



TheWheatField

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SASKATCHEWAN WHEAT DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

OCTOBER 2019 EDITION

Vote in this fall's Sask Wheat director election

The Saskatchewan Wheat Development Commission (Sask Wheat) will be having an election this fall for three positions on the Board of Directors. All registered Saskatchewan wheat producers are encouraged to exercise their vote in this election!

The election will open on Friday, October 18 and will close on Friday, November 29 at 4:00 pm. Producers will have the option to vote electronically or via a mail-in, paper ballot.



Sask Wheat received nominations from seven Saskatchewan wheat producers. The 2019 candidates are:

- Scott Hepworth (Assiniboia)
- Lesley Kelly (Watrous)
- Garth Massie (Biggar)
- Brady Sproat (Kipling)
- Glenn Tait (Meota)
- Jocelyn Velestuk (Broadview)
- Stewart Wells (Swift Current)

Candidate biographies and pictures are available on pages four to six of this newsletter and on the Sask Wheat website (saskwheat.ca).

Ballots will be sent to all registered wheat producers in October in a bright yellow envelope. A registered producer means any producer who has had a Sask Wheat check-off deducted after August 1, 2017 and has not requested a check-off refund in the last fiscal year (August 1, 2018 - July 31, 2019).

Please note that your household may receive more than one election envelope with more than one unique ID number if you or others in your household delivered grain under separate

entities (i.e. for grain deliveries by Jane Smith, John Smith, and Smith Farms). Each of these registered producers would be entitled to one vote.

The results of the election will be announced in early December by email, news release, and on the Sask Wheat website. The three successful candidates will be installed to the Board of Directors at the Sask Wheat Annual General Meeting on January 13, 2020.

CHAIR'S REPORT:

Make sure your voice is heard this fall!



After a poor start to the growing season, harvest got underway across the province at regular times for most. Then the rain came shortly after we started, causing major delays and raising quality concerns, especially across the south, where the rain accumulated in greater amounts. Now, with snow blanketing much of the province, it's hard to tell when we'll be done and what the end results will bring.

I would like everyone to take advantage of the Canadian Grain Commission's (CGC) Harvest Sample Program. If you get your samples in by November 30, you will receive results about the quality of your wheat, including the grade, protein level, falling number, and DON level, within 15 business days of the CGC receiving the sample.

This is valuable information that you can use to help market your crop. Many elevators are now testing for falling number, which is directly affected by sprout damage. It always helps to have this information in your back pocket before you go to the elevator so you can negotiate a fair price for your grain. Go to grainscanada.gc.ca for more information or to sign up or ask your elevator for details and your Harvest Sample kits.

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Another website I hope most wheat producers were able to visit was the online royalty survey that the Agriculture Producers Association of Saskatchewan (APAS) and their counterpart organizations in Alberta and Manitoba put online. It's important that producers take every opportunity to make their voices heard on this subject.

SaskWheat and cereal commissions from across the prairies have been critical of the two proposed options being put forward by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, an end-point royalty on all UPOV '91 wheat varieties sold and a trailing royalty applied to farm-saved seed of these varieties. There are other value creation models available to producers to support varietal development efforts and these need to be explored through further consultation with producers.

Wheat producers have funded successful variety development in Canada for decades, most recently by providing capacity funding through core breeding agreements with AAFC and the western universities, as well as research project funding through the Canadian National Wheat Cluster (Wheat Cluster). Producer-funded varietal development of wheat has led to improved varieties with increased yields, resistance to serious pests and diseases, and desirable end-use characteristics.

This past year, SaskWheat made our biggest investment yet in research, committing over \$8.8 million to 48 projects, including over \$3.1 million to 15 projects under the Wheat Cluster. The diversity of projects that SaskWheat was able to invest in this year on behalf of Saskatchewan wheat farmers will create new opportunities, build on innovative research, and enhance the long-term viability of growing wheat. Collaborating with the Alberta Wheat Commission, the Manitoba Wheat and Barley Growers Association, and the organizations participating in the Wheat Cluster, enhances our efforts as a commission and contributes to new opportunities for Canadian wheat globally.

It takes both the investment of producer money and the investment of producer time to keep wheat strong in Saskatchewan. We have seven wheat producers who are letting their names stand as candidates for the SaskWheat director election this fall. I encourage you to take the time to read their biographies, which are available in this newsletter and on the SaskWheat website, and to exercise your right to vote in the upcoming election, which will take place between October 18 and November 29. Watch for the yellow envelope in your mail box!

I have learned a lot about our industry during the last six years. I have had the privilege of representing Saskatchewan producers locally, provincially, nationally, and internationally. I have spoken on your behalf to international buyers, politicians and researchers. But the best discussions have been with you, the producers. Your passion and fire for our industry has been wonderful to see. As I come to the end of my time at SaskWheat, I'd like to say "Thank-you" for the opportunity to represent you. I look forward to seeing you at CropSphere 2020 and the SaskWheat AGM on January 13 in Saskatoon.

Laura Reiter, Chair

Combine to Customer 2020

If you are a Saskatchewan wheat producer and have not been to Cigi's Combine to Customer program in the past, you can sign up for one of the three programs in 2020:

- February 9 to 12, 2020
- February 18 to 21, 2020
- March 8 to 11, 2020

If you are interested, please go to saskwheat.ca or call 306-653-7932 to see if you are eligible and to sign up.



BOARD MEMBERS:

Laura Reiter, Chair
Radisson

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Regina

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GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT:

Weather, trade restrictions impacting Saskatchewan wheat prospects in new crop year



Well, we finished the 2018-2019 crop year with record export movements of over 40 million tonnes for cereals, pulses and oilseeds. Wheat export shipments are the highest in decades and likely will be a record when all the data is finalized. While prices weakened as we got closer to new crop position, the export movement was very positive for general cash flow, particularly with trade restrictions impacting our

major crop exports to foreign markets. Spring wheat ending stocks are lower and manageable. This will make way for the 2019 production, which will be mixed in terms of quality and condition.

It has been a very irregular year for grain production in Saskatchewan in 2019. Just when we thought it might never rain again and we were ready to write off this year's crop, timely rains nursed the crops along. The cool weather in late summer delayed maturity and created difficult harvest conditions with variable plant maturity in many fields. We got to a point where we could expect near normal yields over a large part of the growing area. There are, of course, areas that did not escape loss due to drought and hail, and the final harvest result now depends on a relatively late harvest window to get the bulk of the crop into the bin.

We will hopefully have significant volumes to market this next year. The potential difficulties are that world market forecasts indicate there will be ample wheat production globally in 2019, despite some weather-related concerns in key import and exporting countries. It is expected that we will have ready export markets but some tough competition into certain regions where Black Sea export competition is possible. I have to note that durum has been uniquely affected by Italian reluctance to import durum at historical levels due to mandatory Country of Origin Labelling (COOL) regulations put in place by Italian regulators. This has severely restricted price and volume for durum exports and this is expected to be an issue into the 2019-2020 marketing year.

Sask Wheat continues to concentrate on wheat research opportunities that have yielded very positive returns for producers. The future of wheat research was on display in Saskatoon this July as the first International Wheat Congress was held in the city. Wheat researchers from every corner of the world met to present their research findings and discuss common areas of new exploration. It was clear from the discussions that Canada is a world leader in many new technologies being employed to advance profitable wheat production. Also evident was the unique relationship between Canadian wheat producers and public plant breeding institutions in Canada, both in terms of the significant funding

provided by producers, and also in terms of connecting and consulting with plant breeders. This was a very timely discussion as the Alberta Wheat Commission, the Manitoba Wheat and Barley Growers Association, and Sask Wheat recently formed the Canadian Wheat Research Coalition (CWRC) to collaborate on regional and national wheat research.

The joint efforts of the CWRC are now finalizing the successor programs to the current core wheat breeding agreements with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) and the University of Saskatchewan's Crop Development Center (CDC) which both conclude in the next six months. Through the CWRC, we expect we may exceed the \$26 million of producer funding provided in the previous five-year agreement with Western Grains Research Foundation (WGRF) that was used to maintain plant breeders, technicians, and specialists at AAFC and the CDC.

Producer funding for wheat research is approaching record levels. Funding from WGRF and the three Prairie wheat commissions shows the major commitment producers have made to research in new wheat varieties. Producers are funding core wheat breeding agreements with public breeders, the Canadian National Wheat Cluster, and research through the provincial funding intake processes such as Saskatchewan's Agriculture Development Fund. This critical effort needs to be continued to maintain the research capacity of these public institutions and to maintain the involvement of wheat producers in varietal development.

Harvey Brooks, General Manager

Sask Wheat Annual General Meeting and Producers Forum

Saskatchewan wheat producers are invited to attend the Annual General Meeting of the Saskatchewan Wheat Development Commission during CropSphere and Crop Production Week in Saskatoon.

Monday, January 13, 2020 • 12:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Gallery BCD, TCU Place

35 - 22nd Street E, Saskatoon, SK

Registration begins at 11:00 a.m., lunch is at 11:30 a.m.

Please note: You do not need to be registered for CropSphere to attend the AGM.

For more information, contact us at:

T: 306-653-7932 E: info@saskwheat.ca

Candidate Profiles



HEPWORTH, Scott

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I am a fourth-generation producer on my family farm near Assiniboia, where we grow durum wheat, lentils, chickpeas and canola.

I was first elected to the Saskatchewan Wheat Development Commission in December 2015 and became the Vice-Chair of the Board in January 2018. It has been a very good experience over the past four years! I enjoy being involved and working on behalf of Saskatchewan wheat producers. I feel we have accomplished a lot as a board during my time but I also see a lot of work ahead during these challenging times.

This past December I participated in a new crop mission with Cigi, CGC, and Cereals Canada to Morocco, Algeria and Italy representing Saskatchewan wheat producers. These are three key durum markets and I was proud to represent Saskatchewan producers. Maintaining market access and finding new markets are on top of my priority list and if re-elected I hope to continue work on this very important file.

As a Sask Wheat director I also serve on the Board of Directors for Farm and Food Care Saskatchewan and Cereals Canada.



KELLY, Lesley

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Lesley Kelly actively farms with her family at Watrous, Saskatchewan where they grow wheat, durum, canola, barley, oats, lentils, peas and flax.

Lesley is the farmer behind the popular High Heels & Canola Fields blog where she dispels myths about agriculture and brings consumers and farmers together. She has recently expanded her reach by co-hosting the What the Farm podcast which explores various topics in food and farming through real life conversations. Lesley's goal in being involved in agriculture beyond the farm is to build community and bring people together, create conversation, collaborate and identify solutions that help make agriculture stronger.

Lesley received her Bachelor of Commerce in Marketing from the University of Saskatchewan, as well as an Accelerated Accounting Diploma from the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology and went on to work in various leadership marketing and branding positions in the ag sector, including FCC and ATB Financial before returning to the farm. Using her entrepreneurial spirit and the skills developed through her agribusiness career, she created a snack food business using the barley grown on her farm and built her own marketing business.

Lesley has been a leader in advocating for mental health. She's been part of the national #BellLetsTalk campaign and co-founded the Do More Agriculture Foundation whose mission is to break barriers and support all producers in taking care of their mental well-being. She was recognized by the Regina YWCA with the Women of Distinction award for this work.

Lesley wants to serve as a Director for the Saskatchewan Wheat Development Commission to:

- Learn from and listen to wheat growers from across the province about the challenges and opportunities they face when it comes to growing, marketing and selling wheat and act with a view to the future.
- Help strengthen relationships among partner and stakeholder groups in the wheat industry.
- Support the growth of current and future market developments and agronomic research initiatives.
- Ensure the Saskatchewan Wheat Development Commission operates as a successful association with producers' confidence that check-off funds are allocated and invested wisely.

HIGHHEELSANDCANOLAFIELDS.COM



MASSIE, Garth

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I farm with my Dad and two brothers north of Rosetown, SK. Our operation is a mixed farm with a cow-calf component and a cropping component. The cropping component is the

larger part of the business and provides the lion's share of the livelihood for our four families. The key crops in our rotation are spring wheat, lentils and canola with some oats grown for cattle feed.

I used cattle income to put myself through university and bought my first piece of land in 1990. The early years of farming were challenging times economically as we were gradually transitioning from a cereal-fallow rotation to a much more sustainable direct seeding system with increased cropping intensity and diversity. The last decade, while environmentally challenging, has been very successful from a business standpoint. However, I sense the winds of change coming for Saskatchewan farmers – our businesses will need to eliminate non-value-added costs to allow us to become leaner and more competitive. I will bring this level of pragmatism to the board in discerning how to allocate your check-off dollars.

I completed university in 1995 (B.S.A. crop science, M.Sc. crop physiology) and am a member of the Saskatchewan Institute of Agrologists. I've served on several local boards and was a

member of the PRRCG (Prairie Registration Recommending Committee for Grain) for a number of years.

I have worked in the agriculture sector continuously since completing my education. I am the Corporate Agronomist for Morris Industries and formerly worked at Prairie Malt Ltd., Syngenta and Canadian Seed Coaters. Through these positions, I've worked with customers and cultures from around the world who purchase made-in-Saskatchewan products. Customer demand drives successful international sales, and we need to be responsive to those demands. Now is the perfect opportunity to refresh Canadian wheat market development activities, and Sask Wheat can take a significant leadership role in this respect. I have a proven track record of delivering on customer solutions through my work experience and I would appreciate your support to make a major contribution to the direction of Sask Wheat.



SPROAT, Brady

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My name is Brady Sproat and I farm at Kipling, SK with my wife Jessica, parents and two brothers. We are a grain farm growing spring wheat, durum wheat, canola, barley, corn,

soybeans and various other crops depending on the year.

I got my Ag Degree from the U of S in 2005 with a major in agronomy and worked as an agronomist for Cargill which gave me a great understanding of both the production side of grain farming and the marketing side. It was a great window to see how different farms operate, the challenges that they face, and solutions they come up with. After my time at Cargill, I started an agronomic consulting company and then came back to the farm in 2011 to farm and run a Pioneer HiBred seed business as well.

Both my father and grandfather have been involved in policy and board governance in various capacities throughout their lives and have seen great rewards for the organizations they have represented. This mindset of contributing to the greater good has been imprinted on myself and I believe that I have the real world and business experience to bring value to a group like Sask Wheat and the growers it represents.

The varieties we have been able to grow the last few years have turned a corner in terms of yield expectations from wheat in Saskatchewan. It is fun growing wheat again! However there are some issues that will need to be dealt with in the future including addressing the "royalty" issue that is currently being proposed by AAFC. The other major issue I see facing Saskatchewan wheat producers is the threat posed by other markets around the world. Other countries are getting much better at agronomy and becoming much more competitive on the world market. I believe we have to take a hard look at how to differentiate our wheat even further than it already is to capture a premium at the farm gate.

I look forward to the opportunity to represent Saskatchewan wheat growers on the Sask Wheat board!



TAIT, Glenn

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Farm

We operate a family farm at Meota, NW of North Battleford, with 2,500 acres of wheat, canola, and some Black Angus cattle. My children are the fifth generation on Harehope Farm.

Related Experience

Like most of us I started on the farm as soon as I could reach the tractor pedals and since receiving my degree in agriculture (crop science) in '85 from the U of S I have been farming full time.

I have served on RM council, APAS, the school board, and many other councils and committees, but the greatest experience I could gain for this position was my first term as an elected director for Sask Wheat. I was part of the team that hired top level staff and built an invaluable organization for Saskatchewan farmers. I developed a strong relationship with wheat breeders across Canada and with many reps and executives from other ag organizations.

Opportunities and Challenges

Opportunities in yield and disease resistance come yearly from the levies we have wisely invested, and as we advertise and educate around the world new markets evolve. We are challenged abroad by growing competition from the Black Sea area, and at home by the erosion of farmer control of research objectives and quality assurance.

As a Sask Wheat Director, I will:

- Stop the federal government from obstinately trying to slice off part of our research investment to funnel off to private companies. No to farmers subsidizing Bayer and Syngenta(e. g.), to End Point Royalties, the 'Seed Tax', and no to technology use agreements for wheat.
- Work to keep the Canadian Grain Commission as the guarantee of fair grades for farmers and of quality for customers. If Sask Wheat and others do not step in to keep it working in the farmers best interest, it may devolve into a corporate shell.
- Work to keep the Canadian International Grains Institute uncompromised, working on our behalf.

Comments

Ag input companies are valuable tools but they shouldn't control agricultural policy. Stay in the driver's seat. Elect me as a strong voice for you at Sask Wheat.

Check out my Facebook candidate page.

CANDIDATE BIOS CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



VELESTUK, Jocelyn

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My name is Jocelyn Velestuk and I am part owner of Velestuk Farms Inc. a family operation with my husband and his parents as co-owners. My farm is a mixed operation with about 300 head

of cows and about 2500 ac of seeded acreage for cattle forage and grain production operating near Broadview, SK. My farm focuses on practices that improve the soil while creating a more sustainable farm business.

While I grew up as a farm kid on a grain farm, I have been in the agriculture industry as a farmer and agronomy consultant for over 5 years. I am currently on the Saskatchewan Soil Conservation Association board (since 2016) as President and also serve on the local daycare board and on the Broadview Agriculture Society board. I have an independent consulting business with Western Ag Professional Agronomy as well as a background in research from my Master's degree in soil science. I keep up with the latest technology and research to bring into conversations about adding value to my own farm and have an extensive network of farmers and industry professionals.

Some of the current challenges and opportunities for Saskatchewan wheat production include:

1. Market stability, growth, and diversity – consistently profitable wheat requires markets that are growing as we increase our wheat supply. Promotion of Canadian wheat to both local consumers as well as global markets is important to maintain these markets. Market research can help anticipate possible issues so we can look at solutions before the industry is greatly affected and some attention to niche markets with premiums can add value for farmers and meet industry demand.
2. Seed genetic development – in the discussion about seed royalties, maintaining control over the price of seed as well as the ability to keep seed is important to keeping costs reasonable. Facts need to be shared about the efficiency of the current system of varietal development as well as the pros/cons of different options if the current system was to change.
3. Education and extension – Research dollars should continue to be divvied up to where the information gained can bring the greatest value to farmers, then this information must be effectively relayed to farmers through more extension events and material. Funding for education and promotion of Saskatchewan wheat and agriculture for the general public including children is also important to advocate for the agriculture industry and show that farmers care about the food we produce.



WELLS, Stewart

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Our Farm

Located near Swift Current, our farm contains about 3500 acres—2300 acres cultivated. My partner, Terry Toews, and I are the third generation to operate the farm. Over time our crops have included spring wheat, durum, peas, lentils, barley and alfalfa with limited acres of canola. We have farmed both outside and within Canadian organic standards.

After high school I obtained a B.Sc. in Agricultural Engineering from the University of Saskatchewan in 1976, and then returned to farm full time.

Related Experience

My organizational connections with the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, the National Farmers Union, the Canadian Agri-food Policy Institute, the Canadian Wheat Board, and the Western Grains Research Foundation have taught me to deal with large sums of money in a responsible way, as well as what it takes to communicate effectively with decision and policy makers.

Opportunities/Challenges

There are several key opportunities/challenges facing the Saskatchewan Wheat Development Commission:

- maintaining the focus on responsible use of the farmer-levy funds by keeping overhead low and channeling the majority of the money directly to researchers. Serving on the board of Western Grains Research Foundation has shown me the positive collaboration that can occur between different research funders.
- control of the seed supply is a fundamental question that affects all grain farmers including wheat farmers. Federal Government proposals clearly place all control in the hands of the seed companies, including control of whether or not farmers can replant their own seed without obtaining permission or paying new royalties to the companies. Sask Wheat has been actively representing farmers on this file and will need to be even more forceful in the coming months.
- the Canadian Grain Commission (CGC) is a key institution that is meant to level the playing field and provide some degree of fairness for the farmers, as well as to financially protect farmers when buyers/brokers become insolvent. Grain companies are trying to remove these protections by attacking the CGC.
- more information can be found at www.votewellsforsaskwheat.ca. Staying farmer-focussed, my approach to all files discussed by Sask Wheat will be “How does this benefit the farmers?”

Dr. Gurcharn Brar: Sask Wheat's first PhD scholarship recipient is ready for the next step

By Dallas Carpenter

In late 2015, the Board of Directors of the Saskatchewan Wheat Development Commission (Sask Wheat) announced that it would be enhancing its wheat research and innovation activities with the introduction of undergraduate and graduate scholarships for students at the University of Saskatchewan's College of Agriculture and Bioresources.

Since then, Sask Wheat has provided \$10,000 annually in undergraduate scholarships and \$100,000 annually in graduate scholarships. The graduate scholarships have helped the U of S's Crop Development Centre (CDC) support master's and PhD graduate students who have enhanced their wheat research and development program.

The first PhD student to receive a Sask Wheat graduate scholarship was Gurcharn Brar. In March 2019, he successfully defended his thesis, Characterization of Resistance to Fusarium Head Blight in Bread and Durum Wheat, and received his PhD from the U of S.

Gurcharn originally came from Punjab, India where he received a BSc from the Punjab Agricultural University. "I saw stripe rust for the first time in our wheat crop when I was a high-school student," he said. "I didn't know what it was, but it intrigued me for sure. I was lucky to get admission at the University of Saskatchewan to start my grad school and start research on stripe rust for my master's."

Gurcharn completed his MSc in Plant Sciences from the U of S, focussing on characterization of wheat stripe rust, which he did under the supervision of CDC plant pathologist Randy Kutcher. Kutcher recognized Gurcharn's potential as a researcher and that he could take on a greater challenge than researching stripe rust for his PhD.

"After I finished my master's, I wanted to do my PhD more on the host and resistance breeding side," said Gurcharn. "Because I did my master's degree with Randy, he talked to (CDC wheat breeder) Pierre Hucl and Pierre said 'I know Gurcharn is a hard-working guy and maybe we should make him work on a more challenging disease than stripe rust.' So, they asked me to work on fusarium head blight."

Part of Gurcharn's PhD project was to study characteristics of CDC hard red spring wheat varieties that had been cross-bred with the Chinese variety Sumai 3, the best-known source for FHB resistance.

"Pierre developed the material in two varieties' backgrounds, CDC Go and CDC Alsask, where he brought in three genes from Sumai 3, Fhb1, Fhb2, and Fhb5, for fusarium resistance," said Gurcharn. "My goal was to focus on how these genes, in Canadian Hard Red Spring Wheat, affect disease suppression, mycotoxin (DON) accumulation, as well as linkage drag (bringing along unwanted genes which have a detrimental effect on agronomy & end-use quality)."

Gurcharn's PhD also had him work with CDC durum wheat breeder Curtis Pozniak on building some FHB resistance in elite durum wheat. Gurcharn crossed emmer wheat, a relative of durum that has a moderate level of FHB resistance, with



Dr. Gurcharn Brar in a University of Saskatchewan greenhouse

susceptible elite durum wheat to map genes showing FHB resistance that have the potential to be used in future durum breeding programs.

The genomes for many bread wheat and durum varieties have been sequenced thanks to the CTAG2 project, of which Pozniak was among the leaders and which Sask Wheat funded. Gurcharn was among the first students to use a portion of wheat's annotated genome, which he says will be a significant tool in producing new varieties with better disease resistance.

"In my case, I was able to use the genome sequence data to look at the genes that are present in the chromosome interval associated with disease resistance or agronomy," he explained. "With the aid of the available wheat genome, you can then look at the gene level and see the type of genes with their physical location.

"Certain types of genes are associated with disease resistance that can further be explored for their potential role in disease improvement and introgression into other cultivars. With the help of other genomic sources, such as expression level of genes at different growth stages of wheat, it can help pin-point some likely candidates for your trait of interest."

Gurcharn's aptitude and hard work in studying FHB and stripe rust in wheat, not to mention his training under the renowned breeders and pathologists at the CDC, earned him several honors and allowed him to publish several academic papers. As a result, he is well known and is now sought after by several institutions.

The next step in Gurcharn's career remains a mystery, at the moment. But two things remain certain:

"I love Saskatchewan more than any other province," he says. "And I like to say that I am in a long-term relationship with wheat and stripe rust."



Learn about degrading factors in wheat, canola, and barley along with grain contracts at

Grade School 2019

Monday, November 18
Painted Hand Casino
Yorkton

Register at
SaskWheat.ca

Tuesday, November 19
Heritage Inn
Moose Jaw

Presented by: **SaskWheat**
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SaskCanola

SaskBarley
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