

## **Seed Hawk excited about plant expansion**

The new plant will cost \$7.5 million

Company expects to triple production capabilities over three years

Michael Raine, Western Producer Saskatoon Newsroom

A Saskatchewan seeder manufacturer is embarking on a major expansion for the second time in as many years.

“We had waited a little while to go ahead with our plans, to see where the economy was headed, but ag in North America and Australia have been steady so we’re proceeding,” said Pat Beaujot, Chief Executive Officer of Seed Hawk in Langbank.

The company has expanded its international and domestic markets despite softening demand for agriculture equipment in former Soviet Union countries, and demand continues to rise for high-capacity precision drills.

“We have had two very strong years here and our exports are good,” he said. “Our partners brought a lot of strength to our company and we’ve shipped more overseas because of that.”

Seed Hawk works with Swedish farm equipment maker Vederstad Verken.

The \$7.5 million expansion will start this spring to double the 45,000 sq. foot manufacturing and office complex. Beaujot said the company’s research and development work will move into its original offices and plant.

“We have been doing R and D building in a farm shop because we don’t have room,” he said. “It’ll be great to have those folks all on site with our engineering and inventory. It’s a big part of what we do and our success, so now they’ll have their own private place to work and test out ideas and concepts.”

The company expects to triple production capacity over the next three years.

Beaujot said new welding, powder coat painting and product testing systems will also improve overall efficiency.

“That in itself will help pay for the costs of expansion. Right now, we have office folks in trailers and we have tents for inventory and other buildings are being used for storage,” he said. “The (110) staff are pretty pumped about this. It will make everybody’s job a little easier and more enjoyable.”

The expansion will also include inventory and parts storage.

“This also positions us for Eastern Europe, Russia and the Ukraine,” he said. “The machines we have over there are in their second and third year and results have been great. They can’t get

credit right now, so demand will be pent up for machines once credit begins to flow again and we'll be well timed to meet their needs."

The company last expanded at the height of the economic boom and materials and construction labour were at a premium.

"We were pleasantly surprised with the quotations we got back from contractors," he said.  
"Right now is the time you want to be expanding, when those costs are low."