



Draft Annual Report

For the Year Ended March 31, 2015

To

The Minister of Agriculture for British Columbia
 Pursuant to the requirements of the Farming and Fisheries Development Act and
 Regulations

Council Members 2014-2015

Barry Follensbee, Chair
 Barry Critcher, Vice Chair
 Rick Kantz
 Martin Odermatt
 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.

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 electronically directly to the British Columbia Peace River Grain Industry Development Council, at email address gidc@bcpeace.com. Printed copies may be sent to Box 6641, Fort St. John, BC V1J 4J1 for evaluation. The deadline is 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 Grain, Oilseed & Pulse Levy

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.

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 2013 Grain, Oilseed & Pulse LEVY

Total \$ 121,981.00

Projects Sponsored by BC Grain Producers Association

Developing Agriculture Possibilities in the Peace (\$25,000).

Summary: The directors of the B.C. Grain Producer’s Association will represent the interests of the B.C. Peace Region grain, oilseed and pulse producers in regards to identified key concern areas: crop research, environment, farm business risk management, crop market development options and transportation issues.

1. Member connection and public awareness:

The BCGPA will engage in ongoing communication between its members and the public, identifying producer’s concerns on current issues and ensuring the action taken is effective. Any issues or concerns raised by the membership to the directors will be acted on through appropriate channels. Once a response is received or a resolution is agreed upon, the finding will be reported back to the producers. This method of communication among key players at various levels of production, industry and government builds trust develops partnerships and successful outcomes. BCGPA will strive to promote the image of agriculture to the public in an attempt to portray an accurate picture of how their food is grown, and to promote awareness of the BC Peace’s role in the production of grain & oilseed. This is also an incredible opportunity to get some immediate feedback from the consumer, glean some marketing ideas, and hear what they think of the direction of agriculture. Public perception can make or break a marketing strategy. This objective will be achieved in a number of ways. A toll free telephone number will be made available to producers and the website feedback form will be promoted. There will be regular website updates, a quarterly member update and other mail outs as required. In this way, BCGPA can immediately gather feedback on project progress and ensure that corrective action taken is indeed effective. The BCGPA administrator and directors will be involved in consumer education opportunities such as Ag in the Classroom, Ag in the City, agricultural show booths, or other venues which may be available.

2. Research & Innovation:

The BCGPA will promote and support a crop research network in Western Canada. They will seek partnerships with research facilities on developing crop varieties, introduce crop species and agronomic practices that may be suitable to this region, and will oversee a crop testing system to ensure they are both sustainable and viable for this area. Directors and members of the BCGPA will take part in local and regional meetings to have input into the direction of research in Western Canada. Representatives will attend the Alberta/British Columbia Cereal and Oilseeds Advisory Committee meetings and contribute to the approval of crop varieties for registration, and have a voice in issues facing the research community. A representative will attend the Western Grains Research Foundation meetings. They will also take part in steering committee meetings to direct the BCGPA research plots, have input into trials to be grown on them, and promote connections for private and public research conducted on site.

3. Environment:

The BCGPA will attend to and keep informed on current environmental issues. Environmental policies and terminology can be difficult to sort out and are often urgent where resolutions have to be sought quickly. Representatives from BCGPA will attend meetings regarding current issues such as ALR/ALC, climate change, water quality and quantity, air quality, wildlife, pests, diseases, GMO products and carbon emissions. They will keep abreast of the issues in order to have a knowledgeable interpretation of the terminology for the membership. They will promote environmental stewardship to ensure sustainable production.

Representatives of BCGPA will attend provincial and national meetings held by the Grain Growers of Canada, BC Agriculture Council, and others relating to environmental issues. They will attend BCAC meetings and represent the grain and oilseed sector in discussions regarding the Environmental Farm Plan program in BC and promote the program in the BC Peace.

4. Transportation:

The BCGPA will strive to ensure market accessibility for BC Peace grain & oilseed crops. There are limited grain movement options available, and grain must be moving in order for producers to be able to deliver their product. Rural roads and highways are an avenue of grain transportation and must be maintained adequately. Rail cars must be supplied at the crucial times to keep the grain elevators and terminals able to accept grain. Representatives will attend local and provincial meetings regarding road and rail transportation to voice concerns and work towards solutions. They will communicate with provincial and federal transportation ministries to improve the movement of grain & oilseed in the B. C. Peace Region.

5. Business Risk Management:

The BCGPA will have input into policy changes and regulations on issues such as farm income protection, the reversal of the HST, Carbon tax and other possible threats to farm income. The BCGPA will monitor the grain & oilseed industry to enhance understanding and influence decisions makers on behalf of the producers in the B. C. Peace Region.

This objective will be reached as a result of the directors attending meetings held by the Grain Growers of Canada, Canadian Canola Growers Association, BC Finance Committee and others. The farm safety nets programs are in a constant state of re-creation in search of the ultimate farm insurance program and our representatives can contribute to the development of these programs. Representatives will take part in consultations regarding the Federal Growing Forward Phase II.

6. Marketing:

The BCGPA will investigate marketing options, barriers to markets, and follow market trends in order to increase BC Peace grain and oilseed producer's marketing options. Representatives will attend related meetings held by the Grain Growers of Canada, Canadian Canola Growers Association, Canola Council of Canada and others.

7. Biosecurity / Food Safety

The BCGPA will investigate issues regarding biosecurity and food safety as related to grain and oilseed producers. The Food Safety System and Excel Grains Biosecurity standard will be supported and promoted, and any other relevant food safety meetings will be attended in order to be aware of new market demands. Information will be relayed to producers so these adjustments can be considered.

NOTE: The above project was 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.

2014 Membership Fees (\$13,500.)

Summary: To maintain and enhance current relationships with other organizations and to build new ones. To have continued involvement with research groups, marketing groups and other special interest groups that complement the objectives and interests of the membership of the B. C. Grain Producer's Association.

Objective: The objective of this project is to ensure the BCGPA has adequate representation on grain and oilseed Committees at both a provincial and national level. It also ensures we have representation on committees that are involved in policy making decisions that will impact the grain and oilseed industry.

Director Meeting Remuneration (\$11,562).

Summary: To provide compensation to the Directors of the BC Grain Producers Association for the travel costs and time they spend at Director's meetings.

The objective of this project is to provide remuneration to the directors for the travel costs and the time they are away from their farms and businesses attending BCGPA Director's meetings in order to attract and retain directors.

Director Support (\$15,000.)

Summary of Project: To provide administrative support to the BCGPA directors.

Objective: The objective of this project is to provide support staff to the BCGPA directors to relieve them of the day to day operations of the organization.

Director Research Meeting Remuneration (\$7,635.)

Summary: To provide compensation to the Directors of the BC Grain Producers Association for the travel costs and time they spend at research meetings.

Objective: The objective of this project is to provide remuneration to the BCGPA Research Committee members for the travel costs and the time they are away from their farms and businesses attending BCGPA Research meetings in order to attract and retain committee members.

Information Seminar (\$5,000.)

Summary of Project: To arrange a grain & oilseeds information seminar to distribute current relevant information to BC Peace region producers.

Objective: The objective of this project is to provide a venue for information sharing and networking between industry, government, and grain and oilseed producers in the BC Peace region.

Peace Pest Monitoring (\$11,184.)

Summary of Project: Collaborative effort between Agriculture & Agri-food Canada, BC Grain Producers Association, Peace Region Forage Seed Association and the Zero Till Association. Track changes and trends in the BC Peace River Region of insect pests and crop diseases and invasive weeds.

Objective: Collect and monitor critical data regarding pests, diseases, weeds and invasive species to increase availability of data and analysis for the BC Peace. Improve the ability to evaluate if and how the prevalence and distribution of pests, diseases and weeds in the BC Peace is changing, and to quickly identify risks to agricultural production. This project will also improve long-term capacity to track changes occurring in prevalence and distribution of pests.

Variety and Agronomic Trials (\$33,100).

These trials involve 8 separate trials co-funded by Investment Agriculture Foundation and Western Grain Research Foundation.

1. To provide regional data on newly registered varieties to show advancement in yield, quality or disease resistance relative to the current varieties being grown in the Peace Region.
2. Provide regional data on newly registered and some pre-registered varieties of winter wheat to show viability in northern climates.
3. Provide seeding rate data on maturity and yield for canola and wheat using multiple seeding rates.
4. Determine whether lentils could be a potential crop for the Peace Region and other northern climates.
5. Determine whether quinoa could be a potential crop for the Peace Region and other northern climates.
6. Work with flax breeders on the development of flax genetics to establish an earlier maturing and higher yielding flax variety(s) appropriate for northern latitude short season climates.
7. Produce data for support of variety registration of wheat, barley and oats.
8. To work with plant breeders on the development of pea genetics to establish earlier maturing and higher yielding pea varieties suitable for northern latitude short season climates

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

PROJECTS FUNDED FROM 2013 Forage Seed Levy

Total \$ 78,610.

Projects Sponsored by Peace Region Forage Seed Association

The Peace Region Forage Seed Association is a joint BC-Alberta producer and processor organization that undertakes projects to enhance the forage seed industry. The BC Forage Seed Growers provide recommendations to the BC Peace Region Grain Industry Development Council on projects to fund.

More detail on these projects is posted at the Association website www.peaceforageseed.ca.

Forage Seed Research Projects (\$26,688)

Summary: This project includes three sub projects.

1. Web based Forage Seeding Tool developed in cooperation with the Peace River Forage Association, to assist growers to locate a seed blend they have specified. Seed trade companies utilize the tool to supply custom blends and unique seed varieties.
2. BC Climate Action: This is a project dedicated to pest management, including weeds, insects and diseases. Our contribution insures that some of the data collected is applicable to the forage seed industry in the BC Peace River area. Up until the present time, this type of data has been collected through the Beaverlodge Research Farm and has not directly pertained to the BC Peace Region.
3. Developing Research projects such as a cross commodity fertility with BC Climate Action. Funds are required to facilitate investigation and implementation of sound research proposals.

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada Joint Research Project (\$29,922)

AgriInnovation Program Industry-led Research and Development Stream being carried out at the Beaverlodge Alberta Research Station on crop rotations, fertility, growth regulators, cultivar trials, herbicide/minor use and pest management.

Communication and Operations (\$22,000)

Summary: this project includes three activities:

1. **Information 2014:** This project includes all our outreach communication activities including publications, website updates and Forage Seed News magazines. It enables PRFSA to send out 3 to 5 packages of information over the coming year to a mailing list of 1000 levy paying growers and PRFSA associate members. These packages include recent research findings/updates, spring herbicide tolerance updates, levy updates, new factsheet publications and the Forage Seed News magazine. Information goes with the Forage Seed News magazine packages, whenever possible, to save postage (3 of 5 mailings).
2. **Events 2015:** Project Description: These funds enable PRFSA to have a seminar which will take place in Fort St. John, BC this year. This is a day which allows research reports to be presented in order to bring members up to date on projects that have occurred over the past year.
3. **Operating & General 2014:** Project Description: This project covers items such as the joint membership in the BC Agriculture council with the BC Grain Producers Association and a membership in Forage Seed Canada. It also covers directors' remuneration for meeting, travel and per diems for directors' time away from their businesses. It also covers a portion of PRFSA's annual bookkeeping/accountant/legal expenses. This request is based on covering the BC growers' share of these items.

Peace River Agriculture Development Fund

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 administer 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.

The Peace River Agriculture Development Fund Contribution Agreement did not specify a time frame for the use of the funds so the Council has been able to continue to support local initiative for the past 18 years. A federal program noted above did assist for several years which allowed the Provincial funds to be extended considerably. The Council now foresees the expiry of these funds within a few years.

A 2014 annual report is attached summarizing the projects supported for a total of \$163,099.

Western Grain Stabilization Adjustment fund.

When the Federal Government removed the Western Grain Transportation Assistance Act (Crow Rate) for grain exports, The BC Grain Industry Development Council was allocated these transition funds by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada to support grain industry development in the BC Peace. A commitment has been made in 2014 to support the acquisition of a new research plot combine for the BC Grain Producers Research Department. This machine will replace the older unit, and provide modern electronic data reporting functions to speed harvest and reporting of plot yields to researchers.

Financial Reports

The BC Peace River Grain Industry Development Council engages an accounting firm, Sander Rose Bone Grindle LLP to perform an annual audit review of Council financial affairs. A copy of this review is attached for the fiscal year ended March 31 2015. The grain and forage levy year is for the calendar 2014 year, so the financial report includes accrual adjustments to reflect the fiscal year. In addition, a copy of the Peace River forage Seed Levy annual audit review is attached for the Forage Seed Levy. This encompasses both BC and Alberta forage seed levies. The BC portion then forms a part of the Council financial report.

Internet supported Information Sharing.

The BC Peace River Grain Industry Development Council maintains a web site at www.bcpeace.com which provides extensive historical information about Council activities as well as applications for current funding.

Partner organizations also maintain web sites which include more detail on specific projects which have been supported by funds administered by the Council. These sites include acknowledgment where appropriate of funding provided by the Ministry of Agriculture.

The BC Grain Producers Association site is www.bcgrain.com.

The Peace River Forage Association site is www.peaceforage.bc.ca.

The Peace Region Forage Seed Association site is www.peaceforageseed.ca.

Questions for further information may be sent to gide@bcpeace.com.

Respectfully submitted,

BC Peace River Grain Industry Development Council

Barry Follensbee, Chair.