



Seeds Canada 2021 Year in Review



Seeds
Canada

Semences
Canada

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Letter from the President and Executive Director

Welcome to our first Year in Review

On February 1, 2021, we officially became Seeds Canada, bringing together the Canadian Plant Technology Agency, the Commercial Seed Analysts Association of Canada, the Canadian Seed Institute / Centre for Systems Integration, and the Canadian Seed Trade Association. The result has been the best of our four legacy organizations' programs and services combined under - Seeds Canada.



Seeds Canada is the leading voice of the Canadian seed sector. We represent seed analysts and labs, breeders, distributors, growers, processors, retailers, service providers and all stakeholders along the seed value chain from coast to coast. Our mandate is to support the growth of the seed sector, both domestically and internationally, focusing on international trade, plant breeding innovation, seed regulatory modernization, and value creation. As the national voice of the seed sector at a pivotal time for the industry, we have an enormous opportunity and responsibility. We are proud of our dedicated team of leaders, our highly skilled staff, and our membership. Our strength as an organization is the scope of our representation both geographically and across the full seed value chain.

As with any new organization, in our inaugural year we focused on structure and infrastructure – we did so with the added challenge of doing this in a virtual environment. During our first



year, we completed the transfer of all legacy members, conducted a full membership fee review, created a Seeds Canada Seal for our Professional seed analyst members – be sure to look for this on all our seed analysis reports, and we worked with an HR firm to develop an organizational chart. In addition, we have implemented a budgeting and financial framework that supports the success and growth of the organization. We have also developed IT and management systems to support our organization's activities.

As a requirement for any organization, but especially for a new one, we quickly launched a strategic planning process this past year, resulting in the first Seeds Canada Strategic Plan. The plan defines who we are, our focus, and our goals. Our Vision and Mission Statement focus on members, clients, and the seed sector. It also helps frame the seed industry as a contributor to thriving food systems, sustainable environments, and successful businesses.

We started the year with getting our 15 committees up and running and ensuring broad representation from across our diverse membership. The committees have been busy with staff supporting all 15 and each having at least one Board member participating. We also hosted our very first Annual and Semi-Annual meetings virtually and we saw great turnout and participation in all sessions.

We have developed an overarching narrative for Seeds Canada, worked on key messages and online tools, and established a social media presence. We continue to work to increase audience engagement – whether it be with members, clients, stakeholders, or government officials.

From a policy perspective, the organization has been busy advocating on behalf of its members' key issues, such as Seed Regulatory Modernization, The Seed Summit, the Variety Use Agreement (VUA), Plant Breeders' Rights, and International Trade. As a result, we have developed solid relationships with industry partners, policymakers, and key decision-makers. Seeds Canada met with several MPs and Ministers as part of its lobbying sessions. The meetings aimed to introduce Seeds Canada to elected officials and discuss our critical files.

“the organization has been busy advocating on behalf of its members’ key issues”



In addition, we continue to increase member engagement on critical issues. We have a full complement of policy staff, key policy and issues committees, and a part-time government relations consultant – to ensure that we are responsive to our policy needs.

We continue to deliver the seed program services previously offered. These include the oversight of the Registered Seed Establishments (RSEs) and Accredited Seed Labs on behalf of CFIA and the delivery of training programs for the Operators and Graders of the RSEs. They also include PBR education and support for our members and monitoring for intellectual property compliance. And we continue to deliver our suite of non-seed audit services supporting our members' and clients' needs in identity preservation, food safety, organic certification, sustainability, and special label claims. In response to the pandemic, we developed internal policies and processes so that we could deliver audits and inspections, remotely. We also continued to provide refresher training for Operators and staff of RSEs online. Unfortunately, we could not offer our training for new Graders during the pandemic. However, with the pandemic subsiding, we have started delivering the in-person new Grader training sessions again.

Other priority policies and initiatives for Seeds Canada are the Midge Tolerant Wheat and Variety Use Agreement platforms. We continue to administer the MTW Platform and work with our industry partners to support this important stewardship program. The VUA platform, still in the development phase, is designed to be the most cost-effective tool to facilitate the collection of royalties on own used seed. Seeds Canada continues to administer the VUA platform on behalf of various developers on a cost-recovery basis.



We are working on our membership portal project, which will help to improve communication and increase member engagement. We want to build and maintain an organization well-



positioned for long-term success. We will develop a Communications Strategy that will be tied back to our Strategic Plan and fully support our key objectives. We will work to enhance member engagement on critical issues, work with like-minded organizations, and continue to develop strong relationships with policymakers.

We thank our Board of Directors and our staff - for working together to become a more substantial resource for our members and clients, and for continuing to work on crucial files. We are proud of how far we have come in our first year. As we look forward to 2022, we are committed to engaging with Seeds Canada members across Canada.

Thank you, let us continue to grow - together!



Ellen Sparry, President, and Barry Senft, Executive Director



Board of Directors

2021 Executive Committee

President: Ellen Sparry, C&M Seeds

Vice President: Eric McLean, JS Henry & Son Ltd

Annie Bergeron, Les Grains Semtech

Holly Gelech, SGS Canada

Quentin Martin, Cribit Seeds

2021 Directors

Philippe Charlebois, Semican

Georges Chaussé, Sollio Agriculture

Chris Churko, FP Genetics

Brent Collins, BASF Canada Inc.

Dianne Gilhuly, Kent Agri Lab

Monica Klaas, Alberta Seed Processors Association

Jeff Loessin, Corteva Agriscience

Jeff Reid, SeCan

Jim Wilson, Wilson Seeds Ltd.

Nick Sekulic, Prestville Farms



Reports from Committees

Steering Committees

We have four Steering Committees, each chaired by a Board Member and appointed by a staff liaison. All Steering Committee meetings are closed, and membership is comprised of Seeds Canada members. All membership classes are eligible to serve on Steering Committees.

Membership terms are annual, the Board appoints new memberships at their first meeting, following the Annual General Meeting (AGM). An open call for volunteers goes out to the Seeds Canada membership in the spring.

“An open call for volunteers goes out to the Seeds Canada membership in the spring.”

Business Services Committee

This committee is unique as its membership comprises the Chairs of the 8 Policy and Issues Committees and the Chair of the Seed Testing and Quality Assurance Committee. This committee is Chaired by a Board Director, which is Chris Churko and the staff leads are Roy van Wyk and Lorne Hadley.

The Business Services Committee (BSC) held two meetings in 2021, the first on April 29th and the second on July 15th.

BSC covered much ground. First, they reviewed the committee's purpose and the Terms of Reference. Then, the committee heard a presentation from the Director of Client Strategy and Solutions, Roy van Wyk, describing Seeds Canada's ISO structures. The ISO 17065 accreditation provides the mechanism for impartiality management in the delivery of Seeds Canada's certification services.



Barry Senft, Seeds Canada's Executive Director, addressed the committee and spoke to the growing market demand and consumers wanting to know where their food originates. Barry noted that, with Seeds Canada's experience and background in both audit and certification services, the organization is in a great position to grow and expand these services. This will assist members and clients and help meet market demands. In addition, Seeds Canada has established the appropriate structures to manage confidentiality and conflicts of interest.

The Subcommittee also heard updates from the staff on the broad suite of services Seeds Canada offers which include intellectual property services and the delivery of the midge tolerant wheat and Variety Use Agreement (VUA) platforms, seed program audits, training for seed program professionals, organic certification, identity preservation and food safety inspections, sustainability verification audits, and several special label claim verification services.

Seed Testing and Quality Assurance

The Seed Testing and Quality Assurance (STQA) Committee membership is comprised of up to 12 members and includes both accredited seed analysts and individuals from other areas of the seed industry. Bringing both analysts and the rest of the seed industry together to talk about seed testing issues has proved successful and brought new perspectives on seed testing for both analysts and industry representatives.

The Committee met six times over the last year and formed three sub-committees

1. Methods and Procedures for Testing Seed
2. Seed Analyst Accreditation
3. Research

These sub-committees work with our members and staff from the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), Seed Science and Technology Section (SSTS) lab on reviewing, updating, and providing advice and recommendations to CFIA on these topics.



We also reviewed the Seeds Canada Seed Analyst Membership Seal and recommended the Seal to the Board. The Seeds Canada Seal is now approved, and all accredited seed analysts that transferred into Seeds Canada have been issued their seal. Be sure to look for this seal on your reports of analysis.

This committee was also involved in the agenda and topic planning for the Seed Testing Open Forums and Workshops last year and this year's Annual Meetings. As our members portal gets developed and finalized, we will also be updating our Continuing Education program, and this Committee will provide advice and recommendations on this. The committee also recommended to the Board that Seeds Canada become more involved in and develop relationships with international seed testing associations. As a result, Seeds Canada's



Director of Member Strategy and Solutions, Krista Erickson, is now a member of International Seed Testing Association (ISTA), Association of Official Seed Analysts (AOSA), and Society of Commercial Seed Technologists (SCST), representing Seeds Canada's members. Ms. Erickson was formerly an accredited seed analyst and is the staff lead for the STQA committee. The Chair of the committee is Dianne Gilhuly.

Diversity and Inclusion Committee

The Diversity and Inclusion Committee meets and works to provide ideas to foster diversity and inclusion in our organization and across our membership. The committee is comprised of up to fifteen members representing all areas of the industry, regions, and diverse backgrounds and is supported by Seeds Canada's Communications and Membership staff. This committee is Chaired by a Board Director, which is Holly Gelech, and the staff leads were Jessica Goodfellow and Selah Katona.



In the past year, committee members have worked to develop messaging on days of recognition, such as International Day of Cultural Diversity, Black History Month, Pride Month, and Women in Agriculture. The priority in the past year has been ensuring that the committee operates in both English and French. As a result, all committee material is published in both official languages. The committee was also responsible for getting renowned speaker Kendall Netmaker, First Nations diversity and inclusion leader, to speak at our first Annual Meeting in July.

In addition, they discussed the need for mentorship within Seeds Canada and the seed industry. They have also addressed a need for a welcome/refresher meeting for members new to Seeds Canada that are attending their first Seeds Canada in-person Annual Meeting and would like to see something like this at future Seeds Canada meetings. They envision this would also be open to anyone attending the Annual Meeting and could serve as a refresher. Finally, the committee intends to suggest ideas to the Board on topics relevant to Diversity and Inclusion within Seeds Canada's strategic plan.

Advocacy and Communications Committee

The Advocacy and Communications Committee meets regularly, reviews, and provides advice and recommendations to the Board on key policy and communications issues. They also act as a sounding board and check in on these issues and the work progress. The committee is comprised of up to thirteen members representing all areas of the industry, regions, and crops within Canada and is supported by Seeds Canada Policy and Communications Staff. This committee is Chaired by a Board Director, which is Jeff Loessin, and the staff leads were Jessica Goodfellow and Selah Katona.

In the past year, committee members have engaged in discussions on the Seed Regulatory Modernization, the Variety Use Agreement (VUA), the Annual Meeting, and increasing member engagement at the policy and advocacy level, among other key files and programs.



Operational Committees

The Seeds Canada Operating Committees are Board Committees; they are:



- **Executive Committee**
- **Finance and Audit Committee**
- **Governance and Nominating Committee**

All members of the Operating Committees are appointed on 1-year terms, with members being appointed by the Board at the first meeting immediately following the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Members.

The Board holds an internal nomination and election procedure to fill the memberships and appoint the Officers and Chairs for all Operating Committees. The first election of Board Directors will take place at the AGM in 2023; eight positions will be up for election. We will share details on the first call for nominations and new directors' election in 2023. All membership classes are eligible to serve, be nominated for, and voted onto the Board of



Directors. Only Business Class members are eligible to vote in the election of Board Directors. Once on the Board of Directors, these members are eligible to sit on Operational Committees.

Policy and Issues Committees

We have eight Policy and Issues Committees. Each committee has a Leadership comprised of a Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary and appointed a Seeds Canada Board Liaison who serves as a direct link to the Board of Directors. Each committee also has a staff coordinator to work with the Leadership. All Policy and Issues Committees meetings are open to all members. The Leadership are Seeds Canada members elected annually by membership classes are eligible to serve on Policy and Issues Committee Leaderships.

Seed Applied Technologies (SAT) Committee

The main purpose of the Seed Applied Technologies (SAT) Committee is to foster a positive perception of seed treatment technology. Presently the committee is most concerned with the re-evaluation of neonicotinoid seed treatments. In addition, the committee advocates for a CFIA modernization of fertilizer regulations, which include biologicals, inoculants, and micronutrients.

In the past year, we have engaged in discussions on resolving issues related to the Pest Management Regulatory Agency's (PMRA) policy concerning differences in formulations and disrupting importers of treated seed. Updating on results and next steps of the survey by the MoE in Quebec –Seeds Canada staff.

The committee is also continuing collaboration with CropLife Canada on seed treatment issues.



Biotechnology (Biotech) Committee

The primary focus areas of the Biotechnology (Biotech) Committee are Plant Breeding Innovation, Post-Patent traits, and a Low-Level Presence Policy for Seed.

Our Biotech committee is highly active because the appropriate regulation and best practice recommendation in adopting new genetics tools is key to our members' success.

The priority in the past year has been our close collaboration with CropLife Canada and Canadian Grains Council on Plant Biotech Innovation. We are seeing success in our joint efforts and are encouraged by the recent announcement of Health Canada guidance on products of gene editing.

Our collaborative efforts encourage the CFIA environment and feed section policies to develop similarly appropriate guidelines for developers.

Oilseeds, Pulses, and Western Cereals (OPWC) Committee

The focus areas for the Oilseeds, Pulses and Western Cereals (OPWC) Committee are Variety Registration and Wheat Classes and Canola Varietal Purity.

The Hybrid-Canola sub-committee plus various crop-specific and regional committees such as the Alberta Regional Variety Advisory Committee also report into the OPWC.

OPWS is highly active in reviewing key areas such as variety registration, supporting best management practices in canola seed production and understanding the investment landscape for various developers in these crops.

We continue to develop stronger collaboration with producers and industry groups in areas of common interest.

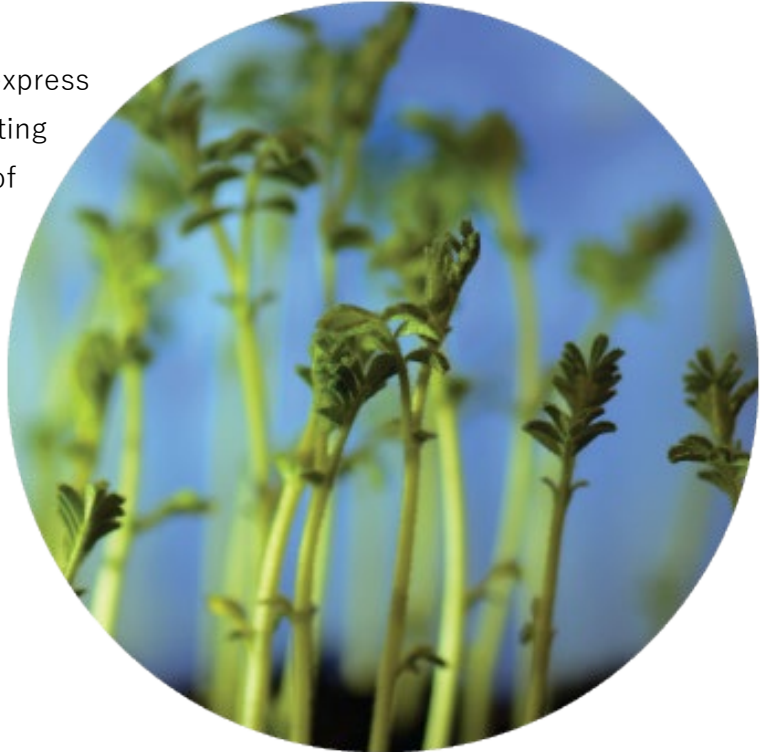
Corn, Soybeans, and Eastern Cereals (CSEC) Committee



The focus areas for the Corn, Soybeans and Eastern Cereals (CSEC) Committee include pollinator health, harmonization of provincial trials, and labour shortages. Many participants serve on various crop-specific and regional committees like the Manitoba Corn Committee and report back to Seeds Canada.

In the past year, CSEC has continued to express concerns about labour shortages resulting from the changing government treatment of temporary workers.

The committee continues to monitor the use of neonicotinoids and concerns with variety registration. Our close collaboration with Grain Farmers of Ontario on areas of mutual interest continues.



International (INT) Committee

The focus areas for the International Committee (INT) are international trade negotiations, non-tariff trade barriers, and international phytosanitary standards. Participants are also active in international organizations, such as the International Seed Federation (ISF), Seed Association of the Americas (SAA), North American Plant Protection Organization (NAPPO), the American Seed Trade Association (ASTA, and the International Seed Testing Association (ISTA).

This year was highlighted by ISF establishing a new operating structure. We are happy to report that Seeds Canada members and staff are serving on several of the new committees of ISF, in all areas important to Canada and our President, Ellen Sparry, is serving on the ISF Board. Canada is a seed exporting nation and is regarded as a trusted supplier of forage seed. COVID has made international work more challenging.



The committee has had great collaboration in matters with ASTA which is of excellent value to our members and the industry, and we will continue to foster this partnership.

Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) Committee

The focus areas for the Intellectual Property Committee (IPR) are Plant Breeders Rights (PBR) and value creation mechanisms to improve return on investment in plant breeding and variety development.

The committee continues to review and advocate for improving the Canadian variety development investment landscape. We are seeking systems and solutions like the Variety Use Agreement (VUA), which facilitates the plant breeder being paid for every use of the genetics.

The collaboration and coordination with the PBR office allowed for successfully completing PBR Distinctness Uniformity and stability trial examinations despite COVID challenges.

The continued development and increased adoption of the VUA platform continue as key priorities.

Forage & Turf (F&T) Committee

The focus areas for the Forage and Turf (F&T) Committee are the Canadian Forage Seed Project, CSGA (Canadian Seed Growers Association) Mechanical Impurity Standards in Forage and Turf grasses. Many participants serve on crop-specific and regional committees such as the Ontario Forage Committee and provide updates to Seeds Canada.

The F&T Committee continues to focus on issues that restrict superior performance in exporting forage seed. In addition, the challenges of inconsistent performance in delivering



phytosanitary certificates continue to be a concern. Finally, some members are reporting problems with attracting new forage seed growers.

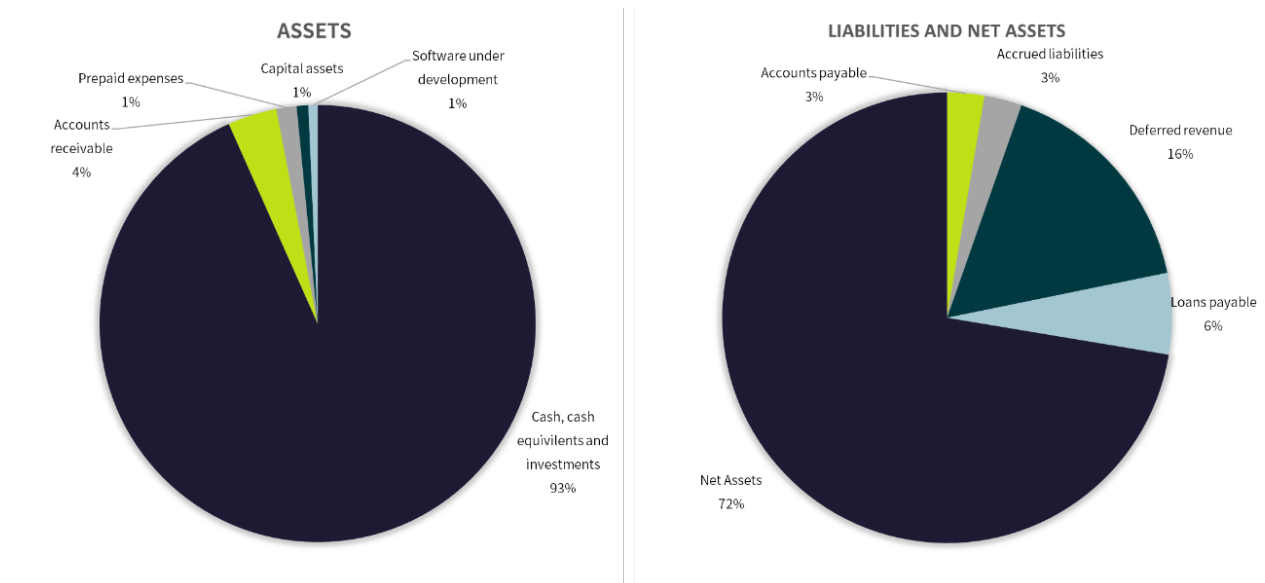
The challenges of forage seed production and marketing challenges will require closer engagement with forage seed grower groups in many provinces.



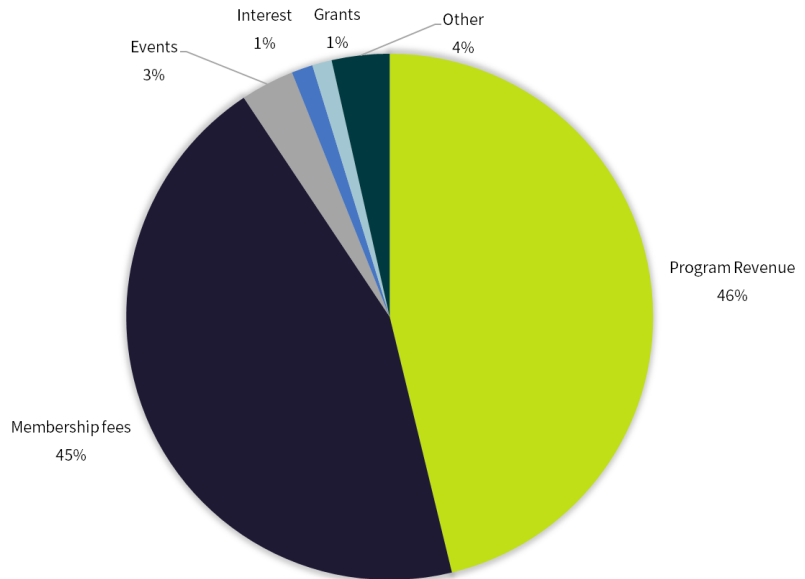
Financials

We are pleased to report the results of our inaugural fiscal year ended January 31, 2022, to the membership at our Annual General Meeting. Our audited Financial Statements are made available to members. Here are some financial highlights:

Our balance sheet is strong with solid reserves and cash balances:



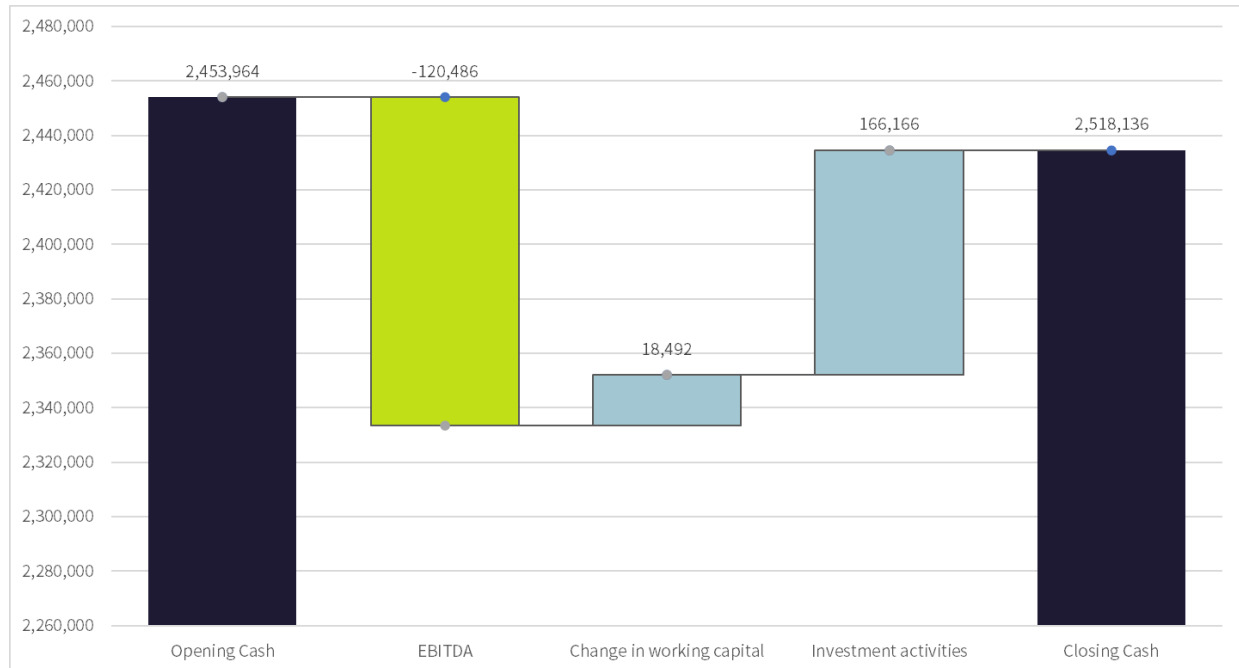
We have a diverse revenue base with no single source representing more than 50%:



Results from operations were consistent with the amalgamation plan, although COVID impacted program and event revenue and their related expenditures:



As expected, we used cash in our inaugural year. However, cash and liquid investments levels remain high.



We have built a more robust finance and administrative infrastructure and have the resources to meet the objectives of our strategic plan.



Highlights

Membership Fee Review

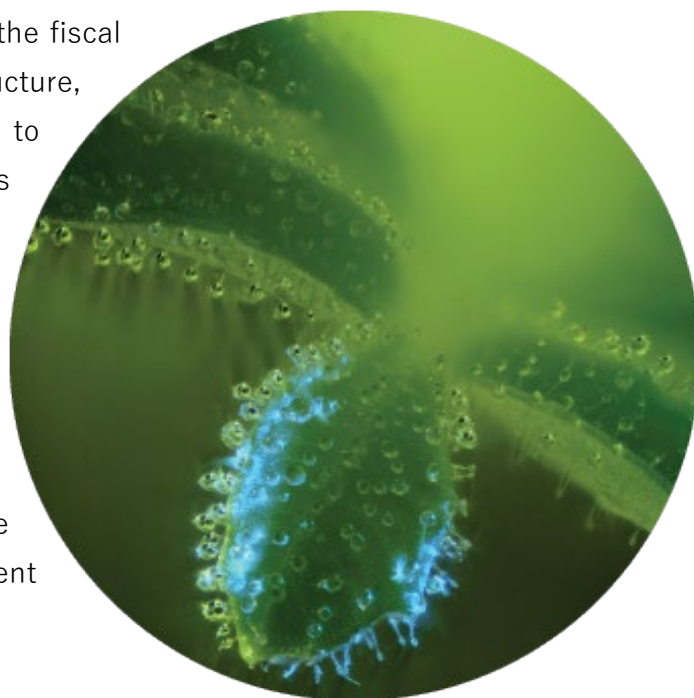
Having committed to conducting a full fee review of all member fees in the first year of operations since amalgamation, a working group of the Board and staff did so in Summer/Fall 2021 - they looked at various potential fee structures and tweaks to the final new structure that was recommended to and approved by the Board.

The new fee structure was implemented for the fiscal year, Feb. 1, 2022. Under the new structure, Business class members are required to complete a self-declaration of revenue, that is used as the basis for determining their fee. To ensure transparency, we developed a web-based fee calculator where members can quickly determine what their membership fee would be.

The working group and the Board kept some fundamental principles in mind as they went through their review:

- Fees should not be a deterrent
- Fees should encourage membership that is inclusive of all sectors of the seed value chain (accessible to all levels of the industry – small, medium, and large-scale companies – small one-person shops to multi-million-dollar corporations)
- Fees must reflect value for services received

The working group and the Board committed to reviewing how the new fee structure and any possible results, positive or negative, and if necessary, adjusting for the next fiscal year.



The new fee structure is flexible since it incorporates a sliding scale that can be adjusted as required, to meet the needs outlined by the Board. It ensures that all Business Class members pay the same rate based on actual revenue while also accounting for the variances in value received by different categories of business members.

Seed Summit

As Seeds Canada became involved in the SRM working group and task teams, it became evident that the broader grain value chain needed to be involved in the process.

To understand the needs of the industry, Seeds Canada brought together value chain partners for the Seed Summit. The idea behind the Summit was that it would help build the foundation of what we need from regulatory reform by exploring questions including: "What do growers and end-users need from the seed system in Canada?"; "How do we encourage more innovation and growth?"; "What role should government play?".



Over 750 people registered for the Summit, which far surpassed our expectations. There was a balanced cross-section of stakeholder groups. It was also significant because the seed and ag sectors rarely come together in this way to discuss issues.

The objectives of the Summit were to:



- Learn what customers and end-users need from Canada's seed sector.
- Enhance awareness of the importance of the Seeds Regulations and their impact on the agriculture sector in Canada.
- Look at best practices from other jurisdictions that would enhance Canada's agricultural competitiveness across the value chain.
- Identify the key areas where regulatory change is needed and explore potential solutions.

The following themes emerged:

- Timely access to varieties
- Attracting & maintaining investment in Canada
- International trade
- The role of government & SRM process
- Consumer trust
- Addressing climate change

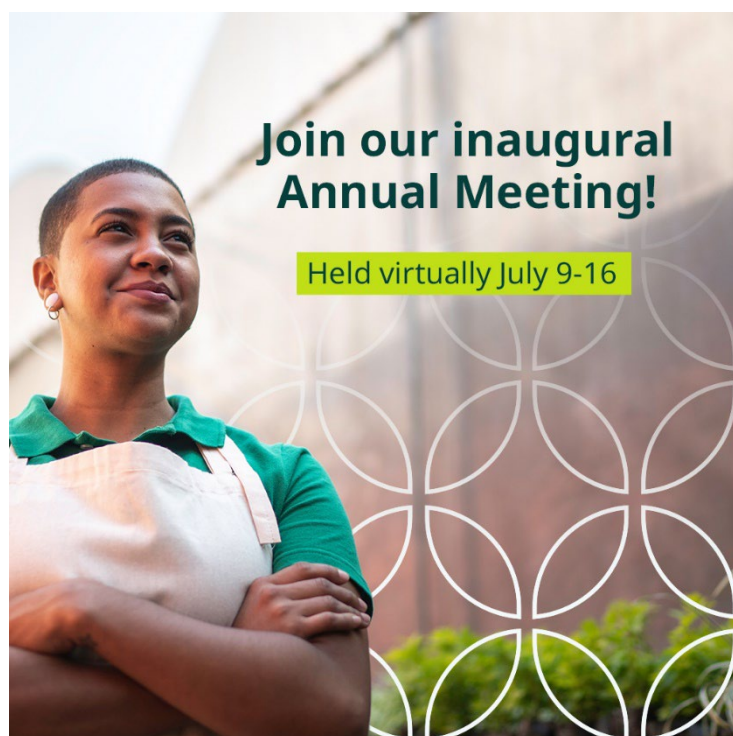
To move forward, the value chain must clearly understand where we are today and where we need to be at the end of the process. Then, the seed sector needs to decide how we will get there, checking in often with customers and each other to ensure these pathways do not divert from the destination.

First Annual and Semi-Annual Meetings

We held our very first Annual and Semi-Annual meeting virtually last year. We had a great turnout for both events. Our Annual Meeting was held in July, and we held our very first AGM, sessions for all eight policy and issues committees, a seed testing open forum and a workshop. We had two great speakers - keynote speaker JP Pawliw-Fry and Diversity and Inclusion guest speaker Kendall Netmaker. We also had some enjoyable social events, including getting to know our new ED Barry Senft, which saw Seeds Canada President, Ellen



Sperry interview him and allowed time for members to ask questions, and we wrapped it up with some fun virtual games at our closing reception.



Our virtual Semi-Annual took place in November and hosted P&I (Policy & Issues) (Policy & Issues) committees that had time-sensitive or important issues to provide updates on. We had an informative opening session and another fun reception with interactive games. Members heard updates on where things were at with our strategic plan, Seed Regulatory Modernization, and our completed member fee review was revealed. We closed the semi out with a professional development session with leadership development and

teambuilding expert Tim Arnold.

Client Services

As 2021 was our amalgamation year, Client Services focused on renovating our foundation to deliver our client services.

We continued to deliver the seed program services previously offered. These include the oversight of the Registered Seed Establishments (RSEs) and Accredited Seed Labs on behalf of CFIA, and the delivery of training programs for the Operators and Graders of the RSEs.

We transitioned to our new management structure and supported Seed Canada's Executive Director in developing Seed Canada policy positions around regulatory modernization. In



addition, we refreshed our entire seed program documents and forms to reflect our new brand, Seeds Canada. We also completed the final steps of our transition to the digital world.

Variety Use Agreement

The VUA is a priority for Seeds Canada and our policy teams because plant breeding investment is critical to our industry. And we firmly believe that all players, along with the ag and seed value chain, deserve and require a return on investment. For various developers, the VUA is part of that equation. We also see the importance through a broader sustainability lens. We must retain the capacity to develop new varieties through research and expertise and continually advance technology to keep up with the shifting climate, markets, and consumer preferences.

Seeds Canada actively gathers input from producer organizations through the VUA Producer Working Group, which meets regularly. Participants have heard from experts and shared their ideas for working group goals and next steps. The working group consists of representatives from the seed industry and various producer organizations. Seeds Canada will advocate having Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) register their varieties within the VUA.

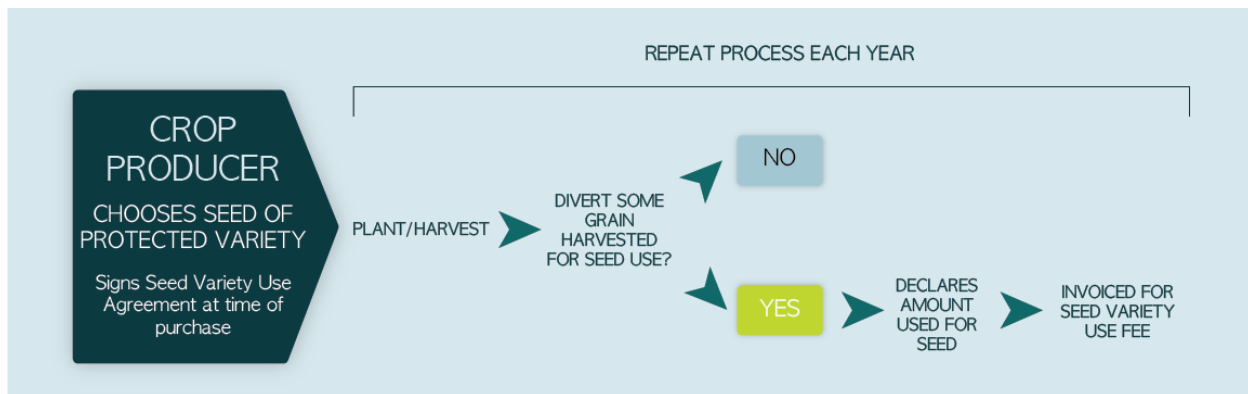
What is the VUA Platform?

The VUA platform is a web-based application used to facilitate and capture the signing of VUA Agreements. It is designed to be the most cost-effective tool to facilitate the collection and communications of royalties on the grain used as seed; it is not an enforcement tool. Seeds Canada continues to administer the VUA platform on behalf of various developers on a cost-recovery basis.

How does it work?

When producers purchase a VUA variety and divert some of that grain at harvest for seed use and plant it the following spring, they will be invoiced a 'Variety Use Fee' for the variety. This fee (which is set at the time of certified seed purchase) will be invoiced to the producer every year that the farm saved seed of the VUA variety is grown.





Seeds Canada is working on the VUA platform to improve training for users and overall user experience. The following platform initiatives are planned for the coming year: ongoing maintenance and user-friendliness; invoicing royalties; reporting; fee redistribution to various developers for seed use declarations; and further development of education materials for software use, specifically for distributors and retailers.

Top Policy Files

Seeds Canada is proud to advocate on behalf of our members and clients in the seed sector. We have a strong voice among Canadian lawmakers, developing policy alternatives on behalf of our members. In addition, we work hard to ensure government leaders are aware of the policy priorities for our industry, both federally and provincially.

Our policy priorities include:

- **Seed Regulatory Modernization**
- **Value Creation**
- **Plant Breeding Innovation**
- **Educating on Plant Breeders' Rights**
- **International Trade**



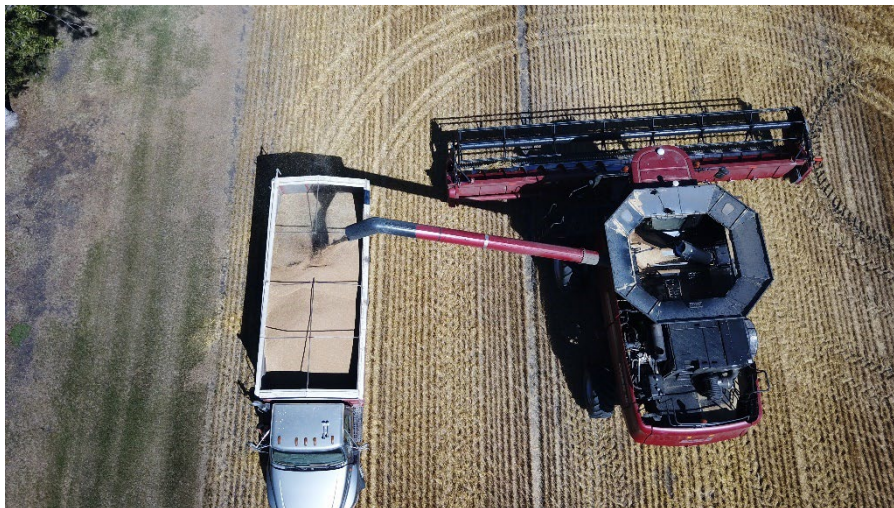
Here Are Some Highlights

Seed Regulatory Modernization (SRM)

Seed has been regulated in Canada since 1905 with the implementation of the Seed Control Act, which sought to improve the quality of forage seeds. The legislation expanded in 1923 to include variety registration, protecting farmers from the misrepresenting of seed.

Today, several levels of legislation facilitate seed production, assessment, and sale. The Canada Seeds Act, or *Seeds Act*, is the overarching document in the regulatory framework. The *Seeds Act*, last updated in 2015, was established in 1985. One step below the Seeds Act in the framework is the *Weed Seeds Order*; it outlines a list of weeds and their classes that may be found in seed and the Seeds Regulations.

According to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), which is responsible for both the *Seeds Act* and *Seeds Regulations*, "The main purpose of the *Seeds Act* and *Seeds Regulations* is to protect producers and consumers from misrepresentation, prevent the use



of the low-quality seed, and to create a level playing field for companies and individuals involved in seed production." (CFIA Seed Regulatory Modernization, 2022).

In 2018, the federal government announced an intention to finalize the modernization of several regulatory frameworks under their area of responsibility; it became known as their "*Forward Regulatory Plan*." As part of this process, CFIA committed to modernizing the *Seeds Regulations*. According to CFIA, the proposed amendments would modernize the *Seeds Regulations* as they apply to imported seeds conditioned, stored, tested, labelled, exported, and sold in Canada. In addition, the proposed



amendments would reduce overlap and redundancy; increase responsiveness to industry changes; address gaps, weaknesses, and inconsistencies; and provide clarity and flexibility to affected regulated parties.

CFIA established the Seed Regulatory Modernization process in 2019. The purpose of the SRM Working Group is to enable government and impacted seed and seed potato stakeholders to collaborate, propose options, and provide recommendations for amending the *Seeds Regulations* to the CFIA.

The SRM working group is co-chaired by Wendy Jahn, from CFIA, and Roy Van Wyk, Director of Client Strategy and Solutions from Seeds Canada. The working group is comprised of representatives from the seed industry, producer groups, commodity associations, and value chain associations; Seed potato; public Breeders; non-government stakeholders.

During the past year, the SRM working group held a series of meetings to develop vision for the seed regulatory framework. In addition, we have received and reviewed reports from the task teams.

Task teams and other sub-initiatives will support the SRM working group where needed. Four Seeds Canada senior staff serve on the working group - Krista Erickson, Dr. Lauren Comin, Lorne Hadley, and Roy van Wyk.

Five task teams have been appointed in the past year and a half. Each task team focuses on a specific area related to the seed regulatory framework, such as variety registration, seed standards and grade tables, seed certification, seed testing. Informed by important detailed information from CFIA, and occasionally supported by professional facilitators, these task teams have gone through a significant amount of data to consider options and recommendations for improvement. However, discussions have been limited because several options are considered outside current practices and structures. Also, some partners find the sheer amount of detailed data being considered challenging.



We are well represented with twenty Seeds Canada representatives sitting on the task teams. In addition, our representatives are well supported in pre- and post-meeting briefings by Seed Canada's senior subject matter experts. The challenge as we advance is how the task teams turn their proposed options into recommendations for consideration by the SRM Working Group.

“We are well represented with twenty Seeds Canada representatives sitting on the task teams.”

The consultation period has been extended as the Forward Regulatory Plan now suggests 2025 for regulatory change. Seeds Canada continues to engage in the CFIA process on SRM. We continue to strive for a more flexible and responsive system that benefits all system users.

Plant Breeding Innovation (PBI)

Seeds Canada is actively advocating for the ability of Canada's agriculture sector to make use of modern genetic technology to grow production sustainably, respond to new market opportunities, and remain competitive internationally. We have been working with industry partners Crop Life Canada and the Canada Grains Council to ensure members are up to date on the Plant Breeding Innovation file, and make sure government policymakers hear their voices.

Spring 2021 marked the launch of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) and Health Canada consultations on guidance for determining plants with novel traits and novel foods, respectively. Seeds Canada actively participated in these consultations, encouraging both organizations to take a scientific, risk-based approach to regulate gene-edited crops.

Along with our partners, Seeds Canada looks forward to the release of guidance in the summer of 2022. We will ensure that our industry has the tools to facilitate compliance and that Canadian farmers and the more significant agriculture industry have timely access to



innovation. Plant breeding innovations, including gene editing, can help Canadian agriculture reach its sustainability goals and support farmers adapting to changing environments.

What's Ahead for 2022-23



For Policy - Plant Breeding Innovation

On May 18, 2022, Health Canada published its final guidance for the *Novel Food Regulations*, which focused on plant breeding innovation. This news is both significant and positive for the seeds industry.

The new direction provides enhanced clarity on which triggers will result in a product being considered novel, in which case they would require pre-market notification and regulatory approval before sale. In addition, a new transparency initiative has been established by Health Canada that will help the seed industry to inform Canadians about non-novel gene-edited



seed products entering the marketplace. Seeds Canada is committed to facilitating the necessary transparency to ensure continued market access.

Seeds Canada would like to thank our partners, Crop Life Canada, and the Canada Grains Council, for working with us throughout the consultation process to ensure that the approach would be science-based, predictable and in line with the others in the international community. We anticipate the release of guidance from CFIA in late summer 2022 and have encouraged them to follow Health Canada's positive lead.

Membership



Seeds Canada is a national seed association encompassing members from all areas of the seed sector value chain. As such, we want to represent the interests of all our members.

Over the next year we will focus on increasing our membership by continuing to reach out to potential members through intensive membership drive activities. In addition, we will continue to strengthen our internal processes and systems. A new member portal, where members can quickly access essential materials and information will be launched this fall.

We will continue updating our website with all the public information and documents from the legacy websites. As part of our updates, we will review all Seeds Canada and legacy



organization information and determine what information to include on the members-only site and what will be available for the public.

We will continue updating Seeds Canada's Committee operations and processes and ensure they run as efficiently and effectively as possible and align with our strategic plan. This will always be a priority for us.

We believe that we have a responsibility to attract and retain talent in the seed industry and we will be starting to look into ways to address this important issue. We will continue building on our existing and establishing new relationships and partnerships both domestically and internationally. We are heavily involved with ISF and have several staff and members serving on their coordination groups and we will continue to support these roles as well as our involvement in other associations when and where required.

‘We will continue working on the CFIA’s overarching working group and task teams to strive for modern, adaptable, science-based regulations’

We will continue working on the CFIA's overarching working group and task teams to strive for modern, adaptable, science-based regulations that support our industry. This means we will continue to invest a significant amount of Board, member, and staff time into Seed Regulatory Modernization (SRM).

Member Portal

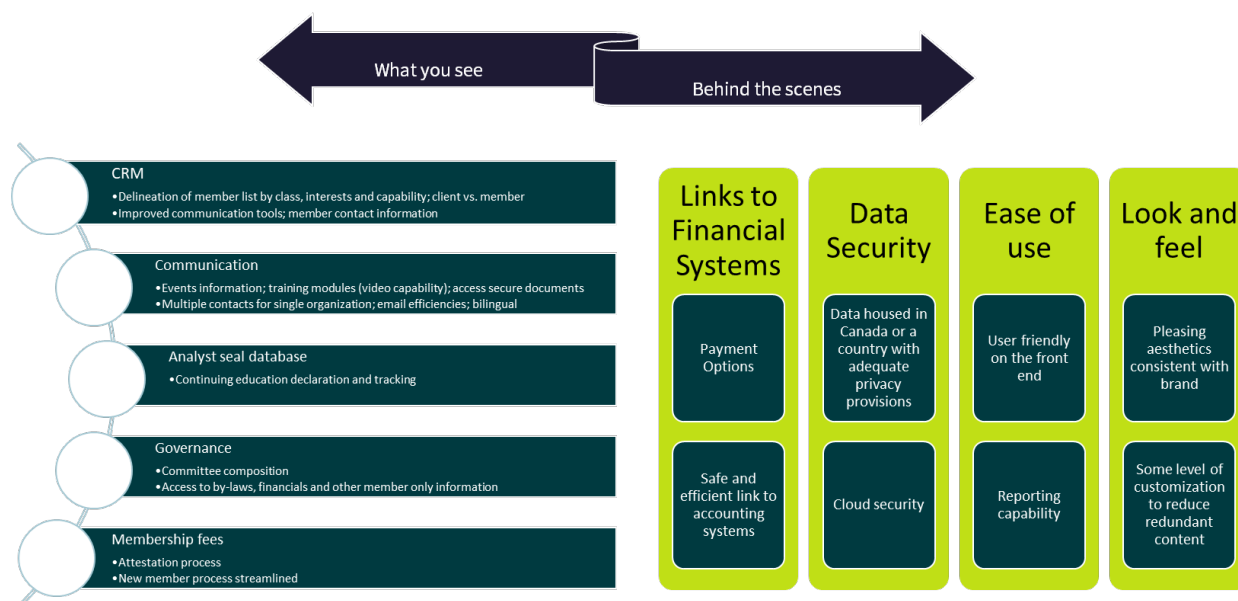
A member portal is several web pages designed for members of our organization to provide easy access to critical information. During the year, we developed the project plan prioritizing the needs of our members while providing fundamental building blocks for other projects on the horizon.

Following a setback related to data protection, we have selected a new vendor and anticipate the full implementation of the project in the Autumn of 2022.



The member portal will house all internal member documents, will serve as our membership customer relations management system, will allow members to easily find out committee information along with committee membership lists, manage the full membership list, among many other valuable resources. The updated seed analyst continuing education database will be maintained in the member portal and it will allow our analyst members to easily submit point requests and view their point status.

Below is a graphic of what the Members Portal will look like:



Client Services

With positive signs that the pandemic is subsiding, we have ambitious plans for 2022. We will increase our resources assigned to technical program delivery support for our seed program including administrative support for our quality management. We will also train and mentor more auditors in Quebec, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta for all of our programs. Cross-training our technical staff to support multiple programs will continue to be a priority.



We plan to deliver the subsequent sessions in ON, SK, and AB through the summer and fall. In addition, we are planning to offer new Grader training online. Given our expertise in broadening our revenue stream, we are also looking to increase our service offering to more non-seed areas.

With an ongoing appetite for our training services, we will build on the three new grader training sessions already delivered in 2022. We plan to provide additional sessions in Ontario,

“With an ongoing appetite for training services, we will build on the three new grader training sessions already delivered in 2022.”

Saskatchewan, and Alberta through the summer and fall of 2022. In addition, we plan to develop training for Operators of RSEs and update the training videos for the users of the VUA Platform.

We use a few key software applications, some off the shelf, and some proprietary, to help us streamline our service delivery and improve our work efficiency. For example, we are completing updates to our seed program audit software, deploying our certification management software to our inspectors in the fall, making improvements and further developing the VUA

Platform, and expanding our use of our training management software. These invaluable tools will help us continue growing our seed and non-seed services. We are also increasing our operational knowledge and understanding of delivering our intellectual property (IP) service formerly provided by CPTA. We will build on this foundational year. In 2023, when we hope to further develop our IP services.

