2012 – 2013 Membership Survey Results: FINAL REPORT

For: Manitoba Pulse Growers Association

From:

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Executive Summary

In December 2012, the Manitoba Pulse Growers Association (MPGA) began a process to gather feedback from its current and past members / growers (up to three years) on a range of issues to understand their businesses and operations, assess members' satisfaction and knowledge about MPGA, and understand how it can continue to improve delivering exceptional value to members / growers. Considering the expanding acres of pulse crops grown in Manitoba and growth in the industry, MPGA's Board of Directors felt this is an ideal time to gather grower / member feedback on how MPGA can improve membership value and shape its strategic direction.

The survey methodology employed included both mail and online approaches so to capture as many growers' responses as possible through a format they would feel most comfortable. A total of 2,740 surveys were mailed to current and past members in mid-December 2012, and they had until March 1st, 2013 to respond. Some 467 surveys were returned (including both mail and online). Please see below for some survey highlights.

According to respondents:

- Most (84%) are or have been soybean growers in the last three years, followed distantly by about 1 in 5 edible bean (23%) and pea (20%) growers.

- Nearly all (95%) reported that pulses are important in their crop rotation, including 61% who said it is *very important*.

- *Crop rotation* (84%) and *price being good / fair / market demand for pulse crops* (82%) are the two main reasons respondents said they grow soybeans. Other reasons include: *weed control* (65%), *low input cost / cheaper to produce* (62%), *easy to grow* (56%), and *diversification* (46%).

- The **TOP THREE** reasons respondents plant pulse crops (not just soybeans, but all pulse crops they grow) are *crop rotation* (40%), *price is good / fair / market demand* (31%), and *low input costs / cheaper to produce* (20%).

- Two-thirds (65%) said they anticipate growing *about the same* number of pulse crops in the next three years then they do now, while one-quarter (26%) anticipate *growing more*.

- Some three-quarters (74%) reported currently accessing information on pulse varieties from *retailers*, while nearly 6 in 10 (58%) reported accessing information from *Seed Manitoba* and half (49%) via *word of mouth*.

- *Suitable varieties* was considered the **NUMBER ONE** pulse crops production related issue growers face (35%), followed by *disease* (18%), *equipment* (15%), and *crop insurance* (13%). Approximately 15% of respondents cited other issues, including *weather, weed control, seed-related issues, consistent yield,* and *price / market volatility*.

- Nearly three-quarters of survey respondents have a positive impression of MPGA – either *very* (20%) or *somewhat* (52%) positive, while over one-quarter either did not know (15%) or did not provide a response (11%). Only 2% have a negative impression of MPGA. While the positive results are encouraging, one-quarter of those surveyed either do not feel they know enough about MPGA to provide a rating, or did not want to provide their impression.

- Survey respondents feel they have an average level of awareness of MPGA's core priorities with an average rating of 4.1 out of 7, although 28% of respondents said they either did not know or did not provide a response.

- Respondents rated all six-core priorities at least a 4.7 out of 7, suggesting that most respondents feel MPGA is focusing on the most appropriate activities and priorities. Respondents were most likely, however, to rate *variety research* and *crop production knowledge* as being higher priorities compared to *market access, government relations, linkages with strategic industry partners* and *member communication*. The other main core activities respondents would like MPGA to focus on include:

    - Increased / better communication with members
    - Market development / marketing / market demand information
    - Crop production knowledge / research trials
    - Vigilance for early detection of emerging diseases and insect problems

- Respondents' top **research priorities** are *variety development, agronomy and sustainable production,* and *disease and insects*.

- Respondents' top **market development priorities** are *increase value-added processing in Manitoba* and *develop and support domestic and local markets*, followed closely by *improving export market access* and *assist with improving transportation systems (reducing costs)*.

- Respondents felt **maintaining linkages with strategic partners** such as *Pulse Canada* and *Canadian Soybean Council* is fairly important, although maintaining a strategic partnership with both the *Keystone Agricultural Producers* and *Grain Growers of Canada* is less important.

- Two-thirds of respondents believe the 0.5% level of check-off levy against sales of pulse crops in Manitoba that funds MPGA is *appropriate*, while another 13% feel it's *too high*. Nearly one-fifth did not know or provide a response. Pea growers and respondents who have more of a positive impression of MPGA or greater awareness of MPGA's core activities, are more likely to report the 0.5% level is *appropriate*.

- Among respondents who feel the 0.5% check-off level is too high, most said they lacked information about what MPGA does, membership benefit or value, and what the organization does with the check-off funds. A few suggested that MPGA should re-evaluate it's management model and look at how it is spending money so to decrease the current 0.5% level, or to possibly cap the level.

- By far the most common method of accessing information about MPGA is through reading *Pulse Beat*, the organization's tri-annual publication (83%).

- Most growers surveyed use one or more online or social media technologies regularly, that is a few times per week, with the *Internet in general* being the most common (used by 83% of respondents). *Facebook* and *Twitter* are not as commonly used by growers. Interestingly, few respondents *regularly visit MPGA website for information on pulse crops*.

- Some 6 respondents in 10 (62%) believe MPGA is communicating with its members ***just enough***, while over one-quarter either said they did not know (20%) or did not provide a response (7%). Most respondents also said they regularly read *Pulse Beat* (average rating of 5.3 out of 7) and that they *receive sufficient communications from MPGA* (average rating of 4.8 out of 7).

- Respondents are more likely to rate the ***IMPORTANCE*** that an organization like MPGA exists (5.7) higher compared to the ***VALUE*** they feel they receive from the organization (4.9) as well as the ***VALUE of the SUMMER TOUR*** (5.1).

- Respondents rated MPGA moderately in terms of *MPGA membership benefits me* (4.6) and *I am aware of the types of variety research MPGA conducts* (4.3).

- Feelings of engagement with MPGA and awareness of membership benefits received lower or average ratings (3.7 and 4.0 out of 7, respectively).

- These results show there is an opportunity for improvement in terms of better and more regular communications with members about their membership benefits and how it benefits them.

1.0 Introduction and Research Objectives

The Manitoba Pulse Growers Association (MPGA) is a non-profit, member-based organization that represents 3,000 farmers in Manitoba who grow pulses, including edible beans, peas, lentils, chickpeas, faba beans and soybeans. Its objective is to provide its members with production knowledge and market development support through conducting and engaging in research, advocacy and linkages with strategic industry partners.[1]

In December 2012, MPGA began a process to gather feedback from its current and past members / growers (up to three years) on a range of issues to understand their businesses and operations, assess members' satisfaction and knowledge about MPGA, and understand how it can continue to improve delivering exceptional value to members / growers.

More specifically, MPGA wanted to better understand the following about its members / growers:

- members' businesses and operations
  - number of acres farmed in 2012
  - number of years in farming
  - types of pulses grown
  - intention to grow pulses in the future
  - percentage of pulses grown of total farming acres / business

- knowledge, impressions and opinions of MPGA and its core activities (research, market development, linkages with strategic industry partners, communications)
- current membership value
- opportunities for improvement
- MPGA's current way of communicating with members – preference on how often, method, topics, and methods of accessing pulses information
- social media, online and mobile technology usage

Considering the expanding acres of pulse crops grown in Manitoba and growth in the industry, MPGA's Board of Directors felt this is an ideal time to gather grower / member feedback on how MPGA can improve membership value and shape its strategic direction. This information will ultimately assist in MPGA's communications and strategic planning to meet its immediate and long-term goals.

[1] www.manitobapulse.ca

1.1 Research Process

The methodology selected involved a mixed method (online and mail-back) quantitative survey design in which all past (up to three years) and current members were eligible to participate. In this way, a census of members was collected and no sampling method was employed.[2] As MPGA has a thorough mailing list it has few email addresses of its current and past members, so it was decided the survey should also be made available online via Survey Monkey as an alternative completion method. The survey included 30-questions, which were mostly close-ended with a few open-ended opportunities on key issues for members to expand on their reasons for ratings and if they had any other thoughts on how MPGA could improve its overall membership value to growers like themselves. The survey package mailed to potential respondents included a postage-paid reply envelope so members would not be inconvenienced in responding to the survey, a paper survey, and a prize draw ballot form. The fact the survey was available online was mentioned in the survey introduction where members could logon directly through MPGA's website.

Please note that throughout the report, members are also referred to as ***respondents*** or ***growers***. We used the term ***growers*** in the survey for consistency as not all potential respondents may be "current" members depending on whether they requested their check-off refunds returned to them, or in a few cases some were not "currently" growing pulses.

1.2 Response Rate

To increase the response rate, growers / members were given the opportunity to enter a random prize draw for the chance to win one of three 16 GB iPad minis valued at $329 each. As clearly indicated to members on the survey, the prize draw ballot was separated from the survey at the point of data entry so respondents' contact information collected on the ballot was NOT connected to their survey responses. It is critical that members' responses are kept strictly confidential, are not be attributed to them personally, and are analyzed in aggregate form with other respondents in order to gather candid, honest responses.

In mid-December 2012, a total of 2,740 surveys were mailed to current and past members. 467 surveys were returned (including n=28 via online). While this would make for a 17% response rate, this does not take into account returned surveys to MPGA's office (no longer farming, incorrect address, farm ownership had changed hands) nor potential duplicates.[3]

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[2] The survey was sent to all past and current members. A sample was not selected from the total population.

[3] It is possible a grower could have multiple holdings or part ownership and therefore could have received multiple surveys. This membership survey was intended for growers to respond in a general sense about their pulses growing experiences and their impressions of MPGA, not about the ownership of the properties themselves, although we did ask one question about their business structure.

2.0 Respondent profile

2.1 Respondents largely soybean growers

When asked what pulse crops they have grown on their farm in the past three years, over 8 in 10 (84%) reported having grown soybeans followed distantly by about 1 in 5 reporting growing edible beans (23%) and peas (20%). Please see Figure 1 below.

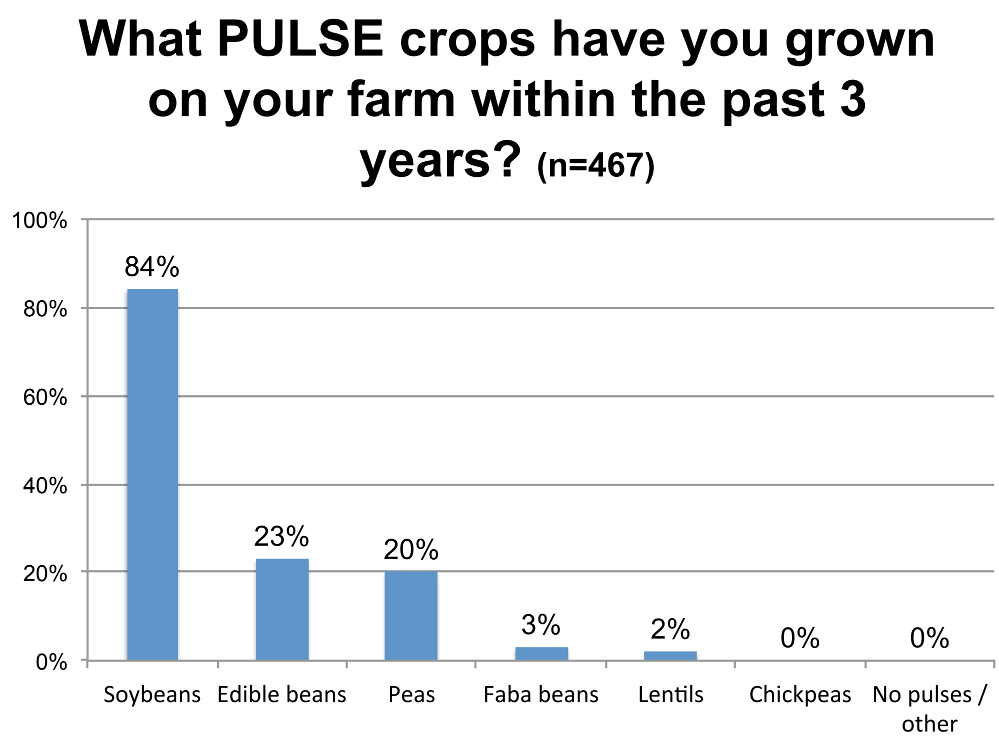

Figure 1

Some 70% of respondents have grown one pulse crop on their farms in the past three years, 29% have grown between two and four pulse crops (including 26% who have grown two), and 1% who said they have not grown any pulses or who have since gotten out of growing pulse crops within this time period.

2.2 Significant range in percentage of total farming acres dedicated to growing pulse crops

The following four tables detail the percentage of total farming acres dedicated to growing each of the following pulse crops: soybeans, edible beans, peas, faba beans, lentils and chick peas. More details are provided on soybean, edible bean and pea farming acres as most respondents grow these pulse crops, and the sample size is larger and therefore more reliable.

- As these tables show, there is a significant range in the percentage of total farming acres dedicated to growing these pulse crops, ranging from a low of one or less than 1% to 100% of total farming acres dedicated to growing soybeans, edible beans and peas. Please see Tables 1 – 4 on the following pages.

Table 1: SOYBEANS ***Q2: Based on an average of the last 3 years, what % of your total farming acres is dedicated to growing each of the following pulse crops: SOYBEANS***	
	% (n=467)
% of respondents who have grown SOYBEANS on farms in past 3 years	**84%**
	(n=388)
% of total farming acres dedicated to growing SOYBEANS	
Under 10% of total farming acres	11%
10 – 20% of total farming acres	28%
21 – 30% of total farming acres	36%
31+% of total farming acres	26%
Did not report	<1%
Other descriptive statistical information	**% of total farming acres**
Minimum (lowest reported % of total farming acres)	.5%
Maximum (highest reported % of total farming acres)	100%
Mean (average)	28%
Median (mid-point)	25%
Mode (most commonly mentioned % of total farming acres)	25%

Table 2: EDIBLE BEANS ***Q2: Based on an average of the last 3 years, what % of your total farming acres is dedicated to growing each of the following pulse crops: EDIBLE BEANS***	
	% **(n=467)**
% of respondents who have grown EDIBLE BEANS on farms in past 3 years	**23%**
	(n=105)
% of total farming acres dedicated to growing EDIBLE BEANS	
Under 10% of total farming acres	14%
10 – 19% of total farming acres	38%
20 – 30% of total farming acres	35%
31+% of total farming acres	13%
Did not report	1%
Other descriptive statistical information	**% of total farming acres**
Minimum (lowest reported % of total farming acres)	.1%
Maximum (highest reported % of total farming acres)	100%
Mean (average)	19%
Median (mid-point)	16%
Mode (most commonly mentioned % of total farming acres)	10%

Table 3: PEAS ***Q2: Based on an average of the last 3 years, what % of your total farming acres is dedicated to growing each of the following pulse crops: PEAS***	
	% (n=467)
% of respondents who have grown PEAS on farms in past 3 years	**20%**
	(n=93)
% of total farming acres dedicated to growing PEAS	
Up to 5% of total farming acres	31%
6 – 10% of total farming acres	46%
Over 10% of total farming acres	23%
Did not report	1%
Other descriptive statistical information	**% of total farming acres**
Minimum (lowest reported % of total farming acres)	1%
Maximum (highest reported % of total farming acres)	100%
Mean (average)	11%
Median (mid-point)	10%
Mode (most commonly mentioned % of total farming acres)	10%

Table 4: FABA BEANS, LENTILS, CHICK PEAS ***Q2: Based on an average of the last 3 years, what % of your total farming acres is dedicated to growing each of the following pulse crops?***	
	% of total farming acres
Other descriptive statistical information: FABA BEANS	**(n=13)**
Minimum (lowest reported % of total farming acres)	1%
Maximum (highest reported % of total farming acres)	15%
Mean (average)	6%
Median (mid-point)	5%
Mode (most commonly mentioned % of total farming acres)	5%
Other descriptive statistical information: LENTILS	**(n=7)**
Minimum (lowest reported % of total farming acres)	4%
Maximum (highest reported % of total farming acres)	20%
Mean (average)	10%
Median (mid-point)	10%
Mode (most commonly mentioned % of total farming acres)	10%
Other descriptive statistical information: CHICK PEAS	**(n=1)**
% of total farming acres dedicated to growing chick peas	2%
Note: These are very small sample sizes and should be observed with caution. It cannot be said they represent all faba bean, lentil, and chickpea growers in Manitoba.	

Table 5 (next page) profiles respondents in terms of the numbers of years they have been farming, number of acres farmed in 2012, business structure, and age range.

- While there is somewhat of a mix of respondents to this survey, in general, respondents tended to be largely 50 – 64 years of age, have been farming for over 30 years, farmed under 3,000 acres in 2012, and whose business structure is either a corporation or sole proprietorship. Please see Table 5 on the next page.

Table 5: Profile of survey respondents	
	% (n=467)
Q26: How many years have you been farming?	
Under 5 years	3%
5 – 9 years	5%
10 – 15 years	10%
16 – 20 years	8%
21 – 25 years	9%
26 – 30 years	13%
Over 30 years	53%
No response	1%
Total	102%
Q27: How many ACRES did you farm in 2012?	
Under 1,000 acres	31%
1,000 – 3,000	44%
3,001 – 5000	17%
5,001 – 10,000	7%
Over 10,000	1%
No response	1%
Total	101%
Q28: What is your business structure?	
Sole proprietor	34%
Partnership	17%
Corporation	47%
Sole proprietor & Partnership	1%
Partnership & Corporation	1%
Sole proprietor & Corporation	<1%
Family venture / farm	<1%
Other	1%
No response	1%
Total	102%
Q30: What is your age range?	
18 – 24 years	1%
25 – 35 years	11%
36 – 49 years	27%
50 – 64 years	47%
65+	12%
Two age groups responded to survey	<1%
No response	1%
Total	99%
Note: The totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding.	

3.0 Pulse crops growing experiences

We began the survey with questions about their pulse growing experiences, reasons for growing, future intentions, where they access information, and the main issues they face as growers of pulse crops.

3.1 Importance of growing pulse crops

Nearly all (95%) respondents reported that pulses are important in their crop rotation, including 61% who said it is ***very important***. Please see Figure 2 below.

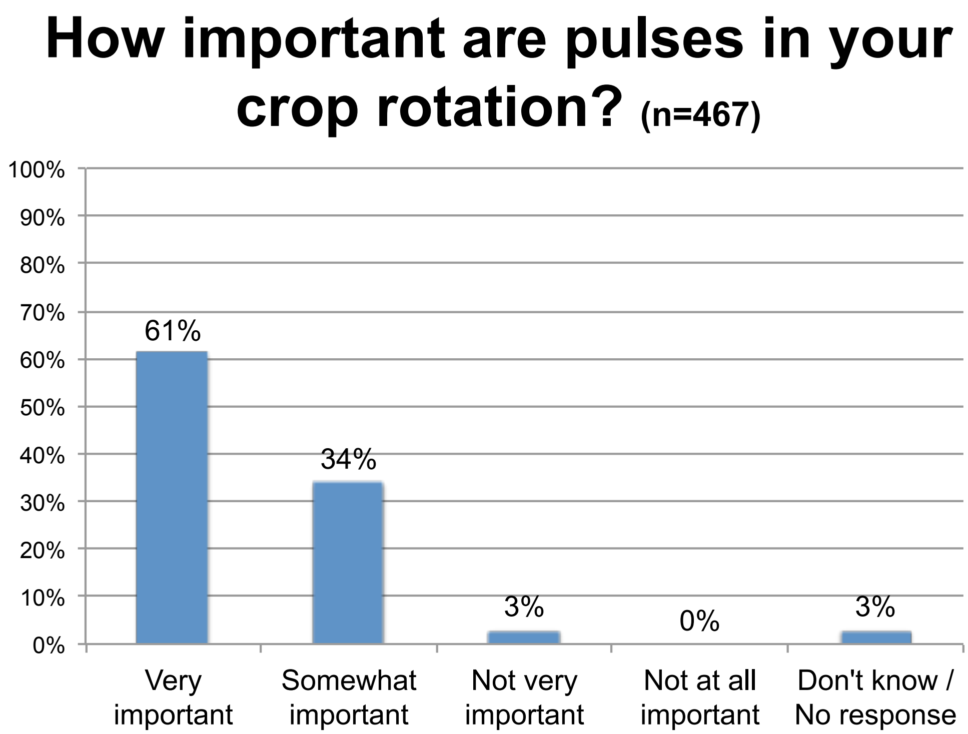

Figure 2

Pea growers were split in their opinion of the level of importance of pulses to their crop rotation, with slightly more saying they are ***somewhat important*** rather than ***very important*** compared to growers of other pulses. As a point of comparison, 43% of pea growers said pulses are ***very important*** in their crop rotation compared to 67% of soybean and 64% of edible bean growers.

3.2 *Crop rotation* and *good / fair price / market demand* are main reasons for growing soybeans

As Table 6 below shows, according to soybean growers surveyed (n=388), ***crop rotation*** (84%) and ***price being good / fair / market demand for pulse crops*** (82%) are the two main reasons for growing soybeans. Other reasons half to two-thirds of respondents identified include:

- ***Weed control*** (65%)
- ***Low input cost / cheaper to produce*** (62%)
- ***Easy to grow*** (56%)
- ***Diversification*** (46%)

While we provided respondents with a list to check off, we also encouraged them to provide "other" responses not included in the list. Approximately 12% of respondents mentioned other reasons, including ***tolerance of extreme weather, spreading out harvest season, consistently profitable / reliable, nutrient or chemical rotation***, or simply to ***experiment or try out*** for a season. Please see Table 6 below.

Table 6: Main reasons for growing SOYBEANS
Q4: Thinking of the last 3 years, what are the main reasons you have planted SOYBEANS on your farm? (Check all that apply.)

	% (n=388)
Crop rotation	**84%**
Price is good / fair / market demand for pulse crops	**82%**
Weed control	**65%**
Low input cost / cheaper to produce	**62%**
Easy to grow	**56%**
Diversification	**46%**
Disease control	21%
Tolerant of extreme weather (excessive moisture, hot, dry) / hardy plant	7%
I'm primarily a pulse crops grower	2%
Spreads out harvest	2%
Consistently profitable plant	1%
Nutrient / chemical rotation	1%
Experimenting / to try it out	1%
Other	3%

Note: This is a multiple response question where respondents could provide more than one answer. The total will sum to MORE than 100%.

3.3 *Crop rotation, good / fair price / market demand,* and *low input costs* are top 3 reasons for planting pulse crops

As shown in Figure 3 (next page), when asked to rank the top three reasons respondents plant pulse crops (not just soybeans, but all pulse crops they grow) from a list provided (or they could also add additional reasons), similar to the results among soybean growers, ***crop rotation*** was the clear top choice among respondents where 40% selected it as their first choice / top reason.[4]

- Also similar to soybean growers reasons for planting soybeans, ***price is good / fair / market demand*** (31%) and ***low input costs / cheaper to produce*** (20%) were the next two reasons selected as being respondents' first choice / top reasons for planting pulse crops.

- The remaining reasons were selected between 1 – 11% of respondents as being their top reason for growing pulse crops.

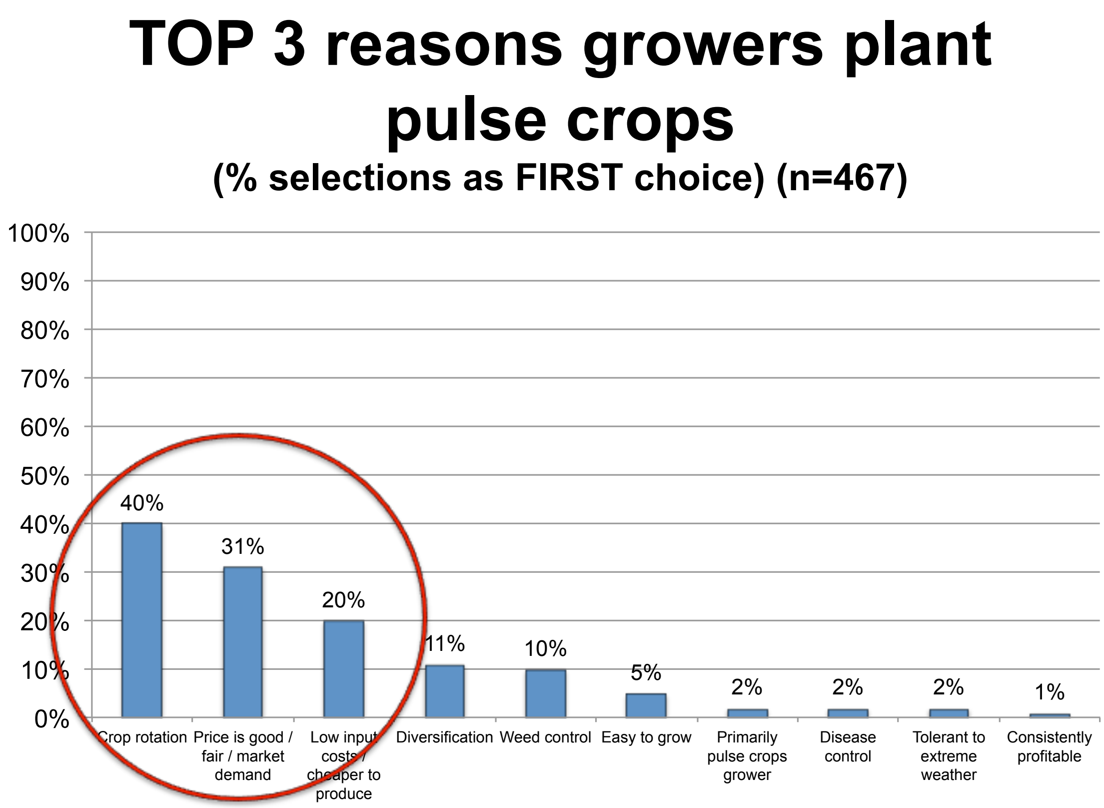

Figure 3

[4] It is important to note that while most respondents accurately ranked their top three reasons for planting pulse crops, there were a number of respondents who did not understand the required task and ranked all eight reasons listed from 1 to 8 or ranked a few of the reasons listed as their first, second and third choices (so then all eight listed reasons were ranked either a 1, 2 or 3).

Table 7 below details all the main reasons identified including the proportion of respondents who selected each as their first, second and third choices, the proportion of those who did not select each reason at all, and their means / averages. Over half of respondents selected the top three reasons listed as either their first, second or third choice. Please see Table 7 below.

Table 7: Top 3 reasons growers plant pulse crops

Q5: Thinking of the last 3 years, please RANK the TOP 3 reasons you have planted pulse crops from the following list, where 1 = MOST IMPORTANT reason, 2 = SECOND MOST IMPORTANT reason, and 3 = THIRD MOST IMPORTANT reason.

	% respondents who selected each reason as their FIRST, SECOND, or THIRD choice, or did not select at all (n=467)				
	FIRST choice	**SECOND choice**	**THIRD choice**	**Did not select**	**Mean (average)**
Crop rotation	**40%**	**23%**	**15%**	**22%**	**1.7**
Price is good / fair / market demand for pulse crops	**31%**	**24%**	**17%**	**28%**	**1.8**
Low input cost / cheaper to produce	**20%**	**20%**	**15%**	**45%**	**1.9**
Diversification	11%	13%	14%	62%	2.2
Weed control	10%	12%	14%	64%	2.2
Easy to grow	5%	10%	10%	75%	2.3
Disease control	2%	7%	6%	86%	2.5
I'm primarily a pulse crops grower	2%	2%	5%	92%	2.5
Tolerant to extreme weather (excessive moisture, hot, dry)*	2%	1%	1%	97%	1.7
Consistently profitable*	1%	-	1%	98%	1.9
Spreads out harvest / timing*	-	<1%	1%	99%	2.8

*Note: Please note that the reasons that have been starred is because a very small proportion of respondents selected these reasons to be either their first, second or third choice / top reasons. Because of their small sample sizes, their means / averages are not very reliable. Otherwise, for the purpose of this table, the lower the mean, the more likely the response was selected as being respondents' first choice.

3.4 Two-thirds of respondents anticipate growing *ABOUT THE SAME* number of pulse crops in the next 3 years than they do now

As shown in Figure 4 below, two-thirds (65%) of respondents reported they anticipate growing about the same number of pulse crops in the next three years than they do now, while one-quarter (26%) anticipate growing more.

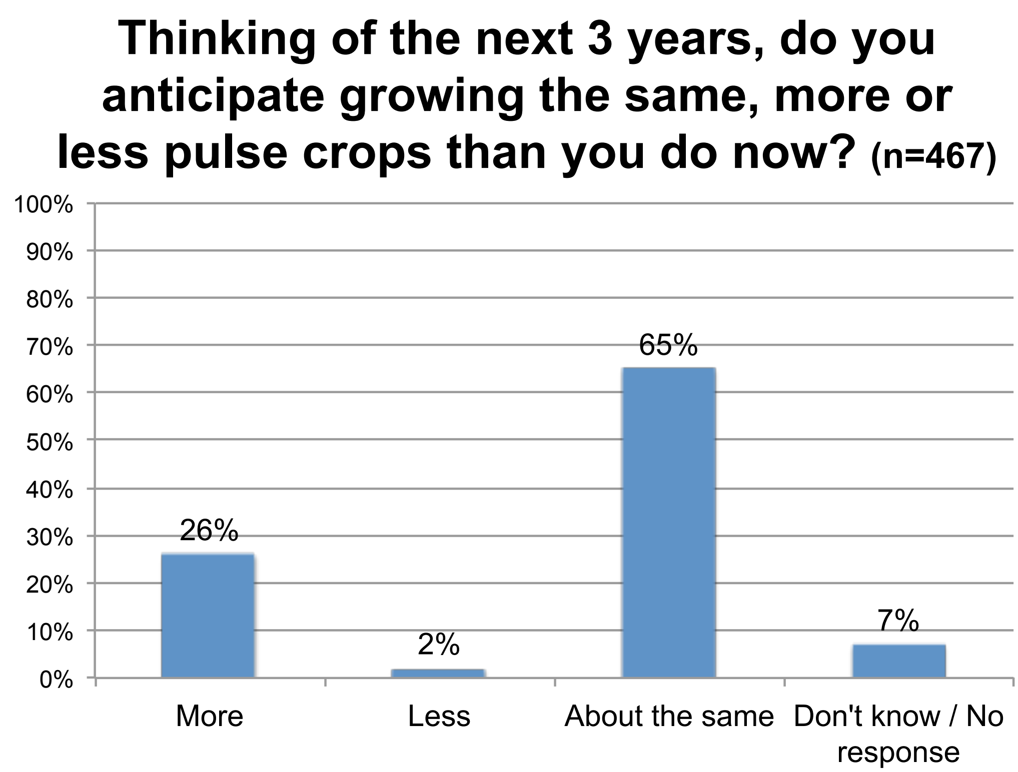

Figure 4

Interestingly, edible bean growers surveyed were more likely than growers of other pulse crops to report that they anticipate growing ***about the same*** number of pulse crops in the next three years.

3.5 Respondents most likely to access information on pulse varieties from *retailers*

Some three-quarters (74%) of respondents reported currently accessing information on pulse varieties from ***retailers***, while nearly 6 in 10 (58%) reported accessing information from ***Seed Manitoba*** and half (49%) via ***word of mouth***.

- It is important to note just under half (44%) of respondents reported currently accessing this information from MPGA's ***Pulse Beat*** magazine.

Please see Table 8 below.

Table 8: Where are growers currently accessing information on pulse varieties?
Q7: Where do you currently access information on pulse varieties? (Check all that apply.)

	% (n=467)
Retailer	74%
Seed Manitoba	58%
Word of mouth	49%
Pulse Beat	44%
Local agronomist	35%
Trade shows	26%
Internet (various websites)	12%
Other	2%

Note: This is a multiple response question where respondents could provide more than one answer. The total will sum to MORE than 100%.

We asked respondents to specify from which websites they access pulse varieties information if they selected ***Internet*** as an information source. A range of websites were mentioned including the following:

- Combine Forum
- Yield Manitoba
- Manitoba Pulse Growers Association (MPGA)
- Manitoba Management Plus Program (MMPP)
- DuPont
- Seed companies / dealers' websites (from which growers purchase seeds)
- Government (level of government not specified)
- Farmer forums
- US websites (mainly universities)

3.6 *Suitable varieties* number one pulse crops production related issue faced by growers

Over one-third (35%) of respondents reported that ***suitable varieties*** is the number one pulse crops production related issue they face as growers, distantly followed by ***disease*** (18%), ***equipment*** (15%) and ***crop insurance*** (13%). Please see Figure 5 below.

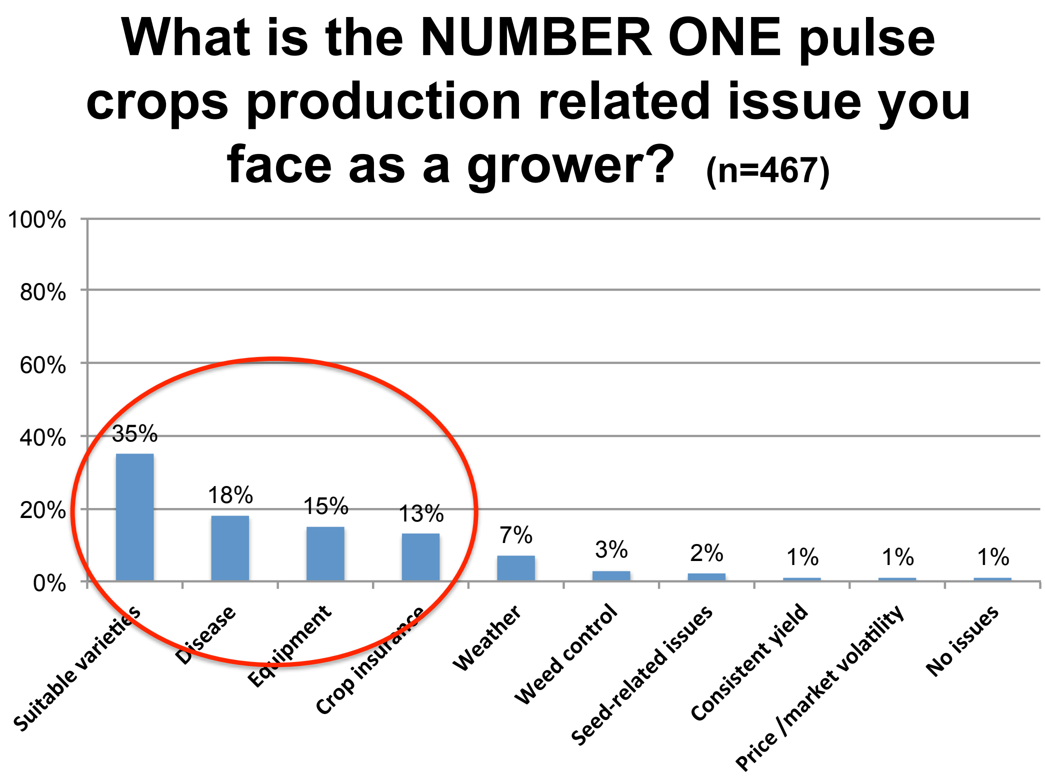

Figure 5

Interestingly, fewer edible bean growers said ***suitable varieties*** is the number one pulse crops production related issue. Instead, they were evenly split on whether the number one reason is ***suitable varieties*** (24%) or ***disease*** (24%). Nearly one-quarter (23%) of both pea growers and edible bean growers mentioned ***disease*** as being the number one issue. ***Suitable varieties*** (38%) was the most reported pulse crops production related issue for soybean growers compared to only 16% who selected ***disease***.

4.0 Impression and awareness of MPGA core priorities and activities

The following section details respondents' ratings and impressions of MPGA's core priorities and activities, and in particular examines respondents' awareness and impressions of MPGA's research, market development, and linkages with strategic industry partners' initiatives.

4.1 Nearly three-quarters have positive impression of MPGA

Nearly three-quarters of survey respondents have a positive impression of MPGA – either ***very*** (20%) or ***somewhat*** (52%) positive, while over one-quarter either did not know (15%) or did not provide a response (11%). Only 2% have a negative impression of MPGA.

- While the positive results are encouraging, one-quarter of those surveyed (who may or may not be current members) either do not feel they know enough about MPGA to provide a rating (and in a few cases respondents indicated they did not know they were MPGA members until they received the survey), or would rather not provide their impression (which could mean they do not feel comfortable or knowledgeable enough to provide a response).

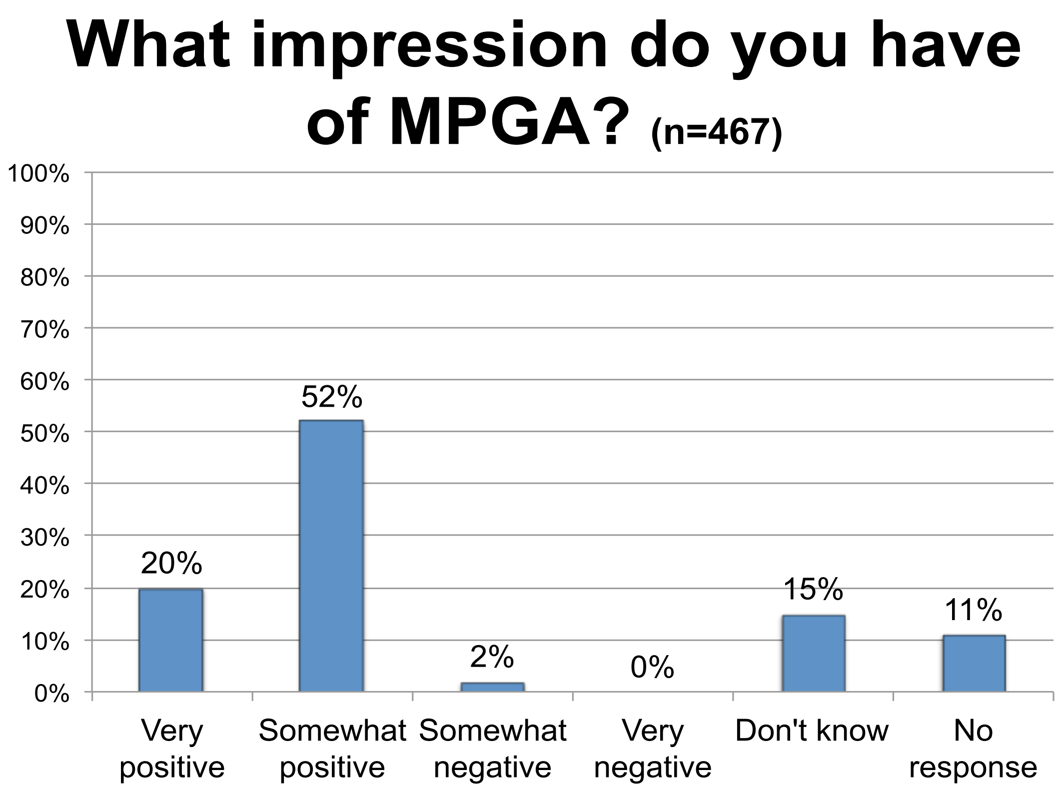

Figure 6

- Interestingly, edible bean growers were more likely than soybean and pea growers to have a ***very positive*** impression of MPGA and also more likely to provide a rating (that is, were less likely to respond with ***don't know*** or ***no response***).

4.2 Respondents moderately aware of MPGA's core activities

When asked to rate on a scale of 1 to 7, where 1 means they are completely UNAWARE and 7 means they are completely AWARE, respondents reported being moderately aware, with a mean (average) rating of 4.1 out of 7. This result is not surprising given the fact that 28% of respondents did not provide a response to this question (including 24% who selected ***no response***), and their responses to the previous question regarding their impression of MPGA. See Figure 7 below.

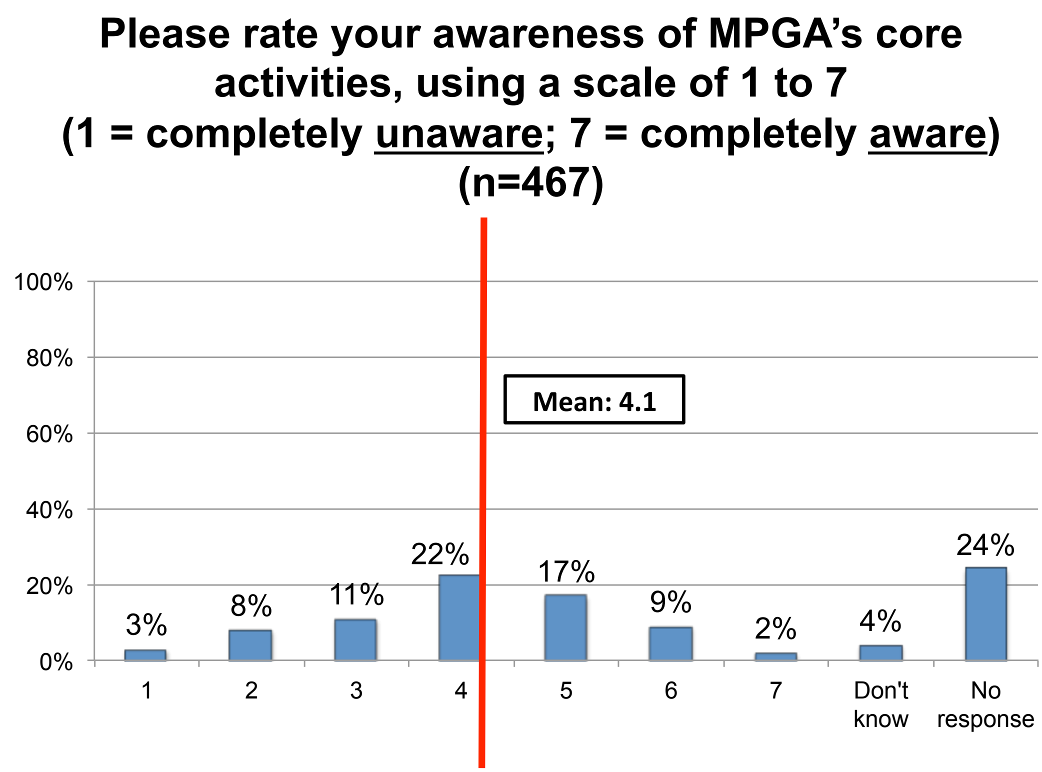

Figure 7

When examining the mean ratings of MPGA's core activities by various subgroups (years of farming and pulse crops grown):

- It appears that generally as years of farming / experience increase, so does awareness of MPGA's core activities; however, it is important to note that only 8% of respondents to the survey have been farming for under 10 years.
- Edible bean growers also tended to report being slightly more aware of MPGA's core activities compared to pea and soybean growers.
- Neither result is statistically significant.

Please see Table 9 below.

Table 9: Awareness of MPGA's core activities by years farming and pulse crops farmed
Q10: Please rate your awareness of MPGA's core activities, using a scale of 1 to 7, where 1 means you are COMPLETELY UNAWARE and 7 means you are COMPLETELY AWARE.

	Mean (average) of awareness of MPGA's core activities
Among all respondents	**4.1**
Years farming	
Under 5 years	3.2
5 – 9 years	3.6
10 – 15 years	3.9
16 – 20 years	4.0
21 – 25 years	4.0
26 – 30 years	3.9
Over 30 years	4.3
Pulse crops grown	
Soybeans	4.1
Edible beans	4.4
Peas	4.0

Note: The sample sizes for each of these mean ratings range depending on the proportion of growers who provided responses (i.e., years of farming is among all respondents, while soybean grower, edible bean grower and pea grower means are among those respondents who grow these pulse crops).

4.3 *Variety research* and *crop production knowledge* higher priorities for respondents

When asked to rate MPGA's six core priorities, respondents were most likely to rate ***variety research*** and ***crop production knowledge*** as being higher priorities compared to ***market access, government relations, linkages with strategic industry partners*** and ***member communication***. Respondents rated all six-core priorities at least a 4.7 out of 7, suggesting that most respondents feel MPGA is focusing on the most appropriate activities and priorities.[5] Please see Figure 8 below.

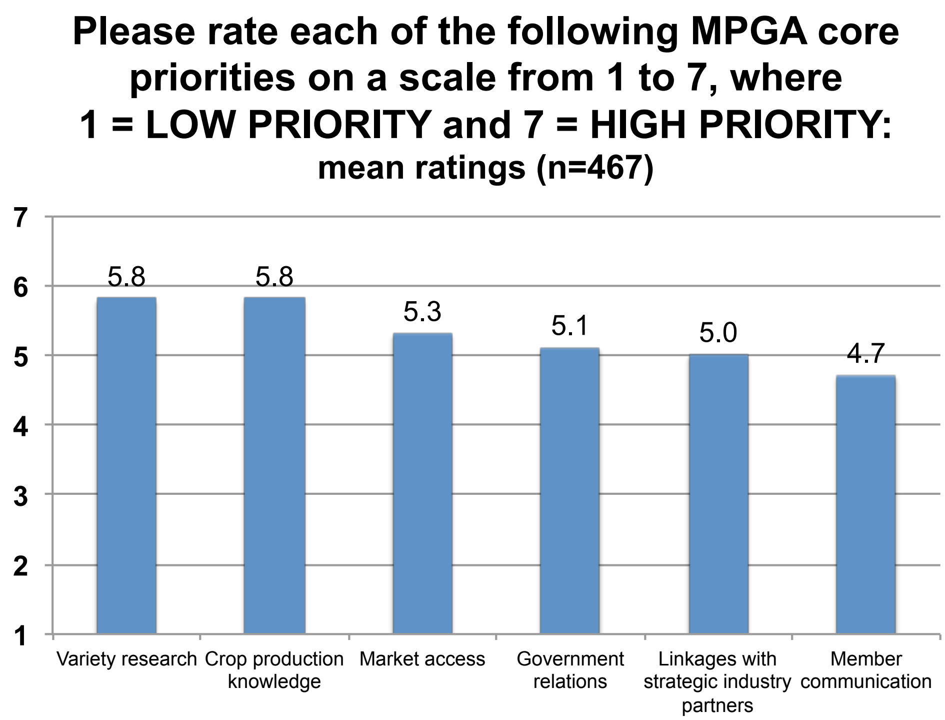

Figure 8

5 Some 7 – 10% of respondents did not provide a rating for these priority areas.

Please see Table 10 for an extensive list of comments respondents made when asked what other core activities they thought MPGA should focus on to provide better service to its members.

- As the table shows, there was some commonality in responses, and where possible these comments have been placed into coded categories, which include:
    - Increased / better communication with members
    - Market development / marketing / market demand information
    - Crop production knowledge / research trials
    - Vigilance for early detection of emerging diseases and insect problems
    - Suggestion to end linkage with the Grain Growers of Canada and the Keystone Agricultural Producers

Table 10: Other core activities MPGA should focus on ***Q12: What, if any, other core activities should MPGA focus on to provide better service to its members?***
Coded categories
Increased / better communication with members (regular email updates / get info out sooner); look to Canadian Canola Growers Association (CCGA) website for weekly updates (8 comments
Market development / marketing / more market demand information / market access / new / maintain high profile / provide marketing tools / developing half or full day course for farmers on marketing (8 comments)
Crop production knowledge / research / trials (5 comments)
Vigilance for early detections of emerging disease (2 comments) and insect problems
Don't want linkage with Grain Growers (2 comments) or Keystone Agricultural Producers
Other comments
Access to seed multiplied and bred in other programs, i.e., US breeding, also focus on not duplicating research
Agronomic research
Better soybean heat unit ratings
Cash advances
Creating more opportunity for processing and value added products from MB production
Early conventional soybean
Early planting info; cold soil; wet soil; minimum daily temperature needed
Encourage buyers to have more winter meetings
Equipment
Fertility
Inoculants
Seed treatments
Information on growing season
Fund practices to improve yields
Health control diseases in peas
Looking into more value added processing locally
Make sure we have time to farm, instead of filling out government forms

Soy coverage!
More unbiased market info (stocks)
Nutrient uptake and management
Office staff should be more pleasant and helpful
Open producer meetings
Reports on radio (rural radio stations) - once per month?
Represent farmers not industry. The loss of the patent and transition to RR2 soybean was handled very poorly.
Research – general
Research on row spacing and other production choices/options/challenges for soybeans
Rotational benefits of soybeans
Sharing growing experiences with first time growers. We learned almost everything about soybeans from people with experience.
Show members where the money is going. Money is taken from our cheque without representations.
Tell us if there are any new processing plants that can be farm-owned (cost, etc.).
Test plots for soybean varieties
Website for pulse growers to access to find out the best price from the most financially sound companies
With extreme wet for 3 continuous years, disease has become a major issue. Also the Growing Forward II program, which isn't going to be there to help us in disastrous years.
Variety research (i.e., non-GMO varieties, improved soybean varieties), variety trials, unbiased variety comparisons

4.4 *Variety development* high priority research area for half of respondents

When asked to rate five research priority areas, ***variety development*** was rated as a high priority (7 out of 7) by half (51%) of respondents, with a rating of 6.2 out of 7. Consistently, respondents have mentioned ***suitable varieties*** and ***variety research*** as being key issues for them, so this result is not surprising.

- ***Agronomy and sustainable production*** and ***disease and insects*** were also rated as fairly high priority research areas, both at a 6 out of 7. Some 88% of respondents rated each ***variety development, agronomy and sustainable production,*** and ***disease and insects*** as a priority (rating of 5, 6 or 7 out of 7), although while half rated ***variety development*** a 7, half rated a***gronomy and sustainable production*** and ***disease and insects*** a 5 or 6 out of 7 (which accounts for ***variety development*** receiving a slightly higher mean rating of 6.2 in comparison).

- In fact, respondents rated all five areas as fairly high priorities, with the mean ratings ranging from a low of 5.3 to a high of 6.2 out of 7.

Please see Figure 9 and Table 11 below.

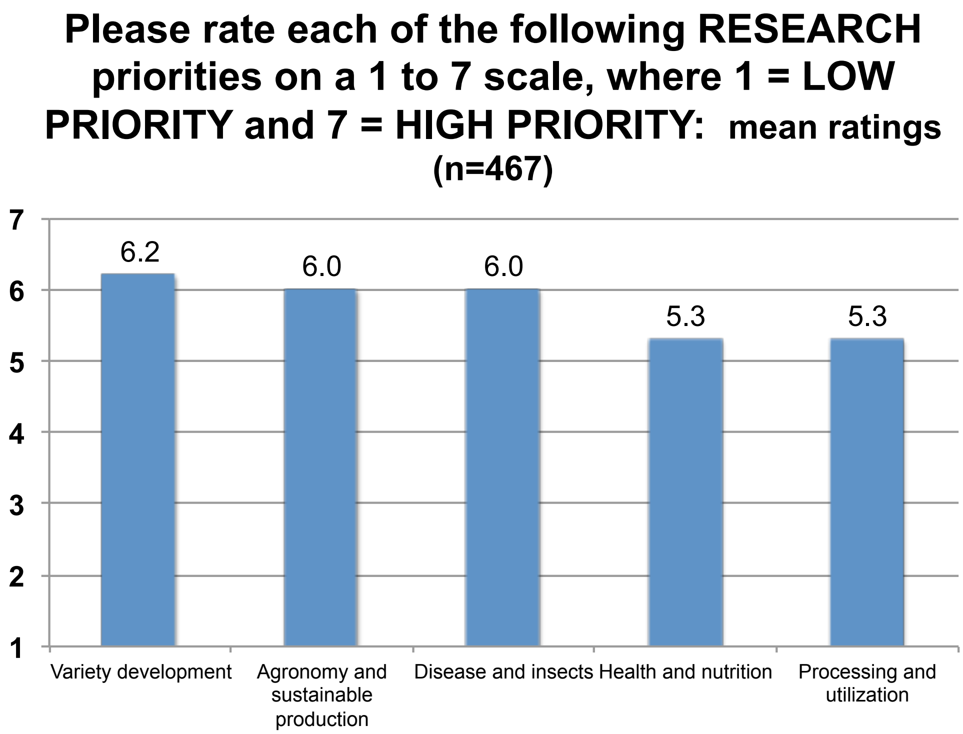

Figure 9

Table 11: Respondents' research priorities *Q13: Please rate each of the following RESEARCH priorities using the following 1 to 7 scale.*							
	% (n=467)						
	High priority (7)	**Priority (6, 5)**	**Neutral (4)**	**Low priority (3, 2, 1)**	**Don't know**	**Total**	**Mean (average)**
Variety development	51%	37%	5%	3%	4%	100%	6.2
Agronomy and sustainable production	37%	51%	5%	3%	5%	101%	6.0
Disease and insects	39%	49%	6%	2%	4%	100%	6.0
Health and nutrition	21%	50%	14%	10%	5%	100%	5.3
Processing and utilization	17%	55%	12%	9%	6%	99%	5.3
Note: Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding.							

Table 12 provides respondents' detailed comments on which areas MPGA should focus it's research efforts. ***Variety development / research*** comments were most often mentioned, followed by ***disease and insect control***, and ***agronomy and sustainable production*** related comments.

Table 12: Research priorities ***Q14: Thinking of the next 3 years, in which areas should MPGA focus its research efforts?***
Coded categories
Variety development / research (comparison, higher yields, for further processing in Manitoba, population comparison, fertility (in response to certain soil types), for northern regions of province specifically, get bottom pods off the ground, shorter season varieties of soybeans, for low heat unit areas, higher yielding varieties or faster yielding varieties, winter pea varieties, for Red River Valley are of province specifically, how to grow certain varieties, more varieties, most suitable varieties for certain areas, for edible beans specifically, resistant to disease and insects, new non-GMO varieties) (71 comments)
Disease and insect control (research, resistance, disease resistant varieties) (36 comments)
Agronomy and sustainable production (for future operations, crop rotation diseases when grow canola, soy, cereal rotation) (24 comments)
Soybean specific research (disease control, maturity, salinity tolerance, shorter season varieties, increased understanding of variability of yields, in Hinterlands, better yielding, better varieties for southern Manitoba, fertility requirements, varieties in general, quality, increased uses) (15 comments)
Market access / marketing / market development (market research, marketability, market expansion (local and globally), closer markets) (15 comments)
Yield improvement / higher yields (for northern Manitoba, Parkland regions specifically) (9 comments)
Health and nutrition (health benefits of pulses) (8 comments)
Seeding related issues (seed treatments fungicides, microbial or fertilization additive the high yield guys use in the US, rates, genetics, varieties, health, sustainability, cost efficient, affordable seed costs) (7 comments)
Government relations / relations with other countries (lobby chemical companies for more selection in products to control roundup resistant weeds as well as crops that become weeds in subsequent years, lobby MASC to increase soybean coverage) (6 comments)
Processing and utilization (consumer awareness of health and nutrition benefits of MB pulses) (6 comments)
Weed control (in peas specifically) (4 comments)
Production knowledge (practices, problems like row spacing) (4 comments)
Early maturity (3 comments)
Rotation research (2 comments)
Specific areas of the province (Red River Valley, Langruth, Dauphin, south central Manitoba (2 comments)
Other comments
See Appendix A.

4.5 Market development priorities

As shown below in Figure 10, all four market development priorities tested with respondents were rated as being priorities, ranging from a low a 5.5 to a high of 6.1 out of 7. Clearly MPGA is on the right track in terms of its market development focus.

- Respondents provided a rating of at least 6 out of 7 for ***increase value-added processing in Manitoba*** and ***develop and support domestic and local markets***, with half providing a 7 out of 7 rating for the former.

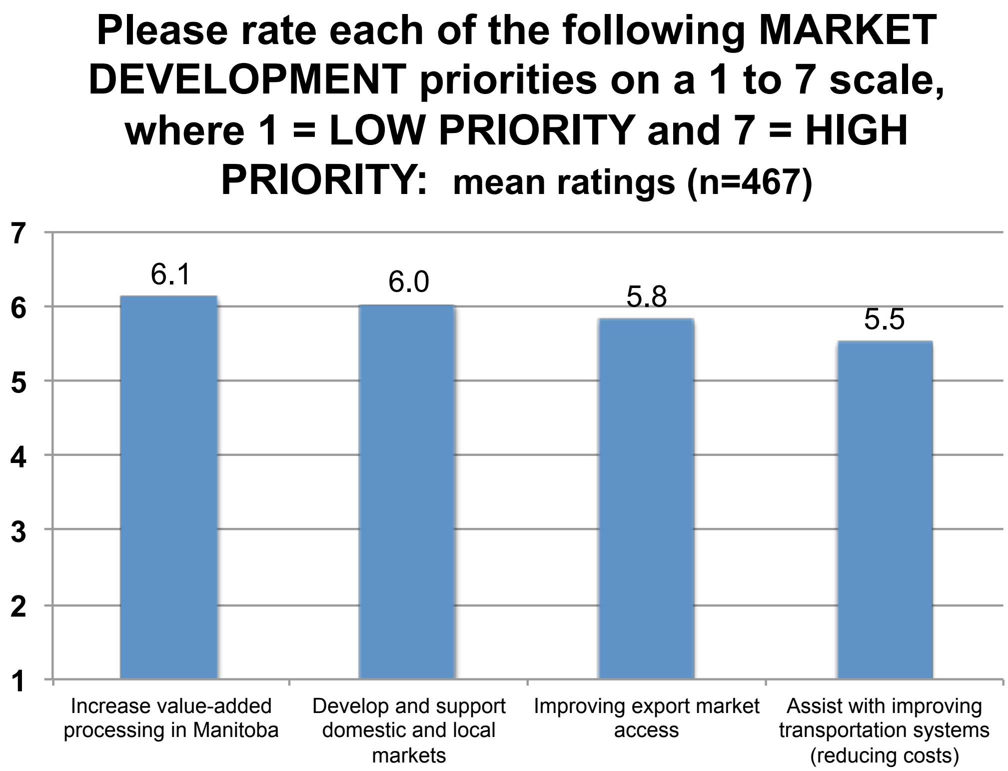

Figure 10

4.6 Importance of various linkages with strategic industry partners

As explained to respondents, MPGA is a paid member of several national and provincial agricultural-related organizations, which are considered linkages with strategic industry partners. We asked respondents to rate the importance of maintaining linkages with these strategic partners.

- Not surprisingly as these organizations are focused on pulse crops, respondents felt linkages with ***Pulse Canada*** and ***Canadian Soybean Council*** are fairly important, rating each 5.9 and 5.8 out of 7, respectively.

- Maintaining a strategic partnership with both the ***Keystone Agricultural Producers*** (5.3) and ***Grain Growers of Canada*** (4.9) were considered less important, and in fact a few respondents suggested when asked what other core activities they thought MPGA should focus on that linkages with these two organizations was not that important.

Please see Figure 11 below.

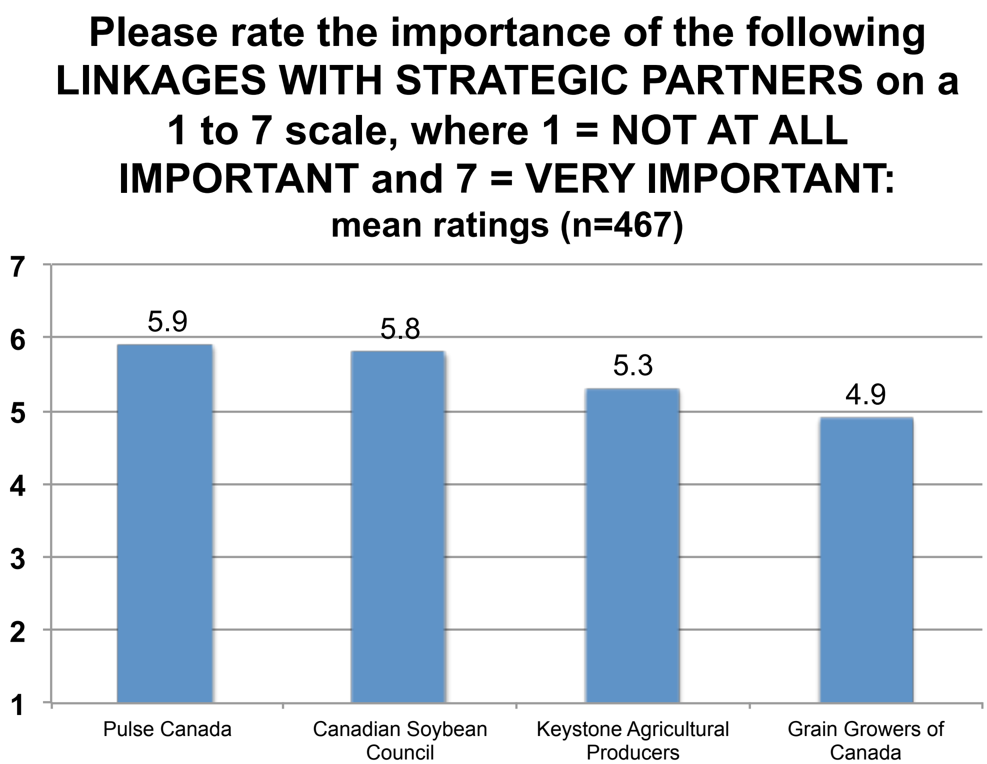

Figure 11

5.0 Communication with MPGA members and perceived membership value

In this section we detail respondents' views about their perceived membership value they receive from MPGA, the value and importance of the existence of the organization, the appropriateness of the 0.5% check-off levied against sales of pulse crops level, and suggestions for how to improve overall membership value.

5.1 Two-thirds of respondents feel 0.5% check-off levied against sales of pulse crops level is *appropriate*

Some two-thirds (67%) of respondents feel that the 0.5% check-off levied against sales of pulse crops in Manitoba level, in which growers who contribute become members of MPGA, is ***appropriate***. Just over 1 in 10 (13%) feel the level is ***too high***. Nearly 1 in 5 either said they reported they did not know (12%) or did not respond / preferred not to respond (7%). Please see Figure 12 below.

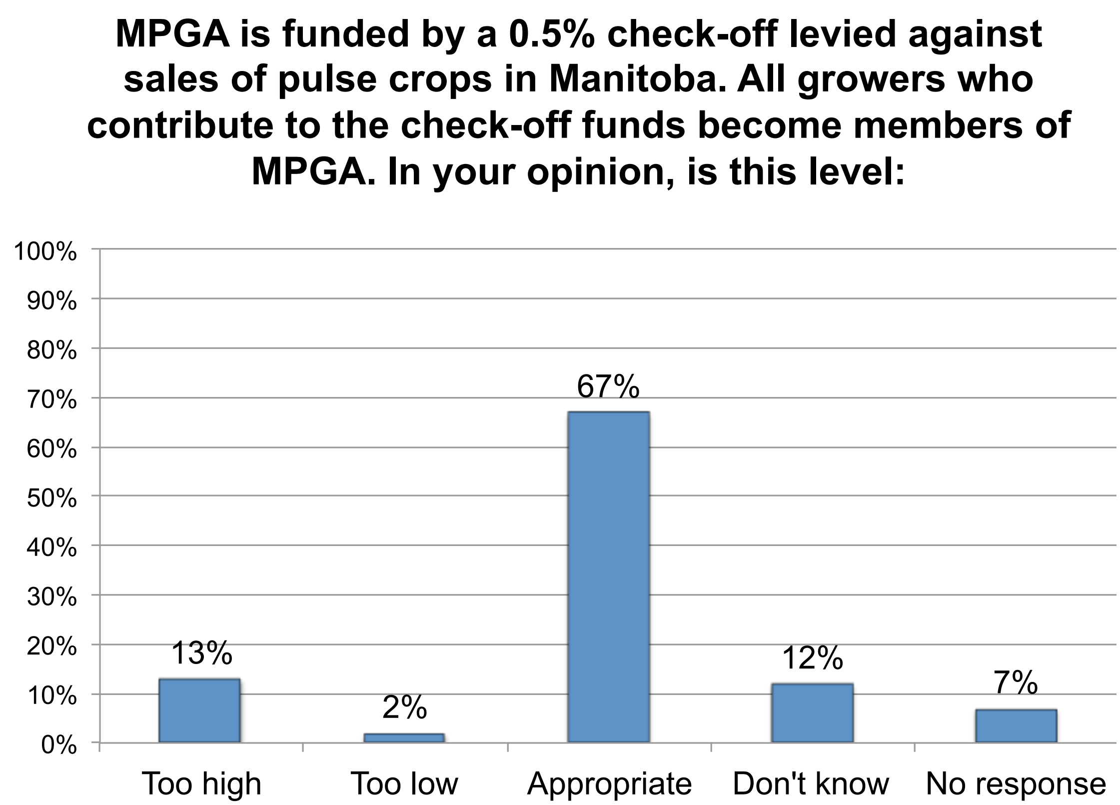

Figure 12

Those sub-groups who were more likely to report the 0.5% level as ***appropriate*** include:

- Pea growers (79%) compared to edible bean (62%) or soybean (66%) growers
- Respondents who rated the fact an organization like MPGA exists as being important / very important (rating of 6 or 7 out of 7)
- Respondents who reported either a ***very*** or ***somewhat*** positive impression of MPGA
- Respondents who farm 3,001 – 5,000 acres
- Respondents who feel they have greater awareness of MPGA's core activities (rating of 5 – 7 out of 7 in terms of being COMPLETLEY AWARE of MPGA's core activities)

Please see Table 13 below, which compares the results among all respondents (n=467) and those who consider the 0.5% check-off levy ***too high*** (n=59) based on a number of different factors tested in the survey. As the latter group sample size is only one-eighth of the total sample size, the results should be observed with extreme caution.

Table 13: Differences in opinion among ALL RESPONDENTS vs. those who CONSIDER CHECK-OFF LEVEL TOO HIGH
Respondents who consider check-off levy of 0.5% TOO HIGH

	All respondents % (n=467)	Consider check-off level TOO HIGH % (n=59)
Soybean growers	84%	96%
Positive impression of MPGA	72%	58%
Average ratings (based on 1 to 7 scale, 1 = least positive category, 7 = most positive category)		
Importance MPGA is member of Keystone Agricultural Producers	5.3	4.3
Importance MPGA is member of Grain Growers of Canada	4.9	4.1
Feel engaged with MPGA	3.7	2.9
Value receive from MPGA	4.9	4.0
Importance organization like MPGA exists	5.7	4.4
Regular readership of *Pulse Beat*	5.3	4.7
MPGA membership is beneficial	4.6	3.4
Awareness of MPGA membership benefits	4.0	3.4

Note: Please compare the two columns of results (all respondents and those who consider the check-off levy too high) with extreme caution as the sample size among those who consider the 0.5% check-off levy TOO HIGH is very small (n=59) and not representative of this population.

5.1.1 Unawareness of what MPGA does / membership benefit or value / what MPGA does with money most common reason

We followed up with an open-ended question asking all respondents, no matter how they responded to whether they felt the 0.5% check-off levied against sales of pulse crops in Manitoba is ***too high, too low***, or ***appropriate***, to tell us why they think this is the case. Among respondents who feel the 0.5% check off level is ***too high***:

- Most commonly respondents felt they had a lack of information of what MPGA does, membership benefit or value, and what the organization does with the check-off funds. A few suggested that MPGA should re-evaluate it's management model and look at how it is spending money so to decrease the current 0.5% level.

- Other suggested the fees be capped or decrease the percentage, or just generally thought the level was too expensive (considering increasing costs, commodity prices, etc.).

- A few others thought they had no choice but to be a member of MPGA and would like it to be voluntary (i.e., they are unaware membership is voluntary and they can request a refund of their fees).

Tables 14 details the comments by coded categories, while Table 15 includes several compelling direct quotes from respondents regarding why they think the level is ***too high***. Please see the next two pages.

Table 14: Reasons for feeling 0.5% check-off level is TOO HIGH: CODED RESPONSES *Q18: Why do you think this?*	
	Number* (n=59)
Unaware of what MPGA does / membership benefit or value / what does MPGA do with money (want more information) / don't feel get money worth or value for money / not seeing membership value / more accountability on how money is spent / spend too much on management / critical or MPGA structure	17
Suggest fees be capped at certain dollar amount / set fee as fees getting too expensive (due to commodity prices) / cap of $500 - $1000	9
Generally too expensive / personally spending thousands of dollars every year	8
Have not been given the choice to be part of MPGA / should be voluntary	4
Suggest dropping to 0.25% / lower % to encourage membership / more farmers to cover costs	4
Duplication with other organizations / focus on other matters (government relations or public policy issues)	3
Other	4
Note: This is a multiple response question where respondents could provide more than one answer. The total will sum to MORE than 100%. *Note: The numbers have been reported in this table rather than percentages because of the small sample size.	

Table 15: Reasons for feeling 0.5% check-off level is TOO HIGH: COMPELLING QUOTES *Q18: Why do you think this?*
Anyone growing 1000 acres of pulses would have member costs of 2500. I don't belong to any organization with membership [fees] that are high.
Association need to be an umbrella to work under; a lot of work done is just duplication; duplicates from many sources
I think it should have a choice whether to become a member or not before check-offs.
More hoopla than elbow grease.
MPGA should be focusing its efforts on matters related to government and public policy only. Private industry is more effective and efficient at variety research, crop production, etc. However, private industry is viewed as biased and therefore less effective when dealing with government.
Our check off is approximately $5,000 / year. My main concern is varieties and I could do the research myself for very little extra.
Over the years it has seemed that pulse directors do a lot of traveling, much more so than directors of other boards.
Should link in more with Grain Farmers of Ontario as they represent a large number of soybean growers; stronger voice together; without the increase in pulse acreage in MB, percentage funded to MPGA should decrease somewhat.
Tell us what you do with our money. Do we ever benefit?
There should be a cap per farm and not just an endless check-off. Large farms should not need to provide the bulk of MPGA funding.
I would like to see an article in the Pulse Beat explaining why MPGA needs our money or more money.

5.2 *Pulse Beat* well-read and most common method of accessing information about MPGA

By far the most common method of accessing information about MPGA is through reading ***Pulse Beat***, the organization's tri-annual publication (83%).

- This is followed by attending the ***Special Crops Symposium*** in February of every year (30%), MPGA ***website*** (16%) and ***attending the Pulse Tour*** (12%).

- Very few look to MPGA ***Facebook page*** or ***follow MPGA on Twitter*** (most likely many respondents are not aware of MPGA being on Facebook and Twitter, and as shown in section 5.2.1, most are not on Facebook or Twitter themselves). ***Attendance to MPGA AGM*** as a method of accessing information on the organization is also very low (4%). Please see Table 16 below.

Table 16: Methods of currently accessing information about MPGA
Q19: How are you currently getting or accessing information about MPGA? Check all that apply.

	% (n=467)
Read *Pulse Beat* (MPGA's tri-annual publication)	83%
Attend Special Crops Symposium	30%
MPGA website	16%
Attend Pulse Tour	12%
Attend MPGA AGM	4%
MPGA Facebook page	1%
Follow MPGA on Twitter	1%
Word of mouth (directors, other members, staff)	2%
Other	2%
I don't look for / access information about MPGA	12%

Note: This is a multiple response question where respondents could provide more than one answer. The total will sum to MORE than 100%.

5.2.1 Social media usage – growers are wired!

Most growers surveyed use one or more online or social media technologies regularly, that is a few times per week, with the ***Internet in general*** being the most common (used by 83% of respondents).

- Most respondents also use a ***mobile phone*** (59%) or ***Smartphone*** (41%). Please note that these responses are not mutually exclusive (that is, in most cases, respondents selected BOTH a mobile phone and Smartphone).

- ***Facebook*** and ***Twitter*** are not as commonly used by growers, but considering the number of respondents who are online to some degree and that many indicated they would like greater communication with MPGA, perhaps Facebook and Twitter are areas for growth. MPGA should continue its efforts online and find the best opportunities to drive growers to its website rather than leaving it to be a passive approach for communication.

Please see Table 17 below.

Table 17: Social media usage
Q29: Are you currently using any of the following types of technology or social media regularly (that is at least a few times per week)? Check all that apply.

	% (n=467)
Internet in general	83%
Mobile phone	59%
Smartphone	41%
Smartphone application	31%
Facebook	13%
Twitter	5%
Don’t use any of these technologies	6%

Note: This is a multiple response question where respondents could provide more than one answer. The total will sum to MORE than 100%.

5.3 6 in 10 think MPGA is communicating with its members *just enough*

Some 6 respondents in 10 (62%) believe MPGA is communicating with its members ***just enough***, while over one-quarter either said they did not know (20%) or did not provide a response (7%). Perhaps this latter group who did not provide a response or do not know either are not current members or may not be currently receiving *Pulse Beat* or other MPGA regular communications.

- While most respondents have said the amount of communications is ***just enough***, MPGA should consider these results an opportunity to further engage its membership by communicating more regularly and on issues that matter most to members, especially considering the lack of knowledge around issues of membership value and benefits. Further, no respondents indicated MPGA communicates with them ***too much***, and in fact 1 in 10 (11%) would prefer more communications as they feel the organization communicates with its members ***too little***. Please see Figure 13 below.

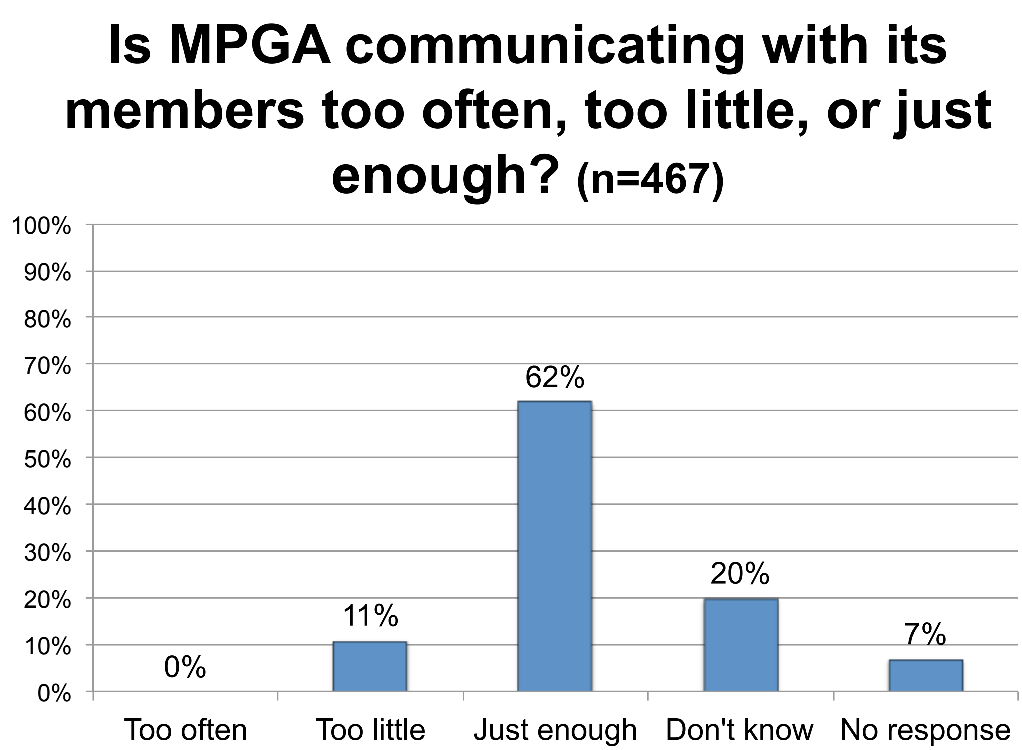

Figure 13

5.4 Overall impressions and communications with MPGA, value of summer tour

We asked respondents to rate their impressions and communications with MPGA on a 1 to 7 scale, on the following items: ***value they receive from MPGA, importance that an organization like MPGA exists,*** and ***value of MPGA's annual summer tour in late July / early August to its members.***

- As Figure 14 below shows, respondents are more likely to rate the ***IMPORTANCE*** that an organization like MPGA exists (5.7) higher compared to the ***VALUE*** they feel they receive from the organization (4.9) as well as the ***VALUE of the SUMMER TOUR*** (5.1); however, it is important to note that over one-quarter of respondents either did not provide an answer or said they did not know enough about the summer tour / have never participated, so felt they could not rate this item.

- While nearly 6 in 10 respondents (58%) rated the ***VALUE*** they receive from MPGA positively (rating of 5 – 7 out of 7), it appears there is a general lack of awareness of what MPGA does, where members' 0.5% check-off funds go towards, and the value they receive being a member of the organization. As mentioned throughout the open-ended comments, there is a desire for more information from MPGA and more regular communications (despite the result in section 5.3).

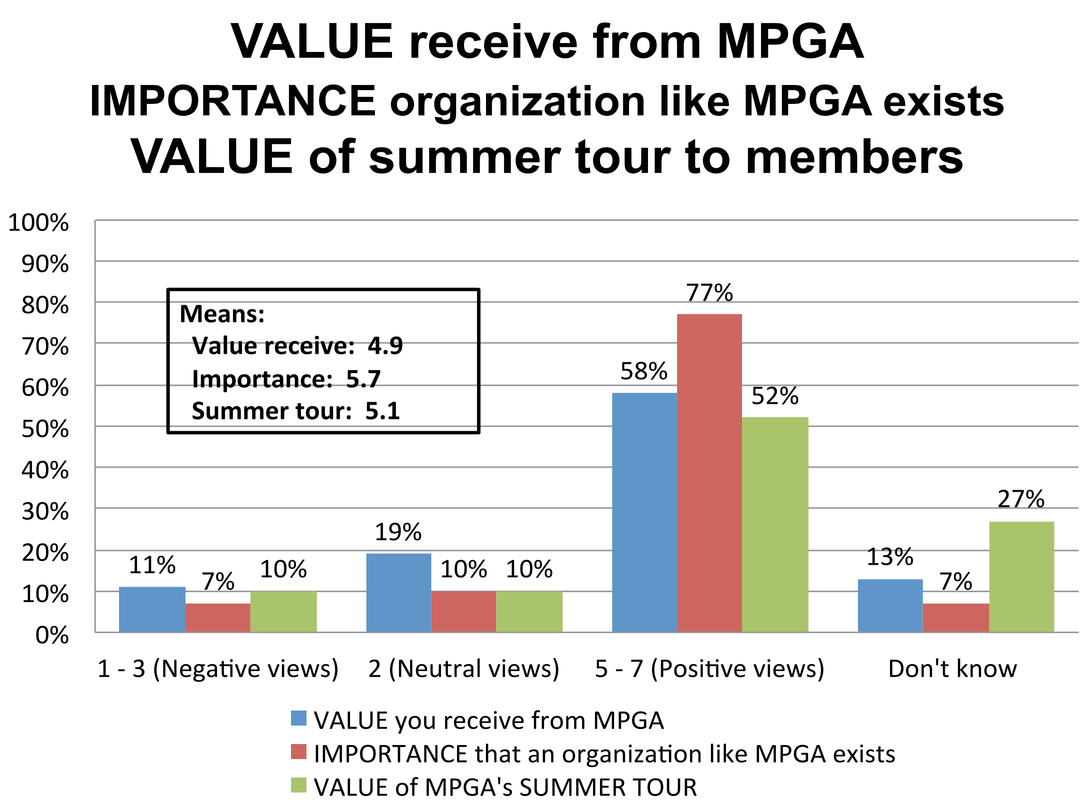

Figure 14

5.5 Moderate level of engagement and awareness of membership benefits; low visitation to MPGA website

Near the end of the survey, we asked respondents to rate their level of agreement with nine statements about MPGA on a 1 to 7 scale. Please see Figure 15 and 16 (next page).

- While there has been some discussion in this report about increasing communications, it is on this fact that MPGA scored the highest ratings among the nine statements, with most respondents saying they r***egularly read Pulse Beat, MPGA's tri-annual publication*** (5.3) and ***I receive sufficient communications from MPGA*** (4.8). It appears that *Pulse Beat* is a well-read and highly regarded go-to publication for members.

- Slightly fewer, but still most respondents, rated MPGA positively in terms of ***MPGA membership benefits me*** (4.6) and ***I am aware of the types of variety research MPGA conducts*** (4.3).

- For the remaining statements, most respondents felt neutral or negative in opinion.

    - Most respondents had a neutral opinion of the statement: ***I am very aware of the benefits that come with my MPGA membership*** (4.0).

    - ***Engagement with MPGA*** is low among respondents, in which respondents rated this statement a 3.7 out of 7.

    - Few respondents ***regularly visit MPGA website for information on pulse crops*** with a rating of 2.5 out of 7.

    - Few respondents think MPGA ***is outdated and doesn't change with the times*** (2.8 out of 7) and that ***before responding to the survey, I DID NOT realize I was an MPGA member*** (2.4 out of 7).

- These results show there is an opportunity for improvement in terms of better and more regular communications (and thus engaging) with members about MPGA and its membership benefits.

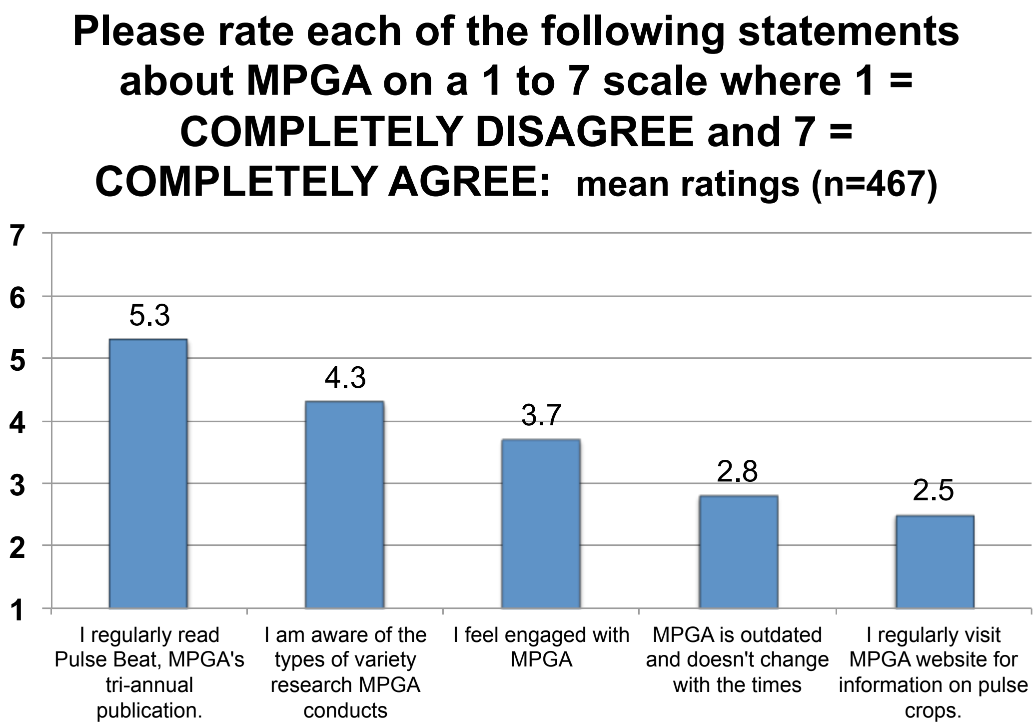

Figure 15

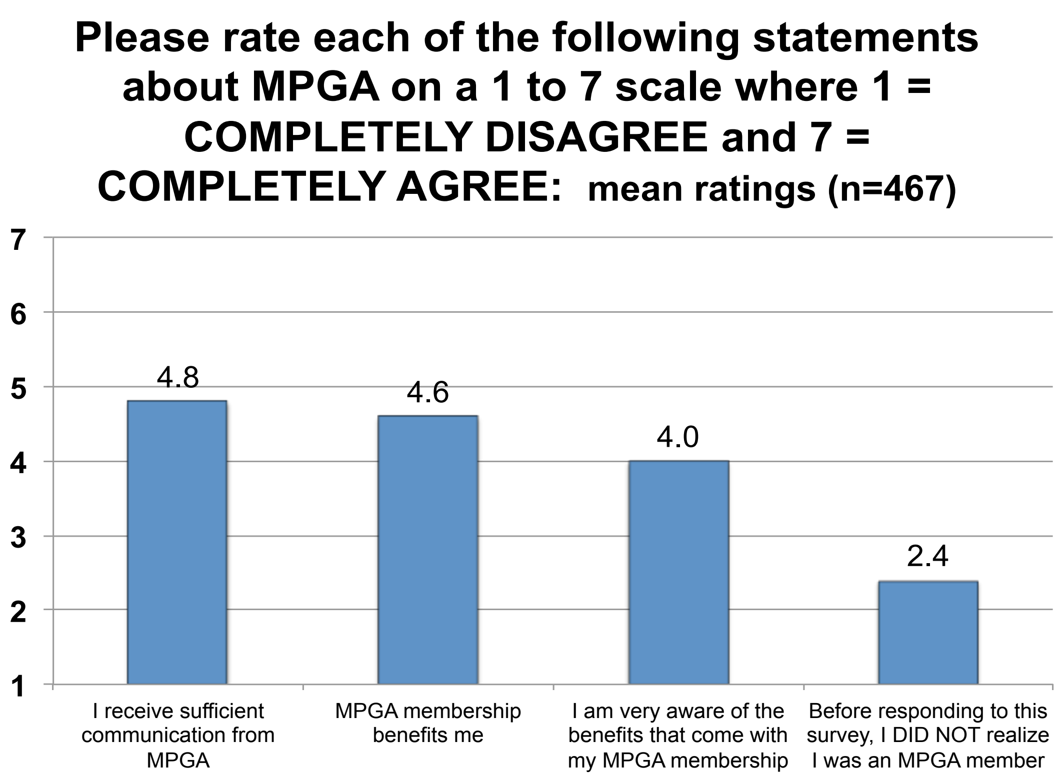

Figure 16

Please see Appendix A for a list of all the comments respondents provided in terms of suggestions to improve MPGA's membership value to growers.

6.0 Conclusions and recommendations

The key issues emerging from this research conducted with MPGA members include:

- general lack of awareness about MPGA
- need for improved communications and engagement
- show more evidence of membership value and benefits

General lack of awareness:

- While some respondents feel they have a good or basic level of understanding of what MPGA does, others do not and would like more information especially as some are misinformed about the organizations' responsibilities and how the organization spends its money.

- Not surprisingly, the main issue for those unaware of MPGA's responsibilities is where their 0.5% check-off funds are going towards and wanting evidence that the money is being spent appropriately and responsibly. Unawareness often leads to inaccurate assumptions; so it is important MPGA correct these misperceptions to prove membership value and relevancy.

Need for improved communications and engagement:

- As just over 6 in 10 feel MPGA is communicating *just enough* and respondents rated *receiving sufficient communications from MPGA* a 4.8 out of 7, the lack of awareness of membership benefits and moderate feelings of engagement with MPGA would suggest increased and more strategic communications initiatives may be necessary.

- Most respondents are online but few are visiting MPGA website – this is a significant gap!

    - Do members even know there is a MPGA website? Facebook page? Is on Twitter?

    - If MPGA intends to increase member traffic to its website, then the association must have something to say that makes it relevant, informative, and innovative, and information is regularly updated and maintained. Other survey research data has shown there is nothing more frustrating than accessing out-of-date information on an industry association website. By driving more traffic to MPGA website, it will become a more reliable, commonly accessed source of information on pulse varieties and groundbreaking pulse crops-related research (i.e., variety research, disease and insects, etc.) if kept up-to-date and includes sufficient information.

- Communicating on issues that matter most to growers will likely engage the membership.

Prove membership value and benefits:

- As some respondents are unaware they are either members of the association or what the association is responsible for / what operations it manages, we cannot expect them to believe they are getting high membership value from MPGA or feel engaged.

- Clearly respondents believe it is important that an organization like MPGA exists (rating of 5.7 out of 7), but their perception of the value they receive from the organization is slightly lower (rating of 4.9 out of 7).

Recommendations:

- As *Pulse Beat* readership is high among members surveyed, perhaps it is the best vehicle at this time to communicate with members about MPGA's mandate, who the staff and Board of Directors are, how the staff and board manage, and their day-to-day responsibilities, and how MPGA uses the check-off funds / where the money goes. A pie chart is often a very effective and simplistic presentation tool to showcase information on how budgets are spent in communication pieces and websites. Members also want to know about new initiatives, research being conducted and funded by MPGA, and how the association is handling member-related issues raised in this survey. Members want to know!

- MPGA may want to evaluate it's current communications strategy and in particular it's online strategy – what are its main communication tools and how frequently is the association communicating through these tools? Is the information reaching the appropriate audience and what messages are most likely to resonate?

    - Drive more traffic to MPGA website, and create opportunities and reasons for members to continually visit the website by being the authority on pulse crops information. Make certain the website is visually appealing and user-friendly, and provides relevant and appropriate variety development / research, disease and insects control, and agronomy and sustainable production information. The website's main focus and audience should always be the membership.

- MPGA may want to conduct an internal assessment of its membership benefits and how it describes these benefits to members so it can evaluate how to more effectively communicate why MPGA membership is a **MUST**. This review is a good rule-of-thumb for member-based, industry associations at various points in their life cycles to understand if members' needs are being met and whether it is remaining relevant and progressive.

Appendix A: Additional tables

Table 18: Research priorities ***Q14: Thinking of the next 3 years, in which areas should MPGA focus its research efforts?***
Other comments
Actual field trials of varieties and products being offered to producers. Lots of snake oil out there. Developing processing with markets in Manitoba would be beneficial as well
Better herbicides for peas. Or Round-Up Ready peas.
Better information on "does fertilizer pay" for soybeans.
Bio diesel
Chemical choices
Consumption in Canada and USA
Cost reduction
Crop production knowledge
Develop new companion crops or fall cover crops agronomy to halt salination of farmland, especially following monoculture dry beans and peas
Development
More stable pea markets
Edible beans; varieties; chemicals
Fertilizer
Fertility and physiology of soybean plants
Focus on developing a research network tool around the globe as to not duplicate research that has already been done.
Processing
Higher yielding edibles; navies or pintos with a better weed control package; lower cast Edge Granular
I need a plant that will mature before freezing and that crop needs to make me profit.
Trials on improving seeding technology
Inoculant effectiveness and options especially after beans have been in rotation; fertility issues
Lowering input costs to put more money in producers' pockets.
Seed set height; early maturity; not much in way of results
Pod height, sustainable markets
Specialty oil varieties and markets
Pushing yield envelope
Real trials in our areas. Not research plots thousands of miles away.
Researching new pulse crops and marketability of those crops worldwide (black eyed peas, mung beans, etc.)
Row spacing; fertility / fertilizer usage; manure; nodulation; pod height
Saturated soils
Weekly or monthly email in the summer; weed pest updates.
Sustainable production
Utilization

Table 18: Suggestions for improving overall membership value to growers Q25: How could MPGA improve its overall membership value to growers like you? Why?
A magazine works best for me. I can read it at my leisure.
A yearly brochure outlining MPGA services / projects.
As a past grower of edible beans, MPGA was and is important. Re: soybeans, most production info is available from many other sources. Check-offs could be removed for soybeans, but continued for other pulses.
As far as the field tours, would MPGA entertain having morning workshops in different areas of the province. E.g., Look at soybeans in RR valley and then couple days later have morning in Brandon and then Dauphin. Could do the same focusing on peas or beans. Just an hour with an agronomist on identifying issues in that particular crop. I would suggest having cooperating farmers for MPGA to work with farmers. MPGA could ask a few retail outlets to see if they would be interested in working with MPGA
Awareness of what MPGA is doing. Keep producers informed.
Better communication on where funds are being spent.
Bring more attention to your website. Keep it current and user friendly.
Bring out income and expense sheet so members know where money is going.
Broader representation through out province. More involvement with groups like KAP
By targeting research and development in edible beans in the Red River Valley so that I can grow better, higher yielding beans in South Central Manitoba.
Cold calls by telephone or email.
Communicate with breeder and chemical research on what is needed to grow more profitable crops.
Communicate more often by email because it is accessible from anywhere anytime.
Continue to keep a young, active producer board focused on primary production needs first. Engage the younger generation of producers and glean their thoughts not their parents about where the industry should go.
Continue to lobby for free trade on pesticides. Some are up to 75% cheaper in the US. We need more NAFTA labels.
Continue with research / pulse benefits to health / markets and any farmer with a "brain" will realize the benefit of the organization.
Continued investment
Continue to keep informed in R & D and communicate new advances in technology to the members (good job)
Cut the cost.
Do more for new members on the fringe; where soybeans have just started being grown
Don't forget where check-off money comes from.
Don't know
Don't know
Don't know.
Email to members current variety trials, prices, and market outlook so members are receiving current reports.
Explain more clearly to members the value provided. Reduce check-offs.
Fine now.
General producer apathy and that is my fault. Producers generally do not know what budget priorities are for some reason. They generally do not care.
Get research results into our hands
Get yield trials out sooner.
Good communication.

Good job.
Have a winter MPGA member grower panel meeting.
Have as much info as possible on website instead of mailed out. Summer tours and winter info meetings; more info out on AGM.
Have more meetings outside of Winnipeg.
Hold more meetings and symposiums in the winter
I am satisfied with the information I receive from MPGA. I couldn't handle more. This is an information age that sometimes is overwhelming.
I believe MPGA is doing a fine job to date!
I did not know I was a member and don't really know of my benefits.
I did not realize that MPGA info could be found on so many different avenues. I basically just read the Pulse Beat. In the next issue of Pulse Beat, clearly let us know of all the different avenues available to find info on MPGA.
I didn't know I was a member.
I do think that we should separate the different crops and research dollars allocated specific to each crop.
I don't agree with ANY mandatory check-offs.
I don't know what it does now, but variety comparisons would be the most useful.
I don't know.
I don't think it could do much more. Too many external factors limiting success.
I mostly use information from my retailer because every variety will not produce the same in different locations. We do test trials on the farm and see which varieties works best.
I think MPGA is quite dedicated to providing value to the membership therefore I have no suggestions. Just keep up the good work.
I would like to be given the option of being a member before you take your fees off my cheques.
I'm at the end of the farming cycle.
I'm happy with how things are going.
I'm not sure I need to pay more attention.
Inform me of the benefits I receive from being a member of MPGA.
Inform us more on what the research results are
It's doing just fine as it is.
It's fine.
Its called MPGA (Manitoba) not Red River Valley. We could use some early varieties.
Just be involved as much as possible in research and development. I will find my information other ways.
Keep our government informed of the real issues that face us as farmers. World markets and boarder issues, etc.
Keep the website up to date.
Keep up the good work.
Keep up the good work. We need an organization like MPGA to stay on top of things.
Keep working hard to improve overall profitability for farmers in many ways such as better varieties, agronomic skills, and developing markets, etc.
Look to the south and get up with early variety soybeans so we can compete better in short season areas.
Make all growers pay the 0.5%.
Make the cash advance simpler to apply for.
Make the tour earlier (quite often in harvest)
More communications so we are more aware of your goings-on. I am more of a pea producer and

there doesn't seem to be much going on with this crop.
More focus on yellow peas. Seems MPGA just focuses on soybeans.
More grassroots hometown in your face crop trials in western Manitoba.
More info on facts and figures.
More interested if it was voluntary.
More price transparency from grain companies. Email different spot price from grain companies,
MPGA association is very active in soybeans and edible beans. I cannot grow either. I grow yellow peas and have to turn to the SASK PGA to obtain varieties that are suitable for my area. They will not allow me to obtain select status CDC varieties. I am not happy about this and there is nothing that MPGA seems to be able to do about it!
MPGA could collaborate a bit more with CGC in terms of conducting valuable research in pulses; encourage MASC to increase soybean coverage money on crop insurance; report on international travels as to what you're hearing in terms of quality; pulse growers could easily be represented by Grain Farmers of Ontario in my opinion
MPGA summer tour too late in the summer
Need to test more world varieties for adaption.
No comment.
Not sure if any.
Not sure.
Ok.
Open more markets. Bring in better pesticides for production that the US currently uses.
Organic producer so I am not sure it would be a total fit
Past research should be continually republished to reinforce ongoing projects.
Plot experiments to raise our yield we depend too much on US and Ontario research. Plant plots with the yield enhancing advertisements in pulse or corn growers' magazine. Try them!
Radio.
Send an agronomist with bean experience to my farm to see how my beans are doing. Summer tour is probably too far to actually go to.
Send out market information - currently it just comes from buyers.
Set up more meetings where members can attend and have experts available there to answer questions and discuss pulse agronomy and varieties.
Show us you're taxing to lower input costs. Stay away from Grain Growers of Canada. All they do is support the railways and chemical companies, getting rid of the Grain _____ and the Canadian Wheat Board and we have direct farmer member linkage.
Some people don't go on website to get new info. Probably should, but don't. I like magazine because I look at my mail.
Stay focused on goals that can be reached; spend your time and resources where you will get the best return.
Take the load off the members so the farmer can do his job.
They could give me more feedback on what is in the future so we can make better decisions.
Timing of tour usually conflicts with other summer activities.
To have smaller and more test plots because of variable soil types and environments
Tough question! Possibly more regional plots. Possibly more info on heat unit / daylight maturity on soybean varieties.
Transportation on _____ out of Manitoba.
Unfortunately I have very poor cell service and no high speed Internet service. Mail info is very important.
Very satisfied.

We need the results of the trials immediately after harvest. (Private companies are always ratcheting up their program timelines.)
Webmail so as to keep up to date
When a producer is signed up to MPGA, an initial information source detailing it's services and value to the producer could be supplied.
You are doing a good job.
You should compose an email database of producers so that you can email important and time sensitive information (such as meeting dates etc.) as needed.