

Title of Project: Cross Commodity Manager Project
Report Title: Year 1 Annual Report
Report Covering Period: July 1, 1999 to March 31, 2000

Organization(s): BC Grain Producers Association (BCGPA)
Peace River Forage Association (PRFA of BC)
Peace Region Forage Seed Association (PRFSA)

Contact Person: Sandra Burton

Address: Box 141, Farmington, BC, V0C 1N0

Telephone: (250) 789-6885 **Fax:** (250) 789-6884 **Email:** sburton@pris.bc.ca

Objectives: (in approved proposal)

- To hire a business manager to enhance the activities and development of these associations.
- To relieve the increasing workload on volunteer executive.
- To support the executive and members activities by providing administrative and communication support.
- To assist these associations in managing their research, demonstration and communication projects.

Accomplishments:

- Complimented BCGPA directors' efforts on grain transportation issues, research plans/priorities, labor agreements, farm income/ safety net issues, WCB rate increases and liaison with Canola Council of Canada.
- Worked with the PRFA of BC directors to advance sections of the integrated Peace River Country Forage Development strategy towards funding proposals and functioning projects (specifically Forage Variety Trials, Forage Stand Renovation, Forage Liming, Forage Facts).
- Orchestrated the successful launch of the controversial, voluntary Producer Research Fund with the directors of the PRFSA (involved designing brochures, posters and displays as well as 2 major mail out efforts and a presence at 5 events over the winter months).

Additional detail of the activities for each association and for each quarter is attached (6 pages).

Tasks in progress:

Writing proposals and obtaining funds for the 3 associations' projects to carry out research, field demonstrations and extension activities is ongoing. Meeting the requirements of accountability with orchestrating interim reports, financial summaries and final reports continues. The CCM assists the associations in maintaining good communication with their funding agencies. At this time the CCM is keeping track of 16 funded projects/ initiatives for the BCGPA, 5 funded projects/ initiatives for the PRFA of BC and 3 funded projects/ initiatives for the PRFSA.

Presently, the CCM is assisting the 3 associations in transforming approved project proposals into functioning, accountable projects. This varies from mere reminders that reports are due, to the initial orchestration and hiring of the labor to carry out the projects.

Responding to crisis situations, especially within the grain/oilseed sector, is ongoing.

Extension and promotional activities:

News articles have been written for all three associations in the Peace Prospects, Northern Horizon (every 2 weeks, 16 articles to date). Articles are also written for the BCGPA page in the Canola Digest (every 2 months, total 4 issues), for the Forage First newsletter (every 3 months, 3 issues to date) and for the Forage Seed News magazine (every 3 months, total 2 articles).

The CCM helped all three associations host successful seminars, information meetings and AGMs.

Dec. 1: Peace River Forage Association AGM, Taylor (50 people)

Jan. 12: BCGPA, GHG Emissions & Agriculture with John Bennett, Dawson Creek (30 people)

Jan. 19: BCIA/ BCGPA, GMO Issue with Bill Robertson & Garry Coy, Fort St. John (30 people)

Jan. 20-22: PRFSA, 2000 Canadian Alfalfa & Forage Seed Conference, Edmonton (330 people)

Jan. 25-26: PRFA of BC, Quality Forage Seminar, Farmington (150 people over 2 days)

Feb. 1: BCGPA, Lygus Bug/ Silvertop Update with Jennifer Otani, Dawson Creek (15 people)

Feb. 5: PRFA of BC, Auction fund raiser, Farmington (80 people)

Mar. 4: BCGPA Seminar & AGM, Fort St. John (40 people)

Mar. 14-16: PRFSA Annual Seminar & AGM, FSJ, Fairview and Falher (250 people over 3 days)

All these events effectively improved communication among members, directors, researchers, government staff and trade/industry.

Finances:

The expenditures from July 1, 1999 to March 31, 2000 totaled \$60,058.46. This represents a savings of over \$14,000 from the approved budget totals for the 3 quarters in year 1. One of the main reasons for this savings is that there were delays in hiring the Cross Commodity Manager until August 1; and a full year cycle of the project (and thus start up costs) is not complete yet. The CCM project is not expected to have this magnitude of surplus in years 2 and 3.

Variances from original work plan, schedule or budget:

Work plan variances: the completed work matches items in the original project objectives very closely. Progress on 9 of the 10 items in the original job description, has been made.

Schedule variances: as mentioned above, there were delays in the start up date of the project. Thus, the first year has 3 rather than 4 reporting quarters or periods.

Budget variances:

1. Office and travel expenses are well under budget. As momentum in this project continues to grow, future expenses in these categories will be closer to targets.
2. Expenditures in the fees, benefits and professional development categories are 8% over budget. All three associations are in the process of re-evaluating expectations, priorities and original labor budget predictions.
3. Special Projects: no associations came forward in the short Year 1 to access the 10% of the funds for special projects. It was decided by the Steering Committee that the two forage associations (i.e. PRFA of BC and PRFSA) could use this time to continue the initiatives they had begun. Special projects allocations are unknown for year 2 and 3 at this time.

Summary comments, conclusions:

Part of the CCM responsibilities is to improve communication among organizations as well as among the members of each association. This format of 2 to 3 pages for annual and quarterly reports is proposed as a means to ensure reporting to funding agencies is timely and in a form that efficiently assists in decision making. To that end, please offer any suggestions you have to improve this.

Cross Commodity Manager Project
Activity Summary for Quarter: July 1 to Sept. 30, 1999

A) BC Grain Producers Association:

Tasks for the B.C. Grain Producers Association to date have been issue orientated. She has been complimenting the efforts of directors and committee members working on BC Rail/ grain transportation issues, Safety Nets programs, proposed Workers' Compensation Board rate increases, and Agri-food Policy.

Communication links have been established with editors of Northern Horizon and Canola Digest and news articles have been submitted. (copies included)

The CCM helped organize 3 directors/ committee meetings, record minutes and define action plans arising from the discussions. Considerable time is also spent discussing issues with individuals outside of meetings. BCGPA mail is picked up, sorted and forwarded to appropriate directors /committees. The BCGPA's share of contract/ office organization is included in this total.

Total time spent Aug. 1 to Sep. 30, 1999 was **9 days**.

C) Peace River Forage Association of BC:

The CCM's work for the Peace River Forage Association of B.C. has involved considerable consultation with a variety of resource people. She has assisted the members of the Research and Development committee to refine and prioritize the projects within their B.C. Peace River Country Forage Development strategy paper. She has met with representatives from funding agencies, association advisors, and directors to try to match funding with project objectives.

The PRFA of BC have had 3 directors/ committee meetings in this quarter. The CCM booked space, arranged for a key, organized agendas and assisted the Secretary with copying and organizing materials for those meetings.

Helping plan their AGM on Dec. 1 and a Forage Seminar on January 25 has also kept her busy contacting speakers, caterers and sponsors. She met with several people to get photographs for display updates or calendar projects over the next months. The PRFA's share of contract/ office organization is included here.

Total time spent Aug. 1 to Sep. 30, 1999 was **10 days**.

D) Peace Region Forage Seed Association:

The major activities for the Peace Region Forage Seed Association have been promotional in nature. She has been assisting the directors launch a Producer Voluntary Research Fund this fall. They have been working with a contractor, Jessica Kant, to develop brochures, posters and other promotional materials. The CCM organized the contract and supervises the subcontractor's progress. She has

met with several producers and seed trade members to get their feedback on the promotional materials and proposed process for launching the fund.

The CCM is also helping the directors organize a major conference in Edmonton: 2000 Canadian Alfalfa & Forage Seed Conference on Jan. 20-22, 1999. Her duties have included reviewing draft agendas and compiling a conference brochure. The PRFSA's share of contract/ office organization is included in total.

Total time spent Aug. 1 to Sep. 30, 1999 was **12 days**.

Office Organization/ Steering Committee Business:

An expanded office separate from the Burton-Kabzems home has been set up. Two private telephone lines were installed and office equipment upgraded. An Internet server was selected and an account set up. Separate accounts were set up at Tiger's Stationary for all 3 associations, and some initial office supplies purchased. Organizing telephone lists, email addresses and speed dials for batch faxes to directors took some time but will improve efficiency in the future.

The Steering Committee requested that the Cross Commodity Manager draft the contract for this project, after reviewing several styles of contracts and memorandums of agreement. This was discussed at length with committee members and advisors. Revisions were made so that the contract can be signed at the next Steering Committee meeting.

Systems to document conversation records, task lists and time tracking have been set up; to assist the Steering Committee in monitoring time allocations and priority setting for never ending task lists.

It's been a busy time of year for farmers, so all three producer associations seek assistance from the Cross Commodity Manager (CCM) on an "on-call" basis. The CCM has responded to a variety of requests from the 3 associations as needed, each requiring a different set of skills. There is potential for increased efficiency by being able to dedicate whole days or half days to each association's tasks.

Total time spent Aug. 1 to Sep. 30, 1999 was 9 days: so 3 days included in each association's total time summarized above.

E) Special Projects:

To date there have been no applications from other organizations for the uncommitted portion of the CCM's time.

F) Total CCM Time: July 1 to Sept. 30, 1999 31 days

I look forward to the challenges of this position and to improving my efficiency and effectiveness as your Cross Commodity Manager.

Cross Commodity Manager Project
Activity Summary for Quarter: October 1 to December 31, 1999

A) BC Grain Producers Association:

Tasks for the B.C. Grain Producers Association in this quarter have been intense and deadline related. Locally, she has been complimenting the efforts of directors and committee members working on grain transportation issues, research priorities, variety and agronomic trial plans, labor agreements subcommittee, industrial hemp trial project plans, and briefs for the Federal Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agrifood.

She co-represented the BCGPA at 2 important Canada wide meetings. She accompanied Garnet Berge to Edmonton to become informed & involved with initiatives and priorities of the Canadian Canola Growers Association. She also accompanied Brian Haddow to Contact 99 in Winnipeg to become informed of the eminent effects on agriculture of Canada's commitment to lower greenhouse gas emissions. Each of these meetings involves preparation, gathering materials, travel time, and follow-up discussions or actions.

The CCM assisted committee chairs in submitting proposals for funding to Investment Agriculture, Grain Levy Council and PRAD. Submissions were made for Variety & Agronomic Trials, Industrial Hemp Trials, Research Consultation, Canola, Transportation, Safety Nets, Pulse and Marketing committees.

News articles continue to be submitted to the Northern Horizon and Canola Digest. (copies available on request)

The CCM helped organize 7 directors/ committee meetings, record minutes and define action plans arising from the discussions. Considerable time is also spent discussing issues with individuals outside of meetings. Discussions continue with our bookkeeper, Cheryl Hill and project contact people to streamline paper flow and ensure interim reports and funding are being delivered as per agreements. BCGPA mail is picked up, sorted and forwarded to appropriate directors /committees.

Total time spent Oct.1 to Dec. 31, 1999 was **36.4 days**.

C) Peace River Forage Association of BC:

The CCM's work for the Peace River Forage Association of B.C. in this quarter has involved more consultation with people. She has assisted the members of the Research and Development committee to set a timeline for applying for 2 or 3 projects within their integrated B.C. Peace River Country Forage Development strategy. She has met with representatives from funding agencies (IRAP, PFRA, PRAD, BCID), association advisors, and directors to try to match funding with project objectives. Proposals for Forage Variety Trials, Forage Stand Renovation, Liming Trials and R&D Consultation are being prepared.

The PRFA of BC have had 3 directors/ committee meetings in this quarter. The CCM booked space/keys, organized agendas and assisted the Secretary with copying and organizing materials for those meetings.

Work continued helping organize their AGM on Dec. 1 and a Quality Forage Seminar on January 25-26: contacting speakers, caterers and potential funding groups (PFRA, PRAD, PRRD). She assists members with their presentations for these meetings.

Total time spent Oct. 1 to Dec.31, 1999 was **16 days.**

D) Peace Region Forage Seed Association:

The major activities for the Peace Region Forage Seed Association are proactive and promotional in nature. She continues to assist the directors launch a controversial Producer Voluntary Research Fund this quarter. The CCM supervises the subcontractor's progress developing brochures, posters and a mail out. This "launch" has involved meeting with 17 seed trade and agriculture representatives, and considerable "orchestration".

The CCM is also helping the directors organize a major conference in Edmonton: 2000 Canadian Alfalfa & Forage Seed Conference on Jan. 20-22, 1999. She produced a conference brochure and some news articles for the organizing committee.

There have been 3 or more director/committee meetings to coordinate in this quarter.

Total time spent Oct. 1 to Dec. 31, 1999 was **13.3 days.**

E) Office Organization/ Steering Committee Business:

Presentations were requested from the CCM for recent PRASP (not billed) and PRAD Consultative Committee meetings. She also responds to requests for more information and clarification from Steering Committee members and alternates.

This quarter has been a busy time for committee meetings and funding application deadlines, so all three producer associations seek assistance from the Cross Commodity Manager (CCM) on an "on-call" basis. The CCM has responded to a variety of requests from the 3 associations, as needed, each requiring a different set of skills. There is potential for increased efficiency by being able to dedicate whole days or half days to each association's tasks; and having more lead time with requests.

F) Special Projects:

Presentations have been made to groups as requested, but to date there have been no applications from other organizations for the uncommitted portion of the CCM's time.

G) Total CCM Time: Oct. 1 to Dec. 31, 1999 65.7 days

I am enjoying the challenges of this position and will be making some recommendations for improvement in our team work and communication in the new year.

Cross Commodity Manager Project Update Activity Summary for January 1 to March 31, 2000

A) BC Grain Producers Association:

Tasks for the B.C. Grain Producers Association in this quarter have again been intense and issue related. Locally, the Cross Commodity Manager has been complimenting the efforts of directors and committee members working on grain transportation issues, safety nets, research updates, and letters to the federal and provincial Ministers of Agriculture.

The CCM organized 4 information meetings/ seminars this quarter: GHG & Agriculture with John Bennett (Jan. 12), GMO Issue with Bill Robertson & Garry Coy (Jan. 19), Lygus Bug Project Update with Jennifer Otani (Feb. 1) and the Annual Seminar & AGM with guest speakers Doug Purnell, Kevin Archibald and David Lobb (Mar. 4). These events required advertising (telephone, fax, mail outs, news articles, and/or radio ads) and coordinating speakers, catering and A/V equipment.

She co-represented the BCGPA with Brian Haddow at the Update 2000 conference in Ottawa Mar. 23-26. The program updated over 90 farmers from across Canada on climate change strategies being implemented by the federal & provincial governments, and the implications for agriculture. There was also discussion of recent carbon trades and provincial team plans for 2000 to 2001.

The CCM wrote funding proposals to Grain Levy Council and PRAD for Transportation Committee, Annual Seminar/ AGM, Canola IPM and Wildlife Committee. Proposals were modified and resubmitted to Investment Agriculture for Variety & Agronomic Trials and Industrial Hemp Trials.

Each quarter, the CCM organizes several directors/ committee meetings, records minutes and completes actions arising from the discussions. Considerable time is also spent discussing issues with individuals outside of meetings. Discussions continue with our bookkeeper, Cheryl Hill and project contact people to streamline paper flow and ensure interim reports and funding are being delivered as per agreements. BCGPA mail, faxes and emails are sorted and filed or forwarded to appropriate directors /committees. News articles continue to be emailed to the Northern Horizon every two weeks and to Canola Digest every two months. (copies available on request)

Total time spent Jan.1 to Mar. 31, 2000 was **48.7 days or 54% of total.**

C) Peace River Forage Association of BC:

In this quarter, the CCM helped the directors of the Peace River Forage Association organize 2 major events. The annual forage seminar was expanded to a 2-day event (Jan. 25-26) with over 150 people attending over the two days. The association also held its first supper and auction as a fundraiser. These events involved contacting speakers, entertainers and sponsors, and coordinating advertising, catering, ticket sales and registration.

She continues to assist the Research and Development committee to transform good ideas into working projects. She met with representatives from funding agencies (IRAP, PRAD, Norwest Labs) to resubmit or defend proposals for Forage Stand Renovation, Liming Trials and R&D Consultation. She participates in conference calls with the BC Forage Council to organize the details of the new 3-year cycle of Forage Variety Trials for the upcoming season.

The PRFA of BC have had 3 directors/ committee meetings in this quarter. The CCM organized agendas and copies of materials for those meetings. News articles were written and emailed to the Peace Prospects and Forage First editors (copies available by request).

Total time spent Jan. 1 to Mar. 31, 2000 was **18.6 days or 20.7% of total.**

D) Peace Region Forage Seed Association:

The major activities for the Peace Region Forage Seed Association are proactive and promotional in nature. She coordinates the controversial Producer Voluntary Research Fund. This quarter, this has involved mailing out 2 packages to 450 producers (Jan. 6, Mar. 25-28); having our updated display at the Grande Prairie Agriculture Classic Mar. 2-4 and having a presence at 6 other meetings this quarter. It also involves compiling the new membership list and research contributions for the treasurer as the cheques come in.

The CCM helped the directors organize a major conference in Edmonton: 2000 Canadian Alfalfa & Forage Seed Conference on Jan. 20-22, 2000. She produced conference brochures, updated the display, helped with advertising and registration. There were over 330 people registered for the conference, the best conference in years, according to many participants. The PRFSA is being urged to host it again in a couple of years.

The annual marketing and production seminars & AGM were held Mar. 14-16 in 3 locations (FSJ, Fairview and Falher). Over 240 people attended over the three days. The CCM helped with the agenda, advertising, registration, minutes, and display. There have also been additional director/committee meetings to coordinate in this quarter.

Total time spent Jan. 1 to Mar. 31, 2000 was **22.7 days or 25.3% of total.**

E) Special Projects:

Presentations have been made to groups as requested, but to date there have been no applications from other organizations for the uncommitted portion of the CCM's time.

F) Office Organization/ Steering Committee Business:

The CCM responds to requests for more information and clarification from Steering Committee members and organizes their meetings.

This quarter has been a busy time for annual seminars and AGMs, committee meetings and funding application deadlines, so all three producer associations simultaneously needed assistance from the Cross Commodity Manager. The CCM has tried to respond to all the varied requests by grouping similar tasks for the most effective use of her time, since the requests often require quite different skills. There is still potential for increased efficiency by having more lead time with the requests for her time.

I am enjoying the challenges of this position; but the task lists seem long and all high priority, while the hours in the days seem too short.

G) Total CCM Time (including subcontractor, Mary Ann McClarty): Jan. – Mar. 90 days

Respectfully submitted by:
Sandra Burton