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Meet Corey Loessin

A pulse grower from Saskatchewan

Corey Loessin lives on a farmer's paradise.

"We have some land that is a perfect square 160-acre quarter where every acre produces crop," he says. "For me, that's the nicest part of our landscape. Those nice square even fields are efficient to farm and just nice to be on."

Located near Radisson, Sask., approximately 60 km northwest of Saskatoon, Corey and his wife, Joan, farm as the fourth generation on the century-old Aidra Farms. Corey also farms, at times, with his brother, Nolan, who grows crops on the original family homestead.

The Loessins grow canola, spring wheat, barley, and oats. Pulse crops, including red lentils, yellow and green peas, and occasionally faba beans, are also prominent in their rotation.

"Most of our production is destined for export, either directly, or with some processing en route," Corey says. "Of what we produce, the amount that is domestically consumed is tiny in relation to the overall production and the amount that gets exported. Exports are of paramount importance to our business."

In terms of predicting long-term potential in his export business, Corey sees a lot of promise in the pulse crops.

"They are in high demand in both India and China, which are large and growing markets," he says. "Both countries



Credit: Sask. Pulse Growers.

have real challenges meeting their own demand needs because of their populations, their finite land bases, and also their limited water resources."

He predicts that with India being a prominent pulse crop market, demand there should continuously strengthen over the next several years, as well as in China, where yellow peas in particular are valued for various food uses.

"If I had to pick one crop in particular that shows the most potential, I'd have to say (it's) the pulse crops going into these two countries," Corey says. "There's so much opportunity for growth in those two markets for at least the next decade or two, probably longer."



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Corey (right) and his son Aidan (left) in the field.
Credit: Sask. Pulse Growers.

Corey has seen this potential with his own eyes.

"I had a great opportunity to visit India on a provincial trade mission with Saskatchewan premier Brad Wall in the fall of 2014," he says. "We went to promote pulses in general, and to promote Canada as a source of quality pulses."

The group toured the different areas of India, visited the ports, and were able to see some of the product actually being sold in the markets of Mumbai and Delhi.

"One thing that stands out for me is how happy the Indian buyers were with our quality from Canada," Corey says. "Even right in the port of Mumbai, we saw yellow peas being offloaded and put into bags clearly labeled 'Canadian Yellow Peas.' It was such a proud moment."

Corey says the trip gave his group a first-hand look into how Canadian products are handled in other countries, and the interest that these countries have in our product.

"It was a great trip and an eye-opener in terms of understanding the other end of our production chain," he says.

He feels strongly that keeping that production chain healthy and efficient is key to keeping Canadian exporters competitive on the world market. This means right from the farm level to handling and transportation systems to port loading facilities, proper systems and practices must be observed. Exporters need to ensure that when the product arrives at the importing country's port, it's of better quality and comparable price to other competing export nations.

"When you see an importing country's interest in our product, they have high quality parameters, and understandably so," he says. "We need to always keep that in mind here- to always focus on producing the best possible quality and maintaining that quality during storage, handling and processing so our end product is most efficient for the buyers."

To do their part in ensuring this mandate is carried out, Corey and Joan stay heavily involved in the commodity association realm, both provincially and nationally. Corey currently serves as vice-chair with the Saskatchewan Pulse Growers.

"We believe those interests need to be represented by producers. Producers need to take an active role in furthering both research that helps production at the farm level and also market development efforts that will help on the export market development side of things as well," he says.

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