

# THE MASTER SEEDER

YOUR PRECISION SEEDING NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 7 • ISSUE 2 | WINTER 2011

## Farmers Gain Huge Savings with Auto Zone Command



**SeedMaster Technology Development and Research Farm Manager Owen Kinch says most farms can easily save 5-to-15 per cent on input costs by eliminating overlap with Auto Zone Command.**

### 5-to-15 Per Cent Savings on Most Farms

Demand for SeedMaster's new Auto Zone Command™ is growing rapidly as more and more farmers realize the huge savings they can gain by eliminating overlap in their fields.

Most farms can easily save 5-to-15 per cent on annual input costs with Auto Zone Command depending on field variability and implement size, says SeedMaster Technology Development and Research Farm Manager Owen Kinch. "With input costs so high, Zone Command is one of the first questions farmers ask us about at trade shows."

Almost every tank system that rolls out of SeedMaster's manufacturing plant this year will have Auto Zone Command on it, says Kinch.

### Payback Within First Year

"Farmers tell us it doesn't make sense not to buy Auto Zone Command because it's so much more economical than other overlap control systems, and the payback is virtually within one year," he adds. Auto Zone Command costs about \$10,000 while other systems charge up to six times more. "That's because our shut-off control is very

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### FROM THE PRESIDENT

## Our Busiest Year Ever

It's quickly becoming our busiest year ever at SeedMaster as demand keeps building for the new leading-edge technologies we've unveiled recently, such as the Nova XP-820 Smart Cart™ and our UltraPro Canola Meter™.



Our tank production tripled this year, prompting us to start planning another expansion to our manufacturing facility. With so many farmers upgrading to SeedMaster systems offering the newest technologies, producers are realizing it is important to start planning a year ahead when considering a new drill or tank purchase.

Almost every tank we build this year will have Auto Zone Command™ due to a growing realization among farmers of the tremendous savings associated with eliminating overlap in their fields – the larger the farm, the more dramatic the savings.

### FLIP is Coming

This winter we'll field test FLIP (Full Last Implement Pass)™ – new overlap control technology that takes Auto Zone Command to the next level (see page 4). We're

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# UltraPro Delivers Surprising Results at Low Rates

What could have been a costly error turned into a significant savings and a successful crop for Bob Eyolfson this year.

Eyolfson, a seed grower near Leslie, Sask., decided to try a lower seeding rate with his new UltraPro Canola Meter™ this spring. His plan was to seed canola at 3 lbs/acre instead of the usual 4-to-4.5 lbs he used with his old tank and air drill. However, a calibration error resulted in seeding his entire 1,300-acre canola crop at a dramatically lower rate – 1.9 lbs/acre.

## “Fantastic” Canola Stand at 1.9 lbs/acre

“I went out to his farm expecting to find a thin crop and a really low plant population, but instead he had a fantastic stand with 55-to-65 plants/m<sup>2</sup> – which is incredible for 1.9 lbs/acre,” says

SeedMaster agronomist David Larsen. “Every seed must have germinated.”

Eyolfson’s seed company rep figured he’d seeded at 4-to-4.5 lbs/acre. “When I told him it was 1.9 lbs, he stared at the plants in disbelief,” says Eyolfson. “He told me my fields looked better than most of the canola crops he’d seen all summer.”

## \$25,000 Seed Savings

Despite the low seeding rate, Eyolfson says his yields were as strong as ever – and he saved \$25,000 in seed costs. “When I took almost half of my canola seed back to the dealer, he said, ‘There’s your drill payment.’”

Eyolfson credits his UltraPro for his good fortune. “Anytime you can realize that kind of savings and still grow a great crop, there’s no question it’s a ‘must have.’ Other systems send out a



Bob Eyolfson

clump of seed and then a 15-inch gap,” says Eyolfson, who seeds with a 77-14 SeedMaster with a 300-bu on-board seed tank and tow-behind Titan fertilizer

cart. “SeedMaster is the only one that’s evenly spaced throughout the whole row, and the depth is bang on.”

Would he ever intentionally seed at 2 lbs/acre? “Probably,” says Eyolfson. “We seeded late this year because of high moisture. If I were seeding in early May, I might push it closer to 3 lbs but in warm, moist soil, 2 lbs turned out to be lots.”

Larsen agrees 2 lbs/acre may be realistic for some farmers when Mother Nature cooperates. “Canola has a huge amount of elasticity, allowing you to get full yields from very low plant populations – as long as the seed is placed accurately and handled gently like it is with the UltraPro.”

“Of course producers have to feel comfortable their risks are looked after in terms of moisture, insects, weeds, and diseases first,” he adds.

## FROM THE PRESIDENT (CONT. FROM PAGE 1)

working with Raven to develop control software for FLIP as part of a new strategic partnership that we’re excited to announce (see page 2).

FLIP is just one of several new developments we’ll give farmers a closer look at during our 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Master Seeders Conference in November. The conference is an opportunity for farmers to learn about the latest advances in direct seeding.

## 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Master Seeders Conference

This year we’ll unveil new patent-pending manifold technology that we’ve developed for the Smart Cart. We’ve taken a completely different approach than other air carts to prevent plugging and ensure more uniform distribution of product (see page 3).

The Smart Cart is capturing the attention of Prairie farmers with its massive 820-bu capacity, 10-zone overlap control, and weigh scales that display real-time product weights in the cab – making it easy to recalibrate on the fly. We’ve also added the weigh scales to some of our on-board tanks as an option for 2012. And we’ve begun work on new game-changing Auto Calibration technology that we’ll present at our conference. It automatically recalibrates as you seed, based on the real-time product weights in each tank.

## New UltraPro Seeding Trials

We’ll also present new data at the conference that was collected from canola seeding trials with the UltraPro. Many producers now realize they can lower their seeding rates with the UltraPro and still achieve full yields as a result of spacing seeds evenly down the row.

In this issue of our newsletter, you’ll find full details about the Master Seeders Conference. Our speakers include independent researchers and industry leaders offering insight on the newest developments in dryland farming. And our Master Seeders panel promises to be yet another not-to-be-missed Q&A session with progressive farmers from across Western Canada and the Midwest. I hope to see you there!

**Norbert Beaujot, P. Eng.**  
President, SeedMaster

## SeedMaster Announces Strategic Partnership with Raven

SeedMaster is pleased to announce a new strategic partnership with Raven Industries Inc.

“Starting immediately we will work closely with Raven as we develop new innovations for farmers. We are already working with Raven on our FLIP™ software for overlap control, which we’ll test this winter and release in the fall,” says Owen Kinch, SeedMaster’s Technology Development and Research Farm Manager. “Raven is very excited to help us bring innovations like FLIP to market.”

Raven will supply most electronic components on SeedMaster seeding systems, including the Viper Pro field computer. “The Viper Pro allows farmers to control and monitor multiple functions on one display screen, such as Auto Zone Command,™ Variable Rate Control, our new Real-Time Product Weighing™ feature, and any existing Raven products farmers already own,” explains Kinch.

All SeedMaster components will be controlled through the Viper Pro within the next year, including the Packing Force Sensor and Smart Hitch. “It will help eliminate in-cab clutter, an important issue for farmers,” says Kinch. He notes, “Raven offers a strong support network to SeedMaster customers with its extensive dealer network and distributors.”

Raven is an innovative market leader with a solid reputation for top-quality components. “We were looking for a long-term partner and believe Raven is a perfect fit with SeedMaster,” says Kinch.



The Raven Viper Pro field computer allows farmers to control multiple seeding functions on one display screen, helping eliminate in-cab clutter.

# New Nova XP-820 Smart Cart in a Class of its Own

## No Plugging at 400-to-500 lbs/acre

SeedMaster's new Nova XP-820 Smart Cart™ seeded 600 acres of winter wheat on the SeedMaster Research Farm this fall with outstanding results.

"The Nova proved it can handle 400-to-500 lbs/acre of fertilizer at up to 5 mph on an 80-foot drill in wet conditions with absolutely no plugging. That's not possible with other air carts," says Norbert Beaujot, P.Eng., President of SeedMaster. "It really is in a class of its own."

Beaujot credits advanced design features – such as 10 primary runs and patent-pending distribution manifolds – for the Smart Cart's ability to move such high rates of product without plugging.

"Manifold splitters are often where plugging occurs on air carts," says Beaujot. "We took a different approach than others in the design of our manifold to avoid plugging and distribute product more evenly."

## More Uniform Distribution

Several tests comparing the Nova's distribution manifold with all others on the market proved the Smart Cart to be more accurate for row-by-row distribution accuracy every time, says Beaujot.

"More uniform distribution results in more uniform crop growth, so it's an area we'll continue studying," says Beaujot. "Because it's bulk metering, it will never have the precision of our Individual Row Metering tanks, but we know we can improve greatly over the distribution accuracy of other air carts because there's so much room for improvement."

Beaujot notes the Nova's distribution manifolds feature only six or eight outlets instead of the usual 12, requiring less airflow to distribute product which helps prevent



The Nova XP-820 Smart Cart proved it can handle more than 400 lbs/acre of fertilizer with absolutely no plugging on the SeedMaster Research Farm this fall.

plugging. The six-outlet manifolds require the least amount of air, so they're on the longest runs feeding product to the outer edges of the drill – making it easier to convey large volumes over such long distances.

## Strong Demand

Demand for the new Smart Cart is very strong, says Beaujot. "Several units will be seeding fields across Western Canada and the Midwest this spring. The 10-zone overlap control is attracting a lot of attention," says Beaujot. "It helped us reduce overlap by 10 per cent on the Research Farm – a significant savings."

The Smart Cart's Variable Rate technology, the weigh scales on each modular tank, and convenience features

like the remote-operated hydraulic lids and remote-controlled fill conveyor also made the whole seeding operation very smooth and efficient this fall, says Beaujot.

"There was no climbing on tanks, and the weigh scales made calibration very easy and precise. We also discovered several side benefits. For example, when you're treating seed as it's loading into the tank, unless you know how much product has been loaded at all times, you have no way of knowing if you're applying the right treatment rate. The weigh scales end all of that guess work," says Beaujot.

The Real-Time Product Weighing feature is now an option with some on-board tanks this year, in addition to being a standard feature on the Nova.

# UltraPro Trials Target Lowest Rate and Highest Yields

Just how low can farmers push their canola seeding rates with the UltraPro Canola Meter™ – while still achieving full yields?

SeedMaster agronomist David Larsen has begun helping producers answer that question through a series of seeding trials. This spring, he worked with Guy St. Amant and his son Blair, who grow 4,700 acres of canola and wheat near Edam, Sask. They tested rates ranging from 2-to-6 lbs/acre in half-pound increments, seeding nine different passes of canola, and keeping all other factors constant.

"We targeted 45 plants/m<sup>2</sup> – the minimum needed to ensure full yields with average growing conditions according to

available research," explains Larsen. The St. Amants maintained that plant count at 3 lbs/acre and higher despite dry soil conditions and early frost shortly after emergence. "The crop got thicker as the rates increased," says Larsen.

## Highest Yields at 3 lbs/acre

The real test came at harvest. "Yields were similar from 3.5-to-6 lbs/acre. They peaked at 3 lbs, and began slipping at 2.5 and 2 lbs," says Guy St. Amant, noting his yields were "average" this year due to the frost.

St. Amant says he isn't surprised his highest yield occurred at only 3 lbs/



Guy St. Amant

acre – well below the 4 lbs he used with previous seeding systems. "I've always believed spacing canola out will give better yields. The UltraPro spaces seeds very evenly. Plants weren't clumping together so we had very even growth and maturity," says St. Amant, who seeds with a 70-foot SeedMaster on 16-inch row spacing.

## Uniform Spacing Allows Lower Rates

Larsen agrees uniform spacing is the reason farmers can seed successfully at lower rates with the UltraPro. "It gives plants full access to the resources around

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## FARMERS GAIN HUGE SAVINGS (CONT. FROM PAGE 1)

simple and reliable. The air cylinders and meshing gears that instantly start and stop our metering rollers and product flow have been trouble-free since day one," explains Kinch. "Other systems are more complex and costly because they lift openers and use hydraulic cylinders and valves that are more prone to break down."

Bob Eyolfson purchased Auto Zone Command on his 77-foot SeedMaster drill and tank system last winter. "It's the simplest and most effective system out there. Some systems shut off half the drill. My tank can shut off five metering sections, which saves a lot more on overlap."

### Up to 10 Zones; Ultimate Precision

With 3-to-5 metering zones on all on-board tanks, and up to 10 zones of six or eight openers each on the Smart Cart, SeedMaster is the leader in overlap control, says Kinch. "Nobody else has as many zones. Those smaller metering sections reduce overlap with unbeatable precision and cost savings."

Eyolfson saved almost \$20,000 on input costs with Auto Zone Command this year. "My fields are relatively square but I have lots of triangles where I go around wet spots. And when there's a five-foot section left to seed at the end of a field with a 77-foot drill, you really see the benefit."

### FLIP – Advanced Overlap Control

This winter, SeedMaster will take Auto Zone Command to a whole new level as it prepares to unveil its patented FLIP (Full Last Implement Pass)<sup>™</sup> system. "FLIP is advanced overlap control that automatically shuts off seed and fertilizer *the first time* openers encounter an overlap area," explains Kinch. "On the second pass through the overlap area, product is applied across the full width of the drill – preventing any disturbance to the planted seedbed without lifting openers."

SeedMaster is working with Raven to develop the FLIP control software. Kinch says FLIP will be market-ready by fall 2012 with a limited release this spring. All 2012 SeedMaster systems will be built FLIP-ready.

## ULTRAPRO TRIALS (CONT. FROM PAGE 3)



David Larsen

them to reach full potential. And Individual Row Metering is gentle on seeds so it eliminates seed damage."

St. Amant plans to seed at 3-to-3.5 lbs/acre next spring and wants to continue the seeding trials for three more years. "One year isn't enough to make decisions. I'd like to see if we can reach top yields at lower rates." While his goal is to maximize yields, St. Amant says the \$5/acre he saves by dropping his seeding rates is "a nice bonus."

### UltraPro is Prompting New Research

Larsen says he'll assist St. Amant and other farmers wishing to conduct UltraPro trials next spring. He's also been getting a lot of interest from plant breeders wanting to conduct trials. "The UltraPro is opening a whole new area of research because no other technology can space seeds uniformly down the row on a field scale."

Dr. Guy Lafond, a research scientist with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) in Indian Head, Sask., hopes to launch a study exploring the benefits of the UltraPro. "We'd like to measure the spacing between plants, and the impact it has on maturity and yields at different seeding rates," says Lafond.

Researchers with AAFC installed the UltraPro on all 12 of its no-till plot drills across Western Canada in the spring. "It's definitely a step forward. The UltraPro appears to space seeds more evenly in our research plots. When you can spread plants out more evenly, it can make a big difference – allowing for more uniform growth, and potentially in the overall value of a crop," says Lafond.

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» November 3<sup>th</sup>, 2011



# Fifth Annual Master Seeders Conference

Queensbury Convention Centre - Evraz Place | Regina, Saskatchewan

## Join us as we present:

- › The latest in no-till research
- › Exciting advances in metering technology
- › Cutting-edge developments in overlap control
- › New field results with the UltraPro and Smart Cart

**A great opportunity  
to compare notes  
with other progressive  
no-till farmers!**

### OUR FEATURED SPEAKERS INCLUDE:



**Edgar Hammermeister**  
P.Ag.  
Western Ag Labs

He will describe how Plant Root Simulator (PRS) technology, developed at the University of Saskatchewan, and a new variable rate data modeling approach called 'Simulated Annealing' can help optimize crop nutrition.



**Pat Flaten**  
P.Ag., M.Sc.  
SaskCanola

She will present findings from several new studies, including what worked and what didn't in SE Sask. where farmers attempted a variety of methods to seed canola in saturated fields this spring. In western Sask. the impact of various seeding speeds was measured.



**Alex Melnitchouck**  
PhD, P.Ag.  
Decisive Farming

He will offer a comparative analysis of two variable rate fertilization and seeding strategies; identify crop biological mechanisms that determine which strategy is best for your farm; and explore optimal seeding rates.



**Stewart Brandt**  
Agriculture and  
Agri-Food Canada

He will reveal results of a four-year study exploring the impact of reducing fertilizer, seed, and herbicide rates by up to 50 per cent or more on canola and barley.



# Fifth Annual Master Seeders Conference



## Our 2011 Master Seeders Panel:

A dynamic Q&A forum led by top producers from across the Prairies

### Guy and Blair St. Amant

» Edam, SK

The St. Amants seed 4,700 acres of canola and wheat with a 70' SeedMaster and 300-bu on-board tank on 16" row spacing. They'll describe how their UltraPro Canola Meter saved almost \$20,000 on seed this year, thanks to safe delivery and even spacing of seeds in each row. And they'll explain why they prefer wide row spacing, especially for canola.

### Ron St. Croix

» Kenmare, ND

Has been one-pass farming since 1989. He and his son seed 6,000 acres with a 64-12 SeedMaster. He'll talk about his precise depth control, consistent stand, fast emergence, and higher yields since switching to SeedMaster seven years ago. He says his SeedMaster "requires almost no maintenance." He's now buying a 70-12 and a Smart Cart for greater air capacity to move more product on large drills.

### Harvey Hasiuk

» Two Hills, AB

Harvey and his son Neil, who operate a large farm with their families, look forward to seeding with their new 70' Compact-In-Transport drill this spring with the UltraPro, Auto Zone Command, and weigh scales on-

board. Harvey says excellent depth control, narrow openers and low-draft requirements with their previous SeedMaster have allowed them to successfully direct seed oats and peas into hayland without disking – an enormous time saver.

### George Connor

» Beechy, SK

Seeds about 7,000 acres of canola, cereals, and pulses. He says his crop yields and grades have increased with his 66-12 SeedMaster due to even emergence and ripening, safe seed and fertilizer separation, better weed control, and seeding between stubble rows – even stripper header stubble – with the Smart Hitch.

### David Murray

» Gainsborough, SK

Seeds 9,000 acres of winter wheat, spring wheat, and canola with his 80' SeedMaster. He'll describe how the Lift Kit helped seed extremely wet fields this year; why the Smart Hitch "makes quite a difference" when seeding canola between rows of wheat stubble; and how he's still using the same fertilizer and seed knives that came with the drill – almost 39,000 acres later – despite abrasive and rocky soil.

## CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

8:30 AM Registration

9:15 AM Introduction & Welcome – Tim Zerr

9:25 AM Overview of Drill, Opener – Norbert Beaujot

10:00 AM **Decisive Farming – Alex Melnitchouck**

10:35 AM **Coffee Break**

10:50 AM **Technology That Saves – Zone Command – Owen Kinch**

11:25 AM **Western Ag Labs – Edgar Hammermeister**

12:00 PM **Lunch**

1:05 PM **SaskCanola – Pat Flaten**

1:50 PM **UltraPro Results – David Larsen**

2:20 PM **Coffee Break**

2:40 PM **AAFC – Stewart Brandt**

3:25 PM **Nova Results – Norbert Beaujot/Greg Vennard/Owen Kinch**

4:00 PM **Master Seeders Panel**

5:00 PM **Refreshments**

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Credit card payments accepted by telephone.

Cost: \$30 / Registration deadline: October 26, 2011

Special 'SeedMaster' hotel rates are available at:

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Group #2755 - Oct. 17 deadline

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