



Irrigation Crop Diversification Corporation

ICDC - 10 years of “value for money” R&D

Each year ICDC collects \$0.35 per acre from irrigators, for a total of about \$60,000 per year, to run a provincial irrigation research, demonstration and education program under the authority of *The Irrigation Act, 1996*. While this is not a large amount of money, ICDC has been able to deliver “value for money” R&D through partnerships, cooperation and the generosity of the private sector.

This 10th anniversary year marks the complete turnover in the ICDC Board of Directors. It is, therefore, an appropriate time to reflect on what ICDC has accomplished since its formation and what you’ve gotten for your \$0.35/acre.

Organization

ICDC signed a 10 year agreement with Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food that provides Agrolgist and administration staff in support of ICDC’s program at a value of \$400,000 per year.

ICDC signed a 10 year agreement with Canada and Saskatchewan to be the industry co-chair at The Irrigation Centre in Outlook. Irrigators are now represented at the table where previously only federal and provincial officials sat.

ICDC represented all irrigators in the strategic planning of irrigation R&D in 1998/9 and again in 2004. Irrigation R&D Priorities was published reflecting the R&D needs of all Irrigation Districts in Saskatchewan. This document has guided the ICDC agenda up to a new 2004 ICDC Strategic Plan.

Other ICDC Activities:

- Assisted with the formation of Agri-ARM even though irrigation was not included.
- Presented proposals for irrigation funding in 1997 and 2000 and a proposal for non-district irrigator ICDC participation in 2000.

- Put on an Annual Conference jointly with SIPA to highlight irrigation’s hot topics and to be accountable to delegates.

- Lobbied for the re-location of the University Feedlot to an irrigated area.

Education

- Irrigation education was almost absent from Saskatchewan. ICDC has been involved with irrigation curriculum for:

- 1100 schools (Agriculture in the Classroom, Water for Life curriculum);
- SIAST (ICDC sits on their curriculum advisory committee);
- University of Saskatchewan (ICDC coop student hired each year);
- Certified Crop Advisor program (ICDC field days and seminars are certified);
- Green Certificate program (irrigation module).

ICDC Directors and staff have organized, authored papers and spoken at several major irrigation conferences including the Canadian Water Resources Association in Alberta and Montreal, Saskatchewan Agrivision Corporation Inc. in Saskatchewan, The Canadian Hay Association National Conference and Irrigation Workshops in North Dakota, Manitoba and Alberta.



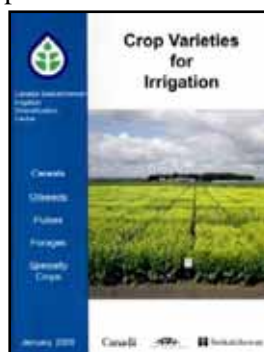
- www.irrigationsaskatchewan.com This website has been redesigned and will become the primary communication medium for ICDC & SIPA.

- www.imcin.net has been developed for on-line irrigation scheduling, thanks to a partnership with Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development.



- ICDC publishes a report on the previous season's work by December 1st. This ambitious target allows ICDC to make the most up-to-date recommendations available to irrigators in time for the annual Irrigation Conference.

- ICDC mails out The Irrigator to all irrigators in Saskatchewan. ICDC also publishes Crop Varieties for Irrigation; Economics and Agronomics; and numerous technical fact sheets. These are also available on their website www.irrigationsaskatchewan.com.



- ICDC hosts seminars and field days for the technology transfer of its work. Many media interviews have been done with The Western Producer, Grainews, CBC, CTV, South West Radio and many others. For example, over 600 farmers attended ICDC's Pocket Gopher Control field days and seminars.

- ICDC has been successful in having irrigation included in some provincial immigration and investment attraction initiatives. For example, Dutch students have been working on irrigated farms in the Outlook area and ICDC is working to strengthen these ties through SAF's consultant in the Netherlands. ICDC is developing an irrigation-based investment attraction package.

- The Final Evaluation of the PAWBED irrigation R&D program gave ICDC's forage work top marks with a return of \$11 for every PAWBED dollar spent.



Forage

When ICDC collected **Irrigation R&D Priorities** from all Irrigation Districts in 1999 to determine its R&D agenda, forages dominated the list.

- ICDC in partnership with PFRA, SWA and local Maple Creek cooperators demonstrated that converting flood irrigated land to sprinklers on suitable soil increased the water use efficiency by 400%. This is crucial in the water-short South West.

- ICDC demonstrated the benefits of phosphate fertilization on flood irrigated land in southwest Saskatchewan. This project was written up in Grainews by Les Henry as a good example of good management getting good results.

- Over 600 farmers attended ICDC's pocket gopher control field days and seminars. ICDC demonstrated an effective method of controlling these pests in alfalfa fields. Two private service providers were one of the results of this popular project.

Top to Bottom:

- ICDC administrates website
- Western Producer at the ICDC Bean Day
- TV at ICDC Corn Day
- ICDC's Pocket Gopher Field Days



Top to Bottom:

- Converting flood to sprinkler at Maple Creek.
- Farmers at Pocket Gopher Field Day
- ICDC works with the Timothy processing industry
- ICDC forage centre at Consul
- ICDC forage plots at SPARC Swift Current

• Irrigated Timothy for export now has crop insurance coverage, a production manual published by the Canadian Hay Association and an ICDC funded research project with Dr Bruce Coulman under the federal Matching Investments Initiative. ICDC has worked alongside this high value export industry to assist it in getting where it wants to go.

• Corn Heat Unit maps were developed by ICDC for Saskatchewan. These maps can be found at www.irrigationsaskatchewan.com on the corn page. The Outlook site (instigated by ICDC) of the Alberta Corn Committee plots was the top yielder in 2003. ICDC has a detailed database of irrigated corn fields in Saskatchewan to guide producers in how to grow these top yields.



Big Crowd at ICDC Corn Day

• ICDC demonstrated top yield and quality management for annual and perennial forages at their Irrigated Forage Centres in Swift Current (thanks to SPARC), Outlook (thanks to CSIDC) and Osler (thanks to several local dairy farmers). SeCan and the Saskatchewan Forage Council have also been excellent cooperators in these centres.

• ICDC developed HAYWATCH Saskatchewan, an easy way to measure the Relative Feed Value of alfalfa at different growth stages in the field. This work was an adaptation of work done in the USA and can be used to properly price alfalfa hay.



ICDC's Haywatch Saskatchewan

• Alfalfa variety work and irrigated ryegrass (both Italian and perennial) demonstrations complete ICDC's forage portfolio in its first 10 years.

Crops

• Dry beans have become an established part of irrigated crop rotations around Lake Diefenbaker. ICDC worked alongside producers, processors and marketers on the local agronomy of this crop on varieties, fertility, white mold, bacterial blight, and in-crop deep ripping. ICDC also worked with CFIA and diagnostic laboratories to demonstrate that high quality bean seed could be grown under irrigation.



Top to Bottom:

- ICDC bean day at Riverhurst
- Potato day at CSIDC
- ICDC Agrolgist talking about variety trials
- Fusarium-damaged durum
- Drip irrigated strawberries

- ICDC has supported potato variety development in conjunction with the Saskatchewan Seed Potato Growers Association.
- Crop Varieties for Irrigation in Saskatchewan is supported and published by ICDC. This project uses the data from coop and regional trials plus ICDC trials and others to screen varieties for their response to high inputs under irrigated conditions. This annual publication is used as a decision aid by irrigators.
- Crop disease work has included fusarium management and monitoring on irrigated wheat, a decision guide for foliar fungicide on irrigated wheat, Sclerotinia control in irrigated canola, seed treatment efficacy for irrigated durum, and control of Bacterial Blight and White Mold in dry beans.
- ICDC demonstrated how the late addition of nitrogen could influence irrigated durum protein.
- ICDC has co-hosted an annual Field Day at Treasure Valley Market Garden at Cadillac. The ultimate water use efficiency project in south west Saskatchewan.
- ELITE Stock Farms Ltd has the longest record of hog manure application through irrigation systems. The management of this effluent as a fertilizer product becomes more important as the price of nitrogen fertilizer increases. ICDC has worked with two major hog producers on the efficient utilization of nutrients from hog manure on irrigated land. Irrigated land can effectively utilize about double the rates of dryland application.
- Additional new projects underway include a vegetable opportunity study as well as precision agriculture application to in-field research.

This program would not have been possible without the cooperation and support of many irrigators, farm supply companies, marketing and processing companies, CSIDC, SAF and our ICDC staff and directors.

This is what makes ICDC's R&D "value for money".

Thank you all for the first 10 years of ICDC results & recommendations.

***Pick up your copy of the
2005 ICDC Demonstration Program Final Report
at the Irrigation Conference or at the ICDC
booth at the Crop Production Show or call
(306) 867-5500.***