



2025 SASKOATS AGM MINUTES
Wednesday, January 15, 9:10 AM
Prairieland Park & via Zoom

Attendees: 24 producers, 28 industry.

Elwood White, SaskOats Chair, welcomed all participants, then introduced the Honourable Daryl Harrison, Saskatchewan Minister of Agriculture.

Minister Harrison provided greetings from the Government of Saskatchewan and thanked SaskOats for the invitation to speak at the AGM. Minister Harrison acknowledged that POGA/SaskOats are recognized leaders in the industry for their ongoing efforts to promote oats, support growers, and identify new market opportunities, such as the recent Peru-directed campaign. Their work in marketing and value-added research, including innovations like oat milk, has contributed to the growing demand for Canadian oats, making them one of Saskatchewan's fastest-growing agricultural sectors. Saskatchewan producers are also celebrated for their commitment to sustainable practices, with 95% of producers using zero-till farming methods—significantly reducing agriculture's net carbon footprint, which is comparable to or even lower than other regions. Minister Harris and the Government of Saskatchewan reaffirm their commitment to supporting the agricultural sector, exploring new avenues for growth and enhanced production.

White provided instructions to those joining online and directed them to not use the chat for questions, but to submit all questions to info@poga.ca. He then introduced presenter Jessica Enns, Research Manager, Western Applied Research Corporation for her presentation.

White called the business portion of the meeting to order at 9:40 am and provided voting instructions for virtual participants.

Approval of the 2025 AGM Agenda: no additions were brought forward.

Motion: Ryan Zuchkan /Jeff Mathieson to approve the agenda as presented. Carried.

White then introduced the current board members: Landon Kuschak, producer from Ituna and the SaskOats Vice-Chair (not in attendance); Ryan Zuchkan producer from Foam Lake and Audit Chair; and board members Jessica Slowski, producer from Sheho, David Katerynych, producer from Richard, and Ambrely Ralph, producer from Arborfield.

White also introduced the SaskOats/POGA staff: Shawna Mathieson, Executive Director; Pam Yule (attending online), working part-time on research and special projects; and Kaitlyn Kitzan, part-time Marketing Coordinator.

Approval of 2024 AGM Minutes: White noted that the minutes for the SaskOats AGM, held January 10, 2024 SaskOats are posted online and available to those in the room.

Motion: Jessica Slowski/David Katerynych to approve the 2024 SaskOats AGM Minutes as presented. Carried.

White introduced Ryan Zuchkan, 2024 Audit Chair, to present the 2023-24 financial statements and budget.

Review of the 2023-2024 Financial Statements:

Zuchkan noted that for the year ending July 31, 2024, SaskOats came in within 1% of the budget.

Producer check-off revenue was down by 25% or by about \$195,000 from the previous year but this was expected and budgeted for.

Zuchkan stated that R&D spending increased this year. This was primarily due to the fact that last year many projects had ended due to the five-year cycle of the federal government. Therefore, this year the oat growers were able to add additional projects with outside funding.

Zuchkan told the attendees that producer refund requests in 2023-2024 were 7.1% of dollars collected and 3.4% of the total number of producers paying the levy. This was a slight increase in the dollars collected from 2022-2023 where refunds were 6.2% but slightly lower number of producers asked for refunds since last year was 4.2%. Overall, Zuchkan stated that this is on par with the general industry standard of around 7%.

SaskOats had approximately \$1.0M in GICs at the end of the 2023-2024 year, slightly lower than last year's at \$1.1M. The long-term goal, Zuchkan reminded the attendee, is to be closer to one year of operating revenue. In the past, SaskOats stated this is about \$850,000. However, since producers unanimously agreed to increase the levy last year to \$0.75 per tonne, one year of reserves for SaskOats now equals about \$1.2 million.

Zuchkan reminded attendees that SaskOats is a member of the Prairie Oat Growers Association which includes the other provincial oat associations from Alberta and Manitoba, and all three Prairie commissions pay a proportionate amount of their levy revenue, into projects funded by POGA.

POGA projects are focused to benefit all oat growers. POGA has a Western Canadian voice and representation which allows for more access to government funding as opposed to each province doing projects alone and allows for one central office reducing staff and costs. SaskOats does support some Saskatchewan projects outside of POGA and they were provided to attendees in the SaskOats Annual Report and the audited financial statements.

Zuchkan asked if there were any questions before he moved on to the budget review. There were no questions.

Review of the 2024-2025 Budget: Zuchkan told the attendees that for 2024-2025 a profit of \$399,661 is forecasted.

Producer levy income is forecasted at \$1,125,000 based on Statistics Canada projections. This is an increase in income compared to last's year revenue of \$779,000 but, Zuchkan explained, this is expected due to the increase in levy.

Zuchkan asked if there were any questions regarding the budget. There were no questions.

Zuchkan welcomed White back to the stage.

Motion: Ryan Zuchkan/Jessica Slowski to accept the audited 2023-2024 SaskOats Financial Statements and the 2024-2025 Budget as presented. Carried.

Motion: Jessica Slowski/Ryan Zuchkan to appoint Baker Tilly of Yorkton, SK as SaskOats Auditor for 2024-2025 year. Carried.

Project Overview and Spending and Priorities: White noted that 2024 has been another challenging year for farmers across Western Canada. The extreme heat in July, coupled with very little moisture, impacted everyone. Oat prices have also been quite volatile this year, ranging from \$3.50 to \$4.75—a swing of over 35%. This kind of fluctuation makes marketing oats even more critical compared to other crops with more stable pricing. White spoke about being hopeful that oat prices and supply stabilize to more predictable levels, keeping oats profitable for producers and being inspired by the resilience of producers and the food system as a whole.

White noted SaskOats priorities for funding: 45% for market development, 35% for research, 10% for communications, 5% for advocacy and 5% for building partnerships.

On the market development front, White stated Exports are climbing steadily after the sharp decline seen in 2022 due to drought conditions, which caused importers to source oats elsewhere. Canadian exports to Mexico and Japan, two countries where POGA has actively promoted oats since 2014 and 2019, respectively, have returned to normal levels and are showing consistent growth. Canada holds 88% of the market share in Mexico and 51% in Japan.

With support from the Saskatchewan Government, POGA has started market development in the Latin American market, starting with Peru (63% of market share) and Ecuador (41.5% market share). There's potential to grow into Chile, Costa Rica, and Guatemala as well. POGA also participated in a Team Canada Mission to South Korea to understand the market. Domestically, initiatives like **OatsEveryday.com** continue to promote Canadian oats through videos, recipes, and consumer engagement.

White noted SaskOats, independently and through POGA supports about 30 projects with 9 different provincial and federal funders, plus industry support. A full list of all projects is available in the Annual Report and on our website. Nine new projects are being funded, with two more pending external funding approval. The sharp increase in research proposals was also noted with nearly 20 in each of the past two years, compared to the usual 5–7. This is a great sign for the future of the oat industry.

In addition, White stated SaskOats has also been hard at work advocating for the industry. Over the past year, meetings have been held with federal and provincial ministers and senior officials. Key topics included the federal strategy to reduce fertilizer emissions, increasing research funding for small crops to meet sustainability goals, discussions on the Bungee/Viterra merger, and Bills C-234 and C-282. While POGA didn't plan an Ottawa mission this year, SaskOats met with Minister Marit and is working to set up a meeting to meet with Minister Harrison this winter and the other two Western Canadian oat commissions are also planning to meet with their respective provincial Ag Ministers.

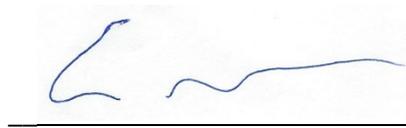
White also noted that through this work, Prairie oat growers through the three provincial associations \$5.7 M of levy dollars into \$42.8 M which is less than 14 cents on the dollar.

White asked if there were any questions. There were none.
White requested a motion to adjourn.

Motion: Jessica Slowski/David Katerynych to adjourn at 9:56 AM.

White introduced the next speaker, Randy Strychar, President of OatInformation.com, to deliver his presentation and Mark Heise, Rebellion Brewing, who was the final speaker.

After the meeting White encouraged any producers interested in sitting on the board to put their name in the box at the back.



Elwood White, Chair

March 5, 2025

Date