



Annual Report April 1, 2023 - March 31, 2024

To

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

Council Members 2023-2024

Willy Rath, Chair
Rick Kantz, Vice Chair
Brandon Funk
Sten Peterson
Alexander Breunig

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 program objectives as specified below.

All applications should be forwarded electronically directly to the British Columbia Peace River Grain Industry Development Council (GIDC), at email address gidc@bcpeace.com. Printed copies may be sent to Box 144 Station Main, Dawson Creek, BC V1G 4G3 for evaluation. There is no deadline to submit applications, however the applicant must allow Council three months to review the proposal.

Grains, oilseed and pulse levies are redistributed into projects that meet the following objectives:

1. Benefit / Promote /Enhance the viability of the field crop industry as a whole or for commodities, in the BC Peace River Region.
2. Conduct or Support Research or Educational Programs in respect of the development and promotion of the BC industry and commodities.

Areas in which there is funding potential include infrastructure support, research, market development, technology transfer and promotion as described in Figure 1.



Figure 1 Areas of potential grain, oilseed and pulse crop levies funding

COUNCIL HISTORY

In 1989 the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries (now known as Agriculture and Food) 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, council members were appointed by the Minister. Pursuant to Bill 52, the Minister of Agriculture 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 Food and previously, a representative from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

GIDC LEVIES

The grain, oilseed and pulse levy is the original levy, whereby the GIDC is to administer collection of the levy and evaluate proposals for funding. The Council considers projects that foster and promote the field crops industry as outlined above.

As of August 1, 2017, the GIDC is administering the new British Columbia Wheat levy and the British Columbia Barley levy. These levies have industry support as shown by the results of a producer plebiscite conducted in 2016. The new provincial levies were initiated in response to the termination of the Western Wheat and Barley Check-off. The GIDC’s role is to re-invest these levies in programs that develop the wheat and barley industries.

It is Council policy to maintain one year’s levy collected in reserve prior to allocation. The Council collects a levy of 1/3 of one per cent (0.33%) of the gross amount payable on all grain, oilseeds and pulse crops grown in the BC Peace River Regional District when it is delivered. The BC Wheat Levy rate is an additional \$0.48/tonne on wheat. The BC Barley Levy is an additional \$0.56/tonne on barley. Producers contributing to the BC Peace River Grain Industry Development Council have an opportunity to apply for a refund of the previous year’s contribution by 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, the 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 2022 GRAIN, OILSEED & PULSE LEVY
Total \$ 129,000.00

Projects Sponsored by the BC Grain Producers Association (BCGPA)

2023-01	Advocacy, Outreach & Operation	
Project Budget \$ 204,000.00	2023 Levy Allocation \$ 129,000.00	Project Levy Contribution 63 %
Objective	Through the Advocacy, Outreach and Operation project, the BCGPA is able to: stay informed about current risk management tools; be involved in developing and improving risk management programs; encourage public engagement and member interaction between commodity groups; be involved in major organizations across Canada to ensure BC Peace Region farmers are updated on current market options; voice the needs of Peace area producers to appropriate boards and agencies; deal with concerns regarding keeping roads available and maintained for moving equipment into fields and safe hauling of production to sales points.	
Status	Project completed with \$129,000.00 of GIDC funds used.	

PROJECTS FUNDED FROM 2022 FORAGE SEED LEVY
Total \$ 78,256.00

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.

2023-02	Research Projects	
Project Budget Approx. \$ 60,364.00	2023 Levy Allocation \$ 60,364.00	Project Levy Contribution 100 %
Objective	This project comprises the appropriate BC contribution to several research initiatives. The BC Branch of Peace Region Forage Seed Association participated in the following research: Emerging Pests, Peace Region (\$10,000), COHA Cluster - Creeping Red Fescue (\$11,294), SARDA: Calvin Yoder (\$15,000), Managing annual bluegrass in creeping red fescue seed production in the Peace Region (\$1,875), Peace Living Lab (\$7,500), AgriScience/AgriInnovation Project (\$12,195), Future Undesignated (\$2,500).	
Status	Completed on budget at \$60,364.00.	



2023-03	Communication Projects	
Project Budget Approx. \$ 17,892.00	2023 Levy Allocation \$ 17,892.00	Project Levy Contribution 100 %
Objective	The BC Forage Seed Advisory Committee applied to support the following communication and extension projects with BC Forage Seed Levy funds: Operating and General project, which included association memberships, meeting remuneration, annual administrative expenses (\$17,892).	
Status	Completed on budget at \$17,892.00.	

**PROJECTS FUNDED FROM 2021 GRAIN
 APPROVED FOR 2022 - COMPLETED IN 2023**

Project Sponsored by the Fort St. John Seed Cleaning Cooperative

2022-05	Fort St. John Seed Cleaning Cooperative Plant Improvements	
Project Budget \$ 1,181,461.29	2022 Levy Allocation \$ 199,169.03	Project Levy Contribution 17 %
Objective	This project seeks to add state-of-the-art equipment with the ability to remove unwanted seeds and foreign objects and improve capacity and throughput. This allows the plant to serve more customers and prevent farmers from having to transport longer distances to have their seed cleaned, leading to lower input costs, higher yield potential and better agronomic practices.	
Status	Project completed in 2023 with \$199,169.03 of GIDC funds used.	

Projects Sponsored by the University of British Columbia (UBC)

2022-06	Annual Crop Surveys in the BC Peace River Region	
Project Budget \$ 23,000.00	2022 Levy Allocation \$ 21,000.00	Project Levy Contribution 91 %
Objective	The project seeks financial support to conduct intensive disease surveys in commercial wheat, barley, oats and forage crops in all crop districts of the North and South BC Peace. Diseased leaf samples will be collected and studied further to identify major pathogen species associated with the samples. Extension activities will be conducted to transfer knowledge to growers in the BC Peace.	
Status	Project completed in 2023 with \$21,000.00 of GIDC funds used.	

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, 2024. The grain and forage levy year is for the calendar 2023 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 B.C. and Alberta forage seed levies. The B.C. 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 Region Forage Seed Association site is www.peaceforageseed.ca.

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

Respectfully submitted,
BC Peace River Grain Industry Development Council

Willy Rath, Chair