

Kids reap benefits of what they sow

Crop to raise \$10,000 for Beausejour school

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By Nick Martin



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Kim Dudeck (left) and Laura Thomson, students at Edward Schreyer School in Beausejour, stand in a field of wheat being harvested to raise money for the school.

NEAR BEAUSEJOUR -- The enormous combine roared, the dust flew and the wheat being harvested made Edward Schreyer School at least \$10,000 richer.

Students from the school's Youth in Philanthropy Canada program have spent the past eight months planning and overseeing a crop of 32 hectares' worth of wheat.

The money raised will create an endowment fund that the Beausejour school will use on its library and other projects within the school, students Laura Thomson and Kim Dudeck explained yesterday as they stood amidst a rapidly shrinking wheat crop -- keeping a wary eye on the approaching combine.

"It's a lot of work to do, all of this. There's so much more than watching wheat grow," said Dudeck, who's entering Grade 12.

Youth in Philanthropy is a national program, in which local foundations provide high school students with grants that they in turn distribute among applying charities.

Thomson, who just graduated, said students in the program decided back in January they'd organize their own project to raise money for the school.

"We thought of the idea, and got all the sponsors," she said. "We helped them seed it. All our sponsors, they provided the equipment, and people to drive and stuff. We didn't have to pull any teeth or twist any arms.

"All the money we make is going into the endowment fund," said Thomson.

She said the students expect the wheat will sell for at least \$10,000, despite a long run of dry weather. "It's all right -- it's not yielding as high as some crops," she said.

Iris Bialek said her son, Ryan, who just graduated, chaired the project. Her father, Edward Bialek, donated the 32 hectares from his farm, and her husband, Randy Bialek, was involved in getting equipment and expertise donated from as far away as Steinbach.

"It was a really good experience for these kids to do," Bialek said.

Though, she added as the kids watched the combine, "You should be behind horses and doing this, and eating the dust."

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