

# Statistics Canada's 2009-10 final crop estimate

Statistics Canada's annual November farm survey of 27,900 farmers was conducted from October 23 to November 16, 2009. According to StatsCan, cool conditions held back crop growth, leading to harvest delays in many areas. However, late-season sunny and dry weather allowed most crops to reach maturity, with a substantial improvement in yield for most major grains compared with the mid-harvest survey results reported in September 2009. Like we didn't know that firsthand. When the bulk of the survey was completed, much of the flax was still un-harvested and based on farmer's yields across western Canada, I expect these estimates to be revised higher in the spring.

## SEEDED ACRES

StatsCan trimmed seeded acres by 10,000 over their spring projection in and dropped harvested acres by 165,000, allowing for the late harvest. StatsCan used an estimate of 10% left in the field, which was probably accurate in the first part of November. After driving all across Manitoba, Alberta and Saskatchewan in November, I saw that there will be few if any flax acres left to harvest in the spring and revisions will be made accordingly.

## PRODUCTION

I was expecting a much larger production estimate from StatsCan but when you factor in the reduced harvest acres, 930,000 metric tonnes is probably close. When revisions are made, flax production for 2009-10 will be over 1 million metric tonnes and may eclipse the record set in 1995-96 at 1.105 MMT. I am using 1.06 MMT as a flax production figure today, 13.9% higher than StatsCan.

## YIELD

At 23.75 bushels per acre (bpa), flax will set a new record this year, beating the old record set in 1996/97 of 23.58 bpa. I am using 25.5 bpa. I have spoken to some farmers who have had fields run 42 bpa and few if any below 19 bpa. Conditions were perfect for flax, cool at the right time and heat when it mattered most with the right mixture of rainfall. We need to duplicate the yield with a \$20.00 price again! 🌾

