

## **NPARA MEETS WITH COMMISSIONS**

On Friday, April 28, NPARA board members and staff met with representatives of the 4 commissions in Peace River:

- Alberta Canola Producers Commission – Ward Toma, General Manager; Dan Doll, Region 1 Director, Fairview
- Alberta Wheat Commission – Tom Steve, General Manager; Warren Sekulic, Region 5 Director, Rycroft
- Alberta Barley Commission – Jason Lenz, Chairman and Region 3 Director, Bentley
- Alberta Pulse Growers – Leanne Fischbuch (by phone), Executive Director; Caroline Sekulic, Vice-Chair and Zone 4 Director, Rycroft

NPARA requested the meeting because producers are concerned about the check-off dollars deducted from their commodity cheques and what these dollars are used for. Producers would like to see more of their check-off dollars returned to this region and used for local applied research and extension. These are producer dollars and they want value for their check-off dollars. NPARA voiced their desire to work with the commissions to address the research and extension needs of producers in the North Peace as it is a very unique growing area.

The commissions stated that NPARA is welcome to apply for more funding in addition to the \$1500 that NPARA receives from each commission through the Alberta Crops Extension Program. (NPARA does receive some extra funding from some of the commissions to support events like the Peace Agronomy Update which is a regional event). There is concern about the time required to complete funding applications and reports for each and every trial that is conducted by NPARA and it was suggested that the commissions provide core funding. With core funding, perhaps producers from the North Peace would be more supportive of the check-off levies if they saw evidence of their dollars spent locally on research and extension. The commissions said that could not be done and encouraged NPARA staff to establish relationships with researchers, develop a marketing package and apply to each individual commission for more funding.

The meeting provided an opportunity for all parties to voice their concerns. There was a good exchange of information – NPARA gained a better understanding of the commissions and the commissions are now more aware of the capabilities of NPARA.