

Road to 2050

Andre Harpe, Chair, Grain Growers of Canada

Saskatchewan Pulse Growers (SPG) advocates for pulse growers on key national issues at the federal government level through partnership with Grain Growers of Canada (GGC).

For the GGC, the end of March was a busy time. After two long years, national grain week marked the return of in-person advocacy by farmer directors with parliamentarians, staff, and senior government officials in the nation's capital.

Efforts included over 20 meetings with Members of Parliament (MPs) and Senators, a roundtable with five Assistant Deputy Ministers for Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC), dinner with Conservative leader Candice Bergen and the Conservative Party's critics for Agriculture, Trade, and Environment, lunch with Liberal Parliamentary Secretary for Agriculture Francis Drouin, and a meeting with Canada's Agriculture Minister Marie-Claude Bibeau.

The return of face-to-face meetings was exciting, but what really had everyone buzzing was GGC's announcement on March 28, 2022, regarding their intention to develop the [Road to 2050](#) for Canada's grain sector. This innovative step forward for Canada's grain sector will consist of a plan to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050 with a focus on innovation, research, and beneficial management practices. The Road to 2050 will demonstrate success by providing recommendations that guide government policies and programming directed at Canada's grain sector and ensure farmers are supported in their ongoing sustainability efforts.

GGC is committed to being a leader in this area and finding solutions that align Canada's climate goals with the unique needs and opportunities of the sector. The decision to develop the Road to 2050 represents a practical and proactive approach to working together with government to tackle climate change, while protecting the profitability of Canadian farmers.

"GGC advocates for grain growers across Canada," says Jason Hennes, SPG and GGC Board Member. "GGC works to influence federal policy and key decisions that impact the competitiveness and profitability of Canadian agriculture."

The announcement was well-timed with the federal government, as the following day they presented Canada's first Emissions Reduction Plan under the Canadian Net-Zero Emissions Accountability Act. Passed in 2021, this new law establishes a legally binding process to set five-year national emissions-reduction targets as well as develop credible, science-based emissions-reduction plans to achieve each target.

As we move ahead with this new world and emphasis on net-zero, for you, the farmer, the reasonable question is: what does all this mean for my operation?

For you, it means keep doing what you do best, at a time the world badly needs it – maximizing your productivity, enhancing your profitability, and feeding an increasingly food-insecure world. For GGC advocacy, it means an open door to engage directly with government to ensure that the programs and policies outlined in the government's Emissions Reduction Plan can help, not hinder Canadian farmers economic and environmental sustainability goals. It means that we are a willing partner and a trusted stakeholder that can better engage with the current government.

The federal government is moving forward with policies and programs that directly impact this sector, and it is vital that growers lead the conversation, ensuring the government knows what will, and what will not work, at the farm level.

As evident during grain week, the response to the *Road to 2050* announcement was extremely positive across Party lines. It showed the federal government that our sector is not only willing to play our part but wants to be a constructive solutions provider. Now, the real work starts.

Over the next several months, GGC will be engaging with industry partners, selecting an agricultural consultant to author the *Road to 2050* report and recommendations, establishing an expert advisory committee to engage with the consultant, and ensuring our members are involved in every step of the process. Our primary aim is to make sure farmer voices are leading the conversation.

We know that Canadian farms operate sustainably, embrace the newest technologies, and pride themselves on feeding the world. Now is the time to lead the conversation about what comes next with our federal government. As the stewards of the land, we know farmers are up for the challenge and GGC is ready to bring that message to our decision makers and policy makers.

We need to work together to achieve a prosperous and sustainable future for our sector. Thank you for your support.