NEW EVENT AND DIGITAL COORDINATOR EXCITED ABOUT THE FUTURE

By Collin Heap

I started as the Events and Digital Coordinator with Alberta Pulse Growers (APG) in July 2022, and I am thrilled to be a part of this team. A major reason that I wanted to work with APG was to join an outfit that is working with professionals actively changing the food industry and to promote the importance and fastidiousness of the agriculture industry. I know the benefits of pulses firsthand; I almost exclusively ate them as a student in university. I have started using the Alberta Pulse recipes and they become a delightful addition to my culinary milieu.

I come from the world of education as a teacher; I love to learn and acquire new knowledge of which there has been no shortage in this position so far. In many ways, I was steeped in education while growing up and I am certainly a product of my parents. My mother was also a teacher, and my father was a national park warden. Professionally, I ended up as somewhat of a Venn diagram between the two. Early in my life we moved a lot due to my dad's work; Riding Mountain in Manitoba to Fort Chipewyan, Alberta; then Prince Albert in Saskatchewan and then finally Sherwood Park, Alberta which is where I consider to be home. I am excited to be able to bring the knowledge and skills I have from education and apply them in a different manner and to engage with new people.

Education and leadership have been major through lines of my entire adult life. During my undergrad degree in Montreal, I was a tutor and Scout leader. While attending the U of A for my after-degree in Education, I was an outdoor leader at the Strathcona Wilderness Centre primarily instructing canoeing and cross-country skiing. I continued to teach skiing in the winters during my tenure as a teacher at the high school in Beaumont. As a teacher, I primarily taught Outdoor Education and English Language Arts. I am one of those rare people you never hear about who gets just as excited about a new Shakespeare adaptation as I do for a new grip wax for cross country skiing.

I have really enjoyed my time with APG so far. Since I started, I have seen places in the province I have never been to before as well as getting the opportunity to learn a new industry. I have really enjoyed getting to know my fellow APG colleagues as well as spending time with directors and advisors. I am very appreciative of the welcome I have received and am looking forward to further opportunities to make everyone's acquaintance at meetings and future tours (stay tuned). My first foray into event planning for APG occurred shortly after I began, with the 2022 Growing with Pulses Summer Tour. There was a truncated planning period, but all the moving pieces fell nicely into place before our departure. During the two days, some of the APG staff and directors took a fast-paced, yet informational circuit tour that went from Leduc to Lethbridge. Along the way, there were plot tours in Lacombe and Linden; the launch of the Know Your Food Trailer in Calgary; a tour of the bean plant at Viterra in Taber and a stop at Stamp Seeds to see the facility.

Going forward, I am excited to work on extension projects and help crystallize them into reality, using my experience with photography and video. Although I am new to the world of agriculture, I am seasoned at taking material that is exciting to me and funnelling it to others in an interesting manner.

My wife Kendall and I live in Beaumont with our two-year-old son named Thomas. He keeps me very busy, but also keeps giving me new perspectives on activities, and well, life. I am enjoying rediscovering things that I like through his eyes. I cherish spending time cycling, skiing, canoeing, and hiking as well as reading and exploring sci-fi worlds. I am always trying to learn something new and am currently taking piano lessons.