

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR - Terence Hochstein



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As summer winds down and fall becomes the season of choice, this industry, and all things agriculture has the opportunity to look back on the past season and reflect on the "what if's" and "what could have been's" and prepare for next year.

"Thanksgiving is one of my favorite days of the year because it reminds us to give

thanks and to count our blessings. Suddenly, so many things become so little when we realize how blessed and lucky we are." - Joyce Giraud

September 1st the PGA welcomed Ms. Ashley Wagenaar to the PGA Team as our new Ag. Relations Director. Ashley takes over from Rebecca Wieler who has chosen a different career path. Ashley joins us with many years of agricultural experience in food production and agronomy work having worked for Farming Smarter, Little Potato Company, Nortera Foods and Bonduelle Canada in various capacities. Her previous experience is one of the many attributes that drew interest from the PGA. Ashley has hit the ground running and fits into the organization seamlessly. On behalf of the growers, industry and the PGA Team, we welcome Ashley to our organization. Feel free to reach out to her at any time and introduce yourself.

As the industry begins to wind down from harvest, it appears that everyone will have enough volume to fulfill the contractual needs. Earlier in the season, it appeared that we would have an above average yielding crop, but as the season wore on, it became evident that most growers would end up with an average yielding crop. Our chip and early season yields that were well above average made way to some rather disappointing Russet Burbank yields for some growers. Time will tell how much overage will come out of the season and what will become of it. For the first time in many years our seed growers were able to harvest a good crop, and in most cases, done before the southern part of the province finished. Even though their crop went in after the commercial crop was planted, they had timely rains and great growing conditions, including a harvest that was not delayed due to weather events.

Early indications are showing that all of the growing areas from Manitoba west had a good year and average to above

average yields. This cannot be said for our colleagues in the east, as many of these growing areas will have poor yields, with some areas receiving little to no rain since mid-July.

When all of the harvest data from across North America is collected we will see how this year's summer will affect the overall pile of potatoes across the continent.

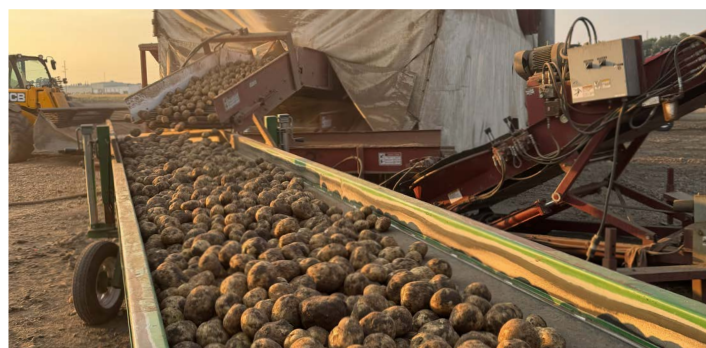
Every summer, the PGA has the opportunity to host some of the processors for their summer tours. In July, we had a number of folks from the Frito Lay group join us for a few days of touring around southern Alberta fields with their respective growers. In September, we hosted a contingent from Cavendish corporate to the southern part of the province and a couple of days later a group of Simplot representatives from their North American sales team spent the day touring a number of our farms. Overall, I believe everyone was impressed with the growing area and the quality of the product that our growers produce.

Our fall area meetings are set for October 14th in Taber and October 16th in Leduc. As always, industry is welcome to attend.

Final plans are being set for the 59th Annual Alberta Potato Conference and Tradeshow. November 18th – 20th at the Red Deer Resort and Casino. This year, we will be celebrating the APIA's 35th anniversary as our partner for the conference and tradeshow.

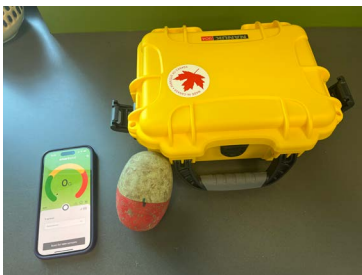
Until next month,

terence@albertapotatoes.ca
 403.382.8382



AG RELATIONS DIRECTOR - Ashley Wagenaar

Hello everyone, I'm Ashley Wagenaar, the new Ag Relations Director with the PGA, and I'm thrilled to be joining this great group of innovative growers and researchers. My first month has been jam-packed, spending time on farms during harvest. I brought along our new "smart spud," a device equipped with a live pressure sensor that we run through harvesters and diggers to identify high-impact areas. It provided a fantastic opportunity to visit many of our excellent seed growers and processing farms across Southern Alberta, the Calgary area, Lacombe, and Edmonton.



Smart Spud wirelessly connects to a cell phone and provides live impact data that is small enough it doesn't get kicked out on the grading lines

Though the PGA Research Director position saw some transition this summer, the research committee and I are now in full swing this fall. We've received our first round of applications through our new grant program, and with harvest wrapping up, our committee is excited to review them and learn about the new research requests in our region.

A new program always comes with continuing improvement, and as part of that, you can now find a PDF on the research page of our website that outlines available funding, deadlines, and our grower group's research priorities.

Regarding our currently funded projects, most are nearing their halfway point or are one year in. We expect to start seeing results from this cycle by the end of 2026 and into 2027. I'd like to highlight a couple of updates from our current projects, as we have some brilliant researchers working to advance Southern Alberta's potato knowledge.

The first project is Dr. Michele Konschuh's work on Powdery Scab in Rotational Crops. Now halfway through, this project analyzes different crops and weeds that could host *spongospora* (Powdery Scab), and tests known affected soil to determine different pathogen quantities. Soil-borne diseases



Julian Ketler, graduate student from Dr. Konschuh's lab, working on disease analysis of potato stem samples

can be particularly challenging because management timing and options are often limited. Knowing which other plants host the pest is critical. Ideally, growers can incorporate non-host crops into their rotation to break the disease cycle and control those weed hosts. As this research continues,

Dr. Konschuh aims to track how powdery scab levels change in the soil between potato crops, ultimately providing a guide to host crops and weeds for better rotation planning.

The second project, also halfway through, is Dr. Chandra Singh's work on Minimizing Shrink Loss in Potato Storage. Here in Alberta, potatoes can sometimes spend more time in the storage than in the field. Maintaining top quality from the first load to the last is essential, and one key area of focus is shrink percentage, the weight lost as potatoes dehydrate in storage. While state-of-the-art storages use cool temperatures and high humidity to minimize this, overall loss can be difficult to measure over long periods of time. To tackle this, Dr. Singh's team has placed sample bags throughout six different grower storages, spread from the bottom to the top of the piles. By weighing these samples at set intervals, the team aims to pinpoint how storage duration affects shrink, while also tracking other key quality metrics.

This project will continue on-farm trials to collect as much data as possible over the 3-year samples are in storage. The goal is to determine accurate shrink percentages and quality relationships to provide for Alberta growers.



Bin filled with sample bags placed throughout the pile. These bags were counted, weighed, and positioned at the bottom, middle, and top at harvest, when the bin was being filled. Bottom: Ashley & Matthijs Van't Westende at 845 Spud Farms Ltd. who runs the storage facility

We look forward to following the progress of these projects and others, which I'll continue to highlight in future articles. Here's to the continued advancement of potato research in Alberta!

Ashely Wagenaar
403.715.6867



Getting the job done for Albertans: Unleashing industries

Premier Danielle Smith has issued mandate letters that direct ministers to take action to unleash the potential of key industries and build prosperity for all Albertans.

Alberta's Minister of Environment and Protected Areas Rebecca Schulz, Minister of Energy and Minerals Brian Jean, Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation RJ Sigurdson, and Minister of Indigenous Relations Rajan Sawhney have been tasked with working with key partners, including Indigenous partners, to unleash the full potential of key industries such as energy and agriculture to build prosperity for all communities in Alberta.

"Alberta succeeds when our industries succeed. By unleashing the potential of energy, agriculture and other sectors, we are opening new doors of opportunity for Albertans. With these mandates, we are focused on growth, environmental stewardship and Indigenous partnership to deliver prosperity for every community."

Danielle Smith, Premier

Environment and Protected Areas

The Premier tasks Minister Schulz with:

Relentlessly defending Alberta against federal overreach into provincial jurisdiction, including any federal regulation of industrial emissions, intra-provincial projects, electricity or plastics, and building alliances with other provinces. Amending the Water Act to increase water availability, improve access to water licenses for municipalities, industry and agricultural producers, and ensuring responsible long-term management of Alberta's water resources, while respecting traditional uses and upholding environmental stewardship.

Asserting Alberta's constitutionally protected authority in dealing with species at risk, including for caribou and sage grouse habitats.

Finalizing and publicly releasing a final accelerated strategy for oil sands mine water management and tailings pond reclamation.

"Premier has given me a clear mandate: deliver results, strengthen our economy and keep protecting the

environment. Albertans want a common-sense approach to conservation and that is what we are delivering."

Rebecca Schulz, Minister of Environment and Protected Areas



Agriculture & Irrigation

The Premier tasks Minister Sigurdson with:

Developing legislation to put 'Agriculture First' and implementing regulatory changes to cut red tape and remove bureaucratic barriers, making the province's agricultural products more competitive and increasing consumer choice by contributing to local and global food security.

Continuing to modernize and expand the province's irrigation infrastructure to ensure farmers, ranchers, processors, communities and recreational users have access to the water they need.

Prioritizing long-term soil health and biodiversity, ensuring Alberta's farmland remains productive for generations to come, while working to reduce fertilizer costs and improve availability by exploring innovative solutions and strategic partnerships.

"Alberta's farmers, ranchers, and processors are the backbone of our province, and I am honoured to continue serving them. We've already seen record-breaking investment and job creation, and I'm excited to build on that momentum by cutting red tape, expanding market access, and strengthening food security so our agriculture sector remains strong and competitive for generations to come."

RJ Sigurdson, Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation

[Read full article](#)

Source: alberta.ca

Federal, Provincial and Territorial Ministers of Agriculture meet to support a resilient and competitive agriculture and agri-food sector



Agriculture and
Agri-Food Canada

News release

September 9, 2025 – Winnipeg,
Manitoba

The annual conference of federal, provincial and territorial (FPT) Ministers of Agriculture was held in Winnipeg, Manitoba, from September 7 to 9, 2025. Ministers recognized the impacts of dry conditions and wildfire activity affecting regions across Canada, and the significant uncertainty caused by tariffs.

FPT Ministers met to advance collaborative efforts in support of a resilient, sustainable and competitive agriculture sector and affirmed their commitment to working together to support hard-working producers and processors to address a variety of existing and emerging challenges. Ministers highlighted ongoing engagement activities across governments, industry and with key sector partners and acknowledged the recently imposed tariffs' impacts on the sector and the economy. Trade action on Canadian canola, peas, pork, and seafood and other commodities has significant financial and economic implications for the agriculture and agri-food industry. To support the sector's ability to navigate evolving trade dynamics, Ministers emphasized the importance of ongoing engagement with key trading partners, including the United States and China, while expanding and diversifying market access and enhancing critical infrastructure. Ministers also heard from a panel of experts, composed of producers, processors, food manufacturers and others from across the agriculture and agri-food value chain on future trade opportunities, infrastructure and other investments. Ministers discussed the conditions of competition between domestic and imported agriculture and agri-food products, and agreed to examine the issue in further detail.

Throughout the conference, discussions focused on ensuring that Business Risk Management (BRM) programs are sustainable and reflect the needs of producers. Ministers reviewed recent adjustments to the AgriStability program for the 2025 program year, including increases to both the compensation rate and the maximum payment limit. Ministers confirmed their intention to implement the necessary adjustments to include feed costs associated with rented pasture as an allowable expense starting in the 2026 program year, while exploring the possibility of adding further allowable expenses to improve program effectiveness. In their discussions on the next policy framework, Ministers explored opportunities for potential reforms to the BRM suite and tasked officials with continuing to assess and develop options that ensure programs are more coherent and responsive.

FPT Ministers discussed their commitment to preserving the Safe Food for Canadians Regulations as the basis for interprovincial and territorial trade of food in Canada, while continuing joint efforts on the slaughter availability pilot projects and pursuing a number of other opportunities to further facilitate internal trade. Seizing these opportunities will help ensure food safety while protecting continued access for Canadian businesses to critical export markets.

Ministers reaffirmed commitments to take collaborative action on key initiatives related to animal disease preparedness, prevention and response activities. Ministers highlighted progress with governments and industry, including on preparedness activities related to African swine fever, a Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD) vaccine bank for Canada, and work to reduce the impact of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI). Ministers also underscored the importance of biosecurity to safeguard animal health and the sector's resilience.

Ministers heard a presentation from the Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA). They highlighted the importance of a science and evidence-based regulatory system that is predictable, reliable, economic-minded and timely. Ministers discussed the need to enhance collaboration and consultation among governments to improve the efficiency of the pesticide regulation system, investment in research to promote innovative pest management and preventative tools.

Ministers welcomed recent progress on reducing red tape, regulatory modernization efforts and improving service delivery for regulated parties. Initiatives include a streamlined pathway for the approval of feed products, and the launch of a centralized website to simplify licencing. Ministers supported continued work to pursue harmonization of Canada's Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) enhanced feed ban with the U.S. to improve competitiveness for producers and processors. These efforts support regulatory modernization, economic growth, and better outcomes for producers and consumers across Canada. Ministers discussed the importance of addressing food waste.

The next Annual FPT Ministers' meeting will be held in Halifax, Nova Scotia. For more information, please see the Backgrounder: Summary of items from the 2025 Annual Meeting of Federal Provincial and Territorial (FPT) Ministers of Agriculture.

Source: alberta.ca

FROM THE OFFICE



AGM SPEAKER LINEUP



CLAIRE TAYLOR

Advocacy Consulting
BIO

[MORE INFO / REGISTER](#)



JEFF MILLER

Miller Research
BIO



JOHN POMEROY

Department of Geography &
Planning - U of S
BIO



VICTORIA STAMPER

UPGC General Manager
BIO



JULIE PASCHE

North Dakota State University
BIO



EMILY OWEN

United Potato Growers of Alberta
BIO



BRENDA ROBINSON

The Robcan Group
BIO

AGM AGENDA

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2025

10:00 am	Registration Desk Opens - Event Centre
4:00 pm – close	Tradeshow - Event Centre
1:00 pm – 2:00 pm	Seed Grower Business Meeting (AB Licensed Seed Growers only) M & S Rm
2:00 pm – 2:30 pm	Refreshment Break in M & S Room
2:30 pm – 4:00 pm	Jeff Miller – Miller Research – "Navigating the Disease Landscape of Russet Potato Variety Susceptibility"
6:00 pm – 9:00 pm	Welcome Reception - Event Centre
9:00 pm – 12:00 am	APIA Hospitality Reception Event Centre

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2025

7:00 am – 8:30 am	Breakfast - Event Centre
7:30 am – 4:00 pm	Registration Desk Opens - Event Centre
9:00 am – 5:00 pm	Tradeshow – Event Centre
8:00 am – 10:00 am	PGA Business Meeting (AB Licensed Growers only) M & S Rm
10:00 am – 10:20 am	Refreshment Break - Event Centre
10:20 am – 10:30 am	Welcome – Alison Davie, PGA Board Chair
10:40 am – 12:00 pm	"Conference Opening"/Keynote Speaker" – Claire Taylor – Agvocacy Consulting "From Rising Scrutiny to Growing Trust: Reframing Agriculture's Story"
12:00 pm – 1:00 pm	Lunch - Event Centre
1:00 pm – 1:50 pm	Victoria Stamper & Emily Owen – UPGC – "Potato Market Update & Second Harvest - From The Farm"
1:50 pm – 2:40 pm	Jeff Miller – Miller Research – "Keeping Early Blight and Verticillium Away"
2:40 pm – 3:00 pm	Refreshment Break - Event Centre
3:00 pm – 3:50 pm	Julie Pasche – NDSU - "In the Shadows: The Impact of Black Dot and Strategies for Management"
3:50 pm – 5:00 pm	Grower Panel - "An Industry in Transition – Balancing Growth, Ground and Opportunity"
5:30 pm – 6:30 pm	Cash Bar Cocktail Reception – Mediterranean Ballroom
6:30 pm – 9:00 pm	PGA Annual Banquet – Mediterranean Ballroom
9:00 pm – 12:00 am	APIA Hospitality Reception – Mediterranean Ballroom

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2025

7:00 am – 8:30 am	Breakfast – Event Centre
7:30 am – 10:30 am	Registration Desk – Event Centre
9:00 am – 2:00 pm	Tradeshow - Event Centre
7:30 am – 9:45 am	PGA Business Meeting (AB Licensed Growers only) M & S Rm
9:45 am – 10:00 am	Refreshment Break – Event Centre
10:00 am – 11:00 am	John Pomeroy – U of S - "Future Water Supplies for Southern Alberta"
11:00 am – 12:00 pm	Brenda Robinson – The Robcan Group "Resolving Conflict in Challenging Situations"
12:00 pm – 1:15 pm	Lunch & APIA Awards/PGA Draws - Event Centre
1:15 pm – 1:30 pm	Closing Remarks – Alison Davie – PGA Board Chair

UPCOMING FALL AREA MEETINGS

SOUTH AREA MEETING

Breakfast Meeting
October 14th 8am
Taber Heritage Inn

NORTH AREA MEETING

Supper Meeting
October 16th 6pm
Leduc - Holiday Inn & Suites



Bottom & Top Right: Great North Potatoes toured over 200 students from New Humble Community School, Calmar Alberta, September 18th. Joyce and Klaas Bakker opened their farm up to educate the group all about potatoes. The day included potato machinery and an all-potato lunch with French fries, potato perogies, potato chips and potato salad served by Stacey Bajema-PGA Staff and Edmonton Potato Growers staff. Bottom right: Kent Lamoureux from Sturgeon Valley Fertilizer spoke from his end gate about different inputs and soil nutrients in the fields. It was a full day of learning!



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Growing Healthy Potatoes Together!





MEMBERSHIP

The Alberta Potato Industry Association is composed of individuals from various areas of business, all of whom work with, and alongside, the potato growers in Alberta. Formed in 1990, the APIA facilitates in the networking with growers at events such as the Burgers N Beans, the Alberta Potato Conference Trade Show, and the Annual PGA Golf Tournament. We are very excited to be celebrating 35 years of partnership with the growers this year!

If you are interested in becoming a member, please send an email to apiamemberships@gmail.com. Memberships will be sent out at the end of the year to last years' members, as well as those interested this year.

LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP RECIPIENTS

The following individuals are recognized for their long-standing contribution to the APIA and have been awarded a Lifetime Membership to our association:

Corah, Chuck
Gash, Brian
Gouw, Arie

Hacker, Bill
Jensen, Wayne
Kaiser, Dave

Mitchell, Peter
Mrak, Tony
Nelis, Jacques

Oikawa, Tricky
Stewart, Russ
Sandberg, Phil

The following individuals are members in good standing of the APIA for the 2025 calendar year:

Alcock, Tony
Aleman, Mike
Bauman, Gerald
Blaine, Justin
Bos, Tim
Brehaut, Randy
Cabernel, Courtney
Coker, Mike
Day, Carol
DeHaan, Jeff
Draper, Derrick
Duell, Michael
Dykstra, Ray
Fletcher, Blake
Fletcher, Bruce
Fletcher, Derrick
Garos, Dirk

Gallant, Dave
Glas, Cobie
Goertzen, Nathan
Gratton, Geraldine
Gratton, Lawrence
Haacke, Aaron
Haan, Hartger
Hanlon, Brendon
Iwan, Josh
Janssen, Tom
Keys, Scott
Klassen, Greg
Konynenbelt, Marlin
Kwiatkowski, Ryan
Laaveg, Chris
Leffers, Joel
Lyczewski, Laurie

MacDonald, Mike
Mackinnon, Kevin
Marshall, Robin
Meier, Whit
Menkveld, Andrew
Michielsen, Frank
Molenaar, Reegan
Nelis, Brian
Nelubowich, Adam
Nikles, Brendan
Nyborg, Bruce
Pickles, Taunya
Pieters, Kristof
Pluta, Denine
Quinn, Dean
Quinton, Justin
Quiring, Cassidy

Ritchie, Mike
Russell, Jessie
Schuppler, Steve
Slomp, Harry
Sorensen, Martin
Steidley, Cory
Sternberg, Ronald
Stewart, Craig
Sydoryk, Terry
Van Eedan Petersman, Lloyd
Visser, Daniel
Vossepoel, Adam
West, TJ
Wilson, Barb
Wynker, Sara