

The Grass/Legume Seed Industry in the Peace River Region of Alberta & BC



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Alberta Agriculture Advisor

Outline

- **Overview**
- **Types of crops & uses**
- **Marketing**
- **Seed processors**
- **Sources of seed**
- **Sources of info**



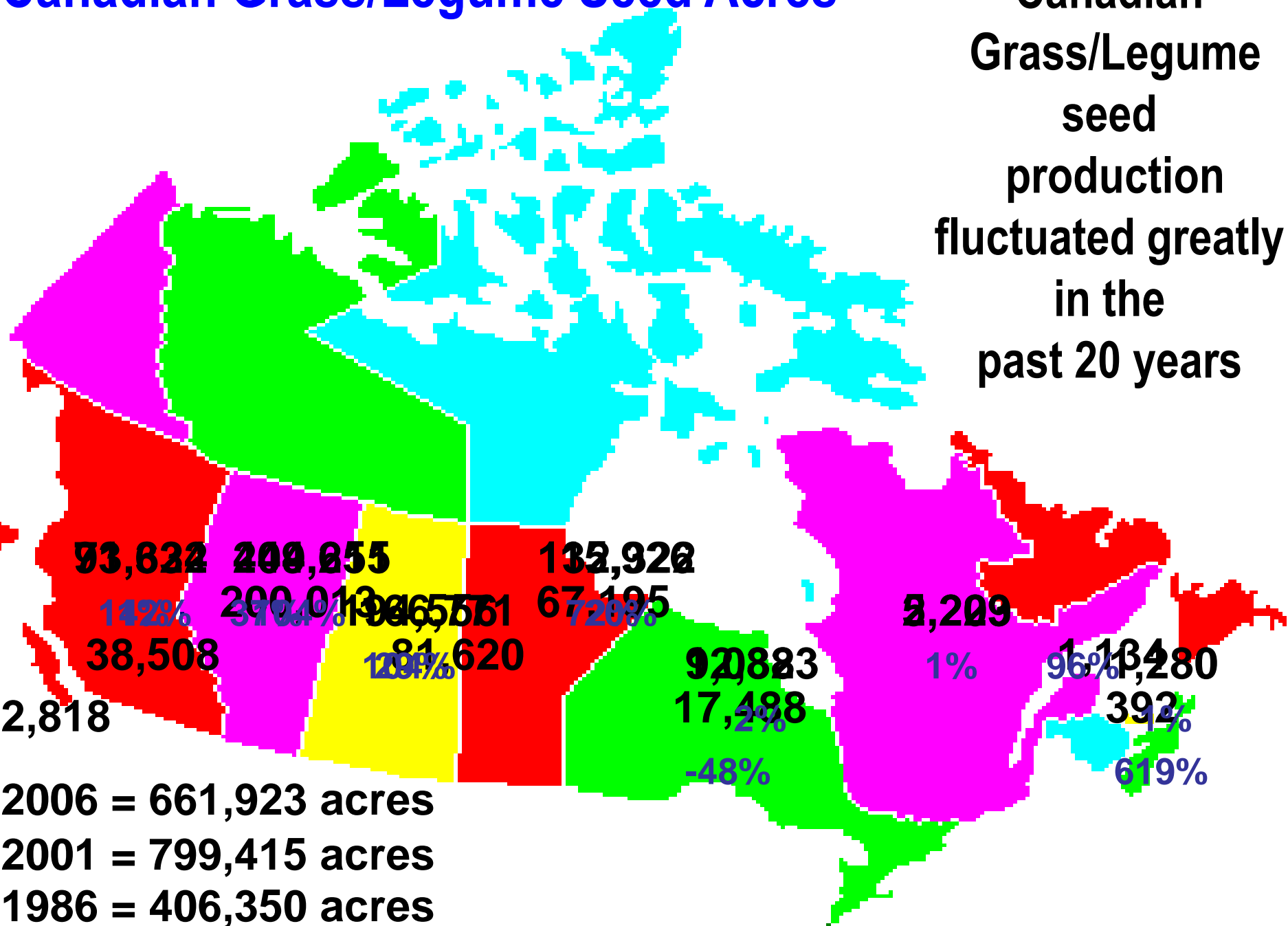
Willamette Valley, Oregon

An aerial photograph of the Willamette Valley in Oregon. The landscape is dominated by a patchwork of agricultural fields, some appearing as dark, tilled earth and others as lighter, vegetated areas. A small town with several buildings is visible in the lower right quadrant. In the background, a range of mountains stretches across the horizon under a clear sky.

**Largest grass seed producing area in the world.
(2/3 rds of the U.S.'s cool season grass seeds)
30 – 50 miles by 180 miles**

Canadian Grass/Legume Seed Acres

Canadian Grass/Legume seed production fluctuated greatly in the past 20 years



93,622
14%
38,508

200,055
31%
81,620

135,926
21%
55,561

67,195
10%
17,488

135,926
21%
92,883

2,209
1%
2,209

1,134
0.2%
1,134

2,818

2006 = 661,923 acres
2001 = 799,415 acres
1986 = 406,350 acres

-48%

392
0.1%
619%


Grass/Legume Seed Processors Peace River Region Spring 2009

- Creeping Red Fescue
- Bromegrass
- Timothy
- Red Clover
- Alsike Clover

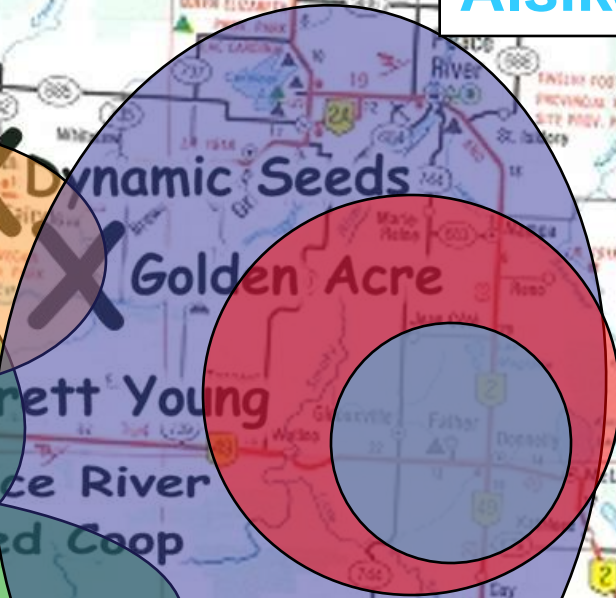
Pickseed



Brett Young



Golden Acre



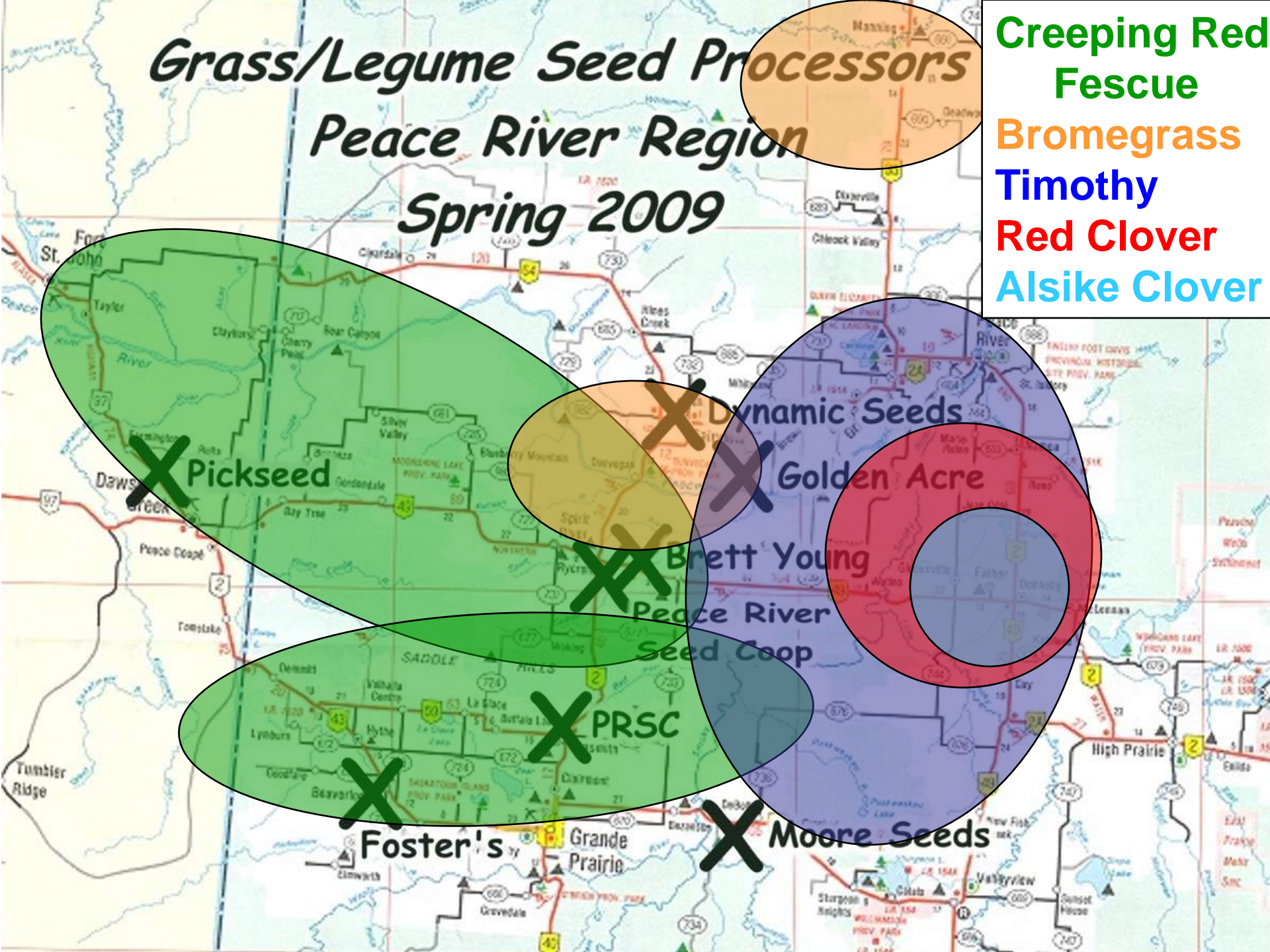
PRSC



Foster's



Moore Seeds



Grass/Legume Seed Production

4 Categories

1 – turf seed crops

- Creeping Red Fescue
- Tall Fescue (turf)
- Kentucky Bluegrass
- Perennial Ryegrass
- Annual Ryegrass
- Other fescues

2 – forage seed crops

- Timothy
- Smooth Bromegrass
- Meadow Bromegrass
- Orchardgrass
- Wheatgrasses
- Tall Fescue (forage)

3 – legume seed crops

- Alfalfa
- Sweet Clover
- Red Clover
- Alsike Clover

4 – native grasses

- Wheat Grasses
- Other

Turf Grasses

Huge sales world wide!

Almost all Canadian production is exported



Creeping Red Fescue

Used in turf seed mixtures

**Largest user: USA, some certified production
exported to E.U**

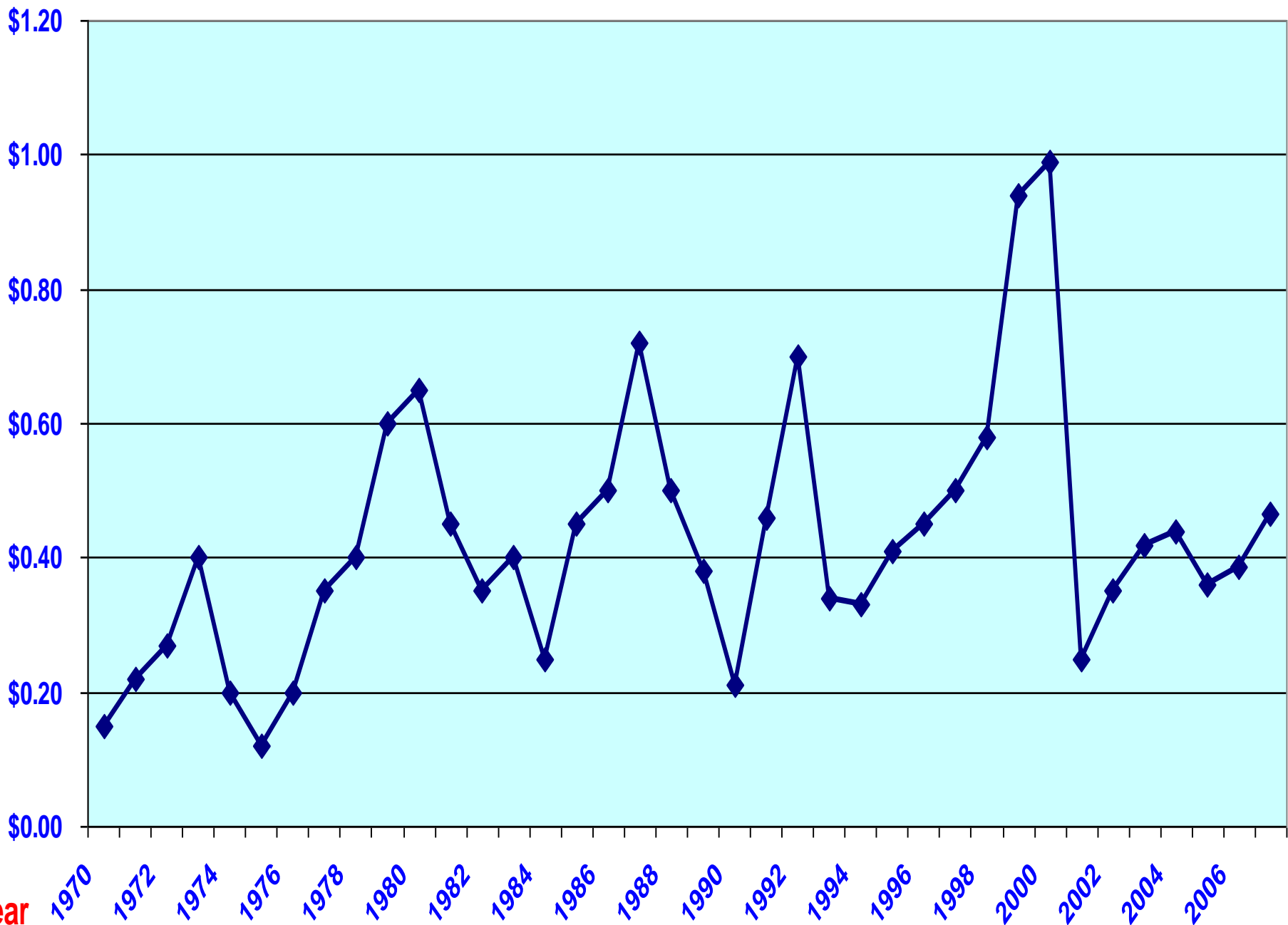
Avg. crop: 325 lbs/acre but up to 1000 lbs/ac.

**Competes with Kentucky bluegrass, tall fescue,
perennial and annual ryegrasses**


**Kentucky bluegrass, and perennial and annual
ryegrass grown in Washington State and
Oregon**

Historical Common Creeping Red Fescue Prices

\$/lb



Hard or Chewings Fescue



Small markets
Can be difficult to establish
7- 10 days earlier harvest than creeper
Yields seem to be a slightly lower than creeper

Forage/Legume Seed Crops

Domestic and export markets



Hay Production
(forages/legumes)



Pastures



Reclamation

Timothy

Big component in domestic and export markets

Average yields 250-300 lbs/acre

Used for hay and pasture

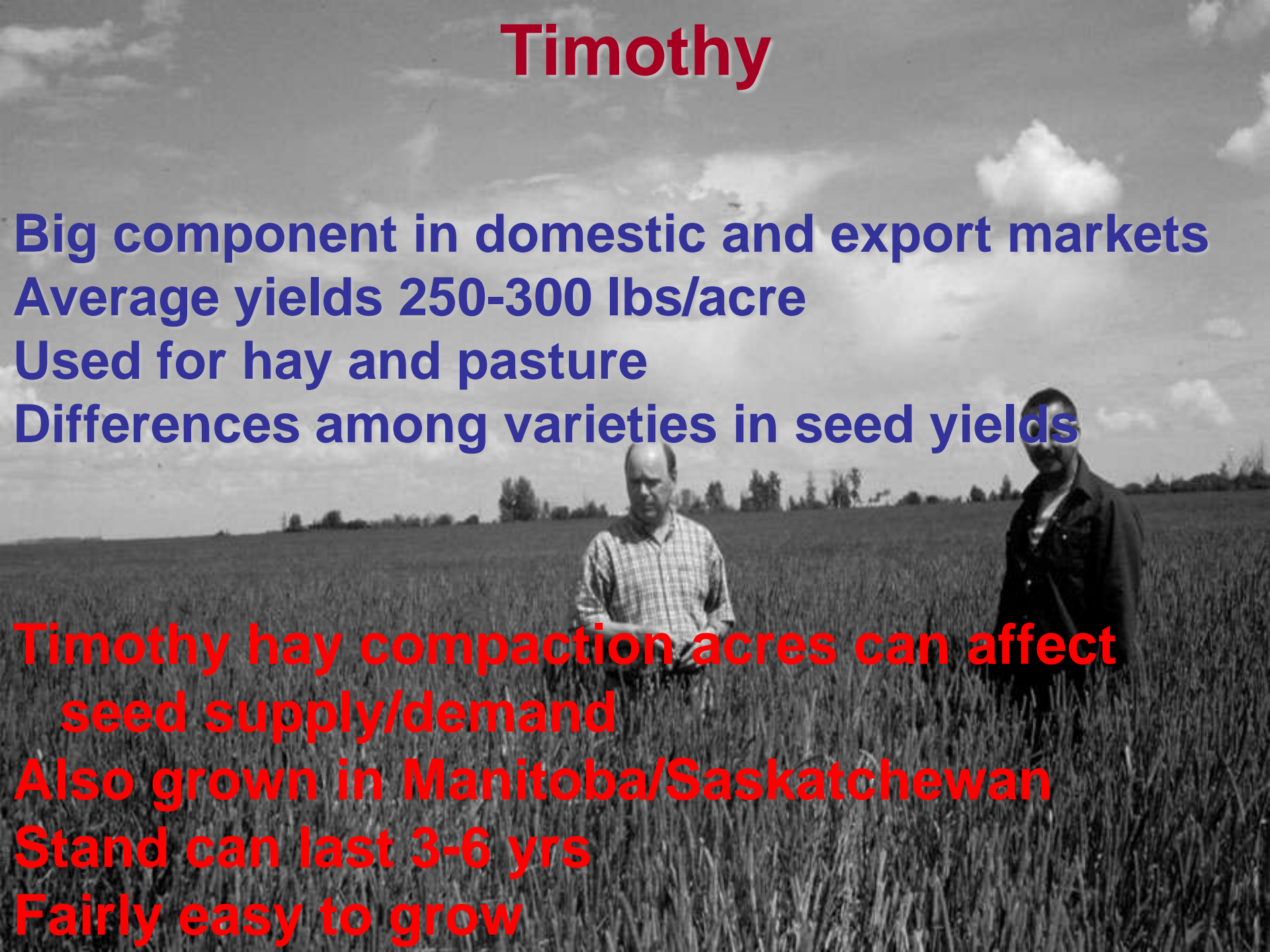
Differences among varieties in seed yields

**Timothy hay compaction acres can affect
seed supply/demand**

Also grown in Manitoba/Saskatchewan

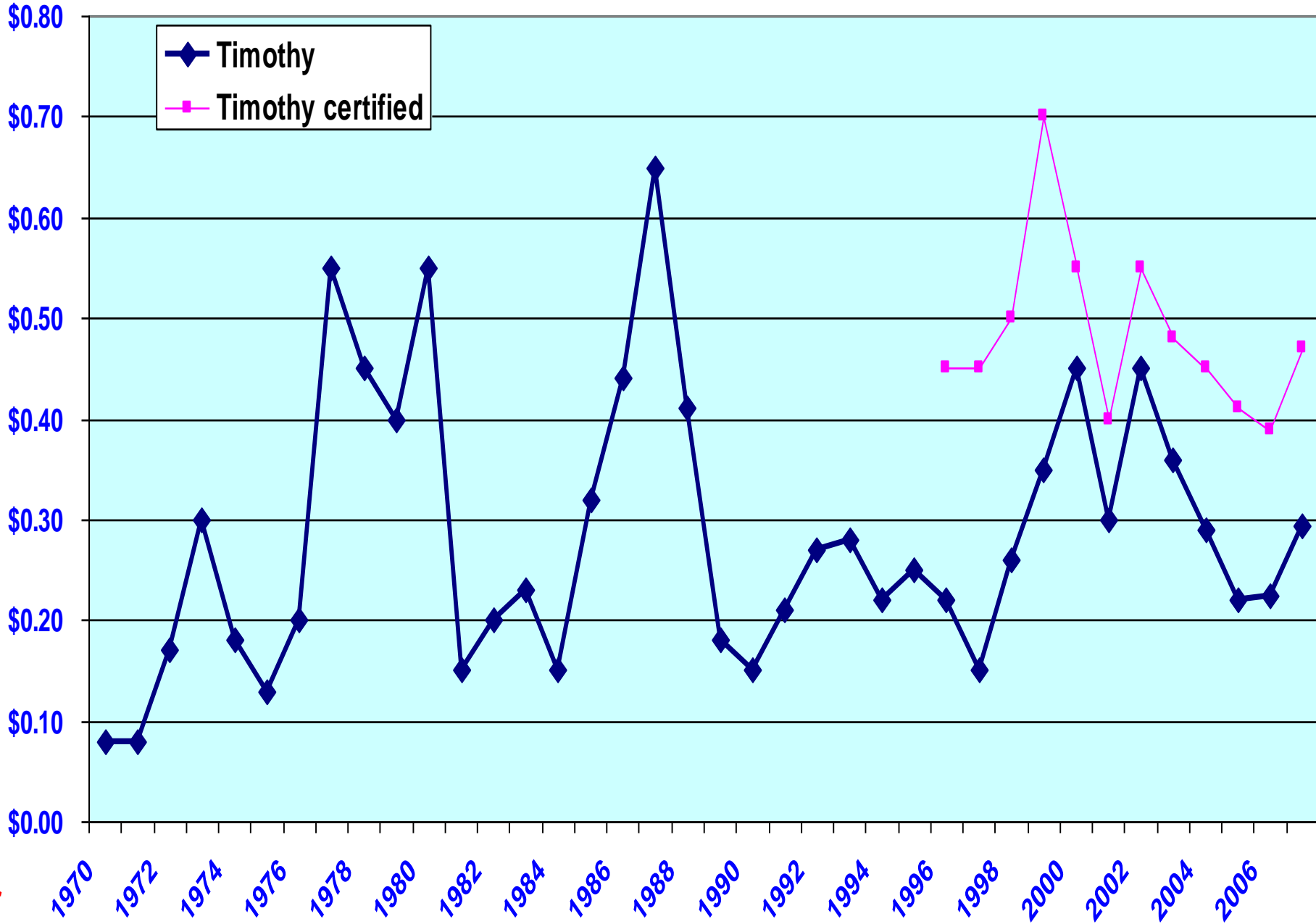
Stand can last 3-6 yrs

Fairly easy to grow



\$/lb

Historical Timothy Seed Prices



Brome grasses

Meadow brome grass used for hay & pasture
For domestic market, seed acres presently low

Average yields 200-250 lbs/acre

Seeds fields last 2-3 years

Increasing forage use in USA, Eastern Canada

Smooth brome grass used for hay and pasture

For export and domestic market

Average yields 200-250 lbs/acre

Seed fields last 4-6 years

Main US area: Kansas, Missouri

Red and Alsike Clover

**Used for hay, pasture & plow down purposes
For domestic and export market**

**Average alsike yields 250-300 lbs/acre
Alsike has a niche market in reclamation
Average red clover yields 200-250 lbs/acre**





Alfalfa Seed

Require leafcutter bees for adequate seed set
#1 traded legume world wide
Used for pasture/ hay for export and domestic

Seed yields average 300 lbs/acre
Main production areas: Brooks AB, Manitoba,
Saskatchewan, Idaho, California

Native Grasses

New opportunities

Markets expanding



BLM/CRP programs



Oil Field Sites



Reclamation

Native Grasses

Used in reclamation activities

New Environmental guidelines, increased demand

Area of adaptation determines size of market

Users - mining, pipeline, oil and gas, forestry, Ducks Unlimited, Gov. transportation depts. and municipalities

Quality issues- germination/pure live seed, weeds and genetic origin

Prices strong but requires lots of management and patience

Production techniques unknown

Peace Region is Known Across the World as Large Producer of Which of The Following Grass ?

1) Tall Fescue

2) Bromegrass

3) Creeping Red Fescue

4) Perennial Ryegrass

5) Marijuana



The Life & Times of a Creeping Red Fescue Crop in the Peace Region



Year 1- Seeded with wheat or canola



Year 2- Clip crop



Year 3 and 4 Harvest Crop





Year 5 – Rejuvenate



Year 6 & 7 – Harvest crop

Spray out creeping red fescue in the fall



Direct seed RR canola into fescue sod



BONUS QUESTION:

What is the most common variety of creeping red fescue grown in the region?



Seed Production

Seed

Foundation or
Registered (USA)

Certified

Non - contracted

Under Contract

Common



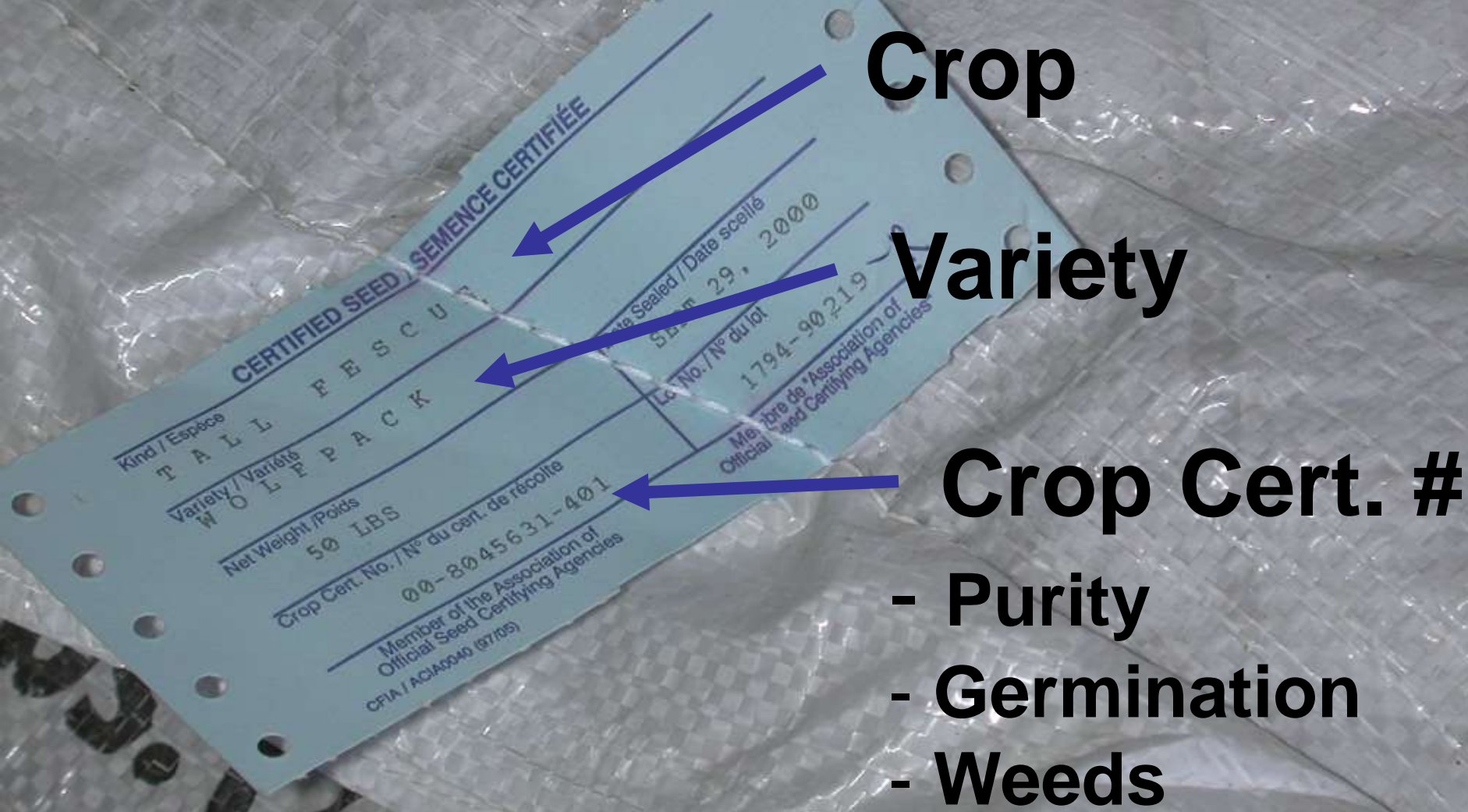
Field
Inspected
by
CFIA



**All Pedigreed (Certified) Seed
Production in Canada must be
Inspected by the Canadian
Food Inspection Agency**



CFIA Inspection



Crop

Variety

Crop Cert. #

- Purity
- Germination
- Weeds

Almost all grass/legume seed grown in the Peace Block is moved out of the region



There are different standards for domestic vs. seed for export

Seed Companies





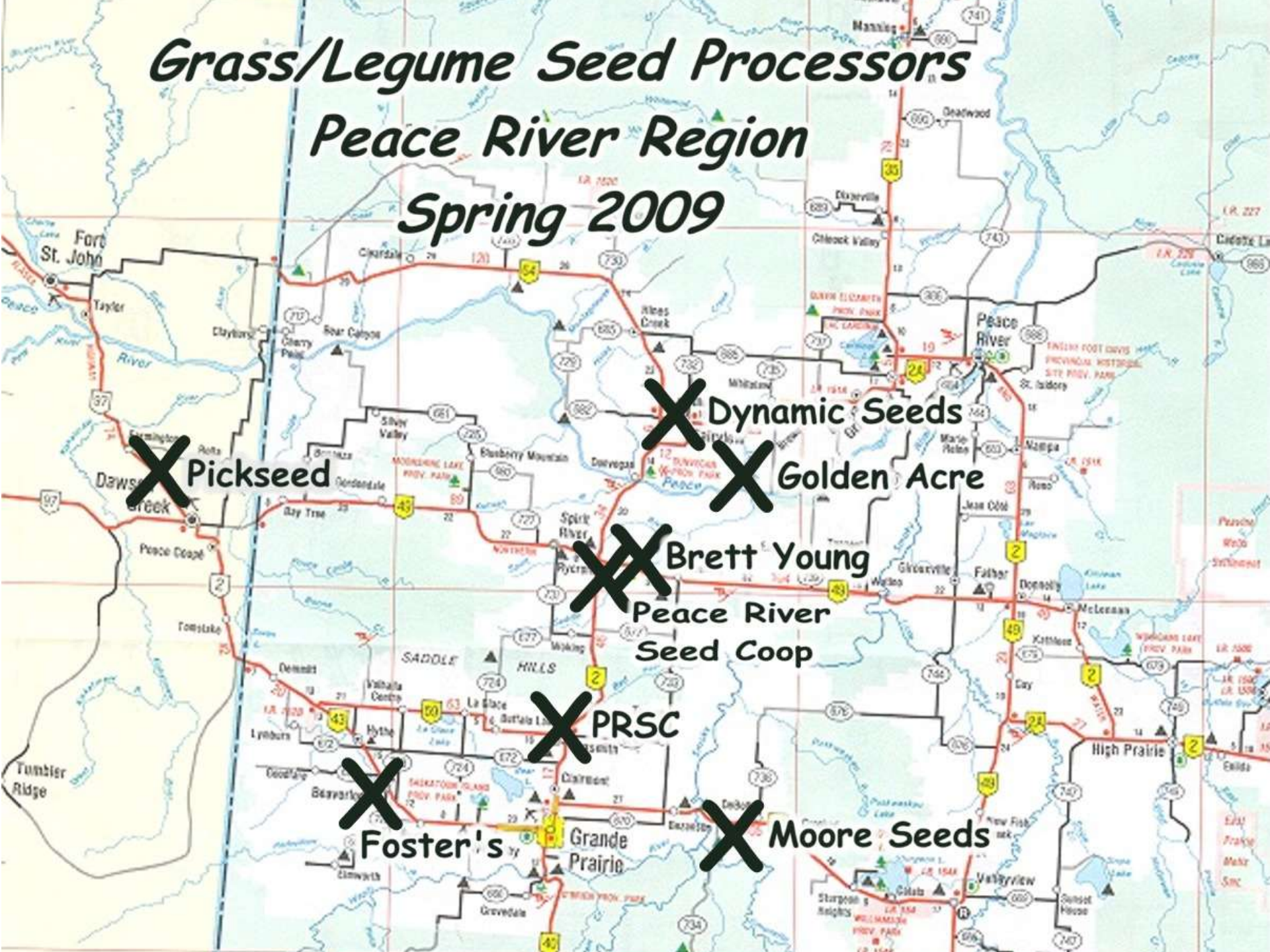
**Inspected,
Bagged,
and Tagged
@ Golden
Acre Seeds,
Fairview AB**



Grass/Legume Seed Processors

Peace River Region

Spring 2009



X Pickseed

X Dynamic Seeds

X Golden Acre

X Brett Young

Peace River Seed Coop

X PRSC

X Foster's

X Moore Seeds

Forage Seed Processors Peace River Region



Peace River Seed
Coop (PRSC): Rycroft



The old grain elevators in
Rycroft now serve as
storage for the PRSC

**The Peace River Region
will process over
50 million lbs.
of forage seed
annually.**

Forage Seed Processors - Peace River Region



**Dynamic Seeds,
Fairview**



**Moore Seed Processors
Debolt**



PRSC, Sexsmith



**Brett Young Seeds
Rycroft**

Forage Seed Processors – Peace River Region



**Pickseed Canada:
Dawson Creek**



**Golden Acre Seeds
Fairview**



**Foster's Seed and Feed
Beaverlodge**

Peace River Seed Co-op Ltd. Rycroft

Box 40, Rycroft AB T0H 3A0

**Phone: (780) 765-3737 or
1-800-565-7772**

Fax: (780) 765-3800



Contact: Rob Henry or Janet Roy

***Comments:* Peace River Seed Co-op, a farmer cooperative, provides a custom cleaning and bagging service for members and non-members. PRSC buys seed as well as acts as a seed broker for growers. Peace River Seed Co-op is involved with some production contracts and also retails forage seed. It also has a government-accredited lab for seed germination and purity**



Seed Trade



Pickseed Canada Inc. – Dawson Creek BC
 Box 2407, Dawson Creek, B.C.V1G 4T9
 Contact: Gino Morrone
 Phone: (250) 782-3040
 Fax: (250) 782-2252
 Email: gmorrone@pickseed.com
 Main Office: Box 3230, Sherwood Park AB T8A 2A6
 Contact: Antonio Tejada

**Sources of
more info**

**Peace Region Forage Seed
Association**

<http://www.peaceforageseed.ca>

**Email:
coordinator@peaceforageseed.ca**

**Calvin Yoder, Forage Specialist
Alberta Agriculture
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**Dave Wong, Market Specialist
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Email: dave.wong@gov.ab.ca**

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