

December, 2005



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The Windsock

Alberta Aerial Applicator Association 2005 AGM REVIEW

The 2005 Alberta Aerial Applicators Annual General Meeting & Conference was held at the Red Deer Lodge, November 14-15, 2005. It was another successful conference with 75 delegates in attendance.

The Wild Rose Protective Fund Annual General Meeting was held on Monday morning. Topics discussed included 2005 Season and Membership review, a new payout policy and retired members payout. The 2006 Board of Directors was selected. Congratulations to Darren Tiede, Peter Hansen, Harvey Abbott, Clark Oberholtzer, Tom Kinniburgh, Mark Kinniburgh and Bob Matthiessen.

A two hour presentation was given by Jeff Grubbs of CEDA on Response & Mitigation of Pesticide Spills. The presentation was filled with a variety of information and ideas useful in all application operations.

Jock McIntosh of Alberta Environment provided a session on updates and issues regarding

Alberta legislation. Topics discussed included; Surface Water Study results, Federal Buffer Zone implementation, Own Use Importation program, 2005 pesticide incident issues and Code of Practice Review.

Julie Sisson and Andrea Sawatzky of Pest Management Regulatory Agency presented a Federal Regulations update. Topics covered included who are the PMRA and what do they do; PMRA regional operations; Own Use Importation program; information on bees; tank mixing; PHI issues; the 2006 Compliance Promotion program; Administrative Monetary Penalties (AMPS); The new PCP Act and Regulations; re-evaluation of products; and buffer zone.

The AAAA Annual Business Meeting was well attended. Fran de Kock provided a President's report, Tom Kinniburgh provided a CAAA report and Peter Hansen provided a CAIR report. Members discussed the new SMS requirements from Transport Canada, the oilfield & exploration workers in the fields, fund raising

options and CAAA CAP Clinic locations. The election of the 2006 board of directors completed the meeting. The new board includes Fran de Kock, Peter Hansen, Tom Kinniburgh, Clark Oberholtzer, Greg Flowitt, Mark Kinniburgh, Brent Lange, Bob Matthiessen, and Darren Tiede.

Monday evening's entertainment was provided by Kerry Unger, a Calgary comedian. He entertained the group with his humorous outlook on life. The silent auction concluded following the entertainment, raising over \$5000 for the AAAA. A big thank you to all supporters of the AAAA who donated and purchased auction items.

The AAAA extends a special thank you to all of the sponsors and exhibitors who supported the association, not only at the Annual General Meeting, but also throughout the year. Please remember as the new season starts, these are the companies supporting your association. A full list of sponsors can be found in this newsletter. Thanks again for your continued support.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY FRAN DE KOCK

As usual, the 2005 season brought a series of challenges to farmers, particularly with large amounts of rain in the south during the spring. The northeast was drenched with 100 to 170 mm in August, and last but not least, there were areas with Bertha Armyworm and Diamondback Moths. In all these events aerial applicators were called on to help with the problems. With the heavy rain in the south in June, many aircraft were called to apply herbicides in areas with a large variety of crops, which can create a significant number of challenges. When you take into consideration the amount of acres that were sprayed, the problems we heard about were minimal. The required insecticide spraying happened in a very short period of time. The areas were small, but the infestation was quite severe. The only complaint I heard was if an operator could not get to it immediately - the [John Deere's] were doing the job. The rain in the northeast made it difficult for pre-harvest by ground, and aircraft sprayed fields that were affected the most.

It seems a significant amount of our work these days is 911. Whenever an event takes place that forces a grower to hire an aircraft where they normally don't, we have to take advantage of the opportunity in two ways. One, it gives us the opportunity to do extra work which directly effects our bottom line. Second, is the opportunity to show how effective we can be, when doing the job for growers we may not normally work for, in hopes, they may hire us in the future as a part of the regular process of growing and protecting their crops.

Our Annual General Meeting was held in Red Deer, November 14th and 15th, and was very well attended. Credit courses were offered on Emergency response and Regulations. Some very important issues were discussed at the AGM, including Safety Management Systems [SMS] and how to handle oilfield or other activities in fields requiring spraying. The two subjects generated much discussion, especially SMS. The consensus, in the SMS discussion, was that we, as applicators, couldn't live with it as presented and the CAAA needs to address the issue. The oilfield and other field activity issue is a matter to be handled by each individual operator. The important thing to remember is how each individual operator handles it, affects us all.

For many of us, the end of the season allows us to catch up with family time. We can spend more time with our children and, in my case, my grandchildren. This time of year is also very busy but I think most of us do a good job of making up for the time when we were focused on our profession and our families were lower on our list of priorities. Sometimes I think because of my profession, my children missed out on a lot of things we could have done in the summer months, as anything we did always had to be short and sweet. When I look back, I think we adapted quite well. Instead of one snowmobile, we had three. Our time at the lake was spent on winter activities instead of summer ones. Skating on the lake, instead of swimming in it isn't that bad - the bugs don't seem to bite. It is also more comfortable sitting in front of the fire in the cabin in the winter than in the summer, and our summer holidays were replaced with winter ski trips to the mountains.

I would like to thank all of the 4A members for their support this past year. I wish everyone a Happy Holiday season and a Safe and Prosperous New Year

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The Alberta Aerial Applicators Association gratefully acknowledges the generous assistance of these companies. Their support has been a major factor in success of the 35th Annual General Meeting.

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Field trials completed last year in Manitoba illustrated yields with aerial application are as good as or better than ground application on canola, wheat beans and potatoes. This is the second trial in ten years that illustrated yields were better overall with aerial application. The data from the trials has been compiled and published in a brochure for use by aerial applicators. The brochure provides applicators with an excellent marketing tool to promote their services to producers. The brochure is available through the CAAA office at \$1.00 per copy. The trials were independently conducted by AXYS Agronomics and supported by Manitoba Aerial Applicators Association, BASF Canada Inc., Arty's Air Service, Bestland Agro, Jonair (1988) Ltd., Morse Bros., Roland Air Spray, and Westman Aerial Spraying Ltd. For more information contact the CAAA at 780-413-0078.