

Sundre Barley distributor takes expertise to Germany

BY SABEEN AHMAD
MVG Staff

Bob Mastin is more than just the owner of Mastin Seeds and distributor of Sundre Barely. Recently, he had the opportunity to represent Canada in Germany at an Agricultural Forum put on by a consulting company, AHT Group AG.

How he found himself there he may attribute to a little luck. "Their Canadian representative couldn't go so they asked me if I could go," Mastin says

with a laugh. "It was quite an opportunity."

Last fall, Mastin signed a long-term agreement with AHT where 160 kilograms of select Sundre Barely seed would be flown to central Russia where it would be tested over a few years. The intention of the agreement was to provide Russian farms with a quality seed that would be the base for improving yields. AHT wants to produce and market the barley in eastern Europe and Russia.

After signing the agreement, Mastin



Photo submitted

Bob Mastin presented at the agricultural forum in Germany.

had hoped to fly to Russia to see how things were going. Instead, he got a call earlier than expected to fill in for AHT's Canadian representative at the company's "Forum International Green Week" on the expert panel "Agriculture of the Future." Mastin was on his way to Germany in the middle of January.

Mastin saw this as an opportunity to learn more about the company he had signed with.

"I thought if I get over there I'm going to see a lot more - take a day or two and go to the corporate head office," he said adding how impressed he was. "Is it ever a good company...I'm proud to be associated with it and I'm glad they found me."

Along with Mastin, representatives from Argentina, Germany and Russia also attended and each representative gave a short presentation on the agricultural situations in their country and compared methods between the four countries.

"In addition to talking about Canada they wanted me to talk about GMO seeds a bit."

Mastin was also asked to discuss carbon sequestration. "I think I did a pretty good job," he said adding that the presentation is available on AHT's website.

While in Germany Mastin found himself attending a party in a palace that was a business mixer. He said he met influential people and made great contacts along the way.

As hoped, Mastin was able to tour the offices of AHT and was introduced around.

"That's when I realized just meeting the quality of people there that it was a great company."

Mastin was impressed to see a story of Sundre Barely in the company's year-end report a long with a photo of the Sundre Barely stamp.

He hopes to get to Russia this summer to see Sundre growing in the field.

"It'd be neat to go over there and see a field of Sundre Barely growing."

While over in Germany, Mastin signed another contract granting the company access to his new barely, Bushy Barely, which he

just won the rights for.

He is confident both his barely seeds are going to be accepted in Russia once the testing phase is completed. "It will be in the state seed registry as Sundre and so will Busby."

He hopes to continue to collect a variety of seeds and gain more connections that will allow him to continue to grow and collect more royalties while over there. "They

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Mastin said he was given a 'wish list' by the company and was told he was their preferred seed supplier. His next plan is to look into Canola for the company.

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