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## FLC Program Feature

### Managing Risk In Agriculture - Making Your Operation More Profitable

Understanding the nuances of the grain marketing business and the importance of risk management is crucial as the industry continues to evolve.

That is why the FLC is offering producers the opportunity to learn from one of the most respected industry insider with their on-line Managing Risk program.

For over 30 years, Paul Cassidy has been involved in the grain marketing business and is very well acquainted with the challenges facing producers on a daily basis.

The Lethbridge, Alberta native is a well-known presenter, educator and lecturer. Cassidy runs Mitcon Inc. which focuses on risk management and training for agricultural producers.

Cassidy has worked with the Farm Leadership Council for a number of years, facilitating Managing Risk workshops across the Prairies, to help producers learn to manage risk in their operations.

"I felt as a grain buyer and trader, producers were not doing a good job in understanding what the market signals were telling them and using those signals to their advantage," Cassidy explained. "Far too often they were taking on more risk in what is already a very risky business."

In many cases, producers would hold out for better prices. Often to the detriment of their operations, with losses in quality or even having crops spoil in the bin.

"Far too often that becomes a common reality. That is way too much risk."

Cassidy has modified the Managing Risk Program and developed an on-line version.

The course is split into 15 sections. Each session is a maximum of 90 minutes. The new format allows Cassidy to ask more questions to ensure that participants have a thorough understanding of the subject matter and terminology associated with marketing, so that they can make informed decisions back on the farm.

In the course, Cassidy tries to get producers to move away from speculating and start managing the risk, managing their cash flow and limiting their exposure to the marketplace.

"It sounds simple because no one has taken the time to explain it to producers. If they become disciplined enough to come to the course and apply this to their operation on a consistent basis – their profitability will increase dramatically."

Managing Risk is geared towards all sizes of operations. For smaller producers, this might even be more critical, as their ratio between the capital investment and the return is much tighter.

"I am very passionate about managing risk and taking a strategic approach to marketing. I believe very strongly about this and can be almost evangelistic some days. But if that gets producers motivated, then it is all worthwhile," Cassidy noted.

The FLC offered the on-line version last year and the reaction was very positive. This year they are offering two Intermediate courses (November 2011 and February 2012) and two Advanced courses (January 2012 and March 2012).

The Advanced course consists of six modules and requires the participants to complete the Intermediate Managing Risk course or have at least two years' experience of active involvement in using options in their risk management program.

For more information or to register, please click [here](#).