



APG'S FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT CRAIG SHAW HONoured WITH 2021 ALBERTA PULSE INDUSTRY INNOVATOR AWARD



Shaw at his Lacombe-area farm.

Each year, APG recognizes a person or organization whose progressive thinking and tireless efforts helped build Alberta's pulse industry into the flourishing sector that it is today. Shaw was pleased to learn he had been selected to receive the 2021 Innovator Award and shared the honour with his peers.

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– Craig Shaw

Shaw had a great impact on the growth of Alberta's pulse industry in many areas, and particularly as a champion of research and extension of pulse production knowledge and practices.

He is a fourth generation Lacombe-area producer who retired from farming in 2016. He was the inaugural vice-president of the newly formed Alberta Pulse Growers Commission in 1989 and became APG's president in 1990.

"I'm very impressed with those that have carried on since we originally started," Shaw told the APG members gathered virtually for the annual general meeting on January 27. "I think for all of us that were in on the ground floor, it tended to be our baby for an extended period of time. We were a little reluctant to turn those reins over to other people, but in hindsight we didn't have anything to worry about, and I'm very impressed with the professional organization that the pulse commission is today."

The Alberta Pulse Growers (APG) selected the organization's first vice-president, Craig Shaw, as the winner of the seventh annual Alberta Pulse Industry Innovator Award.

"Craig Shaw was an early adopter of new pulse growing practices and technology in the early days of the Alberta Pulse Growers Commission," said APG Past Chair Don Shepert. "He also put a tremendous effort into sharing what he learned with other growers, even going so far as to hold an annual farm tour to help other farmers successfully grow these new crops. Craig had a great impact in growing the industry in many different ways."

"I was pleasantly surprised for the award as my pulse commission days were well before the current board," he said. "I consider this more as an award for all those who were part of the pulse association before the pulse commission. When I look back now, I can't believe our commitment betting on a basically new industry. The collaboration between a number of producers and some good industry support people meant we were able to tackle endless challenges. Our goal was to provide some cropping options and gain a presence in the protein industry. When we look at the current industry, our group is proud of our contribution to achieve those goals and get where we are today."

Since planting his first pea crop in 1984 to feed his brother's hogs, his belief in pulses as an essential part of crop rotation continued to grow.

"We had a lot of land very well suited to pulses and all that land was virgin land at that time so the soil disease issues we deal with today weren't prevalent," Shaw said. "We saw the value in a cheap vegetable protein and whether that went to animals or human, I think that has proven out over time. There's been an expanding, growing market for that and more potential ahead."

Shaw is well-known for being an early adopter of new practices and technologies who helped grow Alberta's pulse industry by sharing his experiences with other farmers.

The goals of the Shaw farm were to continually find new answers to address issues affecting the farming operation and Shaw implemented many concepts in precision farming. He conducted a yearly summer farm tour to share new ideas and concepts with fellow producers. He worked closely with the Ag Canada research station in Lacombe in testing new concepts on the farm. He has also been active in many farm organizations including the Alberta Crop Industry Development Fund board.

In addition, Shaw was an active member of the FarmTech planning committee, starting back when FarmTech was new. He was instrumental in getting the annual event rolling and was recognized for his efforts when he was presented with the 2016 FarmTech Award.

To view the video of Shaw's acceptance of the APG Innovator Award, visit APG's Youtube channel or albertapulse.com.

Alberta Pulse Growers celebrated its 25th year as a commission by launching the Alberta Pulse Industry Innovator Award and presenting the



Former APG presidents at a 1995 convention: (Left to right) Frank Spanbauer, Craig Shaw, Lud Prudek, Renald Lamoureux and Jerry Bartosek.



Shaw accepts the 2021 Innovator Award.

organization's founding president, Lud Prudek, with the first annual award in 2015. Since that time, the award has been presented to acclaimed pulse researcher Ken Lopetinsky, life-long pulse supporter Blair Roth, Dr. Hans-Henning Muendel who developed numerous bean cultivars, Kirsty Ross (Piquette) who was instrumental in building the

field pea industry in northeastern Alberta, and Mark Olson who explored new pulse varieties and production methods in many roles including as Alberta Agriculture's Unit Head for Pulse Crops.

Nominations for the 2022 Innovator Award will be accepted by the APG office until Dec. 11, 2021.