



PLANT HEALTH NETWORK PROGRAM

Program Guidelines

2022 - 2023

Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities (SARM)



Purpose of the Program:

As part of the Pest Biosecurity Program, the purpose of the Plant Health Network (CAP-PHN) is to establish human resources in each of SARM's 6 Divisions to provide direct support, education, training to rural municipalities (RM), and their municipally appointed officers, as well as First Nations Bands (FNB) south of the Northern Administrative District, on how best to manage the agricultural crop pests and prohibited and noxious weeds that all landowners are required to manage under *The Pest Control Act* and *The Weed Control Act* in Saskatchewan.

Background:

RMs continue to voice concerns regarding emerging and existing agricultural crop pests they are required to manage under the *Saskatchewan Pest Control Act* and *Weed Control Act*. In the first CAP-PHN program year, SARM contracted the services of a Plant Health Officer (PHO) in each of the six SARM Divisions whose role was to 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 with the goal of developing more comprehensive and uniform control strategies across the Province.

With a proven history of human resource capacity complementing grant programs, SARM will administer the fifth year of the CAP-PHN. It will continue to expand the focus of the human resource support to RMs and FNBS by providing regional networks to effectively assist in the response to invasive/emerging threats to plant biosecurity in agriculture in Saskatchewan.

Program Administration and Budget:

SARM will administer the CAP-PHN on behalf of the Province. Funding for the program is provided by the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture (SMA) and the Federal Government under *Canadian Agricultural Partnership (CAP)* agreement, in the amount of \$715,000 for the year (April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023).

Eligibility:

All RMs and FNBS, south of the Northern Administration District, are eligible to utilize the human resources available through the CAP-PHN when dealing with issues regarding invasive plants, rats, nuisance beavers, clubroot and other pests as declared/designated under *The Pest Control Act* or *The Weed Control Act* of Saskatchewan.

Program Outline:

The CAP-PHN works under the guidance of the SMA to monitor, survey and report on agricultural crop pests and prohibited/noxious weed occurrences and cultivate a more consistent approach on how these 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 involves the prioritization of newly emerging pests over established pests for monitoring and early management to prevent establishment and spread. This has been documented to be a more effective and efficient use of finite economic and human resources.

The Pest Biosecurity Program consists of four distinct programs: Plant Health Network (CAP-PHN), Rat Control Program (CAP-RCP), Beaver Control Program (CAP-BCP) and Invasive Plant Control Program (CAP-IPCP). The CAP-PHN provides human resource support through Plant Health Officers (PHO) to compliment the remaining rebate programs and assist RMs and FNBS in their agricultural pest control management.

PLANT HEALTH OFFICERS

Each SARM Division employs a full-time Plant Health Officer (PHO) 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 SMA, PHOs are a front-line dedicated resource in place to educate, assist, support and advise elected and appointed officials, support staff and producers with ongoing and emerging crop biosecurity issues. The scope of their work includes all pests declared under *The Pest Control Act* and as well as prohibited/noxious weeds designated under *The Weed Control Act* of Saskatchewan.

With training in the field of agronomy, PHOs will focus on educating RMs and FNBs 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 appointed Pest Control Officers (PCOs) and Weed Inspectors (WIs) and under the guidance of the SMA survey and report on agricultural crop pests and prohibited/noxious weeds occurrences.

Assistance PHOs may provide to an RM/FNB:

1. Duties Required under Pest Control and Weed Control Acts

- Assist appointed pest control officer or weed inspector in drafting a plan to deal with an infestation (could 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 rate payer communication letters, assist with the development of bylaws and provide suggestions for key messages when communicating to the public about pest control and invasive plant control.
- Be available to meet with RM and FNB Councils to outline duties/responsibilities required by legislation.
- Assist the RMs and FNBs in finding licensed pesticide applicators with appropriate designations and beaver trappers for hire in the Division.

2. Provide Advice and Training to Municipally Appointed Officers in the Division

- Be available via phone and email to provide direction regarding the municipally appointed Pest Control Officer and Weed Inspector's duties under their respective legislation.
- Provide advice and direction on provincial best practices for drafting orders to destroy and control plans, draft machine-washing protocols, etc.
- Facilitate training opportunities for municipally appointed RM PCO and Weed Inspectors regarding their duties under the respective legislation.
- Assist municipally appointed PCO and Weed Inspectors in person, if necessary, to deal with difficult landowners when serving orders to destroy, etc.
- Work with Rat Control Technical Advisors to ensure RM and FNB Councils and appointed PCOs have the technical advice and support they need to effectively manage rat populations within their jurisdictions.

3. Guiding Provincial Efforts on Clubroot

- As clubroot isn't currently widespread in Saskatchewan, SARM encourages all RMs/FNBs to utilize the expertise of the PHO for their region when dealing with incidences of clubroot.
- PHOs work closely with Ministry officials assisting with provincial clubroot surveys. As part of the team, PHOs have become the clubroot experts in the field providing education and support for FNBs, RMs and their appointed officials as well as producers by promoting the Ministry's message of a scientific based, farmer driven approach to clubroot management to prevent the introduction and minimize spread of clubroot throughout the province.
- If the RM **has** an existing appointed PCO with the abilities to manage clubroot the PHO will support the appointed by providing technical advice and training where required by phone/email/in-person to deliver a farmer driven approach to clubroot management. They can assist the appointed PCO by helping them contact and inform landowners of incidents of clubroot and working with the landowner and appointed PCO to develop a science-based clubroot management plan and agreement that meets all the requirements/best practices determined by SMA.
- If the RM **does not have** an appointed PCO, or the appointed PCO in place does not have the knowledge and abilities to manage clubroot, and an incident of clubroot arises the PHO can be appointed by the RM to be the PCO to deal with clubroot only; the service of the PHO will be provided at no additional cost to the RM. The PHO as the appointed PCO will fulfill all the duties of the appointed PCO outlined via the *Pest Control Act* for the RM.

4. Monitor the Pest/Invasive Plants in the Division

- Under the guidance of the SMA Crop Specialists they will coordinate and participate in agricultural crop pest and invasive plant/weed surveys within the Division and report back to SMA.
- They will 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 FNBs on their monitoring and control efforts.

To access these and more resources, contact the Plant Health Officer located in your SARM Division:

Division 1: Tayo Adegeye, (306) 580-8708, division1pho@gmail.com

Division 2: Joanne Kwasnicki, (306) 541-8437, joanne.kwasnicki@gmail.com

Division 3: Betty Johnson, (306) 315-3925, bettyjohnson0025@gmail.com

Division 4: Katey Makohoniuk, (306) 594-7683, katey.makohoniuk@gmail.com

Division 5: Chelsea Neuberger, (306) 380-4526, chelsea.baraniecki@gmail.com

Division 6: Colleen Fennig, (306) 946-9895, colleen.fennig@gmail.com

For more information on the Pest Biosecurity Program please visit the SARM website at www.sarm.ca or contact Annette Ellert, Programs Administrator, at 306-761-3744 or email at aellert@sarm.ca.