



# THE Oat Scoop

NOVEMBER 2016

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## Adding Value with Value-Added

Value adding typically means taking a raw product to another value level by processing. It generates economic activity in the agri-food industry, contributes to Canada's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and is often used to measure the importance of an industry sector.



Oat based Beverages

Today's consumers pay more attention to nutritional claims and ingredient lists on packaged foods than ever before. This is driving the "clean label" trend (plain language, non-scientific names for ingredients and ingredient sourcing to reduce allergens, additives and coloring agents, etc.). Some food company labels incorporate organic and non-gmo (genetically modified organism) terms. Others identify their products as free from, for example, trans-fats, or gluten-free.

People are eating more oats and oat based food products like bread, cereals, flakes, cookies, and infant foods. Why? Oats have health benefits, like helping prevent heart disease, reducing cholesterol and being a good food for diabetics. Oat based cereals have been on the market for a long time utilizing health claims like 'heart healthy' since oats contain beta glucan.

There is recognition of oat's role in the food product development industry. For example, oat antioxidants are used to help stabilize, meat and milk products. These can be sensitive to fat oxidation which often occur in storage. Oat starch increases shelf life of bread products, oat bran can replace fat in meatballs and oat proteins are incorporated into foods to assist with texture improvement.

The three Prairie Provinces, along with the federal government continue to invest in value-added to help grow the agri-food industry and further diversify their economies by creating new products from quality commodities. All three provinces have Food

Development Centres, which are equipped with state of the art technologies and scientific expertise to develop and commercialize unique products based on primary agricultural products.

In Alberta, the Alberta Crop Industry Development Fund (ACIDF), along with POGA and Saskatoon based Oat Deal, is supporting University of Alberta Professor Lingyun Chen's research to develop a healthy and palatable oat-based beverages as an alternate to dairy-based beverages. She is also working to develop a liquid food formulation for people undergoing cancer treatment. Although not a large market for oats, Executive Director Shawna Mathieson says, "This is a need that could be mutually beneficial for Canadians, and others around the world, as well as oat growers. It just makes sense to fund research projects like this." Darren Walkey, Business Manager of the Crop Protein and Cellulose Program (CP<sup>2</sup>) at the University of Alberta outlines the expertise available at U of A to tackle these product development assignments. He says, "oat fractionation for food applications has primarily focused on what I call primary fractions -- protein, fibre and so on -- but there's a lot of potential to take these fractions to their second, third or fourth stage to get significantly more value." Through collaboration with the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology's Culinary Arts program, and multiple food industry partners in Alberta and Saskatchewan the CP<sup>2</sup> program is aiming to develop at least one commercially viable food, beverage, snack or



Steel cut oats

personal care prototype from each ingredient fraction (protein, fibre, starch, and oil). To date this work has resulted in the development of a cereal snack bar that incorporates oat starch, and several value-added ingredients from the proteins. They are also exploring the possibility of using the oat proteins and starches in meat product applications. The (CP2)program is working to develop an economical process that will allow for each fraction to be extracted in a way that it is still functional. Such a process will be a step towards full crop utilization (current extraction methods within North America focus one or two key ingredients at the expense of the by-products according to Walkey), and will increase the market opportunities for oats.

Saskatchewan's Value-Added Strategy builds on existing strengths in primary production; attracts investment, develops infrastructure; creates knowledge and captures value at home. The overall strategic goal is to increase value-added sector total revenue to \$6 billion by 2020, an increase of 50%.

Saskatchewan's Food Centre's President, Dan Prefontaine, says "The Food Centre supports innovation and technology through enhanced expertise, training and commercialization resources to assist our industry in accessing markets with new products and services."

He adds, "China is one export market that is very interested in oats and oat-based products." In 2015, POGA applied for market access for Canadian oats to be shipped to China for both food and feed use. This is on behalf of the oat industry to encourage the greater export of oats and oat products and diversify our export market.

Manitoba's value-added food processing industry is the largest manufacturing sector in the province with over 250 companies; sales worth \$4 billion in 2015; and employing over 10,000 people. Their Food Development Centre (FDC) is a state of the art facility equipped with various technologies utilized by staff and clients in the agri-food industry. It too, provides expertise in food product development and commercialization.

Here's a few innovative oat products currently being made in Western Canada with Western Canadian oats:

Oat beverages may not be common place in Western Canada yet but George Barreras and Skay Rivera created Saskatoon based Oat Deal to produce oat-based beverages anyway. Barreras says "With the trend for healthier eating, and increasing consumer knowledge of health benefits of oats, it made sense to introduce hot oat beverages to Canadian consumers." The product is a combination of oats, dry skim milk powder, with natural flavors, like cinnamon and chocolate and is available through the prairie Co-op retail locations. Barreras says, "we are proud to be the first company in Canada producing oat-based smoothies and first in the world producing a coffee creamer made of oats." He adds, that support from organizations like POGA and government programs, in this case, ACIDF, really motivated him to do this work. He believes it was the right place, the right time, and the right resources were in place to help Oat Deal. The company continues to partner with POGA and Alberta



*Oat Vodka*

researchers and plan to introduce more oat based products to Canadian consumers.

Colleen Haussecker, founder of Canadian Organic Spice & Herb Co Inc. (2013) expanded her product line to include gluten-free oats in 2015. Splendor Garden gluten-free oat products include quick cooking, thick rolled and steel cut oats.

Haussecker says "Splendor Garden is the first Canadian company to offer a line of oat products that are both organic and gluten-free." When asked, who buys her products she remarks "people with gluten sensitivities of course but more and more people who are not gluten sensitive are buying as well; people want to eat clean, whole foods." Using re-sealable bags and reusable labels reduce the company's environmental footprint and keeps with the company's vision.

Splendor Garden products are marketed across Canada through various retail outlets as well as being available online

John Cote and Barb Stefanyshyn-Cote are passionate about family and farming. 2010 saw them leave their Leask area farm operation of 5000 acres and resettle on 80 acres near Saskatoon. Black Fox Farm and Distillery currently produces high quality spirits and cut

Continued on page 11

## From Genes to Markets to Climate Change: how these all affect the decisions of your Western Canadian Oat Breeders.

It's good to keep up-to-date with key players in the oat industry in Western Canada and oat breeders are definitely vital to the industry. POGA supports all three breeding efforts in Western Canada: Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) with breeder Jennifer Mitchell Fetch, University of Saskatchewan's Crop Development Centre (CDC) with breeder Aaron Beattie and Jim Dyck owner of, and breeder at, Oat Advantage. All these breeding programs exist to provide Canadian oat growers with varieties designed to be competitive; adaptable and sustainable, as well as meet the market demands of the entire industry including growers, processors and manufacturers. Each program is unique and custom fit to the individual oat breeder's goals and internal resources.

The Prairie Oat Breeding Consortium (POBC) is funded in coordination with the Government of Canada's Agri-Innovation Program and nine industry players including POGA. This program, led by Mitchell Fetch in Brandon, MB, exists to develop new oat cultivars suited to production in Western Canada. It utilizes many of the tools available to improve the breeding process, including applying molecular markers to improve selection of essential traits. "These cultivars will have end-use quality characteristics desired by the industry and resistance to major diseases, pests and adverse environmental conditions prevalent in the production areas," says Mitchell Fetch

The CDC objectives are to produce varieties that show good agronomic performance (high yield, lodging resistance, moderate to earlier maturity) and disease resistance (crown rust, stem rust, smut) in order to maximize producer returns, while also ensuring good grain quality (high test weight, kernel weight, plumpness and mill yield). These characteristics, along with a good nutritional profile (high beta-glucan and protein with moderate-to-low fat), benefit both producers and millers. Beattie says, "Basically we are trying to release varieties that benefit all sectors of the value chain."

Dyck says, "My goal is to create improved and innovative oat varieties that will benefit oat growers, handlers and millers and at the same time help me to build a sustainable private oat breeding enterprise. This is a friendly, healthy industry that welcomes new and innovative research."

With climate change being a popular topic in the news these days, POGA asked each breeder if, or how, climate change is impacting their breeding program.

Mitchell Fetch suggests that longer maturing cultivars with higher yields may be feasible if the climate warms, and there is suitable precipitation.

Beattie suggests that the key aspect of climate change is variability which often means excessively wet or dry conditions over the course of a growing season. During the breeding process (a ten-year cycle), breeding lines are exposed to these conditions which means they are selecting lines under these variable conditions which translates into varieties better able to cope with variability (within limits).

Dyck agrees that any breeding program is continually adapting as all plant material is subjected to the impact of the surrounding nature and is evaluated to be the best in that ecosystem. He is working on plant traits to help his oat material adapt to current and future climate

factors. Depending on resources and time, efforts in improved root development, winter/cold tolerance, optimum tillering capacity and plant architecture are his areas of interest.

POGA also asked the breeders their views on the oat markets and what drives changes within breeding for the market.

"The celiac market is gravitating more and more toward consumption of oat and oat products, so this may result in the requirement for more production of "pure oats" or oats

that do not contain other gluten-containing grains," says Mitchell Fetch. There are also companies producing innovative products for human consumption such as using beta-glucan and avenanthramides from oats for particular niche markets, thus providing value-added products."

Beattie suggests, "one of the most important factors when breeding new varieties is to listen to the needs of the value chain and attempt to incorporate their ideas and concerns into the future varieties. And of course, long-term and stable funding is essential to any breeding program."

Dyck adds, "oats with the best nutrition, this is one factor of importance that I see."

Regarding what oat producers might expect to see in the near future, Mitchell Fetch has four lines in the second year of the registration trial, so any of those could be presented for support for registration in February 2017. Beattie's program releases on average one new variety every two years. As for Oat Advantage, his first two oat varieties are coming forward through SeCan.

POGA is pleased to support these breeding programs to meet the needs of producers and end users, which helps maintain our industry as a competitive supplier of oats around the world (Did you know that nearly 50% of Canadian grown oats are exported each year?). Ultimately, these cultivars will improve the health of not only Canadian consumers but oat consumers worldwide.



*Western Canadian Oat Crop*



# Time for Talk?

Elaine Froese is a professional speaker, writer and coach who specializes in helping farm families work through issues surrounding succession, business and communication. Check out [Elainefroese.com](http://Elainefroese.com) to order her resources like books, audios, webinars or book her for speaking engagements and coaching sessions, related to the family farm. She offers these thoughts on communication between and among the various ages and stages of the farm family.

People born before 1946 are “traditionalists.” These folks have a “silent approach” to communication and typically avoid conflict.

Boomers are those born between 1945 and 1964. They tend to be idealistic and young at heart. Generation X (Gen X’ers) born between 1965 and 1979 were told that they would never do as well as their parents. Boomers saw a man walk on the moon in 1969, while Gen X’ers saw NASA’s failure with the Challenger crash disaster. Millennials arrived between 1980 and 1995. This group is highly driven, tech savvy, collaborative in nature, and socially adept. They want choices, efficiency, integrity, and customization.

Gen Edge folks (1996 onward) are the new kids on the farm who can really process many kinds of information quickly, and may be faster at technology than the millennials.

We all have different styles or perceptions due to the way we perceive our world, our reality. While a boomer parent tends to be optimistic about the future, their dad may be idealistic in thinking, “Don’t worry, it will all work out” while the Gen X’er age 37 to 51 is saying “it is time for some change in ownership.”

You might need to present your ideas to your boomer parents in a different way, and with respect. Be aware of HOW you are presenting.

Think in terms of evolution, with the intent of making things better with your communication, not revolution. Boomers have seen tons of change in their lives, but still consider changes to their personal business on the farm with great care. They don’t want to waste money, see the failure of the next generation, or divorce mucking up their ideal plan. Succession planning is a process, not a one-time event, so learn to communicate to boomers about the benefits of the shifts of management, labor and ownership that you are seeking.

Listen more. All generations need to do this. Eighty percent of great communication is effective listening.

Don’t make assumptions. Question everything and then listen carefully to the response. Listen deeply. Paraphrase what you hear and feed it back to the other generations. Do not assume things. Ask “what if?” questions and then listen!

If you are 37 to 51 years old and a Gen X’er, Scott Zimmer suggests you are a skeptic and immensely independent. Boomer dads need to understand this in order to speak and behave in ways that build trust and create certainty.

If you are a competitive boomer dad, perhaps it is time to remember what it felt like when you first owned something (like land) and felt the independence that your millennial or Gen X’er heir is looking for now.

Respect is a good mode of communication to be transferred to all generations. Some 37-51-year-old Gen X’ers may be using profane language mixed with anger that is not helping their cause of trying to get transfer agreements in place. If you are using what Scott Zimmer calls an “unfiltered communication style,” it may be time to “clean your filter” and embrace positive, non-profane language tempered with respect.

“What would you like me to do differently in this succession process?” is a great question for all generations to ask. Gen Xer’s like to question things. Asking a question is not necessarily judgment. Questions are helpful for exploration and discovery when they are asked with a tone of curiosity.

So, reflect on what your generation can do to have more effective communication with the different generations on your farm team.

Twenty-three percent of millennials (ages 21 to 36) still require financial assistance from their parents. This rings true for successors who cannot afford to buy all of their boomer parent’s farm assets. These successors are looking for a collaborative solution of buyouts, gifting, and fair loans from the founders.

Some boomers are spending 20 hours a week caring for aging parents on top of other roles. So if your boomer parents are really tired from role overload, consider rested times to have fierce conversations that require more energy.

Be kind, be patient, and listen well as you navigate new plans for talking things out with your boomer parents.



## POGA'S 19<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Thursday, December 1, 2016  
Lakeview Hecla Resort, Hecla Island, MB

### Agenda \*

- 8:00am **Registration and free hot breakfast –**  
Meet our sponsors and enter the draw for \$100 worth of FREE OAT GROCERIES
- 8:45am **Welcome and Introduction –**Art Enns, POGA President
- 8:50am **Greetings from Manitoba Minister of Agriculture,** Honourable Ralph Eichler
- 9:05am **Mycotoxins in oats: what are they, where are they, and why they matter -** Sheryl Tittlemier, The Canadian Grain Commission.
- 9:35am **The effects of oats in rotations with other crops and do oat cultivars differ in response to nitrogen rates -** Bill May, Agriculture and Agri-Foods Canada (AAFC), Indian Head, SK
- 10:10am **Diversifying oat markets: How demand in areas like India and China could drastically change the Canadian Oat Export Market but what needs to be done to make it successful? –** Steve Lavergne, Director, Grains and Oilseeds Division, AAFC
- 10:40am Coffee Break
- 11:15am **Market Diversification: Increased sales to the Mexican market and future plans -**Paulina Ceballos, Emerging Ag
- 12:00pm **Soup and sandwich lunch –** tour the sponsor's displays
- 1:00 pm **Assessing North America crop weather trends for 2017 -** Drew Lerner, President, World Weather, Inc.
- 2:00 pm **Driving Efficiency in the Canadian Grain Supply Chain –** Murray Hamilton, Assistant VP Grain & Intermodal Sales, Canadian Pacific Railway
- 2:45pm **POGA Annual General Meeting;** Art Enns, POGA President
- 3:00pm Coffee Break
- 3:30pm **Oats and animal feed: what can it mean for your farm-** Rex Newkirk, Research Chair Feed Processing, University of Saskatchewan
- 4:00pm **Market Outlook for Oats and Other Crops –** Marlene Boersch, Owner & Managing Partner, Mercantile Consulting Venture Inc.
- 4:45pm **Wrap-up and Adjourn –**Art Enns, POGA President
- 5:45pm **Social Hour** at the Hecla Island resort
- 6:30pm **Dinner and speaker: Culinary Collaborations, how to grow oats sales through restaurant and pre-packaged goods.** Peter Ecker, Corporate Chef for Sysco Canada (Additional Cost of \$50)
- 8:00pm Adjourn
- Daytime seminars, breakfast and lunch \$20.00      Optional Evening Banquet \$50.00

*\*Times and agenda topics subject to change. For updates, pre-registration and credit card payments visit [poga.ca](http://poga.ca)*

Note: For those arriving on Wednesday November 30<sup>th</sup>, there will be a meet and greet beginning at 8pm in the Lakeview Terrace of the Lakeview Hecla Resort



## AOGC Annual General Meeting

**Monday, January 30, 2017**

*(Monday before FarmTech 2017)*

**Free  
Food**

### Location

The Edmonton Westin  
10135 100<sup>th</sup> Street,  
Edmonton, AB T5J 0N7  
Turner Valley room

**Free  
Drinks**

- 6:30pm **Complimentary drink, sandwiches and vegetables**
- 7:00pm **Welcome from the Alberta Oat Growers Commission**
- 7:05pm **AOGC Business meeting**
- 7:15pm **Director Elections/Director Acclamation**
- 7:30pm **Linda Hall, Agronomist, University of Alberta** – Results from AOGC funded 3-year research study on “Optimizing Oat Yield, Quality and Stand-ability in Central Alberta.”
- 8:00pm **Tracy Bush, Director of Sales and Marketing, Canadian Oats Milling** – Oats market update and forecast as well as how Canadian Oats milling is working to diversify the oats market in places like India, Jamaica and Mexico
- 8:30pm **Adjourn**

For those that stay through the end of the meeting AOGC will provide another complimentary drink ticket.

Please RSVP to [info@poga.ca](mailto:info@poga.ca) to ensure enough food is ordered. There is no charge for this event.

*\*Times and agenda topics subject to change, check poga.ca for updates*



## Alberta Oat Growers Commission

### Director Nominations Open

Are you interested in becoming a director or do you know someone who is? Here are just a few of the benefits:

- o Identify and direct research for the benefit of the entire industry;
- o Increased industry knowledge;
- o The opportunity to meet a large number of influential millers, buyers, and government officials across the province, nation and globally;
- o Increased information sharing with other growers
- o Professional development;
- o Reimbursement for all travel, honorariums for time spent on the commissions’ projects and committees.

**To be eligible, a producer must have sold oats after July 31, 2014.**

**Deadline for nominations is  
December 8, 2016  
5pm**

For nomination forms and further information contact:

AOGC Administration Office, PO Box 20106,  
Regina, SK S4P 4J7

Telephone (306) 530-8545; Fax (306) 546-2999;  
Email [info@poga.ca](mailto:info@poga.ca)



## **MOGA Annual General Meeting: The Rising Demand for Gluten-Free Oats**

**Date:**

Wednesday, February 15, 2017, 2:40pm

**Location:**

Victoria Inn Hotel and Convention Centre, Winnipeg, MB  
(as part of The CropConnect Conference)

Free admission to the AGM

***Come Enjoy a Free Oat Beer from a Local Manitoba Brewery and hear what the Oat Growers Commission is doing for you!***

**Agenda:**

- 2:40 pm – Welcome from MOGA Chairman, Ray Mazinke
- 2:45pm -- MOGA Annual Business Meeting, Ray Mazinke
- 2:55pm - “The Rising Demand for Gluten-Free Oats,” Betsy Hiebert, Owner of Cocoa Beans Bake Shop, one of Winnipeg’s only totally Gluten Free Restaurants (Includes free samples!)
- 3:20pm– Adjourn

*\*Times and agenda topics subject to change, check [poga.ca](http://poga.ca) for updates*

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(After this is done, we will remove your name from the print mail out list)



## SaskOats Annual General Meeting

Tuesday, January 10, 2017

Prairieland Park, Hall A (as part of CropSphere)  
Saskatoon, SK

Free admission to the AGM

### **Agenda\***

- 12:30 pm – Opening remarks from SODC chairman, Alan Butuk
- 12:35pm – SODC Annual Business Meeting, Alan Butuk of Insinger, Chair
- 12:55 pm – Kenric Exner, Viterra Merchandising Manager, Oats Pricing and Marketing Expectations for 2017
- 1:30 pm – Adjourn

*\* Times and agenda topics subject to change, for updates visit [poga.ca](http://poga.ca)*

POGA has received requests from international oat buyers to source oats directly from producers. If you are an oat producer in Alberta, Manitoba or Saskatchewan and are interested in being contacted by these companies for potential direct oat sales, please complete the producer consent form found on the home page of [poga.ca](http://poga.ca).

## Baked Oatmeal

50 minutes

Prep: 10 minutes | Cook: 40 minutes | Servings: 8-10

### Ingredients

- 3 cups (750 mL) rolled Oats
- 1 cup (250 mL) brown sugar
- 2 tsp (10 mL) ground cinnamon
- 2 tsp (10 mL) baking powder
- 1 tsp (5 mL) salt
- 1 cup (250 mL) milk
- 2 eggs
- 1/2 cup (125 mL) butter, melted
- 2 tsp (10 mL) vanilla extract
- 1/4 cup (60 mL) dried cranberries
- Cream (optional)

### Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (175°C).
2. In a large bowl, mix together oats, brown sugar, cinnamon, baking powder, and salt.
3. In a separate bowl whisk eggs, milk, melted butter and vanilla extract.
4. Combine milk mixture with oat mixture. Stir in dried cranberries.
5. Spread into a greased 9 x 13-inch (3 L) baking dish. Bake for 40 minutes.
6. Serve warm. Add a couple teaspoons of cream!

### Tip:

Instead of dried cranberries, substitute your favourite dried fruit. For a thicker, chewier oatmeal use a 9 x 9 inch baking dish instead of a 9 x 13 inch baking dish.



Recipe courtesy of

Great Tastes of Manitoba,  
[www.greattastesmb.ca](http://www.greattastesmb.ca)

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[www.cropproductiononline.com](http://www.cropproductiononline.com)

## MEET YOUR NEIGHBORS



Gordon Pope with Grandson Brody

### Gordon Pope

Gordon Pope and his wife, Cheryl, farm north of Riley, Alberta, seeding 2300 acres with canola, wheat, barley and oats in the rotation. Gordon remarks, "2018 will mark the 100th anniversary of the homestead land being in the family." Pope is happy to be

farming and as he says, "this is where I want to be." Farming has always been his dream, because there is simply no greater challenge. Gordon has never missed a harvest, even when he worked off farm in his younger years.

Pope plants oats because it's good for the land, and can be very profitable depending, of course, on the price and yield. His varieties of choice are AC Morgan and Summit. However, the verdict is still out on Summit, a relatively new variety for the area but Pope says it's worth a try to get new varieties into "mainstream Alberta." Summit has higher beta glucan levels than AC Morgan, the predominately grown oat variety in Alberta. Getting new varieties like this into more fields means Alberta oats can be more competitive with Manitoba and Saskatchewan for the human consumption market since beta glucan is a requirement of many oat millers in order for their products to meet the heart healthy claim. Pope grew Summit due to its resistance to stem and leaf rusts, and, of course, beta glucan, but found lodging to be somewhat of an issue. On any given year, Pope plants 160 -320 acres of oats and harvests 120-150 bu/acre.

When asked about challenges to growing oats, he cited price and the difficulty of controlling wild oats which may discourage some farmers from growing it.

Pope is enjoying his participation in POGA, and finds the organization refreshingly honest and straight forward in their approach to working with, and for, growers and the industry. He is proud of the way POGA handled the transportation crisis several years ago, and how POGA is recognized and listened to federally.

He sees a bright future for oats in western Canada as markets continue to grow around the world and consumers become more health conscious. POGA and the provincial oat organizations continue to support research and development projects that are geared to increase not only production but also consumption, because more consumption means more demand for oats.

When not farming, Pope enjoys curling, fishing and boating, having given up hockey and ball to his younger neighbors a few years ago.



Bob, daughter Courtney Baudry and granddaughter Chloe

### Bob Lepischak

Five generations of Lepischaks have farmed in the Rossburn district of Manitoba for over a hundred years! This family farm celebrated its centennial in 2012. The original homestead is still home to now a fifth generation Lepischak, Bob's nephew. The farm produces cereal crops, oil seeds and forage crops. They also experiment with some speciality

crops, and have a cow-calf operation.

Bob says, "oats has always been a part of the crop rotation as a cash crop and as feed and fiber for the cattle. It also breaks the wheat-canola rotation cycle." Average annual oat acreage on the farm is 400 to 500 acres. Oat production suits the farm well with production levels of 100 to 150 bushels/acre and lower input costs compared to other crops. However, there are downsides to oats, too, acknowledges Bob. He cites historically low prices; storage concerns; varieties are not as resistant to lodging as area farmers would like and distance to market/transportation issues as several challenges.

Lepischak, as a director of The Manitoba Oat Growers Association and the Prairie Oat Growers Association appreciates the research projects that the oat organizations lead. For example, the conduction of growing trials for oats in oat growing areas, value adding research focusing on the health benefits of oats, research on oats as a feed and, of course, encouraging the consumption of oats for people due to all the great health benefits like reducing heart disease, lowering cholesterol and helping to control diabetes.

Lepischak also represents oat producers at various levels of government talking to decision makers about issues and challenges facing the industry. He adds "We (POGA) are focused on producers and how we can help lead and sustain the industry for the benefit of western Canadian oat growers."



Derek and family live on the original homestead.

## MEET YOUR NEIGHBORS



**Elroy Trithardt**

Elroy Trithardt and his brother Garnet farm just north of Kipling, Saskatchewan on their 3,000 acre cattle and grain farm. They rent out some of the cultivated acres and pasture land, but maintain the cattle operation. The farm's crop rotation is canola, wheat, flax and oats. When asked why grow oats, Trithardt replies, "Oats has traditionally been a popular crop on our land for a number of reasons. First,

we often plant considerable oat acres for the cattle operation. Depending on other feed availability, much of the oats is baled as green feed. When not as much feed is needed more oats is combined- with the straw always baled." He added, "Second, oats is also popular because our area often has wet springs with delayed planting. Oats can be seeded later with relatively lower input costs when frost is a greater risk."

Trithardt became involved with POGA because he found the Oat Scoop and industry issues, in general, very interesting. He adds, "I believe oat producers are often more diversified farm operators, very consumer conscious, and environmentally aware." Farmers face a number of challenges- some of which are unique to the oat industry. Oats is a small acre commodity, therefore, the crop does not attract the same kind of industry investment in new varieties and other research as larger acre crops do. Much research requires matching producer funding and smaller oat acreage means less check off revenue is available to fund research and marketing. Also since the oat market is smaller it can more easily be influenced by commodity fund investors. When markets are potentially distorted they are not a reliable price indicator and some producers are less likely to produce the crop.

During his time as a director of the organization, Trithardt is most proud of POGA's lead role taken with the transportation issue. POGA's positions on interswitching and levels of service have influenced public policy. "We tend to be one of the first producer groups that both Federal and Provincial Government officials seek consultation with," he states.

Trithardt believes that the future of the industry will be challenging and potentially very rewarding. "Consumers want food that is healthy, as natural as possible, affordable, and produced in a sustainable way. Oats has the potential to deliver on all fronts," he explains. He also maintains that oat producers and POGA need to continue to aggressively tell the oat story to consumers. "Too often farmers get preoccupied with production, without taking more time to understand that ultimately the easiest way to add value to our crop is to provide a product the consumer specifically wants," says Trithardt.

Trithardt has been involved in the economic development profession for 30 years, providing contract

services to East Central Development Corporation (a non-profit group of 63 member municipalities). He offers business advice and financial services to local entrepreneurs that are starting or expanding their operations. When not working he likes to take relaxing drives in the country and he follows the Toronto Blue Jays and Green Bay Packers.

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### **Another Positive for Canadian Oats**

flowers. Here, the agronomy is much more intense, with over 250 flower varieties, three different fruit crops and triticale, rye, wheat and canola for grain production.

Black Fox is one of only two distilleries using oats to make vodka in North America. When asked why oats? Cote responds, "Varietal vodkas are trending and we are very interested in locally grown quality ingredients." Barb adds, "Oats are a great fit." Along with the oat vodka, the Cotes also have an oat whisky. "Canadian whiskies are lighter tasting than their counterparts south of the border so it makes sense to use oats to create a smoother, milder tasting product." Does it work? John jokes, "we'll find out, as it takes three years to produce whiskey!" Their oat vodka is sold at the farm; in farmers' markets (Saskatoon and Regina) and will soon be in provincial liquor outlets. Other oat-based products on the horizon include an oat and pumpkin brandy. All oats utilized are purchased from Avena Foods Limited. John says "the oats are toasted to achieve a very nutty flavor with hints of vanilla, and this taste cannot be duplicated."

Creating their suite of products is based on trend research; what ingredients they prefer to work with; and naturally, what consumers want. John mentions, "our attitude changed considerably from the commodity based operation, to this one. For example, the price of oats is now much less important as our profits are not dependent on this singular ingredient." "Oats is such a good story, it has great flavor, a great nutritional profile, and the quality factor from production through processing is first-rate", says Barb.



Black Fox Distillery

## Peanut Butter Cookies

375 mL	natural peanut butter	1 ½ cups
125 mL	margarine or butter	½ cup
175 mL	lightly packed brown sugar	¾ cup
125 mL	granulated sugar	½ cup
1	large egg	1
5 mL	vanilla	1 tsp.
250 mL	oat flour	1 cup
125 mL	unbleached all purpose flour	½ cup
75 mL	ground flaxseed	1/3 cup
5 mL	baking soda	1 tsp.
2 mL	salt	½ tsp.
250 mL	old fashioned oats	1 cup
75 mL	chopped roasted peanuts	1/3 cup
75 mL	dried cranberries	1/3 cup



- Preheat oven to 190° (375° F) and position rack in centre of oven.
- In a large bowl cream peanut butter, margarine, brown sugar, and granulated sugar until light and fluffy.
- Beat in egg and vanilla.
- In a small bowl, combine oat flour, flour, ground flaxseed, baking soda and salt. Stir and blend into creamed mixture.
- Add oats, peanuts and cranberries. Combine until all ingredients hold together to form a dough.
- Scoop dough using 15 mL (1 tbsp.) measure, slightly rounded on top. Press and squeeze dough in palm of your hand to form into 3.5 cm (1 ½ inch) balls. Place 5 cm ( 2 inches) apart on baking sheet that has been lightly sprayed with a nonstick cooking oil.
- Flatten cookies with the back of a floured fork, making a criss cross pattern.
- Bake 10 minutes or until golden brown.
- Let cool 5 minutes on baking sheet. Remove cookies to cooling rack.

Single Serving Nutrient Values	
Calories	299.84
Protein	7.05 g
Carbohydrates	29.59 g
Fiber	3.38 g
Fat	16.41 g
Saturated	2.25 g
Monounsaturated	0.89 g
Polyunsaturated	0.72 g
Cholesterol	8.67 mg
Folate	9.28 mcg
Potassium	53.05 mg
Sodium	222.52 mg

Yield: 44 - 6 cm (2 1/2 inch) cookies Serving Size: 2 cookies. Using a natural peanut butter produces a slightly drier dough but equally delicious cookies. Any peanut butter can be used. To make oat flour: In a small blender or coffee mill, process oats until finely ground. Cookies can be stored in an airtight container for up to 3 days or frozen up to 3 months.

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