

Canada-Saskatchewan Irrigation Diversification Centre

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Annual Review
April 1, 1999 to March 31, 2000

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*This report and other SIDC publications are available at our internet address:
<http://www.agr.ca/ptra/sidc/gene.htm>*

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Manager's Report

It is my pleasure to present the annual progress report of the Canada-Saskatchewan Irrigation Diversification Centre (CSIDC). This report summarizes the wide range of activities conducted, funded or facilitated by the Centre in 1999. I would like to extend special thanks to our Executive Management Committee (EMC). Their input, direction and support have been key to the successful operation of the Centre.

CSIDC is a federal, provincial and industry partnership. Industry is represented by the Saskatchewan Irrigation Projects Association (SIPA) and the Irrigation Crop Diversification Corporation (ICDC), federal government by Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada, PFRA, and the provincial government by Saskatchewan Water Corporation. Representatives from each group are members of the EMC.

The past year witnessed many positive happenings at the Centre. This included the development of a strategic plan and from that, a business plan. This plan will be utilized to help define the roles of the partners and set priorities for irrigated research, demonstration and extension in the next five year period.

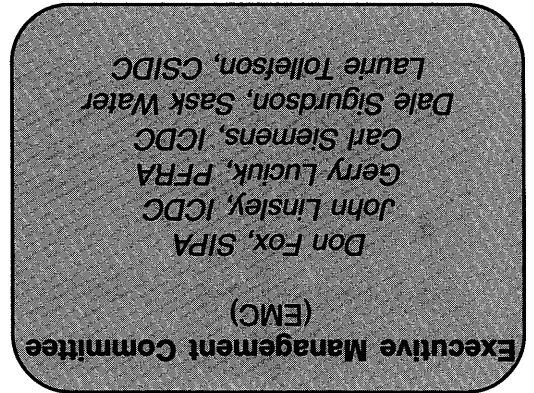
1999 was a landmark year for CSIDC. It marked the 50th year of operation of this facility serving our irrigation clientele. It has been rewarding to see the evolution of this Centre from its origins in 1949 as the Pre-Development Farm to today's Canada-Saskatchewan Irrigation Diversification Centre, a "World Class" facility dedicated to sustainable irrigated crop production. A special section on the history of the facility has been included in this report. To commemorate the anniversary, a staff reunion was held in conjunction with our annual July field day. It was truly a memorable occasion with a large turnout of past and present employees along with a large field day crowd. All were eager to view the work being done today at CSIDC and to reflect and reminisce on the many changes.

There continues to be a need to diversify and adopt irrigated cropping practices that encourage higher valued crop production with value-added potential. Depressed commodity prices have accentuated this need for new alternatives. Increasing numbers at our annual field day and commodity tours, and requests for information all substantiate this need for information on diversification opportunities.

Adequate funding to continue this work is an ongoing concern at CSIDC. Traditionally, the Centre has relied on federal and provincial A-base dollars, along with agreement funding to facilitate the program. The Partnership Agreement on Water-Based Economic Development (PAWBED) was a good example of agreement funding being utilized to intensify programming. The research and demonstration portion of this agreement was managed by CSIDC. Benefit/cost analysis demonstrated returns ranging from 3/1 for cereal research to 12/1 for potatoes. The Agri-Food Innovation Fund (AFIF) is a more recent industry-driven agreement which has provided funding to the agriculture and irrigation sectors in Saskatchewan. CSIDC has utilized funding from this program to support industry-driven initiatives for vegetable, potato, herb and spice, pulse, and turf grass seed production. Many opportunities for industry have and will continue to result from this work.

CSIDC staff continue to be involved nationally and internationally through membership and participation on national and international committees, and through direct involvement in projects such as CIDA-sponsored projects in Egypt and China. CSIDC was directly involved, for example, in training a Chinese agronomist from the Hebei project in China regarding irrigation water conservation technology. This type of interaction keeps staff current and allows networking and new ideas to be continually brought forward to our Centre.

We look forward to serving our clients in the new millennium.



Staff

ICDC Agrolgists:	J. Linsley	Manager:	L. Tollefson
Field Operations:	L. Bohrson	Administration:	M. Martinson
Irrigation:	I. Bristow	Secretarial:	J. Clark
Maintenance:	K. Offert	Casual Clerical:	D. Greig
Student Interns:	B. Vestre	Market Analyst:	H. Clark
Technology Transfer:	D. David	Field Crops Agronomist:	L. Townley-Smith
	A. MacDonald	Irrigation Sustainability:	T. Hogg
	G. Kort	Technician	M. Pederson
	N. Warwaruk	Specialty Crops Agronomist:	J. Wahab
	G. Sarauer	Technician	G. Larson
	J. Harrington	Technician	S. Avis

Objectives

1. Identify higher value cropping opportunities through market research to help target research and demonstration programs.
2. Conduct, fund and provide support for irrigated research and demonstration to meet the needs of irrigation producers and industry in the province.
3. Develop, refine, and test methods of diversifying and intensifying irrigated crop production in co-operation with outside research agencies.
4. Demonstrate sustainable irrigated crop production practices at CSIDC.
5. Promote and extend sustainable irrigated crop production methods.
6. Evaluate the environmental sustainability of irrigation, and evaluate the impact of irrigation on natural and physical resources.
7. Promote a Western Canadian approach to irrigation sustainability by interacting with staff from similar institutions and industry across Western Canada, and by transferring this technology to the industry. This will increase levels of co-operation in marketing, research and demonstration in support of diversification and value added processing.

History

Commemorating the 50th anniversary...1949-1999

This year, the Canada-Saskatchewan Irrigation Diversification Centre celebrated its 50th anniversary. The Centre has gone through four significant phases over this period, each one designed to further irrigation development and crop diversification in the province...

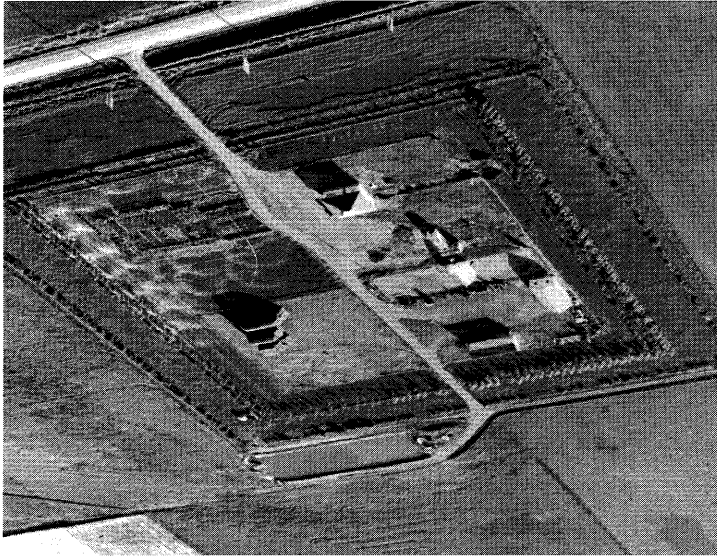
Pre-Development Farm, 1949 - 1967

"Before the dam"

During its first 18 years, the Centre was known as the Pre-Development Farm, a name derived from the fact the farm was established before the *development* of a dam across the South Saskatchewan River. The dream of a dam had been around since the days of the first settlers, and had been kept alive over the decades by southern Saskatchewan's semi-arid climate, its periodic droughts, and its growing population. On July 25, 1958, the dream became a reality when the federal and provincial governments signed an agreement to build a dam near Elbow, Saskatchewan. The project, known as the South Saskatchewan River Development project (SSRD), included building Canada's largest earth filled dam (Gardiner), the smaller Qu'Appelle Dam and creating a lake (Diefenbaker). It was a mammoth task that took seven years to complete. Canada provided 75 per cent of the overall cost and Saskatchewan 25 per cent, while the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration (PFRA) provided project design and construction supervision. The project was officially opened in 1967.

Anticipating a dam would be built, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) established the Pre-Development Farm at Outlook, Saskatchewan, in 1949 to introduce irrigation technology, including water application and the types of crops to grow, into the dryland farming area around Outlook.

PFRA was placed in charge of the farm, which was to be used for demonstration purposes only. Detailed studies of various crops under irrigation were carried out by AAFC's Research Branch on experimental plots adjacent to the farm. Water for both operations was pumped from the South Saskatchewan River.



Aerial view of the Pre-Development Farm site, 1952. The farm surrounds the yard site