



Annual Report

for the Year Ended March 31, 2006

Council Members

2005-2006

Sylvan Raaen, Chair (to January 10, 2006)
Garnet Berge, Chair (after January 10, 2006)

Barry Follensbee, Vice Chair

Martin Moore

Ed Hadland

Willy Rath

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 <ul style="list-style-type: none">-Commodity Organization-Feasibility or Value Added Industry	2) Research <ul style="list-style-type: none">-Market Research-Plant Breeding Research-Agronomic Production Research
3) Market Development <ul style="list-style-type: none">-Identify New Opportunities-Identify Existing Opportunities-Improve Market Share	4) Technology Transfer <ul style="list-style-type: none">-Agronomic-Marketing-Financial management-Safety and Environmental Concerns
5) Promotion <ul style="list-style-type: none">-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 1989 the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries introduced Bill 44, the “Farming and Fisheries Industries Development Act” which was passed by the BC Legislature. Under this legislation, the “Grain Industry Development Fund Regulation” was passed by an Order of the Lieutenant Governor in Council July 26, 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 and Lands and a representative from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

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 and oilseeds grown in the BC Peace River Region when it is delivered. 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.

Other Developments

Since 1997, 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. These funds have been used since April 2002 to fund agriculture-related projects as outlined in the Peace River Agriculture Development Fund Annual Report compiled by the BC Peace River Grain Industry Development Council which is responsible for the distribution of the Fund under terms of the Contribution Agreement signed with the Province.

The Ministry successfully negotiated with the federal government for matching funds, and the Federal PRAD Fund of \$1.2 million was distributed between April 1998 and March 2002.

Peace Region Forage Seed Levy

At the request of the Peace Region Forage Seed Association, Council prepared a request to the BC Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries to set the rate of Levy on Forage and Turf Seeds at 0.75% of the gross amount payable by the first receiver. In April 2004 this request was officially approved by Order In Council and the Levy was collected beginning July 1, 2004. A report on the Forage Seed Levy, together with Audited Financial Statements, is attached to this report.

PROJECTS FUNDED FROM 2005 GRAIN & OILSEEDS LEVY

Total \$58,504.46

All Projects Sponsored by BC Grain Producers Association

1. Crop Variety & Agronomic Research Representation 2006 (\$3,875.00)

The BC Peace has a climate, soil, and growing conditions unique to the rest of the western prairies, and crops respond differently to these conditions. In order to obtain data from crop research that will be relevant to the farmers of this area, these trials must be selected and the representatives coaxed to entice them to try their varieties and agronomic practices up here. A member of the BC Grain Producer Association will be nominated as a director to the Western Grains Research Foundation, and will attend meetings and participate in discussions to communicate the need for crop research pertinent to the Peace River Region. Also several members of the BC Grain Producers will attend meetings with the Prairie Registration Recommending Committee to have input into crop Research & Variety selection. Each member will contribute in their field of expertise on various crops like, wheat, barley, peas and other. Various local Research meetings will be attended to determine research selections for the local variety & agronomic trials as well as new crop developments. Specialty crops like pulses are also vital to this area and with our affiliation with the Alberta Pulse grower's association we are able to have input into production research & variety selection process.

2. Communication of Environmental Awareness (\$2,259.00)

This project will enable Peace River grain & oilseed producers to have their interests represented in the development of new environmental stewardship initiatives. Also it will encourage producers to scrutinize their own operations and possibly apply solutions provided by working groups communicated to them by the BC Grain Producer's Associations. It will give them access to new programs being developed and\ or the information of new environmentally friendly technologies available to grain farmers.

3. Grain Market Development & Accessibility 2006 (\$2,375.00)

The relative geographic isolation of the BC Peace region presents unique challenges in product marketing and transportation to grain producers in this region. This project addresses various concerns with rail and road transportation, as well as providing a liaison with the other players to ensure the viability of adequate transportation and improved marketing options for all grains and oilseeds grown in the Peace.

4. Farm Business Risk Management Communication 2006 (\$12,950.00)

The objective of this project is to actively participate in the development and improvement of risk management tools and communicate the results back to producers. This project will ensure that the interests of the BC Peace Grain industry are represented on various Safety Nets Advisory committees, Grain Growers of Canada, BC Agriculture Council, and other industry groups.

5. Delegate to Canola Council 2006 (\$3,062.50)

The objective of this project is to have a strong presence at a national level in the development of new canola varieties, crop research and market opportunities.

With Bio-Fuels rising as a possible market for our product, this project will ensure that the BC Peace oilseed industry is represented on a national level to have direct input in a decision making capacity to help determine the future of canola production. There are many acres of canola grown in the Peace, and having input into the marketing, production techniques, varieties, and policies surrounding the oilseed industry will help insure that this industry remains a viable and profitable option for Peace Region producers.

NOTE: The above projects were each funded at 25% of total project value through the Levy Funds together with “in-kind” funds of an additional 25% of total project value. This use of “Producer Funds” allowed each project to receive the balance of required money through the Peace River Agriculture Development Fund.

6. Variety and Agronomic Trials (\$33,982.96)

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 and Lands and by private industry for recommending crop varieties, and by producers in choosing which varieties to grow. Projects currently underway:

1. Short-Season Variety Selection & Agronomic Performance;
2. Peace Region Growing Degree Days;
3. Determinant Soybean – New Crop Potential;
4. Short-Season Flax Breeding Co-Op; and
5. Higher Value Barley – Malt Barley Enhancement

Results are posted annually on the BC Grain Producers website at www.bcgrain.com