

# Crop Adviser Chronicle

The Official Prairie Certified Crop Advisor Board Newsletter

Winter 2005

## Chair's Message

Last year's crop will be a memorable one for many CCAs. Aside from the relentless rains in eastern Manitoba, most areas of the Prairie Region reported record-breaking yields. While the 2005 production levels were due, in part, to favourable moisture conditions, CCAs should also take some credit. Undoubtedly, information provided by you, and your colleagues, helped farmers capitalize on these opportunities. Keep up the good work!

Looking ahead to 2006, the outlook for the Spring season is summarized with one word - "mixed". Enthusiasm stemming from last year's high yields, coupled with good soil moisture reserves is being quelled by low commodity prices and high input costs. Now more than ever, farmers will be seeking top notch production advice to maximize their agronomic efficiencies and return on investments - a role tailored to CCAs. The CEU training you participate in this winter will be critical to addressing the current needs of Canada's producers.

While you concentrate on agronomic advice, the PCCA Board remains focused on managing your Program at the regional level. In December 2005, the Board structure underwent a couple of changes for the New Year. During the Fall meeting, the Board elected Lyle Cowell as Vice Chair. Lyle is the elected Provincial Representative for Saskatchewan, and is an agronomist with Saskatchewan Wheat Pool. He will assume the Chair's role following the Fall 2006 meeting. In addition, Jack Payne was elected by his colleagues to represent their interests on the PCCA Board. Mr. Payne is an Instructor at Olds College who trains many future CCAs.

On a more international level, did you know that of the 38 local CCA boards across North America, only the Prairie Region has an online CEU application form. Because of this, and other creative initiatives (e.g., communication package, on-line self study CEUs, the annual "CCA of the Year" award, etc.) the PCCA Board received special kudos for its marketing efforts at a recent International CCA meeting. Many other local boards look

to the Prairie, and Ontario, Boards for guidance relating to CCA communication activities. This is a testament to the active involvement of all CCAs in Canada - especially in the Prairie Region. If you would like to volunteer your services to the Board: helping administer the CCA exams; joining a Board Committee; or promoting the program at agricultural tradeshow, contact the PCCA Administration office today at (204) 989-9307.

Finally, the Prairie Board is reminding all members to be proud of their designation. You worked hard to obtain it, so make sure you always promote the value of the CCA acronym to your customers. I look forward to seeing you at the upcoming CEU training events this winter!



Norm Flore, P.Ag., CCA



**The Prairie Board is always looking for feedback on the operations of the PCCA Program. Contact the Board members via the website at [www.prairiecca.ca/contact/index.htm](http://www.prairiecca.ca/contact/index.htm)**



## Alberta CCA Report

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself to my fellow Alberta CCAs. I want to thank you for electing me as your Regional representative, and I will do my best to represent your interests on the Prairie Board.

I had a chance to meet some of you at the CAAR Crop Management Forum in Red Deer on November 18<sup>th</sup>. I want to thank those who approached me with their comments and suggestions. This kind of dialogue makes my role more effective. Your feedback will make our program more valuable and visible over time. Over the next three years, it is my commitment to attend as many major agronomic conferences as possible, to maintain contact with Alberta's CCAs.

If you have any comments or concerns regarding the CCA program, please contact me by phone, at (403) 507-7940, or via e-mail, at [jpayne@oldscollege.ca](mailto:jpayne@oldscollege.ca). I look forward to seeing you at FarmTech 2006 in Edmonton.

J.C. (Jack) Payne, P.Ag. CCA



## And the Membership Remains...

The following chart details the number of individuals recognized as Certified Crop Advisors, on December 2005.

Region	Number of CCAs
British Columbia	7
Alberta	327
Saskatchewan	235
Manitoba	201
Ontario	461
Atlantic Canada	48
Other (Quebec, Russia, Spain)	16
Canada (total)	1,292
United States (total)	12,616
<b>North America (total)</b>	<b>13,908</b>

Attention all CCAs. Visit [www.agronomy.org/cca/index.html](http://www.agronomy.org/cca/index.html) for tips on applying for CEU credits. Remember, all completed applications must be faxed to the CEU Chair, Gary Martens, at (204) 474-7528.

## Continuing Education Comment

To maintain your status as a CCA, you need to earn 40 CEU credits in a two year cycle. One half, (i.e. 20 credits) must be board-approved, and come from attending CEU accredited events. You can also complete self study articles, and write the quiz, to get

additional credits. These self study articles are all considered Board-approved.

Since only 20 Board-approved credits are required, CCAs can earn the remainder through the self-reporting option. If you attend a meeting that does not offer credits, but you think CEUs could have been assigned in any of the five categories: Nutrient Management; Soil and Water Management; Pest or Crop Management; or Professional Development, visit the ASA website,

[www.agronomy.org/cca/ceu\\_reporting\\_form.html](http://www.agronomy.org/cca/ceu_reporting_form.html), and self-report your credits. However, remember to retain the agenda, proceedings, and other meeting information for CEU audit purposes.

The Prairie Board reminds its members they also are eligible to earn a maximum of five Professional Development (PD) CEUs every two years. This training includes: ethics; computer courses; sales training; etc. While CEUs are typically associated with agronomic training, it is essential for the membership to encourage organizers of non-agronomic events to apply for credits. This will help increase attendance for the sponsor, and provide the CCA certified attendees with added value. For a complete list of PD topics visit [www.cropdecisions.com/cca/caadv200212.pdf](http://www.cropdecisions.com/cca/caadv200212.pdf)

Visit the Prairie CCA Board's website at [www.prairiecca.ca](http://www.prairiecca.ca)

## **Maternity / Paternity Leave of Absence – New Policy**

The PCCA Board adopted a new CEU policy for CCAs who take maternity (or paternity) leave. If a CCA is going on leave, they can now request that the Standards and Ethics Committee review their current credit status, and assign an appropriate CEU requirement during their leave of absence.

Prior to their leave, CCAs are encouraged to contact Michelle Lovejoy, at the American Society of Agronomy, to discuss the start and end dates of the leave of absence. Her contact information is:

**Michele Lovejoy  
CCA Representative  
American Society of  
Agronomy  
677 South Segoe Road  
Madison, WI 53711  
Phone: (608)268-4953  
Fax (608)273-2081**

Michele will send the applicant's request to the Prairie Standards and Ethics Committee for review, along with other pertinent information, such as: the number of CEUs collected to date; and the start and end date of the applicant's two-

year CEU cycle. The Committee will determine the appropriate number of CEUs the CCA is required to earn over the CEU cycle(s) the leave of absence may cover.

Maternity (or paternity) leaves are considering extenuating circumstances where, at a maximum, the CCA would be required to make up all deficiencies within the next CEU cycle. This new policy allows the Committee to consider reducing the number of credits required based on the time away from crop advising work.

## **Evaluating CCA Credentials**

Once potential CCAs pass the Prairie and International CCA exams, they must submit a credentials package to the American Society of Agronomy (ASA). This package includes forms that outline the candidate's educational background, employer and client references, and crop advising experience. A copy of the CCA Code of Ethics is also included, and must be signed.

After the ASA reviews the package to ensure all forms are completed appropriately, copies are sent to the regional Standards and Ethics Committee for further evaluation, prior to granting CCA status.

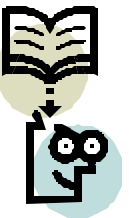
The local Standards and Ethics Committee reviews each application very carefully to determine whether the candidate's credentials meet the standards set out by the International CCA program. The three areas include:

**Education** - The Committee reviews the applicant's level of education, and what portion of their education specifically relates to crop production. This determines the number of years of crop advising experience that are required for certification; it can range from two to four years.

**Experience** - Candidates will often misinterpret this part of the application where "work experience" is confused with "crop advising" experience.

Crop advising experience is the amount of time actually spent advising growers on crop production, or instructing those who provide advice to growers.

Candidates with a farm background can claim one year of crop advising experience, although the Committee does request a description of on-farm activities.



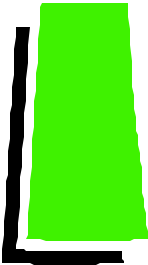
**Looking for CEU events in your area? <http://www.prairiecca.ca/members/calendar.php>**



**References** – The Committee determines whether the references provided are clearly familiar with the candidate's work experience. In addition, they will contact the individual to ensure they actually recommended the candidate for certification.

Reviewing these applications carefully ensures the credibility of the program. It also reinforces that the CCA certification is a professional designation - not just a membership program.

**Saskatchewan CCA Report**



As I'm sure we all know, CCAs will be faced with providing farmers with answers in a very difficult economy this year. I have always felt that economy is an important component of agronomy. As a CCA, we will be using our training to ensure farmers spend their dollars wisely to manage a crop that produces a good return on investment.

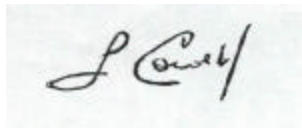
In a sense, we can look at our own CCA training in the same vein. As we gain training credits, it is important to acquire the best information possible in return for the cost and time that we



dedicate to this aspect of our careers. I encourage you to take part in at least some training that can provide truly new information. For example, events like the University of Saskatchewan's Soils and Crops Workshop (March 2006) is an opportunity to hear new ideas in agronomy research. Many of the summer crop diagnostic seminars, and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada tours, are also excellent sessions to learn new information.

The Prairie Board will be working with the University of Saskatchewan to develop more intensive training sessions; perhaps in the next year. In addition, CCAs can gain credits in advanced topics through both self study, and self reporting, CEUs.

As always, please feel free to contact me any time, at [lyle.cowell@swp.com](mailto:lyle.cowell@swp.com). To date, I have a distribution email list that includes approximately half of all CCAs working in our province. This communication link is used to keep them up-to-date on CCA news. If you are not currently receiving my messages, drop me a quick email to be added to the list.



Lyle Cowell, P.Ag. C.C.A.

**PCCA Promotional Products**



Looking to advertise your CCA status to your customers? Check out these great promotional products that can be purchased from the Prairie CCA Board.

**CCA Decals** (\$2.50)  
Spruce up your truck, office, or window with this nifty decal highlighting your status.

**CCA Tent Signs** (\$35.00)  
Put your CCA designation front and centre by placing this handy tent card sign on your front desk. (25 cm x 39 cm)

**CCA Wall Signs** (\$20.00)  
Mount your designation for all to see with this neat wall mount sign (25 cm x 39 cm)



**CCA Labels** (\$25/ Prov)  
Hosting an agronomic event that offers CEUs? Tell others about it by mailing promotional flyers to your CCA colleagues.

**A Picture's Worth a Thousand Words - Contest Winner!!**

Congratulations to Holly Nicol, from Syngenta Crop Protection Canada, Inc., in Trochu, AB. She was the winner of the Prairie Board's photo contest launched in May 2005. To view a copy of the picture, visit the PCCA website.



Special thanks goes out to Ken Plews, P.Ag. for his services on the Prairie Board. Ken served as the Provincial Department of Conservation Representative, and was a member of the Exam Committee. His dedication to the Prairie CCA program is greatly appreciated!

**Prairie Board Now Offers Self-Study CEUs**

As a Certified Crop Advisor, you are eligible to earn up to 20 Continuing Education Unit (CEU) credits through "home study" initiatives, during each two-year term. This is an excellent way to learn - on your own time - about topics of specific interest to you. It also allows you to avoid travel costs and conserve a little cash.

Prairie CCAs have often complained of a lack of relevant self-study material. The PCCA Board now offers CEUs on topics directly applicable to their region on the web site, at [www.prairiecca.ca/members/index.htm](http://www.prairiecca.ca/members/index.htm). The first on-line topic is entitled "Potassium for the Prairies", with more to be added in the near future. The Board plans to provide a wide range of CEUs for each core competency area. The cost will be \$12 per credit. The

money will be used to further improve the Prairie CCA web site, and help fund promotional projects.

CCA employers can also benefit from this initiative by reducing staff training costs, and having to schedule time for staff to attend events. Remember to visit the PCCA web site regularly to stay informed on all the latest updates, including further Prairie-oriented CEU self-study opportunities.



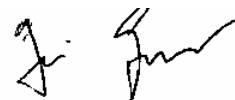
**Manitoba CCA Report**

CCAs attending the Manitoba Agronomists Conference listened to an excellent presentation by Dr. Don Flaten on the opportunities and challenges facing Manitoba agronomists from the new manure management regulations. This talk was very timely, as the new laws allowing CCAs to provide manure management planning services were enacted late in 2005.

Dr. Flaten outlined the new opportunities for CCAs to offer services, generate business, and strengthen ties with existing customers (For a closer look at that part of the presentation visit [www.prairiecca.ca/members/news.htm](http://www.prairiecca.ca/members/news.htm)). Of course, there will be challenges for CCAs who provide these services

(i.e. the regulations will likely be closely monitored by the government and media because they are new). However, it is likely the first of many chances for CCAs to practice our profession in a regulated environment. It is also a valuable opportunity to demonstrate our knowledge and ethics to regulators. If there is an opportunity in your trade area for manure management planning to become a part of your business, I urge you to become certified. Contact Terry Waddel ASAP, at Assiniboine Community College (204) 725-8700 ext: 7116, for more information on the next training course that starts in late January.

I look forward to seeing you all at many of the popular Manitoba CCA accredited events later this year!



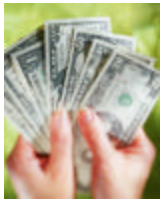
Eric Gregory, CCA

If you are interested in volunteering to assist with the 2006 CCA exam, please contact the Exam Committee Chair, Adrian Johnston, via email at [ajohnston@ppi-ppic.org](mailto:ajohnston@ppi-ppic.org).



## Financial Fact

The Prairie Board would like to remind all CCAs that membership renewal fees for 2006 should have been paid by December 31, 2005. Membership invoices were sent out in early Fall to all current members. If you have not yet received your notice, please contact Michelle Lovejoy at (608) 268-4956 immediately. You have worked hard for your accomplishment – don't let it slip away as a result of non-payment of your dues.



## Manitoba Marketing Moment

One of the marketing activities underway in Manitoba is sponsorship of the 2006 Soils calendar. To promote the designation, the CCA logo is attached. In addition, photos are included depicting CCAs scouting fields and providing crop management advice. To order copies of the calendar, contact Curtis Cavers, from the Manitoba Department of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Initiatives, by phone, at (204) 745-5645, or via email, at [ccavers@gov.mb.ca](mailto:ccavers@gov.mb.ca).

## Movin' on Up or Out?

Relocating to another office, region, province, or country? If so, make sure that you report all contact information changes to the PCCA Administration office, and the ASA. Visit [www.site.asa-cssa-sssa.org/asawebp/ccar901.pg](http://www.site.asa-cssa-sssa.org/asawebp/ccar901.pg) to update your CCA profile online.

## Examining the CCA Exam ...

The Prairie Exam Committee met in September to review the performance of the 2005 CCA exam participants. This year, 123 candidates challenged the Prairie test. In summary, 70 passed, and 53 failed, for an overall success

rate of 57%. In terms of the International exam, 107 individuals attempted the test, with a success rate of 65% (70 passed, 37 failed).

Every year, the Prairie Board analyzes the year-to-date, and historical, performance of writers using common questions to ensure the local exam is comprehensive, yet fair. Based on the findings, the Prairie Board continues to maintain a challenging exam - this standard will not be compromised.

Over the summer months, the Committee looked to the membership for input during the revisions to the Integrated Pest Management section of the Prairie Performance Objectives. The Exam Committee would like to thank those 60 individuals, who were selected at random, for their valuable feedback. The information collected was used to update the materials for the 2006 CCA exam.



The PCCA Board is reminding its members to verify they are covered by a Professional Liability Insurance policy. Also referred to as Errors & Omissions insurance, this policy will pay any compensatory damages, on your behalf, as a result of an error, omission, or negligent act arising out of your professional services. Most businesses have a "Commercial General Liability" policy that covers bodily injury or property damage. However, it may not cover professional services.

**Check with your employer today!**

The 2006 exam is scheduled for February 3 in Olds, AB, Saskatoon, SK and Brandon, MB. The Exam Committee is constantly looking for CCAs to help with the administration of the exam. This is an excellent method for current CCAs to "give back" to the program and help expand the membership.

**Important agronomic information at your finger tips. [www.prairiecca.ca/links/index.htm](http://www.prairiecca.ca/links/index.htm)**

The Prairie Board would like to thank Emile deMilliano for his services as Chair of the Standards and Ethics Committee. His term as Chair has expired, however, he will remain on the Board as the AIA Representative. Lyle DePauw has assumed the Chairmanship role.

**Thanks for Your Support in  
2005**

The PCCA Board would like to thank the following groups and organizations for actively providing CEU opportunities for CCAs in 2005. Your support of the CCA Program is greatly appreciated!

- Agrico Canada Ltd
- Agricore United
- *Agri-Trend*
- Alberta Agriculture Food and Rural Development
- Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
- AgVise Labs
- Arysta Life Sciences
- Bayer CropScience
- Brett Young Seeds
- Canadian Weed Science Society
- Canola Council of Canada
- Canadian Association of Agri-Retailers

- Cargill
- Canadian Association of Farm Advisors
- Ducks Unlimited
- East Central Research Foundation
- E.I. Dupont Canada
- Federated Co-Operatives Limited
- James Richardson International
- Keye Productivity Center
- Manitoba Institute of Agrologists
- Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives
- Manitoba Conservation
- Manitoba Soil Science Society
- Manitoba Pulse Growers Association
- Manitoba Zero-Till Research Association
- MANDAK Zero-Till Farmers Association
- Potash and Phosphate Institute of Canada
- Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Agency (PFRA)
- Quality Assurance Seeds
- Reduced Tillage Linkages
- SeCan
- Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food
- Saskatchewan Wheat Pool
- Saskatchewan Institute of Agrologists
- Saskatchewan Soil Conservation Association
- Saskatchewan Forage Council
- Saskatchewan Canola Growers Association
- Simplot Canada Limited
- Syngenta
- The Council of Alberta
- The Southern Alberta Conservation Association
- The Association of Alberta Fieldmen
- University of Manitoba
- University of Saskatchewan
- Westco
- Western Forum on Pest Management

In appreciation of their efforts, each group will receive a certificate of merit, from the Prairie Board, to display in their office. This will provide further recognition to the companies sponsoring CEU accredited events.



**Tell your customers about the special Growers section of the PCCA website  
[www.prairiecca.ca/growers/index.htm](http://www.prairiecca.ca/growers/index.htm)**

## Important CCA Activities for 2006

Attention all CCAs, mark these important dates in your 2006 calendar!

**January 16** – 2005 CEU statements are mailed to all CCAs for review.

**February 6** - Deadline for CCAs to make corrections to their 2005 CEU record.

**February 13** - CEU out of compliance reports are mailed to all Local Boards for review.

**April 1** - Local Boards receive a listing of all CCAs that did not pay their 2006 renewals.

**August 31** – Deadline for 2005 examinees to submit their credential packages.

**October 1** – Membership renewals for 2007 are mailed to all CCAs.

**November 12** – Second renewal notice is issued from the ICCA Board (if required).

**December 15** - Deadline to register for the 2007 CCA exams.



## New Faces on the Board

A special “Welcome” goes out to Barry Ross, P.Ag., CCA, from the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration in Dauphin, MB. Mr. Ross will serve as the Provincial Conservation Rep. on the Prairie Board. His previous experience with Ducks Unlimited and Westco will make him an excellent addition to the Prairie Board.

## Ladies and Gentlemen, Your PCCA Board of Directors

Norm Flore, P.Ag., CCA  
Board Chair  
Calgary, AB

John Heard, P.Ag., CCA  
Past Chair,  
Carman, MB

Adrian Johnston, P. Ag, CCA  
Chair, Exam Committee  
CFI Rep.  
Saskatoon, SK

Sherrilyn Phelps, P.Ag, CCA  
Ag. Extension Rep.  
North Battleford, SK

Lyle DePauw, P.Ag, CCA  
Chair, Standards & Ethics  
MB Institute of Agrologists Rep.  
Brandon, MB

Bruce Hobin, P.Ag.  
SK Institute of Agrologists Rep.  
Saskatoon, SK

Lyle Cowell, P.Ag., CCA  
SK CCA Rep.  
Star City, SK

Gary Martens, P.Ag., CCA  
CEU Chair  
Ag Faculty Rep.  
Winnipeg, MB

Cam Davreux  
CropLife Canada Rep.  
Etobicoke, ON

Bob Evans, P.Ag.  
CAAR/CCA Employer Rep.  
Nipawin, SK

Barry Ross, P.Ag., CCA  
Prairie Farm Rehabilitation  
Administration (PFRA)  
Conservation Rep.  
Dauphin, MB

Jack Payne, P.Ag, CCA  
AB CCA Rep.  
Olds, AB

Emile deMilliano, P.Ag., CCA  
AB Institute of Agrologists Rep.  
Sherwood Park, AB

Eric Gregory, CCA  
MB CCA Rep.  
Starbuck, MB

**Questions about the  
Prairie CCA  
program? Visit the  
newly revamped  
PCCA website at  
[www.prairiecca.ca](http://www.prairiecca.ca),**

**OR**

**contact the PCCA  
Administrator, Jeff  
Kisiloski, at  
(204) 989-9307**



**Do your colleagues and co-workers want to join the ranks of the CCA program?  
Their next opportunity to challenge the exam is on Friday, February 3, 2006.**