



**ANNUAL REPORT**

**2024/2025**

## **INTRODUCTION –**

This annual report details the 19<sup>th</sup> year of the Saskatchewan Oat Development Commission (SaskOats) operations.

Shawna Mathieson is now in her 15<sup>th</sup> year as the Executive Director of the Prairie Oat Growers Association (POGA), and the Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba oat commissions. She leads the executive and administrative duties of POGA and the three provincial entities. Since 2023, Kaitlyn Kitzan has been assisting part-time with marketing and communications of the four commissions.

### ***Prairie Oat Growers Association (POGA)***

The Prairie Oat Growers Association (POGA) is a voluntary organization that was established in 1998 to promote the interests of oat growers. POGA is comprised of the Saskatchewan Oat Development Commission (SaskOats), the Alberta Oat Growers Commission (AOGC), and the Manitoba Oat Growers Association (MOGA).

The overall objective of POGA is reflected in the vision and mission statements:

***Vision: Increase profitability of growing oats for growers across Western Canada.***

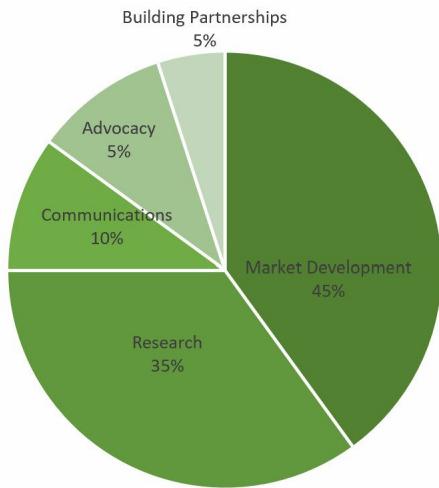
***Mission: Optimize oats as a competitive crop and increase grower profitability through the grower supported levy which directs and funds research, helps develop new markets and products for oats, influences policy, and builds partnerships with the oat industry around the world to better serve the Western Canadian oat grower.***

POGA is funded by the three provincial entities with SaskOats being the largest funder, given the majority of oats are produced in Saskatchewan. All three associations collect a 50 cent per tonne check-off from every tonne of oats grown for sale in their respective province. However, at the 2024 AGM of each provincial commission the producers voted to increase the check-off to \$0.75 effective August 1, 2024. In Saskatchewan, this was a unanimous decision; the board and staff greatly appreciate the support of our growers! Each province is governed by a six-member board of directors, and all are board members of POGA.

The Executive Director, guided by the board of directors, manages the administrative and policy duties of the provincial organizations. In addition, through POGA, the Executive Director manages the monitoring of projects that are mutually beneficial to all three entities. Some projects continue to be provincially directed and therefore funded directly from the provincial organizations.

SaskOats directly funds the Crop Development Center (CDC) at the University of Saskatchewan, the Indian Head Ag Research Farm (IHARF), Northeast Agricultural Research Foundation (NARF), East Central Research Foundation (ECRF), Western Applied Research Cooperation (WARC), Wheatland Conservation Area, Ag in the Classroom Saskatchewan, the Saskatchewan Oat Variety trials, as well as some of the projects listed in this report.

All four commissions utilize the same priorities for spending funds, as all commissions work together to promote oats in Western Canada. As such, SaskOats' goals for expenditures for 2024-2025 were:



#### ***EDUCATION/AWARENESS –***

A key priority of SaskOats is educating youth on the importance and opportunities of agriculture in Saskatchewan. In support of this priority, SaskOats provides an annual commitment of \$15,000 to support Ag in the Classroom (AITC-SK). Through a variety of educational programs and resources, AITC-SK reached over 85,000 students in Saskatchewan.

For the sixth year in a row, SaskOats also provided a “Nutrition Support Bursary”, promoted and administered by AITC-SK. In partnership with Bob’s Red Mill, the bursary supported 38 schools and reached 9737 students from across Saskatchewan. To accommodate as many applicants as possible, funds were distributed across various school divisions, covering both rural and urban areas.

As part of the program, oat recipe cards featuring Oatmeal Breakfast Cookies and Oatmeal Energy Bites to promote oats as a healthy food choice for families were distributed. These cards were intended for students to take home and prepare these oats-based treats with their families or at school. We also shared an online learning module for teachers to use to supplement their learning to connect what they are eating to agriculture. Educational posters about the nutritional benefits of oats were sent to each school along with the recipe cards to be

hung around the school as well. The classroom presentations included an overview of the crops grown in Saskatchewan, the plants parts we eat, and a fun (and oftentimes messy!) in-class demonstration on how to make energy bites. Using oatmeal and seed butter as the base, students were involved in each step of making energy bites - including eating! Overwhelmingly, the energy bites were a hit and students couldn't wait to try the recipe out at home. Teachers emphasized the positive effect of combining oat-based recipes with the educational information provided. This combination effectively enhanced students' learning of the role played by Saskatchewan agriculture. Students were able to understand the significance of local agricultural practices and their connection to the food they consume.

SaskOats also supported AITC-SK's annual Teacher Expedition, which brought teachers from across the province together to tour farms, agri-business and research facilities. This year it was held August 12th-14th in the Yorkton area, offering a dynamic three-day, hands-on learning experience. This year's event welcomed twenty-two teachers from across Saskatchewan, representing primary, middle years, and high school classrooms. Over the course of the tour, participants met directly with farmers and industry professionals at their farms and agri-businesses. Some of these stops included an oat bulk processing plant, test plots, a seed dealer and learning about equipment used to harvest all the great crops we grow in Saskatchewan. These visits sparked meaningful discussions, showcased the important role agriculture plays in producing safe, healthy, and affordable food, and highlighted how science, research, and technology contribute to sustainable practices that keep Saskatchewan competitive in global markets. Each stop provided teachers with fresh inspiration, practical resources, and valuable insights to bring agriculture into their classrooms.

In addition, SaskOats proudly supported the development of kits for schools to have hands on applications, updates to website targeted at grade 4-6 for a more enhanced learning experience, and a career exploration event in Yorkton.

SaskOats is an Affiliate supporter of Farm and Food Care Saskatchewan (FFCS) and the Canadian Food Focus (CFF) program this year. CFF is a national platform, managed by FFCS, dedicated to connecting Canadians with credible information about food and farming in Canada. The website and social media campaign educate the public on agricultural practices, featuring insights from nutritionists and dietitians to help urban consumers better understand where their food comes from.

Another priority of SaskOats is educating producers and the industry on current oat initiatives, issues, and relevant regulatory changes. To provide the latest oat information and updates, the POGA newsletter, *The Oat Scoop*, is distributed a minimum of twice a year to the membership and to the oat industry. It is available on the POGA website: [www.poga.ca](http://www.poga.ca). This newsletter provides valuable information on oats, research, and issues that impact oat producers.

SaskOats is also a co-host of the POGA annual general meeting (AGM), a day-long event on oat production and marketing held every third year in Saskatchewan. The 2025 Annual General Meeting was held on December 3, 2025 in Saskatoon, SK and in December 2026 the event will be in Winnipeg, MB.

As a partner of POGA, the SaskOats board of directors have been active ambassadors for the oat milling and processing side of the industry. For the past eighteen years, SaskOats has sponsored the championship oat class at the Harvest Showdown Grain Show in Yorkton – one of the few shows for commercially grown grains.

*Canadian Agricultural Safety Association “Be Grain Safe” campaign* – has developed mobile units which function as grain entrapment units for demonstrations and as rescue training units for emergency personnel. Awareness efforts are directed at producers and emergency personnel to remind them of proper safety protocols and to effectively handle grain entrapment situations; hopefully saving lives on the farm.

***POLICY –***

SaskOats strives to maintain an ongoing dialogue with the Saskatchewan government. Therefore, directors regularly meet with the Saskatchewan Minister of Agriculture to discuss current issues related to oat growers. SaskOats met with Minister Harrison in March 2025, in November 2025 and at numerous events throughout the year. SaskOats hopes to continue engaging in these annual meetings.

SaskOats continues to collaborate with our provincial commission partners through SaskCrops. The SaskCrops coalition is made up of SaskBarley, Sask Wheat, SaskOilseeds, Saskatchewan Pulse Growers and SaskOats. SaskCrops was formed to ensure Saskatchewan farmers remain competitive in the global market, profitable at an on-farm level and have their voices heard by government. SaskCrops focuses on whole-farm policy issues that impact all commodities such as research programs and funding, trade, environmental policy and government regulations.

*Grain Growers of Canada (GGC)* – SaskOats/POGA holds a membership GGC, which represents oat growers on many policy issues at the national level. GGC is advancing producer interests on issues including: the capital gains tax increase, the right to repair, carbon tax advocacy and advocacy work on International Trade (specifically the US and China) . SaskOats/POGA has representatives on the Sustainability and Transportation committee to ensure oat growers voices are heard on national policy issues and regularly attends “Grains Week” which is a week where members of Grain Growers travel to Ottawa to meet with Federal officials to discuss key priorities and issues.

Building relationships is an integral part of SaskOats/POGA's work, and thus the following important initiatives are supported:

*Field Crops Roundtable* – POGA is participating in this Federal Government Roundtable to ensure producer's voices are heard on their goals of:

1. All stakeholders can better navigate the regulatory system
2. Reduced cumulative regulatory burden, unintended consequences, and irritants across the supply chain for stakeholders, and
3. (Create) a regulatory system that reflects the realities of the day and is nimble to opportunities of the future while gaining a better understanding of challenges, disruptors and novel approaches through an increased capacity in foresight and regulatory experimentation.”

*NAMA* – POGA directors and the Executive Director have also been active advocates to the oat milling and processing sector by representing Canadian oat growers at the North American Millers Association (NAMA) annual conference each year, for the past 16 years. POGA's strong industry support is demonstrated by invitations to these meetings to provide a producer perspective, and oats continues to be the only commodity group represented at this north American wide event.

*Western Grains Research Foundation (WGRF)* – the oat commissions continue to be represented at WGRF. The commissions see the importance of having representation on this committee to ensure small crops, like oats, continue to have a voice and receive the much-needed research dollars.

*Prairie Grain Development Committee (PGDC)* – the annual meeting where new varieties are either approved or rejected for commercialization. Having producer input into the process, as well as input from the entire oat value chain, helps to maintain high quality new oat varieties.

*Barley and other Cereals Sub-Committee* – The Canadian Grain Commission created the grain standards advisory committees and included representation from eastern Canada and western Canada. The advisory committees serve their purpose by bringing forward commodity concerns related to the grading system and facilitating input from all grain industry stakeholders in order to provide advice and formulate recommendations to both the eastern and western grain standards committees.

Each advisory committee:

- studies issues about its specific crops
- advises the standards committees about crop-related concerns

- brings forward concerns about the grading system from the point of view of specific crops
- helps to get input from all affected stakeholders

## **RESEARCH PROJECTS –**

*All previous and current research projects can be found on the POGA website at <https://poga.ca/research/research-projects/>. Research project results that POGA has approval to share are also listed in the year that the project was completed.*



*Denotes projects that began in 2024-2025 year*



*Denotes projects that were completed in 2024-2025 year*

### **Oat Breeding**

**Oat Breeding Research:** by Aaron Beattie at the Crop Development Centre (CDC) in Saskatoon, SK. The objectives are to develop molecular markers for field performance, disease resistance, and end use quality. CDC also looks to develop varieties of oat with improved agronomic performance and disease resistance under western Canadian environmental conditions and with superior consumer quality.

*Project Dates: April 2024 – March 2029*

**A 55 lb bushel high protein oat, with top grain yield, is in your future** by Jim Dyck, Oat Advantage. This private breeding facility has supplied five new oat varieties for the prairie provinces which has contributed to over 200,000 oat acres in some years. This research project is targeting a 10% higher bushel weight, low hull content, high protein, harvest durability, and ultimately high yielding and valued oat varieties. Heavy oats are a focus for Oat Advantage, as the improvement on weight is expected to yield benefits in transportation and storage.

*Project Dates: August 2021 – July 2026*

**Climate-Smart Trait Development in Oat Germplasm for Canada/Oat Breeding Research in Brandon, MB,** by Kirby Nilsen AAFC. This project aims to develop new high-yielding oat varieties for Canadian farmers through applied breeding techniques that enhance agronomic performance, milling quality, disease resistance, and sustainability. By utilizing genomics-assisted breeding strategies, the project seeks to efficiently incorporate desirable traits such as yield, reduced plant height, improved standability, and early maturity. The goal is to create oat varieties that adapt to a wide range of environmental conditions while meeting quality standards of the milling industry. These improvements are projected to increase farm profitability and ensure market competitiveness across the approximately 3 million acres sown to oat annually in Canada.

*Project Dates: April 2023 - May 2028*

**Dissecting the association of flowering time and yield in oat** by Dr. Jaswinder Singh, McGill University. Objectives are: 1) Identification of regulatory sequences in the identified gene/chromosome region, and refining of gene editing in oat. 2) Development of specific CRISPR constructs. 3) Transformation of the

said constructs into oat for developing mutant lines. 4) Genotypic and phenotypic screening of oat mutant lines.

*Project Dates: June 2023 - Jan 2026*

#### **Variety/Trials**

**Alberta Variety Trials** led by Gateway Research Organization, AB will test 11 approved milling varieties to investigate the impact of the variety and growing conditions on the yield and beta-glucan in both Westlock, AB and Fahler, AB. The goal of the trials is to determine if a variety with higher beta glucan can consistently outperform Morgan oats in Alberta to meet oat miller demands for higher beta glucan. It will also compare older oat varieties that still perform well and are grown on many acres, with the new varieties. The comparison of commonly grown varieties, both old and new, has been found to be beneficial in all three prairie provinces.

*Project Dates: April 2025 - December 2027*

**Saskatchewan Variety Performance Trials** led by Saskatchewan Agriculture looks to assess various oat varieties and their suitability to various Saskatchewan regions. Trials are conducted in various areas throughout the province, and the varieties are chosen based on top yearly performers. The information is important for producers to grow the variety best suited for their region to ensure a quality, profitable crop. Enhanced work in these trials now includes lodging and height data collection.

*Project Dates: Yearly*

**Alberta Regional Variety Trials** led by Alberta Grains. In 2025, oat RVTs (Regional Variety Trials) were grown at 10 locations across Alberta. The trial tested the yield and agronomic performance of 9 new oat varieties relative to the check cultivar CS Camden and the benchmark check, AC Morgan. CDC Anson was included in the trial as the variety was added in oat coop trials as one of the checks. RVT keeps at least 1 check variety in common with the coop trials in order to utilize registration data.

*Project Dates: Yearly*



**Oat Lodging: Identifying key root and shoots traits for improved standability** led by Dr. Aaron Beattie and by Dr. Allan Feurtado. This project will evaluate root system architecture in oat cultivars which vary in lodging resistance. It will evaluate stem and root lodging in field trials; assess impact of seeding rate on key stem and root lodging-related traits; assess the correlation between various root phenotyping methods; and compare root system architecture between Canadian oat germplasm and a diverse set of oat germplasm. Lodging and mechanical failure of the stem or root system is a significant issue for oats, leading to yield reductions for producers. Identifying root and stem traits important for lodging resistance will lead to enhancements in breeding cultivars with high standability.

*Project Dates: April 2022 – March 2025*

**Insect/Disease/Weeds**



***Development of markers linked to oat crown rust resistance to help breed improved oat varieties for Canadian oat producers*** led by Dr. Aaron Beattie, CDC. To build on Western Canada's position as a supplier of premium quality oats to the current US markets, and developing markets like Mexico, Japan and Latin America, requires developing varieties with a strong disease resistance package (of which crown rust resistance is a critical component). This will provide value to growers, through improved yield and reduced input costs (i.e. reduced fungicide use) which will help oat remain a viable crop within a grower's rotation, and to millers/food processors, through higher selectability (i.e. good plumpness and test weight).

*Project Dates: December 2018 – October 2024 (amended, with final financial report due Jan/25)*

***Insect Response to Climate Change and Ag-Inputs across the Prairies*** led by Dr. Meghan Vankosky, AAFC (Saskatoon Research and Development Centre). Objectives are: 1) *Understand insect pest population dynamics and forecast pest populations*. The project will evaluate the response of insect pests to climate variables to understand their population dynamics, outbreak frequency, and recent changes to insect distribution and relative abundance, using experiments and by continuing annual insect monitoring by the Prairie Pest Monitoring Network. 2) *Assess the current status of insecticide resistance in western Canada*. This portion will evaluate the current susceptibility of insect pests of cereal, pulse, and oilseed crops to registered insecticides commonly used in western Canada. 3) *Develop new insect information resources*. Lastly, the project will create information resources to augment insect outreach activities in western Canada.

*Project Dates: April 1, 2023 – March 31, 2028*

***The Prairie Crop Disease Monitoring Network (PCDMN)*** led by Dr. Kelly Turkington, AAFC. Objectives are: 1) Further development and formalization of the PCDMN network including annual in-person and/or online meetings. 2) Further development and refinement of survey protocols as well as continue work on disease information and awareness initiatives. 3) Quick Disease Reporter Tool refinement, and develop disease assessment/risk tools and blackleg pathogen mapping. 4) Technology transfer (field days, crop tours, fall/winter meetings, PCDMN webinars, etc.).

*Project Dates: April 2023 - March 2028*

***The Prairie Weed Monitoring Network (PWMN): Building a Strong Biovigilance Foundation***, led by Charles Geddes, AAFC. This project aims to develop the Prairie Weed Monitoring Network (PWMN) and to implement a comprehensive weed bio-vigilance strategy, including: weed monitoring, risk assessment, and forecasting for the prairie region of Canada. This data, and that of past surveys, will be leveraged along with other open data resources to conduct spatial risk analyses for the evolution of herbicide-resistant weed biotypes of greatest concern and where they are most likely to occur, in addition to the development of a tool to forecast weed community shifts in response to management factors and climate change.

*Project Dates: April 1, 2023 – March 31, 2028*

***Understanding, Mitigating, and Managing PPO Inhibitor (Group 14)-Resistant Kochia*** led by Dr. Charles Geddes AAFC. Objectives (note: wherever PPO-inhibitor-resistant kochia is mentioned, this refers to Group 14 resistance): 1) Determine cross-resistance to PPO-inhibiting herbicides in PPO inhibitor-resistant kochia confirmed in SK. 2) Determine cross- or multiple-resistance to other herbicide modes of action in PPO-inhibitor-resistant kochia. 3) Determine the mechanism conferring resistance to PPO-inhibiting herbicides in kochia. 4) Continue monitoring kochia survey samples for PPO-inhibitor resistance across the Canadian Prairies. 5) Assess efficacy of alternative herbicides to manage multiple herbicide-resistant kochia prior to crop seeding. 6) Determine the mid/long-term utility and sustainability of strategic tillage for kochia management. 7) Assess the impact of timing and implement/depth of soil disturbance on kochia emergence, density, and the soil seedbank. 8) Determine the mid/long-term impact of winter cereals and perennials in crop rotations on multiple herbicide resistant kochia.

*Project Dates: Jan 2024 - November 2029*



***On-Farm Fall Applied Granular Herbicide Products for the Control of Wild Oats and Kochia after Oats*** led by Brianne McInnes at Northeast Ag Research Farm (NARF). This project aims to answer the question of "How to best manage straw after an oat crop, prior to granular herbicide application." This research will evaluate wild oat and kochia control using light harrow (45-degree angle) vs. a heavy harrow (70 to 90-degree) with treatments of either Edge, Fortress or no treatment.

*Project dates: September 2024 – December 2026*



***Expansion, validation, and optimization of rapid genetic tests for herbicide resistance*** led by Dr. Charles Geddes, AAFC. Objectives are: 1) Develop new genetic tests targeting more herbicide resistant (HR) weed biotypes of relevance to farmers in western Canada. 2) Validate current and new genetic tests using a range of weed samples from western Canada. 3) Determine cross-resistance patterns associated with specific target-site resistance mechanisms. 4) Optimize sample submission kits, processes, and testing procedures to enhance the efficiency and reduce the cost of HR diagnostics. 5) Inform and educate farmers, agronomists, and the agricultural industry on the use and utility of genetic testing for HR weed diagnostics. *Project Dates: April 2025 - March 2029*

### **Fertility/Climate/Environment**

***Collecting the Carbon Data Needed for Climate-Smart Agriculture in Saskatchewan*** led by Dr. Kate Congreves at the University of Saskatchewan. There is no direct annual data on net carbon footprints of Saskatchewan cropping systems. This project will address this gap by providing spatially and temporally integrated data on greenhouse gas (GHG; N2O and CO2) emissions at the field scale level. This information will be used to determine net ecosystem exchange and the net carbon footprint of the cropping system.

*Project Dates: January 2021 – December 2024*

**Long-term C and N2O monitoring, and climate-smart management of organic grain production systems** led by Dr. Martin Entz, University of Manitoba. Objectives: 1) Compare organic and conventional production in terms of N2O emissions over a growing season. 2) Compare organic and conventional production in terms of soil C storage over the long-term (32 years). 3) Determine the GHG footprints of organic wheat, oats and flax compared with conventional production. 4) Evaluate how mixing legume green manure cover crops with non-legume plant species affects N2O emissions during and after the green manure phase. 5) Evaluate how reducing tillage in the legume green manure cover crop termination phase affects N2O and ammonia emissions after legume termination. 6) Determine if fall cereals reduce the post-termination N2O emissions from alfalfa hay crops.

*Project Dates: April 2024 - March 2026*



**Evaluating the fertility package of newly available Oat Milling varieties in SK** led by Brianne McInnes NARF and conducted at four locations across Saskatchewan. The objective is to demonstrate the yield and quality response of new milling oat varieties to enhanced fertility as compared to a commonly grown and accepted variety.

*Project Dates: April 2024 - March 2025 (Expanded and extended project - see below)*



**Evaluating the fertility package of newly available Oat Milling varieties in SK** led by Brianne McInnes NARF and conducted at four locations across Saskatchewan (Melfort, Scott, Indian Head and Yorkton). The objectives are 1) To demonstrate suitable nitrogen rates for new oat varieties with higher yield potential in different soil and climatic zones within the province; and, 2) To demonstrate to local oat growers, new varieties that are available to increase adoption of new oat genetics.

*Project Dates: April 2025 - March 2027 (Expanded and extended project - see above)*

**N management in oats to increase grain protein, reduce lodging and maintain test weight** led by Mike Hall, ECRF. Objectives are: 1) To determine if a split application of N or side banding ESN (Environmentally Smart Nitrogen) at seeding can decrease lodging, increase protein, and maintain test weight and yield of milling oat relative to putting all the N down at seeding. 2) To compare the efficacy of 30 lb N/ac of dribble-banded UAN versus side-banded ESN to base rates of 80 and 110 lb N/ac of soil- + side-banded urea. 3) To determine if the efficacy of dribble-banded UAN differs between applications made at the 4-leaf versus boot stages.

*Project Dates: April 2024 - March 2026*

## Nutrition/Product Creation



***Development of healthy food products by combining proteins and dietary fibers from oats and pulse*** conducted by Dr. Lingyun Chen at the University of Alberta. A dietary pattern that provides plant protein, dietary fiber and low fat has been shown to decrease the risks of chronic diseases (obesity, cardiovascular disease). The high-quality milling oats in Canada are good sources of both dietary fiber and plant protein. The long-term goal of this research is to develop high quality protein and fiber ingredients from oats for healthy food development.

This research will provide opportunities to add value to oats and pulses as two major crops in western Canada. The food products high in both plant protein and dietary fiber will provide consumers with healthy choices, and help control the prevalence of obesity in the society and lower the risks of chronic disease.

*Project Dates: March 2022 - March 2025 (extended from Feb 2024)*



***Dried Oat Oil Emulsion Powders Stabilized by Oat Hull Derived Nanocellulose*** led by Dr. Emily Cranston. The objective for the specific POGA-supported portion of the larger project was: To explore the isolation of cellulose-based nanomaterials from oat hulls and to use these as stabilizers in dried oat oil powders and oat milk powders. This research begins to show the potential for oat-hull (normally considered a 'low-value' product) valorization, and several companies have already indicated interest in this particular application.

*Project Dates: October 2023 - September 2024*

## Intercropping/Other

Improving Productivity/Resilience of Canadian Prairie Cropping Systems led by Dr. Kui Liu AAFC. Objectives are: 1) Develop a future, resilient cropping system in each of the major ecozones on the Canadian prairies and develop a "sustainability index" which integrates cropping system indicators such as crop productivity, resource use efficiency, weeds, diseases, soil health, whole-farm economics, and environmental footprint. 2) Assess and improve soil health through integrated crop management practices. 3) Evaluate the benefit/cost and economic returns of major cropping systems on the Canadian Prairies. 4) Enhance soil carbon sequestration and reduce greenhouse gas emissions through improved agronomic management practices.

*Project Dates: April 2023 - March 2028*

***Continuing studies on intercropping for increasing yield and quality of grain and forage crops, and improving soil quality*** led by Dr. Myriam Fernandez, AAFC. This project will look at the relationship between various intercrop dynamics to see where benefits can occur. Intercrop species use soil available nutrients and soil moisture, and at given times inter- and intra-competition are expected. Specifically, the project will look to determine if intercrops with crops or a living mulch can reduce weeds compared to sole crops and will look at various seeding ratios to evaluate impact on each crop. It will aim to identify if there is a nitrogen benefit from legumes in the intercrop to its companion crop, as well as look to determine the biomass and grain yield/quality due to the intercrop dynamics. It will also look at the

disease pressures, and evaluate if intercrops have less disease than monocrops, as well as develop crop growth and nutrient models for intercrop versus monocrop scenarios.

Project Dates: April 2020 – (Amended and extended to August 2027)



***Develop New Strategies to Efficiently Utilize Oat Grains in High Production Dairy Cows to Maximize Economic Return and Benefit to Prairie Oat Growers*** led by Dr. Peiqiang Yu, the University of Saskatchewan, is a five-year project that aims to increase and enhance basic knowledge of the optimal nutrient supply to dairy cattle through variety selection, feed processing, and optimal feed ingredient blending. Objectives within this project include: finding the best oat variety or type of oat grain with the highest Feed Milk Value (FMV) for dairy cattle; improving the FMV of oats through processing applications; and finding the maximum or optimum level of oats to replace barley in high production lactation dairy cow diets. Among other things, this project will carry out a detailed metabolic study in dairy cattle to understand the effects of feed processing on rumen fermentation, degradation kinetics, intestinal digestion, and truly absorbed nutrient supply from Prairie oat grains to dairy cattle using various techniques. Note, this project was extended due to challenges during COVID.

Project Dates: April 2016 – March 2023 (extended to 2025)

***Different Oat Varieties, PGRs, Seeding Rates and their Interaction of Lodging and Shattering*** by Dr. Linda Gorim, University of Alberta. Objectives are: 1) Identify the PGR-oat variety pairs that lead to significant plant height reduction and subsequent lodging under different environments. 2) Assess the effects of two PGRs (Moddus® and Manipulator®) on other agronomic parameters in different oat varieties. 3) Assess the effects of increased seeding rate on agronomic parameters in different oat varieties. 4) Evaluate the interaction of PGRs with seeding rates on agronomic parameters and shattering in different oat varieties. 5) Evaluate the effects of PGRs on oat agronomic parameters under drought conditions. 6) Carry out a morphological (*form and structure*) assessment of palea and lemma (*parts of the oat hull anatomy*) in different oat varieties and relate these structures to shattering under normal and drought conditions.

Project Dates: April 2024 - March 2027



***Optimizing oat floral architecture to maximize grain yield and quality*** by Dr. Jean-Sebastien Parent, AAFC. Objectives are: 1) Optimize floret/spikelet number and groat percentage, maximizing milling oat yield and quality. 2) Identify new genetic factors contributing to oat floral development. 3) Develop and study a range of multi-floral architecture by evaluating the specific floral characteristics and grain quality in field and testing the different genetic factors identified in Objective 2. This knowledge will then be transferred to oat breeding programs and the gene editing platform.

Project Dates: April 2025 - June 2028

***Ag Transport Coalition (ATC) Subscription Agreement*** led by Pulse Canada. The ATC collects data on the performance of the two major railroads in Canada with respect to various performance metrics, and compiles that data into reports available to subscribers and members. These reports will enable POGA to stay up-to-date on transportation logistics and better represent oat growers when issues arise.

Daily/weekly reports posted to the ATC website are also available to producers.

Project Dates: July 2024 - March 2029

**MARKETING:**

***Expand the Canadian Oat Market: Mexico*** directed by POGA through Emerging Ag, this project focuses on diversification of Canadian oat exports to Mexico. The activities aim to increase per capita consumption of oats, increase Canadian oat exports to Mexico, increase consumer awareness of the health benefits of oats, and develop partnerships with the Mexican nutrition and health communities. Since this project began in 2015, Canada has been able to more than triple its oat exports to Mexico (Note: 2021 and 2022 were not included in this export number as widespread Western Canadian drought did not allow the supply of oats to maintain the 2020 levels). For 2023 and 2024, Canada returned to being the preeminent source of oats for Mexico and the overall market has been exceeding 200,000 tonnes – the goal originally set as the target driven by increased demand.

*Project Dates: April 2023 - March 2026. (POGA has applied for an extension through March 2028)*

***Expand the Canadian Oat Market: Peru and Ecuador*** directed by POGA through Emerging Ag, using the Mexico project materials as a base, several other Latin American countries who import oats offer additional opportunities for Canadian exports. A long-term strategy for POGA is to make use of the proximity to these markets, and build on the strong Canadian reputation for products in Peru and Ecuador which would support the efforts to differentiate Canadian oats. The activities aim to increase per capita consumption of oats, increase Canadian oat exports to both countries, and increase consumer awareness of the health benefits of oats. Canadian oat imports to Peru are performing strongly and are nearly on track for their best year ever, coinciding with the two years since POGA began its program there, while Ecuador, where POGA launched its program in 2024, is already experiencing record-high imports from Canada.

*Project Dates: April 2023 - March 2026. (POGA has applied for an extension through March 2028)*

***Expand the Canadian Oat Market: Japan***—directed by POGA through Emerging Ag, the intent of this project is to increase demand for Canadian oats by conducting outreach with stakeholders to address trading issues, coordinating with stakeholders to update market development strategies, updating social media campaigns and media outreach, and developing promotional material to promote the health benefits and diversified use of oats to the Japanese market. Japan is the fourth largest importer of oats globally, and Canada has been the leading exporter of oats in recent years. Canada is the largest supplier of raw oats in Japan (excluding late 2021 and 2022 due to the Canadian drought); however, the goal is to gain market share in the human-consumption arena. We have seen substantial growth in the processed oats category since the start of the program, with Canada exceeding the 15% growth target and achieving 77% growth since 2021 and is consistently positioned as the 2nd supplier after Australia.

*Project Dates: April 2023 - March 2026. (POGA has applied for an extension through March 2028)*

**Keep It Clean Cereals (KIC)** is a program that shows Canada's commitment to delivering high quality grains to markets around the world. KIC is an established program started by the Canola Council of Canada and expanded with Cereals Canada, POGA and Pulse Canada.

KIC provides timely updates on potential market risks and resources for on-farm practices to help ensure crops meet the standards of domestic and export customers. KIC targets growers, agronomists and agri-retailers of on-farm practices to ensure crops meet the standards of domestic and export customers.

KIC is important as it reminds oat growers of the possible issues of not meeting export standards around residue limits and contaminants, and it informs international and domestic buyers that Canada is taking measures to meet customer expectations.

**Market Access to China.** Funded in part by AAFC and directed by POGA through Emerging Ag. POGA, in 2017 contracted Emerging Ag to work towards removing a phytosanitary barrier that will not allow raw Canadian oats into China. Work continued on this until early 2019 but as political challenges grew between Canada and China. POGA confirmed through the Government of Canada that no progress would be made on this issue until Government relations between the two countries improved. POGA continues to remain committed to work to address the market access issues in China once politically feasible.

*\*Most of these projects are partially funded by one of the following: Through the Canadian Agricultural Partnership, AgriScience Program: Projects Component and the AgriMarketing Program-National Industry Association Component ; the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture through the Agriculture Development Fund (ADF) and the Canada-Saskatchewan Growing Forward 2- Bi-lateral agreement, and the Agricultural Demonstration of Practices and Technologies (ADOPT) initiative under Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership, a federal, provincial, territorial initiative; Results Driven Agricultural Research (RDAR); Western Grains Research Foundation (WGRF); Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC); and industry partners.*

## **SUMMARY –**

SaskOats has successfully contributed to the profile, representation, and profit of Saskatchewan oat growers. Since 2008, oat growers in Western Canada have contributed less than 14 cents of every dollar spent on research and marketing. The remainder is funded through partnerships and collaboration among industry and government.

SaskOats will continue developing strategic relationships through POGA and industry partners to increase oat producer profitability by enhancing producer investments in oat research and market development. As well, the commission will work on increasing the market share of oats and promoting/developing new products to meet consumer demands.

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS –**

**Elwood White**  
**Chair**  
Pangman, SK

**Landon Kuschak**  
**Vice-Chair**  
Ituna, SK

**Ryan Zuchkan**  
**Audit Chair**  
Foam Lake, SK

**Jessica Slowski**  
Sheho, SK

**David Katerynch**  
Richard, SK

**Ambrely Ralph**  
Arborfield, SK

**STAFF**  
**Shawna Mathieson**  
Executive Director  
Watson, SK  
[smathieson@poga.ca](mailto:smathieson@poga.ca)

**Kaitlyn Kitzan**  
Marketing Coordinator/Admin Assistant  
Yorkton, SK  
[events@poga.ca](mailto:events@poga.ca)

**Payee List for SaskOats 2024-2025**

**Personal Services (Total received by Directors, All others threshold is specified)**

**Directors Honorariums**

David Katerynch	\$ 600
Elwood White	\$ 700
Jessica Slowski	\$ 1,875
Ambrely Ralph	\$ 600
<u>Ryan Zuchkan</u>	<u>\$ 900</u>
<i>TOTAL</i>	\$ 4,675

**Directors Out of Pocket**

David Katerynch	\$ 505
Elwood White	\$ 413
Jessica Slowski	\$ 1,208
Ambrely Ralph	\$ 360
<u>Ryan Zuchkan</u>	<u>\$ 360</u>
Total	\$2,846

**Research and Development (\$5,000.00 threshold)**

University of Saskatchewan	\$ 91,000
SK Variety Performance Group	\$ 29,372
Northeast Agriculture Research Farm	\$ 18,585
Conservation Learning Centre Inc.	\$ 8,485
East Central Research Foundation	\$ 10,394
Indian Head Agricultural Research Foundation	\$ 10,085
Southeast Research Farm, Inc.	\$ 7,485
Wheatland Conservation Area, Inc.	\$ 7,485
Western Applied Research Corporation	\$ 10,085

**Extension/Education (\$5,000 threshold)**

Ag in the Classroom	\$37,600
Sparks Communication	\$38,715*
Canadian Food Focus	\$20,000

*\*Note: \$27,500 was received from outside funding sources*

**Supplier Payments (\$5,000.00 threshold)**

Agricultural Council of Sask. Inc.	\$24,433
Baker Tilly (Auditor)	\$ 9,935

**Market Development (\$5,000 threshold)**

R and D and Communications funded via POGA	\$305,721
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**SaskOats 2025-2026 Budget –**

**Revenue**

Check-off levy (\$.75/tonne)	\$927,500
Check-off refunds @ 7%*	\$(64,925)
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	\$862,575
Interest Income	\$ 50,000
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	\$ 912,575

**Expenses**

Board of Directors	\$8,000
Communications/Education	\$80,500
Levy Administration Fee	\$23,191
Producer Meetings	\$13,000
Proportionate expenses of POGA	\$523,017
Research and Development	\$170,450
General and Administrative (Audit, Legal, Elections, memberships, etc.)	\$17,875
	<hr/>
	\$836,033
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	\$76,542

**Excess of revenues over expenses**

*In 2024-2025 SaskOats Refund Requests were 6.7% of dollars collected and 2.6% of the total number of producers paying the levy.*