Fall Newsletter

BC Grain Producers Association | November 2026

BCGPA AGM Highlights

The BCGPA AGM was held on July 9, 2026, with the honour of hosting BC Minister of Agriculture Lana Popham. A full lineup of speakers kept the day moving, with presentations on Wheat Variety Research from Cereals Canada, along with topics from the Canadian Canola Growers Association, Grain Growers of Canada, and BC Agriculture Council, as well as a presentation on surface rights for landowners. The day wrapped up with afternoon field tours, bussing attendees to two Living Lab sites in both Cecil Lake and Clayhurst. We appreciate everyone who took the time to attend and support the BCGPA!



AGM Attendance



Kevin Thiessen, Hannah Willms, Malcolm Odermatt, Lana Popham, Ernest Wiebe, Amias Dirks (Absent Directors: Ed Hadland and Ty Cusack)



AGM Field Tour Stop



Mason Soil Sampling



Mason doing a demonstration at the AGM

Summer Student Highlights

This summer, the BCGPA employed Mason Bentley as a Summer Research Technician. She was instrumental to the BCGPA's summer research activities, and the organization was happy to have her on staff, wishing her all the best in her future endeavours.

A note from Mason:

I really enjoyed working for the BC Grain Producers Association this year. It was a great opportunity to get a more in depth understanding of local agriculture, improve my plant identification and put my previous experience to good use. I will always love being able to work within the community and have the work I do leave behind a positive impact, especially for farmers. As I move onto my BSc Wildlife and Fisheries degree, I'm excited to broaden my knowledge and learn more ways to help protect the land and industries we all rely on.

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BCAC Ag Forum

The BC Agriculture Council (BCAC) held its first BC Agriculture Forum in Penticton, BC, on June 24 & 25, 2026. The Forum featured farm tours, thought-provoking keynote presentations, panel discussions, and informal networking opportunities. This industry-first event brought together members from BC farm organizations and all levels of government to discuss the importance of agriculture in our province.
There were over 30 Elected Representatives from various branches of government in attendance including:

- The Honourable Randene Neill, Minister of Water, Land & Resource Stewardship
- The Honourable Lana Popham, Minister of Agriculture & Food
- MP John Barlow, Shadow Cabinet Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food

Keynote speakers included:

- Keith Baldrey and Vaughn Palmer discussing BC's political climate and its implications for agriculture.
- Chris Bonar from the University of the Fraser Valley, presenting "Farming at the Edge: The Missing Middle – What BC Agriculture Numbers Tell Us About the Current Realities."
- David Coletto, PhD, of Abacus Data, presenting "Responding to the Precarity Mindset: Implications for BC Agricultural Producers."
- J.P. Gervais, EVP of Agriculture Financing at FCC, presenting "The Future-Proofing of BC Agriculture: Driving Growth and Competitiveness."



Ag Forum Presentation



Hannah Willms, John Barlow, & Les Willms

Round table topics included ALR / ALC strain: Funding cuts have reduced ALC capacity, shifting more decisions to municipalities that often lack agricultural expertise. This has led to inconsistent rule application, slow non-farm-use reviews, and conflicts with municipal housing and zoning approvals. Other concerns included land speculation and the "parking" of ALR land without active farming. It was suggested that Ministers and MLAs visit different regions of the province before enacting legislation to better understand on-the-ground impacts.

Les and Hannah Willms attended alongside Gerhard and Kathy Fehr on behalf of grain producers. Representing the BC Peace Region were Lilia Hansen, Mayor of Fort St. John; Tony Zabinsky, Fort St. John City Councillor; and Leonard Hiebert, Peace River Electoral Area D Representative. Hannah Willms also serves on the BCAC Board of Directors on behalf of the BC Grain Producers Association.

This annual event is open to all producers, and we encourage interested members to attend. For information about the 2027 event, please contact our office or follow us on Facebook and Instagram for updates.



Kathy Fehr, Lilia Hansen, Tony Zabinsky, Hannah Willms, Leonard Hiebert

Peace Region Living Lab Updates:

The BC Grain Producers Association has been collaborating in the Peace Region Living Lab Project since its inception in 2022. This is the first of its kind interprovincial collaboration with partner groups in Northern BC and Alberta to study the Best Management Practices for agriculture in the Peace Region.

The Partner groups are:
The BC Grain Producers Association (BCGPA)
The Peace Region Forage Seed Association (PRFSA)
The Peace River Forage Association of BC (PRFA)
In Alberta:
Mackenzie Applied Research Association (MARA)
North Peace Applied Research Association (NPARA)
Peace Country Forage and Beef Association (PCBFA)
Peace Region Agriculture Extension institute
SARDA Ag Research

We are now in our 5th and final year of the Living Labs Project. Over the course of this growing season our summer technicians helped organize and compile the data collected from the last 4 years along with the collection of samples and growing information for the 2026 season. When the technicians return to school in the fall, the residue and fall data collection is completed by our office staff.

The BCGPA has 7 field trials participating in the Living Lab Project, each with a Check and a BMP. The participating producers have allowed us to access these fields throughout the growing season and into the fall each year since 2022. Management practices have incorporated everything from experimenting with various cover crops, intercropping, incorporating grazing and different tillage methods. The climate, growing conditions and soil composition of the Peace Region is unique and we hope to find practices which will help producers work for continued soil health and productivity.



Soil Sampling



Large Bear track found in research field by office staff



Fall residue sampling



Pest Monitoring 2026 Season Summary

The 2026 Pest Monitoring Project focused on tracking key insect pests, beneficial insects, and crop diseases across the BC Peace Region. The project provided pest updates to producers, supported informed crop management decisions, and contributed to ongoing agricultural research.

Key Season Highlights:

1. Weekly pest surveillance: Over a 16-week period from May through August, the project conducted weekly trapping and field sampling to monitor a variety of insect pests, including Diamondback Moth, Bertha Armyworm, Flea Beetles, Lygus bugs, multiple midge species, Pea Leaf Weevil, aphids, and grasshoppers. Monitoring also included beneficial insect populations, such as ladybird beetles, parasitic wasps, lacewings, and various other beetle species.
2. Producer communications: Introduced weekly SMS pest updates and published articles in New Horizon, with this year's focus on beneficial insects. The project's Facebook page was also updated weekly throughout the growing season to keep producers informed of current pest activity and field conditions.
3. Pest monitoring highlights: Lygus bug populations in the South Peace peaked around mid-July, averaging 3–5 bugs per sweep, exceeding the economic threshold of 2–3 bugs per sweep. The North Peace did not experience the same level of Lygus pressure, instead facing elevated grasshopper populations in multiple field crops.
4. Grasshopper monitoring: In addition to weekly grasshopper monitoring, the project conducted its annual grasshopper survey in August and September to assess species distribution and population levels throughout the region.
5. Cereal and forage disease surveys: Collected root rot samples from peas, wheat, and barley and conducted surveys in oats and grasses. No root rot issues were identified in the oat and grass surveys in the BC Peace. Samples were also provided to UBC researcher Paul Rivarez to support the development of an in-field diagnostic testing kit.
6. Clubroot and Blackleg surveys: Sampled 75 canola fields for Clubroot and Blackleg and initiated a dedicated Clubroot survey across canola fields in the BC Peace. Blackleg incidence remained low for the second consecutive season, with only 15% of surveyed fields testing positive. Disease severity of fields where found was low.
7. Research collaboration: Live Striped Flea Beetles were collected, the predominant flea beetle species in the region, and shipped to Dr. Meghan Jellen at Renaissance Bioscience. This research is investigating RNAi-based biopesticides as a potential method of controlling flea beetle populations.



Seven-spotted ladybird beetle early in the season on wheat



Bruner's spur-throated grasshopper feeding on Oats



Lygus sweep net sample in the South Peace with high number of Lygus

The project also continued sharing sample collections and monitoring data with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Prairie Pest Monitoring Network.

Additionally, field pea root and soil samples continued to be collected to support ongoing Aphanomyces research conducted by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada in Lethbridge.

For more information on insect pests and plant diseases in the region please contact Keith Uloth by phone; 250-613-0761, or by email; pest@bcgrain.com



Save The Date: BCGPA 2027 Love of Ag

Our annual Love of Ag Conference is coming up on February 17th at the Tower Lake Community Hall. Follow us on Facebook and Instagram for speaker announcements and event updates, and visit our website to subscribe to email notifications so you don't miss registration details. We look forward to seeing you there!

Thank you to the BC Grain Producers Board Members!

Members of the BC Grain Producers Association Board of Directors remain active throughout the year in various industry groups and associations, taking time to attend conferences and meetings. They are the voices advocating on behalf of BC grain and oilseed producers.
The BC Grain Producers Association would like to thank the following board members for their time, commitment, and participation in the following organizations and activities:

BC Agriculture Council - Hannah Willms
BC Peace Agricultural Fund - Ty Cusack
Canadian Canola Growers Association - Ernest Wiebe
Grain Industry Development Council - Amias Dirks
Prairie Grain Development Committee - Variety Registration for Oats & Barley - Ed Hadland
Western Grain Research Foundation - Malcolm Odermatt

If you would like additional information on any of the above organizations, or are interested in becoming a Board Member of the BCGPA, please contact our office.

Take the Farmer Wellbeing Survey

Scan this QR Code to take the quick survey!

Are you a farmer in BC with farm class tax status? **Complete a survey on farm and farmer wellbeing and receive a $50 gift card.**
Goal: Develop an indicator dashboard to communicate the wellbeing of farms and farmers in BC. This includes the economic, ecological, and social aspects of wellbeing.
Who is doing this work: The Institute for Sustainable Food Systems (KPU) and the Food System Lab (SFU).
Why: There is often a mismatch between the indicators that government reports use to communicate policy progress, and important issues that farmers are facing on the ground. We're looking to help bridge this gap by developing a suite of indicators reflective of farmer priorities, that policymakers can use to understand wellbeing among farms.
Who can complete the survey: We're looking for feedback from farmers in BC with farm tax class status.
Gift Card: Eligible participants will receive a gift card ($50 value) to either Canadian Tire or Lee Valley. Limit one per household.

Save $30 on Your Farmer ID Card

Sign up today for your BC Farmer Identity card to start saving! Limited time offer allows you to save **$30.**



Production Insurance Deadlines

1. **November 30 Forage Deadline:** For producers with mixed farming operations, please note that November 30 is the deadline for Perennial Forage Production Insurance.
2. **Declarations of Production (DOP):** Grain producers are reminded to submit their finalized 2026 Declarations of Production (DOPs) as soon as possible to ensure any outstanding claims can be processed without delay.
3. **Wildlife Damage (AWP):** Final confirmation of this season's compensation rate is still pending. Producers with active AWP claims will be contacted directly once the rate has been finalized and updates are available.
4. **Looking Ahead (Spring 2027):** Looking ahead, the deadline for Grain Production Insurance is April 30, 2027. Be sure to keep this date in mind when planning for the upcoming growing season.

Connect With Us on Social Media

Facebook	@BCGrainProducers
Instagram	@bcgrainproducersassociation
X / Twitter	@BCGPA
Website	bcgrain.com

Thank you to producers who sent in photos of their harvest in action!

Check out the BCGPA social media to see some of the photos captured.

For any questions or comments regarding the BCGPA fall newsletter, please reach out to communications@bcgrain.com

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