



Sask Young Ag

# 2026 ANNUAL REPORT

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#ProudlyAg2026



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SYA - Sask Young Ag

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>ABOUT SYA.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>WELCOME.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>CONFERENCE AGENDA.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>PARTNER LISTING.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>SPEAKERS.....</b>	<b>6 - 9</b>
<b>PARTNER RECOGNITION.....</b>	<b>10 - 21</b>
<b>SYA EVENT PHOTOS.....</b>	<b>22</b>



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## GWENDA VOLDENG

Accounting Manager



## MISSION

*Cultivate the next generation of agriculture leaders through education and knowledge sharing, while providing lifelong professional connections.*

## VISION

*A Saskatchewan that embraces and elevates young agriculture leaders.*

# WELCOME FROM CARLIE HAYES, CHAIR

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I am pleased to present the Sask Young Ag Annual Report.

This past year marked an important period of growth and transition for our organization. In the fall of 2025, Sask Young Ag welcomed Kaitlyn Kitzan as General Manager, strengthening our capacity to deliver meaningful programming and support to our members. The Board is confident that this leadership addition positions the organization well for the future.



Sask Young Ag continues to exist to support and empower the next generation of agricultural leaders. Throughout the year, our members demonstrated a strong commitment to learning, connection, and leadership — contributing their time, insight, and energy to advance both the organization and the broader agriculture industry.

I would like to thank our Board of Directors, members, and partners for their continued dedication and support. Together, we are building a strong, engaged, and forward-looking organization, and I am proud of what we have accomplished this year and excited for what lies ahead.

## WELCOME FROM KAITLYN KITZAN, GENERAL MANAGER

I was pleased to join Sask Young Ag as General Manager in the fall of 2025 and to step into a role supporting an organization with such a strong purpose.

Over the past few months, I've had the opportunity to work closely with a dedicated Board of Directors, engaged members, and committed partners who are all passionate about the future of agriculture. Together, we focused on strengthening programming, enhancing member value, and ensuring Sask Young Ag continues to be relevant, responsive, and forward-looking.

Thank you to our members for your engagement and trust, and to our sponsors and partners for investing in the next generation of agricultural leaders. I'm excited to continue building on this momentum and to help guide Sask Young Ag into its next chapter.





# SYA PROUDLY AG CONFERENCE AGENDA

**Western Development Museum  
2610 Lorne Avenue Saskatoon, SK S7J 0S6**

**Thursday, February 5, 2026**

**9:00 Registration & Coffee**

**10:00 Welcome & Opening Remarks**  
Carlie Hayes, SYA Chair  
Kaitlyn Kitzan, General Manager  
Carla Beck, Leader of the NDP

**10:15 The Future Leader: The Successor's Guide to Family Business Leadership**  
Patti Durand, Brightrack Consulting

**11:15 Table Talk**  
Led by Patti Durand, Brightrack Consulting

**11:45 Farm Credit Canada - AI Tool - The Root**  
Oren Cairns, Relationship Manager, Farm Credit Canada

**12:00 Lunch**

**12:30 Annual General Meeting**  
James Thorsteinson, Legislative Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture

**1:00 Voices of Saskatchewan's Ag**  
Kim Keller  
Daryl Fransoo  
Julie Mortenson  
Moderated by Keira Miller

**2:00 Protecting Your Future: Finance Essentials**  
Judy Bray, Financial Advisor, Edward Jones

**2:45 Networking Break**

**3:00 The State of the Ag Industry Panel**  
Alan Jackson, JGL Livestock  
Ty Kehrig, Exceed Grain Marketing  
Moderated by Janelle Rudolph

**4:15 Closing Remarks**

**4:30 Networking Reception with Surprise Entertainment that will make you laugh!**

**In lieu of speaker gifts, SYA is making a donation to the Agro's Telemiracle Bedpush!**

## DIAMOND

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# SPEAKERS



## PATTI DURAND

Patti Durand brings 27 years of farm succession expertise and the relatable warmth of a trusted advisor to every stage.

Her presentation will transform ‘awkward conversations’ about family business transitions into actionable, hope-filled plans—blending real-life stories, practical tools, and humour that will resonate with you no matter what stage you are at.

Patti delivers unforgettable takeaways: clarity, courage, and the language to lead.

She will convince you to stop waiting for permission to lead. Learn actionable strategies to influence decisions, earn respect, and build credibility—even if you’re “just” the successor.

## OREN CAIRNS

Let Oren introduce you to Root™, your virtual farm assistant.

Root is a free generative AI tool custom-made for the Canadian agriculture and food industry.

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# SPEAKERS

## VOICES OF SASKATCHEWAN'S AG PANEL



### KIM KELLER

Kim is no stranger to either the ag tech space or the combine. Having successfully built an ag tech business a decade ago while also farming with her parents and brother on her family's farm outside of Melfort, Saskatchewan, she brings a wealth of experience to her new role at Ground Truth Ag.

"I have always been drawn to roles that will have a positive impact on agriculture. Here, I get to work firsthand with the team that is so capable and so smart. I get a front row seat to see the progress being made," Kim shares.

When not at work or the farm, Kim enjoys quiet time at home and being outdoors. She adds, "I'm extremely passionate about mental health in agriculture. In 2018, I co-founded The Do More Ag Foundation with a number of partners. It's a national charity focused on providing mental health supports and raising mental health awareness in rural communities across Canada.

### DARYL FRANSOO

Daryl farms with his father near Glaslyn, Saskatchewan, producing spring and soft white wheat, malt barley, canola, oats, and multiple varieties of peas and lentils.

His family also owned and operated a pulse processing and exporting business in Saskatchewan, giving Daryl a strong understanding of agriculture beyond the farm gate. As a young grower, he's passionate about continuing to grow the family operation and enjoys digging into agronomy, financial management, and marketing strategies.

Fun fact: Daryl played three seasons in the Saskatchewan Junior Hockey League, with the Weyburn Red Wings and the Flin Flon Bombers.



# SPEAKERS

## JULIE MORTENSON

Julie will encourage you to step outside of your comfort zone because that's when growth happens!

Realizing the ag industry is truly all about the people in it led her to stepping out of her own comfort zone to participate in a variety of mentorship programs and volunteer roles, all while working full time as well as growing her family and helping to run the 6,000 acre grain production and 300 head cattle multi generational family farm.

Currently, Julie lives in Nokomis, SK and works as an Area Marketing Representative for Richardson Pioneer as well as a Project Coordinator for Kitzan Strategic Solutions.



## KEIRA MILLER

Meet CJWW Radio reporter Keira Miller. She was born and raised in west-central Saskatchewan but has traveled extensively for work and explored agriculture and community all over the world, including Africa!

## JUDY BRAY

Growing up in small town Saskatchewan, I learned fundamental values from both my family as well as my community — hard work, integrity and caring about those around us. These values have shaped who I am in business and have allowed me to create deep trusting relationships with my clients that make them family to us.

Since 2006, I have been working with families spanning across five provinces and helping them gain clarity and security around their financial decisions. Serving retired clients, those planning for retirement in the future, and people facing life transitions have been the main focus of our practice.



# SPEAKERS

## STATE OF THE INDUSTRY PANEL



### ALAN JACKSON

Jackson works as a cattle buyer/procurement specialist for JGL, a prominent order-buying firm in North America founded in 1979 and headquartered in Moose Jaw, SK.

He has served as the Past President of the Livestock Marketers of Saskatchewan (LMS).

Jackson has contributed to the agricultural community by providing video lectures for the University of Saskatchewan College of Agriculture and Bioresources on the principles of buying and selling cattle.

### TY KEHRIG

Kehrig is Vice President at Exceed Grain Marketing, advising producers on global market trends, financial planning, and crop marketing strategies.

With prior experience in agriculture production and accounting, he is a Registered Professional Agrologist and committed to strengthening rural economies.



### JANELLE RUDOLPH

Janelle is a Glacier Farm Media reporter based in Rosthern, Sask. Her love of writing and information, and curiosity in worldly goings-ons is what led her to pursue her Bachelor of Communication and Digital Journalism from Thompson Rivers University, which she earned in 2024. After graduating, she immediately dove headfirst into her journalism career with Glacier Farm Media and won the Canadian Farm Writers Federation "New Farm Writer of the Year" award in 2025.

Growing up on a small cattle farm near Rosthern, Sask. has influenced her reporting interests of livestock, local ag, and agriculture policy. In Janelle's free time she can be found reading with a coffee in hand, wandering thrift and antique stores or spending time with friends and family.

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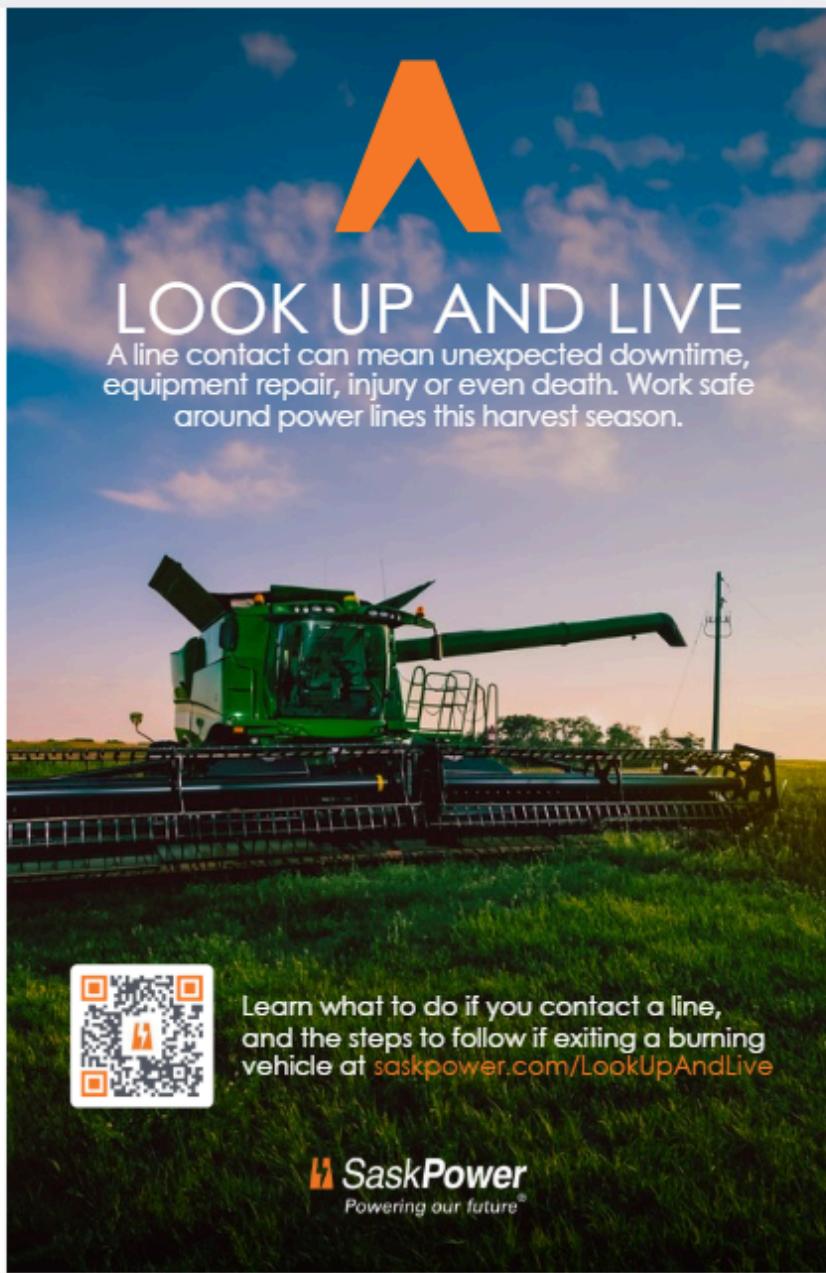
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**February 10, 2026, is Canada's Agriculture Day – an opportunity to celebrate Saskatchewan producers and agribusinesses.**

One of the ways you can celebrate agriculture is by becoming a crop reporter. Saskatchewan has one of the best weekly reports on crop conditions in Canada. It relies on a network of more than 200 volunteers in rural areas across the province.

Join this valued team by signing up to complete a weekly crop report.

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**Contact:**

1-866-457-2377

[cropreport@gov.sk.ca](mailto:cropreport@gov.sk.ca)



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Sask Young Ag

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