

# Haney Farms Quarterly



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## To the Point

By Shaun Haney

You will notice a difference in the beginning of our fifth edition. I have added some editorial comments at the beginning of this newsletter.

### Farm Workers Union Not Necessary

There has been a real stir created in the Lethbridge Herald with the ground floor formation of a farm workers union. There has been a common thread through all the coverage in the paper which is that farm employees are oppressed. I guess that I use a different definition of oppression than the union leader. Does oppression include full benefits packages which consists of travel insurance; life insurance for employee, spouse and children; a prescription drug; long term disability insurance; and Accidental Death, Disease, and Dismemberment Benefits.

Does your definition of oppression include use of company hockey tickets and the annual Christmas party?

I am not sure that oppression would describe this work environment.

I agree that employee safety should be on the minds of all business owners especially in agriculture. I cannot speak for other farm operations but I can say at Haney Farms safety of the workplace is one of our seven core values and we focus on it daily. Because Haney Farms is an accredited Canadian Seed Institute bulk handling facility we take part in safety audits to ensure that our employees are working in safe conditions and that risk factors have been minimized.

Haney Farms has also just formed an internal safety committee composed of four employees to execute a safety audit of the entire company and then bring forth recommendations to the company.

Farm employees across Western Canada should be proud of the work that they do because it is vital to the success of the Canadian economy.



### Email Capability

If you are interested in receiving this publication by email please call or email the office and we will put your email address into the system for the spring edition. Remember that you can also download the newsletter from our website.

### See You at Ag-Expo

For the first time ever Haney Farms will have a booth at Ag-Expo. Please come and join us to discuss your farming operation. You can find us next to the Seed Fair on the seed floor.

## Seed Fair is a Great Opportunity to Showcase Your Hard Work

It is that time of the year when we look back at the growing season that was or could have been and we contemplate what we did right and what could have been done better.

As farmers we are very proud of the work we do and we should take every advantage that we can in showing these accomplishments off. A perfect opportunity to showcase your grown product from the 2004 crop year is the 2005 North American Seed Fair at Ag-Expo (March 2-5, 2005)

There are classes for seeds of all crop types grown in Western Canada in the pedigreed and open classes.

Over the past two years the (Seed Fair) committee has worked hard to re-evaluate the rules to ensure that the competition is fair for all entrants.

One of the rule changes made last year is that all classes except for the junior classes must be machine cleaned.

The committee also initiated a compliance committee to act as a watch dog to ensure that entrants meet entrance criteria.

Please make sure to send your hay and silage samples to Sandberg Labs which is a new sponsor at the fair.

If you have any questions please call Shaun Haney at Haney Farms.

*Disclosure: Shaun Haney is the chairman of the North American Seed Fair*



## STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR SMALL BUSINESS: MAKING YOUR POT OF GOLD AT THE END OF THE RAINBOW



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*“Remember that strategic planning is a process - it is something you continually do.”*

When people talk about strategic planning, most think it is something for only big businesses to consider. They are wrong. Today's business environment is constantly changing. These fluctuations in the business environment, plus changes in who your customers are and what your competitors are doing, can directly affect your business's bottom line. Small businesses are especially vulnerable to unforeseen negative impacts on their operations. You need to anticipate what the future holds not only to take advantage of opportunities, but to mitigate any potential negative impacts. Strategic planning helps to do this. For today's small business, it is essential.

### What is Strategic Planning?

Successful companies make wise strategic choices and then implement them. They have a plan. Strategic planning is a process where a business thinks about its present and its future. It is a way of managing your business, not something you do just once a year. It is the development of a plan that helps the company not only maintain its position, but to improve it in the marketplace. Effective planning involves analyzing what is happening in your marketplace, assessing your own company's strengths and weaknesses and then identifying profit-making opportunities. It does not stop there. To be successful you then need to consider what you not only want to do in the future, but also what you can do. This means looking at your options, seeing what resources you have available, and then determining whether these options fit with what your company truly stands for.

### The Strategic Planning Process

Strategic planning starts with ar-

ticulating a vision and ends when that vision is an integral part of your business's day to day operations. A vision describes what you want your business to be in the future... that place where your goals have been achieved. It is a picture of future success. It is your pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. But ... be realistic. There is a very fine line between a hallucination and a vision. A clear vision contrasts the company as it is, with what you would like it to be. It inspires and motivates not only you, but your staff. Once a vision is determined these steps are necessary:

1. Identify your current objectives and strategy.
2. Analyze what is happening in your business environment.
3. Note the threats and opportunities in the environment to your own business.
4. Look inside. Identify the resources you have available, both financial and human.
5. Be honest. Note the strengths and weaknesses that you believe your business has.
6. Using the information from steps 2-5, start formulating strategies that make sense.
7. Implement these strategies.

Many businesses stop here. Don't.

8. Take the time to evaluate the results of your new strategic initiatives.

Remember that strategic planning is a process - it is something you continually do. Small businesses often have a hard time getting away from just doing operational short-term planning. Strategic planning is an active management process. It goes on at all times. It is more than just establishing a

plan; it is trying to establish a culture of strategic thinking.

### Implementing Your Plan

You can do all the planning you want, but if you can't implement your ideas effectively all that effort will be wasted. There are three key components to implementing your plans. You want to communicate every step in the process with all your employees. They need to be part of the process. Everyone in the business needs to understand how his/her role is linked to the overall future success of the business. Finally, the owner(s) of the business need to be committed to see the plan through to completion.

When you have these three components in place, you need to think of a few other points. If your strategic planning process is going to be beneficial you need to hold people accountable for the results they have agreed to. It is important when developing your strategies to think in terms of cause and effect relationships. Make sure that your strategic decisions are based on accurate and complete information. Provide your staff with the tools to support the strategies you want to implement and set up milestones and control points for monitoring the company's progress. Many small businesses miss this last point. You need to follow through.

### Concerns of Small Business

If it is true that strategic planning is essential for small business, then why do so many small businesses fail to undertake this process? One of the major objections is that small business does not need it. If you truly take this perspective, you probably think small. You need to stop thinking of your company as a small business and

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### Strategy

start thinking of your company as a successful business. Strategic planning will help you plan for the future and determine how to get there. Many small business owners say that they don't have time to do strategic planning. Strategic planning does take time, but as the old adage states: if you fail to take time to plan, then you are actually planning to fail. The time spent can result in an enormous payoff. Many other small business owners feel that if they have to stick to a plan it will limit how they run their operations. This type of thinking fails to recognize that strategic planning is an on-

going process. Plans are not written in stone. As your business situation changes, you need to re-evaluate your strategy and then implement your course of action.

### Summary

Strategic planning can help you improve your business decisions. It allows you to use your resources more effectively and to optimize the outcome of all your efforts. It improves your customer relations, as your strategic plan helps you understand your customers as you prepare to meet their needs. Strategic planning will help you anticipate your competitors' actions, so that you can meet them head on. Strategic planning allows you to be proac-

tive, rather than reactive. You need to determine your own future. You want to control the business, not have the business control you. Strategic planning for a small business does not guarantee success, but it does increase the probability of making your pot of gold at the end of the rainbow.

### Dan's Bio

Dan Kazakoff is the Director, Theory Into Practice Programs for the Faculty of Management at The University of Lethbridge. He has both a B. Commerce (Accounting) and B. Arts (Industrial Sociology) from the University of Calgary and a M.B.A. from the University of Alberta. He is the only person in Canada to win two consecutive J. W. McConnell Foundation Awards for Innovation in Teaching and Research for Strategies in the New Economy. He has been chosen as the Faculty's Professor of the Year the last four years. Over the past six years, he has supervised over 60 consulting projects for small businesses in Southern Alberta and has conducted Workshops on strategic planning for both small business and non-profit sector clients.

## Turning Pages

By Shaun Haney

One of my true passions in life is reading. Here is a list of the books that I have read in 2004 and what my opinions are of them.

**Who Says Elephants Can't Dance—Louis V. Gerstner**—The story of how Lou Gerstner saved IBM from itself and put the company back onto a track of profitability and growth once again. This was a easy read and probably could have been a little more detailed in the process of the plan. The strong point of the book is his explanation of the power of a corporations culture both positive and negative.

**Do You Love Football?—Jon Gruden**—This is an autobiography of the man that was the most sought after coach in the NFL in the past decade and rightly so since he was instrumental in winning Tampa Bay a Super Bowl. This is a great light read for football fans. I especially like the story of how he had to fight off giant rats in the depths of Veteran Stadium in Philadelphia.

**How to get Rich—Donald Trump**—This book is an absolute waste of time. This is one of those books where the publisher puts a famous person on the cover and the reader impatiently reads for 244 pages waiting for something insightful. I never did find it.

**Confessions of a Street Addict—James Cramer**—This is my favorite book that I read in 2004. This is great insight into the life of a hedge fund manager. The book also dives into Jim's struggles to get thestreet.com off the ground during the hype of internet bubble. This is a must read if you enjoy Jim Cramer on the thestreet.com or Kudlow and Cramer on CNBC or if you are interested in how the financial markets work.

**When Fish Fly—John Yokoyama**—The story of the world famous Pike Place Fish Market in Seattle. The author explains very clearly how he turned a homogenous fish market into one that people travel across the world to experience for themselves. Yes, this is the company where the fishmongers

throw the fish back and forth.

**Trade Like a Hedge Fund—James Altucher**—A real eye opener to how hedge fund managers create trading strategies. This book is very quantitative based but very interesting since the author provides statistical analysis to support his 20 uncorrelated trading strategies.

**Re-Imagine—Tom Peters**—A great coffee table book to read in pieces. This is a business book set up in a abstract format. Tom Peters is famous for his strategic management rants and this book sums up all of his consulting work over the past 30 years in a very illustrated way.

**Organized for Success—Stephanie Winston**—For those of us that are usually unorganized this is a great book to begin the process of fixing it. This is a great book because it doesn't just focus on high tech ways to solve your chaos. The author also gives low tech simple solutions to organize your life as well.

## From the Seed Plant

Get your seed tested. You have had this on your mind for some time and will do it any day now. Germination test: Right! Everyone knows that. I can do that test at home. Some seed, paper towel, a little water, put it in a drawer and in a few days, if I remember, I'll have my results. Right!

ger.minate, 1. to begin to grow or develop. 2.a. to develop into a plant b. to sprout; put forth shoots.

The germination test establishes the maximum plant producing potential of the seed tested. "Blotter tests", the ones we do at home on our own seeds are fine: the difficulty is in reading the results of the test. The fact that the seed sprouted is but the start of the analysis. Did the seedling grow normally? Are there indications of frost? What about chemical or heating damage? The list goes on and on. Most of us are not trained to read the test results accurately. Counting sprouts is simply not good enough. My best advice. Send your seed to an accredited lab for

an expert analysis. While you are at it get a "Vigor Test" done. What is a vigor test? The definition is: "The sum total of those properties of the seed which determine the level of activity and performance of the seed or seed lot during germination and seedling emergence. Seeds which perform well are termed high vigor seeds." [Perry 1978] In other words the vigor test can assess the seedlings ability to withstand low temperature stress as it would in most areas in the spring. That drawer you did the germ test in has nothing in common with normal planting conditions. Low temperature is often the cause of poor germination. If you wish, drop off your sample at our seed plant and we can discuss your options and forward the sample to the lab of your choice. Of all the things you plan to do for this coming crop year, starting with the best seed possible is the least expensive and gives you the best chance of helping your bottom line. The wetter than normal harvest conditions this year could mean problems with your seed. Don't take the

chance. The seed labs now offer test packages that include germ, vigor, 1000 kernel weight, fusarium etc. In this day of input costs in the \$000's, the \$100.00 cost to determine the quality of your planting seed is a bargain and the return could be significant. Questions about seed quality? Call Haney Farms and talk to Don or Shaun. Using our Certified seed may be the answer. Already cleaned, inspected and tested, Certified seed is of great value to your farming operation. Lenders and crop insurers consider Certified seed a valuable input that can reduce risk of crop failure.



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## Illegitimate Seed Sales Stopped

**CPTA Releases:** [November 24, 2004.](#)

The Canadian Plant Technology Agency (CPTA) announces that Parkland Agri Services of Didsbury Alta has agreed to pay two member companies for Parkland's sale of common seed grown from varieties protected by Plant Breeders Rights. The owners of those rights, SeCan Association and Proven Seed, share in damage awards approaching \$200,000 and have obtained Parkland's agreement not to repeat the illicit sales practices.

The settlement is a result of negotiations to resolve civil lawsuits filed by Proven and SeCan upon CPTA's discovery of Parkland's practice of selling common seed grown from protected varieties without authorization.

SeCan General Manager Larry White is pleased with the result. "SeCan members support the need to generate income from seed sales in order to effectively fund the plant breeding organizations we represent. Cases like this demonstrate that we will support our members' legitimate sales efforts by ensuring that all sales of our varieties are made by author-

ized distributors who compensate the breeders for these innovative varieties"

"We invest a lot of time and money into the development of new seed varieties, to increase the returns to the western Canadian producer," said Neil Arbuckle, Business Manager of Proven Seed. "We are committed to having our innovative varieties sold legally and in a way that supports the continued investment into the development of new products to meet farmer's ongoing needs." It is our hope that the successful prosecution of infringers like Parkland will help us continue to bring new products to the market."

The CPTA is a non-profit agency working to support innovation in the seed industry. Unfortunately some of this work involves the coordination of activities such as this civil action.

"A small but potentially damaging group of seed sellers continues to think they can have the best of both worlds – new seed technology without paying the plant breeding costs. Their free-ride mentality ends up hurting both producers and seed developers." stated Lorne Hadley Executive Director of the CPTA. "The CPTA was

set up to inform and educate the industry on the need to support innovation through legitimate seed sales. It is regrettable that seed developers must take extreme steps such as this civil action to protect financial returns needed to continue innovating Canadian agriculture."

Seed sellers and farmers should be aware the CPTA will continue to seek out and stop the sale of common seed grown from varieties protected by Plant Breeders Rights. Incidents such as the Parkland case show that plant breeding organizations and distributors will take the steps necessary to protect their innovations.

Recent research completed in western Canada confirms that leading producers purchase pedigree seed from the legitimate distributors with the full knowledge that their purchases will result in further research into new and innovative varieties. Leading producers expect to benefit from new varieties providing better agronomic packages and access to new markets.

*Courtesy of the Canterra Seeds Newsletter*

Aviation  
**CowJet**

**Who Says Cattle Can't Fly???**

Aviation  
**CowJet**