



Shane Strydhorst, APG Chair

## CHAIR'S REPORT

# GROWERS ENCOURAGED TO SEE APG'S PULSE RESEARCH IN ACTION AT SUMMER EVENTS

By the time this issue of *Pulse Crop News* hits your mailboxes, seeding will be well underway, and I hope you are all finding adequate moisture to seed into for successful crop establishment. I am sure that wherever heavy spring snow fell, it was welcome. While there is already some early wildfire activity, let's keep our fingers crossed that we don't see a repeat of last spring.

This past year has included significant investments by Alberta Pulse Growers, particularly into research, as we work to tackle our most challenging production issues. The recent Science Cluster announcement was welcome news, as we will see significant funding from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) go towards important projects aimed at tackling root rots in peas and lentils.

A project investigating genomic improvement of faba bean was also funded, which should lead to improved varieties and potentially expand the region of adaptability for faba beans. Dr. Parthiba Balasubramanian's highly successful dry bean breeding program at AAFC Lethbridge also received continuing support.

We were happy to see support for Dr. Dengjin Bing's pea breeding

program based out of AAFC Lacombe, which continues to generate high performing pea varieties for the benefit of our growers. APG directors and advisors were delighted to honour Dr. Bing with the presentation of APG's 10th annual Pulse Industry Innovator Award at our recent March meeting held in Lethbridge.

Other highlights of the March meeting included the opportunity for directors and advisors to tour PIP (a new pea processing facility) and the AAFC Lethbridge research station, networking with other growers from across the province, and excellent presentations from a variety of speakers. We were encouraged to think strategically about the future of the pulse industry (see Executive Director's report for more), and I would encourage farmers to get involved as advisors with APG to take advantage of the opportunities that our March events offer.

One of the topics that came up in a few of these presentations was the increasing importance of communications with policy makers and the public. With this in mind, I recently participated in a workshop hosted by Dr. Stuart Smyth from the University of Saskatchewan, who is working to

establish a communications lab. We had roundtable discussions focused on Sustainability and Biodiversity, Research and Development, as well as Trade. The objectives of this workshop were to identify gaps in communication in these key areas, and to develop resources for more effective and consistent communication with policy makers and the public. I'm looking forward to seeing how the results of this ongoing work will help APG and Pulse Canada, and ultimately benefit farmers.

Work has begun planning plot tours at various locations around the province this summer, some of which will be co-hosted with other crop commissions and Applied Research Associations (ARAs). Please check out the Zone Updates in this issue, and Events section on the APG app for more information on dates and locations. We are also planning to hold our board meeting in Grande Prairie in July, and looking forward to engaging with farmers and seeing pea fields in Zone 4!

I wish you all a safe and successful planting season. Remember to check the APG app for useful tips and information and "Ask an Expert" to help get your pulse crops established. I hope to meet many of you at tours this summer!