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1st Class Mechanic

Graham has been with us for 10 years. He says he fixes everything that everyone else breaks.

Pask Farms Ltd.

Spring Newsletter 2025

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MARKETS & PRICES

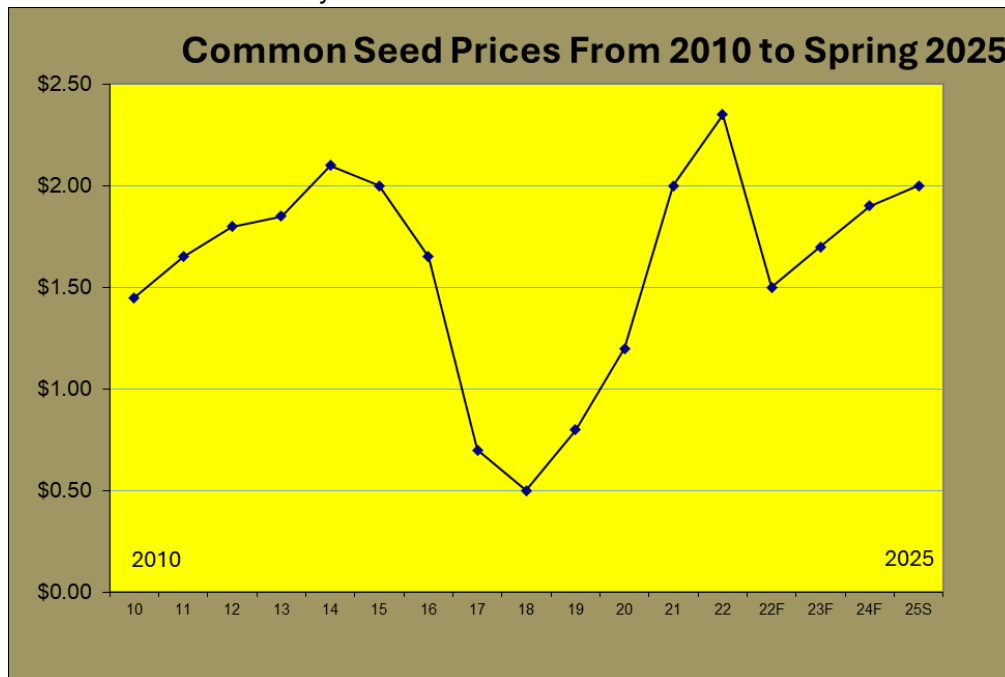
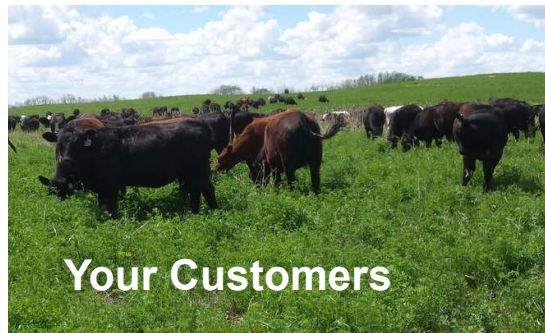
ALFALFA SEED MARKET IS STEADY

This has been a good run. After the drop in fall 2022, prices have kept moving up.

The Alforex inventory has vanished - maybe to China?? The USA has been recovering from the severe plow-outs in both USA and Alberta.

The North America alfalfa seed supply is not excessive in the spring 2025.

Demand in Canada, USA, Europe and China have remained steady.



PRICES FOR YOUR 2024 CROP:

Growers got **\$2.00/lb** for common seed.

VNS ML seed brought **\$2.15 / lb.**

Our contracts settled at about **\$2.35** net
Certified Algonquin brought about **\$2.50**

Beef is booming. Cows eat hay. Hay prices have been low, but ranchers are planting hay, including alfalfa.

CONTRACTS FOR 2025 PLANTING:

There have been lots of contracts offered in both Canada and the USA these past few months. Minimum price, net to the grower, range from \$2.20 to \$2.60 /lb. Quality is the main pricing factor.

NOT CERTIFIED SEED:

There is a small, but steady market for common and VNS (Variety Not Stated) alfalfa, but prices can drop sharply.

LEAFCUTTER BEE MARKETS:

Bees prices ended in the \$95 — \$100 range for the 2024 bee crop. A bit less than expected, but this price still makes money. A larger market for leafcutter bees to pollinate seed canola in Canada and USA just didn't materialize. USA and Alberta alfalfa seed acres are still increasing, and they will need bees in 2026.

PARASITES:



Desperate times call for desperate measures. The first choice for parasite control, Vapona, is no longer available, nor legal for use, in Canada. Rumours are Konk may be next.

The good news is the parasite control work headed by Dr. Gail MacGinnis continues to look good. This year, on our farm, we are undertaking a 100 acre experiment. Pollination using 1%+ parasite bees, with only Gail's "magic spray" for parasite control. We will assess

parasite control and bee health by measuring:

- The % of newly parasitized cells on day 17 of incubation. These will emerge with the bees.
- The final % of cocoons from which bees emerged to assess what reduction in bee emergence occurred.
- The bee increase on the field.
- The % parasites in the bees harvested.

We look forward to a new, workable, reasonably priced, product made available to our industry for parasite control.

BUG CONTROL:

Lygus and plant bugs were the big issues last year. Some seed crops were severely hurt by bugs that wouldn't die. We have overused Silencer/Matador on canola and alfalfa seed by making multiple applications over multiple years. Now we pay the price of resistance.

Carbine is the new insecticide of choice for plant bugs, lygus bugs, and aphids. It has the same active ingredient as Beleaf. Users say:

- Use lots of water, with decent droplet size
- Use the high rate of product
- Apply early, when bugs are really small
- Use only when necessary, rotate insecticides
- Apply at night to minimize leafcutter kill.

Burning for bugs, disease and annual weeds



This is exciting, sometimes expensive, but usually very effective compared to spray and tillage.

WEED CONTROL = LOWER DOCKAGE:

Save the weed control chemicals like Pardner and Authority for your alfalfa seed, don't use on your wheat or flax. Weed resistance is real.

Kochia: Authority is best. Try cultivating, spot mowing, spot chemical, and avoid those patches at harvest. Kochia seeds only last a few years.

The Silver Bullet: Sorry, but this doesn't exist. The bad guys are cleavers, canola, sweet clover, dock, kochia, and Canada thistle. No one chemical takes them all out. These weeds increase dockage and lower your seed price.

SPRING RESET:

There are downsides to owning a farm business. Mental health in agriculture is making headlines.



Spring is a time to reset, to just take time to enjoy the simple pleasures of where we live, and what we do. Like the first crocus of spring.

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