

GRAIN PRODUCERS

Nancy & Mike Dougherty

Nancy and Mike Dougherty are part of a family farm located in the Moose Jaw area. As a couple, they farm cereals, oilseeds and pulse crops. The Doughertys learned of the EFP program through other producers in the area and decided to participate because they thought it would be good for their operation.

"To be honest, in the beginning it was the financial aspect of the program that we were interested in. It was about getting certification so we could receive funding," Nancy says.

"But after going through the process, we found there was other value to it. It made us realize the things we were doing really well and the things we should improve on."



What is the Environmental Farm Plan (EFP)?

The EFP is designed as an awareness and educational tool and is not a regulatory program. It is a completely voluntary and confidential program. Producers that are participating in the program are doing so because they are interested in understanding and addressing environmental issues in agriculture.



The EFP's five-step process helps producers understand their current environmental risks and how these risks may affect their farming operation now and in the future. In Saskatchewan the EFP is delivered by the Provincial Council of Agricultural Development and Diversification Boards (PCAB). The Doughertys' attended a workshop where trained professionals introduce the concepts behind the EFP and worked with them to assess the soil and site characteristics of their operation. They then used a workbook to review all aspects of their operations in order to identify potential risks and solutions. Once the workbook was completed, the Doughertys' attended a second workshop where they finalized their action plan, with the help of facilitators, and determined the steps required to manage any identified risks and prioritize action items.

A peer review committee, made up of producers who have already have endorsed Environmental Farm Action Plans, reviews the completed action plans. Once the Peer Review Committee feels that a plan is adequate, they endorse it. The producer then receives a Certificate of Endorsement from PCAB acknowledging their efforts in the development of an EFP. After the peer review committee has endorsed the plan, producers can begin implementation and are eligible to apply for financial assistance under the Canada-Saskatchewan Farm Stewardship Program (CSFSP).

The Doughertys' found the plan helped them in a number of ways.

"Our main priority is changing our seeding practises," Nancy says. "We want to change to direct seeding and leave more organic material on

Saskatchewan Environmental Farm Plan Testimonials

continued

the surface. We want our seeding practices to work for us, but also to be environmentally sound."

The EFP also highlighted ways to improve field information on pesticides by using better software and labelling hazardous storage.

The Dougherty's learned about better ways to fill sprayer tanks. "Instead of taking water right out of the dugout, we should be using a nursing tank." "We were also given guidelines on things like what the buffer zone on dugouts should be," Nancy says.

"We knew there are areas we should address, but this plan really clarified it." The process was also beneficial in reaffirming some the environmentally sound practices that the Doughertys were already implementing. "It was nice to see that some things we were doing, we were doing well."

The EFP also was positive because the entire family was involved in the process. "Everyone did their own analysis on their own plan," Nancy says. "Then we all got together to look at how each analysis compared. It was interesting to see what the issues were on the different parcels of land and



to see that everyone is thinking along the same lines. Communication is very important. If you are going to work together and make improvements, it's good to pull in the same direction," Nancy says.

"We weren't sure what to expect, but the EFP exceeded our expectations. It was a positive experience for us," Nancy says. "I think it will change our farming practises."



ENVIRONMENTAL FARM PLAN

EFP

Sustainable Futures

Provincial Council of Agriculture Development and Diversification Boards for Saskatchewan Inc. (PCAB) is an independent non-profit organization representing grassroots agriculture in Saskatchewan. We work closely with industry and government to ensure timely and effective delivery of agriculture programs in the province. PCAB is committed to working with both government and industry to ensure a cooperative, efficient approach to agricultural program delivery.

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