



Don Shepert, APG Chair

CHAIR'S REPORT

INCREASED PULSE ACRES EVIDENCE OF REBOUND IN GROWER CONFIDENCE

Early estimates show that more pulses were planted in Alberta this year than last year.

The farmers who grew those pulses did so for many reasons, including benefits to the soil, because it was that time in the rotation as well as because they anticipated good prices and markets changing for the better.

As you will see as you flip through the pages that follow, and in the general news media, plant protein is gaining momentum. Companies are competing to see who can take pea protein and make it into the most nutritious and delicious burger or other food. As a pea farmer and a consumer, this is very exciting to me. I remember visiting Europe on behalf of APG in 2015 as a fairly new director and learning about all the work being done there to improve pulse flavour and nutrition. I also know that a lot of great work in that area has been done by scientists right here in Alberta with APG funding.

The increasing demand for pea protein could not have come at a better time for farmers so that we continue developing new markets for our product even with market restrictions in India, traditionally our top pulse importer. China has also stepped up to import more Canadian pulses.

Now, we are even hearing about by-products from pea processing

potentially being used as inputs for new clothing materials. This all means more markets for our peas and other pulses. I can hardly wait to see what innovative use for our crops people will come up with next. I certainly hope that these developments are paving the road for more pulse processing facilities in Alberta so that we aren't as dependent on foreign markets in the future.

In order to make the most of the new markets for pulses, growers will likely want to see how new varieties fared in their areas and keep up to date with the latest agronomy and marketing news. A good way to do this is to download the Alberta Pulse Growers app. The news and regional variety trials (RVT) app was launched last November and continues to evolve to serve pulse growers the information they want when they want it.

I would also encourage you to follow APG staff on Twitter @albertapulse, @APGExtension, @APGResearch, and @APGCED.

There is a wealth of information available at your local zone meetings in the fall as well. We strive for these meetings to be an informative and valuable use of your time as a producer. Again, we have partnered with Alberta Barley and Alberta Wheat in Zones 2, 3, 4 and 5 to present joint meetings branded

as *Next Level Farming*. The theme continues to fit as we view these meetings as an opportunity to share information about current best practices and technology. Check the back cover of this issue for more information.

These meetings are an excellent opportunity for growers to ask their questions of commission staff, directors and other pulse experts. If you can't make it out to your zone meeting, you will have another chance to chat one-on-one with agronomy staff, directors and advisors at the APG booth at Agri-Trade in Red Deer and then at FarmTech in January. The APG annual general meeting will be held during FarmTech on January 29, so please make a point of attending or tuning in to the live broadcast. If you have any resolutions, or nominations for director-at-large positions, please contact office@albertapulse.com by January 15.

