The United Farmer

January – February, 1985
Alberta best market for nursery industry

A study just completed for Alberta’s nursery growers confirm what many have long suspected: there is ample room for the industry to expand, and some of the best opportunities are right here in Alberta.

For example, the study estimates that Alberta growers supply less than 15 per cent of the trees and shrubs used for landscaping in Alberta. Realistically, says the study, this could increase to 37 per cent. What’s needed is for Alberta’s nursery industry to take a more aggressive marketing approach aimed at replacing imports.

Susan Kitchen of Alberta Agriculture’s market development sector says the study provides the industry’s first comprehensive assessment of its size, volume and value. It shows that in 1983 the sales of shrubs, trees and plants in Alberta totalled more than $27 million. Nurseries and related businesses employed the equivalent of 1,725 people full time, with a gross payroll of more than $11 million. Nearly 2,200 acres were used to grow nursery stock.

While the provincial market offers the best potential for sales, the report also suggests that the nursery industry pursue export opportunities in areas where Alberta’s hardy stock offers an advantage: Alaska, Montana, Oregon and Idaho.

Quarter Horses Cut Out New Markets

Alberta’s quarter horse breeders have a reputation in Europe that is second to none. In just four years over $500,000 worth of Alberta registered quarter horses have been sold to Germany, Switzerland, France and Belgium. Over half of the more than 40,000 registered quarter horses in Canada are in Alberta.

This relatively new breed was started in the U.S. and Canada in the 1920’s and ’30’s and has since turned into a viable industry. The U.S. quarter horse register, opened in 1949, now contains over two million horses. It’s the biggest equine register in the world.

Unifarm Annual Convention

Delegates left the 15th annual convention of Unifarm with a positive attitude towards the future and convinced that the organization had successfully overcome the obstacles of a turn around year. Evaluations by delegates and reports of visitors all indicated a good successful convention, with special emphasis placed on the merits of panel discussions on farm debt and research. All senior officers President Stan Bell, Carstairs, Vice-president Gordon Blanchard, Bow Island and Vice-president Ralph Jespersen, Spruce Grove were returned for further terms of office.

Some meeting time was spent on Unifarm’s activities at rebuilding membership. The province-wide membership campaign added many new members to the rolls. District organization and activity is acknowledged as the key to continued active membership. During the past year, much work was devoted to this area and a number of Unifarm’s 67 districts were revived bringing the total now to about 50 active districts. Two hundred and ten accredited delegates attended the convention, although on a number of occasions, visitors swelled total attendance to well over 300.

The Family Farm

A number of years ago, W.D. Albright, first superintendent of the Beaverlodge Experimental Station, drew up the following resolutions.

Recognizing that whether owner or tenant of the land I occupy, I really hold it in trust for posterity, and that many men will want to use it after me, I shall try to take care of it by:
1. Keeping it as free of weeds as possible.
2. Preventing erosion by wind and water.
3. Conserving fertility.
4. Erecting buildings on solid foundations and building them to last, instead of accumulating a flimsy array of sway-backed shacks and shanties.
5. Conserving tree growth in official groves as needed besides shelterbelts and a few well chosen ornamentals.
6. Trying in every way to leave my farm a little better than I found it, writing my character on a piece of land.

Realizing there is little use in making a living unless one lives, I shall aim to make my home modestly attractive and my farm a well ordered enterprise in which I can take pride.
It’s Our 75th Anniversary!!!

For over 75 years, United Farmers of Alberta Co-operative Limited has served the rural communities of Alberta.

The stabilizing force of co-operatives on business is often not recognized by those who directly benefit in today’s business world by that influence.

This is the second installment of a look back at UFA’s 75 years in Alberta in which the United Farmer will recognize some of the people and events that contributed to the outstanding growth achieved by UFA.

Presidents of United Farmers of Alberta

United Farmers of Alberta came into being in 1909 when the Canadian Society of Equity and the Alberta Farmers Association amalgamated. In the past 75 years, nine men have served as Presidents of UFA.

James Bower
1909 – 1911

The first President, James Bower, came from Ontario and settled near Red Deer. He had operated a large farm and was widely known as a successful breeder of Percheron horses.

Soon after settling in Alberta, Mr. Bower became interested in farm organizations. He joined the Alberta Farmers Association and was active in the campaign to unite with the Canadian Society of Equity. Re-elected President in 1911, he declined the nomination in 1912 and was named honorary president. A leader in the farm movement, he served as vice-president of the Canadian Council of Agriculture.

James Bower’s sound views on the necessity to organize farmers, his practical business sense, together with his ability to debate, gained recognition for him on a national scale.

W.J. Tregillus
1912 – 1914

The second President was W.J. Tregillus who came to Canada in 1902. He built up a fine herd of purebred Holsteins and served the growing little city of Calgary with whole milk. In addition he operated a brick kiln business.

A public spirited man, he served on the Calgary School Board and while living on his farm was elected a city alderman. In 1912, he was elected President of UFA. When the Alberta Farmers Co-operative Elevator Company was formed, early in 1913, Mr. Tregillus became its president and was president of both organizations at the time of his death in 1914.

W.J. Tregillus 1912 – 1914
A man of strong reformist convictions, there is evidence in his addresses and speeches, that had he lived longer he could have developed into one of the outstanding men in Canadian life.

James Speakman
1915

Elected as the third President in 1915 was James Speakman of Penhold. He moved into Calgary in order to better serve in his capacity as chief organizer of the annual membership drive and as a contributor to the Grain

James Speakman 1915

May 8, 1909 - - - a caravan of 12 cars travelled from Calgary to Banff in one day - - - April 14, 1912 - - - the Titanic
Growers Guide. He was involved in researching problems of western agriculture with special attention to the needs of farmers for cheaper loan capital, when he contracted pneumonia and died on December 21, 1915. A member of farm organizations since before the amalgamation, Mr. Speakman served as President for less than one year. Arrangements for the annual convention, less than a month away, were practically completed. First vice-president Henry Wise Wood of Carstairs, took over.

Henry Wise Wood
1916 – 1930

A philosopher turned farm leader, Henry Wise Wood was largely interested in developing co-operation and unity amongst farmers.

At the 1916 Annual UFA Convention, there was a keen competition for the presidency. Henry Wise Wood was elected on the first ballot and served as UFA President from 1916 – 1930. During this time, he led the struggle for the farmers' movement and eventually, farmers sat in the legislature.

In 1921, when the UFA was swept into power in Alberta, Wood was offered the premiership but declined on the grounds of his American background. However, his prominence in the Canadian farmers' movement grew rapidly between 1917 and 1923 when Wood was president of the Canadian Council of Agriculture. He played a crucial role in the formation of the Alberta Wheat Pool and served as president of that organization from 1923 – 1937.

His popularity and influence in the farmers' movement made Henry Wise Wood an important figure in Alberta's history and heritage. In his fourteen years as UFA President, his guidance and practical wisdom had steadily advanced the social and economic interests of the rural people of Alberta.

Robert Gardiner
1931 – 1945

Originally from Scotland, Robert Gardiner settled at Excel, Alberta in 1909 where he raised grain and pure-bred horses. Two months after his arrival, he joined United Farmers of Alberta.

In 1921, in the federal election, he scored an overwhelming victory in the Medicine Hat federal riding. He was re-elected in 1925 and returned in 1930 by acclamation. He was federal leader of the UFA Ginger group in the House of Commons. In 1935, he met his first political defeat.

At the 1931 Annual Meeting of UFA, Robert Gardiner was elected the fifth President of UFA. He became nationally known for his drive for federal investigation of circumstances surrounding the Beauharnois Power Corporation and for his fight for retention of the Crows Nest Pass Agreement.

At the 1939 Annual Meeting, the following resolution was passed: "All direct political activity by UFA be ceased and further that no individual, local or association be allowed in any circumstances whatever to use any part of the UFA machinery to endorse or promote the interests of a political party or movement." UFA had reverted to its position in the years 1909 – 1919 and was again a non-political body.

Robert Gardiner served as President from 1931 – 1945.

George E. Church
1946 – 1961

Elected as the sixth President of UFA in 1946, George Church's primary interest was farm organizations. He was a warm, outgoing man with a keen sense of humor who was...
equally popular with urban or rural people. His activities in many organizations were extensive and he served on the boards of several prominent companies.

During his tenure as President, important changes that set the direction for UFA’s success as a marketing co-operative were made. In particular, the educational section of United Farmers of Alberta was amalgamated with the Alberta Farmers Union of Alberta (in 1968, the name was changed to Uniform). The co-operative marketing section of UFA and its subsidiary, UFA Central Co-op Association, became known as United Farmers of Alberta Co-operative Limited.

In 1950, UFA Co-op sold the 21 retail stores in the Central Co-op Association to the Alberta Co-operative Wholesale Association. In 1953, the Farm Supply Division was restructured and the first Farm Supply Centre was opened. In 1957, UFA Co-op purchased Maple Leaf Petroleums from Imperial Oil.

George Church served as President of UFA Co-operative Limited until his death in 1961.

George Sayle
1963 – 1975

Originally from the Isle of Man, George Sayle homesteaded in 1929 in the Peace River area. He was active in local rural organizations and served for many years as a Delegate to United Farmers of Alberta. In 1947, he was elected to the Board of Directors and in 1963 was elected President.

When Mr. Sayle became President, the locals, which had been an important part of the UFA structure since 1918, were still being used by members as a means to combine their buying power. Every year more members asked for individual billing directly from the head office. Due to this increasing demand that Farm Supply business would be done more effectively on a direct basis, all administrative duties were transferred to head office in 1966. Members would now receive individual statements of their purchases.

Mr. Sayle made every effort to retain a “grass roots contact” with the member-owners of UFA. In 1966, Delegates’ Advisory Committees, which met twice in each Sub-district, were formed. It was also George Sayle who instigated the Director/Delegate meetings at which the President and C.E.O. spent a full day discussing the many aspects of UFA with each Director and his Delegates.

During George Sayle’s tenure as President, UFA gained recognition as

Jake Frey
1961 – 1963

The seventh President of UFA Co-operative was Jake Frey. He had come as a young man to Western Canada in 1918 from Kitchener, Ontario. He settled near Acadia Valley and farmed there for over 40 years raising both grain and cattle.

From 1923 – 1949, Mr. Frey served on the board of Acadia Co-op. He also served on the board of the Alberta Federation of Agriculture and was president of the Co-operative Union of Alberta. He served as President of UFA from 1961 – 1963.
George Sayle (cont’d)

the major farm supply co-operative in Alberta. Many sales records were broken and earnings showed excellent increases. There were now over 125 direct Petroleum Agencies and Member Associations and 19 modern Farm Supply Centres in Alberta.

George Sayle retired as President in 1975. His integrity and dedication to UFA, plus a personal warmth, earned for him a special place in the history of United Farmers of Alberta Co-operative Limited.

Howard Haney
1975 – to present time

Elected President of United Farmers of Alberta in March, 1975, Howard Haney is a prominent agribusinessman in the Iron Springs area. His father homesteaded near Barons, Alberta in 1906, moved to Montana some years later and then returned to southern Alberta in 1926. Irrigation had just started and came into full flow in 1927. Raised on the family farm, Howard Haney attended Iron Springs School and the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology. In 1960, the Haney family was awarded the Master Farm Family Award by the Alberta Government.

Mr. Haney’s keen interest in co-operatives stems from the time he attended a Rural Leadership Techniques Course at Banff. He became actively involved and served as secretary and then president of the Iron Springs local of the Farmers’ Union of Alberta. In 1962, Mr. Haney was elected as the UFA Delegate representing the members of Sub-district #24, the Lethbridge area. In 1970, he was elected Director of District 4D; in 1972 he was elected 2nd Vice-president and in 1974, 1st Vice-president. When George Sayle retired as President in 1975, Howard Haney was elected as the ninth President of United Farmers of Alberta Co-operative Limited.

UFA is controlled by members through their elected representatives, the Delegates. At the Annual Meeting, the Delegates in an electoral district bi-annually elect a Director for a two year term. The eight Directors so elected constitute the Board of Directors.

Following the Annual Meeting, the Board elects a President, 1st Vice-president and 2nd Vice-president from among its members, who constitute the Executive Committee. At this meeting, a Treasurer and a Corporate Secretary are also appointed.

The Board of Directors is also responsible for the appointment, when necessary, of a Chief Executive Officer, who in turn, is responsible to the Board for the total operations of UFA.

As President, Mr. Haney chairs the Annual Meeting, Board meetings and Executive meetings. Directors are also appointed by the Board to represent UFA at the Annual Meetings of Co-op Union of Canada, Co-operators, Co-op College, Unifarm and the Canadian Federation of Agriculture.

UFA’s Total Assets, Members’ Equity and Net Earnings have more than tripled since Mr. Haney became President. This solid, controlled growth has been accomplished without significant long term debt and the Organization remains in a sound financial position.
Delegates’ Advisory Committees

Over 100 Delegate Advisory committee meetings are held each year throughout Alberta. Each of the elected Delegates meets regularly twice a year with his committee.

The Hub of The Community

Locals were an important and integral part of United Farmers of Alberta’s structure. They were the cultural, educational and social hub of the tightly knit rural community and the basis on which UFA built a strong farm organization. Since 1918 they had served as a vehicle through which members combined their buying power to buy carload quantities of coal, wood, apples, honey, flour, etc. When members requested in 1949 that the Farm Supply Division be expanded and modernized to meet current needs, it was logical to again utilize farm locals as buying groups. The locals did a tremendous job.

Conditions Change Dramatically

Conditions, however, changed dramatically in the agricultural industry and in the rural community. Farm units became larger and the number of farmers declined. The country school house, always the center for meetings and social activities, gave way to centralized school systems located in the nearest agricultural trading centre. As a consequence, the farm families’ interests focused on these centres.

While members continued to use UFA with an ever increasing and gratifying extent, they began to do so on a more direct and personal basis. At one time, many of the orders were written by the local secretary. This practise dwindled until very few letters came from the local itself. The vast majority of members preferred to pick up their own merchandise rather than have it shipped by truckers.

On August 1, 1964, United Farmers of Alberta Co-operative Limited started to provide locals with a breakdown of individual purchases. Many members, however, did not receive a statement of their purchases from the locals and continued to strongly demand that statements be sent each month directly from the head office.

This greater volume of business...
Delegates' Advi

had also put a heavy load on local secretaries, who as they were active farmers themselves, were having difficulty in finding the time to keep essential records. In addition, there was difficulty in proper identification, at the time of purchase, of both the local and the members. On a direct basis, individual plastic identification cards could be sent to each member. The card would be stamped on all invoices and therefore eliminate improper identification.

A Time For Decision

Locals had done an extremely worthwhile and functional job, but times and conditions had substantially altered their role. A series of meetings, attended by all Directors and Delegates, were held throughout Alberta. The consensus of these meetings was that business transactions with our members must become more direct, faster and economical.

As a result, the decision was made that all matters pertaining to farm supply activities would be with the
individual member, and all administrative duties for these transactions would become the responsibility of the head office. The time was August 1, 1966.

Close Liaison

Maintaining a close liaison with local groups

There was concern that with the transfer of administrative duties to head office, locals would gradually be disbanded. While most members felt that business could be done more effectively on a direct basis, all realized the value of maintaining a close liaison with local groups.

Delegate Advisory Committees Formed

A meeting of local secretaries was held and the response indicated that many of the secretaries would be willing to serve United Farmers in the capacity of Delegate Advisory Committee members.

Organizational Meeting Held

A suggestion was made that a good working number on the committee was twelve but this number would be flexible. As potential members, the presidents of locals, chairmen of petroleum advisory committees, community leaders were suggested as progressive people in their area - people who realized that the principle of pooling farmers' purchasing powers was sound and that United Farmers of Alberta realistically benefited the agricultural industry. The organizational meetings of the delegates opened in Calgary - - - May 8, 1909 - - - a caravan of 12 cars travelled from Calgary to Banff in one day - - - April 14,
Delegates’ Advisory Committees

advisory committees were held after the Annual Meeting in 1966.

Structure of Delegates Advisory Committees

At these meetings, the structure of the Delegates Advisory Committees was discussed. The consensus was that the following points would be feasible guide lines for the committees.

The Chairman

The chairman preferably would be someone other than the Delegate who already had the obligations of representing United Farmers in an official capacity, preparing and sending reports and attending meetings.

The Secretary

Records of discussion and important points of meetings, as well as correspondence on behalf of the committee, would be handled by a secretary. It was felt advisable that the secretary report to head office on the meetings in order to maintain a good flow of communications between the advisory committees and the head office.

The Delegate

At the centre of all committee functions would be the Delegate who was elected by the members in his Sub-district. The committee would not have the power to discharge the Delegate or relieve him of his responsibilities.

Today, there are almost 1,000 UFA members who are Advisory Committee members. Information that is not practical to send to all UFA members is sent to Committee members. This information includes The United Farmer and the President’s Newsletter, The United Farmer recognizes people associated with UFA and agriculture; The President’s Newsletter is a quarterly interim report that is sent out within two weeks after a Board of Directors’ meeting.

Two regular meetings are held during the year by each Delegate with the members of his Committee. Operational reports are given and various aspects of UFA are openly discussed at these meetings which are attended by Petroleum and Farm Supply Management. The grass roots input and the advice given, over the years, by the committees has proven to be invaluable in keeping our Organization attuned to members’ needs.

The Advisory Committees also serve as a training ground for Delegates. If a Delegate retires or a vacancy occurs in the Sub-district, the Committee could well stand in the capacity of a nominating committee.

How UFA Co-operative is Organized

Directors and Delegates

Democratic control is of the utmost importance in a co-operative. The type of control varies – from direct member to control through elected officials. In UFA, with over 55,000 active members, it would be impossible to have direct member control. UFA is controlled by the members through elected representatives.

The province of Alberta is divided into 8 Districts with each District divided into 7 Sub-districts. Each of the 8 Districts has one elected Director and 7 elected Delegates, one from each of the 7 Sub-districts. In addition, there is a Co-op District Delegate elected in 7 of the Districts who represents the Affiliated Co-ops associated with UFA.

In total there are 63 Delegates and 8 Directors. Delegates are elected for a two year term and at the end of this time, may stand for re-election. In a Sub-district where an election occurs, a nomination form is mailed to each active member (an active member is someone who has purchased $100 worth of petroleum products or farm supplies in the ten month period from January 1st to October 31st of the calendar year). The nomination paper is signed by the member seeking election and five other members within the Sub-district. His nomination paper is then forwarded to the head office where ballots are prepared and mailed to each active member within the Sub-district who can then vote for the member he wishes to represent him as the Delegate from his Sub-district.

Co-operatively owned

To be a member of UFA, you must hold one $5 common share. This entitles you to buy farm production supplies from any of UFA’s 125 Petroleum Agencies and 29 Farm Supply Centres throughout Alberta.

10 1912 - the Titanic ship sank on its maiden voyage - - - December 9, 1916 - - - the C.P.R. opened the Connaught Tunnel in the
Organized Farm Women

Many settlers poured into Alberta from across the sea, from eastern Canada, from across the border. They came to the west at first by ox-team, covered wagons and later by trains. On they came to the land of plenty, which usually meant plenty of back-breaking toil, plenty of discouragements and plenty few returns for their labor. In addition, the isolation of farm life with its restricted opportunity for development of social services was the despair of many a keen-minded farm woman. The emergence of farm women’s organization grew primarily out of a need for some form of social exchange. In addition, realization was rapidly dawning that the home loving mother, who so carefully tended her little ones, could not disregard matters beyond the confines of her home, which could affect her child’s future.

Alberta was not the province of social amenities we know today. While it was a land of great promise, there was a crying need for social, economic and political reform. Educational facilities, health services and protective legislation were requisites in a new and fast developing country.

United Farmers of Alberta had been formed in 1909. At the 1913 Convention, the constitution was amended to admit women to the organization and many women joined the UFA locals. In 1914, the women in UFA formed an auxiliary, adopted the UFA Constitution and elected provincial officers. Although women everywhere were soon immersed in war work for the Red Cross, farm women’s organizations grew. In addition, the Alix group, the first UFA women’s group that was formed, had undertaken the task of relief work to alleviate acute suffering due to successive crop failures in the southern part of the province. By 1915, there were twenty-three women’s locals in various parts of the Province with a membership of more than 700.

A forward step in the history of the United Farm Women of Alberta occurred in 1916. Previous to that time, the Women’s branch was only an auxiliary to the UFA. During their 1916 convention, the branch was given official recognition by the UFA and plans were made to organize as a provincial body. This step did not occur as a natural sequence or as a part of procedure but eventually the UFA accepted the Women’s Branch as an integral part of the Organization with equal privileges accorded. During that convention Mrs. Irene Parby, later to become Alberta’s first female Cabinet minister, was elected provincial president.

Many interesting incidents and experiences - many hours of hard work and personal sacrifice went into building the UFWA. By democrat and buggy over rough roads, by bob

1919 - UFWA Board
Front row: Mrs. A.M. Postans, Mr. J. F. Ross, Mrs. W.H. Parby, Mrs. Paul Carr, Miss Mary Spiller
Back row: Mrs. J.W. Field, Mrs. J. Dowlar, Mrs. M.J. Sears, Mrs. O.S. Welch, Mrs. D. MacGuire, Mrs. Charles Henderson

Couldn’t farm without her

The United Farmer

Plenty of back-breaking toil, plenty of discouragements, plenty few returns

1916 - UFA recognizes the women’s branch as an integral part of the Organization with equal privileges accorded.
sleighs and cutters, in a lumber wagon over muddy roads, the women went to organize locals and speak to potential members. But discomforts were soon forgotten as invariably the visiting officer was welcomed by an assembly of men, women and children, who had come from miles around.

The years have seen great changes. Have the farm women's organization justified their existence? The question can only be answered in terms of accomplishments. In 1916, the first convenorships were established and included health, education and young people's work. A committee was formed to review the laws, particularly as they affected property and civil rights of married women. As a result of demands on the part of the UFWA, endorsed by various other Women's Organizations, more protective legislation was placed on the statute books of Alberta. Some of the other resolutions instigated at the UFWA Annual Meetings that were later legislated into law were: establishment of Municipal Hospitals; establishment of a Department of Public Health; a revision of the system for rural education; establishment of a psychopathic ward in the University Hospital; an egg and poultry pool was first advocated at the 1924 Convention; a vast amount of initial work by the UFWA resulted in the institution of travelling health and dental clinics. For years, the UFWA concentrated on the pressing need for old age pensions and were the first group to urge Federal and Provincial Governments to take action.

There are many, many rural women who have worked, over the years, with a magnificent spirit of unselfish devotion on behalf of agriculture and humanity. On this UFA's 75th Anniversary, it would be remiss not to pay tribute to the long list of solid achievements made by farm women's organizations in Alberta.

From The History of Organized Farm Women of Alberta by Eva Carter.
General Managers and Chief Executive Officers

Norman F. Priestley
1940 - 1951

The first General Manager of UFA Co-op was Norman F. Priestley. A member of a family from Yorkshire, England, that had been active in the co-operative movement, Norman Priestley came to Edmonton early in the century and homesteaded at Onoway. In 1904, the organization of farm people in defense of their industry was just beginning. From that early period onward, Mr. Priestley missed no opportunity to contribute to its development.

A graduate from the University of Alberta, he enlisted in the Canadian Expeditionary Force. On returning from overseas, he was ordained to the Methodist Ministry. For many years, he was vice-president of the Lethbridge UFA Federal Constituency Association. While he was engaged in research work at Lethbridge, he became acting secretary of the Alberta Institute of Co-operation. Under the Canada Wheat Board Surplus Trust Fund, he produced a brochure on co-operation for the schools of agriculture.

In January, 1931, Mr. Priestley was elected as Vice-president of United Farmers of Alberta. In 1940, he resigned as Vice-president in order to devote his time to the general management of the business and remained in this position until his retirement in 1951.

Wilfred J. Hoppins
1951 - 1963

In January, 1951, George Church, President of UFA announced the appointment of ‘Wilf’ Hoppins as General Manager of UFA.

Born and raised on a farm in the Huxley area, Wilf attended local schools and later graduated from the Olds Agricultural School. Influenced by his parents, who were early pioneers of the district and active in developing farm organizations, Wilf learned to love the land and take an active part in farm organizations.

In 1933, he became president of the Junior section of United Farmers of Alberta and held that post for four years. In 1939, he became UFA Director for the Red Deer District and then later left the Board to become a Petroleum Supervisor with UFA. During this time, he established many of the UFA Co-op Petroleum Agencies in Alberta. In 1946, he was promoted to Assistant Manager and in 1951 to General Manager of UFA.

Interested in all co-operatives, Wilf Hoppins was never too busy or tired to drive 100 or 200 miles to meet with local boards of directors who had a problem. Especially interested in the Farmers Union and Co-operative Development Association, he spent a great deal of time and effort getting it established. Goldeye Camp was another project in which he had a special interest.

In the twelve years that he served as General Manager, the growth and earnings that became characteristic of UFA began. Wilf Hoppins laid foundations for people and principles that contributed so much to the outstanding growth UFA has achieved.

Above all, Wilf Hoppins was proud of his heritage and proud to be a farmer. He hoped to eventually return to his farm and take an active part in its operation. This dream, due to his untimely death at the age of 53, was never realized.

Bill McCartney
1964 - 1984

Appointed General Manager in 1964, Bill McCartney monitored UFA through twenty years of unprecedented growth and solid achievements.

Bill McCartney

William McCartney
General Managers and Chief Executive Officers

He had joined UFA in 1946 as a junior clerk and after a series of promotions was appointed Manager of the Farm Supply Division in 1953. Many changes were taking place in agriculture and this necessitated changes in the goods and services members needed from UFA. Much of the innovative and strategic planning that laid the foundation for the Farm Supply Division, as we know it today, were initiated in 1953. That year, the first Farm Supply Centre was opened in Calgary and in the next ten years, Centres were opened in Edmonton, Grande Prairie and Lethbridge.

When Bill McCartney was appointed General Manager in 1964 (the title was changed to Chief Executive Officer in 1982) sales were 18.7 million dollars, assets totalled 7.7 million dollars and earnings were 1.3 million dollars. In 1983, sales were 260.6 million dollars; earnings totalled 13.8 million dollars and assets were 79.2 million dollars, an impressive tenfold increase in just two decades. UFA had grown from a basic general farm supply company into a major corporation.

Bill McCartney elected to take early retirement in 1984. There are many solid achievements attained by UFA over the years and full credit must be given to the planning, close monitoring of operations and careful management that Bill McCartney was responsible for.

James S. Shindler
1984 to present time

The fourth man to become the Chief Executive Officer of UFA Co-operative Limited is Jim Shindler. This appointment, by the Board of Directors, became effective in October, 1984.

Jim Shindler’s entire business career has been with UFA. He joined the Company in 1953 and in 1957, when the Edmonton Farm Supply Centre was opened, was appointed its first Manager. In 1964, he was appointed Operations Manager and in 1974, Manager of the Farm Supply Division. During his tenure as Manager of this Division, ten new Farm Supply Centres, the Distribution Centre and three new Building Departments were opened and sales climbed to over 76 million dollars.

As the Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Shindler is directly responsible to the Board for UFA’s total operating results. Assisting him in maintaining a viable organization with emphasis on efficient customer services is the Corporate Group consisting of Gerry Metz, Treasurer and Manager of the Administrative Division; Ward Smith, Corporate Secretary and Personnel Manager; Lawrence Proudfoot, Manager of the Petroleum Division; Ed Evans, Manager of the Farm Supply Division; Cameron Ross, Manager of Corporate Planning and Management Services.

James Shindler

1947 head office - 2nd floor of UFA building at 11th Avenue and 1st Street S.E., Calgary

This was the UFA head office from 1956 to 1976. It was located at 12th Avenue and 1st Street S.E., Calgary
March 21, 1922, marked the appearance of The UFA, a monthly newspaper published by United Farmers of Alberta. Other papers connected with farm organizations such as The Nutcracker, The Non-Partisan and The Independent are lost in the mists of the past.

Volume 1, No. 1 of The UFA carried a front page editorial by Henry Wise Wood, President of UFA. It said in part, "Most of the news of today will be forgotten tomorrow, while a little truth learned today may live forever. We will not spend much time keeping ourselves informed of the mistakes of others nor in defending ourselves against criticism. If we expect to do something ourselves, we will have to spend all our time doing it. It is not the house we tear down, but the one we build that shelters us from the storm." The editor of The UFA, for many years, was W. Norman Smith.

The amalgamation in 1948 saw United Farmers of Alberta Co-operative Limited created as a separate entity and a Company magazine called The UFA Co-operator began publication. For many years Doug Thornton was the editor.

In 1967, the name was changed to The United Farmer. The magazine is sent to UFA Directors, Delegates, Advisory Committee Members, Management, Staff, Petroleum Agents and to key people in the agricultural industry. The intent of The United Farmer is to recognize people associated with UFA and agriculture. Over the years, the magazine has received numerous provincial and national awards and in 1984 was cited nationally as "an excellent magazine highly focused on the intended audience." The editor since 1965 has been Alice Switzer.

Next Issue

The March – April issue of The United Farmer will feature UFA's Annual Meeting, Petroleum Awards and a look-back at the Petroleum and Farm Supply Divisions.

This modern UFA head office building located at 1016 - 68th Avenue S.W., Calgary, was built in 1977.