Manitoba Canola Growers Association
Annual General & Special Meeting Minutes
February 11, 2025
Victoria Inn Hotel and Conference Centre
4:00-6:00 pm

22 Voting members
27 guests
9 staff

Call to order by Warren Ellis - Chair of Manitoba Canola Growers Association, at 4:00 pm.

Introduction of board of directors and staff.

Motion: to Adopt the Agenda.

M/S/C (Ernie Sirski/Charles Fossay)

Motion: to Adopt the Minutes for Feb. 15, 2024 Annual General Meeting.

M/S/C (John Pruen/Nicolea Dow)

Annual Report of the Association

- Jackie Dudgeon MacDonald presents the Advocacy report.
- Nicolea Dow presents the Research and Agronomy report.
- Jay Derkach presents the Market Development report.
- Darren Nykoliation presents the Grower Engagement report.

Canadian Canola Growers Association Report

Rick White, President and CEO

- Presented overview of both aspects of the business: Cash advance and advocacy on behalf of farmers. Highlighted activity on China anti-dumping investigation and US tariffs, as well as other trade related meetings.

Canola Council of Canada Report

Chris Davison, President and CEO

- Presented overview of activity on verticillium stripe steering committee, Trade issues, biofuels, regulatory support for gene editing, and work with exporters in Japan, Indonesia, China on canola and canola meal.

Q&A

- Question from Jack Froese: What is the battle plan on Seed oils?
- Answer from Delaney: The National Canola Marketing Program has the opportunity to address that with consumers. We have influencers and individuals speaking about the benefits of canola and undoing the misinformation around seed oils. Strategic planning with Fleishman Hillard Highroad (FHR) seeks to take a different approach to getting info

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about seed oils to consumers. There is a lot of noise in social media, but we have expertise we have never had before. FHR can reach our audience. CCC has also supported development of an academic publication on seed oils for a credible resource for dietitians and health influencers to address the question. CCC also collaborates with US organizations to address it from a political level and the broader industry around it.

- Question from Chuck Fossay: When will the spring advances be available and how does CCGA arrive at the crop values for the spring advances?
- Answer by Rick White: April 1 launch with cheques going out shortly after. Pre-application is launching soon. Prices are established by the Agriculture and agri-food marketing team and look at overall prices by commodity.

Finance Report
Nicolea Dow invited Alex George, George & Associates to present MCGA's Audited Financial Statement.

- Question from Ernie Sirski: After two years of losses, any thought being put forward to increase the check off?
- Answer from Delaney: MCGA needs to look at its financial sustainability and engage with members to see what programming they want us to offer in the future, and then determine the appropriate funding for it. I will talk about that a little more in a bit.

- Question from Ron Krahn: Research budget has $263K spent on PSI. What are farmers getting from that? It feels like a big line item.
- Answer from Delaney: We are reviewing the PSI lab and exploring the business model for that. We want to get the maximum value. Testing is a portion of their work, they are also doing research and validating test methods to ensure they work the Manitoba environment. Exploring how that service offers disease testing to members, verticillium, black leg, clubroot so farmers know what's happening in their fields and they can make choices where that seed can be planted.

- Question from Mickey Hersak: Referring to page 16 on sublease on an office. Is there a physical address?
- Answer from Delaney: Suite 167-400 Lombard Ave. Shared space with Canola Council of Canada with shared overhead costs.

Motion: to accept the financial report for the 2023/2024 year as presented.
M/S/C (Nicolea Dow/Jackie Dudgeon-MacDonald)

Motion: to accept DF George as the auditor for the audit period ending July 2025.
M/S/C (Chuck Fossay/Ernie Sirski)

Financial Sustainability review - Delaney Ross Burtnack, Executive Director MCGA presented an overview of the historic trend of MCGA's financials and the current challenges with increasing

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expenses and flat to declining revenue causing significant deficits. Also introduced MCGA's plan to consult with members over the coming year to identify the programming of greatest value to members and inform the board's review of MCGA's funding.

Q&A

- Question from Jack Froese: We need to have a plan with what to do with the money before we increase the check off.
- Answer from Delaney: We agree, an increase is not necessarily the answer. We need to reach out to members to confirm our programming needs before we consider what is needed for funding.

- Comment from Chuck Fossay: We will let the members know that this is just the first step, and we won't be recommending increases in the immediate future.
- Answer from Delaney: In the coming year we will engage with the members, and shape the programming based on what they are interested in. Many conversations to come.

Bylaw Amendments - Warren Ellis introduced two bylaw amendments proposed by the MCGA board to more clearly identify that the Chair and Vice-Chair positions are leadership positions on the board, and not interpreted as staff positions with the titles President and Vice-President:

- All references to "President" shall be revised to "board chair"
- All references to "vice-president" shall be revised to "Board vice-chair".

Motion: to amend the MCGA bylaws so that all references to President are revised to Board Chair, and all references to Vice-President are revised to Board Vice-Chair.

M/S/C (Darren Nykoliation/Nicolea Dow)

Resolutions

Warren Ellis provided an update on Active Resolutions:

- 2021: mandatory export sales reporting is still actively being pursued through our partnership with CCGA. CCGA is working through the Grain Growers of Canada to pursue this as a priority in the Grain Act review. The Conservatives have expressed interest to hear about improvements on the Grain Act and CCGA will be advocating for export sales reporting as part of those conversations.
- 2024: MCGA is working with the Alberta and Saskatchewan provincial canola commissions on the disease labeling resolution to continue to encourage the canola seed industry to utilize and/or develop universal labels that provide information on canola disease genetics to our farmer members. We will be making a formal request from all 3 grower groups for the national disease steering committees to establish a benchmarking system on disease resistance labeling. We will also leverage this information to support our farm members as we prioritize education about the current genetic resistance, labeling and how to best implement the seed decisions based on disease resistance at a farm level.

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2025 Resolutions

Whereas
Blackleg is a disease of canola found throughout Western Canada that can result in as much as 50% yield loss, presenting a danger to Canadian canola production;

And, whereas
Blackleg in canola has been used against Canada in international trade disputes, presenting a potential marketing risk to Canadian canola;

And, whereas
The Canola Council of Canada has organized the pertinent blackleg strains into ten categories representing the major resistance genes present in canola varieties and MCGA has further provided canola growers with the ability to submit field samples to identify predominant blackleg strains found in their fields;

And, whereas
Canola seed variety breeders and distributors have not fully chosen to voluntarily identify and provide the strains of blackleg to which the varieties are resistant;

Therefore be it resolved
That the Manitoba Canola Growers work to change regulation so that Blackleg major gene resistance labeling is required for canola variety recommendation or registration.

This Resolution is moved by Cam Stockford, and seconded by Nicolea Dow.

A friendly amendment was approved by the mover and had no objections in the meeting:

Therefore be it resolved
That the Manitoba Canola Growers work to make Blackleg major gene resistance labeling a requirement for canola variety recommendation or registration.

Cam Stockford spoke to the resolution: Blackleg levels have gone up. Unclear what to do with the info after samples sent to the PSI lab. With the possibility of blackleg mutation and loss of resistance, farmers need to know which major strains we've got and which varieties to use to manage blackleg and protect variety resistance.

Nicolea Dow also spoke to the resolution: Blackleg is a very prevalent disease and has had market implications. We passed a resolution last year to have seed companies use disease labelling but work is still ongoing.

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Question from Ernie Sirski: Would this not change in the variety registration system we have today?

Answer from Nicolea Dow: Not necessarily, and the reason for the friendly amendment. There are a few ways of going after this. May be able to include at the Recommendation level. Some of it's a little bit grey.

19 in favour
1 opposed.
Carried.

No resolutions from the floor.

Other Business
Staff Recognition for Long Service

- Leanne Campbell 20 years. First Communications Director for MCGA.
- Will Gerrard for being on the research committee.
- Clayton Harder who termed out in 2024 and stayed on for another year on CCGA board.

Motion: to Ratify Actions of the association.

M/S/C (John Pruen/Ernie Sirski)

Canola Award of Excellence

- Dr. Stephen Strelkov, Professor of Plant Pathology at the University of Alberta.

Adjournment at 5:45 pm.

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