



I.D.E.A. Industry Update - June 5, 2003

Louis Dreyfus to Operate Churchill Terminal

The Port of Churchill will be open for the 2003 shipping season. Hudson Bay Port Company, an affiliate of OmniTRAX, has ended speculation and announced that Churchill will open despite another money losing season in 2002.

However, OmniTRAX has struck a deal with Louis Dreyfus to take over the operation, management and marketing of the grain terminal at Churchill. OmniTRAX, through its Hudson Bay Port Company, will stick to operating the short line railway.

Observers believe Dreyfus will be in a good position to attract new grain export business to the northern port.

OmniTRAX praised the support from the federal and Manitoba governments as well as the Canadian Wheat Board who are all playing a role in trying to make Churchill viable.

Manitoba Battles Flea Beetles

The weekly crop report from Manitoba Agriculture contains numerous references to flea beetle damage on canola crops.

Flea beetle populations are high. Producers have been monitoring and spraying for flea beetles and in some cases, canola crops have had to be reseeded. Cutworms have also damaged some fields.

The moisture situation in Manitoba is variable. Many parts of the northwest and northern interlake remain dry, receiving less than half of normal precipitation this spring. By contrast, eastern areas of the province received more rain last week, creating ideal conditions for crop development.

Seeding at 91 Percent in Saskatchewan

Saskatchewan seeding progress is now on par with the five year average. The weekly crop report from Saskatchewan Agriculture puts overall progress at 91 percent.

All crop districts are now showing completion averages of more than 80 percent. Most crops are emerging evenly and in good condition, but some crops are behind normal development.

Of the crop reporters across the province, 71 percent rated topsoil moisture as adequate. On hay and pasture land, 64 percent rated topsoil moisture as adequate.

Some reseeding has taken place due to wind, frost, uneven germination and insect damage. Flea beetle and grasshopper populations are reported to be increasing in many areas.

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