

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR - Terence Hochstein

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Even though the calendar says that we are now into April, Mother Nature still wants to hang on to the final remnants of winter across the province, in some areas. Most years, our seed growers have a large portion of their seed shipped out already but with cold temperatures and blasts of winter still happening on a regular basis, things are moving rather slowly. With Easter behind us commercial growers are eager to get into their fields to begin planting. The nice part about this industry, is that most growers can get their crop in the ground in about 3 weeks. The next 2-3 weeks will be very busy for our seed growers to get a month's worth of seed shipped out in a relatively short timeline.

It seems that no one is immune from the ever-growing concern of on-line hacking. Thank you to ATB for providing their expertise at these meetings.



Dr. Chandra Singh from Lethbridge Polytechnic gives update on potato research projects

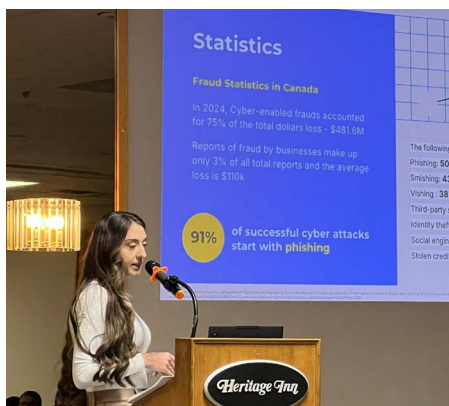
Thanks also needs to go out to the APIA for their continued support as our co-sponsor of the spring and fall area meetings. Their involvement in our industry does not go unnoticed.

The week of March 9-12th, 2026 a number of the PGA Team along with Russ Van Boom and Tony Kirkland attended the 104th Annual AGM of the Fruit and Vegetable Growers of Canada in Ottawa. Along with the spring meetings of UPGC and CPC the main focus was the restructuring of FVGC. A great deal of time was spent on discussions from the membership as to what the organization needs to do to refocus its direction and provide value to the membership. As costs continue to rise across the agricultural sector, the organization needs to concentrate on its key components and provide value to its membership. Congratulations go out to Russ Van Boom, as he was elected as 1st Vice President of the FVGC Board.



Ashley Wagenaar, PGA Ag Relations Director speaks to the North Area growers about CanadaGAP updates

On March 31st and April 1st, Alison Davie, Board Chair, Tony Kirkland, Matt Visser, Board members and Russ Van Boom along with Stacey and myself had the privilege to attend Team Alberta Crops Lobby Days with the Government of Alberta. We spent two days meeting with various Ministers and Government officials on topics and concerns that the agricultural industry is facing. There were a lot of excellent conversations with everyone. During the evening reception, PGA Chair, Alison Davie had the privilege of welcoming everyone on behalf of TAC and introducing RJ Sigurdson,



ATB's cyber specialist Jenna Amerongen shares vital information to protect yourself and your farm on cyber fraud

The PGA once again hosted its Spring Grower meetings March 5th in Leduc and March 24th in Taber. Both meetings were well attended by both industry and growers alike with a full house at both meetings. Attendees had the opportunity to listen to ATB's Cyber specialists present on computer and banking fraud.



PGA Chair, Alison Davie welcoming attendees and introducing Alberta Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation, RJ Sigurdson

Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation. Any time that we have the opportunity to engage with our elected officials, I feel that it's time well spent. The ability to tell our story and possibly have some influence on future policies that are set by government, in regard to agriculture, is not something that we should take for granted.

On April 2nd, Ashley and myself had the opportunity to attend an Industry breakfast at Lethbridge Polytechnic. There were a number of industry representatives from across southern Alberta we had the opportunity to engage with, including the Polytechnic President, Dean of Research and their teams. The conversation questioned what future classes need to be established and what areas of expertise do they need

to focus on, keeping up to the demands of southern Alberta industry.

As our industry begins to ramp up for another busy year, please remember that regardless of where you fit into this industry, the most important part of your success is the people around you and the roles that everyone plays. Take the time to do things the right way and the safe way. Ensure everyone goes home at night to their families.

Until next month,

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SEED DIRECTOR/GOV'T RELATIONS & POLICY - Stacey Bajema

TEAM Alberta Crops Advocacy Days Build Momentum at the Legislature



Team Alberta Crops returned to Edmonton March 31 – April 1 for its annual Advocacy Days, bringing together producer leaders from across Alberta's crop and beekeeping sectors to engage directly with key decision-makers.

Over two days, the delegation met with members of both the UCP and NDP caucuses, as well as representatives from Agriculture and Irrigation, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and Global Affairs Canada. Productive conversations were also held with a number of key MLAs, including Minister Sigurdson - Agriculture & Irrigation, and Minister Hunter - Minister of Environment & Protected Areas.

Advocacy Days provides an important opportunity for producers to share their on-the-ground perspective and ensure government understands the realities of farming in Alberta. As a united voice representing thousands of farmers, Team Alberta Crops continues to emphasize the importance of practical, coordinated policy that supports a competitive and resilient agricultural sector.

Discussions with government focused on several key priorities, including; strengthening market opportunities, improving transportation and trade infrastructure, and maintaining reliable access to domestic and international markets. The group also highlighted the need to streamline regulatory processes and ensure science-based decision-making that supports innovation and access to new tools.

Investment in agricultural research and innovation remained a central theme, with a strong message around the importance of sustained funding to support producers on the ground. At the same time, conversations reinforced the role of agriculture in environmental stewardship, which calls for practical, workable approaches to sustainability that recognize the realities of modern farming.

Team Alberta Crops continues to play a critical role in bringing together multiple commodity groups to speak with a unified voice. This collaborative approach strengthens relationships with government and ensures that Alberta producers remain at the forefront of policy discussions that impact the future of agriculture.



ED's, Board members of the TAC commodity groups and MLAs in meetings, RJ Sigurdson gives his address to the banquet attendees

Overall, this year's Advocacy Days were a strong reminder of the value of direct engagement. By sharing clear priorities and real-world experience, Alberta's crop sector continues to build momentum and reinforce its role as a key driver of the provincial economy.



L-R: PGA Executive Director - Terence Hochstein, Minister of Multiculturalism - Mohammed Yaseen, PGA Chair - Alison Davie, PGA Vice Chair - Tony Kirkland, PGA Seed Director/Gov't Relations & Policy - Stacey Bajema

Seed Growers Update

Seed potato growers across Alberta are in the thick of the shipping season, with product steadily moving out to customers. While progress has been consistent, logistics continue to require careful coordination as growers navigate changing weather conditions.

Fluctuations in temperature have required growers to adjust shipping schedules, balancing refrigerated loads with non-refrigerated deliveries destined for Southern Alberta. These loads are typically shipped in the morning to ensure safe arrival later in the day, adding another layer of planning to an already busy season.

Market demand also continues to vary by variety, with some seeing stronger movement than others. As the season progresses, growers remain focused on managing both logistics and market dynamics to ensure successful delivery. Cautious Optimism on CFIA Seed Potato Division

The Potato Growers of Alberta are optimistic following recent federal changes impacting the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), particularly within the Seed Potato Division. There has been concern across the industry that broader federal cuts could affect CFIA's capacity to deliver critical inspection and certification services. However, it appears that key personnel within the potato unit, those with deep industry knowledge and experience, have largely been retained.

Excerpts from the minutes of the PGA Commission's very 1st Annual Meeting in April 1966

The Commission was established at the request of the Potato Growers, and all preliminary work was done by the Alberta Potato Growers Association. The first attempts to set up a Commission were in 1961. At the time, the growers association requested a change in the marketing of Agricultural Products Act to allow for Commissions as well as Marketing Boards. This legislation was finally passed in 1965, and the first Commission in Alberta became operative on June 1, 1966.

The objectives of the Commission are:

1. Advertise, promote and otherwise increase the distribution and consumption of Alberta potatoes.
2. Aid research work in all phases of production and marketing.
3. Provide the Potato Industry with a newsletter to keep everyone informed on the progress of the Alberta Potato Industry, and help stabilize prices.

While inspector resources remain tight, this is not a new challenge for Alberta, where the system has long operated with a lean, highly efficient team. At this stage, there does not appear to be significant reductions to frontline inspection staff, providing some reassurance as the industry heads into another production season.



Health Canada Announces Changes to PMRA

Health Canada has announced organizational changes to the Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA), which as of April 1st, is now operating as the Pesticide Regulatory Directorate.

The Directorate will operate under the Healthy Environments and Consumer Safety Branch, with anticipated reductions in staffing, including certain program areas. These changes are part of broader federal restructuring efforts.

From an industry perspective, there is cautious interest in whether this transition could lead to more streamlined and efficient decision-making processes.

As these changes take effect, industry will be watching closely to understand how they impact timelines, service delivery, and overall regulatory effectiveness.

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AG RELATIONS DIRECTOR - Ashley Wagenaar



Spring brings excitement across agriculture, but it also ushers in one of the busiest stretches of the year. Meeting season is in full swing, grant deadlines pile up quickly, and extension work doesn't slow down just because calendars are full.

This month, I want to highlight one important organization that the PGA has been a proud member of for the past 60 years, the Fruit and Vegetable Growers of Canada (FVGC). Our staff and a few seed growers attend the AGM each year, along with several other meetings with the Canadian Potato Council (CPC).

This national organization meets in Ottawa to discuss priorities, working groups, and emerging legislation that affects fruit and vegetable production across Canada. Its membership spans a wide range of commodity groups, from the Apple Growers of New Brunswick to the Greenhouse Growers of Ontario, the Potato Growers of Alberta, and the BC Blueberry Council.

At first glance, you might wonder what a greenhouse grower in Ontario has in common with a potato grower in Alberta. The answer is fourfold: access to labour, crop protection tools, competitiveness, and public policy. Individually, each of our commodity groups are often too small to influence policy at the national level. Together, under one organization, we can speak with a unified voice for Canada's fruit and vegetable sector and have an equal presence in Ottawa.

Canada's Potato Industry for Improved Sustainable Production project. These projects matter because they address shared challenges and are carried out across multiple growing regions in the country.

The National Potato Variety Trials evaluate new and promising potato varieties by planting them in PEI, New Brunswick, Ontario, Quebec, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia. Varieties are assessed for disease resistance, productivity, and quality traits. Given that it can take six years or more for a variety to advance to the trial stage, sustained national support is critical to the success of this work.



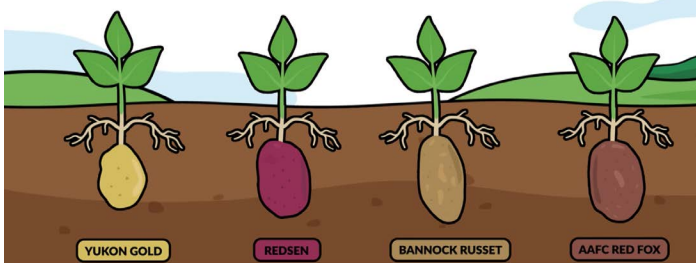
Potato trials during the 2025 growing season at Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada Harrington Research Farm on Prince Edward Island
Photo: Scott Anderson

The Positioning Canada's Potato Industry for Improved Sustainable Production project focuses on improving nitrogen use efficiency in both processing and table potato production. This research evaluates emissions efficiency and nitrogen management practices on farms in Alberta, Manitoba, New Brunswick, and PEI, helping producers adopt more sustainable and cost-effective approaches.



National Potato Variety Evaluation

LEAD RESEARCHERS: Erica Fava, National Potato Variety Trial Coordinator and Industry Liaison
Jen McFarlane, Soft Fruits IPM Coordinator and Research Coordinator - E.S. Cropconsult
Katerina Jordan, associate professor at the University of Guelph



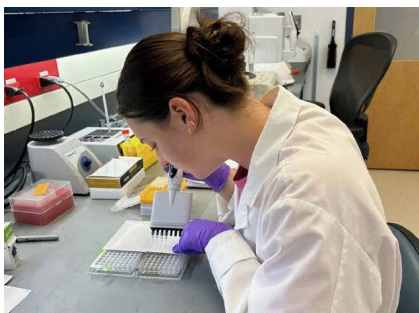
Sustainable Production in Canada's Potato Industry

LEAD RESEARCHER: Mario Tenuta, Senior Industrial Research Chair in 4R Nutrient Management and Professor of Soil Ecology at the University of Manitoba



If you'd like to learn more about these projects or the broader work of the FVGC, visit their website at fvgc.ca.

Ashley Wagenaar
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Master of Science student Taylor Austin working in the lab at the Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada Fredericton Research and Development Centre. Photo: Claudia Goyer

From a research perspective, national collaboration through organizations like FVGC is also the reason we receive Cluster funding. These funds allow us in Alberta to participate in important initiatives, such as the National Potato Variety Trials and the Positioning

EDUCATING & ENGAGING



Stats are in, and southern Alberta's largest Home, Garden and Leisure Show saw 16,000 people come through the doors, despite the freak snow storm that decided to dump on us during the 3-day event. 17 grower volunteers plus staff came out to help man the booth and speak to consumers and answer various questions that came up in conversations.



Dustin Monson and Mark Miyanaga having deep discussions with visitors to the booth



L-R: Brody Curtis, Matthijs van't Westende, Michel Camps, Brenda Bezooyen volunteering their time at our PGA Booth



Travis Elford and Lloyd Vossebelt answering questions from consumer



Alec Boes and Wade Ypma chatting with group of people about spuds



Visitors eyeing up different varieties of potatoes on display with Michiel Buijse and Louis Claassen



Left Photo: Hanneke Camps and Jorgen Rozendaal taking on first shift having a good conversation with attendees

Right: The "Story of Us" video series playing throughout the show drew much attention to the booth with many leaving that much more informed on our industry.



AGGIE DAYS

2019 was the last time Aggie Days was hosted in Lethbridge.

Agriculture For Life, along with the Lethbridge Ag Society partnered together this year to bring a very different format for students to visit booths and have dedicated time with each ag producer group or organization. Each class had 10 minutes at every booth, consisting of education and engagement with Alberta potatoes, canola, chickens, irrigation, seed, beef, farm safety plus Ag For Life's sessions throughout the 2-day event. Over 1000 students participated this year, from schools in the southern Alberta area.

As a pilot project, each group that hosted a learning centre, has the opportunity to give feedback for next year. There are a few changes that can make the show even better and the PGA will be there to participate again. We feel the new format was a definite change needed for students to connect and get excited about agriculture plus retain something that they learned during their visits to our booths. Thanks to our volunteers, Emily Ford, Mark Miyanaga and Wade Ypma, who made a huge impact on the students during the event, as well as Mr. Potato Head for helping out.



Wade Ypma, PGA grower, talks to students about his family's potato operation



Emily Ford, PGA grower, explains how potatoes are grown at the farm level



Mark Miyanaga, PGA grower, talking to students about where water for the pivot comes from



Students sort out the different stages of the potato growing cycle as an introductory activity





PGA GROWER PROFILE

Farm Name: Serfas Farms Ltd.

3rd Generation - Kevin & Mark Serfas

Location: Turin, Alberta

Crops Produced / Animals Raised: Potatoes, Corn, Cereals, Peas, Seed Canola, Beef Cattle

Q1. How did you get into potato farming?

Potatoes have been something that has been on our radar since 2020. We knew at some point, we wanted to diversify into them, but it was a matter of the opportunity opening up to us. When McCain announced their plant expansion, the opportunity knocked on the door and the rest is history!

Q2. What do you love about potato farming?

I think what I love about growing potatoes the most is the challenge. It is not like anything else we do on our farm. It adds another level of complexity and diversification.

Q3. How long have you been growing potatoes?

We harvested our first potato crop in 2024

Q4. What other activities are you involved in (outside the farm or association work)?

We have mainly been involved in our kids for the most part. Whether it be hockey, volleyball or equestrian, all our time spent off the farm has been watching them grow and enjoy their pastimes. Both Kevin and Mark spent many years on the boards of different hockey associations giving back their time to the community

Q5. What types of on-farm sustainability practices do you employ?

Having cattle has put us in a unique place when it circles around to potatoes. The manure we produce goes back into the land and enables us to cut down dramatically our dependence on synthetic fertilizers. We are also able to grow a lot of cover fall crops that we, in turn, cut for feed. 4R practices are heavily relied on, especially in the potato production. We like to think we are ahead of the game when it comes to sustainable production practices

Q6. How do you contribute to tell “your story” of agriculture to the public?

We are very vertically integrated. Everything we produce is either fed to our cattle for protein production or goes to a processor. At the end of the day, it all ends up in a grocery store. We can give a true farm to fork story.

Q7. What is the best farming advice you’ve been given?

Surround yourself with people that specialize in different aspects of your operation. We can try to be “jacks of all trades” but its hard to be an expert operationally in everything. The dollars are too big these days. And collaborate. You need to see people as partners, not enemies. Bankers, machinery dealers, input suppliers, lawyers, accountants, like minded neighbors etc. Work closely with them, collaborate and life will be much easier.

Q8. What are your concerns for the future of farming?

The hyper inflation of many things in the world of ag is starting to choke the money out of the industry. Access to capital is a huge concern going forward.

Q9. What excites you about the future of farming?

Farming is the best industry to be in. The world still needs to be fed. There is a finite amount of land to accomplish this. It is a challenge not for the faint of heart. We can wake up every morning with new opportunities and issues to take head on. It really is an exciting industry to be part of.

FROM THE OFFICE



SUE SMIENK

To one of our our incredible Potato Breeder Research Technicians with AAFC at the Lethbridge Research Station for 35+ Years of dedication to helping the potato industry in Alberta grow and prosper. THANK YOU...Enjoy a well-deserved retirement!



APIA BURGERS & BEANS BBQ
JULY 8th - Taber Legion Park

PGA / APIA ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT
JULY 9th - Taber Golf Club

More golf info coming soon!



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Growing Healthy Potatoes Together!





Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



30 May
International
Day of Potato

MARCH 30TH

International Day of POTATO 2026



Start making plans to celebrate
this global event!



www.fao.org/international-potato-day
#InternationalDayOfPotato



MEMBERSHIP

The Alberta Potato Industry Association is composed of individuals from various areas of business, all of whom work with, and alongside, the potato growers in Alberta. Formed in 1990, the APIA facilitates in the networking with growers at events such as the Burgers N Beans, the Alberta Potato Conference Trade Show, and the Annual PGA Golf Tournament. We are very excited to be celebrating 35 years of partnership with the growers this year!

If you are interested in becoming a member, please send an email to apiamemberships@gmail.com. Memberships will be sent out at the end of the year to last years' members, as well as those interested this year.

LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP RECIPIENTS

The following individuals are recognized for their long-standing contribution to the APIA and have been awarded a Lifetime Membership to our association:

- | | | | |
|--------------|---------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Corah, Chuck | Hacker, Bill | Mitchell, Peter | Oikawa, Tricky |
| Gash, Brian | Jensen, Wayne | Mrak, Tony | Stewart, Russ |
| Gouw, Arie | Kaiser, Dave | Nelis, Jacques | Sandberg, Phil |

The following individuals are members in good standing of the APIA for the 2026 calendar year:

- | | | | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|---------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| Alcock, Tony | Dykstra, Ray | Keys, Scott | Nelis, Brian | Stewart, Craig |
| Aleman, Mike | Elser, Ryley | Kinniburgh, Shaun/ | Nelubowich, Adam | Stinnissen, Pat |
| Bateman, Dave | Fletcher, Blake | Stacey | Neudorf, Ayrton | Sydoryk, Terry |
| Bell, Jared | Fletcher, Bruce | Klassen, Greg | Nikles, Brendan | Visser, Daniel |
| Blaine, Justin | Fletcher, Derrick | Konynenbelt, Marlin | Peters, Abby | Vossepoel, Adam |
| Bos, Tim | Forbush, Todd | Kruk, Adam | Pickles, Taunya | Warkentin, Bruce |
| Brehaut, Randy | Gallant, Dave | Kuipers, Kianna | Pieters, Kristof | West, TJ |
| Burns, Riley | Glas, Cobie | Kwiatkowski, Ryan | Pluta, Denine | Wielenga, Jorrit |
| Cann, Creed | Goertzen, Nathan | Leffers, Joel | Quinton, Justin | Wilson, Barb |
| Claassen, Chantal | Gratton, Géraldine | Loman, Ryan | Quiring, Cassidy | |
| Clark, Joe | Gratton, Lawrence | Lyczewski, Laurie | Ratray, Desire | |
| Coker, Mike | Haacke, Aaron | Mackinnon, Kevin | Reimer, Taylor | |
| Day, Carol | Haan, Hartger | Marshall, Robin | Ritchie, Mike | |
| DeHaan, Jeff | Hanlon, Brendon | Meier, Whitney | Russell, Jessie | |
| Draper, Derrick | Iwan, Josh | Menkveld, Andrew | Sawatzky, Kirby | |
| Dube, Kelly | Janssen, Tom | Michielsen, Frank | Slomp, Harry | |
| Duell, Michael | Joss, Jessica | Mykytiw, Murray | Sternberg, Ronald | |