

HONORARY LIFE MEMBERSHIP - 2021



*The Saskatchewan Seed Growers' Association is pleased to award an Honorary Life Membership to **Mitchell Japp, MSc, PAg.***



Mitchell grew up on a family grain farm near Eston SK. He enjoyed helping out on the farm, from seeding through harvest. He decided late in high school to pursue a career in agriculture, attended the University of Saskatchewan, and completed an undergraduate degree, majoring in Agronomy, with a minor in Soil Science. He enjoyed university and stayed to complete a Master of Science in Soil Science. He thanks several mentors at the University that continue to be a positive influence.

Following University, he worked at the Conservation Learning Centre near Prince Albert, where he saw a very different growing environment from home - there was not nearly as much durum or lentils!

Mitchell and his wife, Leah, spent about a year in England, before returning to Saskatchewan, this time to Regina. He started a new job with the Agriculture Research Branch in the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture. After three years, he began a new role as the Provincial Specialist, Cereal Crops with the Crops and Irrigation Branch.

He started that role in October and, very soon after, two key events happened. One, he was handed a copy of the Varieties of Grain Crops – the yellow section of the SaskSeed Guide – and told to “make sure this gets published on time.” And two, he was sent to Ottawa for a Canadian Seed Growers' Association (CSGA) fall meeting. “I was certainly aware of pedigreed seed and the benefits of using it on-farm prior to this role, but I did not imagine what I didn't know,” he commented. In the nine or so ensuing years, he learned plenty about the requirements that pedigreed seed growers have to know and follow in order to produce the high-quality seed that contributes to Canada's quality advantage.

Mitchell has been an active and very engaged advisor to both the Saskatchewan Seed Growers' Association and the CSGA. He shared his view, analysis, and observations on issues that resonated with the Boards, helping to shape policies and initiatives. His roles, such as Chair of the Prairie Grain Development Committee and coordinator of the regional variety trials, as well as being a strong liaison between the Saskatchewan commodity commissions and the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture, allowed him to bring to our Board tables different perspectives on many issues. And, his mastery of governance was proven many a time!

“Throughout my time with the CSGA, there were discussions and consultations on variety development, variety registration, Plant Breeders' Rights, and value creation. I very much enjoyed the discussions with seed growers in Saskatchewan and Canada over the past decade or so. I think one of the most important things I learned was that the dedication of seed growers to their seed is second to none. And it shows.”

He is passionate about seed, seed growers and Canadian agriculture and the Saskatchewan Seed Growers' Association is very pleased to acknowledge his contribution with an Honorary Life Membership.

Mitchell hopes to continue to have good conversations with seed growers. While his role has changed, as the Research and Extension Manager with SaskBarley, he remains a part of the agriculture industry. On the home front, Leah and Mitchell produce sheep on their small farm, with their three children, Logan, Maryn and Esmæ.