

# WILD ROSE



# NEWS

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FALL 2000

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

BY NEIL WAGSTAFF

### Keeping in Touch

In today's fast paced world, modern communications are becoming a necessary part of any farm business. I now carry my cell phone with me all the time and use it frequently. There are a few days that I do not get or send email. I regularly use the Internet to check out information such as commodity prices and agricultural news. Faxing is also a much-used way of communicating. The use of conference calling is often replacing face-to-face meetings.

These modern communications methods have also speeded up how rapidly government decisions are made that affect agriculture. Farm organizations such as Wild Rose Agricultural Producers need to adjust how they arrive at policy positions in order to keep up with the speed at which changes take place.

The Board of Directors and Executive of Wild Rose Agricultural Producers is given general direction on some policy issues by resolutions passed at the annual convention and from the Regional Directors Summer Council meeting. However, quite often, unforeseen issues unfold during the year to which the Board or Executive must respond.

We communicate positions we have taken in our newsletter, on our Internet Web Site, and through the media. Sometimes it is difficult to know whether we are actually reflecting the thinking of our membership.

Communication is a two-way process and members need to take the initiative to provide your Board and staff with feedback.

If you have an opinion on what we are doing or not doing, please take the time to provide us with your point of view by sending or faxing us a short note or phoning the office using our toll free number. In order to facilitate more feedback from members, we have started to develop short questions to which we are looking for responses and discussion. If you have access to the Internet, check out our upgraded web site and you will see a Chat Room section that has some questions for discussion.

Another opportunity for you to provide your input into your organization's activities is at the Regional Annual Meetings that are usually held in November and December.

*(Continued on page 2)*

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## PRESIDENT'S REPORT — CONT'D

Many farmers find they are operating in a fast paced world that is often created by the expanding workload that has developed in order to make ends meet. All too often little time is left to even consider such things as Government policies that are affecting our farm operations. Also, less and less time is spent talking with neighbours and other producers. When you do find an opportunity to visit with your farm friends take the time to remind them of the importance of supporting Alberta's General Farm Organization. If more farmers in Alberta were members of Wild Rose Agricultural Producers we could be an even more effective voice for Alberta farmers and ranchers than we are now.

## NISA WEBSITE OFFERS PRACTICAL INFORMATION

If you've been socking money away in NISA for years without making any withdrawals, taking funds out now might be the right thing to do. The cash could help you through a year that for many crop producers looks financially challenging. Even if you don't actually need the money, however, a low-income year offers the opportunity to withdraw government contributions and tax-sheltered interest at a low or zero tax rate. That's especially good strategy if you are nearing retirement, at which point you could find yourself forced to withdraw taxable NISA funds in years when you have a high marginal tax rate. NISA offers a toll-free number (1-800-665-6472) to call with questions, but a more helpful (and accessible) tool is the NISA website which offers specific information and examples that help producers understand their options. Take a look at [www.agr.ca/nisa/side/part.html](http://www.agr.ca/nisa/side/part.html). 16/08/00

### A REMINDER

Be sure to make your NISA deposit before December 31. Leaving it to the very last day may not be a wise decision – what if there is a raging blizzard that day, and you can't make it to the bank?

For new participants, remember that you must open a NISA account at your bank or financial institution. A NISA account can be opened with a zero balance. If the producer has a valid trigger the government portion of your matchable deposit will be deemed, or deposited into your account, **but only if you have opened an account at your financial institution or bank.** If you did not have a valid trigger, you must make your matchable deposit in order to qualify for the matchable government portion.

### FREE MEMBERSHIPS

**Free?** Wild Rose Agricultural Producers is offering a free, special, time limited offer, for membership renewals and new membership registrations.

**Offer?** Every individual who renews or joins us for the first time, will receive 3 free associate memberships. He or she can then distribute these free memberships to friends and neighbors.

**Why?** It is important that producers in Alberta have a voice speaking out on their behalf on issues affecting rural Alberta today and in the future. With more members, the voice of Alberta producers, through Wild Rose, will resonate louder and louder.

**How?** With every membership renewal and new signup, we will be sending out 3 forms. These forms can be distributed and then sent in to the office for associate membership registration.

Offer good until January 2001

**Call: 1-800-506- CARE (2273)**

**Animal Care Alert Line**

**If you have concerns regarding the care of livestock;**

**If you are experiencing management problems**

## BY-LAW AMENDMENT

The following amendment to the Wild Rose Agricultural Producers Constitution and Bylaws are to be discussed at the 2001 Annual Convention.

1. Section 9 F presently reads as passed at the Annual Convention on January 14, 2000

Be It Resolved that the Board of directors recommend that the Board size be expanded to nine members and that one of the nine seats be set aside and reserved for the appointed representative of Women of Unifarm.

2. Passed at the Board of Directors on October 23, 2000

Moved by Robert Filkohazy

Seconded by Elaine Jones

**Be It Resolved that the Board of Directors recommend that the Board size be nine members.**

Carried

### Being a farmer isn't just a nine to five job ~ it's a way of life.

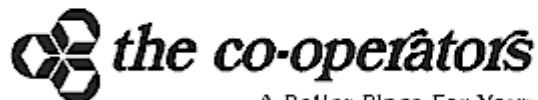


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## OILPATCH STAKEHOLDERS HELP ADR COME TRUE

It's been called "another tool in the toolbox". It's been described as "something between the kitchen table and an EUB hearing." It's been experienced as "the right thing to do." It's "appropriate dispute resolution", ADR for short, and it's coming true in Alberta with the help of Alan Holt, who will represent the the Wild Rose Agricultural Producers on the new multi-stakeholder standing committee.

"I see this process similar to a happy marriage. Communication of the parties involved is absolutely necessary. Although neither party gets their way all the time, with people giving and taking (and talking) most situations can be resolved amicably and everyone involved can be a winner," said Alan Holt. "This ADR process is simple, cost effective and less stressful than other settlement processes," he added.

The Alberta Energy and Utilities Board (EUB) is enabling the petroleum industry, Alberta land owners, groups concerned about the environment and other parties affected by oil and gas exploration and development to resolve disputes in a collaborative manner. The EUB's ADR program – an approach to resolving conflicts -- will be formally 'rolled out' this fall.

The EUB is on schedule for the introduction of an expanded ADR system and interest in dispute resolution approaches in the oilpatch is building. A Board Information Letter on ADR is being drafted now to detail the program and the expectations the Board will have of stakeholders.

The EUB's ADR system has been developed by Albertans for Albertans thanks to a steering committee of representatives from stakeholder groups involved with the upstream petroleum industry. Called the "steering committee", this group came together a year ago with the common interest and commitment to improv-

ing the options available to parties in dispute.

Their work came to a successful conclusion with the approval in June by the EUB of the Report for Implementation of an Appropriate Dispute Resolution System for Alberta's Upstream Petroleum Applications which is available on the EUB web site at [www.eub.gov.ab.ca](http://www.eub.gov.ab.ca)

A new "standing committee" representing the major stakeholders will now assist with the implementation of the EUB's ADR system as described in the report and provide ongoing assistance and advice. Joining the members of the original steering committee are: Judy Huntley, representing the AEN and Stuart Simpson, from the community of ADR professionals in Alberta.

In addition to Mr. Holt, also bringing continuity to the new standing committee are the EUB's Bill Remmer as chairman and:

- Dave Brown from the Sunde Petroleum Operators Group (SPOG)
- Bob Garies, representing the Canadian Association of Petroleum Landment (CAPL)
- Dean Lien, the Farmers' Advocate
- Les Miller, for the Alberta Surface Rights Board
- Joanne Nutter, representing the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP)
- David Savage, representing the Small Explorers and Producers Association of Canada (SEPAC) and the Calgary Chamber of Commerce.

Arden Berg and Brad McManus are continuing in their role as the EUB's Board sponsors. The EUB's Stephen Smith, will be an advisor to the standing committee regarding EUB process and procedures as will consultant Dave Gould of Canadian Dispute Resolution Corporation regarding the EUB's ADR approach described in the Report for Implementation. The EUB's Mika Madunicky is

providing support to the committee.

The Board would like to express appreciation to steering committee members Ross Douglas, Mary Helen Posey and Dave Pryce for their support in building the strong framework for this important program.

Under the program, involved parties can draw on third party "neutrals" if needed. There was a strong response to the EUB's call for expressions of interest from the ADR community to participate in the program and one of the first tasks of the standing committee now will be to finalize a roster of ADR experts. The EUB's request for proposals from firms to provide interest-based facilitation training to staff also enjoyed a strong response. As well, the Canadian Association of Petroleum Landmen is planning to offer training programs to the industry related to appropriate dispute resolution.

A communications professional, Judi Gunter, was also contracted this summer to develop a comprehensive plan to "get the word out" to stakeholders and the public about the EUB's ADR program and to receive feedback. Once the EUB's Information Letter is published in the late fall, watch for scheduled information meetings, special events, articles in news, community and trade media, web-based information and print materials.

Stay tuned.

-30-

For more information, please contact:  
Bill Remmer P.Eng.  
Coordinator ADR Services  
Alberta Energy and Utilities Board  
(403) 297-8174

# PRESENTATION TO THE CANADIAN TRANSPORTATION ACT REVIEW COMMITTEE BY WILD ROSE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCERS OCTOBER 4, 2000

## Preamble

On May 12, 1999 the federal government announced its decision to use a report of Justice Willard Estey as a policy framework for improving the grain handling and transportation system. Justice Estey made the following recommendation in his report:

*It is recommended that the provisions of the CTA relating to various methods of seeking access to other connecting rail lines be simplified and clarified so as to better serve the national interest in obtaining competitive and efficient transportation by rail. The general object of this recommendation is the opening up of the Canadian rail system to competition by and between all competent railway operators, including short-line railways. Competency shall be determined by the Agency.*

*The CTA currently allows only a federal railway to apply to the Agency for authority to run over the lines of another federal railway. In order to broaden the application of the running rights provision, it is recommended that the words "any person" be substituted for the words "railway company" in the current statutory provision. The bramblebush created by the courts as to what is and what is not federal need not be resolved in order to achieve the remedy sought by the grain shipper.*

*The new provision would offer open access to the existing CN and CP lines provided fair compensation is paid and that certain conditions are met. Fair compensation should, at a minimum, cover the costs of the owner of the railway lines, but concomitantly ensure that the owner cannot block access by charging unreasonably high fees. Conditions imposed may include a requirement that would-be operators must carry adequate insurance and meet license, safety and other statutory requirements.*

The agency would in all such applications consider the public interest in granting or refusing a running rights order. As well, since granting running rights on main lines might significantly reduce the capacity of those lines, the Agency would be required to assess whether granting the access would affect the capacity of the rail line in question.

## What are producers looking for?

In the discussions surrounding the Kroeger review, the Provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta distributed a dis-

ussion paper on performance targets. Specifically, the performance targets are as follows:

- On time delivery - right time
- Inventory levels that meet customer demand - right product
- Reduction in producers' total handling and transportation costs - right price
- Equitable sharing of reductions in total grain handling and transportation costs by producers - fair price

In essence these criteria represent those areas where producers and producer groups have tried to focus debate – the delivery of the right product, to the right place, at the right time, for a fair price. Undoubtedly, it would have been easier to address these concerns in one package, but, unfortunately, this did not occur. We are now left with discussions on how to proceed with access provisions while other components of the grain handling and transportation system sputter forwards or lag behind.

## Open Access and Effective Rail Competition

Agricultural producers need to be thought of as somewhat unique in the bulk shipping arena. Whereas most, if not all, bulk shippers are able to pass on the cost of transportation in the sale of their commodity, agricultural producers are unable to do so. They are the true "captive shipper". Furthermore, according to CN, "the percent of farming locations within 36 miles of two major railways ... is 52%... in Alberta,"\* (\* CN response to "Railway Competition" paper by Terry Whiteside) by far the lowest of all the prairie provinces.

In the producer paper entitled **Grain Transportation – Meeting Farmers Needs** written by Wild Rose Agricultural Producers, the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities and Keystone Agricultural Producers, there was strong support recommending open access as the long-term goal for a competitive rail sector. From the information presented throughout the Estey-Kroeger grain handling and transportation review, there was no definitive evidence to cause Wild Rose Agricultural Producers to reconsider this position. In fact, the need to introduce open access provisions has increased dramatically.

The rail situation in Alberta is somewhat unique when compared to other prairie provinces. Approximately one third of the rail sector is comprised of regional railroads. Elevator rationalization is continuing at a rapid pace and is much further along when compared to either Manitoba or Saskatchewan. New 50 and 100 car spot elevators are quickly becoming the norm.

While the construction of high throughput elevators has, and will hopefully continue, to provide some economic benefits to some producers, the simple fact remains that railways do not compete with each other. Subsequently, farmers are unable to obtain the economic benefits that competition could generate. In particular, producers in southern Alberta and northern Alberta are served by a single railroad. Despite what the railways have said in the past, trucking does not represent an effective option to rail service.

### Ways of Introducing Competition

#### Interswitching and Competitive Line Rates

History shows us that interswitching and competitive line rates have been an ineffective tool in providing producers with competitive rail service. Presently, interswitching only applies if a second, federally operated railway is located within a 30 km. radius. As noted above, about half of the farming population in Alberta is not located within 36 miles or 65 km. of two railroads. In order to enhance the competitive features inherent in interswitching, **we would recommend that the CTA look at expanding the radius of origin to a minimum of 60 kilometers and a maximum of 80 kilometers.**

For all intents and purposes, competitive line rates are an extension of interswitching. If the line rate costs is too much, interswitching will not occur. Presently, the maximum rate that can be charged is 7.5% above variable costs. We do recognize that railways must have the ability to administer their own assets. What we do not want is for railways to put forward economic barriers to detract from competition. Therefore, we would **recommend that the 7.5% rate structure be reviewed with a view to lowering the rate to enhance competition.**

Furthermore, the requirement that the shipper must prove commercial harm if a competitive line rate application is not granted needs to be re-evaluated. In its place, **we recommend that, in the event**

**a CLR is not negotiated between a shipper and a railway, the railway must present to the CTA the reasons why "it is not in the public good" for the application to proceed.**

In addition, a shipper who makes application for a CLR should be able to access the Final Offer Arbitration process if there are any difficulties regarding rates. The FOA process should also be applicable to interswitching provisions.

#### Running Rights – Open Access and Reverse Onus Access

As outlined previously, Wild Rose Agricultural Producers sees little need to deviate from the majority position outlined in the report of the Competition and Safeguards Working Group of the Kroeger Committee. **To begin with a "reverse-onus" public interest test for running rights should be implemented as soon as possible and that full open access be a long-term goal for the system.**

The concept of shifting the burden of proof respecting the public interest from the operating railway to the owning railway merits implementation if only to bring forth the fear of competition.

Under the "reverse-onus" system, any person could apply for running rights on the line of another railway. The applications would continue to be considered by the CTA on a case-by-case basis. The CTA would presume that increased competition is in the best public interest, and rather than requiring the applicant to prove the public interest, the owning railway would have to satisfy the CTA that the proposed operations are detrimental to public interest. The legislation would provide that the CTA will give primary emphasis to the interest of shippers. Once running rights are granted, the owning railway and operating railway would negotiate access fees, terms and conditions that are "commercially fair and reasonable". The Agency would have the power to arbitrate disputes. (Grain Transportation Reform – Meeting

Farmers' Needs by WRAP, KAP & SARM)

Certainly, the railways' concerns regarding:

- a) competency, safety and insurance standards
- b) fair compensation
- c) mainline capacity
- d) public interest

needs to be addressed. Both a) and b) are legitimate concerns and we believe that commercial negotiations could alleviate those concerns. The last two concerns, however, are not valid in our estimation. The concept that "cherry picking" would be the result of this type of commercial arrangement seems unfounded. The only way in which this would occur, (given the substantial advantage an existing carrier should have) would be if unreasonable rates were already being charged.

As for their concern about the public interest, throughout the Kroeger process the railways maintained that competition is in the public interest. It would appear on the surface, however, that competition is good so long as the railways don't have to engage in it any further than they claim to do already.

Once the "reverse-onus" access provisions have been adopted, there should/could be steps taken to a full open access system. In the optimum situation, any railway company who meets safety fitness and insurance requirements would have the right to operate on and over the lines of any other railway. Once full open access has been implemented, a contestable, functioning, competitive rail system should exist and producers should see economic benefits.

#### Other Competitive Measures

Certainly, there are other features that may enhance the competitive nature in the rail sector. Car ownership, re-  
*(Continued on page 7)*

## Presentation to the Canadian Transportation Act Review Committee - Cont'd

*(Continued from page 6)*

gional rail systems, port restructuring, road construction, and branchline enhancements all may prove beneficial in designing a more competitive overall grain handling and transportation system. However, for producers in north-western Alberta, none is nearly so important as to link rail lines between Alberta and British Columbia (BC Rail and RaiLink). This route could serve as an alternate route to port for grains and oilseeds potentially reducing costs. The ability for provincially regulated railways to work on inter-provincial commercial relations would certainly act as a potential competitive feature in the rail business. We recognize that there are many difficulties to overcome in this regard (grade, car transfers, etc.), but it does represent an important alternative that needs to be explored.

As mentioned previously, other alternatives exist. However, Wild Rose Agricultural Producers believe that it is imperative that competitive measures, in whatever form, need to be introduced immediately, not only for the sake of the grain handling and transportation system, but for the very livelihood of grain producers.

## AN UPDATE ON THE UNIFARM HISTORY BOOK

The good news is that our writer, Carrol Jaques finished the manuscript in March 2000. After a few minor suggestions by our Editorial Committee, it was submitted to the University of Calgary Press which agreed to publish the book, contingent on recommendation of their selected readers of the manuscript. This group recommended a thirty percent cut in the manuscript. Our Editorial Committee decided that they would not go below ten percent, and if this was the case, they would look for another Publisher. Jaques made the reduction stating that it likely was an improvement, but no more could be cut without jeopardizing contents and analyses in the book.

This delay is frustrating to the Editorial Committee. A major theme in the manuscript is the problem of making policy decisions by the elected Boards and Committees for the thousands of producer members, combined with the various Boards and Commissions. To the Editorial Committee, this was one of the important messages, and a reason for its' 10% maximum cut. All our expenses have been paid up to the first manuscript, but the funds for publishing will require additional support before any books can be distributed.

**Submitted by Dr. Alf Petersen, Unifarm History Book Society Chair**

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Canada



# MANAGING YOUR MINERAL RIGHTS

The year 2000-2001 will see 16,000 new oil and gas wells being drilled in Alberta, and some of these will be on land where individuals hold the mineral rights. In many cases, the Government of Alberta holds the rights, however, individuals (freehold mineral owners) and companies also hold title to minerals and receive royalties from the production obtained.

A concern is always present with individuals who hold mineral rights because of lack of information on their value, their benefits and their limitations. For these reasons, owners of mineral rights should be cautious and careful when negotiating any activity that takes place on or around their holdings.

Mineral rights are quite simple, as an owner you should expect to receive a portion (usually 12% to 20%) of production. The developer, who bears the costs and risks of exploration and production, acquires the balance. Conditions apply in regards to production off adjacent lands and with pooling of production. However, none of these conditions need concern anyone if the contract that the mineral holder and leasing company (energy co.) agree upon is simple, straightforward and fully explained. The mineral holder in most cases is unfamiliar with this type of contract and of course, an over zealous land agent doesn't explain the so-called fine print.

The Farmers' Advocate Office daily answers questions from mineral owners as to their contractual obligation and privileges in signing a lease agreement. "This question of leasing mineral rights is one of the most common calls we receive," states Farmers' Advocate, Dean Lien, "and we provide advice based on common sense to the mineral owners to avoid pitfalls prior to signing leases." There is a variety of leases being used and, before anyone signs the lease (or contract), they should be completely satisfied with the contents of the agreement. One caution would be that as an owner of mineral rights you can agree to lease whenever you please – don't be pressured with someone at your kitchen table advising you that you must sign now. Details of the lease are completely negotiable. When in doubt about a lease you may want to contact the Freehold Petroleum and Natural Gas Owners Association at 1403 – 12 St. SW, Calgary, AB T3C 1B6, Telephone: (403) 245-4438. This group represents mineral right holders and works to avoid the pitfalls that are easily misused by persons whose expertise is in other fields and not lease agreements.

If you are uninterested or unable to negotiate on behalf of yourself, some enterprising entrepreneurs are willing to take on this responsibility. Unfortunately, in exchange for their management services, you may end up paying a handsome fee based on a percentage of your share of the production. As well, these mineral right managers may require you to enter into a binding agreement that defers all decisions regarding mineral production to their firm. Before signing an agreement to let someone else manage your mineral rights, investigate the contract thoroughly and be satisfied with the accountability, control and costs of program.

Mineral rights can be a great asset that you may hold on to for years receiving no benefit. Only when production or possible production comes along does it begin to pay, and it can pay very well. Those persons thinking of transferring their mineral rights should consult an accountant for advice regarding the implications of capital gains. If commercial production has commenced, it can be a shock for an estate when the mineral rights and royalty income are subject to an evaluation. The increase in value may add significantly to the capital gains costs of an estate.

For the vast area comprising Alberta, there are not as many freehold mineral rights owners as one would think – the message is hold them, lease them intelligently and reap the benefits.

**For further information please contact:**

**Farmers' Advocate Office**

**#305, 7000 – 113 Street**

**Edmonton, AB T6H 5T6**

**Telephone: (780) 427-2433**

**Tell Free: RITE Directory, 310-0000 and ask for 427-2433**

## BREAK EVENS FOR ALBERTA AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES – 2000

The new millenium has brought many opportunities and challenges for Alberta farmers and ranchers. In order to give a sense of how farms have fared during the year, Alberta Agriculture's Economics Unit has prepared a set of break even projections through to the end of 2000 for selected crops, cow/calf and farrow-finish hog operations.

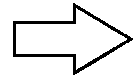
On the crop side, producers budget based on spending a certain amount per acre with the expectation of achieving sufficient yield to cover their costs and provide them with a return on their investment. The break even analysis in the counties of Leduc and Foremost reflect this. Production cost summaries are presented on a per acre basis for spring wheat, feed barley and canola (herbicide tolerant) and are accompanied by the yield level required to break even over selected levels of costs. For example, with spring wheat in Leduc County, seed, fertilizer and chemical costs add to roughly \$68/acre. To cover these expenses, a yield of 19.4 bushels/acre is required to cover these costs (at the expected market price of \$3.50/bu).

On the livestock side, the approach is slightly different in presenting projected break evens for the year. Cow/calf enterprise break even estimates are provided on the basis of market price required to cover cost categories (holding weaning weights constant) and lbs. weaned per cow required to cover cost categories (holding market prices constant). The presentation is similar for the farrow-finish operations (using market prices and hogs sold per sow per year).

### Crop Break Evens:

Weather, commodity prices and rising unit costs have been the over-riding factors affecting crop production in Alberta for 2000. The following break even tables for Leduc and Foremost indicate that good crops are needed in both areas to cover total costs at the estimated prices. For 1999, good yields helped to alleviate the relatively low market price of grain. This year, however, with lower yields, many farmers will cover variable costs and only part of the fixed costs. In the extremely dry Foremost area, yields for some farmers will not even cover variable costs. The difference may come from crop insurance, FIDP and/or owner's equity.

insert crop tables here]



At the bottom of each table, we've shown, by crop, the estimated yield for 2000 and a 10 year average yield for the previous 10 years. Foremost yields are well below average and Leduc yields are slightly above average for cereals. When comparing the long term average yields with the required breakeven yields, it is noted that an average yield rarely covers all costs. Although there have been structural changes in the cropping business over the past ten years, this shortfall in required yield highlights that farmers in both areas need to practice effective cost control, pay particular attention to the mix of crops they grow, and maintain their vigilance in pricing and marketing their crops. Many farmers are doing a better job managing all three of these areas. It should be noted that total costs include some non-cash costs that can provide a short-term cushion in tight years. Depreciation, labour, and land ownership are some cost items that need not be recovered in every year, depending on the individual situation.

The break evens give us a few clues as to what we're facing as we look forward to 2001. First, there doesn't appear to be any significant relief in sight on the commodity pricing side. As well, we may be carrying forward soil moisture shortages to 2001 in some areas. Both of these will have to be kept in mind in preparing our cropping intentions for the upcoming year.

Foremost, Year 2000 Cost and Return Estimates							
	Spring Wheat*		Feed Barley		Argentine Canola		
Expected Market Price (\$/bushel)	4.00		2.40		5.20		
<b>Direct Expenses:</b>	<b>\$/Acre</b>	<b>Breakeven Bu/Acre to Cover Expenses</b>	<b>\$/Acre</b>	<b>Breakeven Bu/Acre to Cover Expenses</b>	<b>\$/Acre</b>	<b>Breakeven Bu/Acre to Cover Expenses</b>	
Seed (Incl. tmt. and cleaning)	7.00		6.00		12.00		
Fertilizer	13.00		13.00		16.00		
Chemicals	15.00		10.00		20.00		
		8.8		12.1		9.2	
Other Variable Costs	57.63		58.16		59.61		
		14.4		24.2		11.5	
<b>Variable Costs</b>	<b>92.63</b>	<b>23.2</b>	<b>87.16</b>	<b>36.3</b>	<b>107.61</b>	<b>20.7</b>	
<b>Fixed Costs</b>	<b>41.50</b>	<b>10.4</b>	<b>41.50</b>	<b>17.3</b>	<b>41.50</b>	<b>8.0</b>	
<b>Total Costs</b>	<b>134.13</b>	<b>33.5 bu/acre</b>	<b>128.66</b>	<b>53.6 bu/acre</b>	<b>149.11</b>	<b>28.7 bu/ac</b>	
<b>2000 estimated yield</b>	<b>18 bu/acre</b>		<b>35 bu/acre</b>		<b>12 bu/acre</b>		
<b>10 year average yield (1990-99)</b>	<b>32.2 bu/acre</b>		<b>46.1 bu/acre</b>		<b>21.5 bu/acre</b>		
* #1 CWRS @ 13.5% protein			Fixed costs include a land rental equivalent of \$20/acre.				
10 year average yield from Agricultural Financial Services Corporation							
Source:	Economics Unit -- Alberta Agriculture, Food, and Rural Development 2000 Cropping Alternatives						
<a href="http://www.agric.gov.ab.ca/economic/product/index.html">http://www.agric.gov.ab.ca/economic/product/index.html</a>							

LEDUC, YEAR 2000 COST AND RETURN ESTIMATES							
	Spring Wheat*		Feed Barley		Herbicide Tolerant Canola		
Expected Market Price (\$/bushel)	3.50		2.10		5.20		
<b>Cost Categories</b>	<b>\$/Acre</b>	<b>Breakeven Bu/Acre to Cover Expenses</b>	<b>\$/Acre</b>	<b>Breakeven Bu/Acre to Cover Expenses</b>	<b>\$/Acre</b>	<b>Breakeven Bu/Acre to Cover Expenses</b>	
Seed (Incl. tmt. and cleaning)	10.00		8.00		18.00		
Fertilizer	33.00		33.00		40.00		
Chemicals	25.00		20.00		25.00		
		19.4		29.0		16.0	
Other Variable Costs	60.77		60.10		62.13		
		17.4		28.6		11.9	
<b>Variable Costs</b>	<b>128.77</b>	<b>36.8</b>	<b>121.10</b>	<b>57.7</b>	<b>145.13</b>	<b>27.9</b>	
<b>Fixed Costs</b>	<b>67.00</b>	<b>19.1</b>	<b>67.00</b>	<b>31.9</b>	<b>67.00</b>	<b>12.9</b>	
<b>Total Costs</b>	<b>195.77</b>	<b>55.9 bu/acre</b>	<b>188.10</b>	<b>89.6 bu/acre</b>	<b>212.13</b>	<b>40.8 bu/ac</b>	
<b>2000 estimated yield</b>	<b>50 bu/acre</b>		<b>75 bu/acre</b>		<b>28 bu/acre</b>		
<b>10 year average yield (1990-99)</b>	<b>45.2 bu/acre</b>		<b>57.1 bu/acre</b>		<b>29.1 bu/acre</b>		
* #2 CWRS @ 12% protein			Fixed costs include a land rental equivalent of \$35/acre.				
10 year average yield from Agricultural Financial Services Corporation							
Source:	Economics Unit -- Alberta Agriculture, Food, and Rural Development 2000 Cropping Alternatives						
<a href="http://www.agric.gov.ab.ca/economic/product/index.html">http://www.agric.gov.ab.ca/economic/product/index.html</a>							

## ALBERTA AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES - CONT'D

### Cow/Calf Break Evens:

The 2000 production year will be remembered by those in the cattle industry for its exceptionally high calf prices. With the cattle cycle at its peak and calf prices running at 7 year highs, many cow/calf operators experienced positive returns this year. That being said, it most certainly wasn't a picture perfect year for everyone. Severe drought conditions in the North West and Peace River Regions during the summer of 1999 hurt forage and pasture yields, driving up 2000 winter feeding costs. Margins in both areas were directly affected, with the Peace Region farmers projected to have negative returns (over total production costs), despite the strong calf prices. In addition, severe drought in Southern Alberta during this past summer forced many ranchers to sell calves early, and in some cases, even liquidate some or all of their herds. Fortunately, high calf prices are expected to be the saving grace in maintaining positive margins for the 2000 production year.

[insert cow/calf table here ]

<b>Break-Even's for Alberta Cow-Calf Operations (2000)</b>											
	<u>South</u>		<u>Central</u>		<u>North East</u>		<u>North West</u>		<u>Peace River</u>		
	\$/cwt sold	lbs weaned per cow	\$/cwt sold	lbs weaned per cow	\$/cwt sold	lbs weaned per cow	\$/cwt sold	lbs weaned per cow	\$/cwt sold	lbs weaned per cow	
<b>Break-evens to cover:</b>											
Winter Feed & Bedding	43.96	147.08	63.48	211.94	46.40	163.92	57.45	203.02	71.84	235.96	
Direct Operating Costs	96.17	321.73	115.40	385.27	106.86	377.53	123.66	437.01	155.60	511.02	
Total Cash Costs	81.93	274.08	97.82	326.57	89.02	314.50	107.94	381.45	135.79	445.97	
Total Production Costs	113.98	381.33	132.62	442.75	122.87	434.10	138.51	489.48	174.15	571.96	
Lbs Weaned/Cow (expected)	493.93		500.19		519.66		519.81		483.09		
Expected Mkt Value (\$/cwt sold)		\$147.64		\$149.82		\$147.09		\$147.09		\$147.09	
<b>Assumptions:</b>											
calf crop: 90% (50/50 split on hfrs & str)											
cull rate: 12%											
58% steer/42% heifer market price.											
Own Hfrs retained to replace culls.											
Gross Revenue includes weaned calf sales plus net breeding herd sales											
All feed valued @ current market value											
Direct Operating Costs includes unpaid operator labour cost											

Looking ahead to 2001, calf markets are expected to remain reasonably close to 2000 levels. This should help to support the revenue side, although areas hit with drought this year will likely experience significantly higher winter feed costs, similar to what happened in the Peace the previous year. Ranchers in Southern Alberta are already feeling the brunt of this summer's drought, with forage markets really beginning to heat up. To put things into perspective, for every \$10/cow jump in winter feeding costs, producers will have to either produce an additional 8 lbs of weaned calf/cow, or else hope for average calf prices \$8.20/cwt above this fall's levels just to maintain the margins experienced in 2000. The longer term implications of dealing with drought conditions could take years to work their way out of the industry. Given our current position in the cattle cycle, replacement heifers laid in during 2000 and over the next few years will be costly. In a business based on cost control, it becomes very difficult to make a herd founded on expensive breeding stock profitable. Consequently, operations forced to liquidate significant portions of their herds this year will have to strive for high productivity and exercise very tight cost control to remain viable.

## ALBERTA AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES - CONT'D

### Farrow-Finish Break Evens:

The hog market rebounded significantly in 2000 from the dismal prices that plagued much of the 1998 and 1999 production years. With stronger support on the revenue side and low feed grain prices, it shouldn't come as a surprise that most hog producers fared quite well this year. However, some challenges do lie ahead for the upcoming year. With utility prices slated to skyrocket this winter, there is no doubt that production costs will be going up. A 40% jump in utility costs over 2000 levels will erode profits by about \$0.025/dressed kg sold. In addition, hog prices are predicted to dip once again in 2001. In order to overcome these obstacles, hog producers will have to strive to increase productivity, while paying close attention to managing the costs that they do have control over.

<b>Hog Enterprise Break-Even's (2000)</b>							
<u>Farrow-Finish</u>							
	\$/kg drs. sold	hogs sold per sow					
<b>Break Evens to cover:</b>							
Feed Costs	0.75	8.18					
Direct Operating Costs	1.16	12.27					
Total Cash Costs	1.15	12.18					
Total Production Costs	1.35	14.32					
Hogs sold/sow:	17.64						
Market Value (\$/kg drs.):		\$1.65					
<b>Assumptions:</b>							
Avg. Sale Weight: 88 kg drs							
Avg. Index: 110							
<b>Additional Notes:</b>							
-Two break-evens are provided here:							
-One to identify the market value needed to cover various costs, assuming that productivity remains constant.							
-The second illustrates the productivity levels required to cover various costs, assuming that the market value for hogs remains constant.							

**REGION 7 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 29, 2000  
EDGERTON HALL  
\$10 FOR SUPPER AND PANEL DISCUSSION ON ILO'S  
CONTACT BILL DOBSON AT 780-745-2442 FOR INFORMATION**

## ALBERTA AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES - CONT'D

### Upcoming Projects:

This winter, the Economics Unit will be working with grain farmers across the province to assess costs & returns during the 2000 crop year. We will be looking for growers in all soil zones, both dryland and irrigated, who are interested in identifying their own cost per acre and per bushel. In addition to receiving individualized cost & returns reports at the enterprise level, participants will also receive a whole farm balance sheet & income statement. The true value from taking part in this project comes from comparing individual numbers to benchmarks. There is no cost incurred by any participants, and all personal information is kept strictly confidential. If you are interested in participating in this study, please call Renn Breitkreuz at 780-422-3122 by November 15, 2000. The study will commence shortly after the new year.

Should you have any questions or comments on these materials, please contact:

Renn Breitkreuz  
Production Economist - Crops

*renn.breitkreuz@agric.gov.ab.ca*  
780-422-3122

Jake Kotowich  
Production Economist - Livestock

*jake.kotowich@agric.gov.ab.ca*  
780-422-3086

## CANADIAN WHEAT BOARD CANDIDATE FORUMS

Wild Rose Agricultural Producers are once again hosting a number of candidate elections forums for candidate to the Board of Directors of the Canadian Wheat Board. Come out and attend these important events.

### **For District 2**

**November 16, 2000**  
**November 17, 2000**  
**November 21, 2000**  
**November 22, 2000**

**At the Camrose Legion @ 1:00 p.m.**  
**At the Clive Legion @ 2:00 p.m.**  
**At the Brooks Legion @ 1:00 p.m.**  
**At the Drumheller Inn @ 1:00 p.m.**

### **For District 4**

**November 7**  
**November 7**

**At the Killam Legion @ 2:00 p.m.**  
**At the Castor Legion @ 7:00 p.m.**

### **Federal Election Strategy** by Neil Wagstaff - President

As Federal election campaigns unfolds, Agriculture is likely to take a back seat as far as important issues are concerned. I encourage all members to take the time to make sure that candidates in their ridings and urban ridings realize that there are important Agricultural issues that need to be addressed.

Agricultural producers are a small minority even in rural communities and unless we all become more active politically our needs are going to be easily overlooked. Please participate when ever possible in election activities and raise the level of awareness and concern about farm issues.

# WILD ROSE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCERS CONVENTION PLAN TO ATTEND!

MARK JANUARY 11 AND 12TH, 2001 DOWN ON YOUR CALENDAR NOW.

**T**HIS YEAR'S CONVENTION WILL BE HELD AT THE RED DEER HOLIDAY INN ON THURSDAY, JAN. 11 AND FRIDAY, JAN. 12. ONCE AGAIN, THURSDAY MORNING AND AFTERNOON WILL BE DEVOTED TO SEMINARS AND PANELS. THURSDAY EVENING WILL BE THE OPENING BANQUET AND FRIDAY WILL BE COMPRISED OF ASSOCIATION BUSINESS. PLEASE TRY TO ATTEND REGIONAL MEETINGS WHERE RESOLUTIONS CAN BE DISCUSSED AND DEBATED FOR PRESENTATION AT THE CONVENTION. A FORMALIZED AGENDA AND REGISTRATION FORMS WILL BE MAILED OUT TO ALL MEMBERS IN MID TO LATE NOVEMBER. VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT [WWW.WRAP.AB.CA](http://WWW.WRAP.AB.CA) FOR MORE CONVENTION NEWS.



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**Presentation to the Crop Insurance Review**  
**By Neil Wagstaff**  
**August 15, 2000**

**O**n behalf of the members of Wild Rose Agricultural Producers, I would like to thank the committee members for this opportunity to address you on Crop Insurance. Most of the points I will be making are not new ideas or needs. They have been expressed by Farm Organizations, individuals, and even the Alberta Safety Net Coalition in presentations made to Administrators and Board panels in the past.

This leads to **our first recommendation**. A change needs to be made to the Administrative structure, so that a better ongoing review mechanism can be in place, which has the ability to make necessary changes that can improve Crop Insurance for producers.

The most common concern we hear expressed is that crop insurance does not provide adequate coverage. This is created by two factors; low commodity prices and historic yields that do not reflect current yield capabilities. New technology and changing practices mean that many grain producers have increased their yield expectations and potentials during the past few years.

**We recommend** that producers be given the option of using a shorter reference period for calculating historic yields averages. A five-year average would make sense.

Hail is not the only type of loss that can occur on a very localized basis and not affect all the fields of a particular crop for a producer. Spot loss coverage needs to be provided for all crops for other types of losses that occur as a result of unusual circumstances. Extreme weather has a way of doing things on a very localized basis, which can cause a significant loss. However, the resulting overall average for a producer for that crop may not be low enough to provide any coverage for such a loss. A couple of examples in my area are; the recent tornado and the 6" of heavy wet snow that fell during the July 15/99 snowstorm. The snow seriously damaged the canola on one of my quarters and never snowed 4 miles away on other land. Why should such losses be any different than a hailstorm?

By providing all risk spot coverage, Alberta Crop Insurance could be innovative and lead the private sector hail insurance companies into providing better coverage for other types of spot losses.

One large loss, especially if it occurs on the only field of a particular crop, can cause the average yield to be decreased significantly for a number of years coverage into the future. Severe crop losses from abnormal or extreme weather occurrences should not be yield index reducers.

There is a need to provide more categories of grain and oilseed types to recognize differences between yield and potential value. We are long over due to differentiate between: Polish and Argentine canola; CPS and Extra Strong Wheat; and possibly varieties of peas and barley that have different yield potentials and which are produced for different markets.

**Some other changes to consider:**

The size and geographic boundaries of many crop districts needs to be studied and revised to better reflect comparative production capabilities.



## **Presentation to the Crop Insurance Review Cont'd**

In many areas continuous cropping is producing yields just as good as summer fallow. Why do we continue to have higher yield coverage for summer fallow for producers who have not summer fallowed one acre for more than 10 years?

As producers endeavor to produce more and more on a per acre basis, their input costs also tend to increase. Re-seeding compensation needs to continually be reviewed as new cropping methods are adopted.

In today's modern world of communications, the effective date and time for hail insurance coverage should not have to be the next day (24 hours). Something like 4 to 6 hours would be more reasonable. The argument that farmers would then take out insurance when hail is predicted is unreasonable, since hail is spotty and can occur at any time in Alberta. Any producer doing such would be gambling and not purchasing insurance.

To be fairer to producers and crop insurance, hail storms earlier than July 1 should have settlements deferred until after harvest. In some cases crops will recover only to be caught by an early or normal frost. In other situations a totally destroyed crop can end up producing above average yields.

### **Summary of Recommendations:**

1. That the Administrative structure be changed, so that a better ongoing review mechanism can be in place, which has the ability to make necessary changes that can improve Crop Insurance for producers.
2. That producers be given the option of using a shorter reference period for calculating historic yields averages. A five-year average would make sense.
3. Spot loss coverage needs to be provided for all crops for losses other than just hail when they occur as a result of unusual circumstances.
4. Severe crop losses from abnormal or extreme weather occurrences should not be yield index reducers.
5. There is a need to provide more categories of grain and oilseed types to recognize differences between yield and potential value.

**REGION 2 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2000 @ 10:00 A.M.  
AT THE HIGH PRAIRIE AG PLEX  
CONTACT: CLAUDE SMITH @ 780-523-5154 FOR DETAILS**

# LETTER TO WILD ROSE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCERS

## BY EILEEN NAGEL

Today I received your "WRAP NEWS". I always enjoy being brought up-to-date.

But today I am really SAD!! I expected to see somewhere - the appropriate place would have been the front page, an article from your Board stating how tragic it was that the Women of Unifarm were forced to close its doors. They should have been paid a tribute for 85 years of hard work and dedication for their contribution to improving rural life in Alberta. Whatever your biases re - the Women of Unifarm are, should have been set aside and the "right" thing should have been done. You should have honored them. Even a small article would have sufficed. But no mention from your Board is like a slap in the face.

I have been gathering artifacts of General Farm Organizations in Alberta from the past almost 100 years. It was the "men" in the early years, 85 years ago, that saw the benefit of having a "women's section" in the organization. They knew what an advantage it would be - And it was!

Through the years we were partners. UFA-UFWA, FUA-FWUA, UNIFARM-WOMEN OF UNIFARM. Hundreds of men and women worked and sacrificed a lot (together) in order to improve life in this province.

You, the Board of Directors - if you were born and raised in this province benefited from the work of these women.

I commend Mr. Dean Lien for his article in your paper. Mr. Lien was involved at a young age with the farm organization of the day. I appreciate his comments. He understands what we lost when we lost the Women of Unifarm.

We are all farmers. How can we expect respect from other segments of society when we can't expect it from our counter-part. The Women of Unifarm received letters from many segments of agriculture expressing their concern that they had to close the doors. Not a word from the WRAP Board.

I feel very sad today as I'm sure are hundreds of farm women across our province. We have done our best. We have made a difference. The province is a better place because we did our bit. Too bad the WRAP Board doesn't see it that way.

*Note to Eileen: The Board of Wild Rose Agricultural Producers thanks you for your input. We met with the Women of Unifarm in June and discussed how we could assist in ensuring their efforts in areas such as farm safety would continue to be maintained. In addition, we also felt Mr. Lien did an excellent job on expressing our gratitude to the Women of Unifarm.*

## IMPORTANT NOTICE

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**E-MAIL: [wrap@planet.eon.net](mailto:wrap@planet.eon.net)**

## PRESIDENT NEIL WAGSTAFF' S ACTIVITIES SUMMARY

August 1 Participated on a panel @ Rail Coalition Conference in Regina  
 August 15 Presentation to Crop Insurance Review  
 August 18 WRAP Board Meeting held by Conference call  
 August 22 Contacted Lyle VanClief's office regarding Southern Alberta drought situation.  
 Telephone call with Ken Ritter CWB Chairman  
 Sept. 1-13 A lot of phone Calls re: Grain Companies request for Mediator with CWB  
           Neil Silver Agricore  
           Marvin Weins Sask Pool  
           CWB Directors  
 Sept. 6 Conference call with KAP & SARM Re: CWB grain Co. impass  
 Sept. 8 Conference call with CWB, SARM & KAP  
 Sept. 13 Speaker phone hookup with meeting of SARM, KAP & Western Grain Elevator Association.  
 Sept 15 Conference call with KAP & SARM Re: CWB grain Co. impass  
 Sept. 20 CFA president Bob Friesen visited at my home for 4 hours  
 Sept. 22 CFA Board of Directors Conference call  
 Oct. 5 CFA conference call Re: farm income situation  
 Oct 6 Attended Briefing with Minister Ty Lund on Acreage payment  
           Attended Press conference Re: acreage payment  
           Attended Agriculture Hall of Fame induction banquet

### YES! I wish to join Wild Rose Agricultural Producers



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	<b>3 - Year</b>	\$ _____	<b>(\$288.90)</b>
	<b>Associate</b>	\$ _____	<b>(\$ 53.50)</b>

Wild Rose Agricultural Producers, 14815 - 119 Avenue, Edmonton, AB, T5L 4W2

Telephone: 780-451-5912 Fax: 780-453-2669 e-mail: wrap@planet.eon.net

# WILD ROSE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCERS DIRECTORY OF OFFICIALS

EXECUTIVE		Telephone	Fax	Area Code
<b>President</b>	Neil Wagstaff, Box 593, Elnora, T0M 0Y0	773-3599	773-3599	403
<b>1st V.P.</b>	Keith Degenhardt, Gen. Del., Hughenden, T0B 2E0	856-2383	856-2383	780
<b>2nd V.P.</b>	Terry Murray, Box 2936, Wainwright, T9W 1S8	842-2336	842-6620	780

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Adam Campbell	Box 66, Rosalind, T0B 3Y0	375-2133	375-2133	780

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	Cliff Richards, RR 1, Sexsmith, T0H 3C0	766-2266	766-2537	780
Region 2	Claude Smith, Box 1863, High Prairie, T0G 1E0	523-5154	No Fax	780
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Region 4	George Quaghebeur, Box 143, Thorhild, T0A 3J0	398-2465	398-3748	780
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Region 9	George Friesen, RR 4, Lacombe, T0C 1S0	782-2408	782-1678	403
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Region 11	Paul Marshall, Box 179, Delia, T0J 0W0	665-2363	665-2363	403
Region 12	Contact –	---		
Region 13	Ken Graumans, Box 85, Seven Persons, T0K 1Z0	832-2451	832-2044	403
Region 14	Paul Thibodeau, 5204 – 47 Street, Taber, T1G 1G6	223-9087	223-0174	403
Region 15	Contact – Jim Allan, Box 133, Berwyn, T0H 0E0	338-2260	No Fax	780

## OFFICE ADMINISTRATION

<b>Executive Director</b>	Rod Scarlett	451-5912	453-2669	780
		e-mail: <a href="mailto:wrap@planet.eon.net">wrap@planet.eon.net</a>		
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