



Another Field Season Done!

The Plant Health Technical Advisors (PHTAs) had another busy summer filled with surveys and events!

As part of the Plant Health Network, the PHTAs assist the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture by conducting crop and insect surveys. Some of the surveys that we assist with are:

- **Pea leaf weevil and cabbage seedpod weevil**
- **Bertha armyworm and diamondback moth monitoring**
- **Disease surveys of lentils, peas, canola, chickpeas, and faba bean**
- **Invasive pigweed survey**

Our team also spends time in the summer monitoring biocontrol agents release sites for establishment and control. This monitoring helps assess if biocontrol releases have been successful and if populations of the biocontrol agents are sufficient to collect from and redistribute agents to other invasive plant infestations. Biocontrol agent monitoring includes:

- **Leafy spurge beetles**
- **Hound's tongue root weevil**
- **Scentless chamomile gall midge and seed-head weevil**
- **Stem galling toadflax weevil**



Photo: Pea leaf weevil damage (Credit: J. Kwasnicki PHTA Div. 2)



Photo: Cabbage seedpod weevil exit hole on canola pod (Credit: C. Fenning, PHTA Div. 6)

The PHTAs also hosted several events throughout the summer including:

- Leafy Spurge Beetle Collection Days at Besant campground were another success with over 60 people attending and collecting leafy spurge beetles.
- Colleen and Betty hosted a kochia workshop in Kindersley which covered integrated management for controlling kochia and *The Weed Control Act*.
- Joanne held a weed identification workshop in Moose Jaw, using live plants to teach participants how to identify over 20 species of regulated weeds.



Photo: Field Event (Credit: Y. Adeyemo)



Weeds to Watch for: Himalayan Balsam

Designation: Prohibited

Himalayan balsam is an annual herbaceous weed that was introduced to Saskatchewan as an ornamental plant and has since escaped into the natural landscape. It can create dense stands that crowd out native vegetation, especially in riparian areas and wetlands. Himalayan balsam plants grow rapidly, reaching up to 3 metres tall. This plant reproduces by seed and can produce up to 800 seeds per year. Mature seed pods explode when disturbed and disperse seeds up to 7 m.

Identification:

- Stems are purple-red, smooth, hollow, and hexagonal.
- Leaves are 5 to 20 cm long and lance-shaped with sharply serrated edges that are arranged opposite or in threes on the stems.
- Flowers are pink or white with a hooded shape. Flowers grow in clusters of 5 to 10 on each stem. Plants can flower for an extended time, from July to October.
- The plant produces a sweet smelling nectar and the foliage has a strong musty smell when crushed.



Photo: Himalayan Balsam (Credit: J. Kwasnicki, PHTA Div. 2)

Control:

- If the area of the infestation is accessible, cutting or mowing can be an option for control. The stems can re-grow if they are not cut below the first node, so repeated mowing or cutting may be required.
- Hand-pulling is also a good option, since the root system is quite shallow.

Upcoming Events & Reminders

The PHTAs are hosting a Weed Inspector webinar on October 2nd with the Ministry of Agriculture. You can register for the webinar here: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/3857984441298007900>

- **The Invasive Plant Control Program deadline is October 31, 2025.** Please reach out to your PHTA if you need any assistance with completing your claim forms.
- **Annual Appointments for Weed Inspectors and Pest Control Officers** expire every year on December 31st. Appointments are to be sent by email (crops@gov.sk.ca) to the Ministry of Agriculture at the beginning of each calendar year.
- **Annual reports from Pest Control Officers and Weed Inspectors** are also due by December 31st each year to the Ministry of Agriculture.

Please contact your SARM Division Plant Health Technical Advisor for more information, to answer any questions, or to suggest content for future newsletters.

DIV 1: VACANT

PHNdivision1@sarm.ca

DIV 3: Betty Johnson PAg

306-315-3925

PHNdivision3@sarm.ca

DIV 5: Chelsea Neuberger PAg

306-380-4526

PHNdivision5@sarm.ca

DIV 2: Joanne Kwasnicki PAg

306-541-8437

PHNdivision2@sarm.ca

DIV 4: Katey Makohoniuk

TechAg

306-594-7683

PHNdivision4@sarm.ca

DIV 6: Colleen Fennig PAg

306-946-9895

PHNdivision6@sarm.ca