



# SUMMER NEWSLETTER

## Research Update

Submitted by Clair Langlois, Research Manager

July 2014

2014, Issue 3

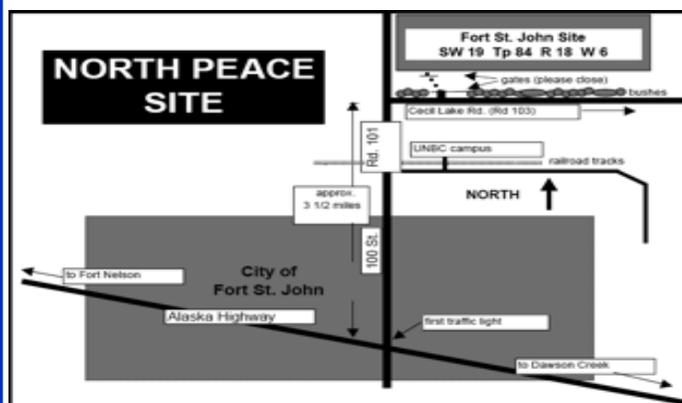


Many a time the BC Grain Producers Association's elected board and or research committee members have discussed the pros and cons of doing so much "fee for service" work at our two research locations. Besides the obvious advantages of incoming cash without long complicated application processes like many grant monies come with, in a short answer it is just plain good business sense. But there are other advantages that have been brought to everyone's attention over the years. Basically, if companies or public institutions wish to pay our association for work to be done here because they trust our abilities to do it right, whether we as an association can publish the confidential final results or not, (and most often it is not), that particular client (public or private) is investing in the Peace River region in an effort to find answers – proprietary answers mind you – but answers just the same to you as producers of the Peace River region. Such answers or solutions could come eventually in the form of newer and more adapted higher yielding varieties, or even perhaps a new insecticide seed treatment to offer producers in our area some day. Well, there is yet another less obvious reason for doing "fee for service" work that has been made rather poignant this spring but which is the accumulation of many years of doing such contracted work – and that is that it keeps your research team "in-the-know" of interesting trends, observations, and discoveries as witnessed by actually doing "fee for service" work.

Case in point – over the last four or so years we have been working with seed treatments in napus (Argentine) canola aimed at flea beetle control with a couple of agricultural companies, and thus we have become very acute to a change that has been happening most dramatically on our two widely separated research farms. It is not clear that it is the result of the change from residual chemistry of the past which seem to deter flea beetles with just a whiff of the products presence, to shorter lasting less environmentally toxic neonicotinoid based chemistry, or "bite then die" chemicals as I personally call them. Regardless, there has been a rapid trend to the presence of more Striped Flea Beetles (two yellow stripes on a black body) verses the good old Crucifer Flea Beetles (the shiny blue-black metallic ones). So much so, that almost all flea beetles now caught on our sticky traps are Striped and only a few Crucifers are

Continued ....

Fort St John site located at the corner of  
the Cecil Lake Road and 101 Road



## Crop Tour

July 15 2014 @ 4PM

Examine the trials that the research staff have been doing on new varieties and new crop developments. Self guided tours and appetizers @ 4PM, steak BBQ @ 5PM with the touring of stations to follow. This is a great opportunity to see what is new and to discuss the future of plant breeding in our area.



### Main Office

Sharla Pearce—Administrator  
 Box 6004  
 Fort St John, BC V1J 2W3  
 Phone: 250.785-5774  
 Toll Free: 1.866.716.7170  
 Fax: 250.787.0031  
 Email: info@bcgrain.com

### Research Office

Clair Langlois—Research Manager  
 401 114 Avenue  
 Dawson Creek, BC V1G 2Z7  
 Phone: 250.782.2557  
 Email: bcgpa-r@pris.ca

Website: [bcgrain.com](http://bcgrain.com)

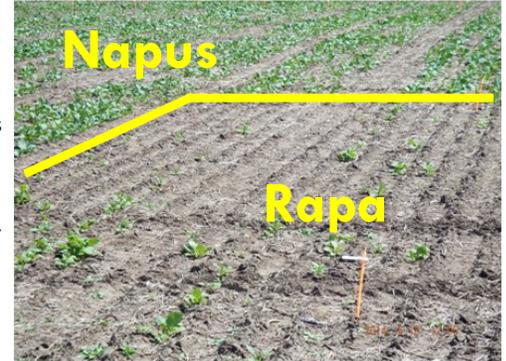
## Mandate

The purpose of the BC Grain Producers Association is to improve the viability of the grains and oilseed industry in the BC Peace River region. The association and its members maintain sustained liaison with other agencies to benefit the field crop industry. The association encourages all farmers to participate within their industry so that their voices may be heard.

Special Thanks to our Funding Partners



ever found now at least early in the season. On top of this, Striped are active much earlier than Crucifers when air temperatures still have Crucifers in the trash trying to stay warm. Striped thus damage canola at its most vulnerable point, when only a small cotyledon plant or with young first and second leaves not yet fully expanded, and when you get a year like 2014 with such a cool dry spring that keeps canola small for an extended period of time (some two weeks at least in many cases), those Striped Flea Beetles can do real damage. Speaking of damage, it is clear to most growers now that those new (current) seed treatments are just not working like they used to when they first came out about ten to twelve years ago and the reason is not the failure of the chemicals as such but the switch from Crucifer populations to the more robust and earlier feeding Striped Flea Beetles. Thus it appears the Striped are also more resilient to the current seed treatments out there more so than the Crucifers, at least to what we have seen that can be witnessed in any commercial field of canola in the region. This situation is only exasperated by the fact the Striped Flea Beetle can start munching earlier in the season while plants are just poking through the ground and while researchers are still wearing several layers of sweaters!



Our team has also discovered that Striped prefer the taste of Rapa (Polish) canola over Napus (Argentine) canola, to which they have once again devastated the Rapa test at our Fort St. John station even though the Rapa plots were protected with the same insecticidal seed treatment as on the napus canola plots right next to it (see inset picture above). We also discovered that Striped also have no qualms about taking nips out of young Quinoa plants too, much to our unhappiness having just started investigations into quinoa as a potential crop to the region.



Point being, had we not been paid to literally watch, count, and assess flea beetles and their damage intently over the last 4-5 years via paid contracted “fee for service” work we would not have witnessed the change or shift in flea beetle populations from Crucifer types to the Striped Flea Beetle, and thus we are able to explain the damage witnessed this spring to our rapa and Quinoa plots. It likely would have remained a mystery to us all and blamed the loss on poorer vigor of rapa vs. napus canola (which as just explained is not the case) or on dry conditions or something else.

Bottom line is that it pays big dividends to have your research department so involved with “fee for service” work in many ways than just the obvious influx of much needed cash, and as such is a great benefit to the Peace River region as a whole. We thank all those companies and institutions out there, both private and public and both large and small, who are investing in the Peace River region in so many ways via “fee for service” work with our association.