



I.D.E.A. Industry Update - July 26, 2004

*****New Wheat Midge Test**

A new, more accurate, and less labour-intensive wheat midge monitoring test has been developed for use in fields. Developed through research at Simon Fraser University, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, and PheroTech Inc., the new test uses recently identified female sex hormones to detect the presence of the wheat midge. The sticky green 'delta trap' contains the female sex hormone to attract the male midge. Midge numbers are easily estimated by counting the number caught on the traps, which are placed 100 metres apart, three for every 160 acres. Alberta-based Agri-Trend Agrology Ltd. has Alberta distribution rights for the new monitoring traps and can be contacted via their Website www.agritrend.com.

(Source: AGNET)

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

The I.D.E.A. 6th Annual General Meeting and Conference will take place February 7-8, 2005, Winnipeg, SK, in conjunction with the CAAR Convention.

*****New Agriculture Minister**

Prime Minister Paul Martin has surprised pundits and farm groups by appointing Andy Mitchell as the new Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food. Mitchell was not one of the names being suggested as a replacement for Bob Speller, who was not re-elected.

Mitchell represents the Ontario riding of Parry Sound - Muskoka. He was first elected to the House of Commons in 1993. In 2003, he was appointed Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. He previously served in other capacities including Secretary of State for Rural Development. Prior to becoming a Member of Parliament, Andy Mitchell had a 20 year career in banking and was active in numerous business associations.

Wayne Easter of Prince Edward Island, a former President of the National Farmers Union, was appointed as the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food with special emphasis on Rural Development. *(By Kevin Hursh; Reprinted in part from the AgExpert Express newsletter by permission of AgExpert Management Software and Farm Credit Canada.)*

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*****Most Prairie Crops Looking Good**

Despite plant diseases, scattered hail storms and areas with surplus moisture, most prairie crops look promising.

Alberta's provincial crop report of July 15 says most crops in that province are in good to excellent condition, although there is still concern that without more rain in the next two weeks, moisture reserves may not be adequate to prevent crop stress and yield loss. The Alberta canola crop was rated as 19 per cent excellent, 51% good and 23% fair. Dry peas were rated as 18% excellent, 59% good and 20% fair. Across Alberta, first cut hay operations were reported to be 35% complete. While yields varied widely, the average was reported to be about 1.1 tons per acre.

The Saskatchewan crop report for this week says hot weather has advanced crop development but 70% to 80% of spring crops continue to be behind normal development. Spring cereals are 87% in good to excellent condition, oilseeds are reported to be 75% good to excellent with 85% of pulses considered good to excellent. About 22% of first cut hay has been baled or put in silage. Dryland brome / alfalfa in the province is expected to average 1.5 tons per acre, 50% above the ten year average.

Manitoba's weekly crop report makes reference to good crop development with the recent heat but many crops are still considered somewhat behind normal development for this point in the season. Fungicides are being applied for leaf diseases in Manitoba cereals. In some areas, fungicide spraying has also begun for sclerotinia in canola. Many grain producers expect control measures for fusarium in wheat will also be necessary. (By Kevin Hursh; Reprinted in part from the AgExpert Express newsletter by permission of AgExpert Management Software and Farm Credit Canada.)

*****Alberta Potato Grower is Being Sued**

An Alberta seed potato grower is, according to this story, being sued for \$10 million US in damages by a Washington State producer who claims the seed stock contaminated his fields with a highly contagious bacterial infection. The story says that the seed stock was inspected and certified for export by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, and if the court case is successful, it brings the CFIA's certification standards under question and an injunction could be granted to close the border to Canadian seed stock. The case has sparked two separate legal actions, including a group of six Alberta potato seed producers who have applied to the Federal Court of Canada to block a Washington State potato group from seeing their records as requested under the Freedom of Information Act. (Source: *AGNET*)