



Manitoba Flax Growers Association

November 2013

Volume 9, Issue 1

MB Ag Days 2014

Stop by the MFGA booth
January 21, 22 & 23

Special points of interest:

- CropConnect Conference 2014
- MFGA Annual General Meeting
- Flax Health Claim

In this issue:

Re-constituted Flax Seed Ready to Launch	2
Farm Stewardship Program for Flax	3
Flax Acres, Yield, Production and Price	3
CropConnect Conference 2014	4
Flax Health Claim	4



A message from our Chair!

Manitoba farmers that grew flax in 2013 will be very pleased as they market their crop. Early reports suggest good yields and flax prices have remained strong with excellent delivery opportunities.

Our organization, in cooperation with the Saskatchewan Flax Development Commission and the Flax Council of Canada, is working together to create a strong research program to move flax forward as a competitive crop for Canadian farmers. Enhanced weed control, improved genetics, disease management, and improved crop management are all to be examined. We believe these topics need to be addressed to keep flax a viable crop choice for Manitoba producers.

In recent years it has been a challenge to attract a viable level of attendance at our Annual Meeting. We have tried several different locations and meeting formats and have recruited some terrific speakers, but have not been able to attract a reasonable number of members. I believe the changing size and workload of the modern farm is the main reason for this problem. Today's farmer just is too busy to attend the number of meetings they could attend through the year. We are very pleased this year to become part of the CropConnect Conference 2014 (www.CropConnectConference.ca). This will be an opportunity to be part of a multi-commodity conference that will allow the progressive farmer to find out what is new in most of the crops they produce in one format. We are putting forward a terrific agenda and believe farmers will appreciate this opportunity to learn and network in a more time efficient way.

The Triffid flax story is familiar to all Manitoba flax growers and we are all pleased at the progress made to date. We are asking that all flax growers participate in the "2014 Reboot the Flax Industry" effort. The reconstituted seed from the Crop Development Centre will be available next year. This means all certified seed is clear of traces of Triffid and we ask that all growers use certified seed in 2014. Farmers, government, the Canadian grain industry and our flax customers have absorbed increased costs and expended a huge amount of effort to deal with this issue. This is really our only opportunity to completely clean it up and have a chance to return to normal marketing at some point in the near future. Even a few farmers using common seed could undo this effort so we ask that all producers participate.

Flax continues to be a great crop choice for 2014!



CropConnect Conference

Registration Now Open!

Registration for the 2014 CropConnect Conference is now open at www.CropConnectConference.ca. The conference is scheduled for February 18 & 19, 2014 at the Victoria Inn Hotel and Convention Centre in Winnipeg, MB.

Re-constituted Flax Seed Now Available!

Todd Hyra, SeCan

SeCan members have good supplies of re-constituted flax seed available for sale for the upcoming season.

"I am very proud of the cooperation and communication during every stage of the re-constituted seed process" stated Todd Hyra, Business Manager, Western Canada for SeCan.

Industry participants (Crop Development Centre, the Flax Council, SaskFlax, Manitoba Flax Growers, Canadian Seed Growers and SeCan) have been working since fall 2009 to launch Certified seed of re-constituted flax for spring 2014. SeCan seed growers have re-constituted seed supplies of four varieties: CDC Bethune, CDC Sorrel, CDC Sanctuary and CDC Glas. *CDC Glas* is seen as a replacement for CDC Bethune. It offers improved standability and a 105% yield advantage in the black soil zone (103% average of CDC Bethune over all zones). *CDC Sanctuary* is viewed as a replacement for CDC Bethune in the brown soil zones, averaging 105% of CDC Bethune in the dryer areas of the Prairies.

Seed growers were very impressed with the flax yields in 2013.



All SeCan seed growers agreed to dispose of previous stocks of CDC Bethune and CDC Sorrel so that only seed lots originating from re-constituted seed are available for 2014 and into the future.

It was important to start with a zero "source" seed supply with the re-constituted seed. But as important, has been the process for multiplying the seed. SeCan growers, in cooperation with the CSGA, agreed to additional certification requirements including extended crop rotations and restricted use of seeding, harvesting, and processing equipment.

Seed customers looking for a re-constituted seed supply are encouraged to ask their seed supplier for a "Re-constituted Flax Seed Certificate". This is a declaration made by the seed grower, verifying the seed lot originated from re-constituted Breeder seed and that the necessary steps were followed to keep it clean. All re-constituted seed can be traced to the original re-constituted Breeder seed lots.

Hyra stated, "We will have approximately one-third more Certified seed than we had last year – which is great. But if demand for flax is strong in 2014, we may still sell out." Flax producers are encouraged to speak to their seed retailer as early as possible to reserve their seed supply. "The sooner everyone moves to the re-constituted stocks, the sooner we can put Triffid behind us."

Hyra expects the price of re-constituted seed to be in line with Certified seed of other varieties.

Flax producers may ask – if I move to re-constituted seed will I still have to test for Triffid? The short answer is yes. But longer term, we hope as the frequency of positive tests moves closer to zero, the requirement for testing every lot of seed and grain will be relaxed.

For a list of SeCan members growing re-constituted flax seed or for more detailed variety information, visit www.secan.com.



Farm Stewardship Program for



William Hill, President, Flax Council of Canada

The Flax Farm Stewardship Program is an important part of the flax industry's efforts to reduce the amount of CDC Triffid in the Canadian flax crop. Since the program of testing planting seed and crop production was introduced four years ago, the percentage of samples of crop production testing positive for Triffid has dropped from 14% to below 2.5%. In addition, the level of Triffid (as measured by the number of the four sub-samples testing positive) has also been reduced significantly. This favourable result has been achieved through an extraordinary cooperative effort by flax producers, seed companies, grain handlers, flax processors and exporting companies and government. The Farm Stewardship Program, along with rigid testing protocols being employed by exporters and processors, has allowed Canadian exports and production to rebound from the historical low levels seen two years ago.

Despite these efforts, the amount of Triffid in farm-saved seed stocks and production tested has plateaued in the last two years. That is why we are asking flax producers to participate in a series of steps that will bring the level of CDC Triffid down even further.

The first step is to segregate your 2013 production (this year's harvest) from production grown in previous years. Market the flax grown in previous years first. Marketing older production first along with the low carryout stocks of the last two years will help to ensure stocks containing Triffid will be "flushed" from the system. The next step is to replace your planting seed stocks with pedigreed seed (including the re-constituted CDC varieties). This will ensure that the seed that goes in the ground in the spring of 2014 is Triffid-free. The final step is to segregate your production in 2014 from inventory produced in previous years.

Throughout these final steps, continue to have your planting seed and crop production tested. It is expected that testing of farm stocks will be discontinued at the end of 2014 and the testing of planting seed will continue indefinitely. The current federal government funding which provides a 50% reduction in producer testing costs will remain in place until the end of this year or until the allocated funding is exhausted. Producers are encouraged to have their stocks tested as early as possible to take advantage of available funding. The Flax Council of Canada is currently exploring ways to extend funding for the program through to the end of 2014.

The flax industry is in the final stages of a five-year effort that has included rigorous testing at all points in the value chain, from seed growers through to exporters and processors and an intensive process to rejuvenate the current planting seed supply. This cooperative effort has produced encouraging results to date. The continued effort over the next year and a half are expected to reduce the amount of Triffid in the Canadian flax crop to a level that is as close to zero as possible and to the point where testing of farm stocks is no longer necessary.

Harvested Acres, Yield, Production & Price

Year	Seeded Acres	Harvested Acres	Yield (bu/ac)	Production (MT)	Price/MT	Value ('000)
2008	251,574	244,465	25	155,243	500	\$77,621
2009	275,433	259,903	28	184,853	400	\$73,941
2010	153,061	148,216	19	71,533	412	\$29,471
2011	86,400	76,180	15	29,026	532	\$15,441
2012	125,770	112,290	17	48,489	582	\$28,220
2013	78,363	75,000	28	53,343	600	32,005

* 2013 harvested acres, yield, production and price are estimates.

* Seeded acres, harvested acres from MASC Seeded and Harvest Acreage Reports. Prices from Saskatchewan Agriculture.



Manitoba Flax Growers Association

465–167 Lombard Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3B 0T6
Ph: 204-982-3990 Fx: 204-982-2128
E-mail: mfga@mymts.net
www.mfga.ca

MFGA's ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Tuesday, February 18th, 2014 (CST) @ 1:50 p.m.

*Victoria Inn Hotel & Convention Centre
Winnipeg, MB.*

Register at www.CropConnectConference.ca



**CropConnect
Conference**
February 18th and 19th, 2014
Victoria Inn Hotel & Convention Centre, Winnipeg, MB

Come join us for...

- Two **intense** days of Speakers!
- A Tradeshow with access to Crop Specific information!
- The CropConnect "**Banquet**"! Come celebrate our outstanding Ag Community!
- The "Farmer's Saloon" Networking Event! Strap your boots on and have a "hoot" of a good time!

Early-bird registration is open from November 4th - January 17th

For more information on the event or to register, visit:
cropconnectconference.ca



Science Heralds new Health Claim for Flaxseed!

The flax industry has known for decades the value of this unique seed for health and wellness and there is no doubt of a strong and growing global marketplace for healthy foods. Food manufacturers and consumers are interested in utilizing flaxseed due to its highly desirable omega-3 fatty acids, antioxidants and fibre. Demand will grow even further with more good news for flax and health.

In early August 2013, Health Canada's Food Directorate indicated that they will be recommending the approval of a health claim for flaxseed and blood cholesterol lowering. This will allow food manufacturers to clearly state on labels the relationship of flax consumption to a reduction of blood cholesterol, a major risk factor for coronary heart disease. The formal acceptance and publication of this claim is expected in late fall of 2013.

This claim is one of only ten allowed in Canada for foods and ingredients, which demonstrates the significant rigor that is placed upon the scientific criteria demanded by Health Canada. Over 1000 references were initially reviewed. Following strict application of the inclusion and exclusion criteria required by Health Canada, seven studies were of the quality demanded for the claim.

In their very rigorous requirements, Health Canada insists that health claims need to be supported by a high level of certainty, meaning that most of the studies must support a statistically significant favorable effect. Studies showed that by lowering total and "bad" (LDL) cholesterol, flaxseed intake may decrease the risk of coronary heart disease by about 3 to 15 percent.

Based on the science, the minimum effective daily dose of ground flaxseed is recommended to be 40 g (just over 2 Tbs), an amount that can be easily incorporated into foods on a commercial level or added to a variety of foods in the home.

Health claims can make a big difference in the food and drink market, where healthy products are now outpacing "conventional" products in terms of global growth by about 4% a year.

When health claims appear on product packages consumers become alerted to the health potential of the food. Consumer purchase of such products has a huge ripple effect along the value-chain. Small and medium-sized flax companies will benefit from the interest by food companies that the claim will generate. The awareness that the health claim will create in the marketplace will bring new value-added opportunities for the flax producer. The acceptance of the flaxseed-cholesterol relationship by a well respected agency such as Health Canada provides support for the remarkable potential of flaxseed in health and wellness. This claim will not only build Canadian markets but will have far outreaching effects for other international markets as well.