

Report Prepared for BC Grain Industry Development Council

Title of Project: Grain Market Development & Accessibility 2007
Report Title: Annual Report
Report Covering Period: April 1, 2007 to March 31, 2008
Organization(s): BC Grain Producers Association
Contact Person: Garnet Berge
Address: Box 161, Dawson Creek, BC, V1G 4H3
Telephone: 250-759-4773 **Fax:** 250-759-4333
Email: bcgpa-c@pris.bc.ca

Objective:

The objective of this project was to initiate a feasibility study for value adding to canola. It was decided to pursue the feasibility of a bio-diesel plant, which included size of sustainable plant, finances, sales and partnerships, use of the bi-product and the support from local producers. To remain informed with local and regional marketing issues and investigating new opportunities while working alongside the Ministry of Transportation and Highways to improve the movement of our product to market.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

Marketing:

The main focus has been on the possibility of a bio-diesel 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 bio-diesel conference, and from Richmond we traveled to Calgary for a renewable fuel conference.

This was a follow-up to the Toronto meeting. We then went to Fairview to attend a workshop to get the local feeling for bio-fuels 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 and even Fairview had a large turnout.

We approached the ministry of agriculture in late June to see if they would fund a feasibility study for a bio-diesel plant in the BC Peace. We secured \$75,000 (\$50,000 from the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands and \$25,000 from the Ministry of Energy Mines and Petroleum Resources, from their alternate energy fund) to hire a consulting firm.

With the help of agriculture 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 nearly the end of August. By the middle of October we contracted Interactive Management Group to do our feasibility study.

There have been many meetings, conference calls, emails, travel and volunteer time put in to get to where we are 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 bio-fuels 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, re crowning the road bed. Most of the main roads are in need of graveling, ditch cleaning and routine 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.

We participated in a Northern Corridor Transportation Study initiated by Northern Development Initiative to explore container trafficking in the greater Peace River District.

Rail service complaints from farmers are still an issue and directors are being contacted on a regular basis about complaints of no cars or delayed cars.

The BCGPA through CCA has been part of a submission to ask for a rail service performance review. This review is part of the process to amend the *Canada Transportation Act* (railway transportation). A summary of Bill C-8 can be found at:

http://www.parl.gc.ca/common/bills_ls.asp?lang=E&ls=c8&source=library_prb&Parl=39&Ses=2 has

Extension and demonstration:

- Actively participated in Rural Road Task Force meetings

- Communicated with PRRD, area farmers and community 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

Budgeted: \$10,675.00

Actual: \$5,010.70