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## A Message From the Director

### Welcome to Fall 2025!

As I write this, our breeding and research teams are busy wrapping up harvest following a productive summer of field data collection. It's been an unusually cool and wet season, which has slowed our harvest activities, but reports indicate that grain yields are high.

This summer, we were pleased to welcome



many of our collaborators, funders and stakeholders to the centre for a series of field tours. In July, over 120 attendees joined us for the 2025 CDC Tour at our new Aberdeen facility. Although the weather didn't cooperate, CDC faculty shared exciting updates on their latest research and breeding achievements. CDC faculty and staff also participated in Ag in Motion, where they introduced growers to the CDC's newest varieties. These collaborations and partnerships are invaluable as we continue to advance our growth strategy.

In our last CDC Insider, we announced that the Saskatchewan Wheat Development Commission has supported the establishment of a new career-endowed research chair at the Crop Development Centre. Following an extensive international search, we are thrilled to welcome Dr. Valentyna Klymiuk as the Saskatchewan Wheat Development Commission Applied Genomics and Pre-breeding Chair. We are deeply grateful to Sask Wheat for their generous support.

CDC faculty continue to be recognized as leaders in their fields. Dr. Tom Warkentin received the 2025 Canadian Pulse and Special Crops Trade Association Industry Appreciation Award, honoring his significant contributions to Canada's pulse and special crops industry. Dr. Pierre Hucl was awarded the prestigious Clarke-Newman-Clayton Award at the 2025 Canadian Seed Growers Association annual meeting.

These honors are a testament to their dedication and excellence--please join me in congratulating Tom and Pierre!

July 1, 2025, marks the beginning of my second five-year term as Director of the CDC. We are currently developing our next strategic plan, focused on increasing the visibility and impact of the CDC. I look forward to sharing more details in the coming months. Thank you for your continued support and commitment. I hope you enjoy this edition of the newsletter.

Warm regards,

*Dr. Curtis Pozniak*

## Announcements

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Dr. Valentyna Klymiuk (PhD) has been appointed as the Saskatchewan Wheat Development Commission Applied Genomics and Pre-breeding Chair at the University of Saskatchewan (USask), supporting the development of productive, climate-smart crop varieties.



## Awards

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Emeritus Professor Dr. Bruce Coulman was awarded the Prime of Life Award by the University of Saskatchewan Retirees Association at their banquet on June 24, 2025.

The Prime of Life Achievement Award honours and expresses appreciation of persons who have retired from work at the University and, after their retirement, have been recognized for outstanding scholarly, artistic or service contributions.



Curtis Pozniak was awarded a Fellowship in the Canadian Society of Agronomy (CSA) at their annual meeting in Vancouver in late June 2025. A fellowship in the CSA is given to a duly nominated member with 10 years or more of regular membership with a distinguished record of service in any field of agronomy in Canada.



Dr. Pierre Hucl was awarded the Clark Newman Clayton award from the Canadian Seed Growers Association at the annual meeting in Victoria, BC, July 3rd-5th, 2025.

The award is given in recognition of a person who has made an exceptional contribution to pedigreed seed production in Canada and to agriculture through research, plant breeding or administration.



Dr. Tom Warkentin was awarded the Canadian Pulse and Special Crops Trade Association (CPSC) Industry Appreciation Award at the Pulse & Special Crops Convention that was held September 9-11, 2025 in Whistler BC. The award is presented annually to an individual, company or organization that has made a significant contribution to Canada's pulse and special crops industry.





## Events

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The Crop Development Centre held a field day on July 22, 2025, welcoming our partners and stakeholders. Despite the rainy weather, we adapted by moving part of the event indoors, where attendees enjoyed insightful presentations from our researchers. After a wonderful lunch, we ventured outside for a short demonstration on UAV research, making the most of the day's wet conditions.

## In the Community

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Our plant breeders participated in the 2025 Ag in Motion show, July 15-17, engaging with producers at several of our stakeholder demonstration sites. They answered questions and shared insights into their ongoing research, fostering meaningful conversations throughout the event.

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Dr. Aaron Beattie hosted a field tour for members of the Canadian Barley Research Coalition on July 24, 2025.



Wheat breeders Dr. Adam Carter and Dr. Curtis Pozniak hosted a field tour for members of the Canadian Wheat Research Coalition on July 23, 2025.



CDC Manager Marissa Janssen was an invited speaker at the Canadian Seed Growers Annual Meeting held July 3-5 in Victoria BC.



Dr's Sabine Banniza and Randy Kutcher along with graduate students Kara Glor and Valentina Anastasini instructed over 200 agrologists on wheat and pulse diseases at the Saskatchewan Crop Diagnostic School 2025 held at the Western Applied Research Corporation Site at Scott, SK, July 23-24, 2025.



Dr. Bunyamin Tar'an was an invited presenter at the Northeast Agriculture Research Foundation (NARF) & Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) joint field day held July 23, 2025 at the Melfort Research Farm in Melfort SK.



Dr. Tom Warkentin along with the chickpea and soybean breeding staff hosted members from Food and Bioproduct Sciences (FABS) and the National Research Council (NRC) for a field tour on July 10, 2025.



Dr. Tom Warkentin was part of a panel discussion at the International Food Legume Research Conference held September 15-19, 2025 in Perth, Western Australia.



Dr. Valentyna Klymiuk and Dr. Curtis Pozniak along with Research officer Jennifer Ens and PDF Ana Achili, attended the International 'From Seed to Pasta 5' Conference held September 24-27 in Bari, Italy, where Dr. Pozniak was an invited speaker.



## In the Media

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Dr Aaron Beattie was featured in the Western Producer for a new variety of oats that shows an incredible yield increase.



Dr. Bill Biligetu was featured in the Western Producer for his research focusing on yellow-flowering alfalfa, and its potential for drought tolerance.



Dr's Valentyna Klymiuk and Curtis Pozniak recently published a paper in Nature Genetics that focuses on their work using wild relatives of wheat to help protect against diseases.

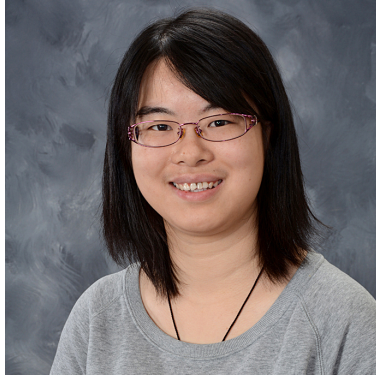


Construction of the Harrington Plant Growth Facility located at the corner of 108th and Preston Avenue on the USask campus is well underway. The projected opening is spring of 2026.



## Recent Graduate Students Defending

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Fan Yang successfully defended her PhD thesis “A study of RuhQ- mediated resistance to covered smut (*Ustilago Hordei*) in barley” on Thursday July 17, 2025.



Valentina Anastasini successfully defended her MSc thesis “Improving integrated disease management tools for bacterial leaf streak of wheat in Canada” on Monday July 28, 2025.



Alex Silvestrini successfully defended his PhD thesis “Understanding the structural genome rearrangements of *Len* Mill. species” on Thursday August 7, 2025.

## Graduate Student Spotlight

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Madison Kist is an MSc student studying under the supervision of Dr. Curtis Pozniak. Madison’s research focuses on identifying novel sources of stem rust resistance in a wheat diversity panel to support Canadian durum wheat breeding. Madison recently attended the Canadian Phytopathological Society Annual meeting in Vancouver and won 1st place for Best Student Poster.

