



Alberta Barley Commission sets plans & goals for 2009/2010

April 27, 2009 (Calgary, Alberta)—Barley is already one of Alberta's largest and most important crops. Even so, the Alberta Barley Commission is thinking bigger. Working on behalf of the province's 17,000 barley producers, the Commission has developed decisive plans to ensure the long-term sustainability and future opportunities for Alberta's barley industry.

The plan has four primary objectives for 2009/2010. First, to develop and deliver a communications and extension plan to give producers new tools and information that help them profit more from their barley. Second, develop and carry out activities that increase existing and emerging opportunities and options for barley producers to sell their crop. Third, support and contribute to the renewal and sustainability of growth of Alberta's main barley customers, the livestock industry. And, finally, identify, rank and act on research priorities important to producers.

The Commission's Board of Directors developed the plans and objectives during an intensive two-day strategic planning retreat in April. As well, the Commission allocated new research funding for 2009/2010. The Commission estimates an increase in check-off dollars will generate new research funds of between \$500,000 to \$625,000 annually. Effective Aug. 1, 2009, barley producers will pay \$1.00 for every tonne of barley (or about two cents a bushel) they sell, up from \$0.50/tonne (about one cent a bushel).

These new research funds will be used to conduct research for: bioproducts (non-feed, non-malt, non-food applications); agronomy and production; feed barley; malting barley; and food and nutrition. Funds will also be used for the Commission's ongoing support of regional varietal trails.

"The session to develop our strategic priorities is the most important meeting of the year and helps us go forward with renewed vigour," Commission chairman Terry Young says.

"This session brings forward a lot of very good discussion and . . . our priorities demonstrate that we are committed to creating opportunities and value in all areas of our industry," Commission vice-chairman and Region 5 director Albert Wagner says.

Alberta farmers produce 50 to 60 per cent of the 10 to 12 million tonnes of barley grown in Canada every year. The Alberta Barley Commission (www.albertabarley.com) is a not-for-profit organization funded, directed and controlled by Alberta's barley farmers. Established in 1991, the Commission coordinates and sponsors research, market development and policy development on behalf of its 17,000 producers.

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