

Growing Season



Preparation

- Farmers consider the health of the soil they'll be working with when preparing to plant a crop.
- Farmers know the soil type, what nutrients need to be added, if a drainage system is needed, and what was grown on the land before.



Planting

- Most crops are planted during the spring and harvested during the fall.
- Wheat can be planted in either spring or fall, and is harvested in the summer.
- Spring planting generally starts in late April or early May once the threat of frost is minimized.

Storage & Marketing

- Once crops are harvested, they are either stored on the farm in large grain bins or sent to a grain elevator for storage or sale.
- Grain elevators buy crops from farmers to resell to large customers such as feed mills or processing plants.



Harvesting

- Once a crop has matured, farmers will harvest the crop using a machine called a combine.
- The combine cuts and gathers the crop, and then loosens and separates the grain seed from the stalk.



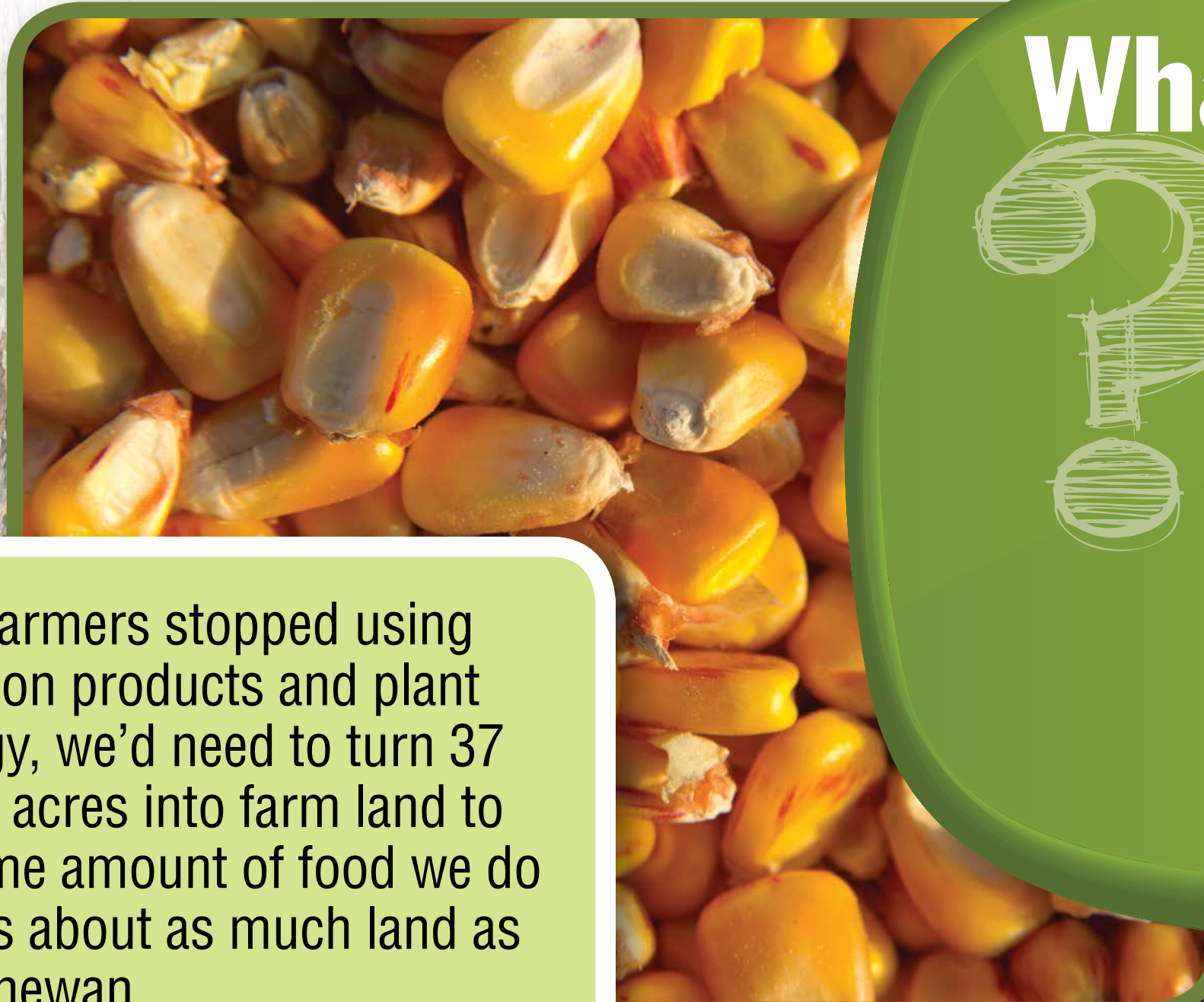
What does GMO mean?



Genetic engineering, a form of biotechnology, is when specific genes are added or removed from an organism to change its genetic makeup, resulting in a genetically modified organism (GMO). GMO crops can be resistant to certain pests, diseases or even drought conditions. Farmers growing GMO crops may require fewer pesticides, less labour and less fuel to manage their crop.

did you know...

If Canadian farmers stopped using crop protection products and plant biotechnology, we'd need to turn 37 million more acres into farm land to grow the same amount of food we do today – that's about as much land as is farmed in all of Saskatchewan.





The Real **DIRT** on Grain Farming

Fact

✓ The crop grown with the largest acreage in Canada is wheat, followed by canola.



Fact

✓ GMO foods are actually nutritionally and chemically identical to food grown from non-biotech crops.



Fact

✓ Corn is an ingredient in more than 3,000 grocery products.



FARM & FOOD
Care

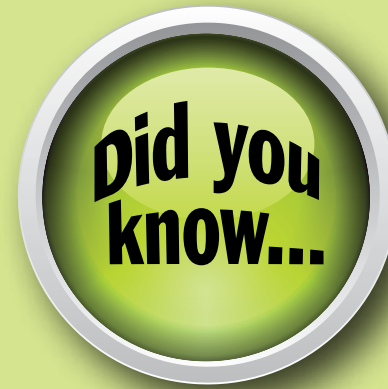
www.RealDirtonFarming.ca



Why do farmers use pesticides?



Pesticides in appropriate quantities have helped us grow more and better quality food. Being able to protect plants against pests, diseases and invasive weeds reduces the risk of crop failure which also helps to keep food prices affordable.



Canola was developed by Canadian plant scientists in the 1970s and is the oil of choice for millions around the world. Canola grows best in the prairie climate, where cool nights and hot days allow it to prosper. Canola oil is widely used both at home and in food processing plants.

What does gluten-free mean?



Gluten is a type of protein in wheat, rye, barley, and foods made from these grains. It must be avoided by people with Celiac disease, affecting about 1% of Canadians, as well as those with gluten intolerance, about 5% of the population. It is not problematic for the rest of Canadians. If you require a gluten-free lifestyle, it is recommended that you consult a dietician as these grains contain important nutrients and fibre.



Terminology

Cash crop farmers: Farmers who grow crops specifically to sell them.

Hectare (ha): A hectare is 100 metres x 100 metres. It is equal to 2.5 acres or about the size of two soccer fields.

Acre: An acre is slightly smaller than a soccer field.

Soil type: The texture of the soil – based on the percentage of sand, silt, and clay.

Tillage: Cultivating the soil to prepare for planting or to reduce weeds.

Crop Rotation: The practice of planting different crops on a field year after year to minimize pest population build up, improve soil health, avoid pesticide resistance issues, and diversify.

Biotechnology: Introducing beneficial traits in plants more precisely, using a variety of techniques, such as processes like genetic engineering.