

Helping Alberta's farmers stay competitive

Seed growers in Alberta will soon have access to more seed varieties and cereal research. Minister of Agriculture and Forestry Devin Dreeshen has signed a ministerial order removing *Fusarium graminearum* (fusarium) from the Pest and Nuisance Control Regulation, bringing Alberta in line with best practices from other provinces.

Fusarium is a fungal disease of cereal crops that affects grain development and quality. Removing it from the regulation will allow Alberta to modernize to managing the disease, rather than having zero tolerance for it.

Regulating fusarium has failed to stop its spread, which has increased across the province over the past 20 years. The Alberta *Fusarium graminearum* Management Plan, published in 2002, does not account for recent advances in seed treatment options that can lower detections, bringing them close to zero.

“Alberta’s farmers continue to grow high-quality food that people around the world can count on every day. This long-overdue change creates new opportunities for our farmers by levelling the playing field. Modernizing these rules means that Alberta farmers will benefit from current research advances.”

Devin Dreeshen, Minister of Agriculture and Forestry

“This news has been a long time coming. Fusarium is well-established in Alberta and since it spreads through air-borne spores, we know that zero tolerance policies are not effective. We welcome this regulatory shift that better reflects the reality facing farmers and appreciate Minister Dreeshen’s dedication to breaking down this regulatory barrier so we can move ahead with improved competitiveness.”

Tood Hames, chair, Alberta Wheat Commission

“Alberta crops are known around the world, so we commend the Government of Alberta for ensuring that growers in the province and those who count on them can benefit from the latest scientific advances. We work every day towards greater food security in an environmentally sustainable way, and today’s decision is a key step in this shared goal.”

Paul Hoekstra, government and industry relations, Syngenta

“The Canadian Seed Trade Association has long advocated for a removal of fusarium as a pest as it will be the most effective way for industry to promote management systems; encourage research, investment and innovation; and allow Alberta farmers to stay competitive with their counterparts in other jurisdictions. We would like to thank the Government of Alberta for its leadership.”

Georges Chausse, president, Canadian Seed Trade Association

The Alberta Fusarium graminearum Management Plan will be updated and continue to be available for farmers and industry looking for information and best management practices. The Government of Alberta will continue education and awareness efforts.

This is another positive step forward in government’s commitment to reduce red tape and make life easier for all Albertans. To track red tape reduction progress and submit suggestions about where government can cut even more red tape, please visit

CutRedTape.Alberta.ca.

Quick facts

- *Fusarium graminearum* causes fusarium head blight, a serious fungal disease that affects wheat, barley, oats and corn.
 - It has been present in Alberta at very low levels since 1989.
 - In late 2002, Alberta released the first comprehensive Alberta Fusarium graminearum Management Plan.