

# Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership

Competitive. Innovative. Resilient.

## Plant Health Network Program

## Program Guidelines

2023-2024

Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities (SARM)



## PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAM

As part of the Pest Biosecurity Program, the purpose of the Plant Health Network is to establish human resources in each of SARM's Divisions to provide direct support, education, training to:

- Rural municipalities (RM) and their municipally appointed Pest Control Officers/Weed Inspectors, as well as First Nations south of the Northern Administrative District, on how best to manage the agricultural crop pests as per *The Pest Control Act* and prohibited and noxious weeds as per *The Weed Control Act*.

## BACKGROUND

RMs continue to voice concerns regarding emerging and existing agricultural crop pests they are required to manage under the provincial *The Pest Control Act* and *The Weed Control Act*. SARM contracted the services of a Plant Health Technical Advisor in each of the six SARM Divisions whose role is:

- Develop, promote and implement best practices within their division to proactively identify, monitor and assist in the control of invasive/emerging threats to crop biosecurity in agriculture;
- Developing more comprehensive and uniform control strategies across the province.
- Provide assistance to RMs, First Nations and other applicants to access to the Pest Biosecurity Program.

## PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION AND BUDGET

SARM will administer the Plant Health Network on behalf of the province. Funding for the program is provided by the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture and the Federal Government under the *Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership* (Sustainable CAP) agreements, \$840,000 for the year (April 1, 2023, to March 31, 2024).

## PROGRAM OUTLINE

The Plant Health Network works under the guidance of the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture to monitor, survey and report on agricultural crop pests and prohibited/noxious weed occurrences and cultivate a more consistent approach on how crop pests are managed across Saskatchewan. This network will take advantage of ongoing pest monitoring and forecasting efforts in the province to establish an Early Detection and Rapid Response (EDRR) system for crop pests. The EDRR approach prioritizes newly emerging pests over established pests to prevent establishment and spread. This EDRR is more effective and efficient use of finite economic and human resources.

The Plant Health Network provides through Plant Health Technical Advisors assist RMs, First Nations, producers and other applicants to access programs under the Pest Biosecurity Program, including:

- Rat Control Program;
- Beaver Control Program;
- Gopher Control Program; and
- Invasive Plant Control Program.

## Program Plant Health Technical Advisor

Each SARM Division has in place a full-time Plant Health Technical Advisor who will develop, promote and implement best practices within their division to proactively identify, monitor and assist in the control of invasive/emerging threats to plant biosecurity in agriculture with the goal of developing more comprehensive and uniform control strategies across the province.

Working closely with SARM and the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture, PHTAs are a front-line dedicated resource in place to educate, assist, support and advise elected, appointed and authorized officials, support staff and producers with ongoing and emerging crop issues. The scope of their work includes all pests declared under *The Pest Control Act*, as well as prohibited and noxious weeds designated under *The Weed Control Act* of Saskatchewan.

PHTAs are licensed Agrologists; they focus on educating RMs and First Nations on how best to undertake their powers and responsibilities in accordance with Saskatchewan legislation respecting pest control and weed control, provide education, training and support to RM appointed and First Nations authorized Pest Control Officers and Weed Inspectors, Rat Control Technical Advisors, and under the guidance of the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture survey and report on agricultural crop pests and prohibited and noxious weeds occurrences.

### **Assistance PHTAs may provide to an RM, First Nations and applicants:**

1. Duties Required under *The Pest Control Act* and *The Weed Control Act*
  - Assist RM-appointed and First Nations-authorized Pest Control Officer or Weed Inspector in drafting a plan to deal with an infestation (may include assisting to draft an order and/or a control plan).
  - Assist in drafting weed management plans or cooperative weed management area agreements.
  - Provide templates for communication letters and provide suggestions for key messages when communicating to the public about pest control.
  - Be available to meet with RM and First Nation Councils to outline duties and responsibilities required by legislation.
  - Assist the RMs and First Nations in finding licensed pesticide applicators with appropriate designations and beaver trappers for hire in the Division.
2. Provide Advice and Training to RM Appointed, First Nations Authorized Officer and applicants in the Division
  - Be available via phone and email to provide direction regarding the RM appointed and First Nation authorized Pest Control Officer and Weed Inspector's duties under their respective legislation.
  - Work with Rat Control Technical Advisors to ensure RM and First Nation Councils and appointed and authorized Pest Control Officers have the technical advice and support they need to effectively manage rat populations within their jurisdictions.
  - Facilitate training opportunities for RM appointed and First Nation authorized Pest Control Officers and Weed Inspectors regarding their duties under the respective legislation.

- Assist RM appointed and First Nations authorized Pest Control Officers and Weed Inspectors in person, if necessary, to deal with difficult landowners when serving orders to destroy, etc.
  - Support RMs, First Nations and producers with program access requirements/claims forms, etc. under the Pest Biosecurity Program.
3. Guiding Provincial Efforts on Clubroot
- As clubroot is not currently widespread in Saskatchewan, SARM encourages all RMs and First Nations to utilize the expertise of the PHTA for their region when dealing with incidences of clubroot.
  - PHTAs work closely with Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture officials assisting with the provincial clubroot monitoring program, including surveillance. As part of the team, PHTAs have become the clubroot experts in the field providing education and support for First Nations, RMs and their appointed and authorized officials, as well as producers and agronomists. PHTAs promote Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture message of a scientific-based, farmer-driven approach to clubroot management to prevent the introduction and minimize the spread of clubroot throughout the province.
  - If the RM or First Nation **has** an existing appointed or authorized Pest Control Officers with the abilities to manage clubroot, the PHTA will support them by providing technical advice and training where required by phone, email or in-person to deliver a farmer-driven approach to clubroot management. They can assist the appointed or authorized Pest Control Officers by helping them contact and inform landowners/producers of incidents of clubroot and working with the landowner/producer and appointed or authorized Pest Control Officers to develop a science-based clubroot management plan and agreement that meets all the requirements and best practices determined by the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture.
  - If the RM or First Nation **does not have** an appointed or authorized Pest Control Officers /Weed Inspectors, the PHTA will support finding a person who can be appointed as Pest Control Officers/Weed Inspectors for that RM. The appointed Pest Control Officers/Weed Inspectors will fulfill all the duties outlined under *The Pest Control Act* and *The Weed Control Act* for the RM. The service of the PHTA will be provided at no additional cost to the RM or First Nation.
4. Monitor Pest/Invasive Plants in the Division
- Under the guidance of the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture, the PHTAs will coordinate and participate in agricultural crop pest and invasive plant/weed surveys within the Division.
  - PHTAs have a good understanding of the overall state of agricultural crop pests and invasive plants in the division and can therefore better advise RMs or First Nations on their monitoring and control efforts.

## RESOURCES AVAILABLE

- **Plant Health Technical Advisors**

Plant Health Technical Advisor located in your SARM Division:

- Division 1: Tayo Adegeye, AAg, 306-580-8708, [PHNdivision1@sarm.ca](mailto:PHNdivision1@sarm.ca)

- Division 2: Joanne Kwasnicki, PAg, 306-541-8437, [PHNdivision2@sarm.ca](mailto:PHNdivision2@sarm.ca)
- Division 3: Betty Johnson, AAg 306-315-3925, [PHNdivision3@sarm.ca](mailto:PHNdivision3@sarm.ca)
- Division 4: Katey Makohoniuk, TechAg, 306-594-7683, [PHNdivision4@sarm.ca](mailto:PHNdivision4@sarm.ca)
- Division 5: Chelsea Neuberger, AAg, 306-380-4526, [PHNdivision5@sarm.ca](mailto:PHNdivision5@sarm.ca)
- Division 6: Colleen Fennig, PAg, 306-946-9895, [PHNdivision6@sarm.ca](mailto:PHNdivision6@sarm.ca)
  
- **Visit the [SARM website](#) to download:**
  - Program Guidelines
  
- **More information**
  - Visit the SARM website at [www.sarm.ca](http://www.sarm.ca) or contact Annette Ellert, Agriculture Program Administrator, at 306-761-3744 or email at [aellert@sarm.ca](mailto:aellert@sarm.ca).