Gorgeous fit

Think 'red,' lentil specialist says

By Mikkel Pates
Agweek Staff Writer

RAY, N.D. — Joe Bloms helped the lentil business grow up in northwest North Dakota, and it's still growing.

The crop is especially at home in western North Dakota's semi-arid climate.

"The farther east you go with lentils, the more problems you have with disease," says Bloms, general manager of Agricore United of Ray, N.D. "The fit is gorgeous out here in western North Dakota and eastern Montana."

The crop works particularly well west of U.S. Highway 2, which runs from Bismarck to Minot, N.D.

A native of Plaza, N.D., Bloms started working the Ray elevator some 26 years ago, when it still was Continental Grain Co. In 1998, the elevator was acquired by Canadian-based Agricore, which became Agricore United in 2000, when the Agricore co-op combined with United Grain Growers. The facility employs eight people in a town of 510.

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