EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

APG OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THE NEW FISCAL YEAR & OPPORTUNITIES TO INCREASE PULSE PROFITABILITY

Leanne Fischbuch, Executive Director

APG's farmer members have said that this is one of the most expensive crops that has been planted and now farmers are waiting to see if that investment will pay off. Early in the season in parts of the province the weather continued to be dry, but thankfully, some moisture finally arrived in June to spur germination and start seed establishment. Later in the summer, typical Alberta storms plagued parts of the province and proved that crop insurance programs are an important offering for many farmers.

Many know that pulse crops incorporated into the rotation help to counter input costs, thanks to their ability to fix nitrogen through the symbiotic relationship with rhizobia. With significant fertilizer challenges this year specific to increased cost and fertilizer accessibility, farmers who incorporated pulse crops in rotation will have lower costs this year and get benefits next year. With no heat dome, like in 2021, and crops maturing, farmers will turn to focus on harvest and getting the crop into the bin and to market. The opportunity for increased yield potential has been observed throughout the province, and this led APG and Pulse Canada to voice greater concern about rail transportation efficiency.

When farmers look at the previous crop year which contributed the smallest yields in the past five seasons, and then look at railway performance, they will see that the railways could not move the reduced amount of product in the country until well after the demand peak for many export markets. APG had the opportunity to bring this, and the container movement challenges, to the attention of Marie-Claude Bibeau, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, in a meeting held in July.

In July, Pulse Canada, in partnership with the Western Grains Elevator Association (WGEA), launched a grassroots campaign aimed at Class 1 railways (CN and CP) asking if they are ready to haul the 2022 harvest. As representatives for Alberta's pulse farmers, who are considerably affected by transportation issues like containerized movement, APG is anxiously waiting to see how things progress through the marketing season.

This summer, APG also took steps to prepare for a significant investment for the organization which will take place in spring 2023. APG will participate in a five-year investment in the Agri-Science Cluster program (Cluster). Cluster funding has been offered to the industry since 2008 with APG participating in the past three Cluster programs with a total funding investment of $3.9 million. In 2023, APG is expecting to participate in Pulse Cluster with other provincial pulse organizations and the Agronomy Cluster with Western Grains Research Foundation.

APG plans to continue our work providing a farmer voice to consultations federally and provincially. Current efforts involve feedback on the Canadian Fertilizer Emissions Reduction Target and input on development of an Indo-Pacific diversification office.

As APG enters the 2022-23 fiscal year for the organization, we are optimistic about the opportunity the pulse sector has before it. Growth, engagement, and finding ways to address pulse profitability are all elements that APG welcomes. I look forward to sharing the information and activities of the organization through the coming year. Have a safe and productive harvest.

All the best,
Leanne