



## I.D.E.A. Industry Update - May 17, 2002

### **Monsanto Moves Ahead with GM Wheat Trials**

As the debate continues to be waged over whether new genetically modified crops should be developed for production, Monsanto is moving ahead with its trials of Roundup Ready, genetically modified wheat. In

"2002 marks the fifth year of trials in Canada on Roundup Ready Wheat," explains Trish Jordan, Communications Officer with Monsanto. This year Monsanto is doing field trials on 15 acres, which are spread out on more than 20 different plots across the Prairies.

"For the most part our field program is pretty much limited to research and breeding trials which are designed to gather the technical information and data we require to make regulatory submissions," Jordan explained. The regulatory submissions appear to be the next hurdle in Monsanto's efforts to have Roundup Ready Wheat available to farmers. Jordan says they need to prove to agencies such as Health Canada, Canadian Food Inspection Agency and the Pest Management Regulatory Agency that the wheat is safe. "The bulk of the submissions (for regulatory approval) we're hoping will go in sometime this summer or later towards the fall." Jordan cautions these submissions are a long way from getting permission to start full-scale production of the crop. "The regulatory process can take anywhere from 12 months to 18 months and it can take even longer than that if they come back to us and need additional information. But again, I think it's important for people to understand regulatory approval does not mean commercial launch."

While there have been numerous suggestions Monsanto is pushing ahead with the introduction of GM Wheat before it's wanted, Jordan says they're trying to address the ongoing concerns of market acceptance and segregation. Although Jordan does not like to give a time frame for the introduction of Round Up Ready Wheat, she did say three to five years from now would probably be the earliest it could be commercially produced considering all the issues that still need to be addressed.

502 - 45th Street West, Second Floor  
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan  
CANADA S7L 6H2

Tel: (306) 933-4904  
Fax: (306) 244-4497  
[office@independentdealers.com](mailto:office@independentdealers.com)

## **Many Nations United in Opposition to U.S. Farm Bill**

The Cairns Group of Nations has expressed deep regret over new U.S. farm support legislation. In a news release, Cairns Group Ministers say the bill is damaging to the international economy and could undermine efforts to achieve global reform of this heavily subsidized and distorted sector. There are 18 nations in the Cairns Group including Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Indonesia, Malaysia, New Zealand, South Africa and Uruguay.

“Cairns Group Ministers will continue to work for the full implementation of the Doha agricultural mandate. We are committed to the phasing out of all forms of export subsidies, to substantial reductions in production distorting domestic support and to substantial improvements in market access.”

Meanwhile, Manitoba’s Agriculture and Food Minister Rosann Wowchuk says Mexico has confirmed it will be an ally of Canada in the fight against the new U.S. Farm Bill.

## **Results from 2001 Census of Agriculture**

Statistics Canada has released some of the results from its 2001 Census of Agriculture. A total of 246,923 farms were counted in the country, down almost 11% since the last census in 1996. All provinces showed a decline, with 8 of the 10 showing decreases of more than 10%.

Average farm size over the five years increased to 676 acres from 608. Farms with gross receipts of \$250,000 or more accounted for 13.8 percent of all farmers in 2001 compared with 9.4% in 1996. The average farm in that sales class was 1,620 acres.

In 2001, for every acre in wheat, 2.3 acres were in other field crops, compared to a ratio of 1.8 in 1996. While still the largest crop, wheat area declined by 12.6 percent.

Stats Can says livestock numbers have reached a new high. The number of cattle has risen in every census since 1986. Hog numbers are approaching the level of cattle numbers for the first time.

Based on the 2000 production year, farmers spent 87 cents on operating expenses (not including depreciation) for every dollar received in gross farm receipts. In 1995, it was 83 cents.

According to the census, environmentally friendly land management practices have surpassed conventional tillage methods and are now used on 60 percent of tilled land. This is double the percentage of 1991.