



I.D.E.A. Industry Update - September 3, 2004

*****How to Maximize Canola Returns at Swathing**

"Swathing canola at the proper seed colour change will reduce green seeds and ensure high grades and prices," stresses David Vanthuyne, Canola Council of Canada agronomist for Eastern Saskatchewan.

The best time to swath for optimum canola seed yield and quality is when average seed colour change on the main stem is at 50 to 60%. At this stage, seeds will have changed colour on at least the bottom half of the main stem in *B. napus* varieties and on the middle and upper pods in *B. rapa*. When seeds in the bottom half of the plant have changed colour, seeds in the top, or last formed pods will be firm and roll between the fingertips.

To be considered "colour changed," green seeds must have small patches of colour or spotting. Seeds slowly turn from green to light yellow, or reddish-brown to brown, depending on the weather and variety, he says.

Canola seeds within pods on the main stem will change colour about 10% every two to three days. Physiologically mature seeds lose moisture at about 1 to 3% per day. Start inspecting canola fields approximately 10 to 14 days after flowering ends. The end of flowering is defined as the stage when less than 5% of plants have flowers.

"After assessing the main stem, look at seeds from pods on the side branches to ensure they are firm with no translucency, especially in fields with low plant populations and multiple branches," says Vanthuyne. Sampling various parts of the field every two to three days and averaging the percent seed colour change will give growers an accurate assessment of the overall maturity of the crop. Plant densities, soil type, topography and moisture availability will affect the rate of seed maturity. "Walk out and sample at least five to 10 plants in various areas of the field," he says. Growers with large acreages will need to start swathing at about 20% seed colour change. This allows the majority of the crop to be swathed at or near optimum seed colour change. Risk of an early fall frost may also warrant swathing earlier.

"Growers have invested a lot of time and money in their canola crops. Swathing at the optimum seed colour change will help maximize canola returns," says Vanthuyne.

For a free copy of the Canola Council's Time of Swathing Guide, contact admin@canola-council.org or (204) 982-2100. An on-line version is available at: www.canola-council.org/cpc/timeofswathing.html
(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. Keep posted for details.

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*****Slow Harvest in Saskatchewan**

According to Saskatchewan Agriculture, only two per cent of the provincial crop was combined as of August 29. The ten-year average for this date is 26 per cent. Last year, 60 per cent of harvest had been completed.

Rain and cool weather has hampered progress. Only 11 per cent of the province's peas had been combined as of the reporting date, compared to normal progress of 61 per cent. Lentils were at 7 per cent, compared to the normal of 49.

Harvest progress on barley was reported to be one per cent, with less than one per cent of the wheat, durum, oats and canola combined.

The provincial crop report contained no specifics on frost damage from the freezing temperatures of August 20. However, reports from individual farmers indicate some canola and flax crops will be a write-off. *(By Kevin Hursh; Reprinted in part from the AgExpert Express newsletter by permission of AgExpert Management Software and Farm Credit Canada.)*

*****Assessing Manitoba Frost Damage**

Manitoba Agriculture, in its weekly crop report, says damage from frost is evident in many regions of the province. In southwestern Manitoba, corn and pulse crops seem to have suffered the most. The report says bean crops in most areas of the southwest appear to have little harvest potential. In the central region of the province, Manitoba Agriculture reports significant frost damage in some areas with corn, soybeans, beans, canola, flax and sunflowers affected most in terms of both yield and quality. In the eastern region, many frost-damaged fields may be salvaged for forage. The threat of further frost damage remains with many crops still weeks from maturity. Accumulated growing degree days are three to four weeks behind normal averages. Last week's cool, wet weather was not helpful for advancing crops. *(By Kevin Hursh; Reprinted in part from the AgExpert Express newsletter by permission of AgExpert Management Software and Farm Credit Canada.)*

*****Price Expectations Drop on Wheat and Feed Barley**

In its Pool Return Outlook (PRO) released August 26, the Canadian Wheat Board (CWB) dropped its price predictions on milling wheat and feed barley, while leaving durum and designated barley the same as last month.

The PRO drop on milling wheat ranges from \$9 to \$15 a tonne. According to the CWB, U.S. wheat futures continue to drop on expectations for larger American and world wheat crops.

The price for No.1 CWRS wheat with 12.5 per cent protein is down 35 cents a bushel from last month's PRO.

On feed barley, the PRO has declined by \$11 a tonne or 24 cents a bushel. The CWB says the early frost has resulted in much larger domestic feed grain supplies. In addition, American corn production is expected to shatter the previous record.

Meanwhile quality concerns in both wheat and designated barley have helped maintain the PRO for those grains. *(By Kevin Hursh; Reprinted in part from the AgExpert Express newsletter by permission of AgExpert Management Software and Farm Credit Canada.)*