



## I.D.E.A. Industry Update - August 25, 2005

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### ***\*\*\*I.D.E.A. Golf Social and Meeting a Success!***

Twenty-four people attended the I.D.E.A. golf social and meeting on August 17 in Innisfail, Alberta. Great discussions were held during the breakfast meeting, at lunch and on the course. Issues reviewed included custom spraying, billing, complaints, third party financing, and customer expectations. Thanks to Ed Paul of Linear Grain, Don Kitson of IRM and Bud Kushnir of IRM who provided the dealers with excellent commentaries on fertilizer markets. Special thanks to Allan Rundell and Lise Rundell for organizing the golf event.

### ***\*\*\*I.D.E.A. Member Conference Call***

The next I.D.E.A. Member Conference Call is scheduled for September 13 and will feature Don McCannell of McCannell Financial Group Ltd. discussing succession planning. Mark your calendars and plan to participate. Further details will be sent out shortly.

### ***\*\*\*Saskatchewan Yield Expectations Slip***

Volunteer crop reporters for Saskatchewan Agriculture have revised their yield estimates downward slightly from two weeks ago. At that time, a record crop of over 30 million tonnes was predicted. The estimate has now been reduced to just over 29 million.

If realized, that would still be a record, surpassing the approximately 28.2 million tonnes in both 1996 and 1999.

The yield reductions range from one to five bushels an acre depending upon the crop. The main cause is hot, dry weather that has cut yields.

This week, there was widespread rain and showers, particularly in the central and northern part of the province's grain belt. While this will benefit some later seeded crops, for other producers it's delaying harvest and creating concern over quality reductions.

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As of August 14, Saskatchewan Agriculture pegged harvest progress at two per cent. The five-year average for this time is four per cent.

Crops with the most harvest progress include fall rye at 37 per cent combined, winter wheat at 33 per cent, peas at 16 per cent and lentils at 6 per cent. *(Source: by Kevin Hursh; Reprinted in part from the AgExpert Express newsletter by permission of AgExpert Management Software and Farm Credit Canada.)*

### **\*\*\*Above Average Crop in Alberta, Below in Manitoba**

According to the most recent crop report from Manitoba Agriculture, there are some good crops in the province, such as in the northwest region, but most of the news is not good. Meanwhile in Alberta, except for some small pockets, crop potential is rated as above average.

The eastern side of Manitoba was especially hard hit by the flooding earlier in the summer. The crops not worked down or taken for green feed will produce very poorly. Winter wheat has yielded 15 to 40 bushels an acre. Manitoba Agriculture says barley yields are less than 20.

Many producers anticipate straight combining canola as the thin stand won't make a decent swath. Canola yields in eastern Manitoba are expected to be in the 10 to 15 bushel per acre range. Spring wheat has yielded 20 to 25.

Those are poor yields in a part of Manitoba that can be very productive. While some other areas will have better production, much of the wheat crop will be downgraded by fusarium. Reports of premature ripening and low bushel weights are common.

In Alberta, Crop Specialist Kent MacDonald of Alberta Agriculture's Ag Info Centre believes provincial production will be better than average with some areas getting their best crops in many years.

The ten-year average for the production of grains, oilseeds and specialty crops in Alberta is about 16.6 million tonnes.

MacDonald says there has been limited harvest progress in Alberta to date and many producers are still worried about the possibility of frost. *(Source: by Kevin Hursh; Reprinted in part from the AgExpert Express newsletter by permission of AgExpert Management Software and Farm Credit Canada.)*

### **\*\*\*Big Sky Acquires Community Pork**

Big Sky Farms, based in Humboldt, Saskatchewan has acquired the assets of Community Pork Ventures. Community Pork, which had been managed by Quadra Group, was placed in receivership earlier this summer.

The assets acquired include 13 production units in Saskatchewan and three in Manitoba, as well as breeding stock. With a capacity of 12,000 sows the new assets will take Big Sky's total herd to 40,000 sows.

Big Sky president and CEO Florian Possberg says the company will now have the ability to produce roughly one million market hogs a year. This solidifies Big Sky's position as the largest producer in Saskatchewan. Big Sky says it will now be among the top three in Canada.

The more than 130 jobs at Community Pork facilities will be maintained. The transaction is expected to close on or before August 30. No purchase price has been disclosed. *(Source: by Kevin Hursh; Reprinted in part from the AgExpert Express newsletter by permission of AgExpert Management Software and Farm Credit Canada.)*