



## **I.D.E.A. Industry Update - October 20, 2004**

### **\*\*\*Farmland Values Strengthen**

For the first half of 2004, farmland values in Alberta led the country increasing 4.4%. Across the nation, the increase was 2.3%.

After Alberta, the next biggest increase was in British Columbia at 4.2%. Ontario was up 3.4%, New Brunswick increased 2.9%, Manitoba was up 1.3% as was Quebec, while Saskatchewan saw an increase of 1.1% over the six-month period. Values in Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland and Labrador remained steady.

Farm Credit Canada examines and publishes changes in land values across Canada twice a year based on an assessment of benchmark properties. This national increase of 2.3% was somewhat stronger than the 1.5% increase noted in the last half of 2003. (Source: Kevin Hursh; Reprinted in part from the *AgExpert Express* newsletter by permission of *AgExpert Management Software and Farm Credit Canada*.)

### **\*\*\*Soybeans Up in Ontario, Down in Manitoba**

Soybean production is expected to increase by a whopping 31% in Ontario this year, while production in Manitoba is expected to plummet by 33%.

The figures are contained in the October 6 estimate of field crop production issued by Statistics Canada. In Ontario, more than 6,000 farmers were surveyed in the first two weeks of September. In Manitoba, the sample size was 1,800 farmers.

Ontario soybean yields are expected to increase 13% compared to last year. Production is expected to hit 2.3 million tonnes, up from 1.7. The estimated production is above both the five- and ten-year averages.

The story is much different in Manitoba where soybean production has been adversely affected by this year's cool, wet conditions. In the spring, Manitoba farmers intended to plant 330,000 acres of soybeans, but only 220,000 acres were actually planted.

The same area was planted in 2003. However, yields are expected to fall from 25 bushels an acre last year to 20 this year. A production barely over 100,000 tonnes is expected. (Source: Kevin Hursh; Reprinted in part from the *AgExpert Express* newsletter by permission of *AgExpert Management Software and Farm Credit Canada*.)

### **\*\*\*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. Mark the date in your calendars and plan to attend. Conference details will be available in the near future.

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**\*\*\*China Could Release GMO Rice as Early as Next Year**

China, the world's top producer and consumer of rice, could release its genetically modified rice as early as next year, as pressure mounts to boost domestic production and spur farmer income. China has long been seen as the pioneer in GMO rice, while the plant has slipped off the priority lists of Western private researchers who have focused their efforts on other commodities such as soybeans, corn, cotton or wheat.

Jikun Huang, a director of the Centre for Chinese Agricultural Policy at the Chinese Academy of Science, was quoted as telling Reuters that, "This technology is more or less ready for commercialization. You cannot hold it back too long when you have invested a lot of money. It would boost Chinese agricultural productivity and increase farmers' income."

Scientists in China were cited as saying they believe Beijing is likely to give the green light for commercialisation of insect and disease-resistant GMO rice as soon as next year after more than six years of trials. (Source: Agnet)

**\*\*\*New Markets Newsletter**

If you have access to the internet, by now you will have seen two installments of our new weekly, internet-based markets newsletter, available at: [www.pfcanada.com/report.html](http://www.pfcanada.com/report.html). In partnership with Pro Farmer Canada, I.D.E.A. members receive a free trial of this weekly newsletter through to December. Throughout the trial, we encourage you to share this information with your staff and farm clients, and we welcome your comments and feedback.

Remember that while this preliminary newsletter appears in a "no-frills" format, in the near future, you will have the option of having a version of this newsletter customized to your individual business, including placement of your company logo, agronomic information relevant to your area, and special messages from you to your clients. In essence, it will be YOUR personal newsletter, available for YOUR customers...which includes a weekly update of market news and analysis provided by Pro Farmer Canada.

Following the trial period, beginning in January 2005, this newsletter service will go into full operation. A customized newsletter package will be available on CD, which can be installed by your individual customers on their computers. For only \$1000 per year, each I.D.E.A. member can present a tailor-made newsletter to their clients. Initially, each I.D.E.A. member will receive a 20 CD allotment of the newsletter program to distribute to your farm clients. Your farm customer will place the CD into their computer tray and the program will automatically load. An icon will be displayed on the computer's desktop, flashing each week when the latest edition of the newsletter is available. Clients simply click the icon, automatically launching the computer's browser and internet log-on process, directing the user to the webpage where your customized newsletter is displayed. The key to this streamlined operation is making it easy for your clients to use. There are NO usernames or passwords to memorize and NO technical info to sort out. Content is updated weekly, based on your needs. Additional CDs over the initial 20 allotment can be purchased for \$25 each, for one year's programming.

For only \$1000 per year, you will be able to target your 20 best customers directly, with market news and analysis they can use AND feature your business prominently in your customer's mind year-round.

So, enjoy the trial version of this newsletter. We look forward to hearing from you.