

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

APG CONTINUES TO ADVOCATE FOR FARMERS DESPITE COVID-19

The impact of the global pandemic caused by COVID-19, and the resulting changes to how business is conducted also touches the farm. Elevators and seed cleaning facilities have changed their protocols, and on the farm, farmers are investigating changing how they engage with employees and others who come to the farm to do business. There are great resources being shared electronically; websites like:

- **The Canadian Agriculture Human Resources Council** - <https://cahrc-ccrha.ca/programs/emerging-agriworkforce-issues/information-and-updates-coronavirus-covid-19>
- **AgSafe Alberta** – www.agsafeab.ca
- **For the latest in Alberta updates the government of Alberta website is updated regularly:** www.alberta.ca/coronavirus-info-for-albertans.aspx

Agriculture has been identified as an essential service by many provinces and through federal guidelines by the Government of Canada. Technically, this means that farmers can do the business that they are supposed to do - plan, seed, monitor and maintain, and harvest - in the months ahead. However, with other services that surround farming, the hope is that they too can do what is needed to keep an integrated food production system working.

Alberta Pulse Growers has also changed the way we are doing our jobs. We are social distancing, using web technologies and finding alternative ways to share with

farmers what we are doing. We are preparing the 2020 Regional Variety Trial (RVT) program and have secured sites across the province to share information on how varieties perform during the year, including organic RVTs for the first time. We are moving ahead in Plot to Field work engaging our cooperators to address a fourth year of field-scale research with the second year of a project looking at safe placement of phosphorous in the seed row.

In the interest of public safety, many major extension events have been cancelled this summer. Our colleagues have determined that Canolapalooza is not proceeding and other events are looking at significant changes. While we won't be active in some of these forums like in the past, we are finding ways to reach out with webinars and share information on video through our APG app and other social media sites. Download the APG app and connect with us for immediate updates.

On the policy front, we have increased interaction with government provincially with our APG Directors and with our partners in Team Alberta (www.teamalbertacrops.com), discussing unharvested acres, BRM and approaches to securing PPE for agriculture in our current situation. Federally, through Grain Growers of Canada (www.ggc-pgc.ca), we continue BRM discussions, and working with Pulse Canada (www.pulsecanada.com) and Soy Canada (www.soycanada.ca) making sure that elected officials understand how their decisions impact the farm.



Leanne Fischbuch, Executive Director

We cannot predict how, or when, this pandemic event will fade, however business has been changed. Today the grain sector and other agriculture sectors can build trust with the public in sharing our story and continuing to provide and contribute to a safe and healthy food system during unprecedented times. Agriculture is given the freedom to operate during this crisis and agriculture has an opportunity to capture public trust in an unprecedented way – farmers grow food and food is a necessity.

Send us a message or give us a call: APG staff can always be reached through email and phone messages and we will get back to you. Have a healthy and safe growing season.

