

The Windsock

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Presidents Message

If you have not heard the news yet, it appears we have had our last AGM at the Red Deer Lodge. The hotel is going through some troubles so we have decided to move our AGM for the coming year. Organizing an AGM at a venue for a decent price takes a few months, so we had to act immediately. The Black Knight Inn will be our new location for the 2015 AGM. It is promising to be equal to, if not better than the Red Deer Lodge.

We have not heard from many fellow operators on the subject of cell/data towers being proposed to be erected in areas they work in, but it has been a continuous issue in the Southeastern portion of the province. We have addressed three proposed towers this winter. We have been successful having one of the tower's location moved a mile, this will be a safer distance away from cropland and the second location is out of the way of any cropland. We were successful in convincing the County Planning Commission to have the marking of both towers as per Advisory Circular AC600-001 as part of the approval for the towers. However we are still dealing with the third proposal; it is taking great efforts to convince the tower company to move the location 3 miles from where they want to build.

Getting prepared for spray season 2015, all of us are in the mindset of having equipment and people in place along with the training requirements that need to be accomplished. Guidance is provided via links on the AAAA's website on ground crew/assistant training along with safety equipment that needs to be utilized, eg: PPE, respirator requirements, etc. Don't forget the Provincial and Federal requirements as per OHS regulations; make sure you go through their websites on convictions and fines for companies not following regulations, it'll scare you straight.

Depending on the number of people working on site, we need to have at least one person present with up to date first aid training. This person should also be well versed in handling any accidents concerning chemical exposure by a person whether it be ingestion or dermal. Don't forget to update your MSDS and have them on site for all the products that you are handling.

The PMRA re-evaluates crop protection products and its active ingredients on a 15 year schedule. It is a good practice to go through their site and review what they have addressed and what changes are made on products that you may work with throughout the upcoming season. We've noticed a couple so far that have changed PPE requirements, buffer zones and have issued advisory statements on some.

The issue of washing of spray equipment is on the forefront of the association's list of tasks. There is going to be a study, led by us, on where and how the exterior of a spray plane or ground rig sprayer can be washed and what is needed (if any) for containment of the resultant liquids that come from it. From this study we will need to accomplish a document of best practices for this procedure. Any suggestions or ideas are welcome.

For a number of years, Fran de Kock has represented the association very well on the Alberta Aerial Committee and the Prairie Province Aerial Certification Committee. Without Fran's work and input on these two Environment committees over the past several years, the Alberta Aerial Applicators would not have the respect of Alberta Environment that we have today. Thank you Fran! Fran has now retired himself from these committees and Darren Tiede has volunteered to fill the position.

The last AAAA's Board Meeting was held on April 10, 2015 and a handful of new subjects were raised. Some people were offended at the CAAA AGM in Winnipeg on the labeling of the flying farmer as a Non Certified Operator (NCO). The Board has decided that at the Provincial level, the AAAA's will remain to address the flying farmer as a 'flying farmer'.

The Board has come to realize that the association's bylaws are extremely out of date with today's times, so a committee has been formed to review the bylaws and recommend any changes. Expect some resolutions to come forth for voting at our next AGM in November.

President's Message cont'd

The Manitoba Association has been working with the Manitoba Bee-Keepers Association on a smart phone application that will help both the beekeepers and the aerial applicators. This app is called BeeConnected. BeeConnected will allow an aerial applicator to easily log the time and field location of a specific crop protection product application activity through a Google Maps-based platform with GPS capability. Beekeepers can use the same functions to log the present locations of their beehives. When a beehive is logged near the field requiring treatment, applicators are then connected with beekeepers within a specific geographical area. The automated notifications will allow the two parties to chat further about their activities via a secure internal messaging service. They are hoping to have this up and running by this spray season. MAAA invited Board representatives from the AAAA's and the SAAA's to their spring AGM in Portage on April 15, 2015 for the unveiling of this new app.

Shaun, Jill, Shauna and I attended the event and found it to be very interesting and useful. Look for BeeConnected to be available through your phone's app store later this spring and inform your local beekeepers.

The AAAA's lost one of our own on April 19, 2015, Fred Kinniburgh. Attendance to his Final Farewell Flight at the Lethbridge Lodge on April 24, 2015 filled two ballrooms. Fred treated us to food and drinks along with a presentation by his grandchildren portraying his life. The AAAA's sends their heartfelt condolences to Daisy and the Kinniburgh family. Gonna miss him. Tailwinds Fred!

Pat Stinnissen

BeeConnected

A new tool to help encourage communication between beekeepers and farmers is coming to Canada.

CropLife Canada's BeeConnected app anonymously connects registered farmers, beekeepers and pesticide applicators – free of charge – to provide information on any pesticide application activity or beehive locations near them – all through the use of a web browser, iPhone or Android device.

“We've heard from a number of groups that communication between all parties could be improved,” said Pierre Petelle, vice-president of chemistry, CropLife Canada. “And the BeeConnected app addresses this issue with an end goal of helping prevent bees from being unintentionally exposed to pesticides.”

Getting started is easy.

Users simply download the app from iTunes or Google Play and create an account right on their smartphone.

Farmers are then notified when a beekeeper logs a bee yard location within five kilometers of their property and beekeepers are notified when any crop protection activity is logged within five kilometers of their hives.

All registered information is kept confidential and users are always anonymous.

Registered users can choose to use BeeConnected's built-in messaging service to coordinate and privately share information with specific users or can broadcast their message to any relevant users registered within a five kilometer radius of their activity or hive.

Farmers, commercial applicators and beekeepers can also explore the in-app map to find any nearby activity that could affect them. But beekeepers can't see other beekeepers and farmers and pesticide applicators can't see other farmers and applicators, something Petelle says was flagged as a concern for users of existing geolocator apps.

Petelle says BeeConnected is an important tool to help farmers, commercial applicators and beekeepers protect pollinators by opening up a line of communication about agricultural activity or hive locations with their neighbours.

“Bees and pesticides are integral and complementary components of sustainable agriculture,” said Petelle. “The plant science industry is committed to ensuring both beekeeping and agriculture can co-exist and thrive and this is just one tool to help make the connection between farmers and beekeepers.”

Interested in signing up? Head to www.croplife.ca for more information on BeeConnected and further instructions on how you can download the app.

Join Us in Celebrating 45 Years!

**2015 AAAA Conference &
Annual General Meeting
November 2 & 3, 2015**

Black Knight Inn - Red Deer, AB

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Wild Rose Protective Fund Update

All WRPF members should have returned their renewal packages for the 2015 year.

You will have noticed there is some new information to provide.

We now require commercial operators to provide an AOC number, as well as relevant licence numbers. Flying farmers also need to provide licence numbers. Flying farmers are also asked to provide a legal land description of the property that is used to calculate their 25 mile operating limit.

During past investigations of incidents or claims, it has been found that a member was missing some key regulatory compliance data. The Board feels it is prudent to require this information up front to ensure all members are in compliance with regulations. Membership will not be extended to those who do not meet these requirements.

While it is not our intention to police our industry, a process to ensure that insurance is only being offered to those that are complying with both the letter and spirit of the laws.

Illegal operators are an issue, and the board will be working with AB Environment in the future to identify weakness in regulation where illegal operators are concerned. We will also push for legal consequences for those who operate outside of the law.

REMINDER Drift coverage only applies to products applied according to the label.

As always, we welcome comments to your board members.

May your summer be inversion free!

Darren Tiede

Pratt & Whitney Canada Tour

On April 28th Pratt & Whitney Canada's Lethbridge Plant hosted a gathering for the Aerial Application community of Canada and the United States. Invited guests included Shaun Kinniburgh; CAAA President, Peter Hansen; Lethbridge Applicator, Jill Lane; CAAA Executive Director, Shauna Prokopchuk, CAAA Association Manager, Andrew Moore; NAAA Executive Director, Rick Boardman; NAAA President, Dana Ness; NAAA Past President and Bill and Graham Lavender; Ag Air Update. Guests were treated to a history of the relationship between Pratt & Whitney Canada and the aerial application industry. Guests were also privileged to receive a tour of the plant which is a rare honor.

Following the tour and presentation at the plant, Pratt & Whitney Canada employees and their families were invited to

Peter Hansen's West Wind Airspray facility. Attendees were able to see up close where their hard work ends up. Several planes were on display courtesy of West Wind as well as Kinniburgh Spray Service. Jack Appleton also provided a flying demonstration which fascinated the employees and their children. Hopefully we have another generation of Ag pilots in the making!

A huge thank you is extended to Pratt & Whitney Canada's Ryan Densham, Marketing Account Manager; Kathy Roberge, Senior Advisor, Marketing Communications; and Olivier Lefebvre, General Manager, Lethbridge facility or their hospitality and continued support of aerial application in Canada and specifically in Alberta.

2015 Container Management Updates for Alberta Aerial Applicators

CleanFARMS is pleased to be working more closely with its Alberta partners this year to increase return rates and promote our regional obsolete pesticide collection campaigns.

As preparations for the 2015 season begin, please make note of the following return locations:

Bulk containers returns – return to retail partners

Ag retailers across Alberta will continue to collect all >23 litre containers, both one-way and multi-use containers.

*One-way containers – new for 2015**

Beginning this year, CleanFARMS will be working with CWS Logistics to pick up all one-way bulk containers from retail collection sites.

*Onsite pickup is also available to aerial applicators that have more than 25 empty one-way containers, provided the containers are stored in an Agrichemical Warehousing Standards Association (AWSA) certified warehouse. Visit www.cleanfarms.ca/ABoneways for more details. This does not apply to multi-use containers, which must be returned to retail collection sites.

Obsolete pesticides collections – return to select retail partners in southern Alberta (2015) and northern Alberta (2016)

CleanFARMS' obsolete pesticide collection will be offered at select ag retailers in the fall of 2015 and 2016. This free service is offered every three years. Collection sites and dates for the 2015 collection will be released this summer.

Small (<23L) pesticide and fertilizer container returns – return to municipal collection partners

CleanFARMS works with 130 municipal partners to collect <23 litre containers from users across the province. Prior to being returned, containers must be triple or pressure rinsed with the caps and booklets removed.

Bulk containers (one-way and refillable) and obsolete pesticides will not be accepted at the municipal collection sites.

Stay in touch

Email us at info@cleanfarms.ca to join our mailing list for the latest updates from CleanFARMS. Please contact us at 877-622-4460 with any questions or comments.