

Report prepared for Peace River Agricultural Development Fund

Title of Project: Grain Transportation & Marketing Project
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Objective:

The objective of this project was to maintain current and factual information regarding local and regional transportation and marketing issues; and to explore and pursue new opportunities for marketing products and identifying avenues to get new products to potential markets. There were discussion on inadequacies in the marketing and transportation industry in the Peace Region and how to bring these issues forward to appropriate authorities with some possible solutions.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

Marketing:

The main focus has been on the possibility of a biodiesel plant in the BC Peace River. It started with a trip to Toronto to a renewable fuel conference; from there we traveled to Richmond to attend a biodiesel conference, and from Richmond we traveled to Calgary for a renewable fuel conference. This was a follow up to the one in Toronto. We then went to Fairview to attend a workshop to get the local feeling for biofuels and finally to Banff in December as a follow up to Calgary. The interesting thing in going to these conferences was the amount of interest and how the enthusiasm grew from one conference to the next. There were 400 to 500 registered at Banff, Calgary had more than they expected even Fairview had a large turn out.

We approached the ministry of Agriculture in late June early July to see if they would fund a feasibility study for a biodiesel plant in the BC Peace. We secured seventy five thousand dollars (\$50,000 from Agriculture and \$25,000 from Energy Mines and Petroleum, from their alternate energy fund) to hire a consulting firm and with the help of ministry staff and a steering committee of six local producers we put together a request for an expression of interest through the government website. This was about the end of August. About the middle of October we contracted Interactive Management Group to do our feasibility study. They have been an excellent Group to work with and will present their findings today at our AGM.

There have been many meetings, conference calls, emails, travel and volunteer time put in to get to where we are at today. We do not know if it would have been possible without an early harvest, the commitment of our steering committee and the help of ministry staff. Hopefully our Provincial and Federal Governments will support the biofuels industry and create a climate that will help the grains and oilseed sector.

Transportation:

The committee has met with Caribou Road Services (CRS) to deal with the 8F road and other road issues that have been identified. The 8F road has been neglected and is in need of a major upgrade to bring it back to a usable level. This includes reworking and cleaning the ditches; and, recrowning the road bed. Most of the main roads are in need of a graveling, ditch cleaning and routines maintenance. This committee continues to meet and work with CRS, Ministry of Highway personnel to set priorities and determine what projects to undertake each year.

Extension and demonstration:

- Actively participated in Rural Road task force meetings
- Communicated with PRRD, area farmers, community and farm leaders.
- Encouraged government people to understand the issues and implications.
- Reported to general BCGPA membership

BCGPA Web Page

- www.bcgrain.com – BC Grain Producers Association

Summary:

This committee continues to identify rural road issues, rail transportation issues and marketing issues in the Peace Region. We have established a positive working relationship with all stakeholders to work toward finding constructive and workable solutions to all issues that arise. We continue to be an important voice for area producers regarding transportation and marketing concerns.

Attachments:

Project Financial
In-Kind” summary