

Crop Adviser Chronicle

The Official Prairie Certified Crop Advisor Board Newsletter

Summer 2006

Chair's Message

"Indecision" was likely one of the most frequently used terms describing farmers' crop plans this Spring. What crop to grow? What variety? How much fertilizer? What are the crop protection options? As you take to the field to begin your cropping assessments, many of the agronomic decisions made by you and your colleagues provide valuable guidance to farmers in their decision-making process. Is the worst behind us? Perhaps for this year, but I believe this scenario will play itself out quite frequently in future years.

Some of the factors contributing to this year's indecisiveness (i.e. volatile energy and crop input prices, uncertain grain markets, overall thin profit margins, etc.), are not likely to subside anytime soon. This means there will be a growing importance for CCAs to provide quality information to farmers in these "volatile times".



In order to accomplish this formidable task, your selection of continuing education events should recognize these changing times. To assist you with this process, the International CCA Board has made a major amendment to the CEU program to add some flexibility to your ongoing learning initiatives.

As of January 1, 2006, all CCAs must continue to earn a minimum of five CEUs in each of the four core competency areas. However, the Board has removed the cap on the number of professional development (PD) credits allowed. This means that any formal non-agronomic training you participate in, may qualify towards your CEU requirements. It will also allow you to better tailor your training to effectively address your customer's needs.

The greater recognition of PD credits not facilitates the earning of CEUs, but it speaks volumes to the overall professionalism of the CCA Program. If you have any questions on this

change, please contact your elected provincial representative.

Over the winter months, the CCA Board continually looked for ways to facilitate training for its members, and create awareness for the Program. To highlight this commitment, the Board recently completed two successful initiatives which will become more prominent in the near future.

First, a live satellite link to the 2005 Manitoba Agronomist Conference was offered at a remote location in Dauphin, MB. Feedback from those who viewed the proceedings electronically was very positive. More specifically, it addressed concerns related to costs associated with time and travel to earn CEUs. The Prairie Board is investigating whether to offer this service for more CCA-accredited events this year – we need your input!

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Secondly, the Prairie Board began a major awareness campaign by awarding *certificates of recognition* to organizations that actively provide CEU training opportunities.

The certificates recognized the groups for their contributions to the CCA Program, and helped raise the profile for the designation in the eyes of many industry players. This success will pave the way for more programs and seminars.

In conclusion, as you do your field walks this summer, remember that you, along with over 700 of your western Canadian colleagues, are providing a valued service to agriculture in the Prairies. While you will see this daily at the farm level, it is also happening on a broader scope. Industry groups and various governments are becoming more interested in the Program. Of particular interest are the stewardship messages conveyed. Keep up the good work and have a safe and rewarding season.



Norm Flore, P.Ag., CCA

And the Membership Remains...

As of May 2006, the following chart details the number of individuals recognized as Certified Crop Advisors across North America.

Region	Number of CCAs
British Columbia	6
Alberta	304
Saskatchewan	216
Manitoba	198
Ontario	458
Atlantic Canada	45
Other (Quebec, Russia, Spain)	13
Canada (total)	1,239
United States (total)	12,029
North America (total)	13,269



Alberta CCA Report

Hello to all my fellow Alberta CCAs. It is my pleasure to once again be writing this message to maintain liaison between you and our local Board.

Over the winter months, I have heard from many of you that there is a real need to find high quality, local, training opportunities for you to maintain your designation. While there

will be several CCA-accredited seminars this Summer, I would like to draw your attention to the *Reduced Tillage Linkages* web page. It contains an excellent calendar of training events going on now, and for the rest of the Summer months.

www.reducedtillage.ca/events.htm

I would also like to encourage you to visit the Prairie Board's website – prairiecca.ca. It contains lots of valuable Program information for all CCAs, non-members, and even growers. In addition, it also has a comprehensive online calendar of public CEU seminars offered throughout the Prairies.

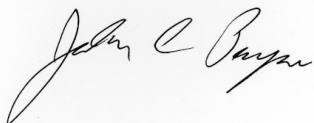


Finally, I know many Alberta CCAs are interested in attending field diagnostic schools this Summer. While Alberta Agriculture withdrew from offering this service last year, I am pleased to inform you of some upcoming field diagnostic events. The Southern Alberta Diagnostic Field School will run from June 27-29. Participants can register by contacting Elizabeth Tokariuk, at (403) 328-0059. (continued on next page)

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

Olds College is also offering an Integrated Crop Management School, July 4-5. This seminar will focus on crop management and diagnostics. To register call (800) 661-6537 (ext.4677). For more information go to: www.oldscollege.ca/programs/ContinuingEducation/Land_Sciences

Just a reminder that if you have any comments or concerns regarding the CCA Program, please contact me at (403) 507-7940, or via e-mail, at jpayne@oldscollege.ca. I look forward to seeing you at the some of the many CEU events offered in our Province this Summer.



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

ICCA Board Sets New Policy on Professional Development CEUs

The International Certified Crop Advisor Board (ICCA) has amended the protocol for earning Professional Development (PD) CEU credits. Previously, all CCAs were allowed to earn a maximum of five PD credits, during each two year cycle. With the new changes, the cap on the number of PD credits

allowed was removed. Therefore, as of January 1, 2006, all CCAs are still required to earn a minimum of five CEUs in each of the four core competency areas (i.e. Nutrient Management, Crop Management, Pest Management, and Soil and Water Management) for a total of 20 CEUs. **However, the remaining credits (20) can be earned as PD CEUs.**

Professional Development topics include: ethics training; computer courses; sales training; etc. With the PD quota increased, the membership must actively encourage all PD event organizers to actively apply for CEUs in order to utilize this privilege. More credits at training events will increase attendance for the sponsor, and provide the CCA-certified attendees with added value.

Just a reminder that, if a CCA attends a training event where credits could have been offered, but the organizer did not apply for CEUs, they can utilize the self-reporting option at www.agronomy.org. For more information on PD credits, and a complete list of potential topics, log on to www.cropdecisions.com/ccaccaadv200212.pdf.

The Prairie CCA Board would like remind its members to use the online application form when applying for CEU credits for all training events.

Using the online form (available at www.prairiecca.ca) will not only expedite the registration process, it will also ensure all “public” events are advertised on the PCCA website – absolutely free!

Forget the old paper/fax application process. Start filing your CEU applications electronically today!

Wade Barnes Named 2005 “CCA of the Year”

The Prairie Certified Crop Advisor Board is pleased to announce that - Wade Barnes – was awarded the 2005 “CCA of the Year” award.



“Wade utilizes a broad network of agronomic resources to guide him when making cropping recommendations to his customers,” said Norm Flore, Chair of the Prairie Certified Crop Adviser Board. (continued on next page)

Check your CEU status online at http://www.agronomy.org/ccacca/search_ceu.html

“He is very knowledgeable about agronomic production, yet constantly strives to continue learning and bringing new information to farmers.”



Saskatchewan CCA Report

Mr. Barnes earned his CCA designation in 1999. Since that time, he continues to offer expert agronomic advice to Manitoba farmers through his independent crop consulting company, *Farmers Edge Precision Consulting, Inc.* His clients praise his desire to provide innovative, cost-conscious recommendations for economical crop production.

Mr. Barnes holds a diploma in Agribusiness from Assiniboine Community College (ACC). He is in the process of becoming a Technical Agrologist with the Manitoba Institute of Agrologists. In addition, he is also participating in the certified Manure Management Planner course from ACC. Congratulations Wade!



Another crop year is upon us, and with it comes the continued stress on the farmers that we, as CCAs, serve. In the Northeastern portion of Saskatchewan, where I work, flooded fields, late crops, and unintended fallow acres will add a twist to agronomy that we don't like to see. It will be a year to rely on a network of CCAs to lend experience and expertise to this situation.

This Summer, I encourage all CCAs to attend one or more field tours to gain CEU credits. Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, the

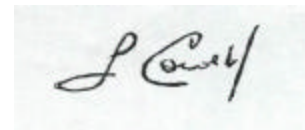


University of Saskatchewan, and many other institutions, will all be offering an opportunity for you to view new

research in the field. I am sometimes concerned that we become too reliant on winter CCA training sessions. While these can be excellent workshops, we do need to mix in some field experience.

Finally, please remember that nominations for a new elected member from Saskatchewan to represent the membership on the PCCA Board is included with this newsletter. While my term is complete, I have agreed to assume the position of Vice Chair of the Prairie Board. I thank you for electing me as your Provincial Representative, and look forward to representing all CCAs in my new role.

If you are interested in running for the vacant position, and have questions about the roles and responsibilities of a Board Representative, give me a call at (306) 873-3456, or send an email lyle.cowell@swp.com.



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

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.pgm to update your CCA profile online.

Tell your customers about the special Growers section of the PCCA website www.prairiecca.ca/growers/index.htm

**Lost Your Job? Don't
Lose Your Designation
As Well!**



The Prairie Board received some valuable feedback during the latest round of Exit Interviews conducted with several CCAs who left the Program in 2005. Some of the interviewees were forced to voluntarily drop their certification because they were unemployed for an unspecified period during their two-year cycle. This loss of employment made it very difficult to earn credits for several months.

If your certification is revoked because you did not meet the 40 CEU requirement – due to unemployment reasons – you may be allowed to maintain your designation; due to these *extenuating circumstances*. Once you are officially informed your designation will not be renewed, you need to file a *CEU appeal* with the Prairie Board's Standards and Ethics Committee. The appeal must contain a detailed plan to make up this credit shortfall in the next two-year cycle.

Once the appeal is received, the Committee

reviews each request on a case-by-case basis to determine whether an extension will be granted. **Please note that all appeals are reviewed on a case-by-case basis, and are not automatically approved.**

While a short-term CEU appeal can be applied for, all CCAs who are not actively earning CEUs for more than 24 months, must rewrite both exams prior to re-entry. If you have questions about your CCA status during an unemployment period, contact your Provincial CCA Representative through the PCCA website (www.prairiecca.ca)

**Become and Certified
Manure Management
Planner Today**

Amendments to Manitoba's Livestock Manure and Mortalities Management Regulations require all individuals preparing manure management plans to successfully complete Assiniboine Community College's certified Manure Management Planner course. The module includes a home study module, followed by a two-day workshop, and exam. Each candidate is also required to prepare a

manure management plan as part of the curriculum requirements.

The theory portion of the course includes information on: laws and regulations affecting manure; land use restrictions; effects of manure on soils; application technology; etcetera. For more information on the course, or to sign up, contact Terry Wadell, at Assiniboine Community College, at (204) 725-8700 ext. 7116.



**Send Your
CCA-Accredited Seminar
into Cyberspace!**

The PCCA Board took "one giant leap for CCA-kind" late last year by broadcasting the 2005 Manitoba Agronomists Conference to a satellite location in Dauphin, MB. As part of a pilot project, nearly 25 participants viewed the online production (in real time) with very favourable reviews. (continued on next page)

**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 2, 2007.**

Providing a video conference link to major agronomic events allows a greater audience to participate. In addition, it reduces travel time and expenses to attend CEU-accredited events. The Prairie Board is currently investigating the costs of establishing additional video conference links for other major agronomy seminars in 2006 and 2007.

If your organization would like more information on this topic, contact John Heard (204) 745-5640.

**“First Friday in February”
Fallout**



This year, 121 candidates challenged the Prairie CCA exam. In summary, 56% passed. In terms of the International exam, 108 individuals attempted the test, with a success rate of 59%.

This variation between International and Prairie test results is not uncommon. In fact, the number of candidates who successfully pass the International exam, compared to the Regional

test, is traditionally higher on an annual basis.

The Prairie Board reviews the results of the local exam annually to ensure the test is adequate. As part of the investigation, the yearly performance of writers is evaluated based on common questions from previous years.

The group also compares the overall scores from the Prairie and International tests. Despite a regular pass rate of only 50-60%, the Board is confident that they are maintaining a challenging, yet fair, exam.

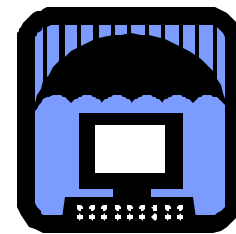
**Agriculture Institute of
Canada Offers Errors and
Omissions Insurance for
CCAs**

Last year, the Prairie Board polled its membership on whether a group liability insurance program should be offered for the membership. Due to the limited feedback and interest, the Prairie Board has elected not to pursue this initiative.

However, those CCAs looking to obtain Errors and Omissions Insurance are privy to an offer from the Agricultural Institute of Canada (AIC). In order to access this program, the

CCA must be a member in good standing with the AIC. In addition, the eligible participants must be actively promoting the agriculture sector, as part of their career activities.

For more information on this insurance policy, and AIC membership fees, contact (888) 277-7980.



**Clarification on
Reference Requirements
in CCA Credentials
Package**

Each year, the Standards and Ethics Committee reviews applications from individuals who have passed both CCA exams, and now must demonstrate their qualifications in order to earn their designation. For new candidates, many questions may arise on whether they are filling out the appropriate forms, or providing the correct information.

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The Prairie Board is looking for your feedback on the operations of the PCCA Program. Contact your local Board members via the website at www.prairiecca.ca/contact/index.htm

As such, the Committee encourages all current CCAs to assist their colleagues to ensure they meet all of the application requirements.

One of the areas that has raised questions in the past is the issue of “references” supporting an individual’s application. Providing a reference for a candidate’s designation is a very serious issue. The individual signing the reference is putting their “name” behind the candidate, and affirming they have met all four CCA criteria: Education; Experience; Exam; and Ethics.

As a result, the “reference” category is very prescriptive. According to the CCA Policy and Procedures manual, all applicants must provide a minimum of two detailed references supporting their application. The first is from their supervisor. The second must be from a client/customer whom they have provided crop production advice. If the candidate is self employed, at least two references must come from current clients.



The Committee is advising that any references from relatives and/or co-workers should be supplemental to the two core references from an employer and client.

Important CCA Activities for 2006

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

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.

Election Fever Heats Up on the Prairies

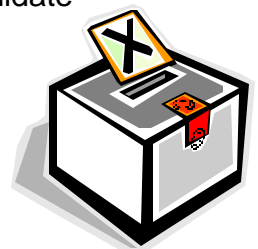
A *Motion* passed at the March 2006 PCCA Board meeting has opened the door for CCAs in Saskatchewan and Manitoba to elect a Provincial Delegate to represent their interests on the PCCA Board of Directors.

As per Board rules, only registered Certified Crop Advisors in their respective

Provinces can be nominated for either one of the Directorship positions. In order to get nominated, have your colleagues complete the enclosed nomination form, and include a brief summary of your credentials (who you are, where you’re from, your education, training, experience, your expectations of the CCA program, etc).

For more information on what will be expected of you, speak with one of your local PCCA Board of Directors, or contact the PCCA administration office at (204) 989-9307. **Nominations for the position will be accepted up until noon on Friday, September 15, 2006** and must be forwarded to the PCCA Administration office. Ballots will be mailed out at the end of September to all Manitoba and Saskatchewan CCAs, respectively. The new Provincial Delegates will be announced in the Fall 2006 newsletter.

Get involved and help choose who will represent your Province on the PCCA Board. Nominate your best candidate today!!!!





PCCA Promotional Products

Looking to advertise your CCA status to your customers? Check out these promotional products.

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 Labels (\$25/ Prov)

Hosting an agronomic event that offers CEUs? Tell others about it by mailing promotional flyers to your CCA colleagues.

Manitoba CCA Report

What a difference a year makes. This time last year, most of the cropland in southeastern Manitoba was drowned out, suffering, or not seeded. This year, things got off to a very early start (with a few exceptions), and talk has been of dry conditions and needing rain; again with a few exceptions.

This same year has seen several new initiatives in the Prairie CCA Program, such as Manitoba CCAs getting recognition from Manitoba Conservation, further development of the Prairie CCA website, and activities to recognize the organizers and sponsors of

CEU events. There have also been many new faces added to the Prairie Board, and, as of this summer, my term as your elected CCA representative concludes.

Personally, it has been an excellent experience. I am grateful for not only the opportunity to further develop the Program, but also to work alongside and learn from the many Board members who have committed much time and energy to the CCA cause.

Soon, calls for nominations will go out to all Manitoba CCAs. I really encourage you to get involved by looking around and bringing forward someone (maybe yourself) who you think would be an effective and motivated person to represent your interests for the next three years on the Prairie CCA Board. I plan to stay active with the Program by chairing the Publicity and Website committees. In addition, as in the past, I look forward to hearing your comments and ideas regarding these topics. Have a great summer!

Eric Gregory, CCA

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
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

