WCD, also known as the Western Wheat and Barley Check-Off), which is \$0.56 per tonne and supports the Western Grains Research Foundation and the Canadian Malting Barley Institute (\$0.03 of this levy goes towards administration costs).

The WCD was established by the federal government in 2012 as a transitional

check-off on wheat and barley, with the intention that it would continue to provide stable funding for the Canadian Malting Barley Technical Centre (CMBTC) and to research initiatives administered through the Western Grains Research Foundation (WGRF). These initiatives included core funding agreements for public breeding, variety development and cluster projects. Prior to 2012, an export check-off on barley sold by the Canadian Wheat Board provided funding to these programs.

However, the WCD was designed to be temporary; to provide an operational bridge until each newly established provincial farmer commissions, including SaskBarley, had the capacity to assume check-off responsibilities internally. The WCD is set to expire as of July 31, 2017.

SaskBarley has been working over the past year with the other cereal organizations across Western Canada to assume the responsibilities of the WCD. SaskBarley will bring forward a motion at its annual general meeting on January 9, 2017, in Saskatoon, to maintain the current level of total check-off

collected on Saskatchewan grown barley, and to recommend that SaskBarley would be responsible for the collection and administration of this levy. We have also been in contact with the recipients of the WCD barley funding to provide assurance that as long as they continue to provide value to farmers, there will be funding for important long-term work.

The good news is that the changes will bring many advantages to barley check-off payers, including: increased efficiency and effectiveness of check-off administration; stronger and more direct representation for Saskatchewan barley farmers; and long-term stability for market development and public research programs that have and continue to serve farmers well.

We will continue to keep you informed about these changes as they come. In the meantime, if you have any feedback on this issue, please feel free to get in touch with us at 306-653-7232 or info@ saskbarleycommission.com.



Opportunities for young barley farmers to grow professionally

Apply now to receive funding for leadership and professional development skills



Are you an active barley farmer who would like to develop your leadership skills and/or be mentored by a more experienced farmer in your field? Are you between the ages of 18 to 39 years old?

If yes, the Government of Saskatchewan has a program just for you.

Part of Growing Forward 2, the Youth Leadership and Mentorship Program (YLMP) aims to help young farmers gain valuable experience, take advantage of networking opportunities and develop the skills necessary to become a future industry leader. Successful applicants can receive funding for projects or events that promote professional development and developing leadership skills, including conferences, seminars and training sessions.

If you are interested in applying to be part of this program, please contact SaskBarley and answer the following questions:

- Why are you interested in this program?
- What specific skills or goals do you hope to achieve through this program?
- What specific events or projects you would like to partake in to help achieve these goals?

Contact us at 306-653-7232 or info@ saskbarleycommission.com.

Follow us on Twitter!

For news and information about growing and marketing your barley

@SaskBarley



Breeding new barley varieties

The CDC's barley breeding program aims to make barley an attractive option for farmers



Aaron Beattie has been the barley breeder with the University of Saskatchewan's Crop Development Centre (CDC) for more than five years now, having taken over for Brian Rossnagel in 2011, but his priorities in that time have not changed.

"We're really focused on maintaining barley as a viable option in farmers' crop rotations," he says. "We're trying to make it easier for them to grow barley and to have their barley acceptable to end user markets."

This is a task that includes a lot of communication, he says. Beattie is regularly talking to farmers, informally at field days and other events, and formally through Boards and technical committees, as well as seed companies, commercial farmers, and groups that are designed to represent the full spectrum of users and their needs.

"We get a lot of feedback through these channels in

CDC barley breeder Aaron Beattie says a priority right now is getting new malting varieties registered and accepted by markets faster than has happened previously.

terms of what farmers are looking for and what they are seeing in varieties that have come out recently – the good and the bad, so we know the strengths and weaknesses," he says.

And these days a large part of that feedback is about transitioning to newer malting varieties, which will be key to keeping growers interested in growing barley.

Since Beattie has taken over the role of barley breeder with the CDC, the program has released five new malting varieties, including CDC Clear (2011), CDC Bow (2014), CDC Platinum Star (2014) and TR12135 (to be named CDC Fraser), in 2015.

"I think the farmers like the yield boost that they're seeing over CDC Copeland and AC Metcalfe from some of the new varieties that have come out recently, like CDC Bow and AAC Synergy, which came from the AAFC-Brandon program," Beattie says. "That's been a real positive for the them."

But beyond just developing new malting varieties, Beattie is also focused on ensuring the new varieties are accepted by end users in a timeline that is not prohibitive to farmers' operations.

"We know these new varieties are better agronomically, but if they haven't yet been accepted by maltsters and brewers, it really throws up a barrier to turning over varieties faster than in the past," he says.

As a result, stakeholders along the entire value chain have ramped up work aiming to get varieties past registration and into market acceptance in a much more organized and hopefully accelerated way than has been done in the past. "It will be a positive change," Beattie says.

Beyond malting varieties, the CDC has also released three hulless food varieties and one forage variety in the past five years. With all these new varieties, the ultimate goals are the same, Beattie says - yield performance, lodging resistance, and keeping the maturity of the crop on the earlier side. Disease resistance is also a major focus right now, particularly fusarium head blight within the prairies.

"This is still a tough one to crack. We've made a lot of improvements in terms of lowering mycotoxin accumulation, but it's been hard to get lower than where we're at. I think we've been stuck at this level for a couple years now."

Going forward, Beattie will continue to work on these priorities and turn out new varieties that will hopefully achieve the program's ultimate goals. He also hopes to continue getting valuable feedback from farmers.

"We are always open to feedback from farmers and that feedback definitely impacts what we do here," he says. "Farmers do have a voice."

For more information on the CDC's breeding programs visit www.agbio.usask.ca

SaskBarley Announces Funding for CDC Breeding Program

In early August,
SaskBarley, Alberta
Barley, the Manitoba
Wheat and Barley
Growers Association
and the Western Grains
Research Foundation
announced a funding
commitment of more
than \$2.4 million over
five years for the CDC's
barley breeding program.



Future of Variety Development Up for Discussion

The Wheat and Barley Variety Working Group has come up with several models to consider for the future of wheat and barley breeding



SaskBarley wants to ensure we are on the right track for developing and supporting a barley variety development program that will help build a sustainable and profitable industry for Saskatchewan farmers.

One of the ways we are doing this is through our membership in the Wheat and Barley Variety Working Group (WBVWG). The WBVWG includes representatives from all Western Canadian farmerelected cereal associations, with the Western Grains Research Foundation acting as facilitator. The purpose of the group, formed last year, is to explore options for the best model and approach to building a world class, sustainable wheat and barley variety development program that will contribute

to an increased net profitability per acre for Canadian farmers.

Last year the group enlisted a consultant to explore a range of opportunities for farmer involvement and leadership in wheat and barley variety development and in December 2015 a report was released presenting an objective business case analysis of a range of options that would serve this purpose.

This report, which is available on our website at www.sask barleycommission.com/ priorities/research, features five proposed models, including:

 Model A – To continue the current approach with more coordination and information sharing

- Model B To have eight provincial commissions involved in variety development research programs
- Model C To have one non-profit, farmer-directed body that has a formal, coordinated structure
- Model D To have separate partnerships for pre-breeding and breeding/ finishing
- Model E To have farmer ownership in a cereal breeding company

At this point the SaskBarley Board has narrowed its preferred choice down to either Model A or Model C. There are many benefits to both models. For example, Model A is a modification on the current approach and would not require the creation of new

groups or institutions, but would encourage more coordination among groups involved in funding variety development. It would also build on current processes and ensure farmer involvement.

Model C would require the creation of a new formal structure, which would then contract out research and management partnerships on priority variety development projects. The structure would also have more flexibility to create partnerships and to foster specific initiatives and since it would be one centralized body, there would be less administrative costs and redundancies.

The WBVWG will meet again in coming months to begin discussions around a consensus on the path forward. Farmer input is welcomed on this process and will be brought forward to the group.

If you have any comments on the WBVWG report, please get in touch with us anytime at 306-653-7232 or info@ saskbarleycommission.com.

THE SASKATCHEWAN BARLEY DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION:

The Saskatchewan Barley Development Commission was established in 2013 under the Agri-Food Act, 2004

SASKATCHEWAN BARLEY DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (SASKBARLEY)

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