

Meet a Producer – Jeff & Sheila Elder

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Jeff Elder and his wife, Sheila, are proud to be operating a fifth-generation, family farm in Manitoba. Jeff, having grown up on the farm, has been learning about the agriculture industry his entire life, while Sheila, originally from in town, has always been “supportive and willing to learn” about the agriculture industry. A few years ago, when the chance to participate in a Combine to Customer workshop was presented, both jumped at the opportunity!



Jeff and Sheila Elder at their farm (photo: Mark Willis Photography)

“We learned so many things at the course. It seemed that every minute of our time was jam packed with learning and networking experiences,” Jeff and Sheila went on to explain a few of the many things that they were able to learn over the course of the program.

“We learned about grain grading and analysis, flour milling, bread baking, noodle making, pulse processing, malt production and beer brewing. We also learned about many of the market development activities that take place behind the scenes, as well as governance, rail monitoring and variety development.”

Three Combine to Customer workshops are scheduled to be held at the Canadian International Grains Institute, commonly known as Cigi, in 2019. Each workshop is four days long and is geared towards informing Canadian grain growers on where today’s evolving grain industry is heading and what needs to be done to stay

competitive and meet the ever-changing requirements of domestic and international grain buyers.

“Attending as a couple gave us a lot of ‘food for thought’ [on the farm] and we have discussed things we’ve learned many times over the past year – it also created more interest in continuing education and workshops.” One of the biggest things that the Elder’s became more aware about included where all of the dollars from grain deductions go.

“Our biggest take away from the course was realizing how much goes on behind the scenes that supports our industry.”

The workshops are designed to engage and inform growers in a unique way, and will help anyone gain a better understanding about the agriculture industry as a whole. Increasing awareness about how the industry works at the consumer level is a huge takeaway from the program as well.

Today, people’s idea of ‘time well spent’ can vary. However, if anyone understands the value of time, it’s farmers. When asked if they considered the Combine to Customer workshop to be ‘time well spent’, Jeff and Sheila did not hesitate one bit with their response,

“Yes!- Anytime that there is an opportunity to mention this course to fellow farmers, we do. It was one of the best workshops that we have ever attended.”

There are currently several spots left in all three 2019 workshops. The dates of the upcoming workshops are: February 10-13, February 19-22 and March 10-13. Cigi covers all expenses for participants and encourages growers to sign up!

If you, or someone you know, might be interested in attending a combine to customer workshop, please contact kate@mbwheatandbarley.ca.

As posted on Manitoba Wheat and Barley Growers Association Website