



## Grain, Grass & Growth December 2025

*The CARA Board of Directors and staff and would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas. May the magic and wonders of this special season fill your heart with joy and happiness that lasts all year long.*



CARA Board. Back rows: Kirby Laughlin (Big Stone), Marie Cowan (Acadia Valley), Richard Bailey (Hemaruka), Tyrel Kuhn (Acadia Valley), Pat Rutledge (Monitor), Barry Redel (Consort). Front rows: Dan Grudecki (Acadia Valley), Olivia Sederberg (Sibbald), John Kimber (SAAC, Youngstown), Dianne Westerlund (Manager), Gloria Nelson (Veteran), Gordon Long (ASB 4, Veteran) and Curtis Benedict (Hanna). Missing: Nathan Berg (ASB 2, Hanna), Kyle Christianson (Sedalia), David Eaton (Sibbald), Darcy Brown (Empress), Jory Hoffman (ASB MD), Don Hogan (ASB 3), Kevin Letniak (Hemaruka), Landon Olsen (Cereal), Chad Williams (Hanna).

Another year flies by! Many thanks to all CARA staff members who worked so hard during the year to ensure quality results from trials and top notch extension events. A huge shout out to our site landowners who again gave up a few acres of land to host project sites. Your contributions are very much appreciated. CARA's program would not be possible without base funding from the Special Areas Board, MD of Acadia Council and RDAR.. We are also thankful for all the producer associations, post secondaries, ag societies, other governments and agri-businesses we partnered with during the past year.

CARA 2025 Extension Activities by Category to Dec 15					
Category	CARA		Partnership		Consulting
	Events	Reach	Events	Reach	Reach
Grazing/Livestock	11	336	4	253	44
Crop	5	34	4	37	16
Soil	9	98	14	2254	38
Environmental	6	92			92
Funding					120
General	3	262	3	1220	
Newsletters	4	6480			
Youth	5	250	2	34	
Business Mgmt	1	28			
<b>Total</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>7580</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>3798</b>	<b>310</b>

## One Sample at a Time!

As 2025 draws to a close, CARA staff are already looking at what trials will be included in our plans for 2026. Crop variety trials have always been ranked high in CARA's program by local producers who appreciate the unbiased evaluation of how varieties perform under the growing conditions of the Special Areas and MD of Acadia. In addition to CARA's reports and direct inquiries from local farmers, results from some trials are included in the Alberta Seed Guide data base.



### What goes into the variety trials?

All crop trials are located on farmer's property at key sites within the Special Areas and MD. Planting is completed with a customized planter which places precisely measured amounts of seed in 5 rows on 11 inch spacings. Maintenance of trials is accomplished by a plot sized sprayer, mowers and some hand weeding during the summer. Each trial is marked for self-guided tours. Presence of disease and lodging are noted.



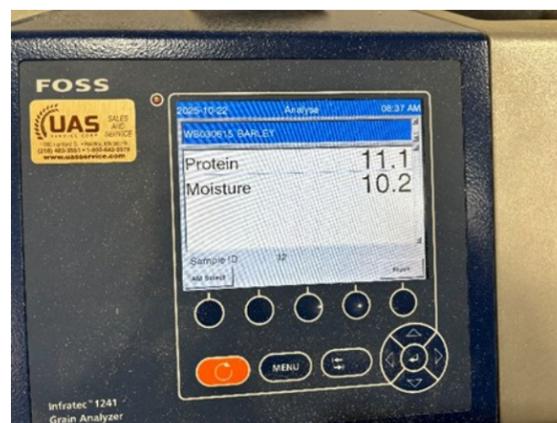
Individual plots are harvested with a plot sized WinterSteiger straight cut combine.



Samples arrive back at the CARA Center where they are cleaned and weighed



CARA is pleased to share that we now have a new tool to assist in gathering information from our trials. A Capital Grant from Alberta Agriculture enabled CARA to purchase our own refurbished protein machine for grains. The ability to determine proteins on site has improved overall efficiency in handling and recording sample data. Our FOSS unit is capable of analyzing wheat, durum, barley, pulses, canola and mustard seed. **A huge THANK YOU to the staff at Oyen's Richardson Pioneer who have made time to process our grain samples in the past for protein.**



Thousand kernel counts and bushel weights are also measured

The life cycle of variety trials end at Braeden's desk as he summarizes data and prepares reports. Results for provincial variety trials are shared with provincial coordinators. **Reports for producers will be available soon.**



## Considerations When Buying New Seed

Plant breeders' rights (PBR) in Canada were first enacted in 1991 based on the 1978 Act of the International Convention for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants (FAO, 2019). In 2015, PBR regulations were updated in Canada to align with the updated UPOV 1991 convention. Today, most of the varieties that are registered in Canada for farmers to use are protected by either PBR 78 or PBR 91. Protected varieties are denoted by one of two symbols that follow the name of the variety (PBR 78 on the left; PBR 91 on the right):



PBR legislation protects research and intellectual property of the plant breeders/organizations as well as incentivizes investment from the private sector (FAO, 2019). Older varieties covered by PBR 78 require authorization to sell or produce seed of the variety, but breeders cannot be compensated for harvested grain resulting from illegally obtained seed (Seeds Canada, n.d.). The updated PBR 91 offers more coverage for breeders including fines for illegally selling and purchasing seed, royalties from sold grain, as well as possible consequences for grain buyers and cleaners (Seeds Canada, n.d.). Financial consequences for PBR infringement can be severe with fines ranging from \$5000 to \$15,000 for individuals and up to \$25,000 for corporations (Government of Canada, 2015). For varieties covered by PBR 91, royalties on illegal grain sales and other illegal activities outlined under the legislation could result in hundreds of thousands of dollars in

additional fees.

Some varieties released more recently also have a Variety Use Agreement (VUA) that farmers are required to sign at the time of purchase. The VUA requires the farmer to pay a royalty to the breeders for the use of farm-saved seed (Robinson, 2020). Varieties that have a use agreement associated with their use are denoted by the “VUA” following the registered name.

When making the decision to purchase and grow a different variety, farmers should be aware of the legal obligations when doing so. Obtaining “brown bag” seed illegally could result in substantial financial repercussions for not only the farmer but also local businesses that deal with the grain. The best way to avoid fines is to purchase seed from an authorized retailer and always keep the certified seed tag and invoices as proof that the seed was obtained legally.

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). (2019). Views, experiences and best practices as an example of possible options for the national implementation of Article 9 of the International Treaty. *Plant Breeders' Rights Advisory Committee. Government of Canada.*

Government of Canada. (2015). Retrieved from: <https://inspection.canada.ca/en/plant-varieties/plant-breeders-rights/overview/guide>

Robinson, A. (2020). The nuts and bolts of the VUA. *Alberta Seed Guide.* Retrieved from: <https://www.seed.ab.ca/the-nuts-and-bolts-of-the-vua/>

Seeds Canada. (N.D.). Plant breeders' rights.

Retrieved from: <https://seeds-canada.ca/en/seed-resources/plant-breeders-rights/>

### *Did you know?*

CARA is a Registered Charity which can issue tax credit receipts for both cash and in-kind donations. These receipts may be used to lower taxes payable. The percentage of the deduction depends on the size of the donation, the tax bracket of the doner as well as the province the doner resides in. The tax credit may be as high as 33% of the donation for federal taxes and 75% for Alberta provincial taxes. Please call the office (403-664-3777) or your accountant for more information. Donations will have to be received by the end of December for the credit to apply to 2025 taxes.



## SUMMER EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY



The Chinook Applied Research Association (CARA) is ready to accept applications for **2026 Summer Research Technicians** (May through August)

*CARA is a non-profit, producer driven agricultural research society based in Oyen. Our program includes small plot and field scale adaptive research projects as well as workshops, seminars and field days designed to share information with producers. We are committed to improving management practices, supporting environmental stewardship and demonstrating technologies to increase the sustainability and profitability of grain, forage and livestock producers in east central Alberta.*

Summer Research Technicians will work closely with CARA Research Team to ensure that demonstration and research trials are of outstanding quality.

### Summer Research Technician responsibilities:

- Assist with the establishment, maintenance, data collection and harvest of various applied research and demonstration projects
- Assist with development of tours, field days and other extension events

### Qualifications:

- Ability to work independently as well as contribute to a team effort
- Self-motivated, organized and committed to quality results
- Valid driver's license
- Agricultural background preferred

### Why work for CARA?

- Expand your knowledge of agricultural production
- Learn skills in agricultural research and extension
- Opportunities for personal development
- Work in the great outdoors

Closing date: February 6, 2026

For more information & to submit a resume:  
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