

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

# WORK CONTINUES AT HOME AND ABROAD TO BUILD MARKET OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALBERTA PULSES



*Leanne Fischbuch, Executive Director*

The geopolitical situation puts into perspective what Canada needs to do to keep our agricultural markets vibrant. This includes the pulse market. Presently, Canadian pulse exports are primarily flowing into two large markets: India and China. Politically, both countries are cautious, but that doesn't mean that the industry needs to panic. The industry just needs to be mindful and strategic. How?

First, establish business to business relationships and become more present 'in-country' with our largest trading partners. Second, prioritize the development of the diversification strategy for food and feed in areas of the world where we do have consistent relationships. Third, do what we can do within Canada and Alberta.

Alberta Pulse Growers Commission representatives, through our national organization Pulse Canada, once again are taking the steps internationally to reach out to our trading partners. As you read in the APG Chair's report, a team went to China this fall to listen, learn, and share what Canadian pulses have to offer.

Through Pulse Canada, APG has also invested in research overseas in countries that have typically not used pulses as a feedstock for their food production. Work has already been undertaken for feeding

studies showing the inclusion of pulses in swine diets in Canada, demonstrating an overall reduction in greenhouse gases (GHG) in the food chain. This new work is taking what our sector already knows and bringing it to strategic world markets. The new studies include feeding trials with fish, shrimp, and swine with southeast Asian markets.

A thriving market for the pulse trade is the North American marketplace. Canadian pulses have increasingly crossed borders to the US for pet foods. Keeping this market as a viable source is also critical. That isn't stopping the work that will also share our industry's sustainability efforts to lower GHG emissions by including pulses in livestock feeds. This message on reduction of greenhouse gases helps support corporate goals for large companies as many have shareholders who are requiring them to meet this objective.

Within Canada, APG through Pulse Canada is continuing to provide support for the development of information that will support the incremental use of peas in fractionation and increased market share for pea protein fractions in plant-based meat/dairy alternatives, bakery and animal-based processed meat and dairy. Peas continue to be the largest pulse crop produced in Canada and the goal is to have increased capacity within Canada by 2025. Other pulse crops are

also being worked on including faba bean, which is an important rotational crop for Alberta farmers. With fractionation, there is protein and there are other products like fibre and starch. Of the three products, starch has the most challenges. To facilitate the use of starch, APG has invested in research nationally and provincially that looks to discover new end uses of starch. This is exciting work. Within Alberta, APG is leading efforts by the Food Processing Development Centre in Leduc to showcase the potential of these new uses.

Finally, the opportunities for farmers to start to sell their pulses into value-added markets right in Alberta are starting to open. With the government of Alberta's value added tax credit there is increased interest in establishing facilities in the province. Farmers are starting to see contracts emerging online from various processors and the industry is developing here in our province. The future continues to look bright for pulses and Alberta Pulse Growers is supporting efforts to keep pulses in markets, develop new market opportunities, and most importantly, support our members with options for where they can sell their production.