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Soon on store shelves: Saskatchewan sea-buckthorn products

By Peter Derbawka

Known across Europe and Asia for its nutritional value and therapeutic uses, the domestic market for sea-buckthorn berry products remains small. Numerous products are possible from the sea-buckthorn berry, from juice to hair gel, and thanks to research by Northern Vigor Berries, markets for the Saskatchewan-grown shrub may be opening up.

While sea-buckthorn products have been used extensively in countries like Russia and China for centuries, little is known about the plant by North American consumers. The plant has been grown in North America for decades, but growers here have yet to reap much from their labour.

“Many growers have been discouraged over the years because of lack of markets,” says Betty Forbes, President of Northern Vigor Berries, “and my goal is to reverse that so every sea-buckthorn grower can see a return on his investment. It’s such an incredibly valuable plant that offers so much for the health conscious consumer. It is just a matter of educating the consumer on what is available now.” Only a very small amount of berries are needed for the health benefits, as they include high amounts of vitamins C, E, and A as well as flavonols and amino acids.

Northern Vigor Berries’ recently completed project focussed on developing products and expanding the market for the berries. The project

received adaptation funding from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, delivered in Saskatchewan by the Agriculture Council of Saskatchewan (ACS) Inc.



Oil can be pressed from sea-buckthorn seeds, and some estimates place the potential market in North America at 10,000 kilograms of oil per year. The oil has a high price point, with 1000 grams of berries yielding about six grams of seed oil and about 21 grams of pulp oil. As Forbes notes, both types of oil are very valuable because they can be used as a medicinal product, in various creams, and can be taken internally for digestive problems.

Northern Vigor was able to freeze dry the berry pulp, which can be used as an ingredient in various foods,

from sauces to sorbets. An excellent fruit leather and a sugar-infused dried berry to add to products were also developed. Both products can now move to the consumer product testing and marketing stage.

Benefits of this project will be seen by the 120 Saskatchewan producers, who will be able to market new value-added ingredients and products that will have uses for consumers, chefs and processors. “They will have new, very healthy ingredients,” says Forbes, “and value added products with local origins.” ■

ACS Member Profile: Saskatchewan Seed Potato Growers Association



When most people think of Saskatchewan's agriculture and agri-food sector, images of grains, oilseeds, pulses and livestock are among the first to enter their minds. However, in our province's increasingly diverse agriculture industry, many non-traditional crops are becoming common, including seed potatoes.

The Saskatchewan Seed Potato Growers Association (SSPGA) represents a group of 16 seed potato

growers in the province who supply potato growers from across the continent with seed that is hardy and disease free. Established in 1994, SSPGA is a non-profit corporation that allows members to speak collectively to local, provincial, national and international issues of interest to their industry.

The SSPGA has developed and promoted the unique Northern Vigor® seed, which brings producers superior quality potatoes and increased yields. Developed in northern latitudes for shorter growing seasons and high-stress environments, Northern Vigor® seeds have been shown to produce more vigorous and higher yielding crops than seed grown in southern latitudes. This superiority is due to reduced levels of seed borne disease and physiological characteristics of the seed tuber itself.

The development and promotion of the Northern Vigor® seed complements the SSPGA's mandate, which includes promoting the use of high quality, locally produced, early generation seed by Saskatchewan's commercial potato industry and to foster the development of export markets for Saskatchewan grown seed potatoes.

For more information on the Saskatchewan Seed Potato Growers Association, including information about the Canadian seed potato certification system, please see their website at www.sspga.ca.

ACS is on the move!

After four years at our offices in the Concourse Building of Innovation Place, ACS will be on the move.

We will be moving to 104 - 411 Downey Road at the end of June. This building is west of our current offices, accessible through either the Research Drive or Innovation Boulevard entrances off of Preston Avenue.

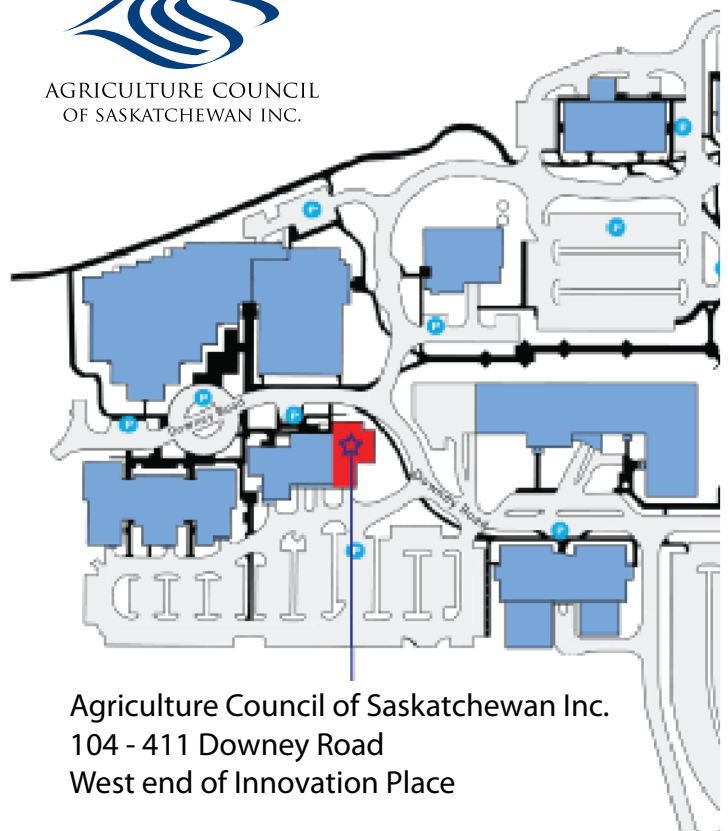
As we move, we may be without phone service or E-mail for short periods. Please be assured that any messages you leave will be returned as soon as possible.

Please send any mail to our mailing address to ensure we receive it:

P.O. Box 21038
Saskatoon, SK S7H 5N9



AGRICULTURE COUNCIL
OF SASKATCHEWAN INC.



Agriculture Council of Saskatchewan Inc.
104 - 411 Downey Road
West end of Innovation Place



AGRICULTURE COUNCIL
OF SASKATCHEWAN INC.

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From the Desk of the Executive Director

Laurie Dmytryshyn

ACS is once again holding our Annual General Meeting (AGM) at the Western Canada Farm Progress Show, this year on Thursday, June 16, 2011. After many years of holding our AGM on a Friday, we have decided to move it to Thursday so that it does not conflict with the Outstanding Young Farmers Luncheon. As well, we have changed the format slightly and have brought in more speakers for our members.

We are pleased to have secured Dr. David Sparling, Professor and Agri-Food Innovation and Regulation Chair at the Richard Ivey School of Business at the University of Western Ontario. Our sister council in Ontario brought Dr. Sparling to their AGM in December and he comes highly recommended. His past experience includes being president of a farming company, a biotechnology start-up and an agri-business insurance company. Dr. Sparling has consulted for a wide variety of government and industry organizations and is frequently featured in TV, radio and the press.

We have also decided to add a local component and will be inviting three of our successful agricultural business people to share their thoughts about the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead for our sector. The speakers are Mark Pickard of Infra-Ready Products Ltd., Jeremy Lang of Open Mind Developments Corporation, and Jason Praski of Titan Clean Energy Products Corporation.

The other feature we have added to the AGM agenda is an update on Growing Forward 2 by an Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) representative. This update will occur at 11:00 a.m. after our regular AGM meeting, which starts at 10:30 a.m. We are asking our members and supporters to send your RSVP to Communications Manager Dallas Carpenter by Friday, June 10 to ensure you are included for the complementary lunch and your

passes for the Farm Progress Show. You can reach Dallas at (306) 975-6856 or carpenterd@agcouncil.ca.

The Growing Forward 2 engagement sessions that were scheduled prior to the federal election will now be held on June 21 in Regina and June 22 in Saskatoon. I encourage all of our members to attend and let your opinions on the direction of the new Growing Forward program be heard. For more information or to register, please go to the AAFC website at www.agr.gc.ca and follow the features link on the right side.

The ACS Board of Directors revisited our strategic plan at their January Board meeting. One of our priority areas in the upcoming year is to expand our current program offering. In addition, we are pleased to welcome our newest Levy Central Client, the Alberta Winter Wheat Producers Commission. Levy Central now has nine clients from Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. If you are interested in learning more about Levy Central, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Finally, for those of you who do not know, ACS will be moving our offices from the Entrepreneurial Centre in the Concourse Building to 104 - 411 Downey Road here at Innovation Place during the week of June 20. We are pleased to be able to remain as tenants of Innovation Place. We are also pleased to be able to continue to co-locate with the Entrepreneurial Foundation of Saskatchewan (EFSK) in our new space. We will try our best to continue to serve our clients without interruption, but our phones and E-mail may be down for a few hours. Please leave us a message if you can't get in touch with us during the move and we will be sure to return your call as soon as possible.

Have a great summer! ■



Pelleting firm studies low cost, high nutrition livestock feed

By Peter Derbawka

The nutritional value of many crop byproducts for livestock feed has been studied and is well known. However, questions still surround how to combine various products to meet specific livestock needs while keeping costs low. That's the goal of West Central Pelleting (WCP) in a research project now underway. Once this research is complete, it hopes to produce new specific branded feed products for the ruminant livestock market.

WCP has been operating in Wilkie since 1998 and in Wolseley since 2002. "Since the inception of the company," says General Manager Dean Skinner, "we have been using Saskatchewan crop by-products such as pea and oat hulls, grain screenings, off quality canola, peas and dry distillers' grains in our pellet mix products."

These pellet mixes are sold within and outside Saskatchewan, and those main ingredients used to be called dockage, which farmers were charged to ship away. Now the new research will confirm anecdotal reports of superior performance gained from the use of WCP's existing pellet rations.

Beef producers would receive a formulation of pellets based on their specific needs, such as backgrounder pellets, or finisher pellets. "We may have been expecting, for example, 2.65 lbs. of gain on a cow out on grass supplemented with a pellet," Skinner notes, "yet achieve 3.3 or 3.5 lbs." Researchers will now be able to examine the chemical composition of each crop by-product. This will allow WCP to maximize the nutrient utilization by cattle of new feed products.

Working with the University of Saskatchewan, including the research of two Masters students, the U of S Beef Research Station,



and the Western Beef Development Centre, the project will not only provide third party verification of the anecdotal reports, it will set a new benchmark for the best formulations possible.

Research will continue over the next few years, and Skinner sees producers in numerous sectors benefit from feeding their cattle high quality, low cost products. Once the extra value in the crop byproducts is shown, growers will also benefit. Demand will increase for all by-products, which will also have a positive impact on distiller grain processors and ethanol plants.

Funding for the project comes from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada through the Canadian Agricultural Adaptation Program (CAAP), which is delivered in Saskatchewan by the Agriculture Council of Saskatchewan. ■

Feed innovations to reduce the need for antibiotics

By Peter Derbawka

Prairie Plant Systems of Saskatoon is developing novel animal feed additives in an effort to replace antibiotics. “If we don’t inject antibiotics in the future,” says Research Director Dr. Larry Holbrook, “then improving the health of an animal through the feed system is the way to go.”

The banning of antibiotic injections occurred a number of years ago in Europe, and the Obama administration has been talking about a similar ban for the United States after widespread evidence of bacteria developing resistance to antibiotics.

Dealing with those bacteria is what this project, with funding from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada through the Canadian Agricultural Adaptation Program (CAAP), which is delivered in Saskatchewan by the Agriculture Council of Saskatchewan (ACS) Inc., is all about. The initial phase of the project is to be completed in mid-2011, and Holbrook sees it running on schedule. It is a collaborative research project with the Department of Animal and Poultry Science of the University of Saskatchewan.

As with all research projects, there are plenty of unknowns. Much work has been done with university collaborators on engineered plants, inserting anti-microbial proteins or peptides (AMPs) to help fight disease in the plant itself. The new twist in

this project is to use those types of plants in the animal feed to fight disease in the intestinal tract of animals such as chickens.

An example of a common problem AMPs could help is coccidiosis, a parasite occurring in all large scale chicken production facilities in North America that costs an estimated at \$600 million per year to treat. “Other research shows AMPs are effective against parasites,” Holbrook says, “so we are looking at the effect of these AMPs on the coccidiosis parasite.” Peptides have already been inserted into potato tubers, and Holbrook and his team is looking to design the peptide which can fight coccidiosis. Then the tuber, or more likely extracts from it with that peptide, can be fed to the chickens, thereby reducing the parasite infection and improving the health of the animal.

A successful project will provide many possible benefits for producers as well as consumers concerned about overuse of antibiotics. Not only will chicken producers benefit from increased animal health without drug injections, but the opportunities for producers to grow the modified potatoes or other crops to be used in the animal feed will also increase. Other benefits will accrue to the Saskatchewan bio-sciences industry, as more research generates more discoveries. ■

POS Bio-Sciences brings new technology to Saskatchewan

By Peter Derbawka

Saskatchewan’s agriculture and agri-food sector is the direct beneficiary of a successful oil extraction project at POS Bio-Sciences in Saskatoon.

Established in 1977 as the POS (Protein Oil Starch) Pilot Plant Corporation, POS contracts its research, toll processing and analytical services around the world to clients developing food ingredients, nutraceuticals, biofuels, animal feeds, cosmetics, and bioproducts.

The Biomass Extraction System Project, which is a technology new to Saskatchewan, was funded by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada through adaptation funding. In Saskatchewan, adaptation funding is delivered by the Agriculture Council of Saskatchewan (ACS) Inc.

The main benefits come from the new technology capacity. “The bead mill is a key piece of equipment,” says Dr. Rick Green, POS Vice President of Technology, “It’s really an enabler that gives Saskatchewan processors and researchers access to new technology that is leading edge.”

The bead mill uses a cylinder containing ceramic beads to disrupt the cells of microalgae, releasing the oil contained in the single cell organism. That oil can then be processed into a biofuel such as biodiesel or jet fuel. “As an alternative fuel that

would be carbon neutral,” says Dr. Green, “it opens the door for Saskatchewan to be a major player in this area.”

The bead mill is part of a biomass processing line, which can extract oil from yeast, microalgae and bacteria, and has attracted interest, and revenue, from companies in other parts of Canada and the United States. An Alberta company is now looking to develop its microalgae growing operation across the prairies utilizing the bead mill and processing services at POS. “It helps bring in new companies,” Dr. Green notes, “and it allows us the potential to expand the biomass industry in Saskatchewan.”

Not only does the bead mill help attract business to Saskatchewan in general, it also enables and supports numerous other biomass research capabilities available in the province such as fermentation, product analysis, and additional downstream processing. An American company is also looking at locating to Saskatchewan. “They would grow their product in fermenters,” says Green, “and POS’s role would be to help them develop a process for extracting and refining their biomass.”

Other sectors with increased potential because of the bead mill include health and wellness products, functional foods and nanotechnology. As products are developed for market, those companies would likely acquire their own units with the spin-off benefit of more new industries in Saskatchewan. ■

Levy Central program welcomes its first Alberta client

By Dallas Carpenter

The Agriculture Council of Saskatchewan Inc. (ACS) has added a ninth client to the Levy Central program with the addition of the Alberta Winter Wheat Producers Commission (AWWPC).

“We’re pleased to welcome the AWWPC to Levy Central and ACS,” said ACS Chair Neil Ketilson. “ACS is a professional organization with an objective of delivering programs and services that benefit our members and clients. We’re confident that the AWWPC will experience many advantages of being under the Levy Central program.”

The benefits of using levy collection services through Levy Central include an Automated Levy Tracking System, a knowledgeable Levy Central staff that has 23 combined years of experience working with levy collection and the database, and the ability for buyers of multiple commodities to deal with one organization and remit reports and payments to one address. Working relationships are quickly established between Levy Central staff and buyers, resulting in fewer reporting errors and less delinquency of reports and payments.

“What appealed to us was Levy Central’s data management systems, paper trails and processes for collecting and tracking levies,” said Rick Istead, Executive Director of the AWWPC. “One of our organization’s challenges has been levy collection efficiency (currently around 60%). Like many organizations we struggle with keeping our databases current. We believe Levy Central’s system will be an asset. We also feel that by outsourcing this activity, it

will free up our manager’s time to carry out more value-added activities for the organization.”

A levy is collected on each of the crops for the nine Levy Central organizations, paying for research, market development and education activities through the commodity organizations.

The commodity organizations that collect levies through Levy Central are:

- Saskatchewan Canola Development Commission
- Saskatchewan Flax Development Commission
- Saskatchewan Mustard Development Commission
- Canaryseed Development Commission of Saskatchewan
- Saskatchewan Oat Development Commission
- Manitoba Oat Growers Association
- Saskatchewan Winter Cereals Development Commission
- Winter Cereals Manitoba Inc.
- Alberta Winter Wheat Producers Commission

The Levy Central program was previously administered by the Saskatchewan Canola Development Commission (SCDC) and was transferred to ACS in February 2010. ACS operates a Levy Central Advisory Group, made up of members from the nine commodity organizations and two directors from the ACS Board.

There are many benefits for organizations to use levy collection services through Levy Central and ACS. For more information on Levy Central, please contact Christine Colborne, Levy Manager at (306) 975-6623 or colbornec@agcouncil.ca. ■



COMING SOON

Thursday, June 16, 2011

ACS Annual General Meeting and Industry Forum

Salon 3, Queensbury Convention Centre (EVRAZ Place)
Regina, Saskatchewan

Held on location at the 2011 Western Canada
Farm Progress Show.

ACS AGM: 10:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. (members only)
Growing Forward 2 Update: 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Lunch: 12:00 p.m. to 12:30 p.m. (RSVP required - members only)
Industry Forum: 12:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. (open to public)

The theme of this year’s industry forum is Beyond the Horizon:
Creating Opportunity and Prosperity in Saskatchewan
Agriculture.

The industry forum will feature Dr. David Sparling, Professor and Agri-Food Innovation and Regulation Chair at the Richard Ivey School of Business at the University of Western Ontario. The forum will also feature a panel of agricultural business people who will share their thoughts about the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead for the sector.

The industry forum is open to all who are attending the Farm Progress Show. Only ACS members and supporters are eligible to attend the AGM. Only full-members who have paid their fees in advance of the AGM will be eligible to vote.

Members are asked to RSVP by **Friday, June 10** to Dallas Carpenter, ACS Communications Manager, at carpenterd@agcouncil.ca or 975-6856.

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CAAP Project Approval Update

Projects receiving funding between November 1, 2010 and April 30, 2011

Applicant	Project Title	Estimated Project Cost	AC S Funding
BioExx Proteins of Saskatoon Inc.	Toxicological Evaluation of Food-Grade Canola Protein Products for Development of National and International Markets	\$291,374.00	\$99,999.00
BioExx Proteins of Saskatoon Inc.	Silliker HACCP Certification and Audit, EU Certification and FDA Registration	\$283,066.33	\$63,969.16
BioExx Proteins of Saskatoon Inc.	Nutritional Evaluation of Food-Grade Canola Protein Products for Development of National and International Markets	\$31,172.40	\$15,586.20
Birch Narrows Dene Nation	Northern Food Project	\$44,000.00	\$17,500.00
Livestock Marketers of Saskatchewan Inc.	Training for Safe and Humane Handling of Cattle, Primarily But Not Limited to, Auction Markets, Assembly Yards, and Order Buying Stations	\$81,578.95	\$69,342.11
Natural Chow Pet Food Corp.	Implement General Manufacturing Practices (GMP's)	\$9,600.00	\$4,800.00
Open Mind Developments Corporation	Using Flax Fibre to Create Environmentally Friendly Consumer Goods	\$92,500.00	\$43,750.00
Saskatchewan Alpaca Breeders' Network	The Alpaca Fibre Project	\$191,995.00	\$158,368.43
Saskatchewan Canola Development Commission	An Innovative Fractionation Process for Better Utilization of Canola Non-Oil Components: Pilot Scale Testing and Economic Analysis	\$242,000.00	\$205,700.00
Saskatchewan Flax Development Commission	Exploring the Social and Economic Costs of Zero Tolerance Policy on the Canadian Producer: A Survey	\$21,500.00	\$10,000.00
Thunder Creek Pork Inc.	Thunder Creek Pork QMS Accreditation	\$205,800.00	\$24,025.00
WAM Investments Inc.	Optimizing Performance of a Thermophilic Anaerobic Digester Treating Waste Streams from the Livestock Processing Industry	\$199,950.00	\$93,075.00
Totals: 12 Projects		\$1,694,536.68	\$806,114.90
Collective Outcome Projects			
Beef Information Centre	Maximizing Market Opportunities for Canadian Prime and AAA Grade Beef	\$1,000,000.00	\$100,000.00
Biofume Technologies Inc.	Biofume's Natural Active Packaging	\$199,500.00	\$99,750.00
Centre de developpement du porc du Quebec inc.	Study on the Interaction Between Genetic Patterns and Feed Types to Identify Strategies Improving Hog Farm Profitability	\$245,322.00	\$5,000.00
Federation des producteurs de porcs du Quebec	Commercial Validation of a Feeding Strategy Based on Compensatory Gain for Grower-Finisher Hogs	\$97,429.00	\$3,500.00
Fieldgate Organics Inc.	Organic Value Chain Development and Pilot Program	\$197,012.00	\$24,000.00
North American Bioextracts Inc.	Developing High Value, High Quality Fractionation Processes for Surplus Berries	\$381,600.00	\$18,871.00
Saskatchewan Forage Council	Assessing the Potential Impact of Roundup Ready Alfalfa on Canada's Forage Industry	\$44,105.00	\$37,489.00
Saskatoon Berry Council of Canada	Technical Analysis Saskatoon Berry Functional Attributes	\$29,901.05	\$25,415.90
Totals: 8 Projects		\$2,194,869.05	\$314,025.90
Overall Totals: 20 Projects		\$3,889,405.73	\$1,120,140.80

ACS launches SaskValueChain.ca

ACS, through the Saskatchewan Grocery Retail and Foodservice Value Chain Initiative project, has launched the new SaskValueChain.ca website. The Value Chain Initiative is funded by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada through the Canadian Agricultural Adaptation Program (CAAP). In Saskatchewan, CAAP is delivered by ACS.



The new website will focus on capacity building and capturing new market opportunities within the Canadian grocery retail and foodservice sectors. A series of guides, written by experienced food industry consultants, is available for each of the grocery retail and foodservice paths, with each guide focusing on a different aspect of the industry, analyzing current trends and detailing strategies.

"The focus of the guides will be on understanding retailers and foodservice providers," said Bryan Kosteroski, ACS Value Chain Specialist. "With the Grocery Retail Initiative, we also talk about branding programs, costing programs, and how to get on store shelves and stay there. The Foodservice Initiative will provide budding value chains the assets to better understand and move forward within the foodservice industry." In addition to the electronic guides, semi-annual conference calls with Canadian foodservice consultants will be held, providing up-to-date information on trends and industry updates while giving participants the opportunity to discuss experiences.

The Value Chain Roundtables will also be introduced as a part of the initiative, focused on providing opportunities for discussion and collaboration within the Saskatchewan agri-food industry. The roundtable discussions will be face-to-face discussions with invited Saskatchewan agriculture and agri-food industry participants and the ACS Value Chain Specialist and industry consultants.

Two other pieces of the Value Chain Initiative include the Concept Evaluation Business and Marketing Plan program, and the Internet Marketing program, which will help users gain insights on how to use the Internet to drive sales around the world.

For more information, go to the Saskatchewan Grocery Retail and Foodservice Value Chain Initiative website or contact Bryan Kosteroski at (306) 975-6851 or kosteroskib@agcouncil.ca. ■

Concept Evaluation Program accepting applications for fall projects

This program will provide opportunities for Saskatchewan agriculture and agri-food companies to request a preliminary business plan and/or conceptual marketing plan. The plans will be developed with the assistance of a team of agribusiness students, evaluating possible concepts or marketing initiatives. Participants will pay \$300.00 of the \$600.00 cost of the project application, with \$300.00 provided by the ACS.

The deadline for applications is Thursday, August 25, 2011 for projects starting the first week of September. For more information, please go to www.saskvaluechain.ca or contact Bryan Kosteroski at 975-6851 or kosteroskib@agcaouncil.ca. ■

Application Deadlines

ACS CAAP Project Review

CAAP funding requests over \$10,000:

APPLICATION DEADLINE	MEETING DATE
June 22, 2011	September 28, 2011

ACS Executive Committee

CAAP funding requests \$10,000 or less:

APPLICATION DEADLINE	MEETING DATE
August 15, 2011	September 14, 2011

A complete application must be received at the ACS office by 5:00 PM on the deadline date. Applications may be mailed, couriered, faxed, E-mailed, or dropped off directly. If E-mailed, please forward pages that require a signature by fax to (306) 975-6850.

Please send applications to:

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Box 21038, Saskatoon, SK
S7H 5N9

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E-mail: info@agcouncil.ca

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