



# ANNUAL REPORT



## 2023-24

GROWING HEALTHY  
POTATOES TOGETHER

YEAR ENDING:  
07/31/2024

# ABOUT US

The PGA is a progressive, member-driven organization focusing on success and sustainability in Alberta's potato industry through leadership, marketing, production, relationships and communication.

## MISSION

Growing Healthy Potatoes Together

## WHO WE REPRESENT

The PGA represents everyone who grows five or more acres of potatoes in Alberta, as well as, greenhouse nuclear growers who grow plantlets and sell mini tubers. Growers who fit this criteria must register with the PGA for licensing annually. Today the PGA represents the interests of around 155 Members.



## OUR VALUES



### UNITY

We are stronger together; our success is driven by our unity.



### ACCOUNTABLE

We are good stewards for our environment, industry and communities.



### OUTCOME-DRIVEN

We are committed to making positive impacts through our actions. Successful, engaged growers provide world class products, while striving for prosperity.



### TRUSTWORTHY LEADER

We strive to be great leaders in business and our communities.



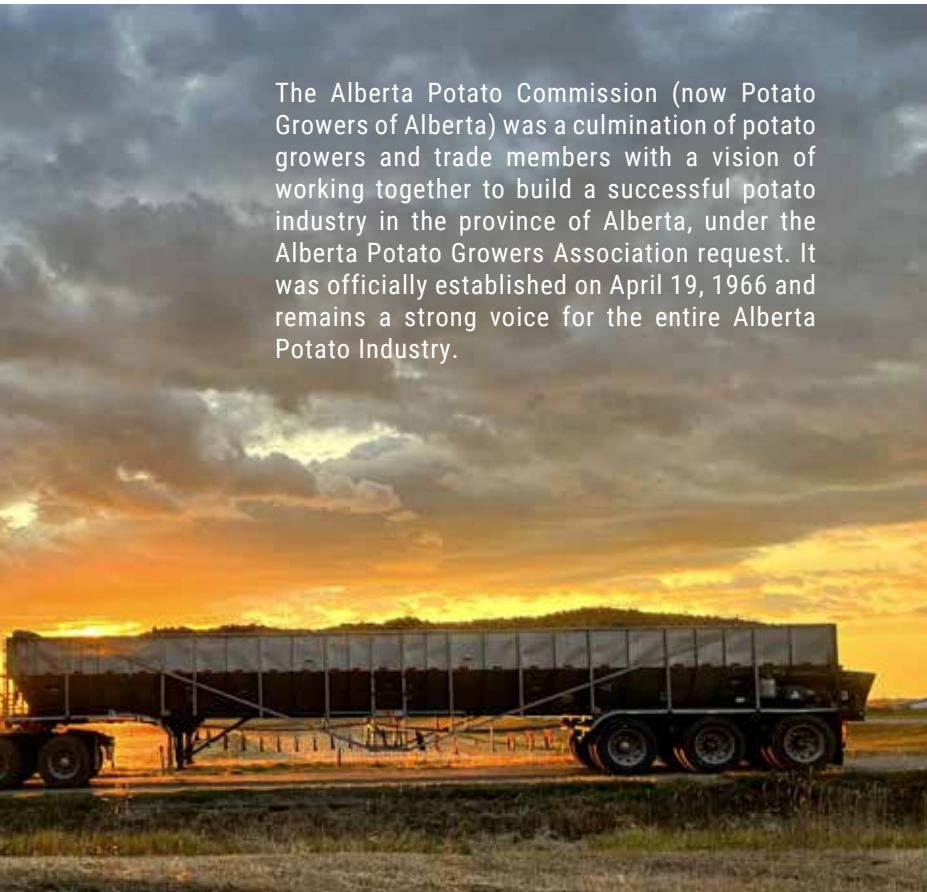
### FORWARD-THINKING

We are leading the way in trying and adopting new ideas for the benefit of our industry and our environment.



### PROUD

We love what we do and work hard to represent our industry.



The Alberta Potato Commission (now Potato Growers of Alberta) was a culmination of potato growers and trade members with a vision of working together to build a successful potato industry in the province of Alberta, under the Alberta Potato Growers Association request. It was officially established on April 19, 1966 and remains a strong voice for the entire Alberta Potato Industry.

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## OUR GOALS



Proactively build and maintain public awareness and trust in Alberta’s potato industry.



Cultivate and enhance trust through collaborative and transparent engagement.



Provide value to our membership through specific sector services and information for all growers, whether it be seed, table or process.



Support growers to navigate challenges and opportunities by providing the most current, relevant regulatory information in the industry.

## VISION STATEMENT

When you think potatoes, think Alberta

# Board of Directors

ALISON DAVIE

Chair, South Area Director

NORTH PADDOCK FARMS LTD.



TONY KIRKLAND

Vice Chair, North Area Director

SANDHILLS SEED POTATOES LTD.



LLOYD YPMA

South Area Director

QUATTRO FARMS



J.P. CLAASSEN

Director-At-Large

PRAIRIE SPUD FARMS

DELBERT VOSSEBELT

Director-At-Large

DV FARMS LTD.



MATTHEW VISSER

North Area Director

NORBEST FARMS LTD.



RYAN JENSEN

Director-At-Large

KLEARIDGE FARMS LTD.



# CHAIR'S REPORT - ALISON DAVIE

"It is important that all growers in the industry continue to share the positive story of agriculture and the optimistic future of Alberta potatoes."

The 2024 growing season gave our growers some challenges. Many started off the season with worries of drought, but that concern was washed away in May by the frequent rain storms across the province. This led to delayed planting, drowned out areas and a slow start to the potatoes getting out of the ground. We started out more than a week behind normal, however once the sun finally came out, the plants did take off and we ended up only a couple of days behind. We all know it's not the amount of rain that matters, it's the timing; so even though most areas started off with good moisture, a hot dry summer brought on new worries of drought. Going into harvest, I heard that the potatoes didn't bulk as much as some growers would like, but most people expected an average crop.

The 2023 crop was stored for a record number of months as the processors tried to get through the abundant amount. Some years, there are opportunities to fill in the market shortfalls, but unfortunately (or fortunately), many other growing regions across North America also had bumper crops; that led to a lot of the overage of potatoes being given to feedlots, or donated. We all want to grow a bountiful crop, but it was a reminder to all growers the importance of why we don't over plant. As negotiations took place for the 2024 crop year, the abundance of product available was taken into account and overall planted acres went down from 80,100 acres in 2023 to 75,500 in 2024.

In December 2023, the Board took part in a strategic planning workshop. We spent a day discussing where we saw the industry going in the next five years, and how we could support the growers in our industry. We had many great conversations about priorities and key performance factors. Out of the meeting we developed our strategic plan, which I explained at the spring meetings. We also gave ourselves timelines to explore certain areas over the next couple of years.

**The main areas we intend to focus on are:**

- 1) Managed Growth and Strategic Planning**
- 2) Governance, Staffing and Education**
- 3) Research**
- 4) Public Awareness**

We also added the vision statement **"When you think potatoes, think Alberta"**. We know how great Alberta potatoes are, and we want the rest of the country, and the

entire world to know that as well.

During the course of the last year, I have had the privilege of meeting with many government officials from many levels and areas of government to discuss with them the exciting things going on in our industry and some of the challenges we face. In March, some of the Board was able to meet with Provincial politicians from both sides of the table to talk about Alberta potatoes, and I also had the pleasure of meeting with Federal Agriculture Minister MacAulay, in July this year. I have found many of the politicians are very interested in learning more about Alberta potatoes and our expanding industry. Our economic impact study is a great tool to help them realize the true impact our industry has on both the provincial and federal economy.

It all comes back to public awareness and sharing our story. I think a lot of the scrutiny and criticism of agriculture come from misunderstanding and misinformation. As farmers, we know the food we grow and we are proud of the food we grow. It is important that all growers in the industry continue to share the positive story of agriculture and the optimistic future of Alberta potatoes.

- Alison Davie, PGA Board Chair

Photo with the Minister of Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation, Honourable R.J. Sigurdson at the Alberta Legislature, Alison Davie, Stacey Bajema (PGA representatives) far right along with other members of TEAM Alberta Crops.



# REPORTS

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Terence Hochstein

**“It is impossible to progress without change, and those who do not change their minds cannot change anything.” -George Bernard Shaw**

The winds of change are blowing and accept it or not, what is now happening in the Alberta potato industry cannot be undone. The hard work and success of the last 25 years has led to the decisions that are shaping our future. We need to cautiously embrace what is ahead, be a part of the discussion and together with industry, shape what the next 25 years will look like.

**“Everyone wants to live on the top of the mountain, but all the happiness and growth occurs while you are climbing it” – Andy Rooney**

Crop year 2023 was one for the history books for most members of the Potato Growers of Alberta. Excellent growing conditions, perfect rains in the north and an exceptional fall led to our largest crop ever on record. Couple that with the Alberta growers planting over 80,000 acres for the first time ever and we finished off harvest with a rather large pile of potatoes to deal with. The downside to this tremendous year was that every growing area in North America west of the Mississippi river had the same success. Excellent yields above long term averages coupled with uncontracted acres in some growing regions trends towards over production. This in-turn leads to difficulty in keeping long term profitability.

The potato industry as a whole, is a very tightly driven supply and demand machine. It does not take much to upset the proverbial ‘apple cart’, and when this happens, it sometimes takes years to get the cart back up on its wheels traveling down the road again in the proper direction.

In recent years, Alberta has seen a tremendous growth in the demand for our top quality seed, process and fresh potatoes. With the increase of new or expanding markets, the growth in our fry and chip industry and the new Little Potato Company plant coming on-line in Nisku, the potato industry has experienced opportunities that have never been available before. With the federal and provincial governments, along with the irrigation districts committing close to \$1Billion over the next 5-10 years for irrigation expansion and upgrades, the opportunities for continued growth will remain possible for the near future. The potato

industry will be one of many specialty crops that will be a benefactor of this once-in-a-lifetime expansion. Another plus of our province’s industry, is the fact that the majority of our seed industry remains isolated from our commercial production thus leading to our ability to produce top quality, low virus level seed for both local and export markets. To top all of this off, our processing industry is right smack in the middle of Canada’s Premier Food Corridor. As the corridor continues to grow and expand, it bodes well for the growers and their families, which leads to an opportunity for succession planning for the future.

This past year, the Board welcomed Mr. Ryan Jensen as our new South Area Director. Ryan has brought a welcome sense of business acumen and experience to the table. As always, adding new board members bring new ideas and thoughts on how our organization should continue to grow to meet the demands of the future. The writing of this report brings to an end the six years of service of Mr. J.P. Claassen. J.P. has been instrumental in driving the success of our organization over his time on the Board. On behalf of the Board, the growers and the PGA Team, we thank you for your service and wish you every success in the future. J.P. is one of those individuals who will continue to find other ways to serve, in some capacity, towards to success of our future.

Speaking of our future, our Board made the decision last fall to undergo the process of updating our Strategic Plan. Under the guidance of Finlay and Associates Ltd. - Calgary, we now have a plan and a sense of direction for the next five years. It has been a number of years since the Board took a deep dive into what the future of our organization should look like. Its exciting to see the outcome and where our plan will take us in the next five years. Thank you to the Board for having the vision to set up our organization for success in the coming years. Part of changes for the future was expanding the roll of Stacey Bajema. Stacey was hired by the PGA four years ago to assume the position of Seed Coordinator. Stacey’s added rolls of Government Relations and Policy strengthens our association in an area that is becoming more and more demanding and time consuming. Part of growing larger as an organization



means recognizing the changes, meeting the needs and putting people in positions to succeed.

As the Alberta potato industry continues to grow, so does the demands on the PGA Team. Growth always brings additional work to everyone in the office and the Team of Cindy, Stacey, Rebecca, Deb, Juanita and Trina continue to rise above and beyond the call of duty. Collectively, this group of six ladies always figure out how to get things done on time and with a smile on their faces. The process to get there is not always that way, but in the end we support each other, laugh with each other, sometimes cry with each other but always deliver a world class outcome. I am extremely proud and fortunate to be able to work with this Team and thank each and every one of you for what

you bring to the table each and every day.

As we officially close out Crop Year 2023, I would like to say that it has, once again, been a privilege to occupy the chair of the Executive Director of the Potato Growers of Alberta. As I sit at the Board table of the many organizations that I am involved in with this industry, I am constantly being reminded that I am becoming one of the elder statesman of the Canadian potato industry. I take this as a compliment and feel very fortunate to be involved in this business and in some way may have a hand in shaping the future of the national and Alberta potato industry.

Until next year,



Terence Hochstein,  
PGA Executive Director



**TERENCE HOCHSTEIN**  
Executive Director



**STACEY BAJEMA**  
Government Relations - Policy / Seed Director



**REBECCA WIELER**  
Ag Relations Director



**CINDY FLETCHER**  
Financial Administrator / Office Manager



**DEB BREWIN**  
Communications / Promotions Director



**TRINA GEDNY**  
Administrative Assistant



**JUANITA STANGE**  
Executive Admin Assistant / Events

# NEGOTIATION COMMITTEE

## Greg Nakamura - Chair

As we enter another harvest, I would like to reflect on what has happened this past year. The 2023 crop was a record year for both yield and acres planted. This resulted in the province having an over abundance of potatoes. Growers were sitting on well over 40,000 ton of extra potatoes because the processors also over contracted and these potatoes had no home. We even seen situations where processors were paying for contracted potatoes and telling the growers to dispose of them. As we have seen in the past, wherenver there is an excess of potatoes, the market tends to drive the price down.

Negotiations for this year have not started in any area yet, and I don't anticipate we will be discussing anything significant with the processors until after the PGA Annual Meeting.

As I reflect on the years spent on this committee, I have witnessed many changes in the industry. I have seen it grow from two chip processors (Hostess & Old Dutch) and one French Fryer (Maple Leaf Potatoes) to the present, where we have four major French Fry plants, three of which have plants in Alberta contracting acres here. We also have three chip processors in the province. From these plants , and with the increase in acres, Alberta has grown from a tiny potato growing area to one of the largest in Canada. The reason for this is Alberta's quality that growers

constantly provide. This is aided by the fact that we can irrigate, maintain a good crop rotation and minimize disease risk due to our cold winters. It is also due to the fact that growers are able to remain healthy and profitable. This has enabled them to build storages with the best technology and use equipment that gets the job done in a timely manner. **I believe, overall, the success of our industry is mainly due to the unique grower unity that exists in Alberta,** and because of this, the processors have not been able to conquer and divide our group.

**My hope is that even though we have grown from a handful of process growers to about 60 now, we will remain unified and be heard as one.**

If you have any questions for the committee, please reach out.

-Greg Nakamura, Negotiations Committee Chair



### Committee Members:

Greg Nakamura, Laus Stiekema, Lloyd Ypma, Tony Bos, Mark Miyanaga, Jaap Remijn, James Bareman, Terence Hochstein





# TRIBUTE TO A SILENT LEADER

“A true leader has the confidence to stand alone, the courage to make tough decisions and the compassion to listen to the need of others. He does not set out to be a leader but becomes one by the equality of his actions and the integrity of his intent.”

-General Douglas McArthur, American Military Leader

## Truer words cannot be written about a man that has left his mark on the Alberta potato industry.

The Alberta Potato Commission officially started on April 19th, 1966. The industry itself had been around for many years prior to that. Over the last 58 years, many people have come and gone and left their influence on the potato industry. Few, if any, have spent their entire working career dedicating their life to make this industry what it is today. Often the decisions that were made had a negative effect on his family operation but the outcome was for the better of the entire industry. For 37 of those years, Mr. Greg Nakamura has selflessly served the PGA in a leadership role. Starting in 1987, Greg was elected to the Board of Directors, where he served seven years. **He also dedicated over 30 years as Chairman of the Negotiating Committee.** Greg has spent countless hours and days working tirelessly behind the scenes, to help make this industry what it is today and keeping members unified throughout the process.

Never one to draw attention to himself, or his family’s farm, he has quietly helped shape and mold the Alberta potato industry to what we have today. As Greg reaches a point in his life where his next focus is on retirement and spending more time with his family, this chapter of servitude will come to an end. Not only has he influenced the way that Alberta has grown over the years but his presence at the North American table will be greatly missed. On behalf of all growers, both past and present, and the entire Alberta potato industry, we would like to say thank you for all that you have said and done over the years and we hope that this next chapter serves you well.

-Terence Hochstein

Working together with Greg on the negotiation committee has been a very positive experience. As a committee member and as a chair, he had a unique way of being calm, but staying very focused on our goal as a committee. I felt he really worked hard to reach settlements that were good for all our growers in Southern Alberta, while gaining the respect of each of them including process companies all over North America. “I want to thank you on behalf of all process growers for your years of dedication and hard work

as member and chairman of the negotiating committee.”

It was a pleasure working with you for the past 30 some odd years.

-Mike Wind



Top L-R: PSA meetings 2024 tour, PSA Board of Directors in 2022.



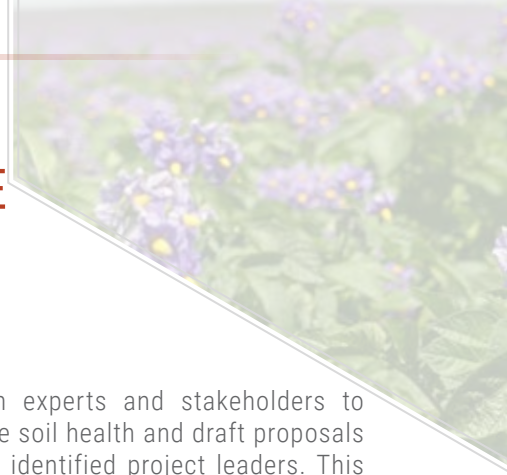
Top L-R: Cavendish expansion ribbon cutting ceremony 2018, Frito Lay Canadian Grower of the year awarded to Nakamura Farms.



Top L-R: Greg speaking to PGA members during area meeting 2023, Board of Director photo, 1988.



Top L-R: Greg taking in some fishing during annual golf tournament in Lethbridge, Greg’s love for farming began early in life.



Committee Members:

Emily Ford, Alison Davie, Art Hazelhoff, Dustin Monson, Harold Perry, Karen Tans, Lane Lievaart, Rebecca Wieler, Stacey Bajema

## RESEARCH COMMITTEE

Emily Ford - Chair

The research committee has spent the last year discussing water management, soil health, regenerative agriculture and the government’s climate goals related to agriculture. Through our conversations, we worked to identify key priorities related to these topics for our industry. **All proposed projects were vetted**

**through this lens to ensure we are filling any gaps in local, relevant research that will ensure our industry research is moving in the right direction.**

Rebecca has been excellent at liaising between growers, industry and researchers. Her work is critical to ensuring that the concerns and ideas of growers and industry are communicated to researchers. This ensures that research in Alberta is relevant to current topics of interest and that the projects conducted will ensure that the Alberta potato industry remains at the forefront.

**We have continued to commit funding to these multi-year projects:**

- National Variety Trials (Dr. Chandra Singh)
- Nitrogen Management in Potato Production Systems (Dr. Jonathan Neilson)

A significant focus of our discussions over the past year was the continuation of the spore trapping and insect card program. We were able to secure funding that will allow Promax Agronomy and the University of Lethbridge to continue to implement this invaluable program. Once it was decided that the program would continue, the research committee acknowledged the need for improved communication on how the program works and how to access the information. This was completed in the spring prior to launching the 2024 sampling. A special thank you goes out to all the volunteers who ensure the program’s success.

**The PGA also supported the following projects in 2024:**

- Soil health literature review (Dr. Michelle Korschuh): This project aims to review relevant soil health practices

for Alberta, consult with experts and stakeholders to discuss efforts to enhance soil health and draft proposals to fill research gaps with identified project leaders. This ensures no duplication of past work and focuses on Alberta’s specific soil health requirements.

- Powdery scab on rotational crops (Dr. Michelle Korschuh): This project aims to offer targeted guidance to producers on cultivating effective crop rotation strategies, implementing comprehensive weed management practices, and selecting the most suitable crop varieties. These recommendations aim to gradually decrease the soil inoculum levels of powdery scab, thus mitigating its risk to the potato industry.

- Heat stress (Dr. Jonathan Neilson): This project will examine managing heat stress in potato fields. A framework will be developed to enable growers to conduct field experiments assessing the effectiveness of practices or products in their operations. This includes strategies to prevent heat stress, enhance heat resistance and aid recovery post-heat stress events. Preventative measures will analyze cover crops for their effect on reducing soil temperatures and improving water infiltration.

- Structural and compositional changes of stored potatoes (Dr. Chandra Singh): This project uses synchrotron imaging to detect structural and compositional changes in potatoes before and after natural dormancy breaks. It examines the effects of CIPC and alternative suppressants during dormancy transitions and identifies sprouting potential in seed potatoes through near-infrared hyperspectral imaging.

Along with the existing projects, the PGA Research Committee has been working on co-funding projects with the Alberta Potato Investment Fund (APIF). APIF is a partnership comprised of four organizations who contribute jointly to research and development projects to further western Canada’s potato industries.

If you have any further ideas or feel that there is a research gap, please feel free to contact any member of the research committee. We welcome your feedback and look forward to the discussion.

- Emily Ford, Chair Research Committee

# SEED COMMITTEE

Jeff Ekkel - Chair



Committee Members:

Jeff Ekkel, Jake Hoogland, Ben Meyer, Gord Visser, Jan Vermue, Peiter Kamper, Ron Hulleman, Stacey Bajema

In the past year, Alberta’s seed potato industry has maintained its role as a critical supplier, both domestically and internationally. With ideal growing conditions, Alberta continues to provide a strong foundation for the industry in the province, as well as, fueling other potato-producing regions across North America.

Seed potato producers planted their largest acreage ever, at over 15,000 acres, due to the growth of the commercial industry in Alberta and across the Pacific Northwest. With idyllic planting conditions and timely rains in key seed potato regions, Alberta growers were surprised with an early harvest and record high production overall. Production in Alberta increased by 50,000 T over the previous year. Though many bins were full across the province, some areas did not benefit from the late season moisture and were still susceptible to the drought challenges of the previous years.

The biggest challenge for the 2023 production year came in the spring, when it was time to move this big pile of potatoes off the farm. Though as an industry, we were grateful for our fruitful harvest, the supply of potatoes was high in many other of our competing regions as well. Demand for Alberta seed potatoes continues to grow as several regions across North America contend with a shrinking supply of seed potato growers and increasing challenges finding disease-free seed sources. However, the oversupply of seed in the West for 2023 meant Alberta seed growers had a challenge moving unsold excess seed out of the storages. Some of this was mitigated through new partnerships with growers in the east who battled moisture, along with some disease and quality issues that come with wet conditions going into storage.

Seed potato producers are always looking to adapt production practices and learn ways to mitigate the challenges that changing weather patterns have on our production and storage systems. In Alberta, over the past year, a number of storages have been introducing new technology on their seed grading lines that may forever change the way our industry manages quality assurance. With the introduction of new sensors, optical sorters and the massive amount of data now available to growers, technology is changing production systems at an unprecedented pace.

The PGA Seed Committee remains highly engaged to ensure the long-term sustainability and competitiveness of Alberta seed in the broader North American marketplace.

Policy advocacy and regulatory review remain key objectives for this committee as we look to ensure that regulatory requirements keep up and don’t hinder the growth of our industry. Engagement with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency and other seed producing areas across Canada through the Canadian Potato Council help ensure that the strength of the seed potato industry remains strong.

Looking forward, the Alberta seed potato industry aims to expand its reach, improve yield efficiency, and implement new tools and ideas for increased quality. **Our commitment to providing disease-free seed and embracing innovation will carry us forward as we continue to strengthen our position in the North American marketplace.**

- Jeff Ekkel, Chair Seed Committee





# AGSAFE ALBERTA

Travis Elford



The team at AgSafe Alberta had a busy year developing tools and resources to grow the health and safety culture on farms.

This year saw the completion of Farmers Care Level 4 (newly launched), which finishes the program. The program focusses on emergency planning and how to get your farm ready, should the need arise. Farms who complete the levels can also order a farm sign to show everyone that safety matters on your farm.

The FarmSafe Plan modules and manual were also updated and made easier to use and complete. These are great tools for farms with employees who need to have a safety program in place. Another new course that has been launched is the Respiratory Protective Awareness Course, which walks farms and ranches through identifying the need for RPE and ensuring that the users are fitted properly and understand how to wear and care for their equipment.

AgSafe Alberta continues to share information through social media and its monthly newsletter on topics with tools

to improve aspects of safety on your farm. Readership continues to grow and there are significant downloads of the resources that are promoted. The advisor program continues to be offered to farms and ranches but there was a lower uptake of this program this year. A reminder goes out to farms that we offer 10 free hours of support to get your safety program started. The 1-800 number continues to receive calls looking for information and received no emergency support calls this year. The incidents are still happening, as can be seen in WCB and medical examiner reports that AgSafe Alberta receives. There is a downward trend in farm fatalities, but noticeably men (owner/operators) over 50 are involved in 80% of them, the other 20% involve employees under 30.

**AgSafe Alberta looks forward to supporting farms and ranches in the coming year through more new courses and resources, as well as our advisor team.** AgSafe Alberta will be keeping an eye on required legislative review of the OHS legislation and providing feedback on how it will impact farmers during the review and if changes are made, letting farmers know how it will impact them.

- Travis Elford, PGA Representative

## PGA SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS



Anke-Marie Van Tryp  
Quattro Farms



Lisa Camps  
CP Farms Ltd.

### Innovate, Educate, Elevate

Every year, the PGA awards a \$1000 scholarship bursary to students of licensed growers to further their education. Course of study may be any subject.

We wish these two students the best of luck throughout their academic journey.

# TEAM ALBERTA CROPS



Reg Warkentin



This past year marked the second full-year of operation of the modernized Team Alberta Crops. Originally the informal collaboration between Alberta Wheat & Barley (now Alberta Grains), Alberta Canola and the Alberta Pulse Growers, an agreement was struck in early 2022 to formalize the partnership, hire a full-time Government Relations and Policy Manager and broaden the membership to include the Alberta Beekeepers, Alberta-BC Seed Growers, Alberta Sugar Beet Growers and the Potato Growers of Alberta.

Collectively, our partnership represents approximately 30% of all Canadian crop production and 40% of Canadian honey production.

The premise of the team approach is simple. We work together to share information and speak with a common and unified voice on issues of joint interest. With a year of experience and learning under our belts, the second year of operation allowed our group to flourish and greatly expand our capacity to work together and influence policies important to our farmers. The model has proven to be successful and appreciated by our partners in government and industry whom we work with closely to share priority issues with.

The regular operations of Team Alberta Crops are two-fold in our regular touchpoints with government to bring forward ongoing issues impeding the growth and prosperity of primary agriculture and our ability to address pressing issues that arise.

One shining example has been our regular meetings with the Assistant Deputy Ministers (ADMs) of Agriculture and Irrigation. This meeting with the department’s senior bureaucrats lets us hear directly about what the ministry is working on and provide input on the issues facing industry and areas needing focus. These meetings have proved to be an invaluable touch point on pressing issues such as the renewable moratorium, federal-provincial territorial meetings, ongoing work related to the Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA), extension, Business Risk Management and the government’s drought response.

While the policy challenges facing primary crop production are varied and subject to change on a moment’s notice, Team Alberta Crops has proven its ability to pivot and quickly react to arising challenges. When notice was given about the potential for a rail strike that would massively disrupt the supply-chain, our group wrote to Minister

Sigurdson and Minister Dreesen asking them to pressure their federal counterparts to avoid the strike. Premier Smith quickly responded with a public statement pressuring the Federal Transport Minister to prevent such an action.

A highlight of last year was the first ever Team Alberta Crops lobbying event at the Legislature in March. This included meetings with several members of cabinet, United Conservative MLAs, members of the Official Opposition and the senior bureaucrats that manage key files relevant to our partnership. Again, the model proved its effectiveness by creating a common, unified voice and a sort of “one-stop-shop” for agricultural policy makers. Prior to our meetings, Team Alberta Crops developed agreed upon messaging to ensure we stayed on-point and consistent.

As Team Alberta Crops looks forward, **we’ll continue to build upon our internal working relationship and the relationships with government leaders to ensure issues facing primary producers remain at the forefront.**

- Reg Warkentin, Government Relations & Policy Manager, Team Alberta Crops



Top: Team Alberta Crops representatives tour with federal Ag Minister, Honourable Lawrence MacAuley (middle), Alison Davie to the right of him. Below: Team Alberta Crops Lobby Days with several Board and Commission Reps speaking to several AB government officials.



# Alberta Industry

## SETTING RECORDS

**155** LICENSED GROWERS

Last year, the potato growers set another record for the most acres planted in the history of the organization. With massive expansions, comes extra acres to keep process plants full of product.

PROVINCIAL  
ECONOMY

**\$2.3B**

ACRES PLANTED

**80K**

TONS PRODUCED

**1.5M**



73%

**Process**

Our highest production of potatoes in Alberta goes into the process industry. Lamb Weston, McCains and Cavendish supply the French fry and frozen food market. Pepsico Frito-Lay, Old Dutch and Shearer Foods produce potato chips and other snack foods in Alberta.

19%

**Seed**

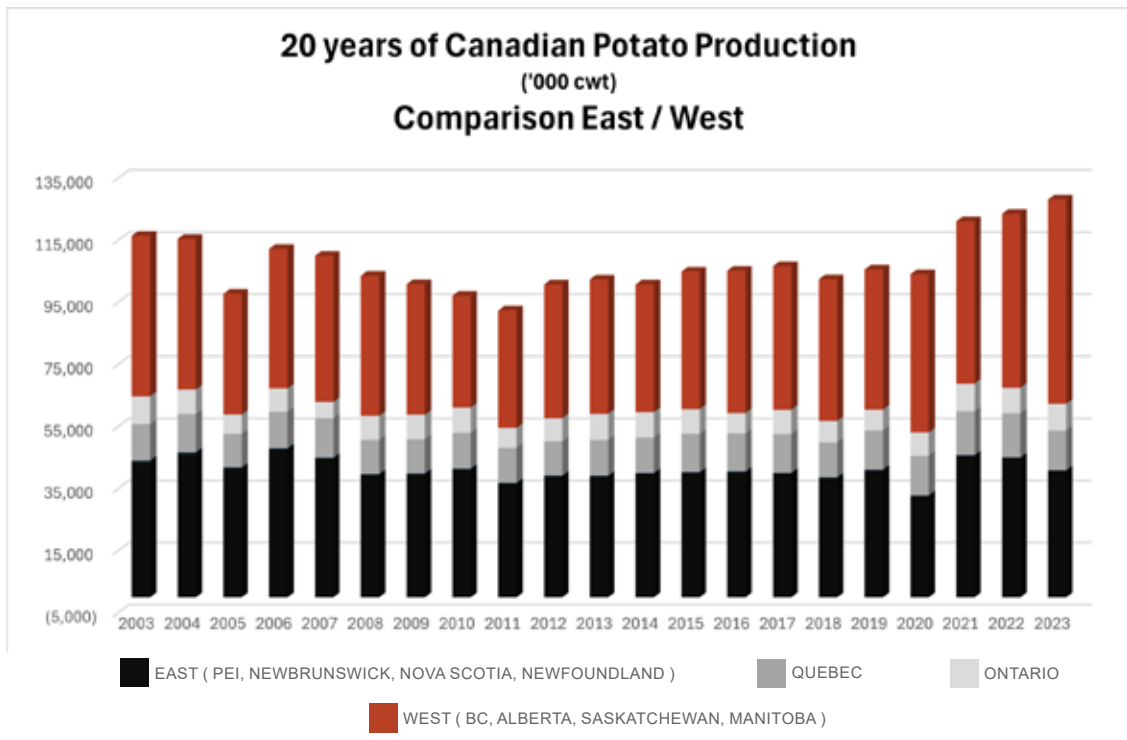
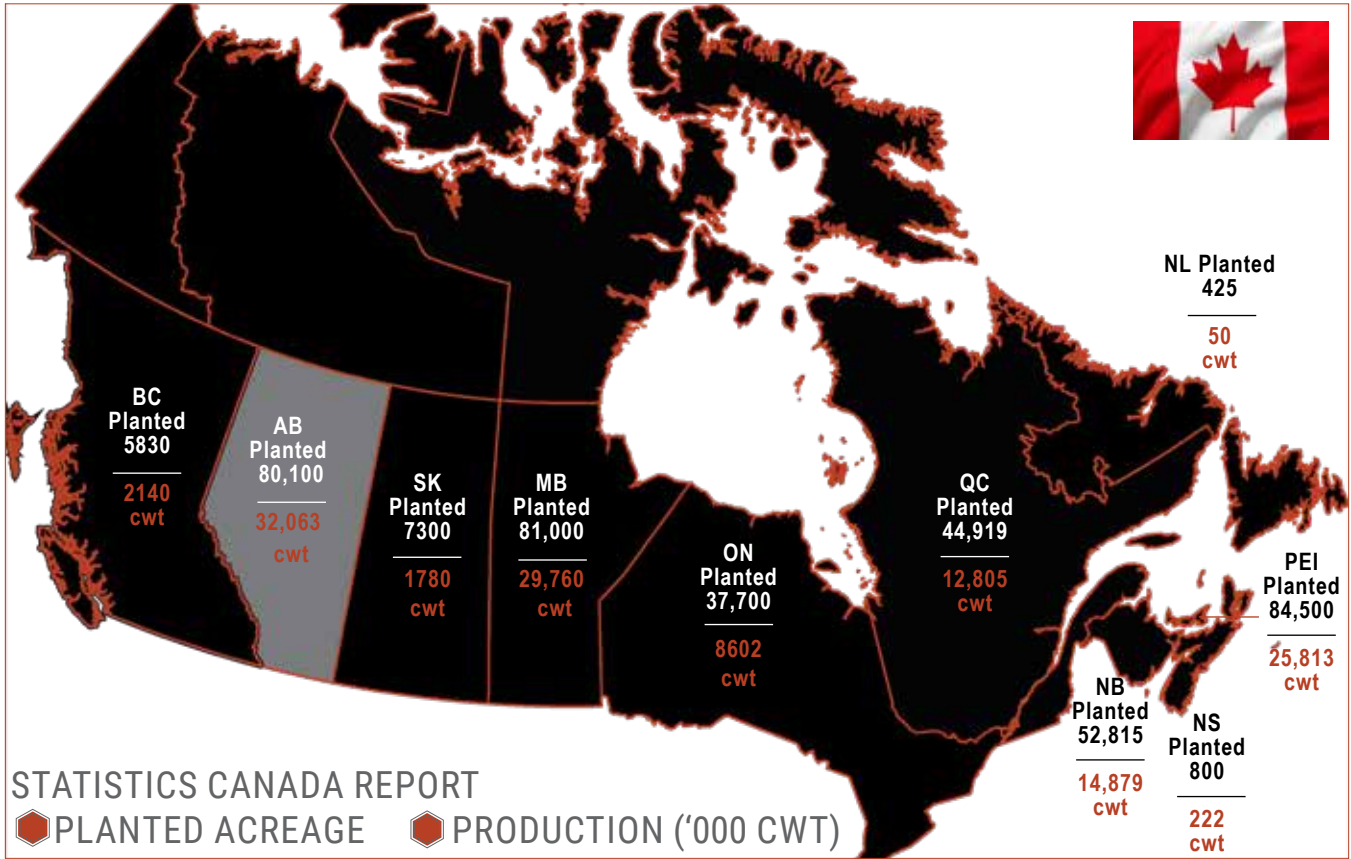
60% of Canada's seed potato exports originate from Alberta growers. From the lab to the greenhouse to the field grown crop, Alberta has a reputation of one of the most sought after seed potatoes across North America due to isolation, climate and ongoing inspections of disease-free product.

8%

**Table**

The table potato market continues to grow across the province. With the new expansion of the Little Potato Company plant in Nisku, brings added acres of creamers to the fresh industry.

# National Review



# UNITED POTATO GROWERS OF CANADA



## Victoria Stamper - General Manager UPGC

### The 2023-24 Marketing Year for Potatoes: Key Changes and Industry Impact

The 2023-24 marketing year for potatoes brought some significant changes compared to the previous two years. Continued expansion in the processing industry in North America and two years of shortages of potatoes had a notable impact on supply to the processing sector. In response, there was a substantial increase in planted acreage in 2023 across the Pacific Northwest, including Alberta and Manitoba. However, this expansion, coupled with excellent yields, led to a surplus of processing potatoes in the region.

In contrast, the eastern regions, particularly Quebec and New Brunswick, experienced heavy rains, lack of sunshine, and cool temperatures, resulting in issues like hollow heart, rot, lower yields, and high cull rates. This led to tighter inventory levels for both fresh and processing potatoes in the East. Consequently, potatoes were transported from west to east, reversing the flow from the previous year.

### Inflation and Consumer Behavior

Food inflation during the 2023-24 marketing year has been a pressing issue for all Canadians prompting consumers to be much more careful with every dollar spent in retail. Despite accusations of high-margin pricing by major retailers, potatoes continued to represent good value for consumers. In an effort to address pricing concerns, the Grocery Code of Conduct was signed by all major parties, though many feel its impact has yet to be fully realized. Food producers, especially potato growers, continue to play a vital role in the food supply chain, and consumers appear more appreciative of safe, locally produced food available in stores and restaurants. Growing potatoes remains an essential service in our society.

### Industry Collaboration and Key Events

Our ongoing partnership with United Potato Growers of America remains strong, as seen in joint efforts at the Potato Business Summit and the shared booth at Potato Expo. Additionally, the Crop Transition Conference, held each June in Minneapolis, allows both Canada and the

US to create an accurate timeline of supply as the crop transitions from old storage to new out of field. Data and information are instrumental in avoiding oversupply in the market at any given time and in past years this conference has been an important piece of information to aid in maintaining initial price levels as the first areas begin to market their crop. Canada continues to be a significant participant and contributor in this meeting. I have also been attending PMANA meetings, strengthening relationships with growers in the processing sector and presentations at provincial meetings have led to requests for presentations in the seed sector, as all growers understand the impact of supply and demand in the "whole potato pile".

### Shifting Work Dynamics and Travel

Since COVID, many of our organization's operations have shifted, with meetings often conducted via conference calls and video conferences, helping us reduce expenses. However, we recognize the importance of personal connections with growers and industry partners, and we are balancing online activities with in-person meetings.

Marking my second year with UPGC, I have continued to travel across the country, visiting farms, attending variety trials and speaking at meetings and conferences, including attendance at the PGA Conference & Tradeshow. This travel has been very beneficial for the organization, providing good exposure and the opportunity to speak directly to growers. It has also been invaluable for me personally, giving excellent opportunities to learn, both about the supply and demand of potatoes across Canada, but also the process of growing potatoes and the challenges faced by growers.

### New Initiatives and Data Collection

UPGC continues to introduce new initiatives, including an update to our website, which will feature a members-only section dedicated to market data. We are also collaborating with provinces to develop a forecast model for shipping volume, helping us track fresh potato movement and better predict the transition from the old crop to new.

Our organization plays a key role in data collection and



interpretation, working closely with Statistics Canada and AAFC to improve and enhance data on the potato industry in Canada. We are proud to call ourselves a truly national organization with the return of Saskatchewan, Ontario and New Brunswick as members - and we certainly could not undertake these initiatives without the support of all the provinces, including the staff in the office of the Potato Growers of Alberta.

**Acknowledgments and Future Collaborations**

The continued support of growers has been critical to maintaining our organization. We recognize the numerous associations farmers are asked to support, and we greatly appreciate your support and encouragement.

In addition to grower support, partnerships with private industry have helped keep membership dues low. The past year has been particularly successful in attracting new

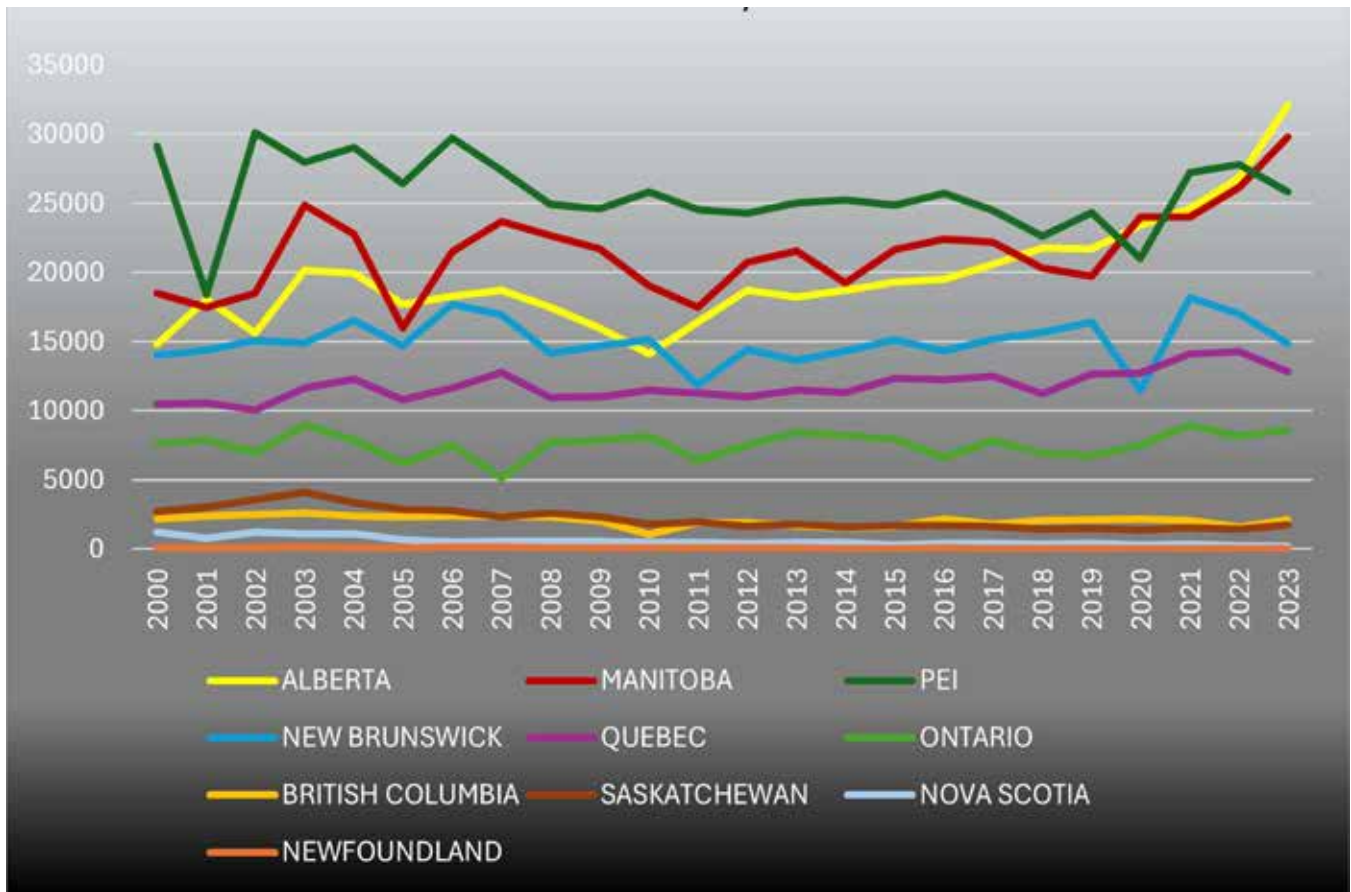
partners, including our first national-level sponsor, Volm. We also extend our thanks to Farm Credit Canada, The Quebec Packers Association, Capital Equipment, Coderre Packaging, Émile Senechal et Fils, Allan Equipment, Thomas Fresh, and the PEI Bag Co. for their valued support. We are always looking to expand our partner clientele, offering synergistic benefits to all sides of the industry.

Lastly, a special thank you goes to our Board Director from Alberta, Terence Hochstein. It has been a pleasure working with you over the past year, and we look forward to continued collaboration in the future.

Thank you for continuing to support United Potato Growers of Canada. For any questions or more information you can always contact:

- Victoria Stamper, General Manager UPGC

**20 YEAR NATIONAL PRODUCTION COMPARISON**



# CANADIAN POTATO COUNCIL

Bill Zylmans - Chair CPC



Reflecting on the accomplishments of the past year for the Canadian Potato Council (CPC), a major highlight is the finalization and approval of CPC's strategic plan, a crucial step toward guiding the industry's future.

**•Vision: A thriving Canadian potato industry**

**•Mandate: A unified voice for Canadian potato growers, overseeing initiatives leading to increased profitability of the industry**

**•Strategic Priorities: Effective CPC structure/governance; pre-emptive advocacy specific to trade; research; pest management.**

CPC members have also come together this year to respond to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency's consultations on Potato Wart, including the CFIA's updated Potato Wart management plan. CPC is committed to supporting decisions being guided by data, science, international standards, and best practices. The draft plan

has taken into consideration many of the comments and recommendations from the CPC. Work with CFIA is ongoing and CPC continues to lead the industry's responses on this file.

On October 15, 2024, FVGC welcomed back Caleigh Hallink-Irwin as the new General Manager, Canadian Potato Council. Caleigh is eager to collaborate with CPC members to turn the strategic plan into action. Her leadership and experience will be instrumental in driving CPC's initiatives forward and supporting the potato sector in the months and years ahead.

-Bill Zylmans, Chair CPC

# POTATO SUSTAINABILITY ALLIANCE

Greg Nakamura - Canadian Grower Rep



The Potato Sustainability Alliance has been moving forward to attaining its goals, at the same time, pushing the bar further along. In 2023, we launched the Cropwise Sustainability app to provide growers with streamlining how farm data is collected and made available to the end users. We had 420 growers representing 589,120 potato acres across the US and Canada. Growers then received an overall performance score of which they can see where they scored well and also areas in which improvements can be made. Sustainability in agriculture is not only important to our farms, but it also shows our customers that we are doing our part in the industry in keeping our world viable.

This past year, the Water Team Committee came up with a framework to help growers and other agri-food value chain actors engage in water stewardship and create value for their operations. To learn more about this framework, I encourage growers to visit the PSA website and discover

how they can benefit from the program.

In this industry, growers are constantly looking for ways to increase potato production and quality through varieties and practices that see us use less water, fertilizer and chemical. Another area we are looking at is storage. We tend to forget about this but storage can also impact sustainability through food waste and energy usage. There are many practices that growers can implement to make sure they are doing their part.

In closing, I would like to remind growers that the PSA On-farm Assessment is now open and must be completed by December 20th, but I'm sure processors will want it before then.

-Greg Nakamura, Canadian Grower PSA Representative

# PSA SUSTAINABLE OUTCOMES IN AGRICULTURE SURVEY



REGION	WEST	MIDWEST	EAST
Canada Growers	47	47	129
Canada Potato Acres	58,346	62,080	86,114
U.S. Growers	100	57	40
U.S. Potato Acres	231,515	115,508	35,557
<b>Total Growers</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>169</b>
<b>Total Potato Acres</b>	<b>289,861</b>	<b>177,588</b>	<b>121,671</b>

This information is the number of participating U.S. and Canadian potato growers in each survey region and their represented potato acres. Great initial results, working towards including the whole industry.

## North American Scores and Insights

Potato growers across North America achieved an overall performance score of **Medium**, averaged across all outcome scores and the leadership levels attained by individual growers in each outcome (Figure 4).

Overall	Biodiversity and Habitat	Community Leadership	Human and Animal Health	Optimal Production	Soil Health	Water Impact
Medium	Medium	Medium	High	Medium	Medium	Medium

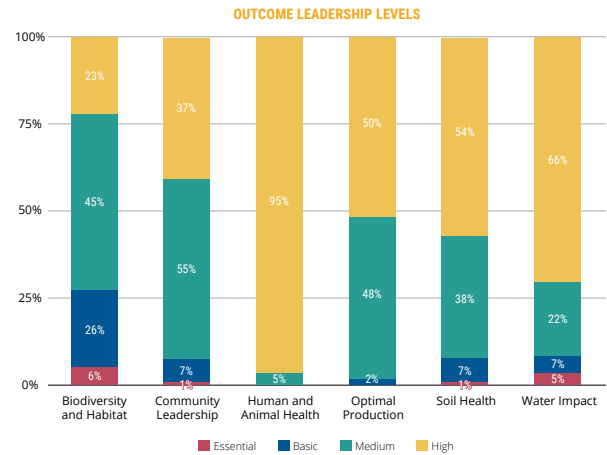


Figure 4: The percentage of growers that achieved an average leadership level of essential, basic, medium, or high in each outcome.

**420**  
GROWERS

**589,120**  
POTATO ACRES

For more results visit [www.potatosustainability.org](http://www.potatosustainability.org)



# 2023 PGA Business Meeting Minutes

November 21 & 22, 2023 Grey Eagle Resort & Casino, Calgary Alberta

## Part 1 - November 21, 2023 @ 8:30 am

**Meeting Chairman – James Bareman, PGA Board Chairman**

### Welcome and Call to Order

James Bareman, PGA Board Chairman, welcomed everyone to the meeting and called the meeting to order.

### Introduction of Special Guests

James Bareman welcomed the following special guests to the meeting:

- Lisa Bussieres – Marketing Council, Senior Manager, Projects and Policy
- Calvin Scott CPA, CA – Avail, CPA

### Additions to the Agenda

There were no new additions to the agenda.

### Approval of the Agenda

**Motion: To approve 2023 PGA AGM Business Meeting Agenda (Bareman/Hofer - Carried)**

### Approval of Minutes: 2022 AGM – November 15th, 2022 PGA AGM Business Meeting

**Motion: To approve minutes from the 2022 PGA AGM Business Meeting (Bos/Bennen - Carried)**

2022-23 Financial Statements – Calvin Scott, Avail CPA  
Calvin Scott presented the Auditors Report for the 2022-2023 fiscal year. Calvin stated that the financial position of the Potato Growers of Alberta remains healthy. Calvin reviewed the financial statements and highlighted increased use of the APP program and increased revenue due to higher interest rates.

**Motion: To accept the 2022-23 Financial Statements as presented (Kirkland/Bos - Carried)**

### PGA Chairman's Report – James Bareman, PGA Board Chairman

Bareman presented the 2023 Chairmans's report and remarked on the key achievements of the 2023-24 year. The staff were able to move into the brand-new PGA office building. 2023 also saw the release of the Alberta Potato

Economic Impact Report which allowed us to outline the value of the potato industry in Alberta at just shy of 3 billion dollars. He commented on the need to ensure a safe secure supply of water as we see water levels currently below 10-year provincial averages. Bareman further commented on challenges facing potato growers with the increase of land prices and cost of production. He also outlined how Alberta potato growers were leading the industry with increased innovation, investments and research. Bareman welcomed newcomers to the industry and encouraged continued camaraderie and teamwork as we move forward.

### Executive Director's Report – Terence Hochstein, PGA Executive Director

Hochstein welcomed the group and began with an extended thank you to the auditors for their continued work alongside the PGA staff. The 2022-2023 year for the PGA brought a number of firsts. We saw the completion of the new PGA building. Alberta became the largest potato producing province in Canada for the first time and will continue to grow. The new Economic Impact Analysis for the Alberta Potato Industry was released, and the numbers were impressive. This year, Alberta saw an above average crop and Hochstein highlighted that we need to work together to ensure that we continue to offer an excellent product at a fair price. Hochstein recognized some new faces in the industry and thanked the Board for their service. He also acknowledged the time James Bareman served on the board with his position as Board Chair coming to an end and thanked him for his dedication. The PGA Board of Directors is about to start working on a new strategic plan that will help shape a path forward for our upcoming years of growth. Hochstein concluded by thanking the staff for another year of hard work.

### 2nd Call for Nominations

Ryan Jensen, Michiel Buijsse and Hanneke Camps are nominees for election.

### 1st Call for Resolutions

There were no resolutions put forward by the membership

### Adjournment

James Bareman, PGA Chairman, closed the meeting at 9:18AM

## Part 2 - November 22, 2023 @ 8:30 am

**Meeting Chairman – James Bareman, PGA Board Chairman**

### **Welcome and Call to Order**

James Bareman, PGA Board Chairman, welcomed everyone to the meeting and called the meeting to order.

### **Appointment of the Auditor for the 2023-2024 Fiscal Year**

**Motion: To retain the services of Avail as the auditor for the Potato Growers of Alberta for the 2023-2024 fiscal year (Bos/Vossebelt - Carried)**

### **2nd Call for Resolutions**

### **3rd Call for Resolutions**

No resolutions presented.

### **3rd Call for Nominations**

No further nominations were received.

**Motion: To accept the PGA Chairman's Report as presented. (Camps/Rozendaal - Carried)**

**Motion: To accept the Executive Director's Report as presented. (Klassen/Miyanaga - Carried)**

### **2024 Bylaw Amendments**

**1st Motion: To accept the new Potato Growers of Alberta bylaws as presented at the fall area meetings. (Bareman/Davies - Carried)**

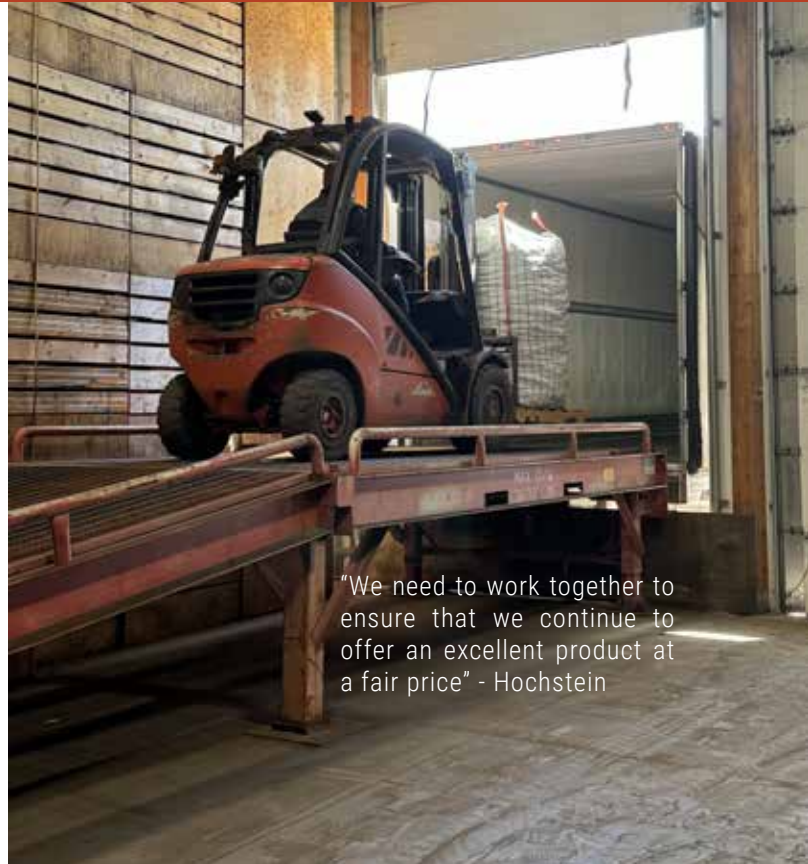
**2nd Motion: To accept the new Potato Growers of Alberta bylaws as presented at the fall area meetings. (Claassen/Van Boom - Carried)**

### **Elections**

Ryan Jensen was elected to the Potato Growers of Alberta Board of Directors.

### **Adjournment**

James Bareman thanked the membership for attending and the meeting was adjourned at 9:20AM.



"We need to work together to ensure that we continue to offer an excellent product at a fair price" - Hochstein



"Alberta potato growers were leading the industry with increased innovation, investments and research."  
- Bareman



## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To: The Members of  
Potato Growers of Alberta

### *Opinion*

We have audited the financial statements of Potato Growers of Alberta, which comprise the statement of financial position as at July 31, 2024, and the statements of operations, changes in net assets and cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Organization as at July 31, 2024, and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

### *Basis for Opinion*

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are independent of the Organization in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Canada, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

### *Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements*

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Organization's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Organization or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Organization's financial reporting process.

### *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements*

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements. As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

**INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT, continued***Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements, continued*

- ◆ Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- ◆ Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Organization's internal control.
- ◆ Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- ◆ Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Organization's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Organization to cease to continue as a going concern.
- ◆ Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

*Avail LLP*

Lethbridge, Alberta

October 21, 2024

Chartered Professional Accountants


**POTATO GROWERS OF ALBERTA**  
**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION**  
 As at July 31, 2024

	2024	2023
<b>ASSETS</b>		
<b>Current</b>		
Cash	\$ 2,294,134	\$ 1,306,303
Short-term investments (note 3)	275,000	525,000
Accounts receivable	110,581	171,741
GST receivable	-	4,814
Interest receivable	132,795	53,683
Inventory	12,493	15,531
Prepaid expenses	95,728	69,088
Funds held on behalf of others (note 9)	2,397,184	1,036,405
Current portion of crop advances receivable	3,076,035	1,376,504
	<u>8,393,950</u>	<u>4,559,069</u>
<b>Crop advances receivable (note 4)</b>	2,266,000	5,031,000
<b>Long-term investments</b>	-	275,000
<b>Investment in Alberta Seed Potatoes Inc. (note 5)</b>	-	8,000
<b>Capital assets (note 6)</b>	2,162,742	2,292,826
	<u>\$ 12,822,692</u>	<u>\$ 12,165,895</u>

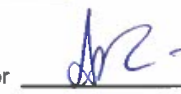
<b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>		
<b>Current</b>		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 76,748	\$ 68,108
Payroll remittances payable	203	221
GST payable	1,712	-
Deferred contributions (note 7)	307,365	55,416
Funds held on behalf of others (note 8)	2,397,184	1,036,405
Current portion of loans for crop advances	3,076,035	1,376,504
	<u>5,859,247</u>	<u>2,536,654</u>
<b>Loans for crop advances (note 9)</b>	2,266,000	5,031,000
	<u>8,125,247</u>	<u>7,567,654</u>
<b>Commitments (note 14)</b>		
<b>Net assets</b>		
Unrestricted	643,768	309,916
Internally restricted	1,890,935	1,995,499
Invested in capital assets	2,162,742	2,292,826
	<u>4,697,445</u>	<u>4,598,241</u>
	<u>\$ 12,822,692</u>	<u>\$ 12,165,895</u>

Approved on behalf of the board:

Director



Director





**POTATO GROWERS OF ALBERTA**  
**STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS**  
For the year ended July 31, 2024

	2024	2023
<b>Revenue</b>		
Levies and licenses	\$ 1,777,948	\$ 1,576,449
Advance Payment Program interest	712,273	387,125
Registrations and sponsorship	267,652	233,065
Interest	128,649	99,758
Grants and recoveries	111,938	541,782
	<u>2,998,460</u>	<u>2,838,179</u>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Wages and benefits	686,689	633,432
Advance Payment Program interest	663,146	320,358
Research and industry development	400,828	331,050
Annual general meeting	206,240	187,306
Memberships	151,525	128,282
Office and administration	107,814	123,489
Negotiation costs	83,784	34,574
Advertising and promotion	64,598	58,568
Meetings and travel	60,369	55,307
Seed growers expenses	58,040	55,929
Potato industry meetings	47,210	45,643
Professional fees	41,961	128,322
Property costs	38,933	31,535
Telephone and utilities	33,343	35,967
Insurance	31,755	32,248
Bad debts	24,337	-
Extension and grower education	23,200	22,288
Automotive	19,610	17,722
Donations	18,836	16,031
Rent	-	19,595
Amortization	138,727	112,358
	<u>2,900,945</u>	<u>2,390,004</u>
<b>Excess of revenue over expenses from operations</b>	<u>97,515</u>	<u>448,175</u>
<b>Other income (expense)</b>		
Gain on disposal of capital assets	6,609	15,418
Loss on sale of marketable securities	(4,920)	-
	<u>1,689</u>	<u>15,418</u>
<b>Excess of revenue over expenses</b>	<u>\$ 99,204</u>	<u>\$ 463,593</u>

## 2023-24 IMAGE GALLERY



Top L-R: MLA Grant Hunter, PGA Board of Directors with Alberta Premier Daniele Smith during visit to the PGA office, researchers Michele Korschuh, Chandra Singh, Jonathan Nielson, Sue Smienk showing new varieties at the AAFC Variety Trial Field Day in Brooks.



Top L-R: South growers pack the Heritage Inn in Taber for the Area Meeting in spring, researcher, Mike Harding giving a presentation on Pest Monitoring at the meeting.



Top L-R: Deanna Klaasen from AFSC speaking on water allocation restrictions at south area meeting, north growers gather in Nisku for the spring north area meeting with Chair, Alison Davie opening, Russ Stewart from Promax Agronomy giving presentation on the pest monitoring program.



Top L-R: Board, staff and committee members come together for Christmas party at the office, Deb Hart, former PGA Seed Director awarded with the Doug Connelly Award at FVGC AGM in March, students planting their seed potatoes for the Spuds In Tubs Program.



Top L-R: PGA Staff - Trina getting spuds looking their best for the Home & Garden Show in Lethbridge, Deb & Juanita at H & G show booth, Mark Miyanaga, Dustin Monson and (ED) Terence chatting with curious consumers at the H&G Show, Alison & Michael Davie taking a shift at the booth.



Top L-R: 2023 AGM had special guests from CFIA speak to a packed room of growers mc'd by our seed director Stacey Bajema, PSA reps, Mike Nemeth ( Water Committee Chair) and John Mesko (PSA ED) give their talk on sustainability in North America, APIA tradeshow conversations.



Top L-R: PGA Staff and growers participated in a potato giveaway for International Day of the Potato May 30th in Taber. Staff (Rebecca, Juanita & Cindy) fill sacks of spuds for the lineup of people awaiting their free bag, Terence (PGA ED) and Grower Jan Bennen (Bennen Farms) pack and load out of his truck, people still came out after a short rain to fill bags out of Alison Davie's (North Paddock Farms) truck.



Top L-R: Growers and industry come together to enjoy 18 holes of golf for the Annual PGA Golf Tournament held on July 4th.



Thank you to all committee members, growers, board of directors, industry partners & researchers that work hard for the unity & success of the Alberta Potato Industry!

Annual Report created by Deb Brewin, PGA Communications & Promotions Director

### CONTACT

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