

From the Desk of the Executive Director - Terence Hochstein



March is here, whether we are ready for it or not. LION or LAMB, in this province, that can change by the hour. Alberta has had its share of a good old fashioned winter this year with some areas experiencing more snow, deep drifts and wind than the local

residents can remember. Some say that this is a result of Global Warming, I say Mother Nature is having a bit of fun and is reminding us that only she is in control of the weather.

Last week, I had the opportunity to attend the International Potato Technology Expo in Charlottetown, PEI, as well as address the PEI grower group in an afternoon session. Although we live 5000 km apart, we face a lot of similar situations and problems as potato growers. It became increasingly obvious that disease pressures, pest pressures and weather are not geographically isolated. The only difference we have here in Alberta is that we are in the enviable position of having options for rotational crops in the 'off years' where we are not producing potatoes. The growers in PEI have very little options in front to choose from. A cereal crop, possibly some corn or soybeans, a biological or green manure crop in hopes of combatting the ever increasing problem of wireworms and back to potatoes. A number of growers said to me that it is getting very difficult to survive on a paycheck once every three years. Unfortunately, many are looking towards selling out to either a bigger operation or looking towards tourism to fill the void. Sadly, the producer numbers on the island are in an alarming decline and no one appears to have an answer to end this cycle. I have never met a more determined, politely defiant group of people. In fairness to all of them, your typical potato grower with the will to survive.

Contract discussions continue to occur across North America, with only Washington and Oregon complete at this time. The rest of the growing areas have either not began or mid-way through the process. Time will tell how successful the discussions are for this upcoming season.

On a very positive note, the recent announcement from J.R. Simplot to add a major expansion to their Manitoba plant is not only a great benefit to the Manitoba growers, but the Alberta seed industry as well. Many Manitoba operations already source seed from our Alberta growers and there is an opportunity to expand that market.

"and there is an opportunity to expand that market"

Area meetings are coming up the end of March with the North area meeting in Leduc on Tues March 27th and the South area meeting on Thurs march 29th in Taber. Please plan on attending for the latest updates on what your organization has been doing since the AGM.

One of the biggest advocacy organizations for the fruit and vegetable industry in Canada is the Canadian Horticultural Council. Their AGM is fast approaching and will be held from March 13th to March 15th, in Ottawa. As a member, the PGA is in a position to access not only federal politicians, but PMRA and CFIA on a national basis. If you are interested in becoming involved in this great organization please contact the office for information.

Until next month

Terence

This Edition

Seed Update	2
Ag Director Update	3
Provincial Updates	4
Across The Country	5
From The Office	6





Deb Hart

Post-Harvest Test Plots

Post-harvest test results, visual and/or lab test and Field Inspection Results:

This is either part of the contract requirement for commercial growers, or these documents must be available if required. This is a requirement for **ALL ALBERTA SEED GROWERS**, including process growers growing their own seed for commercial production as well.



Documentation For Shipping Seed



A reminder to contact CFIA as soon as possible for shipping point inspections to the US, and to have all documents available for your customers during the busy shipping season: BRR results (PCR testing only accepted for shipments to Idaho). Even if you grow only one or two seed lots

for your own use, this test is a CFIA requirement and must be performed.

PCN test results for shipments to the US North American Plant Health Certificate

Deb Hart @ 780-415-2305.

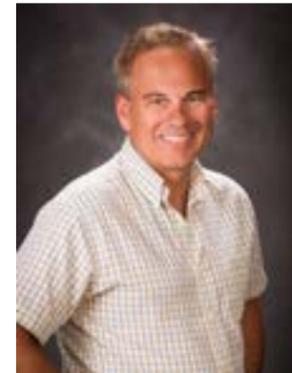
From Our History...

John Tucker, under the direction of H.T. Gussow, the Dominion Botanist, began a survey of potato fields in the prairie provinces during the summer of 1919 to determine the prevalence of virus and other diseases. The following year, as a result of this survey, the seed potato certification service was extended from eastern Canada to the prairie provinces. Following the survey, H.S. McLeod from PEI started seed potato certification work in the prairies in 1920. He looked after the work in Saskatchewan and Alberta.

In 1927, J.W. Marritt took over McLeod's work in Alberta and Western Saskatchewan. During this same year, field and tuber standards were published for the first time.

SAVE THE DATE:

Please plan on attending the North Area Meeting on March 27th. Dr. Mathuresh Singh, Director, Agricultural Certification Services Inc., will be travelling from Fredericton, NB to talk about Management of PVY through combined use of mineral oil and insecticide, along with other cultural practices. Industry updates will also be provided.



Thomas McDade

Managing Risk through Surveillance & Monitoring Program:

As early as 2014, a small number of potato psyllids were discovered in Southern Alberta. This discovery was significant and concerning, as the Potato psyllid can cause psyllid yellows in potatoes, resulting in chlorosis, stunted plants and small misshapen tubers. Potato psyllid can

transmit a bacterium like pathogen known as *Candidatus Liberbacter solanacearum* (Lso), which causes zebra chip disease. The disease can cause significant yield reductions and creates serious quality issues, forming dark stripes in the tubers when they are cut and fried. Although the defect is harmless to consumers, potato chip processors reject infected potatoes due to the unacceptable dark stripes and the off-taste of the fried chips. Not all potato psyllids are carriers of the zebra chip pathogen, and so far, the disease has not been detected in Canada. The zebra chip disease was first detected in Texas in the United States in 2000 and has been spreading northward. In 2011, the



disease was found in damaging levels in the Pacific Northwest, a major potato producing area. Identification, scouting and monitoring programs can help producers be prepared should the zebra chip disease spread to Canada (AAF: Agri Facts - Potato Psyllids, January 2014).

Monitoring for potato psyllid and zebra chip as part of regular scouting, along with watching potato psyllid patterns in other areas to help assess risk is important. Producers need to learn how to properly identify the potato psyllid at the egg, nymph and adult stages. If necessary, work with potato specialists to assess the risks and have testing done for the zebra chip pathogen *Candidatus Liberbacter solanacearum*. Yellow sticky cards can be used to monitor adults only. Place the cards inside the field at about the height of the canopy toward the field edge. Check and replace sticky cards at least once a week or more often (AAF: Agri Facts - Potato Psyllids, January 2014).

Monitoring is the most important strategy for Alberta growers to be prepared if the potato psyllid becomes a

concern. Scout fields for psyllids by sweeping foliage to look for adults, and examine the underside of leaves for nymphs in the middle to upper third of the canopy. Many of the products registered in Canada for management of other potato pests will also control the potato psyllid. Because this insect lives on the underside of leaves, applicators should be aware of any special pesticide needs for coverage and canopy penetration. Always use registered products and follow label directions. No products are registered for potato psyllid control in potatoes in Alberta (AAF: Agri Facts - Potato Psyllids, January 2014).



In response to the discovery of potato psyllids that tested positive for the Lso bacteria, in September of 2017, the PGA in partnership with the potato processing industry and Alberta Agriculture and Forestry, are planning to launch a new monitoring and surveillance program in the spring of 2018. The current plan would have this program run for the next 5 years. The monitoring & surveillance program would continue to be led by Promax Agronomy. Additionally, similar weekly reports will be circulated throughout the upcoming growing season. These reports will show not only potato psyllid numbers, but also the numbers of the overall insect population present in the fields. Many of these other insects are referred to as "beneficials" as they are natural predators to psyllid insects. The monitoring and surveillance programs will help Potato growers in Alberta manage this threat, by knowing when and where not to take action, such as spraying insecticides.

Thomas McDade
Agricultural Director



India Mission Unlocks Trade Opportunities

From the Government of Alberta

India mission unlocks trade opportunities
Agriculture and Forestry Minister Oneil Carlier, along with a number of Alberta businesses and producers, met with scores of potential Indian investors, traders and government leaders during a seven-day trade mission to India.

India mission unlocks trade opportunities
Alberta Agriculture and Forestry Minister Carlier meets with representatives from the India Pulse and Grain Association and Alberta's New Delhi Office at the 2018 Pulse Conclave in New Delhi.

The anchor event for the trip was the international Pulses Conclave in Delhi, where Minister Carlier delivered a keynote address to 1,500 international delegates. The address highlighted the robust and mutually beneficial relationship between Alberta and India.

"The opportunities in India are immense and our Alberta products are desired by emerging markets. We have a reputation for safe, world-class food and ingredients. Our government's work to increase market access for prime agricultural products is key to furthering our efforts in diversifying our economy, creating jobs and keeping our family farms sustainable."

Oneil Carlier, Minister of Agriculture and Forestry
Part of the mission focused on advocating for Alberta's pulse producers to address trade issues, such as fumigation of pulses and tariffs on peas.

"Clearing the way for increased international market access is crucial for the continued success of our industry. Our industry needs predictability and we appreciate the government communicating our trade concerns to their counterparts in India and to the country's business community."

Rodney Volk, Alberta Pulse Growers
The team met with a number of senior business executives, chamber of commerce members, retailers and importers, who provided insight into business expansion opportunities available for Alberta producers of pulses and canola.



"Alberta's world-renowned canola makes the healthiest vegetable oil. Given that India is among the world's top three importers of edible oils in the world, Alberta is ready to tap into that market."

Ward Toma, executive director, Alberta Canola
As part of the mission, Minister Carlier signed a memorandum of understanding for cooperation on Agriculture and Animal Husbandry with the Government of Meghalaya.

Other highlights of the mission include:
Meeting with the Indian Union Minister for Food Processing to discuss trade opportunities and issues including fumigation of pulses and tariffs on peas
Meeting with a pork production company and a senior representative of the State of West Bengal to discuss the need for animal genetics, water infrastructure and geomatics expertise and technologies from Alberta and Canada
Minister Carlier's address at Agro Protech, a local conference for farmers, researchers and industry professionals to help them learn about the latest trends, technologies and public policies in India's agriculture sector
A pork promotion event at the High Commission of Canada, where Alberta-raised-and- processed pork products were served to potential exporters
Last year, Alberta's agriculture trade with India was worth about \$82 million. India represents Alberta's largest export market for pulses and is also a major market for canola meal, lentils and malt.

Check out the interview on Call of the Land:

<https://soundcloud.com/alberta-agriculture/agriculture-minister-carlier-minister-carlier-discusses-his-trade-mission-to-india>

Minister MacAulay promotes agricultural trade with California and the United States

News release

From Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

Friday, February 23, 2018 – Ottawa, Ontario – Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC)

Canada and the United States (U.S.) share deeply integrated economies and enjoy the largest bilateral trade and investment relationship in the world.

As negotiations on a modernized North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) continue to progress with the seventh round of renegotiations to be held in Mexico City, Mexico from February 25 to March 5, 2018, the government of Canada continues to work to strengthen the Canada-U.S. trade relationship and create new opportunities for producers and food processors on both sides of the border.

As part of these efforts, Minister MacAulay travelled this week to Sacramento, California, where he highlighted the strengths of agriculture trade with California, noting that Canada is the number one market for California's agriculture and agri-food exports worth \$5.4 billion (CAD) in 2017.

The Minister had a bilateral discussion with California Secretary of Food and Agriculture, Karen Ross, and Canada was recognized as an important trading partner for the U.S. on the California Assembly Floor, and the California Senate Floor.

During these events, the Minister discussed the agricultural benefits of NAFTA regarding trade between Canada, California and the U.S. He also emphasized the importance of ongoing U.S.-Canada collaboration and cooperation, while speaking with the California Chamber of Commerce and U.S. Congressman, Ami Bera.

Minister MacAulay later provided remarks at a Friends of Canada Reception, and held meetings with various U.S. legislators, business representatives, and members of industry.

Quotes

"Canada and California are important trading partners for agriculture and agri-food products, supporting millions of middle class jobs on both sides of the border. NAFTA has brought tremendous economic benefits to Canada and California. Working closer together will make farmers and food processors on both sides of the border reach more markets, create more jobs and become more prosperous."

- The Honourable Lawrence MacAulay, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food

Quick facts

Canada exported \$2.9 billion (CAD) in agriculture and agri-food products to California in 2016.

Canada and the United States are each other's largest trade partners for agriculture and agri-food, with bilateral agriculture trade reaching \$62 billion (CAD) (\$47 billion (USD)) in 2016.

Canada is the top agriculture and agri-food export market for 29 states.

NEW Food Loss + Waste Cost-Share Program for Canadian Food & Beverage Manufacturers



invite food and beverage manufacturers from across Canada to join us and learn about a new cost-share program that will tackle food loss and waste in manufacturing facilities. Join us March 5th to secure your spot for participation in the program.

The first 50 food and beverage manufacturers enrolled in the program will receive 50-85% cost share (total project value of \$10,000) for a facility food loss and waste assessment that will identify operational cost savings.

Canada Centre for Food Integrity and Provision Coalition are pleased to

CCFI will be researching both consumer and manufacturer views on food loss and waste, with a public trust lens.

When: March 5, 2018
12:30 - 3:00pm - includes lunch

Where: Food & Consumer Products of Canada
2700 Matheson Blvd E, Mississauga

Can't join us in person? Livestream access available

View full details or Register online click [here](#)

This workshop is being funded as part of a grant provided by the Walmart Foundation.



Beneficial Insects... Your Unpaid Workforce Webinar

The webinar will look at the many beneficial insects that keep pest insects from causing too much damage in field crops. In particular, it will look at the economic thresholds of the damaging insects and emphasize that insecticide sprays should be the last resort in the fight against damaging insects. Be aware of the beneficial insects that may make spraying unnecessary as they are controlling the pests. When assessing a field for pests, pay attention to the beneficials, as well as the pest species, as they may be taking care of the problem for you.

Please register at: <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/290458375461786627>

From The Office

Rural Crime Watch...Get Involved

We all need to be educated on the laws and prevention of this every increasing problem and to get involved in your communities to ensure rural crime is decreased. If you have missed the informational sessions/open house (that were hosted throughout the province) in your area, you may call your local MP or RCMP to get more information and join/develop a rural crime watch group in your area.



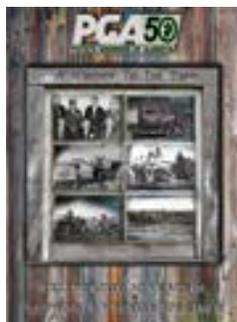
Please remember to complete and submit your monthly storage reports.



Staff at CDC North wore pink in support of anti bullying on February 28

Attention Growers
M.D of Taber Pesticide Courses:
Mar. 7th, and April 11th.
Call Jason Bullock 403-634-4429
for more info!

<p>Make sure you get your copies while supplies last!</p> <p>HISTORY BOOK \$42.00</p> <p>COOK BOOK \$15 Includes GST</p>	<p>Books are available at our Taber office, as well as, our north office in Edmonton:</p> <p>CDCN 17507 Fort Rd Edmonton, AB Ph: 780.415.2305</p>
--	---



6008 46 Avenue Taber, AB T1G 2B1
Phone: 403-223-2262
E-mail: pga@albertapotatoes.ca

Staff Editor:
Deb Brewin



The PGA assumes no responsibility for any errors in the information provided, nor assumes any liability for any damages incurred as a consequence, directly or indirectly, of the use and application of any of the contents of The Potato Minute. Unless otherwise noted on an individual document, the PGA grants users permission to reproduce and distribute information in the Potato Minute as long as the contents remain unaltered and as long as it is noted that the contents have been made available by the PGA.