

Local processor wins awards

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Fenton Seed Farm took home three prizes from the 2016 Grain Millers Harvest Showdown Pedigreed Seed Show.

The Tisdale area company took the oats category with CDC Ruffian from FP Genetics, as well as the flax category with CDC Sorrel from Secan.

The Premier Seed Champion was tied between Fenton Seeds and Fedoruk Seeds of Kamsack. Both companies won two categories, with the fifth category taken by Littman Brothers of Saltcoats, Sask.

Robin Fenton, third-generation owner of the company, described CDC Sorrel as a tried and true variety, well-trusted by producers. CDC Ruffian was available on the market for the first time this year.

Fenton said that he enters seed competitions every year.

“We put a lot of work and effort into getting our varieties pure and getting the right variety for our area or a niche market,” he said. “When there’s competitions, it’s a good way to show what we grow and show the success of our hard work.”

The seed show, which was held at the early-November Yorkton Exhibition, is one of few left in the province. Fenton sees the competition as an opportunity.

“It’s nice to know where you stand compared to some of the other seed growers. Not everybody enters the competition, [but] at least we know we put out a good quality sample.”

The samples are graded based on germination, purity, disease levels, uniformity of the variety and agronomics – how it performs in the field.

Fenton, who works with pedigreed seed, will spend three or four years segregating and purity checking before selling a variety to a producer.

“It’s hit and miss. You might take on a variety that doesn’t fly, but we try and get new varieties that are better than the old ones, and something that fits our area - because a lot of the varieties now are getting area-specific.

“After... producing a variety for four years before the farmer gets it, we have a pretty good idea how it’s going to fit and how their agronomic package is. Hopefully we have some knowledge to share with the grower when it comes time for that variety to be at the public level. That’s the name of the game – to get varieties for our customers, and better varieties.”



Recorder Photo/Emma Meldrum

Robin Fenton of Fenton Seed stands with three awards from the 2016 Harvest Showdown at the Yorkton Exhibition. The company’s quality oats and flax seeds were recognized at this month’s competition.