

Council Members

1997 – 1998

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 associations, 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 collected 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 and Food to set up the Peace River Agriculture Development (PRAD) Fund. The PRAD Fund was established in the amount of \$1.2 million in December of 1997. The Ministry successfully negotiated with the federal government for matching funds, and the Federal PRAD Fund is in process of becoming a reality. .

The Council successfully applied for a Western Grain Transportation Adjustment Grant of \$532,000 which was received during the year. This grant funding will be directed towards agri-research and development initiatives in support of crop diversification in British Columbia.

PROJECTS FUNDED FROM 1997 LEVY Total \$13,390.00

BC Grain Producers Association

1. Research Project \$2,582.50

Three 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.

2. Transportation Project \$575.00

The concern with the rail transportation network is secondary to that of local road conditions and the inability of local farmers to deliver their grain production to the nearest railhead. The road maintenance issue has not only become critical in all grain producing locals of the BC Peace, but is critical for all resource producing segments of our economy.

The BCGPA intend to: hold two public forums; assemble interested representatives of affected industries; initiate public awareness through the circulation of a petition requesting action by the province; cooperate with the newly formed North Peace Rural Road Task Force (Economic Development Commission) and the Dawson Creek and District Chamber of Commerce.

3. Safety Nets \$690.00

There continues to be a need to spend time and resources to stay current on the issues surrounding the Crop Insurance Program, the Whole Farm Insurance Program (WFIP), and the Loan Guarantee Program. For example, the new look crop insurance, including basic and plus components require adjustment and synchronization of dates and requirements with Alberta. There will be a need to hold meetings with both producers and Ministry personnel to plan alternatives.

4. Farm Safety Project \$287.50

In 1998-99 this committee will continue to work with the Farm and Ranch Safety and Health Association (FARSHA) on the issues of farm safety and Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) requirements.

5. Canola and Pulse Committee \$2,817.50

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.

6. Marketing \$1,437.50

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 through sponsorship of a speaker during the BC Provincial Seed Fair.

Ag Canada Beaverlodge

1. Liming Effects on Canola Production on Acid Soils \$5,000.00

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. Council supplied funds in 1997 for the first year of the three year project, and has in 1998 committed funds to continue the work. As well, this funding will assist with the hiring of a Research Associate to focus on this project for a five month period.

NOTE: The above projects were each funded at 50% of total project value through the Levy Funds. This use of "Producer Funds" allowed each project to receive the balance of required money through the Peace River Agriculture Development Fund.