



I.D.E.A. Industry Update - January 14, 2002

SWP, Farm Credit Canada Introduce Crop Input Financing Programme

Saskatchewan Wheat Pool and Farm Credit Canada (FCC) have agreed to partner on a crop input financing program available immediately to Prairie farmers buying input supplies through the Pool. Under the program, farmers will have access to FCC credit for a full crop cycle.

"Our 73,000 Pool and AgPro members and customers now have access to one of the most attractive financial management tools available today," says the Pool's Chief Executive Officer, Mayo Schmidt. "FCC is the only national financial institution totally focused on agriculture and we're extremely pleased that it has chosen to enter the business of financing crop inputs for the Pool's customers."

"Through this innovative program, we are providing an important option to Prairie producers for financing inputs in the coming crop year," says John Ryan, President and Chief Executive Officer of FCC. "Producers have been asking for programs that are responsive to the day-to-day management of their operations, and this program is targeted to address their needs."

The program provides great flexibility in repayment schedules and options. Once a FCC loan is approved, producers can draw against the amount any time during the crop year, with the loan due and payable on January 31 following harvest. Interest charges do not begin until the date of the first purchase against the loan. Producers can schedule their payments around their cash flow cycle. All loan applications will be handled through Saskatchewan Wheat Pool or AgPro outlets across Western Canada.

"We recognize that crop input financing is important to farmers. Through FCC, we are able to offer this service at a more competitive rate than previously available," Mr. Schmidt says. "This program is one more excellent example of how the Pool is able to increase value to our customers through innovative alliances with people who understand the business of farming. Our alliance with FCC means we're able to focus on what we do best, delivering unparalleled sales and services to western Canadian farmers."

"Similar to our other 26 alliance and partnership agreements, we've established this relationship to leverage the respective strengths of our organizations for the benefit of producers. Our objective is to continue to serve the changing financial and management needs of producers and, in doing so, ensure that the agricultural industry remains strong and vibrant," says Mr. Ryan.

Saskatchewan Wheat Pool is Canada's largest publicly traded agri-business co-operative

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headquartered in Regina, Saskatchewan. Its core business operations are grain handling, merchandising and agri-product sales. These operations are complemented by food processing and value-added businesses that allow the Pool to leverage its pivotal position between Prairie farmers and destination customers in North America and around the world. The Pool's Class B shares are listed on the Toronto Stock Exchange under the symbol SWP.B.

Farm Credit Canada (FCC) provides financial products and services to primary producers and agribusiness via a network of 100 offices - primarily located in rural areas. With a singular focus on agriculture, FCC is deeply committed to helping the industry thrive in the long term. The corporation is self-sustaining and has a national portfolio of \$7.5 billion.

I.D.E.A. Annual General Meeting and Conference

The I.D.E.A. Annual General Meeting and Conference is scheduled to take place February 11-12, 2002 in Winnipeg, Manitoba. This is must-attend event. Conference details and registration information is available online at www.independentdealers.com/conference.htm.

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