

# Haney Farms Quarterly



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## To the Point

### Fusarium Action Plan

*By Shaun Haney*

For the past three years the government has been in crisis mode with BSE. The affects still linger to this day and will do so for quite some time.

There is a new crisis in Agriculture, specific to the cereal seed industry. The seed industry's version of BSE is fusarium.

The province of Alberta has tackled this issue by trying to contain the disease as if it were a rat. I still laugh at the statement, "If we can keep rats out we can keep fusarium out."

This truly is naive and in the meantime many seed growers and farmers are being significantly affected by this situation. The rules that are in place are that any cereal grain deemed to be used for feed is to be handled under best management practices that are suggested in the Fusarium Action Plan.

Cereal seed on the other hand has a zero tolerance. This means that if the lot of seed has any infection, its value has now

dropped by 60%. This is essentially comparable to the losses suffered during BSE by livestock producers.

It makes no sense to me that the province allows truckloads of straw which can be a major carrier, to drive around the province untested and untarped. Meanwhile we are not allowing certified seed to be planted at minimally infected levels. Even though that minimally infected seed can be treated with several products to combat the infection at seeding time.

Under these regulations your commercial grain farm is still able to sell any infected product. Seed growers on the other hand are being forced to sell their certified seed or stock seed as feed because of a detectable level of fusarium infection that is very small and can be treated.

Another strange facet of the Fusarium Action Plan is how corn is treated. Corn's status as a prime host has never been addressed. Corn is the worst host of fusarium even though it does not affect the yield potential of



A healthy AC Strongfield field is left unaffected by Fusarium

the corn plant itself. In feedlot alley, corn is a staple silage crop due to its high yield potential. Corn is a significant carrier and has not been handled aggressively but certified seed is handled with zero tolerance.

If you are using farm saved seed this year please have it checked for fusarium. Please treat your seed with one of the recommended seed treatments for this disease.

Please send feedback to:  
shaney@haneyfarms.com

## Gravel....Get Your Gravel Here....Gravel

Haney Farms now has a retail gravel business to compliment our current portfolio of pedigreed seed and livestock services.

We have four products:

- 1.5 inch to six inch

screened—good armor for ditches and dugouts

- ¾ inch to 1.5 inch—for drain rock and landscaping,
- 3/4 screened—for landscaping and roads

- Sand—highway and sand boxes

Please call Dick Haney to make your sand and gravel order now. Please come to the main farm in the spring to see the sample piles.



## Wireworms: Know Your Enemy



**Jason James, CCA**  
Seed Treatment Specialist  
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by Jason James

Wireworms are significant pests in agricultural crops throughout the world, infesting millions of acres annually on every continent. In North America alone there are many species. Under the right conditions, they will feed on crops available to them and the damage they do can be significant. On the Canadian Prairies alone, wireworm damage to the field crops, not just cereals is in the millions of dollars annually.

### Lifecycle

Wireworms have four developmental stages: egg, larva, pupa, and adult. The egg, pupa and adult stages are relatively short lived. However, the larval stage is long-lived and during this time, feeds on plant material.

**Adults.** The adult wireworm is a click beetle. They may be anywhere from 8- 12 mm in length. They are usually black, but may also be tan, or grey depending on the species. Despite differences in size and colour, all click beetles have slightly converging sides, a rounded head and wing tips and a bell-shaped thorax. The best way to tell for sure that it is a click beetle is to flip the beetle on its back. It will thrust itself into the air with a clicking sound in an attempt to right itself.

**Eggs.** Adult females mate shortly after emergence (late May through June) and deposit their eggs, either singly or in batches in the soil, usually a few centimetres below the soil surface (if the soil is firm), or deeper (if the soil is cracked or

loosely cultivated). Each female can lay 200-400 eggs. Wireworm eggs are tiny, oval spheres, usually opaque, white and less than half a millimetre in diameter. They hatch three to seven weeks after being laid.

**Larvae.** Wireworm larvae are shiny, smooth, conspicuously segmented and relatively hard. Initially, they are white but most species gradually become yellowish-brown. They have three pairs of legs behind the head and the last abdominal segment is flattened with a keyhole-shaped notch.

Larvae establish connecting burrows close to where they hatch, either by tunnelling through the soil or by taking over tunnels created by plant roots. When seeding equipment cuts through the existing burrows, it loosens the soil allowing wireworms to easily extend their burrows into and along the seed row, giving them easy access to the seeds and roots.

Larvae over winter usually within two to four inches of the soil surface, but sometimes as deep as 10 inches. The following spring, they resume their feeding activity once the surrounding soil reaches 7-10°C. Wireworms prefer moist soil and will remain near the soil surface feeding on young plants. Under dry conditions, wireworms will move deeper into the soil profile. The larvae stage can last for 5 years before they pupae and emerge as adults.

**Pupae.** Wireworm pupae are white and delicate. The pupal period lasts about two to three weeks and is usually completed by

late fall. However the adults do not emerge until the following spring.

### Symptoms of wireworm damage

There is quite a complex process going on underground where wireworm feeding is concerned. Once seeds have absorbed enough water to germinate, they give off carbon dioxide and this attracts wireworms. Using their network of burrows, wireworms tend to feed along crop rows taking out plants as they progress. Look for:

- Small holes drilled into seeds
- Shredded stems, just above the crown
- Yellow, wilted plants
- Main shoots that are withering or dead
- Wilted and /or dead plants along a section of crop row.

Many of these symptoms are commonly mistaken for stress, poor seed quality, disease, and seeding to deep. If you see any of the above symptoms, it's critical to dig into the soil, look for the wireworms and examine the seeds to find out for sure.

Stay tuned for the next Haney Farms Quarterly newsletter for proper assessment and control measures to deal with wireworms. In the mean time if you know that you have a problem with wireworms please call Don McDowell at Haney Farms or Syngenta customer resource centre at 1-877-SYNGENTA for information about Dividend Supreme Pak.



A wireworm attached to a wheat seed

## CWB Training Staff to Handle Stressed Farmers.

By: Shaun Haney

Is it just me or is it the fact that the wheat board is putting staff through counseling training for farmers that are stressed out

really ironic? Maybe the board should spend some of that money finding more markets for our grain instead of training staff to console farmers. This is nothing more

than a newspaper headline catcher for urban people so that the CWB appears to really care about Western Canadian grain farmers.

## Affects of the Import Tax on US Corn

On December 15, the Canada Border Services Agency imposed an import tax on US corn. This has caused quite a stir among the users of corn in Canada including among others, livestock producers and ethanol manufacturers. Since Southern Alberta is one of the biggest consumers of barley in Canada and corn is a substitute for barley, I thought that it would be important to dig deeper into this issue. I talked to Dr. Danny LeRoy, an agricultural economist at the University of Lethbridge about the import tax and some of the ramifications.

### What was your initial reaction to the import tax?

Disappointment!! The benefits to domestic corn producers are limited and in the long run everyone will lose. The import tax shifts corn production from the regions best suited for this purpose, while reducing productivity and increasing production costs for everyone, everywhere. As corn users in central Canada search for sources of less expensive feed, there will be a small increase in the quan-

tity demanded of feed grains produced in Western Canada.

### What do you feel was the reason for the tariff and how much is it?

It was the federal government's response to intense lobbying of corn producers in central Canada to the effects of subsidized corn production in the United States being dumped into Canada. The import tax totals US\$1.65/bu on imported grain corn. Of that amount, US\$0.58/bu is an anti-dumping duty and US\$1.07/bu is a countervailing duty to offset producer subsidies provided by the US government. Before December 15, cash bids for corn at London, Ontario averaged about C\$2.90/bu. The import tax adds more than C\$1.90 for each bushel of imported corn.

### How long do you think the tax will be in place?

That has not been determined to this point. The import tax could be in place for months or years. It will depend on the continued willingness of Canadian politicians to enforce the import tax, on US

farm policy and on supply and demand conditions in the corn market.

### So what are the affects of this decision that we should be aware of?

The cost to consumers of corn will increase as will the quantities of corn domestic producers are willing to supply. As users of corn look for lower cost alternatives, the scope for marketing domestically produced corn will go down. There will be an increase in the quantity demand of western feed grains in central Canada. That region is a net importer of corn, and much of it is used for human and livestock feed and ethanol production.

The import tax will reduce the profit margin on livestock feeding activities in Ontario and Quebec. For marginal enterprises, producers may be forced to consider some other line of production. Any further expansion of feeding activities will be encouraged outside the region (west or north).



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## Turning Pages

By Shaun Haney

Reading books and magazines is by far one of my largest passions. Therefore I bring to you the 2nd annual "what is Shaun reading now" segment. If you have some reading suggestions or would like to comment on the books listed below, please email me to share your ideas and thoughts.

**Secret Ingredients: The Brave New World of Industrial Farming—Stuart Laidlaw**—By far the most provocative book that I have read this year because of its significant slant on one issue—the affects of genetically modified foods. This is not one of those books that allows the reader to gain insight

into both sides of an issue or lets the reader decide where they stand. If you read this book, you will never eat again. Consistently throughout the book anything that Dr. David Suzuki says is the gospel and anything Monsanto says is a public relations spin. Definitely worth the time to read to gain insight into one side of an issue.

**The Education of a Coach: The Education of Bill Belichick—David Halberstam**—I am reading this right now and it is fascinating. One word describes Bill Belichick's relationship with football...PASSION. After you read the first couple of chapters which

describes Bill's childhood, you realize that this guy has lived game film since he was eight. His obsession with smart disciplined players and not necessarily the most skilled, is hard to argue with since he has won three of the last four SuperBowls.

**Fast Company Magazine**—This is by far the most influential monthly reading that I do. The best part is that a two year subscription (24 issues) is only \$15. This is not a traditional business magazine like Business Week because it digs deep into issues that will affect business tomorrow instead of yesterday.

## Getting to Know You— Dr. Dave Sippell, Canterra Seeds

As stated in the Fall issue of the Haney Farms Quarterly, Haney Farms is now selling Canterra Seeds Canola. The four canola varieties available at Haney Farms this spring are Canterra 1841RR Hybrid, Canterra 1896RR Hybrid, Canterra 1812RR Synthetic, Canterra 1818RR (open pollinated).

You may not at first recognize the name Canterra Seeds but you will recognize some of their cereal varieties such as CDC Bold, AC Intrepid, CDC Yorkton and next year the release of AC Infinity (HRS).

Canterra Seeds is a unique interlocking network of partners and grower/retailers taking pride in providing customers with quality products, who also provide high quality advice to follow up on customers' needs.

The following is an interview with the CEO of Canterra Seeds, Dr. Dave Sippell.

If you would like to inquire further about Canterra varieties please call Haney Farms or visit [www.haneyfarms.com](http://www.haneyfarms.com).

### What is Canterra Seeds?

Canterra Seeds is a seed company owned by seed growers from across Western Canada. It is focused on acquiring varieties from plant breeders around the world then testing, producing and marketing these varieties.

### How long have you been CEO and what was your background before your current role at Canterra Seeds?

I have been CEO since 1997, which was six months after the inception of the company itself.

I have a PhD in plant breeding from the University of Guelph.

I worked for Pioneer Hybrid as their World-wide Marketing Manager for canola and then spent some time at Proven Seed as their general manager. After Proven Seed I joined Canterra as CEO.

### What motivates you?

Starting a seed company from inception and seeing it through to a growing, viable business is motivating.

We have an outstanding group of shareholders. Being able to work with them and to see how Canterra helps these shareholders advance their own businesses is motivating.

Canada has few strong seed companies and

needs more. By keeping decision making in Canada we can do business in the way that works for Canadians, we can set our own standards and we can maintain profits in Canada.

### What part of your job do you like most?

The part that I like the most is getting a chance to deal with people. I love working with the Canterra staff and our shareholders. I also enjoy working with people in the agriculture industry, both nationally and internationally.

### How do you define success for Canterra?

For Canterra I define success in a couple of ways. First, we define success by our ability to build a long term growth company that will still be around in 100 years. Second, success for Canterra is defined by our shareholders' ability to get what they need from the company over the long term. Third, Canterra needs to be profitable in order to continue.

### How do you define success for yourself?

I define success by my ability to truly contribute to something of significance. In this case it is in the building of a seed company. When I am 85 years old I will see my efforts as a success if Canterra is still thriving.

### What is the difference when you compare your mission at Canterra and the larger company's you have worked for in the past?

At large companies there is a depth of support due to the larger number of employees. At Canterra every single team member must work as part of our team to create more strength than they could working alone. Every single staff member is on the front line. There is not a backup battalion so to speak.

### Think into your past and describe your biggest challenge as a leader?

That's funny that you describe me as a leader because I don't usually think of myself that way. I would have to say in terms of day to day operations my biggest leadership challenge is in making sure we have the right staff in place, that each and every staff person knows what they have to do in order for the company to be successful, and that we are having fun while we execute our different roles within the company.

### What do you see is the biggest challenge for the seed industry in the next five years



**Dr. Dave Sippell**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Canterra Seeds

The seed industry is an established industry in a very fast changing world. It takes up to 10 years to develop a product through breeding, multiplication and retail and the business environment and working environment can turn on a dime.

Canterra's challenge is to try and change and adapt our business practices faster than the speed of industry change and faster than our competitors.

### How can Canterra compete in the canola market with the likes of Pioneer, Monsanto, Bayer, Dow?

We have to stay focused, but nimble in order to compete with the larger companies. We must also establish business partnerships that allow us to accomplish more than we can do alone.

We have to be sure we have the best people involved in our organization without compromise.

We must be creative within the context of the structure that we work in. For example, English language writers work within a tight structure. Shakespeare, used 26 letters, no more no less and a certain set of rules of grammar which was the same for every other writer. Within that defined structure of 26 letters he was immensely creative and the rest is history. Canterra must also work well within our constraints and structures and be immensely creative compared to our competition.

