

LATE ZONE 5 ADVISOR REMEMBERED FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO GROWING APG AND THE PULSE INDUSTRY



Long-time Alberta Pulse Growers (APG) Advisor and former Director Tom Jackson is remembered for his dedication to growing Alberta's pulse industry.

"Tom was a great promoter of pulses," said fellow Zone 5 Advisor Harold Haugen. "More often than not, he grew soybeans and tried other new crops on his farm. He was with APG from its inception and until he termed out on the board. He always said if you need me, I will step to the plate. He wanted to make sure people were active in their commissions too."

Jackson was one of the early APG commissioners. He was first elected as a commissioner-at-large (now known as director-at-large) in 1990, just after the new commission was established.

"He was very active with the organization and even when he completed his terms on the board and stepped into the advisor roles, he continued to be a voice for pulse growers in his area," said APG Executive Director Leanne Fischbuch. "He was not afraid to speak up, advocate for, or communicate on various topics around the sector or about farming in general. APG wishes to express our condolences to his family and friends and recognize that through his life, he was a strong contributor to pulse development and conversations in Alberta."

Zone 5 Chair Michael Bury said Jackson's contributions to zone discussions will be missed.

"Tom was a great guy," Bury recalled. "He was part of our sober second thought, no group-think with Tom. The combination of sometimes differing perspectives always made our committee meetings lively and effective."

Tom Jackson's obituary said that he had been struggling with chronic heart and lung problems, and passed away on August 10, 2024. He is survived by his wife, Lucy, his children and grandchildren.

Jackson became involved with APG when he farmed with his family near Sherwood Park. In 2001, Tom and Lucy established a new seed farm near Killam after rented fields were lost to housing developments in a growing Sherwood Park.

Jackson continued his involvement with APG in Zone 5, where he served alongside his Killam neighbour Haugen.

"At a meeting, no matter how small or large, if something came to a vote, and Tom had spoken against it, he would politely ask for his vote to be recorded," Haugen said. "Tom wanted to make the world a better place, and a focus for him was ag policy."

Haugen said he appreciated the support APG showed himself and Jackson when each became ill at different times during the past year. He said he was impressed by how many APG delegates attended Jackson's funeral to pay their respects.

At the graveside, Haugen recounted when Jackson had picked him up in a "sporty looking Audi" to travel to Lethbridge for the APG Director-Advisor March Meeting earlier this year.

"We headed down the road and Tom wasn't well," Haugen recalled with a chuckle. "He slept in the passenger seat and the power poles moved by pretty fast. Tom opened one eye and said, 'this rig has cruise control and I won't be offended if you use it.' That was his backhanded way of saying slow down. I never had the chance to take a sporty Audi for a drive before, especially with a sleeping passenger."

Haugen added that Jackson would always do whatever was necessary to make sure people turned out for their zone meetings, including picking him up just after he left hospital to make sure he made it to the Zone 5 fall meeting.

APG staff and members who knew Jackson agree that his presence at APG meetings and events will be missed, but his contributions will be remembered for years to come.