

SUMMER FIELD UPDATE

The Plant Health Officers (PHOs) have been busy since snow melt assisting the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture conduct in-field pest and disease surveys. We are part of the province's Early Detection, Rapid Response (EDRR) network, and our role as such is to be an extension of the Ministry's staff capacity, filling in any blanks to ensure that the province is covered from corner to corner. We assist in monitoring existing pest and disease activity, and monitoring for crop pests and diseases that are present in neighbouring provinces/states but have not yet been found in Saskatchewan. The goal of these surveys are to protect Saskatchewan's agricultural industry and provide producers with current and accurate pest levels and forecasts so that they may make informed management decisions. These surveys usually involve protocols designed by research scientists who will use the data to create forecast maps, spray thresholds, and other important resources.

Here are the surveys we have been working on so far:

Richardson Ground Squirrel (strychnine), Diamondback moth, Bertha Armyworm, Aster leafhopper, Swede midge, Pea leaf weevil, and Chickpea disease.

Upcoming surveys:

Pea disease, Lentil disease, General Canola disease, Faba bean disease and Lygus bug, Soybean disease, Flax disease, Tall Waterhemp and Palmer Amaranth, and Clubroot.

LEAFY SPURGE BEETLE COLLECTION DAYS

The annual Leafy Spurge Beetle collection field days were held from July 6th to 9th at Besant Campground. The Plant Health Officers facilitated these collection days and were present to assist and advise anyone that wanted to collect beetles to control leafy spurge on their property. A range of people attend this event, including ranchers, watershed groups, acreage owners, First Nations staff, and RM staff. The purpose of this field event is to provide people with an inexpensive but effective means of controlling Leafy Spurge on their property, to be used in combination with other control methods. To learn more about biocontrol, stay tuned for Betty Johnson's article in the next issue of the Rural Councillor Magazine or contact your Division PHO.

BIOCONTROL RELEASES

This spring some of the PHOs took part in the first Saskatchewan releases of the hound's tongue weevil, *Mogulones crucifer* (pictured below) and the toadflax stem galling weevil, *Rhinusa pilosa*. We are excited to see how these agents work to reduce the populations of these invasive plants!



WEED SURVEY RESULTS

In April 2020, the PHOs sent out a weed survey by email to gather information from Weed Inspectors, Administrators, and FNB and RM Councils. The purpose of this survey was to gain better understanding of the weed issues that RMs and FNBs face every year, and to learn more about how we can assist.

Here is a quick look at some of the results:

- When asked what are the most common invasive weeds in their area, scentless chamomile was listed most often, with leafy spurge second
- Most common weed-related issue was limited budget for weed management in the RM
- 14% of respondents agreed that they need help identifying weeds in their RM
- More work is needed to increase understanding of Prohibited weeds in the province
- 24% of respondents provided suggestions for the Invasive Plant Control Program
- The survey had 112 respondents in total



Baby's breath, a noxious weed in SK.

The survey gathered some valuable feedback and opinions, including weeds of concern for RMs and FNBs, and helped to highlight some areas where the Plant Health Officers can provide additional support in the future. Being that this is the first time that this type of survey has been delivered, the PHOs were satisfied with the number of responses. Overall, the responses to the survey were positive and the feedback will help to provide the PHOs with opportunities to develop training and support for Weed Inspectors, RMs and FNBs. We thank you for your participation!

REMINDERS

CLUBROOT MONITORING PROGRAM

Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture, SaskCanola, Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation, and the SARM Plant Health Officers are collaborating for the 2020 Clubroot Monitoring Program to:

1. Clubroot survey in high risk areas
2. Clubroot monitoring through the general canola disease survey
3. Encourage on farm testing through the soil testing program
4. Raise awareness to increase external reporting of clubroot.

INVASIVE PLANT CONTROL PROGRAM DEADLINES

Weed Management Plans and Weed Inspector appointment notices were due on July 2nd. If you haven't had the opportunity to complete your WMP yet, call your PHO for assistance and be sure to send in to SARM as soon as it's prepared. Don't miss out on your opportunity for a rebate!

NEED HELP WITH YOUR NEWSLETTER?

The PHOs can provide information and write articles for your newsletter, on topics including clubroot, invasive plants, SARM rebate programs, and more.

KEEP IN MIND

PHOs are available by phone, email, text and video calls for meetings.

Please contact your Division PHO for more information, to answer any questions, or suggest content for future newsletters.

Div 1: Katey Makohoniuk, CCA AAT
306-594-7683
katey.makohoniuk@gmail.com

Div 2: Joanne Kwasnicki AAg
306-541-8437
joanne.kwasnicki@gmail.com

Div 3: Betty Johnson AAg
306-315-3925
bettyjohnson0025@gmail.com

Div 4: Lynne Roszell PAg
306-852-8328
lynneroszell@gmail.com

Div 5: Chelsea Neuberger AAg
306-380-4526
chelsea.baraniecki@gmail.com

Div 6: Colleen Fennig PAg
306-946-9895
colleen.fennig@gmail.com