



REGIONAL ADAPTATION ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM | PROJECT SUMMARY

Good Data Informs Good Decisions in Climate of Change

MAKING GOOD DECISIONS IS EASIER when you have good information to work with. Faced with increasing uncertainty related to climate change, producer organizations in BC’s Peace region have been working to fill the information gaps related to pests and weather.

During the development of the *Peace Adaptation Strategies*, increasing producer access to weather data emerged as a priority to support real-time, seasonal and long-term decision-making and planning. As a region, the Peace is geographically distinct from the rest of BC, as well as the Alberta Peace. Baseline weather data was also needed to improve monitoring and forecasts for pests and diseases.

“Climate change is a real issue and the weather is changing, but we can’t measure the changes if we don’t have historical data,” says Garnet Berge, a grain grower in the Peace and an active participant in the committee overseeing the implementation of the *Peace Adaptation Strategies*.

PROJECT	<i>Agriculture Weather Monitoring and Decision Support Tools</i>
LOCATION	<i>Peace region</i>
COMPLETION	<i>March 2017</i>
PROJECT LEAD	<i>BC Grain Producers’ Association</i>
FUNDING PARTNERS	<i>Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, BC Ministry of Agriculture, BC Branch of the Canadian Seed Growers Association, BC Grain Producers’ Association, Peace Region Forage Seed Association, Peace River Regional District</i>

“The two projects tie together because pest pressures are affected by weather conditions. The weather will influence how severe the infestations will be,” explains Berge. “The more areas that can be monitored, the better. These are important tools to help us with risk management.”

In 2014, an assessment of the availability of local weather monitoring data determined that — to achieve reasonable



“*The weather will influence how severe [pest] infestations will be.*”

coverage of the growing areas in the Peace — at least ten new weather stations would need to be added. Since then, 12 new monitoring stations have been installed in strategic locations to maximize the coverage of the area.

With a more robust network of weather monitoring stations in place, the BC Grain Producers’

Association is collaborating with other producer groups and the BC Agriculture & Food Climate Action Initiative, to deliver a project to increase the availability of agriculturally relevant weather data and decision support tools to area growers. The new website is currently being tested, and is expected to be available to growers in the summer of 2016.

“Once it is in place, our growers will be able to combine data from their closest weather station, with information about their fields to help make crop management decisions,” explains Sharla Pearce, general manager of the BC Grain Producers Association.

“While some decision support tools are commodity specific, this project includes benefits and potential for on-going collaboration across production systems. The CAI funding has allowed us to develop a tool that all types of producers can use, regardless of operation size or commodity.”

Projects like this are part of the work being delivered by the BC Agriculture & Food Climate Action Initiative (CAI). CAI develops tools and resources to assist BC farmers and ranchers with adapting to impacts of climate change. CAI’s Regional Adaptation Enhancement Program provides up to \$300,000 to implement priority projects identified in each regional adaptation strategy.

www.BCAGClimateAction.ca

The BC Agriculture & Food Climate Action Initiative was launched in 2008 by the BC Agriculture Council to enable a proactive and pan-agriculture approach to climate change issues. The Climate Action Initiative is currently supported by the BC Agricultural Research & Development Corporation and the Investment Agriculture Foundation of BC with funding provided by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and the BC Ministry of Agriculture through Growing Forward 2, a federal-provincial-territorial initiative.

The photo in this handout is courtesy of Tamara Leigh.

