

# WINTER CEREALS

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Incorporating  and  News

# GROWER

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OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF WINTER CEREALS

## KERNELS OF ASSOCIATION NEWS

### GARTH BUTCHER JOINS WGRF

Garth Butcher, Chair of Winter Cereals Manitoba Inc. assumed the Winter Wheat position on the Western Grains Research Foundation Board of Directors at the spring 2010 WGRF meeting. The winter wheat position had previously been filled by a representative of the Alberta Winter Wheat Producers Commission.

During 2009 Winter Cereals Manitoba Inc., the Saskatchewan Winter Cereals Development Commission and the Alberta Winter Wheat Producers Commission reached an agreement wherein the WGRF winter wheat position would rotate between the three organizations on a four year basis. Winter Cereals Manitoba Inc. will provide the representative to the board for the next four years. Following WCMI the Saskatchewan Commission will hold the position for four years, followed by the AWWPC. The three producer groups will work together to ensure that information is shared between the three groups and that the views of winter wheat producers in all three prairie provinces are clearly outlined to the WGRF.

At this time the WGRF is undertaking a major study concerning how the organization will use the interest and possibly some of the money recently received from the rail companies. At the March 10, 2010 Annual General meeting of Winter Cereals Manitoba Inc. Chairman Garth Butcher told those in attendance that now was the time for producers to speak out and let their voice be heard. He pointed out that the money available for research came out of farmers pockets through overpayment of freight charges. Since the money was essentially "farmer's dollars" it is important that producers, through their representative organizations like WCMI, send their views to the WGRF. This is possibly a once in a lifetime opportunities for producers to make a huge difference in the future of cereal research.

In a March 22, 2010 letter to a diverse group of 54 different organizations that are involved in Canadian Agriculture, Dr. Keith Degenhardt, Chairman of the WGRF outlined how the organization may allocate funding for critical research over the foreseeable future.

"Each year, WGRF plans to approve funding for 5-year Directed Research Program (DRP)

projects worth one-half million dollars per year, so that by 2015 a projected \$2.5 million will be spent annually on DRP projects. By 2015, the amount spent on projects under the LOI (Letter of Intent) process for small projects will rise to about \$825,000. Earnings from Endowment Fund investments are forecast to support these annual spending targets. However, the targets will be reviewed annually and adjusted up or down based on what Fund earnings will support. A portion of the Endowment Fund principal may be spent if such expenditure is required in order to support beneficial projects. However, a key goal will be to ensure that a base level of the Fund principal is protected over time so that WGRF can sustain a consistent and reliable long term research program for crop producers."

Dr. Degenhardt indicated that there has been a specific set of steps developed for allocating funds through the DRP. He further indicates "The steps will be repeated annually, with new crop research priorities being added and the high ranked proposals from the previous year going back into the mix for consideration. This means proposals that do not receive funding one year but which are ranked as high priority are not lost but will be carried forward for possible funding the next year."

Through this process and this new infusion of badly needed money into the research community your three organizations, Winter Cereals Canada Inc., Winter Cereals Manitoba Inc. and the Saskatchewan Winter Cereals Development Commission believe that producers will reap a bountiful harvest of new varieties and technologies that will increase farm productivity and profitability for generations to come.

The key to success will come from producers sharing their thoughts and research concerns with organizations that have a place at the WGRF decision making table. Please take time to contact your WCMI or SWCDC board members, or our business office with your ideas. You can be assured that as your representatives we will incorporate your suggestions into our written proposal to the WGRF.

### SWCDC CHAIRMANS AGM REPORT, Rod Fedoruk, Kamsack SK

The last year has been a year of learning for

the Saskatchewan Winter Cereals Development Commission (SWCDC). As a now firmly established entity in the winter cereals industry we learned that we can be a strong voice for Saskatchewan producers at all levels of the industry due to our ability to fund and direct research. We learned that like everything else there are personalities and politics that must be managed to achieve our goals.

We learned our initial vision for the future does not require change. We see winter cereals as a growing industry, and that growth will require an investment in many different facets of research. Therefore the SWCDC spent a considerable amount of time and effort over the last year discussing how we can move the industry forward through investing in research.

The SWCDC cannot reach our goals by being an insular organization. Therefore we are working with our sister organizations in Alberta and Manitoba towards funding new critical research in agronomic practices. In conjunction with Manitoba, Alberta, Ducks Unlimited and Agriculture and Agri Food Canada we have developed a proposal for a significant agronomy research project under the federal Diversity In Agriculture Program.

The SWCDC, Winter Cereals Manitoba Inc. and Ducks Unlimited are also working towards the establishment of the Pan Prairie Winter Wheat Breeding Project. This project will be our largest commitment to driving change through new varietal research and we believe it will speed the development of critically needed new varieties.

During 2009 we learned that there may be changes coming in the grading structure for Winter Wheat in Western Canada. The SWCDC is actively participating in this process which involves both the Canadian Grain Commission and the Canadian Wheat Board. It is important that we as your

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# KERNELS OF ASSOCIATION NEWS *(cont'd. from page 1)*

representatives understand your feelings on this issue. Please feel free to contact our office or any one of your directors at any time to discuss winter cereals issues.

## WCMI CHAIRMANS AGM REPORT Garth Butcher, Birtle, Mb

In the past two years we have been fortunate to be farming in a situation where demand for our products was outstripping supply. This situation appears to be changing in the short term, particularly in cereal grains. But we cannot just stop growing cereals. They are important to our cropping systems, particularly as far as crop rotations are concerned but cereal grains have to remain profitable.

One way to remain profitable is to produce a crop of high quality. As far as winter wheat is concerned this means a product that is

harvested in good condition, with good test weight and low in vomitoxin. At that point you have a product that is desired by all buyers, the milling, feeding or ethanol industry. It is worth more!

That is where WCMI comes in. We need improved varieties, more resistant to disease – particularly Fusarium Head Blight. These varieties need good winter hardiness, early maturity, high yield and in high rainfall areas they must resist lodging. We are providing financing to breeding programs to fund this end.

There was a lot of work done on agronomy in the late 1970's and early 1980's but we have not learned a great deal since then. We need a concentrated look at alternatives to the traditional planting of winter wheat on canola stubble. Canola often isn't harvested in time

to plant winter wheat. WCMI is involved in agronomic research to solve this concern.

Financing research is not our only function. Hopefully we are providing a link between research and producers. Researchers want to know they are on the right track. They want guidance and feedback. WCMI should and will provide that necessary link

One positive accomplishment of WCMI is that we have gained a seat on the WGRF board. We will serve on that board for the next four years and then the position will be rotated to the winter cereals group in Saskatchewan and Alberta. It is an exciting time to be present at the WGRF with the huge infusion of funds from railway overpayment.

Please contact our office or one of your directors to discuss winter cereals issues and research priorities at any time.

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## **CWRW – CHANGE IS IN THE WIND – ELIGIBLE VARIETIES TO BE ADJUSTED**

Late in 2009 Winter Cereals Manitoba Inc. and the Saskatchewan Winter cereals Development Commission entered into discussions with the CWB and the Grain Commission concerning streamlining the CWRW grade classification to make Canadian winter wheat more competitive on world markets. Developments related to the Canada Western Red Winter (CWRW) wheat class over the past several years provide an opportunity to change CWRW variety classification and marketing options in response to market demand and farmer needs. Your organizations held meetings with the CWB and participated in conference calls hosted by the Canadian Grain Commission. In addition presentations were made at both the SWCDC and the WCMI Annual General Meetings by the CGC and producers had opportunities to ask questions and voice concerns directly to CGC Commissioners.

The driving force behind the proposed changes is a need to provide a consistent source of high quality, Milling Quality winter wheat to the world markets. This requires that some varieties that are currently classed as CWRW be moved out of the class and into the recently created General Purpose grade. Additionally the current "Select" designation for the highest quality varieties will be discontinued.

There is a detailed discussion document available for interested producers. The document may be found on the Grain Commission website as indicated in the information provided below by the Grain Commission or producers can contact the Winter Cereals Canada Inc. office and we will provide the information. The Canadian Grain Commission has provided the summary of information below as a general outline of the proposed changes.

### **From the Canadian Grain Commission - Proposed changes to the CWRW variety classification**

The Canadian Grain Commission (CGC) and the Canadian Wheat Board (CWB) have proposed:

- Reclassifying some varieties in the Canada Western Red Winter (CWRW) class
- Changing CWRW grades

These proposed changes would:

- Develop a consistent supply of CWRW with desirable milling qualities
- Allow CWRW to compete effectively with U.S. hard red winter varieties
- Ensure farmers continue to have access to high yielding varieties aimed at the feed and fuel markets

#### **Current situation**

Currently, 13 varieties are registered in the CWRW class. The CWB has divided these varieties into 2 categories: Select (with 8 varieties) and Generic (with 5 varieties).

#### **Select**

- Are higher-quality milling varieties
- Have at least 11% protein content
- Marketed to domestic and overseas customers for flour milling

#### **Generic**

- Are high-yielding varieties
- Have desirable agronomic qualities (e.g. improved fusarium resistance)
- Often do not meet quality specifications desired by millers

All new varieties registered must meet the current quality standard for CWRW.

#### **What is the proposed change?**

On August 1, 2013:

- Select and Generic would no longer be used in the CWRW class by the CWB.
- All of the varieties now in the Select category would remain eligible for the CWRW class.
- All of the varieties now in the Generic category would become eligible for the CWGP class.

There would be a transition period of at least 3 years. Farmers and industry would receive first notice of any changes on August 1, 2010. Reclassification would happen on August 1, 2013.

The variety CDC Falcon would be re-classified in 2013, if a new replacement variety with similar agronomic factors is commercially available. The transition period for CDC Falcon may be extended if alternatives are not yet commercially available.

#### **Proposed grade standards change**

Grade standards changes have been proposed for August 1, 2011. The proposed changes:

- Will be brought to the spring meeting of the Western Standards Committee for consideration
  - Would set a minimum grade specification of 11% protein for #1 and #2 CWRW
- Would create a #3 CWRW grade for deliveries with less than 11% protein. Other grading factors such as percentage of sprout-damaged or fusarium-damaged kernels (FDK) would remain.

#### **More information and your comments**

Variety eligibility lists and the complete discussion document are available on the CGC's web site: [www.grainscanada.gc.ca](http://www.grainscanada.gc.ca).

We want your comments on these proposed changes to the CWRW class. Send an email to:

Melanie Gustafson, Policy Economist, Canadian Grain Commission      [melanie.gustafson@grainscanada.gc.ca](mailto:melanie.gustafson@grainscanada.gc.ca)

**Disclaimer: The views expressed in this newsletter are those of each individual author and do not necessarily represent the views or opinions of Winter Cereals Canada Inc., its officers, employees or members.**

## FROM THE CWB: Producer groups endorse new plan for winter wheat

As most winter wheat farmers are now aware, the Canadian Wheat Board (CWB) and the Canadian Grain Commission (CGC) have proposed changes to the Canada Western Red Winter (CWRW) wheat class.

The changes are intended to increase the milling quality of the class and to address farmer concerns that CWRW be more competitive with U.S. Hard Red Winter, according to Lawrence Klusa, the CWB's quality control manager.

The first round of consultations with producers wrapped up March 5 with mostly positive comments, he said.

"It's not surprising because winter wheat farmers themselves have been asking for changes," Klusa said. "This proposal just reflects what farmers and customers have said they want."

The proposal was sent to 30 stakeholder groups for feedback. Producer groups in Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Alberta have

endorsed the plan, and the Wheat Subcommittee of the Western Standards Committee gave its stamp of approval in March.

Under the proposal, generic CWRW varieties would be classified as Canada Western General Purpose (CWGP). The current Select varieties would be retained in the CWRW class, with the "Select" designation dropped. The grade standards would also be changed to provide minimum protein specifications for No. 1 CWRW and No. 2 CWRW at 11 per cent. A new No. 3 CWRW variety would be added that would not have a minimum protein level.

According to the latest CWB variety survey, Select varieties now make up about three-quarters of all winter wheat grown on the Prairies. The proposal would move the five non-Select CWRW varieties – CDC Clair, CDC Harrier, CDC Kestrel, CDC Raptor and CDC Falcon – to the new general purpose class

"The higher milling quality Select varieties would essentially become the red winter class," Klusa said.

Finding a suitable replacement for CDC Falcon for producers on the Eastern Prairies was the main issue flagged during consultations, Klusa noted. CDC Falcon is widely-grown in Manitoba and, because there isn't a suitable alternative, it may be initially retained in the CWRW class.

Two new Select quality varieties were approved this year and could be available to farmers within a few years, Klusa said. One of these varieties looks like it has potential as a CDC Falcon replacement for the Eastern Prairies.

The non-Select CWRW varieties will be moved into the general purpose class by August 1, 2013. Klusa said far-forward implementation date should give farmers time to adjust to the changes.

Find the full text of the proposal at [www.cwb.ca](http://www.cwb.ca) under Farmers < Growing Grain < CWRW proposal.

## NEW FORECASTING TECHNOLOGY INTRODUCED AT WCFMI GENERAL MEETING

Participants at the 2010 WCFMI AGM were introduced to new forecasting technologies that in the not too distant future may help producers make decisions on when to spray. Ian Nichols from the Chatham, Ontario company, Weather INNOvations introduced the company's management programs that are designed to use weather data collected from multiple sources to predict site specific fusarium levels (DONcast®) and also to guide producers on the best times for pesticide application over a three day period (SPRAYcast®).

Nichols explained that the DONcast® model was developed to provide wheat producers with a means to predict deoxynivalenol toxin accumulation for better efficiency in spray decision timing. His company has the ability to produce DONcast® estimates for the quantity of deoxynivalenol toxin (DON in p.p.m.) produced by Fusarium sp. that will accumulate in wheat within a specific geographical area. The predictions are based on a determination of the heading date, (75% of the heads in a canopy completely emerged from the flag leaf) for the calculation. These DON predictions use local weather forecasts for your fields. This forecasted data is then supplemented with observed data from weather stations. DON predictions before the crop has actually headed are generally less reliable than those where heading has already occurred, mainly because more observed data is available to the model.

DON predictions generally become more reliable as the forecasted weather data is updated with observed data. DON predictions are meant to serve as a guide to alert producers of potentially high DON levels for specific wheat markets; high DON levels – according to tolerance levels established by various wheat market destinations – may warrant a timely application of a fungicide. DON predictions for individual fields vary depending on the wheat variety, crop rotation, tillage, planting date, soil type, and local weather conditions. Site-Specific DONcast® has the potential of becoming a much more precise tool than regional maps that may have been previously available. At this time Ontario producers have the ability to enter this data and generate daily reports through internet access to the program.

Nichols advised participants that SPRAYcast® uses decision support criteria, developed by Environment Canada, incorporated in a 3 day weather forecast. Growers can choose their field location, to obtain weather forecast data pertinent to their field operation. SPRAYcast® will identify times during the day that are more or less favourable for spraying. Nichols added that even when times are not opportune for spraying the job still has to be done. SPRAYcast® will help producers make the best out of what may be a less than optimum situation.

Weather INNOvations has begun collecting data relative to Manitoba and Saskatchewan and there is a strong possibility that these programs may be available for the 2011 crop season or earlier. In Manitoba MAFRI has been working with WI on the necessary inputs for SPRAYcast® and this program will probably be the first introduced on the prairies if funding and sponsorship details can be finalized.

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