

# Flax Straw Management

Effective Straw Management Workshop

Hilton Garden Inn

February 12,13, 2008

Photo: Sask Flax

# Flax Straw Management

History in our community

- 1920s

  - binders, thrashing machines, burned piles

- 1940s

  - swathers, combines, narrow cuts, spreaders

- 1970s

  - wider cuts, windrows/bunching.....burning

- 2000s

  - even wider cuts but chopping and spreading

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## History of Organised Straw Management

- Flax Growers Western Canada
  - 1970s process straw...Domtar
- Flax Council of Canada
  - 1997 strategic plan...5mm acres: straw issue
- Saskatchewan Flax Development Commission
  - straw fibre gap, Crop Fibers Canada
- Flax Canada 2015
  - straw pillar Sweitzer Mauduit

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## History by Government

- Manitoba

- 1990s burning legislation

- Saskatchewan

- AEGP, fiber funding..ADP, MSA crop specialists,FC2015

- Canadian

- early fiber flax research, CARDS/ACAAFS,FC2015,WED

# Flax Straw Management

History on our farm

- 1975 to 1982

- straight cut, chop, spread

- 1982 to 2000

- straight cut, drop, bunch, burn

- 2000 to present

- straight cut, spread, min till

# Flax Straw Management

Management factors on our farm:

- Bunching and burning straw is a non productive activity.....a dead cost
- On our heavy clay soil we produce relatively little straw vs. yield most years
- In the past varieties grown relate to potential seed yield not straw as it had no sale value
- More recently, environmental, soil quality, health issues (smoke), and other related factors have impacted all straw management

# Flax Straw Management

- The main issue with flax straw management has been seeding the subsequent crop. This was a big problem until recent technology has solved it and we can now incorporate the straw back into the soil.
- This has virtually eliminated all sorts of rotational, mechanical, seeding, societal, and environmental problems.
- The Future is so bright I have to wear shades

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THANK YOU!