

# AS GROWER PRIORITIES CHANGE, SO DOES APG RESEARCH

When Dr. Jenn Walker joined Alberta Pulse Growers as Research Director in 2009, the organization's research budget that year was \$400,000. Most of that amount was for research into peas, with a few bean projects rounding out the portfolio.

In February 2021, APG announced new research funding of \$1.06 million for the year ahead. This covers not only peas and beans, but lentils, faba beans, chickpeas, soybeans and lupins as well.

"When you include previous years' funding from APG alone, between new and ongoing projects, \$9 million in APG research funding is out there working for growers in 2021," Walker said. "It's more than \$25 million in total when partner funding on our projects is added. This includes funding from the two agriscience clusters we are part of."

Today, the APG research team includes Research Officer Dr. Jagroop Gill Kahlon, as well as, on select projects, Food & Nutrition Coordinator Debra McLennan and Policy & Program Specialist Nevin Rosaasen. The research program's greater funding and deeper team allow APG research to keep up with a dynamic set of pulse issues and opportunities.

APG's approach to research stands on four strong pillars, Walker explained.

**Producer direction.** APG's Board of Directors and Research Committee ensure that research projects solve real producer issues. As those needs change, research projects respond. Recent years' work on *Aphanomyces* is a good example.



*This APG initiative takes cutting-edge research from small plots to farmers' fields.*

## **Multiple research aims.**

APG research spans genetics, insect and disease protection, pulse utilization, sustainability and consumer health issues. This supports APG's Vision: *Pulses on every farm, on every plate.*

**Robust screening process.** Project selection – both the topic and the methodology – is guided by a rigorous process of internal review and confidential external peer review.

**Constructive partner relationships.** APG maintains strong working

relationships with funders such as Western Grains Research Foundation, Alberta Innovates and Alberta's new Results Driven Agriculture Research. By joining forces on shared priorities, more producer issues can be addressed.

"The strength of APG's research program today goes back to the program's inception many years ago," Walker said. "The program was set up to reflect real producer priorities and achieve maximum results for the money spent. We have built on that foundation ever since."