



AEPA Partner Profile: Alberta Pulse Growers Commission

Alberta Pulse Growers Commission (APG) represents farmers who grow field pea, dry bean, lentil, chickpea, faba bean and soybean in Alberta. Recently, the organization completed strategic planning which resulted in a new vision to strive toward: *Pulses on every farm, on every plate*. Continuing to focus on the farmer and the consumer, APG will be working through the new plan with this vision as a priority.

Pulses are environmental superstars and the use of these crops in farmers' plans enables many positive outcomes from the farm gate through to the food plate. On the farm, less input usage ticks the boxes for many positives, including reduced costs, less passes in the field, reduction in carbon footprint and building of the soil nitrogen base thanks to efficient nitrogen fixation properties. On your plate, the options continue to expand for plant forward products. New product launches for pulse-based foods have increased substantially over the past 10 years and, even with the recent pandemic environment, pulses and products made from pulses continue to be in demand.

Finding a way to provide value for farmers who grow pulse crops is key for our organization. A significant portion of our resources are directed to supporting a strong research and development program in genetic advancement, agronomy, food innovation and health. With an objective of increasing pulse acreage to three million acres by 2025, APG needs to be on top of addressing pulse adaptability and overcoming roadblocks that farmers may have with adding the crop to their on-farm systems. To maximize our resources, APG looks to address issues from a Canadian perspective by extending our research and development funding with our pulse partners in other provinces to focus our efforts on common problems. Similarly, if it is a multi-system issue, we partner with our other crop colleagues in Alberta to strengthen our effort at addressing challenges.

We are also focused on adding value for our membership through enhancements to our APP. Farmers can receive the latest APG news, research and agronomy information pushed directly to their smartphones by downloading the free APG app through the links available at www.albertapulse.com. This enables our organization to share key information and highlight important resources during the growing season. Sending the information quickly to our members has become valuable during this year as we work to find other formats of engagement with our members.

A strong voice on policy issues has evolved since 2015 with APG participating in the development and growth of Team Alberta. This has also become an area of focus where more resources have been targeted by the organization. Through working with partners like Alberta Canola, Alberta Wheat and Alberta Barley in the primary Team Alberta arrangement, APG has strengthened its ability to advocate and lobby to get farmers' voices heard. In addition, APG also supports highlighting issues that broaden the Team Alberta group to Team Alberta and friends encompassing an even wider provincial crop sector voice with Alberta Sugar Beet Growers and Potato Growers of Alberta on issues that include the special crops sector. When required on more specific issues, the voices of the Alberta crop sector are brought together through the work of the Crop Sector Working Group (CSWG), through which APG aims to tackle more environmentally focused issues. Policy is also supported nationally through APG participation in Pulse Canada, Grain Growers of Canada, Soy Canada and Biological Carbon Canada. Within these organizations, APG has found a way to bring a local voice to national issues.

Social licence and public trust continue as an evolving topic where APG is providing leadership. The focus here for APG is through education and targeted outreach to bring the understanding of cropping systems to the public. Emergence of a need for work in this area is leading to exciting opportunities in youth education, which aims to target awareness of the sector to young Albertans so that knowledge is shared and an understanding is developed to bolster agriculture's public trust for the future.

APG is beginning its 31st year in Alberta's agriculture sector in 2020-21. We have a reinvigorated vision, a revised plan and we have opportunity waiting for our organization and the farmers we represent. We will aim to fulfill our new strategic focus of grow, move and use, as well as play a role in supporting pulses on every farm and on every plate.

For more information:

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