



Western Standards Committee record of discussion and recommendations

Date: April 1, 2025

Time: 9:00 am to 1:50 pm (CDT)

Location: Canadian Grain Commission
Winnipeg, MB

Members

Description

Canadian Grain Commission

David Hunt (Chairperson)
Derek Bunkowsky
Dr. Esther Salvano

Chief Commissioner
Chief Grain Inspector for Canada
Director General, Grain Research Laboratory

Nominated by the Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Agri- Food Canada

Dr. Felicitas Katepa-Mupondwa
*Avtar Virk

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
Canadian Food Inspection Agency

Processors of grain

*Caalen Covey
*Kevin Sich

Canadian National Millers Association
Brewing & Malting Barley Research Institute

Exporters of grain

*Tala Mobayen
*Robert Tkatchuk

Canadian Pulse and Special Crops Trade Association
Canadian Grain & Oilseed Exporters Association

Producers of western grain

*Steven Donald
Gregg Fotheringham
Jon Fehr
Jean Harrington
Fiona Jochum

Shane Stokke
Shanna Stolhandske-Dale
Glenn Tait
Beverly Wieben

Saskatchewan producer (Canadian Federation of Agriculture)
Manitoba producer (Manitoba Crop Alliance)
Manitoba producer (Canadian Canola Growers Association)
Saskatchewan producer
Manitoba producer (Western Canadian Wheat Growers Association)
Saskatchewan producer (Flax Council of Canada)
Saskatchewan producer
Saskatchewan Wheat Development Commission
Alberta producer (Alberta Pulse Growers)

Additional

Robert Chapman
James Dunlop
Lynne Sweeney

Inland Terminal Association of Canada
Canola Council of Canada
Country Elevator Association

Observers:

Curtis Rempel
*Aiden Sanden
*Shannon Sereda
*Dean Hubbard
Gino Castonguay
*Joey Vanneste
Dr. Veronique Barthelet
Lonny McKague
Shanell Dupras
Dr. Ning Wang
Dr. Bin Xiao Fu
Kris Wonitowy
Evan Thomas
*Brianne Stewart
*Max Cote
Dr. Marta Izydorczyk

Canola Council of Canada
Saskatchewan Wheat Development Commission
Alberta Grains
Alberta Grains
Canadian Grain Commission
Canadian Grain Commission
Canadian Grain Commission
Canadian Grain Commission
Canadian Grain Commission
Canadian Grain Commission
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Canadian Grain Commission

Regrets:

Justin Bell
Sean Stanford
Ian Armer
Vacant

Alberta Grains
Alberta Grains
Terminal Elevator Association
Saskatchewan producer (Saskatchewan Pulse Growers)

Minute taker:

Natalie Rioux

Canadian Grain Commission

*indicates virtual participation

Recommendations and action items from this meeting

- A motion was carried to repeal physical standards and replace them with standard prints for mildew in Canada Western Red Spring (CWRS) for the No. 1 and No. 2 grades and Canada Western Amber Durum (CWAD) for No. 1, No. 2 and No. 3 grades.
- A motion was carried to close the grain grading modernization project, recognizing a continuous review of the Official Grain Grading Guide and any specific grading issues of concern will remain an ongoing process.
- The Canadian Grain Commission is committing to providing the standards committees with a progress update on its new technology advancement initiative at each meeting moving forward.

Chairperson's comments

Lead: David Hunt

For information

- Welcomed members and asked them to introduce themselves

Approval of the April 1, 2025 Western Standards Committee agenda

Lead: David Hunt

Action items

- Meeting agenda was approved.

Approval of the November 5, 2024 Western Standards Committee meeting minutes

Lead: David Hunt

Action items

- Meeting minutes were approved.

Business arising

Lead: David Hunt

For information

- No business arising.

Pulses Advisory Committee report

Lead: Joey Vanneste

For information

- Small lentils assessed as dockage project – to determine if small lentils falling through the No. 9 round-hole sieve have different quality characteristics than those that remain on top of the No. 9 round-hole.
 - o Canadian Grain Commission initiating this research and will provide an update on findings at the fall 2025 meetings.

- Lentils are designated into two classes: Lentils, Red and Lentils, other than Red, which is determined by the cotyledon colour. Concerns about a new red lentil variety with the black seed coat entering the bulk handling system. Shared that one solution could be to use the definition of contrasting colours instead of contrasting classes. Contrasting classes is only assessed for Lentils, Red.
 - o Canadian Grain Commission will be reviewing the definitions of contrasting classes and contrasting colours and will provide an update at the fall 2025 meetings.

For discussion

- Member asked how considerate the Canadian Grain Commission will be to already-established processing procedures, as the smaller seed size may have a negative impact on handling processes and may cause inefficiencies.
 - o Joey Vanneste explained that the Canadian Grain Commission will do the scientific research to determine the impacts of smaller seed size on end-use quality and share the results of that research with the standards committee for information and discussion.
- Member noted that exporters want consistency in seed sizing. In their opinion, the round-hole 9 sieve provides this accuracy with no apparent complaints. Also noted niche markets exist for specifically coloured lentils and cautioned making rules around niche products.

Barley and Other Cereal Grains Advisory Committee report

Leads: Kris Wonitowy and Dr. Marta Izydorczyk

For information

- Dr. Marta Izydorczyk gave a presentation comparing measuring techniques of Rapid Visco Analysis (RVA) and Falling Number test.
- Dr. Marta Izydorczyk provided an update that the Canada Food Inspection Agency will start applying the regional restriction process for barley variety registration, similar to what's done for wheat.

For discussion

- Member asked for further explanation on the Canada Food Inspection Agency's initiative to apply regional restriction process to barley varieties.
 - o Dr. Marta Izydorczyk explained some barley lines recommended by the eastern recommending committees were brought into western Canada without proper evaluation of malting quality characteristics and disease resistance. By default, the Canada Food Inspection Agency provides national registration, which may pose a risk when grown in western Canada. The Prairie Recommending Committee for Oats and Barley (PRCOB) will be able to reject the application for national registration and ask that a variety go through western regional trials prior to receiving national registration.
- Member commended the Grain Research Laboratory for doing this work on pre-germinated malt barley.
 - o Dr. Marta Izydorczyk added pre-germinated malt barley is not a bad thing and can still be malted if stored properly and used in a timely manner.
- Member added that information on pre-germinated barley is good for handlers as well to understand the stability of barley for malting purposes.

Oilseeds Advisory Committee report

Lead: Evan Thomas

For information

- Increase in sprouted canola observed during harvest 2024 – industry trade memo was issued in September clarifying the definition of sprouted in canola. Impacts of sprouted canola on the quality of oil were assessed on samples through the Harvest Sample Program. Free fatty acids levels were measured at the time and will continue to be monitored every few months.
- Update on research done on brown mustard seeds that have sprouted due to excess heat – sprouted due to heat has a different chemical composition than sprouted due to moisture. The difference can't be seen between sprouted seed due to heat or moisture. The study did not indicate a need for any changes to the definition or tolerances.
- Broken and small canola project – project scope for phase 2, which will assess quality parameters and effects of reasonably sound small canola seed. Segregations to be performed with various slotted sieves and compared against the original sample and cleaned samples. An update will be presented at the fall standards committee meeting.
- Brown damaged canola seed – will perform detailed grading and analyze the quality of samples containing brown seed. Early indications suggest brown seeds are more damaged, have higher oxidation, higher chlorophyll and are lower in quality than sprouted seeds. There may be a need to define types of damage while maintaining total damage tolerance.

For discussion

- No comments.

Wheat Advisory Committee report

Lead: Kris Wonitowy and Dr. Bin Xiao Fu

For information

- Shrunken, broken, and total shrunken and broken project scope – to determine when levels of shrunken, broken, and total shrunken and broken start to affect end-use quality with a goal of implementing a quick and consistent process that can be used to determine an accurate shrunken and broken assessment. The work will also determine if shrunken and broken need to continue to be separate grading factors.
- Falling number in relation to sprouting in Canada Eastern Soft Red Winter (CESRW) and Canada Western Red Spring (CWRS) in 2024 – presented the results of their research, which found that:
 - o 2024 crops had a low incidence of visible sprouting
 - o grading for mildew in CESRW protected against falling number
 - o excess moisture resulted in mildew damage
 - o alpha-amylase levels can be slightly elevated even before sprouting is visible
 - o late-maturity alpha-amylase is triggered by temperature shock during grain development and occurs only in specific genotypes
 - o there was no indication of late-maturity alpha-amylase in CESRW and CWRS in 2024
 - o the existing sprouted tolerances and mildew standards are working effectively

For discussion

- Member commented the shrunken tolerance for CWAD, with no spread between No. 1 and No. 5 grades, is counterintuitive to what's in place for the rest of the system, which is a huge concern for producers.
 - o Member commented the tolerance is very punitive at the export level as well and a study is needed to determine impacts to importers before making changes to the tolerance.
 - o Member commented they don't want the work to instill changes to take a lot of time and needs to be expedited.
 - o Kris Wonitowy commented that with work being done, any changes to the tolerance would occur in spring 2026 at the earliest. The Canadian Grain Commission is cognisant that there's urgency to this.
- Members discussed the potential lack of consistency in how samples were being graded at grain elevators and the use of Final Quality Determination. A trade memo was issued on how to assess shrunken and broken in CWAD to help instill consistency within the industry.

Hard Vitreous Kernel (HVK) in Canada Western Red Spring (CWRS) discussion

Lead: Derek Bunkowsky

For information

- HVK is a major degrading factor for CWRS every year.
- No. 2 CWRS compared to No. 1 CWRS downgraded due to HVK had similar milling yield and ash content. Lower protein content and slightly lower damaged starch in No. 2 resulted in slightly lower water absorption.
- HVK is a key factor in the US grading and marketing system, and some important customers place a lot of value on it. Want to ensure that we don't undermine Canada's market share when reviewing HVK as a grading factor.
- Given the risk of market implications, the Canadian Grain Commission has engaged with Cereals Canada for assistance understanding customer reaction
- Cereals Canada will create a small focus group to explore market implications. The focus group will look to determine an approach on how to engage with international customers possibly as early as this fall's New Crop Missions.
- A status update will be provided at the fall meeting with potential recommendations at the spring 2026 meeting. No changes will be recommended or made until there is a solid understanding of potential market impacts.

For discussion

- No comments.

Scope document

Lead: Derek Bunkowsky

For information

- Motion from fall 2024 meeting: Canadian Grain Commission to establish a scope document including a cost-benefit/economic analysis, considerate of work to be undertaken in relation to shrunken and broken, consistent with work completed on test weight, for the purpose of investigating and making a recommendation as to the alignment of primary and export standards on all classes of wheat, to be presented at the spring Western Standards Committee meeting.
- Derek Bunkowsky provided an update on the Canadian Grain Commission's task to establish a scope document which would include a cost-benefit/economic analysis. The scope document outlines the research plans for analyzing Shrunken, Broken and Total Shrunken and Broken. The results will inform discussion and facilitate making any recommendations for potential changes at the standards committees.
- As part of our changes to the regulatory approach and since this would have a regulatory change, there would be some form of a cost-benefit analysis conducted, based on the potential impact to the sector.
- Progress will be shared at the fall 2025 Western Standards Committee meeting.

For discussion

- A member commented that doing a cost-benefit analysis is an inefficient use of resources and an unproductive allocation of time that would never result in an accurate number.
 - o David Hunt commented that alignment is being looked into on these last few factors and that a cost-benefit analysis now forms part of the regulatory process.
- Members discussed the cost-benefit analysis, the results of the science study, and the importance of both.
- Member commented that it will be a difficult challenge to decide as a committee and feels that to do so, the committee should have some type of guidelines to assist in making this decision once the science has been completed.

Grain Standards Advisory Committee update

Lead: David Hunt

For information

- Presented initial results of the Grain Standards Advisory Committee consultation.
- A "What we heard" report will be compiled and published on the Canadian Grain Commission website.
- Will also be shared at fall standards committee meeting.

Recommendation of standards

Lead: Derek Bunkowsky

Action item

- Motion carried: Be it resolved that the following official standards of western grain are hereby repealed as the designated standard samples and be replaced with the tentative standard prints submitted to the Western Standards Committee by the Chief Grain Inspector for Canada, for the following official grades of grain, be and are hereby recommended to the Commission for designation for the 2025-2026 crop year, effective August 1, 2025.

Repealed standard samples:

Wheat, No. 1 Canada Western Red Spring, Mildew Standard (2022)

Wheat, No. 2 Canada Western Red Spring, Mildew Standard (2022)

Wheat, No. 1 Canada Western Amber Durum, Mildew Standard (2016)

Wheat, No. 2 Canada Western Amber Durum, Mildew Standard (2016)

Wheat, No. 3 Canada Western Amber Durum, Mildew Standard (2016)

Recommended standard prints:

Wheat, No. 1 Canada Western Red Spring, Mildew Standard Print (2025)

Wheat, No. 2 Canada Western Red Spring, Mildew Standard Print (2025)

Wheat, No. 1 Canada Western Amber Durum, Mildew Standard Print (2025)

Wheat, No. 2 Canada Western Amber Durum, Mildew Standard Print (2025)

Wheat, No. 3 Canada Western Amber Durum, Mildew Standard Print (2025)

- Motion carried: Be it resolved that owing to suitable samples not being available and in accordance with the provision of subsection (b) of Section 25 of the *Canada Grain Act*, the use of the last designated standard prints for other grades of grain grown in the Western Division, be and are hereby recommended to the Commission for designation for the 2025-2026 crop year, effective August 1, 2025.

For discussion

- Member questioned whether “owing to suitable samples” should be retained as wording in the motion.
 - o Explained that in every crop year there aren’t samples of degrading factors to create new standard samples. In years like that, previously approved standards are carried forward to the next crop year.

Grain grading modernization project

Lead: Derek Bunkowsky

For information

- Updated on the status of the grain grading modernization project and the closure of the project.

Action item

- Motion carried: Motion to close the grain grading modernization project, recognizing a continuous review of the Official Grain Grading Guide and any grading issues of concern will remain an ongoing process.

Technology advancement framework

Lead: Derek Bunkowsky

For information

- Presented the technology advancement framework at the fall 2024 Western Standards Committee meeting.
- The Canadian Grain Commission has received proposals showing promise.
- Developed a strategy to identify ways we can contribute, including research and development, and will continue to evaluate and validate new technologies, facilitate access to samples/reference material and create benchmarks and standards.
- Planning a targeted call-out soon with the intention of preparing and planning for possible projects during fall 2025.

Action item

- Committed to providing the standards committees with a progress update on this new technology advancement initiative at each standards committee meeting moving forward.

Other

Lead: David Hunt

For information

- Advised that the next Western Standards Committee meeting will be on November 4, 2025, in Winnipeg, MB.

Terms of committee members

Lead: David Hunt

Summary

- Currently 2 vacancies on the committee for Alberta Grains and Saskatchewan Pulse Growers.
- One member is coming up to the end of their third and final term. The Chair thanked them for their time and service.

Closing remarks

Lead: David Hunt

Summary

- The Chair thanked members for their participation and wished everyone safe travels home.

Adjournment

Lead: David Hunt

Action items

- Motion was carried to adjourn the meeting