
News Release

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GOVERNMENTS ANNOUNCE FUNDING FOR INDUSTRY-LED FEED GRAIN RESEARCH

Farmer-led research to find new feed wheat varieties will receive \$400,000 as part of a commitment to innovation under Growing Forward 2, Federal Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz and Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Development Minister Ron Kostyshyn announced today.

“Advanced research is key to developing new wheat varieties to help satisfy global demand for high-quality Canadian wheat,” said Minister Ritz. “This investment will create more opportunities for farmers to generate revenue and grow their business.”

The focus of this four-year project is to develop new feed wheat varieties that have characteristics such as high yield, flood tolerance, fusarium resistance and tolerance for Manitoba soils with high salinity. It will use traditional plant breeding techniques, so any resulting varieties will not be considered genetically modified and could be used in all livestock operations.

“It’s important for Manitoba farmers and the biofuels sector to have access to feed wheat varieties tailored to our growing conditions,” said Minister Kostyshyn. “This research is based on the priorities of Manitoba’s farmers. Growing more of our own animal feed within the province will lead to economic benefits for grain farmers, livestock producers and rural communities.”

The research will be led by the Western Feed Grain Development (WFGD) Co-op, which was established in 2005 to find new wheat varieties suitable for livestock feed and the ethanol industry. WFGD and its farmer-members are also contributing \$1.8 million toward this research.

“The WFGD Co-op is unique because farmers can invest and participate in the development of varieties they can use on their own farm and we’re pleased to receive funding from Growing Forward 2,” said David Rourke, WFGD Co-op director. “We are looking forward to applying these funds to our breeding program and addressing major areas of concern for Prairie producers, including post-seeding excess moisture, salinity, and aster yellows. WFGD Co-op is developing wheat varieties that will help to minimize the economic losses that result from these crop production challenges.”

Research into new feed wheat varieties supports the goals of the Grain Innovation Hub, a framework announced by ministers in May 2014 to establish Manitoba as a leader in the grain industry through strategic investments in grain production, research and processing.

This project is one of 32 funded this year through Growing Innovation – Agri-Food Research and Development Initiative (GI-ARDI) under Growing Forward 2. In total, more than \$3.2 million will be invested in industry-led research for the crops, livestock, agri-environment and food sectors. The next intake date for GI-ARDI projects is October 2, 2014.

The federal and provincial governments are investing \$176 million in Manitoba under Growing Forward 2, a five-year, federal-provincial-territorial policy framework to advance the agriculture industry, helping producers and processors become more innovative and competitive in world markets.

The WFGD Co-op registered its first Canada Western General Purpose wheat, WFT603, in 2014. For more information about the organization, visit www.wfgd.ca. To apply for GI-ARDI funding, visit www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture under Growing Forward 2.