

POTENTIAL SAVINGS FOR ALBERTA'S WHEAT FARMERS FOLLOWING WCD EXPIRATION



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At the Alberta Wheat Commission (AWC), we invest in your bottom line. We want you to see a return on investment right at your farm gate, and our producer-led model ensures that all of our programming is advancing your interests and strengthening the wheat industry. Funded by a check-off on all Alberta wheat sales, AWC puts your check-off dollars to work through innovative research, market development, policy advocacy, and communications and extension.

Currently, Alberta wheat farmers are accustomed to seeing two wheat check-offs on their grain cash ticket: the AWC check-off of 70 cents per tonne and the Western Canadian Deduction (WCD) of 48 cents per tonne, for a total of \$1.18 per tonne.

The WCD was established in 2012 by the federal government as a transitional program to maintain support for research and market development that was previously funded by the Canadian Wheat Board (CWB), while giving provincial wheat commissions time to get established. Looking ahead to August 2017 when the WCD is set to expire, AWC is proud to be operating at full capacity with mature program areas led by farmers and carried out by our management team.

Subject to passing of a motion at our annual general meeting in January 2017, the board of directors and management of AWC are recommending that Alberta producers move to a single wheat check-off of \$1.09 per

tonne—a nine-cent reduction from the two levies. In doing so, AWC will assume all of the funding obligations of the WCD, including the development of new wheat varieties and the market support activities of the Canadian International Grains Institute (Cigi). Most of the top wheat varieties grown in Alberta today, including CDC Go, AC Stettler and AC Foremost, were developed with the support of producer check-off dollars administered by the Western Grains Research Foundation (WGRF).

Our western Canadian counterparts, the Saskatchewan Wheat Development Commission and the Manitoba Wheat and Barley Growers Association, are also well positioned to continue their work to support growers' bottom lines, and will also transition to a single check-off.

What does the end of the WCD mean for Alberta's wheat farmers? The transition will reduce costs at point of sale by nine cents per tonne while consolidating all research and marketing activities under AWC in a model that is directly accountable to farmers. AWC will continue its full menu of programming, including an annual research budget of approximately \$1.9 million, while absorbing all obligations of WGRF for variety development and continuing to support Cigi, in collaboration with our fellow provincial wheat commissions.

With a revised strategic plan to be launched this year, AWC has a bright future ahead to continue investing in your bottom line. In the next three pages, learn more about how AWC is putting your check-off dollars to work, and get a sneak preview of some of the deliverables that will be part of our new strategic plan. We also encourage farmers to visit albertawheat.com to learn more about the full range of programming, initiatives and partnerships that AWC is proud to carry out on behalf of our farmers.

Your check-off dollars at work

The Alberta Wheat Commission (AWC) is driving long-term profitability for wheat and Alberta's wheat farmers through robust programs built to create new opportunities and address issues that affect farmers. This work is made possible by a check-off on wheat sales that is invested in farmer-directed research, market development, policy advocacy, and communications and extension - all with the end goal of supporting your bottom line.

Recent highlights:

Public Private Producer Partnership (4P)



Thanks to a partnership between AWC, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and CANTERRA SEEDS Ltd., farmers can continue to look forward to premium access to premium CPS wheat varieties through the breeding program at the Lethbridge Research and Development Centre.

Investment in wheat research and development



AWC recently invested \$740,625 in five wheat-related research projects that leveraged an additional \$622,625 from other funding partners. Through this investment, farmers can learn new management practices for hail-damaged crops, advanced monitoring to better understand stripe rust, improved water-use efficiency for better yield and drought tolerance, low-cost testing technology for mycotoxin detection, and new tools to improve wheat grain yield under normal and abiotic stress conditions.

Visit pdqinfo.ca

AWC launched a website that is contributing to a more transparent and efficient grain market with daily market prices for five major commodities.

Sustainability extension and partnership



The four crop commissions (Alberta Wheat, Alberta Barley, Alberta Canola and Alberta Pulse Growers) have collaboratively implemented a new sustainability extension co-ordinator role to build on the crop commissions' work to address the growing consumer-driven demand for food produced in alignment with internationally recognized sustainability standards and best management practices.





Team Canada Marketing



AWC is part of the Team Canada approach to wheat marketing with Cereals Canada and other members of the value chain. AWC participates in New Crop Missions to ensure market growth and strengthen the Canadian brand.

The AgCoalition



AWC was a catalyst in the formation of this producer-driven group of 29 organizations united by a common industry goal to foster a culture of farm safety in Alberta. Visit agcoalition.ca to learn more.



Ag Transport Coalition

AWC has committed to fostering improvements to our rail transportation system through a \$75,000 per year investment in the Ag Transport Coalition. Formed by producer and industry groups, this *Growing Forward 2* initiative is mandated to monitor and review opportunities to improve the agriculture supply chain.

We encourage you to visit albertawheat.com to learn more about how we are putting your check-off dollars to work through these and other AWC-led initiatives.

Our path forward: highlights for upcoming strategic check-off investment

As we look ahead, AWC will continue on our path to put your check-off dollars to work by strategically investing in programming that strengthens our industry and supports your bottom line.

Some highlights of how your check-off dollars will be invested in the future:

- ✓ We will take a more active role in the future of variety development, ensuring that Alberta's wheat farmers have continuous access to new, premium varieties that offer better returns.
- ✓ We will build programming that celebrates agricultural production and instills nostalgia among consumers about where their food comes from.
- ✓ We will continue to collaborate with industry to define a future model of international market development in wheat.
- ✓ We will build an established network between researchers and extension organizations to provide producers with regionally adapted agronomic information.
- ✓ We will create a national sustainability program that meets the needs of international buyers while facilitating stewardship at the farm level.



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PUSHING THE YIELD ENVELOPE

Advanced agronomic practices in wheat, barley and pea crops maximize yield and harvestability

Irene Lam
Research and Producer Engagement Intern

Innovative research is one of the most important drivers that sustain the competitive advantages Alberta farmers enjoy. As such, the Alberta Wheat Commission (AWC) invests approximately \$1.9 million annually of your check-off dollars in projects that provide innovative tools and solutions to improve crop performance and net profitability. Sheri Strydhorst's project "Advanced agronomic practices in wheat, barley and pea crops to maximize yield and harvestability" is one of many projects in AWC's research portfolio that has the potential to help ensure better returns on your farm.

Strydhorst, an agronomy research scientist with Alberta Agriculture and Forestry, is conducting research on advanced agronomic practices in wheat in a three-year project funded by AWC and other organizations. Field trials incorporate different management practices to maximize harvestability, yields, quality and, ultimately, profitability.

According to Strydhorst, this type of research is necessary for Canadian wheat to remain competitive in future global markets.

"Farmers must continue to improve, and this study will allow them to grow

more wheat by using crop inputs more efficiently," she said.

The project is unique in that trials are located across all wheat-growing regions of Alberta. Current farmer practices are mimicked as closely as possible so that results can be replicated on farms across the province.

While the study is not yet complete, initial results indicate a significant yield response to advanced agronomic management (in-crop UAN fertilizer application of 34kg N/ha + Agrotain to prevent nitrogen loss; Manipulator plant growth regulator (PGR); dual fungicide application) versus standard agronomic management (no in-crop UAN application; no PGR; no fungicide) for wheat varieties.

In addition, Strydhorst found that the interaction between cultivar and management practice had a significant impact on yield and harvestability. Wheat varieties such as AC Foremost, Belvoir, CDC Go, Coleman and Thorsby had significantly higher yields with advanced management. Other cultivars examined, such as AAC Penhold, AC Andrew, Harvest and

CDC Stanley, obtained less-significant yields with advanced management. These results together suggest that only certain varieties see a significant boost with advanced agronomic practice. Therefore, efficient use of advanced inputs could be achieved if inputs were only applied on responsive varieties.

Strydhorst's long-term goal is to identify which varieties are the most responsive to advanced inputs so that she can develop variety-specific agronomic management packages for newly registered varieties in the future.

Strydhorst understands the importance of agronomic research to a producer's bottom line on a personal level. "Much of my success as an agronomic research scientist can be attributed to my farming connections," she said. "My husband and I have a grain farm at Neerlandia so I live the ups and downs, stresses and joys, of crop production first hand."

More information about this project can be found in a video available at www.albertawheat.com through the research portal.



The Bon Accord cropwalk was an opportunity for producers and industry to see research investment in action.