



Annual Report

for the Year Ended March 31, 2007

Council Members

2006-2007

Garnet Berge, Chair

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 -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 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 2006 GRAIN & OILSEEDS LEVY Total \$72,742.00

Projects Sponsored by BC Grain Producers Association

Crop Variety & Agronomic Research Representation 2007 (\$4,438.00)

Summary: To work closely with a committee of local producers and industry representatives to improve upon and identify new research topics, techniques and varieties which will be beneficial to the Peace region grain and oilseed industry. A member of this committee will be sent to the National Crop Research meetings, representing the BC Peace.

Objective: The objective of this project is to be involved in the discussions and decision-making process regarding projects suitable for the Peace region: ensuring that crop variety and agronomic research is beneficial to the area. To remain up to date on current research, and work with universities or other research facilities on topics specific to the Peace.

Rationale: Due to the unique climate, soil and growing conditions found in the Peace region, data must be collected under similar conditions to be relevant to local farmers. Therefore trials must be selected and grown under these conditions.

Environmental Awareness & Action Liaison (\$2,769.00)

Summary: Raise awareness of environmental conflicts on local farms and provide solutions based on local, provincial & national environmental working groups and advisory committee ideas.

Objective: The objective of this project is to provide representation on committees and working groups which are actively seeking solutions to the environmental issues grain farmers face. Farmers need to be made aware of environmental conflicts, initiatives and the availability of on-farm stewardship programs.

Rationale: This project ensures that Peace River grain & oilseed producers are represented in the development of environmental stewardship initiatives. They will be exposed to new environmentally sustainable programs and/or technologies, encouraged to examine their own operations and to apply solutions communicated to them.

Farm Business Risk Management Communication 2007 (\$4,800.00)

Summary: To have a BCGPA director attend the Safety and Business Risk Management meetings representing BC at a national and provincial level and communicating findings back to the farmer.

Objective: The objective of this project is to be actively involved in developing and improving risk management programs. Listening to producer's comments, voicing concerns and reporting back.

Rationale: In order for farm risk management programs to be effective, communication and feedback is essential. This project ensures that the BC Peace Grain Producers have a voice at both the national and provincial levels.

Canola Council Representation 2007 (\$3,438.00)

Summary: To have representation from the BC Grain Producer Association attend Canola Council and Canola Growers of Canada meetings in order to represent the needs and concerns of the BC Peace Region oilseed producers.

Objective: The objective of this project is to provide representation at a national level to ensure participation of the development of new canola varieties, crop research, policy making and varying market opportunities.

Rationale: This project guarantees that the BC Peace producers will have a national voice on relevant issues concerning production techniques, varieties, marketing and policies surrounding the oilseed industry, ensuring that this industry remains a viable and profitable option for Peace River 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.

Variety and Agronomic Trials (\$49,797.00)

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 (2007-2012): (This is Year 1 of 5 for these projects)

1. A New Western Canadian Cereal, Pulse and Flax Variety Evaluation System;
2. Cereal Variety Selection for Ethanol End-Use Suitability;
3. Peace River Region Hard White Spring Wheal Suitability Study;
4. Peace River Region Flax Breeding and Commercialization Project;
5. Western Co-op Barley Trials – Identification of High Yielding Malt Barleys;
6. Selection of New Field Pea Cultivars Adapted to the Peace River Region

This project is funded 15% by Levy, 15% by BCGPA Research Contracts & Industry and the remaining 70% from Investment Agriculture Foundation

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

Project Undertaken in Co-operation with Alberta Canola Producers Commission and Saskatchewan Canola Development Commission (Year 4 of 7)

This project – led by Dr. Kevin Falk of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada’s Saskatoon Research Centre – funds a 7 year program aimed at developing high yielding *Brassica rapa* cultivars with resistance to brown girdling root rot, blackleg, white rust and clubroot. BC’s portion of the \$100,000+/year project is \$7,500/year. This amount for the first three years of the project was provided by the Peace River Agriculture Development Fund. As that fund has a three year contribution limit per project, the remaining 4 years are being funded through Levy Funds.