



From *the* Field

STORY SERIES

— ORGANIC WHEAT —

MANKOTA, SK

Ardent Mills proudly supports family farms in our communities across North America. Every grower has a unique story to tell, which we are proud to share.

Meet Dwayne & Doreen Smith of Grace Hill Farms, organic farmers from Mankota, SK. Their family farm is run with the help of their four children Holt, Hart, Haden and Moriah. With deep roots in their remote farming community, their farm is named after the original one room school house that used to be located near the farm and sits over an hour and a half away from the closest Tim Hortons. We had the pleasure of sitting down with the Smiths, who shared their passion for organic farming with Ardent Mills.

How did you begin farming?

Both Doreen and I grew up on and around family farms, and from a young age I played with tractors and combines in the sandbox, then graduated to working on the farm. I farmed with my father in Vulcan, AB, then moved to Saskatchewan, where my wife Doreen's side of the family (Hunter) is from. We can trace back at least four generations of family who farmed, and today Doreen and I farm approximately 7,000 acres of land growing only organic crops including wheat, flax, lentils and peas.

Tell us about your passion for growing organic wheat!

Our passion for growing organic wheat ties very closely to our passion for farming, which is to grow crops that are best suited for the land. Being situated in the wheat belt region of lower Saskatchewan, wheat has been our primary crop for more than 30 years. We dedicate approximately 60-70% of our acreage to growing wheat, and in 1986 we received our first organic certification and have never looked back.

Why does Grace Hill Farms practice organic farming? Why is this important to you and your family?

We really love organic farming as it lines up with our personal philosophy, which is to farm in a synergistic fashion, to the benefit of the land, wheat, and our family. We work only with the resources the land provides and as a 100% organic farm, don't even own a sprayer or fertilizer. We work to take advantage of the strengths and weaknesses of the crop and environment we have been provided. The land is treated as a partner of our organization, and like everything that is treated well – this benefits our family, farm, and community.



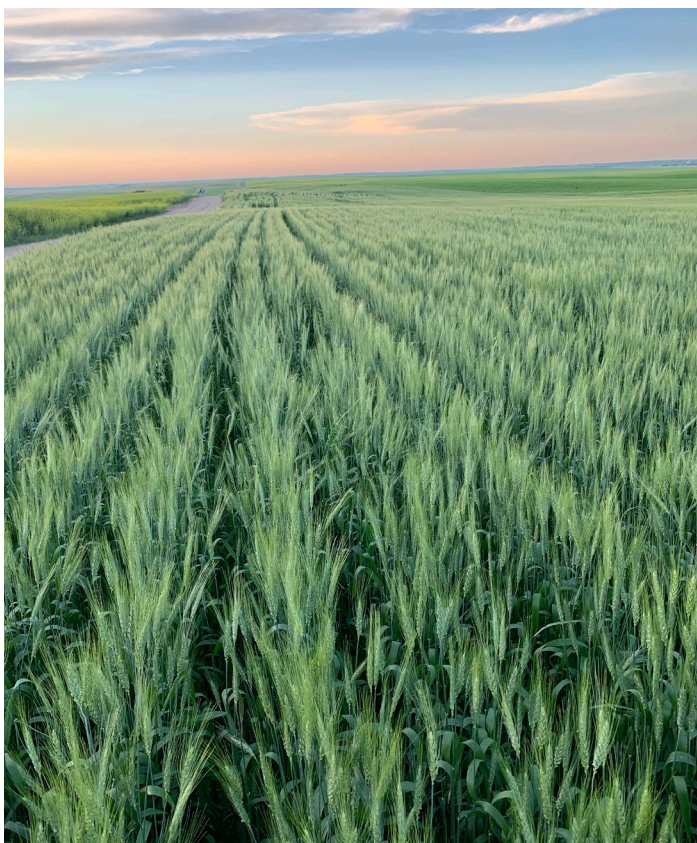
Dwayne and Doreen Smith with their four children, Holt, Hart, Haden and Moriah. The Smiths farm approximately 7,000 acres of land, growing organic wheat crops for more than 30 years.

From the Field

STORY SERIES



Dwayne Smith of Grace Hill Farms harvesting organic wheat during harvest season.



Organic wheat in the prime of growing season at Grace Hill Farms.

Why do you enjoy having a family farm?

It's the clear skies, beautiful weather, peace and quiet. We have had the pleasure of homeschooling our four children and being able to share days on the farm with my wife and kids is truly special. For Doreen and I, every day is a "take your kids to work" day – as they've grown up they have become quite competent farmers and are poised to embark on their own farming careers. We have significant generational ties and truly recognize our place in the circle of life. We never discount the tremendous opportunity the farm has given us to farm as a family and hold the pleasure we share very close to our hearts. The family is at the core of every decision we make.

Why did you settle in Mankota, and why is this a special place to you?

I left Alberta where I was farming with my father, to purchase a farm in Mankota next to where Doreen's family had been farming since 1912. The land we purchased is in the same community as the Hunter homestead. It's an area of Saskatchewan where there's no city pressure, and farmers can do what they do best. This unique area of Saskatchewan is known for consistently growing high quality, high protein wheat. The area is characterized by an arid climate and sandy soil, with limited rainfall. Some might call this challenging, but we're up for what nature gives us.

How did your partnership with Ardent Mills originate, and how is it significant to you?

Ardent Mills was looking for organic wheat and wanted to buy direct from local family farms. We saw this as a good opportunity to partner with a company whose values aligned with ours. We see Ardent Mills as a valuable partner to Grace Hill Farms, as they will go out of their way to provide flexibility at their flour mill in Saskatoon. We view this partnership as mutually beneficial and are excited for the opportunity to work together in the future.

Ardent Mills is committed to being the leader in organic wheat flour.

For more information visit ardentmills.ca/products/organic.

