

The Wheat Grower

November 2015

From the President, Levi Wood



The importance of the Wheat Grower voice

I really hope that everyone has had a chance to wrap up a successful, productive, and safe 2015 harvest. My own harvest has dragged on and at the time of writing, I am still among the 2% in SK who haven't completed harvest (I think I have learned my lesson that Flax always looks good on paper ... in April!).

In the last few months, the board of directors has been dealing with a significant administrative change that is occurring in our organization.

Earlier this year our Executive Director, Blair Rutter, indicated to us that he planned to step down from his position in the spring of 2016. As your board, we all understand how important a change in leadership can be for an organization, and so we put our minds toward making sure we found the right person. We knew that finding someone of Blair's calibre was going to be a huge task.

As a result of our search we are very pleased to announce that we have named Robin Speer as our Executive Director. Robin is very experienced in the area of public policy and has a diverse background with political experience in Regina and Ottawa, along with

time at Viterra, Canadian Renewable Fuels Association, and recently with the University of Calgary. We feel very fortunate that we were able to hire Robin, and look forward to a smooth transition and consolidating our administrative office in Saskatoon over the next few months.

Blair has been instrumental in the revitalization of our organization, since he came on board in 2005. He has always been a passionate advocate for our organization, and prairie farmers in general, and he has always been a champion of the free market principles we embrace.

We are glad that Blair will remain onboard until the spring to assist Robin in the transition.

Please take the opportunity over the next few months, in wishing Blair all the very best in his future endeavors and welcoming Robin into our organization. We are all very thankful for Blair's significant contributions and are also excited for Robin's contributions going forward.

I also want to extend a note of thanks to Fiona Jochum who we hired on as a summer student this year. Fiona was tasked with developing and executing a marketing plan for the Wheat Growers. Through her efforts we significantly increased our membership and have set the stage for further growth. Thanks Fiona!

Of particular interest to us was the federal election campaign which culminated with the Liberal's majority government on October 19th. I have been asked a number of times since the election, what affect will this have on the Wheat Growers and our policies.

As with any new government, we're not sure what to expect, however I'm reasonably confident that there won't be any significant change in policy direction. We certainly expect the Trudeau Government to follow through

on Canada's participation in recently signed free trade agreements including the CETA and TPP. We will also be encouraging the government to continue to maintain a strong science-based approach to creating a regulatory environment that strongly defends modern agricultural practices. This is certainly an area in which we will remain vigilant – we have seen how changes in policy in Ontario with respect to neonic regulations can adversely affect farming practices.

The transportation file is another area in which I see the new government taking a strong interest. The Emerson report regarding the Canada Transportation Act review is due out in December. I'm sure we will have lots to say about the recommendations that come forward and we'll work toward getting some positive changes implemented.

Throughout our 45 year history we have always been successful by maintaining a working relationship with the party in power. We have maintained a tradition of advocating for our members by putting forward good, well-reasoned policy positions and we will continue to do so with this new government.

In closing, I would like to once again remind everyone of our annual convention which is coming up on March 1 to 3 in New Orleans. This year our convention is running in conjunction with the Commodity Classic which promises to provide good educational opportunities for all who attend.

We have a number of interesting events planned and we really hope you will make plans to join us in the Big Easy, or at our member dinner events in Red Deer and Brandon.

As always please feel free to call or email and reach out to any of us on the board.

Wheat Growers Welcome New Executive Director



The Wheat Growers are pleased to announce that Robin Speer is our new Executive Director. Robin replaces Blair Rutter, who announced on November 2 that he would be stepping down as Executive Director, a position he has held since 2005. Blair has been a key player in the Wheat Grower's success in achieving several significant policy changes over the past decade. We thank Blair for his dedication to the Wheat Growers and wish him well in his future endeavours.

Robin Speer, originally from North Battleford, SK brings diverse experience in the agriculture industry to the Wheat Growers, having previously served as Manager of Government and Commercial relations at Viterra and as Vice President of Public Affairs at the Canadian Renewable Fuels Association. Robin has also worked extensively in the policy-making arena, including on

Parliament Hill in Ottawa, at the Saskatchewan legislature in Regina and in government relations in agriculture and other sectors.

Robin looks forward to meeting many Wheat Grower members at our upcoming dinners in Red Deer and Brandon, and at Wheat Grower events throughout the year.

To facilitate a smooth transition, Blair will be working with Robin for the next four months, and will leave the Wheat Growers following our convention and annual general meeting in March.

Please join us!

The Wheat Growers will be holding dinners for members and guests during the Agri-Trade farm show in Red Deer and Manitoba Ag Days in Brandon. Please join us to meet with your directors and our new Executive Director, and to learn about our latest policy initiatives. Here are the details on the two events:

- Thursday, November 12 at the Sheraton Hotel in Red Deer. Reception at 5:30 p.m., dinner at 6:15 p.m. Norm Woodbeck, Manager of Agri Operations for Intertek will be our guest speaker.
- Wednesday, January 20 at the Victoria Inn in Brandon. Reception at 5:30 p.m. dinner at 6:15 p.m.

Wheat Growers in Action

- On July 2 in Saskatoon, Chair Jim Wickett and Saskatchewan Director Gerrid Gust attended the announcement by Canterra Seeds and Limagrain of a new joint venture, Limagrain Cereals Research Canada, which will be developing new varieties of wheat and other cereals for prairie farmers. The Wheat Growers also issued a news release regarding the announcement, noting how this new investment was a direct result of the passage of Bill C-18 which modernized Canada's plant breeders' rights legislation. The Wheat Growers were a leading proponent of the legislation.
- In early July, Mike Bast, Manitoba Director and Blair Rutter, Executive Director attended the Grain Growers of Canada (GGC) summer meeting

in Hecla, MB. Major issues of discussion included grain transportation, trade, neonics and labelling of genetically-modified (GM) foods. GGC adopted a policy in support of voluntary GM labelling.

- On July 28 and 29, Gerrid Gust attended a Western Grains Research Foundation (WGRF) board meeting in Saskatoon. The WGRF will be spending \$18 million this year on research, including almost \$3 million toward fusarium research.
- On July 31, Fiona Jochum, summer student for the Wheat Growers, attended the AAFC wheat and oat research field day in Brandon. Emphasis in the CWRS wheat program is on improving the disease package, increasing yield, and maintaining adequate gluten strength.

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Wheat Growers in Action

- On July 31, the Wheat Growers issued a media release supporting the Canadian Grain Commission's wheat re-classification proposal, which includes the tightening of gluten strength standards in CWRS and CPS Red. The Wheat Growers also supported the introduction of a new milling class of wheat that would accommodate varieties with lower gluten strength properties. While supporting the changes to the wheat classes, the Wheat Growers also emphasized the need to encourage more grain buying on the basis of specs, as a better way to ensure farmers receive full value for their grain.

- On August 2, Levi Wood, Blair Rutter and several Wheat Grower members attended the Saskatchewan Agricultural Hall of Fame induction ceremony in Saskatoon. Wally Nelson, founding President of the Wheat Growers was among the five inductees. Congratulations Wally!

- On August 10, the Wheat Growers provided a submission to the Saskatchewan farmland ownership review. The Wheat Growers supported easing the restrictions on foreign ownership to allow farmers from other countries to acquire farmland in those cases where Canadian farmers are allowed to own farmland (e.g. the United States). In keeping with our free market principles, we also supported the purchase of farmland by investors and pension

funds providing these entities were not owned or financially backed by governments.

- On August 20, Cherilyn Nagel, Saskatchewan Director was one of three panelists to give a presentation to the JGL Group in Moose Jaw, speaking about meeting the needs and expectations of the modern grain farmer.

- On September 3, the Wheat Growers wrote to the Canadian Grain Commission, asking the Commission to allow licensed grain dealers to load cars at producer car loading sites. We

argued that making this regulatory change would provide farmers with increased marketing options and strengthen competition among grain buyers.

- On September 16, Blair Rutter attended as a guest at a Genome Canada board dinner held in Winnipeg. Dr. Curtis Pozniak of the Crop Development Centre in Saskatoon was the guest speaker, talking about how genomics is used in the development of new wheat varieties. Dr. Pozniak is part of an international team that is expected to sequence the wheat genome by 2018.

Join us in the Big Easy!

Wheat Growers 46th Annual Convention

New Orleans, Louisiana

March 1 to 5, 2016

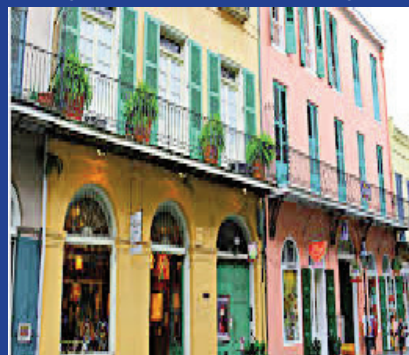
The Wheat Growers are pleased to invite you to attend our 46th annual general meeting and convention, to be held March 1 to 3 in New Orleans. Our convention will be held just ahead of the Commodity Classic farm show, which is being held March 3 to 5 in New Orleans.

The convention will kick-off with the President's reception at 7:00 pm on March 1 and will close with our banquet on the evening of March 3. Guests will then be invited to attend the Commodity Classic. A number of tours and events are planned, including a Wheat Grower riverboat cruise on the evening of March 2.

For details on the Commodity Classic, please visit:
<http://www.commodityclassic.com/home>

Convention details are enclosed with this newsletter. Please visit our website www.wheatgrowers.ca for updates.

Make plans to attend now. It promises to be a most memorable convention!





Congratulations to Walter Nelson, founding President of the Wheat Growers on his induction into the Saskatchewan Agricultural Hall of Fame on August 2, 2015. This picture was taken shortly after the induction ceremony. We have since received the following note of thanks from Mr. Nelson:

“Please extend my heartfelt thanks to the Wheat Grower board of directors and members for nominating me for this honour. It was truly a special occasion for me and my family, and is an honour we will always treasure. Best wishes for your continued success.

Yours truly,

Wally Nelson.”

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Wheat Growers in Action*

• On October 5, the Wheat Growers issued a media release applauding the conclusion of negotiations of the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade agreement. The agreement will ensure Canadian grain exporters maintain access to Pacific Rim countries on the same basis as other members of the TPP, including the United States and Australia. The deal also significantly improves market access for our beef and pork

exports to Japan, Vietnam and Malaysia.

• Levi Wood was the Canadian farmer representative to the Global Farmer Roundtable held October 12 to 16 in Des Moines, Iowa. Levi met with farmers from 14 other nations to talk about challenges facing food producers and to discuss how to promote trade and technology throughout the world.

• On October 19, the Wheat Growers issued a media release congratulating the Liberal party on its election win and thanking the Conservative party, and in particular Minister Ritz, for several important policy achievements including grain marketing freedom, modernizing plant breeders’ rights, trade agreements, and easing restrictions on variety registration.

Saskatchewan members:

Please be sure to vote in the Saskatchewan wheat and barley commission elections that are now underway. Ballots have been mailed out and must be received by the returning officer no later than December 2.

The Wheat Growers have endorsed Gene Lahey, Scott Sefton and Scott Hepworth for the wheat commission and Zenneth Faye, Daryl Fransoo and Larry Spratt for the barley commission. These candidates are running under the banner Team Wheat and Team Barley.

Don’t let your ballots get buried in your pile of mail. Send in your ballots today!



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