



**ASSOCIATION OF ALBERTA
CO-OP SEED CLEANING
PLANTS LTD.**

**62ND ANNUAL MEETING
JANUARY 14-16, 2015**

**Board of Director's
&
General Manager's Report**



Board of Directors Report 2015

Meetings and Activities

As in the past, the Provincial Board met 4 times during the year. The purpose of these meetings are to keep track of the organization from a broad operational viewpoint, as well, as to ensure the activities of the association are congruent with the strategic direction of the organization. At every meeting each director gives the group an update from the plants in their region. This helps keep the board current on the opportunities and challenges throughout the province. In addition to board meetings, directors work with County Ag Field Men to inspect each plant in their region.

Last year's regional election saw Ross Bezovie re-elected in region 5 and Charlie Martin elected in region 6. The Region 7 election resulted in James Obniawka being elected for another 3 year term. Thank you to Ross, Charlie and James for your commitment to our association.

At the re-organizational meeting after the AGM, The following members were elected:

This group makes up the Executive of your Provincial Association.

President – John McBain

Vice-President – Dave Bishop,

General Manager/Secretary – Lorena Pahl. (Monica Klaas, effective April 15, 2014)

Manager's Association Rep – Terry Howe

I would like to thank all board members for their dedication to our association over the past year, without a strong team, the entire association would suffer.

Today we will be having elections for directors from Regions 1 & 2. These are for a 3-year term. I have made the decision not to run again for director in Region 2. Hence, it is extremely important that all directors and manager's present from both regions 1 and 2 attend their respective regional elections scheduled for the end of the meeting today to ensure that the continuity of operations in all regions is maintained. I cannot begin to tell what a deficit is made when a director's position remains unfilled. As a board, the intent is to seriously exercise due diligence in overseeing the Association, but also have a little bit of fun, I encourage anyone that is interested in holding a position on the provincial board to have a chat with any one of the current board members.

General Manager Position

Further to the dissolution of the Seed Industry Partnership, a General manager's position was created, and filled, effective April 15, by Monica Klaas.. Employee orientation, including discussion of the 2012 Strategic Plan that is used to guide the overall direction of the Association

ALBERTA SEED GUIDE, & SEED.AB.CA website

The executive reviewed and selected a publisher for ALBERTA SEED GUIDE magazine, and hosting services for the seed.ab.ca website. Three proposals were reviewed during this process in cooperation with the Alberta Seed Growers, Issues Ink, the current publisher, was the

successful provider. A contract for 3 years, with an option to renew for another 2 years, for a total of 5 years was struck between the 3 parties. (Alberta Seed Growers, Alberta Seed Processors, Issues Ink).

Further to the signing of the contract, both the Alberta Seed Growers, and the Association of Alberta Co-op Seed Cleaning Plants will have to move their “members-only” information to an independent website. We are currently in the process of making this transition.

The executive met with Alberta Seed Growers and Issues Ink to brainstorm for the upcoming fall issue. Some great ideas on current issues facing agriculture were pitched by our executive to ensure the publication remains the highest quality.

Call Issues INK to book your ad today - it is a great way to promote your growing business

Property Insurance

Foster Park Baskett (FPB) continues to serve as the broker of choice for our Association’s physical insurance. The premium rebate program continued in 2014. The loss ratio for the 2013/2014 term was 8.3% and the premium rebate was \$50,741. Rebate cheques were mailed out to all the plants.

Thank you to FPB and “Good Job” to all the plants in keeping the losses to a minimum.

I want to remind everyone that Foster Park Baskett has introduced a resource library for our member plants. Information is available on various topics including the following (but not limited to):

- Insurance Coverage Explanations
- Safety Resource Materials/ Safety Employment Materials
- Human Resource Materials
- Occupational Health and Safety
- WCB Information
- Risk Management Information

This information is provided free of charge to our plants.

FPB has completed a risk analysis of all the plants. This was started three years ago, in which a 1/3 of the plants were visited by a risk auditor. Subsequently a third of the plants were inspected each year, with 2014 concluding the inspection project. The decision to start another three year round of insurance inspections has not been made at time of print. These inspections are important to ensure the risk is properly evaluated to ensure that the coverage is, indeed, correct. Thank you to all plants for your participation in this project over the past three years. One thing that arose from the inspections is the requirement for lightning rods. Which, again, in the past round of inspections was a “nice to do”, rather than a “need to do”; which leaves the plant to make their own decision. I will assure you, that the investment in protection from lightning strikes (if your area is prone to these), far outweighs the possible loss to electrical systems, and the possibility of a devastating fire due to a lightning strike.

FPB has also advised that in the event of the closure of a facility, that insurance be maintained to protect the board until the operation has been completely dissolved.

There have been cases in other parts of Canada that lawsuits have arose in conjunction of the closure of a business. Once the insurance stops, coverage stops; it is important to protect officers until the final legal step is completed.

We would like to thank FPB for their ongoing support of our Association. We would also like to extend a big thank you to the FPB staff who work our registration desk each year and to Debbie Workun for taking the minutes of our AGM.

Disability, Health and Dental Insurance

Morneau Shepell continues to supply the health and dental insurance to our member plants. The Provincial Board meets with Doug Sample on a quarterly basis to receive updates on claims and costs.

- Our 2013/2014 program saw a proposed premium increase of 5.5%, Morneau Shepell was able to negotiate this down to a 3.2% increase in premiums. The employee demographic continues to shift to the right with older employees outnumbering younger ones. The program is at risk of higher premiums as evident through our basic life insurance and long term disability.
- Employee Assistance Program was added in at a rate of \$5 per member per month plus GST.
- Consider Critical Illness Insurance (next logical step in adding additional coverage if you so wish) – \$0.75-\$0.85 per \$1000; pays a lump sum should an employee be diagnosed with a critical illness

An effective health and dental plan continues to be an important benefit in hiring and retaining staff in this competitive labor market.

Canadian Seed Institute (CSI)

Wayne Walker represents the Association on this Board.

Alternative Service Delivery: 2014 was the first year that private companies offered seed inspection services rather than CFIA inspectors. Alternative Service Delivery occurred at the following rates:

- 90% private inspection, exceeded the 75% forecast that CFIA predicted
- 24 service providers or companies that offered inspection services,
- 288 licensed inspectors were available to provide inspection services

Going forward, there has been a request from CSTA for 2nd party inspections, currently the alternate service delivery is only 3rd party.

CSI has planned a Strategic Planning Session for March 2015.

Manual Updates have been completed, and will be dispersed to the appropriate facilities electronically. Auditors have been trained in regards to the updates.

CSI is continuing to work with CFIA to advance the licensed seed sampler program. CFIA has come up with a 3-phase plan to implement the program as follows:

1. Information sessions
2. Auditor & Industry training to evaluate and accredit samplers.
3. Ongoing accreditation and monitoring of samplers.

Thank you Wayne for your work with CSI, and for the information updates & reports.

Accredited Seed Treatment Operations Standards – CropLife Initiative

Ron Wirsta represents the Association on this committee.

This process started a number of years ago and is now coming to fruition.

- November 2013 Standards released – All plants that treat seed have a copy
- January 2014 First Auditor Training/Exam
- July 2014 Pre audits available at a greatly reduced fee.
- July 2015 Re-evaluation of initial audit activities
- July 2017 Commence second round of audits –
- July 2017 Implement No-ship Policy of products designated
“For Use in Accredited Facilities Only”
- Post 2017 Program Maturity

All facilities that currently use seed treatment products are strongly encouraged to participate in the pre-audit process as a means to establish a base line of the status of your storage facility and operations pertaining to seed treatment application. Having a base line will then provide clarity on what the next steps (if any) the facility may choose to take to become fully accredited. Note that products that are labelled as “For Use in Accredited Facilities Only” will fall under the no ship policy. All other products can be used on farm, or through non-accredited facilities.

Thank you Ron for all your work on this project.

Fusarium

By all accounts, levels of Fusarium have taken a big increase over levels of the previous year, thus this continues to be a much debated topic.

Alberta certainly is not Fusarium-Free.

- A presentation to the Standing Committee on Resource Management regarding Fusarium Management was made at the end of June. The position of the Seed Plant Organization for a flexible management plan was communicated to the members of the standing committee. Myself (John McBain), Blair Peregryn and Monica Klaas made a presentation calling for an overhaul of the Management Plan, and to remove Fusarium as being declared as a PEST, rather to be listed as a NUISANCE, which would allow for a flexible approach to management/control of the pathogen.
- More recently, Dave Bishop and Monica Klaas attended a Fusarium Action Committee meeting, which the draft of the revised Fusarium Management Plan was approved by

the committee members for the Pesticide Surveillance Branch to recommend that the minister of Agriculture adopt the revised Plan dated October of 2014. Here are the differences between the plan implemented in 2002, & the suggested revisions October 2014. (Note: the revisions are a result of a scientific review done by a 3rd party in 2013.)

- 2002 plan objective: to eradicate *Fusarium graminearum* from the province, on the assumption that the disease is not established.
- 2014 draft plan objective: to minimize impact in areas the disease is prevalent and to slow the movement to areas that do not have a high presence of the disease: based upon the fact that the disease has become resident in some areas of the province.
- 2002 plan as it relates to seed infection: 0% tolerance.
- 2014 draft plan as it relates to seed infection: a varied approach is recommended based upon prevalence of the disease in an area: Proposal is to identify areas as either "Commonly Found" or "Not Commonly Found".
- Commonly Found areas: defined as areas in which over 20% of the seed samples routinely test for a presence of the disease. In commonly found areas, it will be recommend for growers to use the best seed possible but will have an allowable limit of up to 5% infection of *Fusarium graminearum* on the seed.
- Not Commonly Found areas: are areas that do not fit the above criteria, and have over 80% of seed samples test negative for the disease. Seed infection tolerance in those areas shall remain at 0% or 'non detectable'.

Important notes!! Ensure everyone understands.

- The 2014 revised plan is currently a RECOMMENDATION, and is not yet part of the plan. The Pest Surveillance branch is working out details regarding how seed samples are tested, and how to track infection levels etc. (NOT A DONE DEAL)
- **Seed Testing is a VITAL part to making this plan work; this has not changed, as the small investment in a seed test goes a long way to protect Alberta's vibrant crop sector.**

Canadian Seed Trade Association

- Membership in the Canadian Seed Trade Association (CSTA) has been secured by the Association. I (John McBain) and Monica Klaas attended the Annual Conference, and were recognized for our part in speaking to the standing committee on Bill 201, or the change to the Agricultural Pest Act from a "non-detectable" level of *Fusarium Graminearum* to having a tolerance level. Key contact with seed companies, suppliers of seed treatments and inoculants, retailers were made at the conference raising the profile of the organization as a whole to the Canadian Seed Industry

Manager's Association

- Accolades to Terry Howe, Keith Reynolds and the other managers involved in hosting the Manager's Training Session in Camrose. By all accounts, the trade show and speaker sessions were right on target in providing a relaxed learning environment suited to all managers and staff.
- The provincial board supports training and professional development, as this is a conduit to strengthening member plants, and ensuring the flow of knowledge to every plant.

Investing in education is an activity that typically has sustainable value. We encourage all boards to encourage your employees to participate in any training opportunities, offered internally by the Association, externally by manufacturing companies, or certification agencies like CSI, CSTA, etc.

Membership

Another factor affecting this year's budget – the loss of members: Westlock Terminals opted to not renew their membership in 2014, as well as Valleyview has ceased operations. That leaves 67 members in our Association.

We hope that plant boards continue to review their rates to reflect the cost of doing business. Keeping rates at a proper level will allow for reinvestment back into their facilities and to ensure their viability. The Business Planning workshop after the AGM on Friday afternoon will help boards and managers craft business plans that should help all facilities look to the future.

Recognition of Agriculture

Here are some of the ways your Association supports the industry:

- Manager's Association funding for training opportunities and scholarships
- Farm Tech Bronze Sponsor 2014
- Alberta Regional Variety trials sponsorship
- Alberta Silage Variety trials sponsorship
- Members of Alberta Community and Cooperative Association
- Members of Canadian Seed Trade Association

2013/2014 Board of Directors

John McBain,	President, Region 2
Dave Bishop,	Vice President, Region 1
Keith Reynolds,	Managers Association Representative
Terry Howe,	Managers Association Representative
Colin Wager,	Region 3
Dan Brachmann,	Region 4
Ross Bezovie,	Region 5
Charlie Martin,	Region 6
James Obniawka,	Region 7

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Provincial Board of Director's,



John McBain
President