

CSA Newsletter

Canadian Society of Agronomy

July 2015



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

What A Year!!

Serving as your President for the past year has been an extremely rewarding and challenging experience. There were several developments that, I believe, result in our Society better positioned for the long term. The major issue, of course, was our relationship with AIC and our society sponsored journal, *The Canadian Journal of Plant Science*. While the sale of the journal to Canadian Science Publishing is not yet final, our hope is that this occurs soon and we move on to the next phase. The complete details and copies of all pertinent documents were circulated to membership in early May. I would like to acknowledge your CSA Executive as well as past-presidents, Dr. Malcolm Morrison and Dr. Shabtai Bittman. These individuals dedicated a tremendous amount of time and effort in charting the path forward for CJPS and developing the terms by which we would commit to a new Publisher. Malcolm was particularly helpful in this respect and was always eager to provide input and guidance. For the first time, CSA will now receive material benefits for committing to this sale and transfer by both AIC and CSP through an agreement to continue the role of content development for CJPS; the nature of those benefits is primarily directed at enhancing our journal editors and our conference activities, the latter will focus largely on supporting student involvement. Renewal of the retiring demographic of agronomists is now recognized as an immediate challenge so fostering student recruitment and development into highly qualified personnel will become more and more imperative.

Thanks to the efforts of Dr. Steve Sheppard and Dr. Yvonne Lawley, we now have a shiny new website and I encourage you to visit it often for updates and Society info. A website overhaul was long overdue and now we have one that is comparable to other Societies with a broader range of capability to better interact and inform our membership.

However, these developments that embolden our Society well into the future did evolve into a classic case of 'short term pain for long term gain'. Legal fees around the journal and costs to overhaul our website did require that we tap into our reserves to get this work accomplished. The upside is that our revenue stream looking ahead should allow us to replenish reserves in a short time frame.

I do hope we see many of you at the joint Plant Canada/Botanical Society of American conference in Edmonton, BOTANY2015, held the last week of July (www.botany.org). We have put together two great technical sessions specific to CSA that will also include presentation by the Best Paper Award winner, Dr. Julian Thomas as well as a presentation by the 2015 Distinguished Agronomist, Dr. Cynthia Grant. We also have Dr. Nancy Ames representing our society with an address at the Plant Canada Symposium. Lastly, I would like to recognize Dr. Sheri Strydhorst for doubling-down and once again being on the local organizing committee for this conference, and was essentially a lone wolf with some sporadic input from Exec and Ms. Robynne Bowness, who is a new member recruit and will be chairing one of our sessions. Sheri was instrumental in putting together the sessions and overseeing CSA abstract submissions. If you see Sheri at the conference give her a pat on the back – she has more than earned it!

See You in Edmonton!

Brian L. Beres
President



New CSA Executive Members

Eastern Director—Caroline Halde

Caroline Halde is an Assistant Professor in Agroecology at Université Laval. Dr. Halde's research interests are multidisciplinary and include agronomy, weed ecology, soil fertility, organic agriculture, and international cooperation.

Growing up on an organic dairy and grain farm near Montréal, QC, she has developed a passion for agriculture, innovation, and applied agricultural research very early on. She has received a B.Sc. in Agronomy from Université Laval (2007), a M.Sc. in Agriculture from Dalhousie University (2009), and a Ph.D. in Plant Science from the University of Manitoba (2014).



Her Ph.D. research focused on the use of cover crop mulches for weed control and reducing tillage in organic farming systems in the Canadian Prairies. She has also completed postdoctoral studies in sustainable agriculture at Cornell University (2014-2015), working on weed ecology in organic farming systems under the supervision of Dr. Matthew R. Ryan. She has a keen interest in improving the science of organic agriculture.

In her spare time, Caroline enjoys cooking, working on the family farm, travelling, and daydreaming about doing a second Ph.D. in physics. As an Eastern Director for the society, she wishes to strengthen the link between CSA and French-speaking agronomists in Eastern Canada, by translating the CSA website to French and by actively promoting the society in universities in Eastern Canada.

To learn more about the research activities of her Agroecology Lab, visit: <https://carolinehalde.wordpress.com/>

Western Director—Bill Biligetu

Dr. Bill Biligetu is an Assistant Professorship in Forage Crop Breeding with the Crop Development Centre at the University of Saskatchewan. Dr. Biligetu completed a Bachelor of Science in Grassland Sciences and a M.Sc. in Rangeland Management from the Inner Mongolia Agriculture University, Inner Mongolia, China. He then moved to Saskatchewan and obtained his Ph.D in Perennial Forage Management and Physiology from the University of Saskatchewan.



Dr. Biligetu worked in perennial forage breeding program as a NSERC post-doctorate researcher at Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada Semiarid Prairie Agriculture Research Centre for more than three years. He also worked as a Regional forage specialist with the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture, where he delivered forage extension service to producers.

He is a member of Canadian Society of Agronomy since 2005, and is excited to serve as a Western Director for the period 2015-2017.

New CSA Executive Members (continued)

President Elect—Alireza (Ali) Navabi,

Dr. Alireza (Ali) Navabi is an associate professor in the Department of Plant Agriculture, University of Guelph. Dr. Navabi started his career as a research officer in the highlands of Central Iran after obtaining his Bachelor of Science degree in Agronomy and Plant Breeding from Shiraz University in 1992. He later on moved to Northern Iran to work in a Winter/Facultative wheat breeding program. He completed his Master of Science in Plant Breeding in 1997 and moved to Edmonton Alberta to start his PhD in Plant Breeding in 1998. His PhD research involved an international collaboration with the International Centre for Wheat and Maize Improvement (CIMMYT) in Mexico, working on genetics of resistance to rust diseases of wheat. He completed his PhD in 2003 and started working as a post-doctoral research associate with the University of Alberta Wheat Breeding Program.



Dr. Navabi joined Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) at the Greenhouse and Processing Crops Research Centre, Harrow, Ontario in 2008 as a dry bean breeder/geneticist. In this role he was co-located in the Department of Plant Agriculture, University of Guelph, where he served as an adjunct professor and associated graduate faculty. Later on, in 2008, Dr. Navabi accepted his current position with the University of Guelph and was appointed the Grain Farmer's of Ontario Professor in Wheat Breeding. Over the years, Dr. Navabi has been involved in national and international research projects with a central focus on plant breeding and genetics. Since 2009, Dr. Navabi has served in different capacities in Editorial board of the Canadian Journal of Plant science and is currently the Editor in Chief of the journal.

Student Representative—Laurel Perrott

Laurel Perrott graduated from the University of Alberta with a B.Sc in Agriculture, majoring in Crop Science, in 2013. During this time, she gained experience through summer positions in canola breeding, small plot research, and crop scouting. After graduating, she went on to work in the agriculture industry in east central Alberta as an agronomic advisor for a year and a half, where she achieved her Certified Crop Advisor status through the American Society of Agronomy. Laurel gained valuable applied agronomic knowledge in her role as agronomic advisor, and worked directly with farmers to develop and execute year-round agronomic farm plans. This included seeding and fertilizer rate recommendations, herbicide and fungicide recommendations and rotations, insecticide decisions based on economic thresholds, and harvest management plans.



Laurel returned to the University of Alberta in 2014 to pursue graduate studies with Dr. Linda Hall and Dr. Sheri Strydorst. Her M.Sc work is focused on advanced agronomic practices to maximize feed barley yields in Alberta. Seeding rate, in-crop nitrogen, plant growth regulator, foliar fungicides, and barley cultivar are the factors she is examining in-concert to increase yields. Laurel continues to be involved in agriculture at the farm level on a mixed grain and cow-calf farm in east central Alberta.

DISTINGUISHED AGRONOMIST - CYNTHIA GRANT

Dr. Cynthia Grant worked as a soil scientist at Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Brandon Research Centre in Manitoba from the time she received her Ph. D. in Soil Chemistry from the University of Manitoba in 1986 until her retirement early in 2015. Her research and extension activities dealt with integrated management strategies for improved fertilizer use efficiency in cereals and oilseeds in varying environments and cropping systems across the prairies. Her focus has been on nutrient management research that results in economically and environmentally sustainable farming practices. Cooperative studies addressed prediction of nutrient availability as affected by management and the interaction of nutrient supply and crop management practices with crop diseases, weed competition and soil microbial activity. Dr. Grant's research also examined management to improve crop quality, through increased nutrient content, reduced heavy metal accumulation, enhanced protein content or improved fatty acid profiles.



She has published more than 160 peer-reviewed papers, more than 25 chapters, books and other scientific publications, over 200 technology transfer articles and over 300 proceedings and abstracts. She has served as president of both the Canadian Society of Soil Science and the Canadian Society of Agronomy and is a fellow of the American Society of Agronomy, Canadian Society of Agronomy and Canadian Society of Soil Science.

Dr. Cynthia Grant grew up in Minnedosa and maintains her ties to rural Manitoba, living north of that town with her husband on their family farm.

FELLOW OF CSA - MAHESH K. UPADHYAYA

Dr. Mahesh K. Upadhyaya obtained his B.Sc.(Ag) degree from the Jawaharlal Nehru Agricultural University in India, M.Sc. from the Indian Agricultural Research Institute, New Delhi, M.A. from Princeton University, and Ph.D. from the University of Michigan. After completing his graduate studies he worked at the University of Saskatchewan as a Professional Research Associate for few years. In 1982 he joined the University of British Columbia as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Plant Science, where he is a full Professor now. He has served his university as an Associate Dean, a Senator, Director of Applied Biology, and the Graduate Advisor for Plant Science program. Dr. Upadhyaya is a weed biologist/ecophysiologicalist with particular interest in survival and persistence strategies of weedy species, weed stress ecophysiology, regulation of weed seed germination, seed bank dynamics, and environmentally-friendly weed control options. He has also worked in areas of crop production and postharvest physiology. He has published his research in reputed journals, written many popular articles, and has co-edited a book "Non-chemical Weed Management". Dr. Upadhyaya loves working with students and is an excellent teacher. He has supervised many M.Sc. and Ph.D. students and has taught several undergraduate and graduate courses in crop production, crop protection, weed science, and biology. Dr. Upadhyaya has served as an Associate Editor of the Canadian Journal of Plant Science and the Weed Science journal and has either chaired or served on numerous professional committees nationally and internationally. Dr. Upadhyaya has received significant awards and recognitions for his contributions to teaching (e.g. Killam Teaching Award for Outstanding Teaching at the University of British Columbia), research and service (e.g. Excellence in Weed Science, Fellow of the Weed Science Society of America, Fellow of the Canadian Weed Science Society, J.F. Richard Service Award of the University of British Columbia, and many presentation awards at professional society meetings, to name a few).



CSA Awards 2015 (continued)

FELLOW OF CSA - GAVIN HUMPHREYS

Dr. Gavin Humphreys has been a wheat breeder with Agriculture & Agri-food Canada (AAFC) since 1996. He spent 18 years as a spring wheat breeder at the Cereal Research Center in Winnipeg where he was initially responsible for the Extra Strong (CWES) spring wheat program and later took on both the hard white spring and Parkland CWRS wheat breeding programs. During that time, he registered fifteen spring wheat varieties in four marketing classes. At present, all checks used in the Hard White Wheat Cooperative test are derived from his program. He was coordinator of the CWES Coop (1997-2003) and the Parkland Wheat Cooperative Test (2002-2013). In April 2014, Gavin transferred to the AAFC Eastern Cereals and Oilseed Research Centre (ECORC) in Ottawa, where he is responsible for the AAFC winter wheat germplasm enhancement program for Eastern Canada. Gavin has been a member of the Canadian Society of Agronomy since 1992 and active in the Society for over a decade holding several executive positions including Western Director, Secretary/Treasurer, and CSA President. He chaired the organizing committee for the 2013 CSA Annual meeting held in Tampa, FL, which was the first joint meeting with the American Society of Agronomy.



Gavin has published more than 55 scientific publications and three book chapters. He is author or co-author on over 85 conference presentations and was a frequent contributor at crop field days and the Canadian International Grains Institute while in Winnipeg. He is an adjunct professor at the University of Manitoba and the University of Guelph where he sits on graduate students' advisory committees.

Gavin lives in Ottawa with his spouse, Sylvie Cloutier, a manageable cycling distance from ECORC.

FELLOW OF CSA – ELROY COBER

Dr. Elroy Cober received his Ph.D. from the University of Guelph in 1994. He has been a soybean breeder with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada in Ottawa since 1996. During that time, he developed 16 oilseed, 17 natto, seven tofu and six high protein cultivars. Dr. Cober has collaborated in the identification of three soybean maturity loci. He works to understand the genetic control soyfood quality traits and to devise appropriate breeding strategies for food type soybean. He has been elected to and served as Chair of the Soybean Genetics Committee and as Canadian representative to the USDA Soybean Germplasm Committee. He has served as Chair and Secretary of the Ontario Oil and Protein Seed Crop Committee (now Ontario Soybean and Canola Committee).



Elroy has been a member of the Canadian Society of Agronomy since 2000 recently serving as Eastern Director. He has been a Special Issues Editor or an Associate Editor of the Canadian Journal of Plant Science from 2003 to the present.

Elroy has published more than 60 scientific publications. He has served on graduate student advisory committees at the University of Guelph.



**Botany
2015**
Science and Plants for People

July 25 - 29, 2015
The Shaw Conference Centre
Edmonton, Alberta - Canada

Conference ‘Botany 2015, Science and Plants for People’

Keep your calendar open for our annual conference **July 25-29** in **Edmonton**. It is called ‘Botany 2015’ because this is a big all-encompassing conference that includes the **Botanical Society of America** and **Plant Canada**, and under these two umbrella organizations are almost all the plant-related societies in North America. The registration and abstract submissions will open this month. Please identify your submissions as related to CSA, so we can compile sessions focussed on agronomy in Canada. There will be topical reviews in our sessions, and then lots of volunteer papers.

Student Travel Awards to CSA Annual Meeting



Charles Geddes

Thesis:

Volunteer canola seedbank ecology, ecophysiology and management



Gurcharn Brar

Thesis:

Is population structure of *Puccinia striiformis* in western Canada really clonal?



Dustin McLean

Thesis:

Fungicide application at anthesis provides effective leaf spot control in spring wheat

Minutes from 2014 CSA Annual General Meeting

CSA Annual General Meeting

July 11th, 2014, University of Lethbridge, Lethbridge, AB
27 members present

Welcome and Introductions – Derek Lynch

Agenda

Additions to Agenda. None arising.

Move to accept agenda by Surya Archarya, second Tarlok Sahota, passed

Correction and approval of minutes from last meeting (Tampa, FL)

Move to accept minutes by Malcolm Morrison, second Gavin Humphreys, passed

Treasurer's report and budget – Derek Lynch

Budget available to members circulated by e-mail in spring 2014 and as a handout at the AGM

Move to accept 2013 budget and proposed budget for 2014 as presented by Gavin Humphreys, second Sheri Strydhorst. Passed.

Move to reappoint Anita Drabnyk as auditor for the CSA for the coming year by Malcolm Morrison, second by Serina Black. Passed.

Past President's report– Derek Lynch

Thanks to Gavin Humphreys, Helen Booker and Teketel Haile who are all finished their terms on the executive. Welcomes extended to new incoming members, Rosalie Madden, Lily Tamburic and Paula Halabicki, plus Tarlok Sahota as new President Elect and Brian Beres as new incoming President.

In 2013-14 the CSA passed bylaws compliant with new Industry Canada requirements. This included moving some operating information into a new "CSA rules book.". This will be reviewed and approved annually by the new incoming executive.

Membership and new awards. A total of ten graduate students applied to the new CSA travel awards (each \$500), and three were awarded as planned. Overall membership stayed similar to 2013 at approx. 150 but encouragingly total graduate student membership doubled to 28 currently. This is an important given the need for revitalization of the organization.

As noted by Steve Sheppard the CSA website and its maintenance needs improvement. The executive in the coming year to consider appointing one member to monitor and make recommendations. Some discussion ensued re. content that could be added included Distinguished Agronomist information, and annual conference tour photos etc.

Awards – Gavin Humphreys

Distinguished Agronomist: Harvey Voldeng (included 15 minute presentation by Dr. Voldeng)

Fellow: Patricia Juskiw

Pest Management: Andrea Hitchon

CJPS Best paper: Brian Beres

CJPS update – Ali Navabi

Postponed due to time constraint.

Adjourn

Note from Secretary Treasurer about 2015 Budget

2015 has been an active and expensive year for the CSA. We have made some strategic investments this year by seeking legal counsel about the sale of CJPS to CSP, continuing to fund graduate student travel awards to our annual conference, and redeveloping the CSA website. These expenses are also occurring at a time of continued decline in membership, and thus a decline in membership fees. We will need to utilize some of our society's savings (we have approximately \$55,000) to cover some of these exceptional expenses and make plans to maintain adequate saving for the future. However, fiscal balance should return to the CSA in 2016 as new MOU's with AIC and CSP come into effect and they begin making regular financial contributions (anticipating \$12,000 on an annual basis) to support our society's conferences and awards.

Yvonne Lawley

Canadian Society of Agronomy Balance Sheet

As of December 31, 2014

31-Dec-14

ASSETS

Current Assets

Chequing/Savings

Sunova Credit Union

Chequing - Organizational CNC 5,256.83

Common Shares SHARE #1 105.00

Joint w/ Chequing SSUP #2 54,463.34

Pest MGMT Chl Fund SSUP #1 23,155.87

Petty Cash C #1 582.52

Total Sunova Credit Union 83,563.56

Total Chequing/Savings 83,563.56

Total Current Assets 83,563.56

TOTAL ASSETS 83,563.56

LIABILITIES & EQUITY

Liabilities

Current Liabilities

Accounts Payable

Accounts Payable -1,986.31

Total Accounts Payable -1,986.31

Total Current Liabilities -1,986.31

Total Liabilities -1,986.31

Equity

Retained Earnings 85,997.34

Net Income -447.47

Total Equity 85,549.87

TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY 83,563.56

CSA 2014 Profit/Loss Report and 2015 Budget

Item	Budget	Actual	Year to date	Budget
	Jan - Dec 2014	Jan - Dec 2014	Jan-June 2015	Jan-Dec 2015
Ordinary Income/Expense				
Conference surplus from previous years	6000	4901	0	0 ^a
Corporate Sponsorship	0	1000	0	0
Member Fees & Subscriptions	12000	11887	6497 ^b	10000
Sponsorship for Awards	2000	4920	2000	2000
Total Income	20000	22708	8497	12000
Cash Awards and Grants	6000	6500	0	6500 ^c
Bank Service Charges	5	8	10	12
Book keeping & Registrar	2520	3217	80	500 ^d
Business Licenses and Permits	30	20	0	20
Copying and Reproduction	500	394	0	200
Insurance	729	729	815	815
Internet website	300	149	2571	2571 ^e
Membership Fees	1000	1000	0	0
Office supplies	25	0	0	25
Postage and Shipping	600	577	0	200
Professional Fees	175	158	686	1694 ^f
Quarterly Fee Exec Dir	8200	8438	2182	8728
Reimbursable expenses	200	0	0	2800 ^g
Subscriptions	2000	3184	737	2000
Total Expense	22284	24372	7081	12000
Net Ordinary Income	-2284	-1664	1416	0
Other Income				
Interest Income	1000	1216	468	1200
Net Other Income	1000	1216	468	1200
Overall Net Income	-1284	-447	1884	1200

Comments

^aNot anticipating income from the Botany 2015 conference

^bCSA membership renewal has been low in 2015

^cincludes \$1500 in student travel awards for 2015 conference

^dExpenses reduced as book keeping now done by Exc. Dir.

^eSignificant expense in 2015 due to update and redevelopment of CSA website

^flegal fees related to sale of CJPS

^gtravel for Best Paper and Distinguished Agronomist winners to conference

CSA Financial Review

Anita Drabyk
Deer Woods Imagery and Services
Box 324
Pinawa, MB R0E 1L0

2 July 2015

Canadian Society of Agronomy
Box 237
Pinawa, MB R0E 1L0

Dear Canadian Society of Agronomy,

I have reviewed the accounting books for the Canadian Society of Agronomy for FY 2014.

I have summarized the information below:

1. The total in all CSA accounts at the end of FY 2014 was \$83,563.56. I found the Profit and Loss and the Balance sheets (as attached) to match the actual income and expenses, including all deposits and debits.

All the financial records for the Canadian Society of Agronomy for 2014 were found to be accurate and balanced according to the attached statement. All amounts on the bank statements were checked against the deposits and the receipts and invoices.

Sincerely,

Anita Drabyk

CSA Pest Management Research Award Winner 2015

Charles M. Geddes

Project: Volunteer Canola Seedbank Ecology, Ecophysiology and Management
Advisor: Dr. Robert H. Gulden

Charles Geddes is a Ph.D. student at the University of Manitoba under the supervision of Dr. Rob Gulden. Growing up on a small farm in south western Manitoba, Charles became interested in agriculture from an early age. Charles developed a fascination with agricultural weed ecology during his undergraduate research project focussing on crop/weed allelopathy at the University of Manitoba. Following graduation with a B.Sc. Agroecology in 2012, Charles began a M.Sc. Plant Science degree at the University of Manitoba in 2013. During this time his research focussed on the effect of soil disturbance on volunteer canola seedbank dynamics as well as cultural and mechanical management of volunteer canola in soybean production. Charles has since transferred to a Ph.D. Plant Science degree and expanded his research to fill current knowledge gaps in volunteer canola management using a multi-stage life-cycle approach. Charles' interests in agriculture are vast and he enjoys thinking of new areas for innovation in the hope that he may one day play a role in the advancement of sustainable cropping systems.



Best Paper in CJPS for 2014

The Best Paper in agronomy published in the Canadian Journal of Plant Science (CJPS) in 2014 was by Thomas and Graf. The award was chosen by a committee of three CSA members from a selection of 12 candidate papers recommended by the agronomy Editor of CJPS.

Rates of yield gain of hard red spring wheat in western Canada

Julian B. Thomas and Robert J. Graf

Can. J. Plant Sci. 94:1 to 13.

The Manitoba and Saskatchewan Seed Guides dating back to 1972 represent an unused source of yield comparisons to re-examine current progress in western Canadian spring wheat cultivar yields. Adjusting for the shift in check cultivars over time showed that the yield rise due to new cultivars could be divided into two periods. Prior to the early 1990s, yields rose at a rate of about 0.33% per year; these low early rates agree with other published estimates from this period and were possibly influenced by a strong emphasis on replicating the quality of previous cultivars. From the early 1990s to 2013, yields rose by about 0.7% per year; this doubling of the earlier rate was significant based on the nonoverlap of confidence intervals of comparable slopes. To compare rates published in the literature with these new rates, all slopes were adjusted to a common benchmark where mean yield 100%. Following these adjustments, current rates in western Canada (about 0.67% per year) were comparable with a world average estimated to be about 0.62% per year. Variation in performance among Canada Western Red Spring cultivars based on the Seed Guides was significantly correlated with their on-farm yields based on Manitoba Management Plus Program (MMPP) crop insurance data ($r = 0.81$, $n = 42$). Beginning in 1991, on-farm yields rose by an average of about 1.4% per year both in Manitoba (Manitoba Management Plus Program data) and across the entire western wheat area (Statistics Canada data). This compares favorably with a world-wide rate of yield increase for wheat since 1991 of 1.16% per year. Although western Canadian onfarm yield gains were attributed to a combination of new cultivars and upgraded agronomy, the two influences were not separable in the Manitoba crop insurance data set. Opinions published in the farming press that rates of yield gain among western Canadian wheat cultivars are comparatively low were not supported by the evidence presented here.



\$3000 in prize money
available to CSA student members!
Split among the 3 top oral and 3 top poster
agronomy presentations
at the conference in Edmonton.
Co-sponsored by SeCan and CSA

CSA EXECUTIVE

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