

Report prepared for Peace River Agriculture Development Fund

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Objectives:

The focus of this committee is to have a strong presence at a national level in the development of new canola varieties, crop research and market opportunities, and policy making by:

1. Representing the BC Grain Producers on the Canadian Canola Growers Association board of Directors, and
2. Sitting on the Canola Council of Canada's Crop Production Committee.
3. Representing the Canola industry on the Grain Grower's of Canada board of directors

Activities & Accomplishments:

BCGPA maintains membership with 2 national canola organizations, Canadian Canola Growers Association and Canola Council of Canada. BCGPA's representative on these committees is Ross Ravelli, currently the president of the Canadian Canola Growers Association. These group's main activities are outlined below:

The **Canadian Canola Growers Association (CCGA)** is the umbrella organization whose members are the 6 grower groups stretching from BC to Ontario, with a combined membership of over 60,000 growers. Its purpose is to influence national issues and policies and enhance the profitability of Canadian canola growers.

Cash Advance Program:

The CCGA has administered cash advance programs since 1983 - which has grown to now cover over 20 crop types and to advance over \$200 million annually to 6000 Prairie growers. These funds are split evenly between the two current programs, the Spring Credit Advance Program (SCAP) and the Advance Payments Program.

We continue to try and make this program of more value to growers - to that end we are in discussions with the Federal Government to try and have the Spring Advance Program become a permanent feature which would allow for a more streamline set of programs and allow for a reduction of programming costs.

CCGA has recently identified and prioritized key policy areas and has established working committees to implement these policies:

- Grain Handling and Transportation: the CCGA supports objectives designed to achieve a more efficient, low cost, competitive commercial grain handling and transportation system
- International Trade: The CCGA supports trade liberalization
 - Support efforts to eliminate export subsidies.
 - Promote the elimination of trade distorting domestic support, national and international.
 - Promote unrestricted market access for Canadian agricultural commodities and their value-added products.

- Work toward achieving tariff parity between canola seed and competing oilseeds and products in international markets.
- Work toward a substantial reduction in tariff escalation between canola seed and its value-added products in international markets.
- Environment: CCGA supports efforts directed at protecting Canadian agricultural production in a sustainable and environmentally responsible manner.
- Biotechnology: The CCGA supports the science of biotechnology as it pertains to crop science. CCGA maintains that growers must be able to participate in the development and marketing of the products of biotechnology, and these regulations must remain science-based.
- Farm Income: The CCGA supports a farm income strategy that affords farmers the risk management tools, in a transparent manner, to carry on business without the need for ad hoc government aid programs.
- Pesticide Harmonization: CCGA supports the harmonization of international pesticide regulations and maximum residue limits.
- Food Safety: Canadian Farmers produce the safest food in the world and CCGA will support efforts directed at promoting and ensuring the continued production of a safe food supply.
- Canola Marketing: CCGA supports the right of Canadian growers to choose where and how to market their canola.
- Intellectual Property Rights: CCGA supports a balanced approach to the protection of intellectual property rights in Canada – one that encourages investment in Canadian agricultural research and development of new technologies, and delivers that technology and its benefits to growers at an affordable price.
- Biodiesel and Bioproducts: CCGA supports the development of effective policies that would encourage the production and use of biodiesel and bioproducts derived from Canadian canola.

Formation of the Biodiesel Association of Canada (BAC) was the major accomplishment of the Market Development Committee. BAC is comprised of CCGA, Canadian Oilseed Processors Association, Ontario Soybean Growers Association and the Renderer's Association of Canada. An economic impact analysis regarding biodiesels will be completed in the future.

Other activities of the CCGA in the past year have included influencing a better deal for canola through the current WTO negotiations through letters to Ministers supporting negotiating framework, trade issues with China, participating on ATNCG, etc. CCGA has also put considerable effort on safety nets, CAIS design, and a possible alliance with ACC Farms in Ontario. They have worked to influence the design of the Canada Grains Council's On-Farm Food Safety Program. They also received approval for funding to develop a Canola Options Pilot.

CCGA has memberships in the Grain Growers of Canada, Canola Council of Canada, Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance, Biodiesel Association of Canada, Canadian Renewable Fuels Association, Vegetable Oil Industry of Canada. Its involvement includes Government and Industry committees such as the Western Grains Standards Committee, National Safety Nets Advisory Committee, Canadian On Farm Food Safety and a number of Standards committees. They are well positioned to represent the growers of canola with government and industry. Growers need to remain engaged to ensure our views are heard.

Canola Council of Canada (CCC) is the group that encompasses all levels of the canola supply chain - from growers, seed developers, crushers, and exporters. Thru this group we are able to deal on issues that effect canola; labelling, trans fatty acids, GMO, market development and any number of other issues. The strength of this group is that it gives everyone an understanding of the views and issues of the other sectors and allows us to make good informed decisions that are best for the whole industry not just individual components.

Extension & Demonstration:

Great Web Site: [www. BCGRAIN.com](http://www.BCGRAIN.com)

This is a site that has it all. This is a great start page for local farmers – it is also a great page for canola information – Canola Council of Canada and Grow Canola are but a couple of great sites to check out.

BCGPA sponsored a CCC Crop Production Committee meeting held in Dawson Creek in January with Joanne Buth and Christine Mardell from the Canola Council of Canada. Topics discussed were production issues as well as marketing and pesticide issues.

News releases and articles

“Topical speakers address grain growers’ AGM” Country Life in BC, March 2005

Variances from original work plan, schedule or budget: As the president of the Canadian Canola Growers Association, a majority of Mr. Ravelli’s trips to meetings were paid through that association.

Finances:	Budget	Actual
Income	\$10,166	\$3,134.65
Expenses	\$10,166	\$3,134.65

Attachments:

Finances - Contributions in kind summary, budget vs. actual income statement
Newspaper Article Country Life in BC, March 2005

Topical speakers address grain growers' AGM

by CAROL VAN DE BON

DAWSON CREEK - Canadian grain growers are facing a long-term decline in income, making safety net programs such as Canadian Agricultural Income Stabilization (CAIS) harder to trigger, says B.C. Grain Producers Association president Jim Smolik. Smolik was one of the speakers at the BCGPA annual meeting in Rolla, February 8.

Approximately fifty Peace area grain farmers listened as Smolik, who is also president of the Grain Grower's of Canada (GGC), reported on that organization's efforts on behalf of Canadian grain farmers.

Smolik explained that before GGC was established five years ago, grain farmers had little or no chance of influencing government policy. That was why, he says, during the Uruguay trade negotiations, an 85% tariff was placed on canola oil being sold to India, versus a 35% tariff on soybean oil.

Smolik noted that CAIS payments based on ten year averages will be affected by a general trend of lowering income.

Other difficulties facing Canadian farmers include having to compete against higher international farm subsidies. European farms receive 45% subsidies, American farmers receive 30%, while Canadian farmers receive 18%. Smolik says the GGC supports a standard "25% cut of trade distorting domestic support."

Another concern of GGC is allowing growers to sell grain to value added and niche markets.

just want choices of where to market their grain.

Canadian Canola Growers Association (CCGA) president Ross Ravelli feels that with soybean and rapeseed production increasing, marketing canola requires a pro-active approach that includes the elimination of tariffs against Canadian canola.

Ravelli considers CCGA involvement with biodiesel and bioproducts a counterbalance to the Canadian Wheat Board. For example, noted Ravelli, the CCGA became involved in the court case of Schmeiser vs Monsanto to provide a more balanced argument regarding biotechnology.

"We intervened because we didn't hear a balanced argument," says Ravelli, adding the CCGA supported neither side.

Herbicide tolerant canola varieties continue to be an issue. Ninety percent of canola in Canada is herbicide tolerant, and seventy five percent of that is genetically modified (GM).

"And that has increased every year," says Ravelli, adding that it is an increasing world trend also.

He noted that while GM canola is banned in Europe, GM soybean is allowed.

"Figure that one out."

Other speakers included research manager Clair Langlois who reported on Variety Trial results. A drought in May, a damp fall and three heavy snowfalls affected yield more in the South Peace than in the North Peace, but "both sites still managed to produce reliable data," Langlois told producers.

Niels Holbek, co-ordinator of



The executive of the BCGPA poses at their annual general meeting. Front row, from left to right are Jim Smolik, president, Irm Citcher, director, Margaret Leuvenberger, director, while in the back row, from left to right are Martin Moore, chair research committee, Ross Ravelli, director, Edmund Rath, director, Robert Vanderlinden, vice-president, and Garnet Berge, second vice president. (Carol van de Bon photo)

as a "double-edge sword"

Holbek noted that the EFP program can help with bank loan approvals, and that "insurance companies were starting to look for this." For information on workshops in the Peace

Region, phone EFP planning advisor Colleen Giesbrecht at 250/630-2113.

Adina Meier, of the Farm and Ranch Safety & Health Association (FARSHA), explained that effective January 1,

all parts of Workers Compensation Board now apply to farmers. For more information on how your farm could be affected, contact Dennis Meier, regional safety co-ordinator at 250-782-3914.

CAIS program is not a quick fix

by CAROL VAN DE BON

DAWSON CREEK - Many Peace region grain growers are dealing not only with unharvested crops left in fields over winter, but with a safety net program they say is confusing and complicated.

The Canadian Agricultural Income Stabilization

approximately 50 grain farmers during the BC Grain Producers Association annual meeting in Rolla, near Dawson-Creek, February 8.

Vos told BCGPA members that of the \$4 million in crop insurance directed to Peace region farmers, \$3.6 million was paid to grain growers. Combined, the North and South Peace