



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **New Integrated Crop Agronomy Cluster Announced**

“WGRF is very proud to be leading the newly established Integrated Crop Agronomy Cluster,” says Terry Young, WGRF Board Chair. “The \$6.3 million announced today by Minister MacAulay, combined with the investment from WGRF (\$1.6 million), and other industry partners (\$1.1 million) accounts for a total investment in this agronomy research of up to \$9 million over the next five years. We would like to thank Minister MacAulay and the Government of Canada for their continued partnership and investment in this important area of crop research.”

The Integrated Crop Agronomy Cluster consists of eight research activities ranging from soil health to herbicide resistance and climate change adaptation. It also includes the coordination of crop insects and disease monitoring, assessing and managing spray drift, developing a risk model for mitigating Fusarium Head Blight, development and management of productive, resilient and sustainable cropping.

This cluster has been established because Canadian farmers face agronomic challenges that cut across multiple crops and there are gaps in multi-crop and systems approaches to agronomic research.

Collaborating research organizations include Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Alberta Agriculture and Forestry, Agri-Metrix, Brandon University, Farming Smarter, InnoTech Alberta, Prairie Agricultural Machinery Institute, Smoky Applied Research and Demonstration Association, University of Alberta, University of Manitoba, University of Saskatchewan, and Western Applied Research Corporation.

Built into all the activities in the cluster, is a strong knowledge transfer plan that will communicate results to producers, agronomists and scientists enabling them to respond in a timely way to these agronomic challenges.

“Coordination and collaboration was really important in bringing this cluster together,” says Garth Patterson, Executive Director WGRF. “WGRF’s focus on funding research, our western Canadian membership, and our multi-crop funding scope made WGRF uniquely qualified to develop and lead this first of its kind cluster. Farmers don’t just grow one crop and that’s why we’re taking a whole-farm approach to agronomic research. We are very excited about the potential of this cluster.”

The other funders of this cluster include: The Alberta Pulse Growers, Alberta Wheat Commission, Brewing and Malting Barley Research Institute, Manitoba Canola Growers Association, Manitoba Pulse and Soybean Growers, Manitoba Wheat and Barley Growers Association, Prairie Oat Growers Association, Saskatchewan Canola Development Commission, Saskatchewan Pulse Growers, Saskatchewan Wheat Development Commission.



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### **Backgrounder**

The Western Grains Research Foundation (WGRF) is a farmer-funded and farmer-directed non-profit organization investing in agricultural research that benefits western Canadian producers. WGRF is the largest producer funder of field crop research in Canada. Since 1981, the WGRF Board has given producers a voice in agricultural research funding decisions.