

Council Members

Ross Ravelli, Chairman

Garnet Berge, Vice Chairman

Brian Haddow

Willy Rath

John Aalhaus

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.

New Developments

The Council has been working with all commodity groups in the Peace River Region and the BC Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food to set up the Peace River Agriculture Development (PRAD) Fund. The Ministry is negotiating with the federal government for matching funds. It is anticipated that the PRAD Fund will commence operation in December of 1997.

The Council has been selected for a WGTA Grant of \$532,000. Formal application will be submitted following the AGM. It is anticipated that funds will be paid in two instalments Of \$266,000 in November 1997 and Spring 1998. These funds will be used for research and development of the Grain Industry in the BC Peace River Region.

PROJECTS FUNDED IN 1997 Total \$95,092

BC Grain Producers Association

1. Variety and Agronomic Trials \$50,000

These trials involve testing new varieties of traditional and non-traditional crops against industry standards. This testing identifies those new varieties that are well adapted to the area, as well as those that do not perform well. Testing at locations within the region is essential as varieties differ in performance from region to region. This data is used by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food and by private industry for recommending crop varieties, and by producers in choosing which varieties to grow.

The BC Grain Producers Association is working with industry, the Grain Development Council and Investment Agriculture to insure the future sustainability of the Variety and Agronomic Trials. The trials have hired Jack Dobb as manager and continue to increase the number of contracted trials.

2. Research Project \$8165

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.

3. Fine Seed Project \$1200

The Fine Seeds Committee continues its involvement with the Stem-eye Spot Research and will keep All farmers informed. The Committee is working with Alberta producers to develop an interprovincial Forum.

4. Transportation Project \$2300

Continued communication 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. Important issues such as road maintenance, "P" plates, night travel for equipment and the Northwest corridor transportation will continue to need to be dealt with by this committee.

The committee will also encourage amendments that will not discourage value added processing and utilization by the livestock industry of BC Peace River grains. We need to encourage an equal benefit for this region that compares to other Western Provinces. We will continue to try to have 16' wide grain bins declassified as buildings, as they are not, rather than implements of husbandry, for both the North and South Peace. This committee will continue to work towards obtaining federal government grain cars by BC Rail while encouraging BC Rail to purchase additional cars.

5. Environment Project \$1020

The Council approved the roll-over of prior year funds to cover the cost of a seminar, "Get the Drift... Crop Protection Options." Featured speakers were Neil Harker, Weed Management Research Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Lacombe, Alberta; Brian Storozynsky, Project Technologist, Alberta Farm Machinery Research Centre, Lethbridge, Alberta; and testimonials by area farmers.

The BCGPA will make proceedings of these workshops available to the general public at a cost of \$15.00 per copy.

6. Marketing Project \$2500

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 our products. This information will be passed on to farmers through informational meetings.

7. Canola and Pulse Committee \$4300

This committee meets with their Western Canada counterparts such as the Canola Council and Alberta Pulse Growers Association. This communication helps to ensure we are aware 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.

8. Farm Safety Project \$1620

An all commodity group has been formed to carry out the objectives of farm safety as outlined in the safety committee proposal of 1996\97. The BCGPA committee was instrumental in organizing the all commodity group and making an application for \$8000 funding from the Farm and Ranch Safety Agency.

Two people have been hired to work with the Peace River farm industry on farm safety concerns. The funding requirements are therefore diminished dramatically. The project requirements are only those that the BCGPA must do as part of the larger industry group.

Ag Canada Beaverlodge

1. Liming Effects on Canola Production on Acid Soils \$5000

The objective of the project is to evaluate the effects of different rates of liming on soil properties, Brown Girdling Root Rot and yield of canola on acid soils in the Peace River Region. The project will be carried out in collaboration with the BC Peace River Soil Conservation Association. Matching Funds will be sought from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada under the Matching Investment Initiative.

Council has agreed to fund this initial year of the three year project with recommendations that the second and third year applications be submitted to BC Investment Agriculture.

Peace River Soil Conservation Association

1. Pea Inoculate \$2362

In 1996 a new inoculant "Nitragin Soil Implant+ Granular" was introduced in Canada. Initial trials indicate a significant yield response using 5lbs/ac and 10lbs/ac of Nitragin Granular inoculant.

The PRSCA would like to continue the trials in 1997 on zero till in cooperation with PRSCA member Garnet Berge. The addition of a newly formulated granular inoculant "MBR Granular" will be added to the site. Garry Scott the conventional till cooperater in this project will add this new formulation of granular inoculant to his trial as well. The PRSCA also propose to carry out the field data collection on Garry Scott's site to maintain uniform data collection standards.

2. Black Leg Survey \$3025

The PRSCA feels strongly that the maintenance of Canola Blackleg Surveys are important to the oilseed industry in the BC Peace region. The surveys will identify problem fields and give producers an opportunity to practice management techniques that may control canola blackleg in the area. Council has agreed to fund 50% of this project on condition that a matching application is submitted to BC Investment Agriculture.

Canola Council of Canada

1. BC Canola Production Centre \$13600

The BC Canola Production centre is one of ten CPC's proposed for Western Canada. The objectives are to demonstrate both new and proven canola production practices (including new and novel trait varieties, seedbed preparation, soil fertility, disease control, soil conservation and harvest management) in order to allow farmers to realize higher net returns through increased production, and/or a reduced unit cost of production. In addition, the CPC's investigate the extent by which production practices influence product quality (Grade and oil content). The Canola Council distributes this information to all canola growers.