

ENGAGING WITH YOUR PLANT HEALTH OFFICER DURING COVID-19

In some ways the global Covid-19 pandemic has made our jobs and home life more complicated and stressful just as it has simplified and strengthened other aspects of our lives. Engaging with your Plant Health Officer (PHO) need not be stressful or worrying. We are working to adapt to the needs of RM and First

Nation Band (FNB) Councils, Weed Inspectors, Pest Control Officers, Land Managers, and other stakeholders. While we may need to opt out of meeting with you in person at Council meetings, we are still available to meet with staff and Councils via video conferencing and/or conference calls. Feel free to contact your PHO to make arrangements that work for everyone. Staying engaged with you is still a priority for us.

Even though the pandemic has altered local priorities, the priorities of your PHO remain the same: to be of service to Administrators, RM staff, Councillors and ratepayers. We hope to be able to connect with every RM and FNB in our division this winter whether in person or via technology to discuss your priorities and concerns. We understand that staff and Administrators come and go and that in election years there may be some changes to Council. Our hope is that you will invite us to bring your new staff and Council up to speed on what programming is available or to refresh everyone's memory.

Some of the services we provide include addressing any clubroot questions you may have, whether it is regarding biosecurity or enacting a bylaw. We are here to assist with creating or updating weed management plans. If you are new to the Pest Biosecurity Program, we are available to answer any of your questions and to help with making claims for any of the rebates offered through the program. You can share our contact information with your Weed Inspectors, Pest Control Officers, licensed applicators, and staff for technical support including weed ID, help with rebate programs, and interpreting *The Weed Control Act* or *The Pest Control Act* in Saskatchewan.



DON'T FORGET! IMPORTANT DEADLINES COMING UP

Submission of clubroot soil samples to RM offices—OCTOBER 30, 2020

Invasive Plant Control Program (IPCP) Claims—OCTOBER 31, 2020

FOR HELP WITH CLAIMS FORMS FOR THE IPCP, CONTACT YOUR PHO.

Rat Control Program Claims—DECEMBER 31, 2020

Beaver Control Program Claims—FEBRUARY 15, 2021

FOR HELP WITH RAT AND BEAVER CONTROL PROGRAM CLAIMS CONTACT ANNETTE ELLERT (aellert@sarm.ca) OR YOUR PHO

CHANGING OF THE SEASONS

Even though we are in the middle of a pandemic, the survey season was a busy one. This summer the Plant Health Officers helped the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture with a variety of different pest and disease surveys. All in all we participated in the strychnine audit, surveys for the pea leaf weevil, aster yellows leafhopper, bertha armyworm, diamondback moth, swede midge, lygus bug in faba beans and the spotted wing drosophila; field pea disease, lentil disease, general canola disease, chickpea disease, soybean disease and the provincial clubroot survey. On the invasive plant side of things, we hosted four days for leafy spurge beetle collection, monitored historic release sites for biocontrol agents for leafy spurge and scentless chamomile; and new sites for the release of toadflax stem galling weevil and hound's-tongue weevil were located and monitored. In the southeast, we conducted a survey for tall waterhemp in soybean crops.

The PHOs would like to thank all RMs who promoted the Producer Pest Monitoring Sign-up Initiative. Your help was greatly appreciated, and we hope you will continue to promote voluntary producer sign ups for the 2021 season. We would also like to thank the RMs that participated in the Producer Clubroot Self-Sampling Program by distributing and collecting the soil sample bags through the RM offices.

This winter the PHOs will be planning webinars in lieu of the regular workshops we have hosted in the past such as the Pest Control Officer workshops and Weed Inspector clinics. Please feel free to share with us any topics you would like addressed in a webinar.



Happy Thanksgiving!
We hope you have a safe and
happy holiday

Please contact your Division PHO for more information, to answer any questions, or suggest content for future newsletters.

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