



# **2019 Annual Report & Field Crop Variety Performance**





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(Elected at Annual General Meeting on July 25, 2019)

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BC Peace River Grain Industry Development Council (BCPRGIDC)  
BC Grain Producers Association (BCGPA)



*Opinions expressed in this document are those of the BC Grain Producers Association and not necessarily those of our funding partners.*

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## Introduction and Acknowledgements

The look of 'The Book' as it is known throughout the region has changed significantly this year. In addition to an earlier release, you will notice that the first section of the book is dedicated to the advocacy work that the BC Grain Producers Association completes on behalf of our members. The remainder of the book will have the more familiar look and information everyone is expecting from the BCGPA research department. The weather struggles that plagued the Prairies and the Peace Region this year also affected the research trials; most notably the South Peace trials, which are still in the field as of the publication date of this book. Another major change this year affects the canola pages, due to funding constraints there were no BCGPA directed canola trials this season, so the canola page will show the link to the Canola Performance Trials, instead of the full canola report.

Local agri-businesses and seed producers of the BC Peace Region should be recognized for their contributions by providing certified seed to the program. We thank all these individuals/organizations, along with various seed development and distribution companies for their direct financial support through "fee-for-service" contracted research, and "in-kind" support towards making field-testing and production of this book possible. Various other private organizations make financial contributions for field days, etc. throughout the year which further enhance the efforts of the research department.

Thanks are extended as well to the site cooperators who continue to generously give their support to the program via lease agreements to their land for research, the **Blanchette Family** and **Heath Tanner** for the North Peace site and **School District #59** for the South Peace site. A further word of thanks goes out to **Dennis Meier** of Dawson Creek who continuously and generously offers us space on his own farm for storage of much of our field equipment.

## Cautionary Notes

This document reports all tested materials grown during the 2019 growing season from head-to-head performance trials placed at the BC Grain Producer Association research farms. Multiple-year testing for any one variety is our goal, but often new materials can only be tested for the current year, which may result in an unfair representation of new single-year materials against statistically stronger multiple-year materials. To try to resolve this issue, we now display the results in two graphs for each crop type, one with only the current year's results and one with multiple-year results. In the multiple-year graphs, new one-year data is left out to be objective. Where **one-year results are shown**, whether in current one-year graphs or in charts, **readers must still interpret and use such one-year data with considerable caution**. As additional results are obtained for a particular variety, the simple effect of compiling data from variable weather patterns over time may change its position regarding either or both yield and maturity. The more station years (*defined as one test site at one location in one year*) that can be used to produce an average, the more stable and reliable a result will be - hence the association's steadfast efforts to procure multi-year data. By providing readers with a separate "current year graph," many of the risks with looking at one-year data is still there but the chances of misrepresenting new entries against older stronger data is greatly reduced.

This book is produced without bias and is reported to the best of our ability from our own site data collected locally (except where noted). Results contained herein should only be used as a guide and where labels or agreements are signed or supplied with your product, always follow label directions and agreements.

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# REPORT TO MEMBERS

The focus of the BC Grain Producers Association (BCGPA) is to improve the long-term viability and sustainability of the grains in the oilseed industry in the BC Peace River Region. The Association communicates with other organizations and agencies to benefit the field crop industry in the Peace Region and outside the region via cooperative research and active participation with other industry focus groups and committees.

The staff and directors of the BCGPA work tirelessly on establishing a more cohesive and functional organization, as well as fulfilling both the research and the advocacy aspects of the association. Strategic planning has been an instrumental part of building a better functioning society for our members. Out of the strategic planning sessions that have taken place, the BCGPA now has solid tactical plans that require implementation over the next 3-5 years. BCGPA has applied for funding for multiple projects that benefit our members, which will be discussed in more detail in the body of this report. The BCGPA has kept up its membership on various boards and committees in the North and South Peace in order to represent the grain producers of the Peace Region and to provide the organization with as much knowledge as possible.

The realization that the majority of our members think of the BCGPA as strictly conducting crop research was eye opening, as the BCGPA does so much more than just research. Advocacy for the grain producers of the North and South Peace is a monumental part of what our Association does. A large part of this advocacy includes involvement in outside organizations, which is important to maintain and build relationships to benefit grain producers of British Columbia.

## FUNDING PRIORITIES

### **Director's Meeting Remuneration**

Director's remuneration is used to provide compensation to the Directors of the BCGPA for travel costs and time they spend at Director's meetings. The BCGPA directors are pulled in many directions, and their volunteer duties on the board can be very taxing on both their time and resources. While directors are compensated for attended BCGPA meetings out of this fund, the multitude of other meetings they attend on behalf of the BCGPA will continue to be on a volunteer basis. This small token of appreciation has helped the Association to retain experienced board members and to attract new ones. It is of utmost importance to have informed representatives on local, provincial and national issues, it is key in providing significant local based input at meetings.

### **Director's Support**

The funding in this project provides administrative support to the BCGPA Board. The operation of an organization requires time, skill and most importantly, consistency. The many duties of the administrative support include ensuring the action items that come out of meetings are carried out and that careful preparation goes into board meeting planning to promote the efficiency. The BCGPA's General Manager, along with part-time office personnel, provide this service for the directors to ensure that their operational load is minimal, freeing their time to advocate for farmers. We have

noticed that director changeover is minimized when long-term administrative staff is in place and the operations of the Association can proceed seamlessly when directors do leave the Board.

The administrative office in Fort St John allows the BCGPA to fully serve its members and is the hub of all incoming and outgoing communications. The office staff makes director travel arrangements, prepares agendas and meeting packages for board meetings, takes meeting minutes and communicates with members and outside associations on behalf of the board. The General Manager works closely with the Board of the BCGPA to make sure that tasks delegated at the director's meetings are followed up on and completed.

The operational support provided to the BCGPA directors through this funding allows directors to attend to their own businesses and represent the membership of the BCGPA at various meetings and conferences. This project has helped to bridge the gap from meeting to meeting by having dedicated staff personnel follow through with action items.

### **Membership Fees**

Funding for membership fees allows the Association to maintain and enhance current relationships with other organizations as well as foster new ones. The objective of this funding is to ensure that the BCGPA has adequate representation on grain and oilseed committees at both a provincial and national level. To have continued involvement with research groups, marketing groups and other special interest groups that compliment the objectives and interests of the membership of the BC Grain Producers Association is very important.

The BC Grain Producers Association is a member of the following organizations:

- ✦ BC Agriculture Council
- ✦ Grain Growers of Canada
- ✦ Cereals Canada
- ✦ Canola Growers Association
- ✦ Fort St John Chamber of Commerce

It is critical that the BCGPA have representation at both the provincial and national levels in order to have input into decisions or changes made to grain and oilseed industry policies that will directly impact BC Peace producers. By having a strong presence within these organizations, the Association is able to influence policy development in the agriculture sector. Affiliations with these organizations allow Canadian and British Columbia agriculture to present a united front and increase impact and success when fighting for policy change in the government arena.

### **Pan-Agriculture in the North/Regional Agriculture Awareness (2017 - 2019)**

The key objective of these projects is to address issues affecting all farmers in the BC Peace in a timely and effective manner. Agricultural producers in the region are relying on directors of the organization to be proactive in their approach to dealing with agriculture matters and bringing attention to these issues, both locally and outside their region. The project has been broken into six concerns that have been flagged as important to agriculture producers across the BC Peace Region.

Producers in the Peace face distinctive challenges and no one is more capable to represent the issues and interests of BC Peace Region grain and oilseed producers than the farmer directors who are facing the same issues as the members who elected them. These projects were vital to ensuring that BC

Peace grain and oilseed producers have a say at various local, provincial and national meetings on all these important topics and have access to the involvement in developing new programs and initiatives that are meaningful to agriculture producers.

**Business Risk Management** – The BCGPA was kept informed about current risk management tools and was actively involved in developing and improving risk management programs. In order to be assured that these programs will be effective when needed, representative(s) had the ability to influence policy changes and regulations on federal and provincial agriculture funding programs, crop protection insurance and other issues that could be considered an eminent threat to farm income.

A national strategy for an Environmental Farm Plan was moved closer to implementation with a meeting held in Ottawa that involved discussions across the commodities and the provinces to set a plan for a new national policy framework. Staff and board members of the BCGPA were invited to attend a meeting with an independent advisory committee put in place by BC Minister of Agriculture to provide strategic advice and policy guidance on revitalizations of the ALR and ALC. Those in attendance were able to speak directly to a panel of BC based producers from around the province to discuss changes they feel would best support Peace agriculture producers.

The BCGPA was able to engage a third-party contractor to run through a generic farm cost-based scenario to show how provincial risk management programs could either benefit a producer or not, this information was presented to members during an AGM. An AgriRisk based meeting was held in Fort St John, with producers leading the discussion on what they felt the major risk(s) the grains and oilseed sector in BC were facing. This meeting ties into changing the provincial and national programs and giving farmers the tools to be proactive in risk management rather than reactive, as well as mitigating losses after the fact.

The Production Insurance Grain and Forage Advisory Committee met in March 2018 in Fort St John and members of the BCGPA board were able to attend to discuss the needs of grain and oilseed producers as related to provincial production insurance. The payments for AgriStability are still almost 2 years behind, with only 67% of applications for 2016 processed. The Ministry was again made aware that this hold up in the payouts is completely unacceptable when producers may need cash flow. The Production Insurance working group met in March 2019 and discussions on insurance of winter wheat and malt barley were had again, with no results. However, due to conversations started through this committee, the insurance pricing for all peas has been raised to 2CW.

In mid-2018, there were reports of GM wheat being found in Alberta. This project allowed for the Association to have an ear on the conversation and monitor it for any issues that would affect BC producers. The BC Grain Producers' hosted presentations from Anthony Parker with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency to speak on Plant Breeder's Rights and Gregory Sekulik from the Canola Council of Canada to discuss the threat of Clubroot arriving to the BC Peace region.

**Climate Awareness and Biosecurity** – Concerns regarding biosecurity and environmental issues as related to agriculture production were investigated and followed up upon. A BCGPA representative attended relevant food safety meetings, environmental meetings and seminars in order to inform producers of new and relevant protocols, as well as encouraged producers to take a closer look at their own operations and those of their neighbours to investigate solutions provided through these meetings and seminars. Environmental concerns (GMO, pests, farm waste, etc.) are constantly changing and at most times need an immediate response, making it extremely important to have

representative(s) who are accurately informed about these concerns to allow for exact and concise information to pass on to local producers who can then make educated decisions for their own farms.

The BCGPA worked in partnership with the Agriculture and AgriFood office in Summerland, BC to trap spores in the air at the North Peace farm. These samples were sent to AAFC Summerland at the end of the season for analysis. The analysis was then overlaid with climate and weather data to show the shift of the pathogens throughout the province.

Different pathways for agriculture recycling in the Peace Region were investigated with no firm plan to move forward currently available. There was not much progress made in this area as there seemed to be roadblocks everywhere stopping the progress in our region. We will continue to push forward on this matter, as recycling agriculture waste will tie into the public trust issue moving forward.

The Agriculture Waste Control Regulation (AWCR) has been replaced by the Agriculture Environmental Management Code of Practice (AEMCoP) in BC over the past year. Staff of the organization have participated in calls with the Ministry of Agriculture and Environment as the conversion has taken place over the past year, along with working with the BC Agriculture Council on this file.

BC Grain Producers Association's staff was involved in wildlife programming within the Site C Environmental Assessment Condition #31. This program will allow for wildlife monitoring within 5km of the new reservoir pre and post filling and will be a voluntary program that will have data collection by the means of camera traps, exclusion cages and the knowledge of local producers.

**Marketing** – With trade missions departing from Canada more often as the Canadian government attempts to break into new markets, producers need to be kept current on market options and barriers in order to capitalize on these new opportunities. As we look to the future of marketing grains and oilseeds, BCGPA representation will ensure that the needs of Peace area producers are voiced with appropriate boards and agencies. Board members and staff of the BCGPA have been able to take part in events and discussions with individuals and associations throughout the entire value chain. These conversations centered around trade markets that were in the process of opening and concerns with chemical residues and tariffs for foreign markets.

**Community Building & Public Trust** – Grain and oilseed producers in the Peace Region need to come together to prove we are worthy of the public's trust. This is a battle being fought worldwide and because of its importance to the future of the industry, public trust and engagement are the basis of this project. Public Trust is becoming more a part of everyday life on the farm and educating the public about science-based agriculture and fighting misinformation in the public sphere has never been more important, nor more difficult. Public engagement, along with member interaction between commodity groups was encouraged through rural town-hall meetings, school tours, agricultural show booths at regional fall fairs and tradeshow, as well as public and member workshops. The BCGPA engaged in promoting awareness of agriculture production in the BC Peace and informed the public where and how their food is produced.

BCGPA staff set up an information booth at the FSJ Trade Show in April for two years in a row. The booth had many visitors and we were able to connect with producers and educate the public on grains and oilseeds and our local grain industry. In 2019, we won the 'Best Booth' award for having the most engaging, educational and interactive display.

Staff from the BCGPA attended both the South and North Peace Fall Fairs with a public informational booth. The booth was well received and many questions were asked and answered about grains in



general and our local grain industry. There were games set up for children, as well as a place for people to hand grind wheat to make flour and see the simple process to help recognize where food comes from.

The BCGPA is working with the BC Agriculture Council on a BC wide public trust initiative. This brings together stakeholders from around the province to provide input to develop a plan to tackle this critical issue. Becky Parker from BCAC presented a short educational session at a spring seminar on speaking to non-farmer public on potential disruptive conversations.

The BCAC website was refurbished in the past few years to be more user friendly and was kept updated with current prices (in partnership with Richardson Pioneer in Dawson Creek), bulletins of local events and current contact information for the BCGPA offices and board members. There is also a 'classified' section for crop buyers to post on if they are looking for a specific commodity from a local producer.

**Transportation** – The largest regional concern continues to be the non-maintained roads. The continual degradation of the roads was addressed at Ag-Days in Victoria with both the Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of Transportation. This led to a meeting in the spring of 2019 with the area superintendent from the Ministry of Transportation and an increase in funding of up to \$250,000 for those unmaintained roads in the Peace Region. Members of the BCGPA transportation committee attended the Caribou Road Services stakeholder meeting and discussed how to move forward with road degradation concerns. The local rural roads are not being well maintained and it is important that there is a continuous push from producers to keep the roads available and maintained for equipment movement into fields. Directors and staff of the BCGPA are uniquely situated to deal with this concern, with the majority of rural roads being utilized by our membership.

There are many craft breweries and small distilleries looking for BC grown grains and local producers are poised to take advantage of the 'Buy BC/local' government incentives, however being relatively secluded from the remainder of the province means that solutions need to be found to move viable crops to the southern portion of the province. BC Peace producers need to have a direct link to advocate for change to rail lines, grain handling and road transportation. Having educated and local representation on the appropriate boards and committees will allow producers from the region to have direct input towards improving the grain transportation system in our province.

Those same committee members took part in a conference call held between the BCGPA and Ministry of Agriculture to discuss grain transportation in BC and how it is affected by the rail service across Canada. Grain transportation via rail is an issue across Canada and this project allowed the Peace Region to have a spot at the national table to voice concerns on Bill C-49, as well as media interviews with CBC to bring attention to the lack of rail service. Association President, Rick Kantz, was given an opportunity to speak to the Vice President of operations for CP Rail regarding subpar rail service and the acquisition of new rail cars.

**Research** – With current funding concerns facing the research department of the BCGPA and the vocal support from Peace area producers to keep the department research innovative, it is more important than ever that participation in a crop research network in Western Canada is ongoing.

A member of the BCGPA sat as a director to the Western Grains Research Foundation (WGRF) and attended meetings and participated in discussions which communicated the need for crop research

pertinent to the Peace River Region. An Association representation on the board of the WGRF gives local producers a voice to a national research organization and promotes and supports a producer funded research network in Western Canada. It is important to be involved in the decision-making process across the Prairies to facilitate discussions identifying projects suitable to the BC Peace Region, with our unique climate and short growing season.

Members and Association staff will continue to attend meetings and seminars such as the Prairie Registration Recommending Committee (PGDC) and Agricultural Institute of Canada, as well as others that come up intermittently. By seeking and maintaining partnerships with other agricultural research facilities, it allows the BCGPA to obtain the resources and tools necessary for producers to stay on the competitive edge. The BCGPA sends representatives to participate and voice regional concerns at the Prairie Grain Development Committee meetings each year. These meetings discuss new variety registration recommendations and BCGPA networked on behalf of Peace area producers who need specific traits in their varieties.

Directors and staff of the Association continue to work hard in order to ensure that the grain and oilseed producers of the Peace Region have a voice to advocate their unique needs and concerns at a national and provincial level. The Association also spent a great deal of time creating a strategic plan in order to form a more functional and cohesive organization moving into the future. This strategic plan will take us through the next 3 years, when we will be creating a new plan to build on the expected successes of the current one.

Local agriculture faces challenges unique from the rest of our province and producers in our region need to be supported and represented by local people who understand these unique challenges. The BCGPA is in a good position to be the leader of agriculture in this region, with the resources and staff in place to be able to represent the grain and oilseed community of the Peace Region.

## Vision

Grain producers in BC are profitable, sustainable, and recognized as providers of safe, high-quality food.

## Mission

BC Grain Producers Association supports and connects grain producers in BC by providing a collective voice, information, and regionally relevant research.

### **Strategic Goal 1: Stakeholder Engagement**

Cultivate engagement between BCGPA and stakeholders.

#### **Strategic Objective 1.1**

Improve communication with membership.

#### **Strategic Objective 1.2**

Develop and implement a strategy to positively impact public trust with minimal BCGPA resource investment.

#### **Strategic Objective 1.3**

Act as informal connection point to facilitate opportunities between producers and end users.

#### **Strategic Objective 1.4**

Increase collaboration and partnerships with other Peace Region organizations.

### **Strategic Goal 2: Research**

Determine a direction for research that is sustainable and serves the BCGPA Mission.

#### **Strategic Objective 2.1**

Continue and improve fee-for-service research that is self-funding or net income generation.

## **Strategic Objective 2.2**

Continue to support partnered research that requires minimal BCGPA resource investment (e.g. weather and pest monitoring).

## **Strategic Objective 2.3**

Modify variety trials research from small-plot research to field-scale producer collaboration.

## **Strategic Goal 3: Organizational Health**

Create systems that ensure a healthy sustainable organization.

### **Strategic Objective 3.1**

Develop and implement Policies & Procedures for core business functions (e.g. HR, finance, board, etc.).

### **Strategic Objective 3.2**

Identify and track emerging issues.

### **Strategic Objective 3.3**

Develop Strategic Plan (2023-2025).

## **Strategic Goal 4: Advocacy**

Ensure that the needs of grain producers in BC are included in government policies and decisions that affect grain producers.

### **Strategic Objective 4.1**

Establish BCGPA positions on key issues.

### **Strategic Objective 4.2**

Continue to have staff and board involved with priority provincial and national agricultural organizations.

### **Strategic Objective 4.3**

Improve relationships with local and provincial departments and officials.