

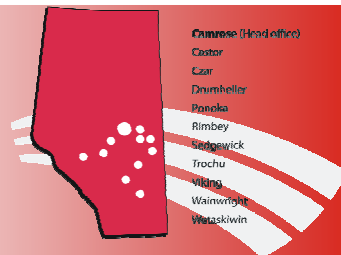


ROSS AGRI

Growing Together

ROSS AGRI NEWSLETTER

Spring 2007



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Propane

Propane is one of nature's most versatile fuels, clean burning, efficient, portable and economical. It is a fuel suitable for appliances in homes and cottages, for powering automobiles and forklifts, and for use at farms and businesses. A large portion of the business in Central Alberta comes from Gas and Oilfield industries. Thanks to the recent boom in this area, Ross Agri added a third truck last year. John Baumgartner who has spent over 20 years delivering propane, primarily in the area surrounding Viking Alberta joined with Ross Agri after hearing positive things about us. John excels at his service to his loyal customers, usually operating as a round the clock service. In Camrose Al Cleveland is our specialist. Al has been with Ross Agri since April 1998. During the winter months when propane demand is steady and peaking, Al runs a second truck operated by Dennis Kuefler. With regular weekly runs to the gas and oil patch this year has seen an increase in demand primarily at construction sites in and around the Camrose area. In winter 2006 demand was heavy in the agriculture side as many farmers were drying grain throughout the winter, due to a wet harvest. Its great to have a product so versatile and with a steady growth pattern. Propane is here to stay, its a relatively inexpensive and portable product alternative to natural gas. As one of Central Alberta's leading distributors of propane, Ross Agri is ideally suited to meet your propane needs. For more information on propane, call our knowledgeable and neighborly team, for Viking and area call John Baumgartner at 780-385-4079. For Camrose and area call Al Cleveland at 780-679-7399.



Propane Specialist John Baumgartner serving East Central Alberta out of the Viking office.

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Outback 2007



When was the last time you made a capital purchase that actually paid you back? One that lives up to its claims and not only helps you to be more productive, but is incredibly easy to install and use. The cover on the OUTBACK sales literature says " Guide it. Position it. Steer it. See it." Quite simply stated, just like the system itself, from the ease of installation to the accuracy of the GPS and the end results for your operation. In the race to bring technology to the farm, GPS systems are a natural fit. Today as the family farm grows so do the number of acres farmed. GPS technology is now so refined that the accuracy of the systems is measured in inches. Last year Ross Agri was offered the opportunity to sell Outback Guidance systems in a large Central Alberta territory. The program was so successful that we ranked in the top 5 dealers in western Canada for sales. This year we have set our sales targets even higher. Neil Dunham who joined RA in 2005 was a former sales leader with the Outback product line in Saskatchewan. He is teamed up with Steve Nelson to help with the installation and sales of Outback. This year we had a booth at the Bull Congress in Camrose featuring these units. Neil and Steve host several Ride 'n Drive days in many locations. This gives the customer the opportunity to try the product out... in the field! They also assist Outback with their trade show appearances in Red Deer and again this year at the Edmonton Farm and Ranch Show in Edmonton. If you would like a demonstration of the Outback Guidance system, pricing or other product information, drop by one of our locations today.



Neil Dunham



Steve Nelson

Did You Know?

- The top five Alberta agri-food exports in 2005 were beef (\$1.4 billion), wheat (\$786 million), pork (\$464 million), canola seed (\$418 million) and live cattle (\$271 million).
- Total farm capital in Alberta was valued at approximately \$55.3 billion in 2004, consisting of \$42.6 billion in land and buildings, \$8.8 billion in machinery and equipment, and \$3.8 billion in livestock and poultry.
- Producers spent an estimated \$6.3 billion in farm operating expenses in 2004. Commercial feed was the largest single expense at approx \$1.0 billion.
- In 2005, agriculture and food processing industries employed 78,500 Albertans, with 56,200 in primary agriculture and 22,300 in food and beverage industries.

Source: Alberta Agriculture

Bins Galore



Once again this year we participated in the Winter booking program through Meridian Industries; Wheatland Bins. This lets us purchase a significant number of bins at a special price for distribution to our eleven locations. Passing these savings on to our customers is a key to the success of this program. In 2006 we sold GrainMax and Wheatland bins, this year we have decided to go with the Wheatland product line through this program. It should be noted that we do sell all types of bins available from Meridian. Many of our customers are in the process of completing the Alberta Environmental Farm Plan. This gives the farmer the possibility of access to up to \$50,000 which all or a portion of the funds can be used to purchase bins for their operation. This year we are featuring Wheatland's 1600 series bins, some of the options available are: **Grain Guard Aeration Systems, Manway (bottom), Manhole (roof), View Glasses, Poke Hole, Bean Ladders, Ladder Cages, and Skid Foundations.** By speaking to our customers, we found many prefer to have the option of a bin that is capable of use for both fertilizer or grain, with aeration. Standard features include; **Powder Coat Paint Finish Interior and Exterior, Telescopic Ladder, 22" Spring Loaded Vented Lid, 24" Clearance Under Bottom Slide, and Rack & Pinion Slide Gate** Bins are available for ordering at all 11 locations. We have knowledgeable staff and plenty of product literature available to help you make the right choice.

Local Producer

The Maxwell family lives just a few miles south of Viking, where their 35 year purebred Simmental operation steadily carries on. This is a 4th generation, 105 year old family farm where everyone pitches in to help keep the 300 head Simmental and mixed farm operation running.

First homesteaded in 1903, Charles and Florence Maxwell took over the farm in 1927. Gordon and Emma in 1970 and now the work continues with their sons Glen, Dean, and Kevin, spouses Pru and Leigh and 5 grandchildren, Reece, Katie, Dagan, Lexi and Bryce.

Following in the footsteps of their parents the kids are starting to get involved with 4H, "they are a bit young to work on the farm just yet, but they seem to enjoy 4H" says Gordon.



The Maxwell Farm Family: Back Row (L-R) - Pru and Kevin, Leigh and Glen Maxwell. Front Row - Reece, Katie, Dagan, Gordon and Emma, Dean, Lexi and Bryce Maxwell

This year will mark the 12th year the family has been a participant with the Herd Master Bull Sale in Camrose held every March. Each year they market about 115 purebred bulls, the top 60 or so go to the show in Camrose. The Maxwells are pleased with their successes as they are able to judge this by the number of repeat buyers for their Simmentals. "In the 12 years of our involvement with the Sale, 85% of our customers are repeat buyers, and we also sell bulls off our yard, communicating with customers is a big thing, if they come back they're happy" states Glen.

The Maxwells prefer Simmentals of the 'exotic' breeds, for the good maternal strengths, their size, performance weight as well as being quite docile. They imported their first full blood in 1972. To get a variety of the best genetics they use artificial insemination. Glen states "They cross breed very well with other breeds, this is helpful in selling bulls, each year we like to add a new herd bull, and this also helps us with our genetics".

Aside from putting up the required feed of silage and hay for 300 head, the family operates a zero till grain operation of canola, wheat and barley, together with their pasture land which spreads over about 2500 acres. "We haven't tried corn, but we'd like to some year" said Glen. During summertime the cattle are rotated through the pastures to try and maximize the grass and rotate to avoid over grazing.

When asked what major accomplishments Gord was proud of he humbly replied "my family". He was on the County Council for 18 years and the Simmental board for 12 years. The walls of their modest home proudly display many photographs of industry awards including the County award for 1996 Farm Family.

Location - Viking

Murray Josephison is the manager for the Viking Office. He has been in the fuel and oil business in Viking for 24 years. Married to Trudy, and with 3 growing children, Murray's life is busy, but together his family still manages to find time for winter sports. Hockey is a big part of Murray's life as well as being on the board for the new "Carena". Murray coaches various levels of his children's hockey teams as well as plays for the senior rec hockey team in Viking "The Viking 26ers".



The Viking crew ready to serve you!
Back Row: Manager Murray Josephison, Karen Hill, Shelley Labre, Nancy Tkaczyk. Front row: Doug Zazulak, Rob Chomik, Brian Anderson, missing: John Baumgartner

Viking is the site of Imperial Oils fully modernized bulk fuel terminal for east central Alberta. This is one of fifteen terminals that are located in Alberta. The Viking site currently serves a large area with fuel delivery. We have four trucks on site and there are three drivers based out of the Viking office and one out of Wainwright office. Brian Anderson delivers fuel to the south to Castor-Hanna area, Doug Zazulak delivers east to the Sedgewick-Czar area and Robbie Chomik delivers in the Viking area and west to Camrose. Harry Allen based out of the Wainwright site loads in Viking and then covers Wainwright and any short orders for Czar. Viking handles & sells granular fertilizer through their modernized bin system and also seed, lubes and Meridian Bins. Viking is striving to offer a fully based agricultural business and excellent customer service in all of these areas.

John Baumgartner is part of the Viking team and he is the propane delivery man. He has been in the propane business for many years and joined Ross Agri in November of 2005. You can find John on the road most of the time as he never seems to sit still for long. The Viking office staff consists of Shelley Labre, she keys invoices for oil, fertilizer, chemical and propane sales and reconciles the oil account for Ross Agri. Shelley deals with the day to day credit issues for customers on the Ross Agri accounts as well as daily administration duties. Nancy Tkaczyk works for Ross Agri part time - two days a week and currently handles the cardlock billing, accounts receivable for the fuel accounts, assists with keying of invoices and setting up credit for new customers. Karen Hill is fuel dispatch, part of the fuel pricing team, admin team manager, coordinator for fuel sales at six sites; Camrose, Castor, Czar, Sedgewick, Wainwright and Viking and "mom" to all in the office.

Murray is proud of the awards that the Viking footprint has received over the past 5 years. Each year the staff participates in the Esso Work Alert Program and has received top honors each time. In 2005/2006 the Viking footprint received the Imperial Oil National Safety Award. Competing with sites all across Canada Viking is #1. Safety is our number one objective as we want everyone to "Go Home Safe".

Community Giving

Working hand-in-hand with local business associates in farming communities across Canada, Imperial Oil is committed to supporting initiatives that impact the quality of every day life for Canadians. This year, the Esso Farm Community Growth Fund has raised over \$475,000 to improve arenas and sports facilities, provide equipment for fire departments, develop children's playgrounds and support various health related services in 20 rural farming communities across Central Canada. Each year, Imperial Oil and Ross Agri recommend community projects for support financially.

Last spring we submitted 3 groups for consideration and have were successful in obtaining funds to donate to each of the recipients. This year the Esso Farm Community Growth Fund will directly benefit: Viking Carena rebuild, Stollery Childrens Hospital, Camrose Leaders of Tomorrow. These are 3 examples of how we can help to give back to the communities we serve.

Imperial Oil has been fuelling farm businesses in Canada for over 100 years. Contributing to communities has been a way of life for Imperial Oil for just as long with a great history of support to minor hockey and community living across Canada. In 2003, Esso, through the Imperial Oil Foundation, contributed almost \$6.1 million in support to over 400 nonprofit organizations in Canada. Ross Agri financially supports over 100 local community projects every year throughout their territory.



Sheilagh Ross (right) presents cheque to Sheralyn Dobos of the Camrose Leaders of Tomorrow program, with Rod Ross to the left.



The New Viking Carena under construction.

