

Council Objectives

The Council's goal is to enhance the grain industry in the BC Peace River region. As such, the Council is responsive to the initiatives of producers and producer associations and supports development initiatives that would result in increased opportunities for the BC grain industry.

Funding Program

The Council has established a funding program, using levy funds collected, to support projects which enhance and promote the BC grain industry. Assistance under the Program is open to all producer association, private individuals, companies, industrial, private and public institutions, and Canadian Universities which undertake projects consistent with the program's objectives as specified below.

Objectives:

1) Infrastructure Support

- Commodity Organization
- Feasibility or Value Added Industry

2) Research

- Market Research
- Plant Breeding Research
- Agronomic Production Research

3) Market Development

- Identify New Opportunities
- Identify Existing Opportunities
- Improve Market Share

4) Technology Transfer

- Agronomic
- Marketing
- Financial management
- Safety and Environmental Concerns

5) Promotion

- Commodity
- Image Enhancement
- Education - Public Schools
- Food Safety

All applications should be forwarded directly to the British Columbia Peace River Grain Industry Development Council for evaluation by December 15th.

How the Council Works

In late June 1990 the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries introduced the "Farming and Fisheries Industries Development Act" in the Legislature. This act was passed by an Order of the Lieutenant Governor in Council July 23, 1990.

The Act provided for the establishment of an industry commodity council whose mandate is to set and collect a levy and to fund field crop enhancement. The levy is legally enforceable and penalties are provided for those who do not comply. Initially, the council members were appointed by the Minister.

Pursuant to Bill 52, the Minister of Agriculture Fisheries and Food approved the election of producer representatives to the British Columbia Peace River Grain Industry Development Council. Accordingly, the council held a referendum and won the right to have elected members. The Council is composed of farmer representatives from the North and South Peace, along with a representative from the B.C. Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food.

The purpose of the British Columbia Peace River Grain Industry Development Council is to administer collection of the levy and evaluate proposals for funding. The Council will consider projects that foster and promote the field crops industry.

It is the policy of the Council to maintain one year's levy collect in reserve prior to allocation. The Council collects a Levy of 0.33% of the gross amount payable on grain grown in the BC Peace River Region when it is delivered. For example, on a 400 bushel load of barley sold at \$1.50 per bushel, the Levy would be \$1.98. Producers contributing to the British Columbia Peace River Grain Industry Development Council have an opportunity to apply for a refund of the previous year's contribution between January 1 and January 31. Refund request forms are available from the Council or at the elevators.

Results of Projects Funded in 1995 - The total projects funded was \$102,436

BC Grain Producers Association

1. Variety and Agronomic Trials \$33594 Contact: Maurice Fines and Ken Nickel

Variety Evaluation Trials. These trials compare new and existing varieties of crops grown in the area. Their value is in showing how new varieties perform in the BC Peace.

Most of the trials were run in three locations, Dawson Creek, Fort St John, and Prespatou to also determine differences in varietal performance within the region. These trials are the same as those run in Alberta so that the results can also be pooled with their data.

Crops included in these trials were wheat, oats, barley, triticale, canola, field peas, flax, faba beans and lentils. There was also a second harvest of an ongoing grass seed variety trial in Baldonnel consisting of 12 different species.

Variety Development Trials. Plant breeders look at many lines before eventually selecting a few to be put forward for registration as varieties. The registration process generally involves another 3 years of Co-op testing where these lines must prove to be at least equal to the existing check varieties for that crop

In 1995 the B.C. Grain Producers supported the development and registration processes for several crops. Trials were run for plant breeders of wheat, oats, barley and flax. Private

work was also done on several other crops. The Grain Producers also ran one of the ten Field Pea Co-op tests in western Canada and the Parkland Wheat Co-op.

New Crop Evaluation Trials. Crops tested for the area were dwarf sunflowers, fibre flax, lupins, dry beans (5 kinds), chick peas, canary seed, safflower, soybean, buckwheat amaranth, quinoa and borage. These are small tests to see if there is any point in exploring these crops any further.

Agronomic Trials. These trials are generally designed to answer a production related question or problem. They are usually conducted over several years and locations.

In 1995 new and ongoing projects looked into the effects of various rates of phosphorous on wheat and canola, different rates of nitrogen on different malting barley varieties, seed date of field peas, seeding rates of dwarf sunflowers and copper on field peas and sunola.

Private Research Trials. These trials were done on a fee-for-service basis for various clients. While the results are confidential, it is still expected that these tests will benefit local producers in the future.

2. Research Consultation \$5865 Contact: Maurice Fines

The BCGPA has been a member on the Advisory Committee at the Research Station at Beaverlodge. Main plant breeding centres have been established in Canada and Beaverlodge is not one of these centres. The Wheat Program has gone to Winnipeg under Dr. Fred Townley-Smith. The barley and oat program has gone to Lacombe, being amalgamated with the provincial barley and oat program under Dr. Jim Helm. There are still tests run at Beaverlodge under the crop technicians for various crops. With a great deal of pressure by many different people, the canola program still exists. The chances of it going to Saskatoon are very probable in the near future. There is a small program which has been changed from straight forage to forage seed work that is still intact, but this does not include any breeding work. The Research Station at Beaverlodge is considered a centre of excellence for honey bee work, although research on leaf cutter bees come under a different scientist and may still be eliminated. The influence that BC Producers are able to have at the Beaverlodge Research Station has been minimal. This is not for lack of trying but when the federal Government restructures and the Provincial Governments are unable to take up the slack, not much can be done. The Association is constantly forming new working relationships with new players. With persistence and luck the needs of the farms in the Peace will be better met than before.

The Expert Meeting on Grains and Oil Seeds was attended on February 18th by Jack Dobb, Ken Nickel and Maurice Fines. This meeting is very important as most of the people involved with plant breeding, quality testing and marketing, both the public and private sector attend. The BCGPA Variety Trials were chosen to be one of the paid testing sites for the co-op pea work plus some other paid programs last year. This has been proven to be very positive. It is vital that the open communications lines are maintained..

The organization is a member of BCARC in B.C. This year members did not attend any meetings at the coast. The updating was done by phone and fax.

3. Fine Seeds \$8625 Contact: Arthur Hadland

The most important event of 1995 was the support for the formation of the Peace River Forage Seed Association. This is an effort to bring all Peace Block forage seed producers into a common front.

Support of the Stem-Eye Spot Research project at U.B.C. by Dr. Brian Holl continues. As a note of interest, he is close to developing a new Red Fescue variety in cooperation with AWP. This development has the potential to really benefit Peace fescue producers.

Cooperation in silviculture projects underway by the BCFS is ongoing. There are sites near the Peace Canyon, Farrell Creek, Goodlow, and Fort Nelson. The purpose is to see how domestic forages can be used to benefit new tree plantations. Another future market.

4. Transportation \$8510 Contact: Brain Haddow

The big meeting held last spring at the George Dawson Inn, in Dawson Creek brought farmers out of the woodwork. The objective of the meeting was to inform farmers of the policy changes and resulting implications. Almost half of the more than one hundred people were from Alberta. They were of course, going to be much more affected by the August 1, 1995 change in the "Method of Payment", than B.C. producers. The Transportation Conference was an informative, well attended event.

5. Safety Nets \$920 Contact: Jim Smolik

Revenue Protection Plan. Should this program terminate, there is approximately \$1.4 million in the producers share of the surplus account. At present, the Association is working on confirmation from the government that this money will be returned to the participants, rather than for the general purpose of agriculture. If the BCGPA is successful, the difficulty will be to arrive at a formula for distribution that will be fair and equitable to all participants. As this program was cost shared, 1/3 farmer, 1/3 provincial and 1/3 federal, there is also approximately \$1.4 million in each of the government's accounts. As this money was budgeted for the grains and oilseed sector, the Association is in preliminary discussions on the availability of these funds. Should R.P.P. end, there is no new program to replace it. This will leave Crop Insurance and NISA as the safety net for 1996.

Crop Insurance. There will only be minor changes for 1996. Producers will be able to purchase up to the 80% coverage level for canola and oats in 1996. However, field peas will not be offered due to lack of data, but possibly the Ministry's wish to move to a "New Look" Crop Insurance for 1996 has affected the decision. As the federal government is committed to Crop Insurance as a risk management tool for farmers, the question will be, "In what form will it be delivered in 1997"? The Association will continue to monitor the review process and provide input as to the effectiveness and fairness of any "New Look" programs.

Net Income Stabilization Account. The base program will remain the same for the 1995 tax year. The notable changes being the fee increase from \$40 to \$55, and the contribution rate will also increase to 2% provincial, 2% federal and 4% producer. Although the governments are encouraging farmers to contribute to NISA, farmers are concerned with the long delays in being able to access funds from their NISA accounts. Under current administration, the farmer is not able to access the triggered payment until well after the financial loss is incurred e.g. a loss in the 1994 tax year would result in a cheque being received in early to mid 1996.

6. Safety Training \$8021 Contact: Sylvan Raaen

The Committee has been almost inactive during the course of the past year. On Saturday, June 3, 1995 guest speakers from FARSHA and WCB attended a meeting held in Montney in conjunction with the 4-H and AG Society Day. This meeting was so poorly attended that perhaps this area of education should be left to the private sector and free enterprise.

7. Marketing Information \$2300 Contact: Jerry Hill

Learning marketing skills and understanding market conditions can mean greater financial success for farming operations so... the BCGPA have begun to hold Marketing Seminars to increase opportunities in this area.

The Canada-BC Farm Business Management Program has made funding available to the BCGPA for two grain marketing seminars, one in the fall and one in the spring. The first seminar "Cross-Roads, Grain Marketing: Challenges & Change" was held on November 9, 1995 at the North Peace Cultural Centre in Fort St John. Although poorly attended, the event was well received and participants thought the seminar worthwhile.

Planning for the spring marketing meeting is now underway. This workshop will feature John DePutter, Market Analyst for the "WildOats" publication. The event will be held March 18th in Dawson Creek at the George Dawson Inn.

Canola Council of Canada

1. BC Canola Production Centers \$4700 Contact Garry R. Coy

The BC Canola Production Center was located at Rolla on Borek Farms 4 miles north of highway 49, on the Rolla road. At the Rolla site there were two trials carried out. The Canola Council trial used Westwin (rapa) and was seeded with a Melroe Hoe press drill. The other trial at Rolla was seeded (seed placed treatments only) by the Peace River Soil Conservation Association using a prototype Flexicoil disc-type direct seeding air drill. This drill is designed to seed directly into stubble conditions. Difficulties in controlling the seeding depth in worked soil were experienced. No differences in emergence counts were noted at any of the sites, nor were there any differences between treatment with respect to maturity date. Complete Report available at BCMAFF Offices.

Peace River Soil Conservation Association Contact: Darrel Veiner, President

1. Soil Health and Productivity \$2500

Project funding has been extended to allow for the lab analysis of samples which could not be completed in 1995.

2. Mobility of AgroChemicals Under Different Tillage Systems \$2500

Identification of pesticides with low and high leaching potential and understanding of basic processes involved in mobility of agrochemicals in soil will be useful in developing recommendations for pesticide use and management to minimize contamination of soil and water resources. It will also provide a basis for comparing herbicide use under a direct seeding system and that of a conventional system. Greenplan funding of \$100,000 has been approved, the Council provides industry participation funds.

Council Initiative Fund

PRASPS

1. Farm Products Map \$3000 Contact Deborah Butler

The new map was distributed to all households in the region and is available at tourism offices. As it is the first complete map of the area, it is also very popular with resource companies. PRASPS is to be congratulated on this excellent map and should be encouraged to revise and reprint periodically.

BC Grain Producers Association

1. Canola and Pulse Development Contacts: Garnet Berge and Garry Scott

The Pulse Committee is working with the Alberta Pulse Growers to share information about this new "Cinderella Crop". The following events were sponsored:

Feb.13 - Pulse Production Seminar, Fort St John

Feb 27/28 - Ag Week Trade Fair: Visit the Alberta Pulse Growers Booth

March 21 - Pulse Production Seminar, Dawson Creek

December 4,5,6 - Alberta Pulse Growers Convention, Grande Prairie

The Canola Committee provides liaison with the Canola Industry in Canada, and the Chair of the BCGPA Canola Committee attended the following meetings:

Canadian Canola Growers Assoc, March 5 in Vancouver, BC

Canola Council of Canada, March 6, 7 in Vancouver, BC

Canadian Canola Growers Assoc, June 25 in Calgary, AB

Crop Production Committee, June 27 in Calgary, AB

Crop Production Committee, Nov 7 in Saskatoon, SK

Grains and Oilseeds Fund

BC Grain Producers Association

1. New Truck for Variety Trials \$20,000

The equipment used in the Variety Trials is now the property of the BC Grain Producers Organization for which the Research Committee pays a rental fee. This money is in turn creating a fund much like a depreciation account. This can and is being used to replace equipment as it wears out or to buy new capital items as needed. The exception being the new one ton truck which was purchased this past year. This was financed 50% by the Grain Development Council from the special GOS account with the remainder coming from money earned by fee for services from the Research Committee.

Projects Funded in 1996 - Total funds for approved projects was \$96,783.

BC Grain Producers Association

1. Variety Trials \$44,125 Contact: Maurice Fines

A review of the Variety Trials and a plan to hire someone to oversee the operation involved analyzing the current status of the program, consulting with existing funding agencies, identifying other potential partners (both public and private) and developing a business plan. A consultant with considerable experience in operating a private field research company has been hired to do this work. The funding for this project is provided through Partners in Development, with the BCGPA as lead applicant, and the BC Grain Industry Development Council and PRASPS as co-applicants. The project was completed in February 1996. The fee for services will help reduce dependence on government funding and provide more self sufficiency. This is a bold step, however, the research needs of the Grain Industry must be met in a cost effective way.

2. Research Consultation \$8165 Contact: Maurice Fines

Two representatives of this committee will attend the Expert Committee on Grains Research for the Prairie Region. Members of this association will also attend the advisory committee meetings for the Beaverlodge and Lacombe Research Stations, the Alberta Barley Council and the B.C. Coordinating Agriculture Research Council. As well, there will be continued participation in the UBC Stem-Eye Spot Research.

3. Fine Seeds Committee \$345 Contact: Arthur Hadland

The Fine Seeds Committee will continue to keep all farmers informed. The BC/AB Forage Association has seven BC members to date. As this is a new organization, it is deemed advisable to keep the Fine Seeds Committee structure in place until replaced.

4. Transportation \$2500 Contact: Brian Haddow

Objectives are to continue communications with both provincial and federal Government to foster improvement to the National Transportation Act that will reduce the cost of freight by rail, by eliminating high cost branch lines. The Association will work with CWB and Agriculture Canada to eliminate the pooling costs for moving the grain to the St. Lawrence River, thus saving \$6.00 - \$8.00 per tonne for producers in the B.C. Peace River area. The Association will encourage amendments that will not discourage value added processing and utilization by the livestock industry of B.C. Peace River grains. The BCGPA will encourage an equal benefit for this region that compares to other Western Provinces. The Association will encourage a continuation of the successful pilot project to bring 15' wide grain bins into the South Peace area. This project needs to be extended to include the North Peace. Another objective is to work towards obtaining federal government grain cars by BC Rail and encouraging BC Rail to purchase additional cars.

5. Safety Nets \$920 Contact: Doug Summer

The issues for 1996: Will BC continue with the current RPP program, will producers withdraw and the program be terminated immediately? What's the process? What do farmers want? Saskatchewan has recently implemented a new Safety Nets Program and Alberta is forwarding a new proposal called FISP- both program will need investigation. As well, the Association will investigate the feasibility of the free disaster insurance. Information meetings will be held in the North and South Peace to receive producer feedback and direction.

6. Safety \$4500 Contact: Sylvan Raaen

In 1996/97 this committee will continue monitoring health and safety regulation of the Workers Compensation Board and involvement in the Farm and Ranch Safety Agency. The pesticide container program will be continued and enhanced. Training budget includes Pesticide Training, First Aid, WCB Accident Investigation as well as informational meetings in the North and South Peace. Under consideration is a joint regional project with Cattlemen/Grain to hire a coordinator and presenter to get this safety training moving in the fall.

7. Environment \$4000 Contact: Jim Smolik

There is an increasing interest in the issue of reduced rate herbicide application and little available literature. This committee plans to hold at least one seminar on the subject bringing in researchers, sprayer companies, local chemical distributors and local producers to share their findings. Additional funding will be sought from the Sprayer companies.

8. Marketing \$1000 Contact: Jerry Hill

A representative from the Marketing committee will attend all Canadian Wheat Board meetings held in this area. The committee will investigate market opportunities/restrictions for BC grown products. This information will be passed on to farmers through informational meetings. Dual marketing public meetings will be held in the North and the South Peace as BC access is different to border areas of prairies. This input will go to Ottawa.

9. Canola and Pulse Project \$6020 Contact Garry Scott and Garnet Berge

This committee meets with their Western Canada counterparts such as the Canola Council and Alberta Pulse Growers Association. This communication helps to increase awareness of industry and commodities problems and activities that may affect all farmers. A pulse growing seminar is planned in order to share information with pulse producers.

BC Federation of Agriculture \$9,000

1. Safety Nets

BC surplus of \$20M will be distributed amongst the commodities. Cost will be BCGPA representative to attend meetings and BCFA labor.

2. Market Development

Movement to have BC grain accessed rather than Alberta. Considering purchase of grain cars.

3. WCB

Rate reduction, FARSHA issues, other issues, employment standards and transportation BC/AB

Aquarian Mechanical Systems (AMS) Contact: David Che Pinkerton

1. A Unique Noodle Production Opportunity in the PR Region \$8208

Significant research has been done on product development. At this point AMS have decided to consider dry noodles rather than use modified atmosphere packaging (MAP) for fresh noodles.. Product Samples using grains from the BCGPA Variety Trials were presented. This project will produce sufficient quantities of prototype product for market assessment purposes and collect recommendations for improvement or modifications to suit market requirements.

Canola Council of Canada

1 BC Canola Production Center \$5,500 Contact: Garry Coy

Continued support to the Production Centre program will ensure a stronger presence of the Canola Council in the B.C. Peace. The Committee and the agronomists are working to improve the quality of work done on Production Centres and make the information available to all area farmers. Tours are planned in July.

Peace River Soil Conservation Association

1. Mobility of Agro Chemicals \$2500 Contact: Joanne Anderson

This is year 2 of the project to track the mobility of agro chemicals. The PRSAC has substantial funding from other sources to support this project.

Council Initiative Funding

Peace River Soil Conservation Association

1. Blackleg in Canola \$4500 Contact: Jack Dobb

Funding has been provided for lab analysis to identify Blackleg from local test materials and to survey all canola fields in the North and South Peace in the fall of 1996.

1996 Projects - Leverage of Funds

Project	Grain Council Contribution	In Kind Contribution	Other Funds	Total Funds
BCGPA				
1. Variety Trials	44,125	22,400	90,000	156,525
2. Research Consultation	8,165	2,400	0	10,565
3. Fine Seeds Committee	345	2,500	0	2,845
4. Transportation	2,500	2,400	4,400	9,300
5. Safety Nets	920	2,400	0	3,320
6. Safety	4,500	2,400	4,022	10,922
7. Environment	4,000	2,400	2,900	9,300
8. Marketing	1,000	1,500	2,300	4,800
9. Canola & Pulse	6,020	2,250	0	8,270
BCGPA Total	71,575	40,650	103,622	215,847
BC Federation of Agriculture	9,000	unknown	unknown	9,000
Aquarian Mechanical Systems				
1. Noodle Production	8,208	8,000	0	16,208
Canola Council of Canada				
1. BC Production Center	5,500	0	9,000	14,500
Peace River Soil Conservation	2,500	0	100,000	102,500
Total Leverage	96,783			358,056