AGENDA
Agricultural Service Board Meeting
9:00 AM - Friday, November 27, 2026
Council Chambers

Page

A. CALL TO ORDER

B. SELECTION OF CHAIR & VICE CHAIR

3 - 4 1. **Nomination for ASB Chair and Vice-chair**
Nomination for ASB Chair and Vice-chair

C. CONFIRMATION OF AGENDA

D. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

5 - 7 1. **Agricultural Service Board Meeting Minutes**
Agricultural Service Board - 05 May 2026 - Minutes

E. DELEGATIONS - 10:00 A.M.

1. **Natural Resource Conservation Board - Kevin Seward, Compliance Manager & Francisco Echegaray, Manager of Applications**

F. REPORTS

8 - 14 1. **Agricultural Fieldman, Report on Activities**
Agricultural Fieldman, Report on Activities

G. NEW BUSINESS

15 - 24 1. **South Region Resolution & Conference Summary**
2026 SR ASB Conf. Resolutions

2. **ASB Conference Attendance - South Delta Hotel Edmonton - January 19-21, 2027**

25 - 31 3. **Alberta Invasive Species Council Year in Review - Support Letter**
AISC YEAR IN REVIEW - OCT 2026
Lethbridge County - 2027 AISC Partnership Letter
Support Letter Template AISC Request for Core Funding ASBs

4. **ASB Strategic Planning Summary**

H. CORRESPONDENCE

32 - 40 1. **Agriculture Disaster Letters**
Lac La Biche County
County of Two Hills
Leduc County
Strathcona County
County of Barrhead

41 - 47 2. **Resolution to Repeal Alberta Bill 22**
Resolution to Repeal Bill 22

I. CLOSED SESSION

1. **Bank of Montreal/Calgary Stampede Farm Family Awards Program**
(ATIA Section 22-Confidential evaluations)

J. ADJOURN

AGENDA ITEM REPORT

Title: Nomination for ASB Chair and Vice-chair
Meeting: Agricultural Service Board - 27 Nov 2026
Department: Agriculture Service Board
Report Author: Gary Secrist

APPROVAL(S):

Ryan Thomson, Director, Operations	Approved - 23 Nov 2026
Cole Beck, Chief Administrative Officer	Approved - 23 Nov 2026

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT:

Primary priority: 5 Effective governance
Secondary priority: 4 Service delivery & organizational excellence

Council's decision filter:	How the recommendation stands (one sentence):
Value for residents and taxpayers	Providing leadership at the ASB level.
Alignment with the Strategic Plan	Providing effective governance for ag-producers.
Long-term financial sustainability	No financial decisions are made by the Ag-Service board only reccomendations to council.
Impact on future generations	Future generations will be inspired to contribute service at the ASB level of governance.
Innovation and continuous improvement	ASB members represent an ever changing ag-industry.
Regional and community benefit	Lethbridge County ASB members represent local producers at the regional and provincial levels.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That the Agricultural Service Board recommend to County Council their choice of chair for the year.
2. That the ASB appoint a member to take on the role of the vice-chair for the year.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION AND AUTHORITY:

Each year County Council is to appoint a chair of the Agricultural Service Board which is brought to Council as a recommendation from the ASB Board. The ASB Board is able to appoint the vice-chair and no further resolution is needed.

THE DECISION IN BRIEF:

To follow the rules as set out in the ASB Act:
ASB Act Section 3(2) The council is to determine the chair, the number of members, the voting status and the term of office of the members of the board.

BACKGROUND:

In 2022 the composition of the Agricultural Service Board committee transformed from a group made up entirely of council members to a board that now includes 3 members at large. The chair is appointed by Council and can be any member of this group and the vice-chair is appointed by the ASB. ASB delegates with voting privileges are appointed by Council and are typically the chair and vice chair of the agriculture service board, but do not have to be.

OPTIONS:

In previous years the chair was appointed through a reccomendation coming from the Agricultureal Service Board. The vice chair was appointed at the fall ASB meeting.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

There is no financial impact.

RISKS:

It is important that County Council and the ASB Board follow the rules set out in the ASB Act and the corresponding Lethbridge County Agricultural Service Board Bylaw No. 22-017 which defines the appointment of the ASB Chair.

ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION:

*ASB Chairs and Co-chairs collaborate with other members on ag-issues that are locally relevant and are communicated at Lethbridge County ASB and Council meetings.

Collaborate

IMPLEMENTATION AND REPORTING BACK:

*It is a requirement that ASB meetings minutes are forwarded to Council for review.

MINUTES
Agricultural Service Board Meeting

9:00 AM - Tuesday, May 5, 2026
Council Chambers

The Agricultural Service Board of Lethbridge County was called to order on Tuesday, May 5, 2026, at 9:00 AM, in the Council Chambers, with the following members present:

PRESENT: Councillor Eric Van Essen
Councillor Kevin Slomp
Councillor Tony Ankermann
Councillor Mark Sayers
ASB Member at Large Ken Coles
ASB Member at Large Dan Chapman
ASB Member at Large Logan Miller
Chief Administrative Officer Cole Beck
Supervisor, Agricultural Services Gary Secrist
Legislative Coordinator & Executive Assistant Candice Robison

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Eric Van Essen called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. and read the following land acknowledgement:

In the true spirit of reconciliation, we acknowledge all those who call this land home now and for thousands of years in the past. May we respect each other and find understanding together and recognize the benefits that this land provides to all of us.

B. CONFIRMATION OF AGENDA

1-2026 | Councillor Sayers | MOVED that the May 5, 2026 Agricultural Service Board Meeting Agenda be approved, as presented.

CARRIED

C. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

C.1. *Agricultural Service Board Meeting Minutes*

2-2026 | ASB Member at Large Miller | MOVED that the November 25, 2025 Agricultural Service Board Meeting Minutes be approved, as presented.

CARRIED

D. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF MINUTES

D.1. *Strategic Planning*

3-2026 | Councillor Van Essen | MOVED to direct administration to facilitate a half day workshop for the Agricultural Service Board.

CARRIED

D.2. *Rural Dust*

Ryan Thomson provided an update on the dust management program.

F. NEW BUSINESS

F.1. *Agricultural Service Board Level of Service*

4-2026 | Councillor Ankermann | Moved that the Agricultural Service Board forwards the 2026 ASB Level of Service to County Council for approval.

CARRIED

F.2. *Matthew Wells, Rural Extension Specialist Update*

Matthew Wells, provided the rural extension specialist update which included the following:

- Environmental Farm Plan (EFP)

- Funding
- Reporting
- Workshops
- Presentations
- Communication & Outreach

F.3. ***Soil Erosion Discussion***

The ASB discussed soil erosion.

F.4. ***Strychnine Discussion***

5-2026 Councillor Sayers MOVED that Agricultural Service Board recommend to County Council that the ASB department become a vendor for the sale and distribution of Strychnine to eligible producers in Lethbridge County.

CARRIED

Chair Eric Van Essen recessed the meeting at 9:50 a.m.

Chair Eric Van Essen reconvened the meeting at 10:00 a.m.

E. DELEGATIONS

E.1. ***10:00 a.m. -Ashley Wagenaar/Potato Growers of Alberta/Update on the Industry***

Ashley Wagenaar from the Potato Growers of Alberta was present to provide the ASB an update on the industry.

Chair Eric Van Essen recessed the meeting at 10:15 a.m.

Chair Eric Van Essen reconvened the meeting at 10:22 a.m.

E.2. ***10:30 a.m. - Dirk Muilwijk/Sunshine Custom Farming/Dragline Manure Application Presentation***

Dirk Muilwijk from Sunshine Custom Farming was present to provide the ASB a dragline manure application presentation.

G. CORRESPONDENCE

G.1. ***Summer Tour Link***

The Wheatland County ASB Summer Tour was discussed.

G.2. ***Letters from past month***

ASB correspondence from the past month were reviewed and discussed.

H. OTHER BUSINESS

H.1. ***ASB Conference 2029***

Gary provided information on the 2029 ASB Conference which will be held in the South Region.

I. CLOSED SESSION

I.1. -Weed Control (ATIA 26 - Disclosure harmful to intergovernmental relations)

6-2026 Councillor Sayers MOVED that the Lethbridge County Agricultural Service Board Meeting move into Closed Session, pursuant to Section 197 of the Municipal Government Act, the time being 10:49 a.m. for the discussion on the following:

I.1. -Weed Control (ATIA 26 - Disclosure harmful to intergovernmental relations)

Present during the Closed Session:
Lethbridge County ASB Members
Chief Administrative Officer
Senior Management
Administrative Staff

CARRIED

7-2026 Councillor Ankermann MOVED that the Lethbridge County Agricultural Service Board Meeting move out of the closed session at 10:58 a.m.

CARRIED

J. ADJOURN

8-2026 Councillor Sayers MOVED that the Agricultural Service Board Meeting adjourn at 10:59 a.m.

CARRIED

_____
ASB Chairman

_____
CAO

Supervisor of Agriculture Services Report

ASB Grant

The ASB Provincial Grant has been renewed for a 5-year cycle running from 2025-2029. Lethbridge County receives annual funding of $166,247 for Legislative and $77,350 for Resource Management programming, respectively.

Mowing

- ASB staff completed two cuts on most gravel roads and 3 cuts on paved roads for a total of 5,300 miles of roadside mowed.
- Hamlets and subdivisions were cut three times.
- Barons and Elnora cemeteries were cut twice, and White Lake and Albion Ridge only required 1 pass.
- Mowing was also done for weed control in areas where spraying was not possible. This mostly occurred on roads where specialty crops were grown and where grass has been seeded and is unable to accept a chemical application.

Level of Service Measures: Staff anticipate we will meet all Level of Service goals for 2026 and come close to budget amounts. Paved and gravel roads were done twice at minimum.

Weed Control

- Most of the roadside spraying took place in Divisions 6 and 7 this year with spot spraying being performed throughout the County. Increased spot treatment occurred where mowers were last to arrive. In total 391 miles of road were sprayed.
- A total of 7 Prohibited Noxious and 307 Noxious weed sites were found with most being sprayed and 30 sites being hand-picked. All these sites are GPS mapped for future reference.
- Custom Spray work for Volker Stevin had a budget set at $54,000 at the beginning of the year and crews ended up using the entire allotment.
- Road top vegetation control work was busy in early spring applying pre-emergent herbicides assisting grader operators to deal with excess vegetation growth on 123 miles of road.

- Weed inspection activities helped resolve numerous issues with weed notices being issued where warranted. In total 20 issues were resolved without notice, and 2 notices were issued
- Bio-Control agents for Leafy Spurge were not released this year due to low numbers at collection sites due to the wet conditions in late spring. Results from past drops appear to have taken a step backwards as conditions were favorable for increased weed density. We were given an $8,000 Grant from Alberta Environment to control Leafy Spurge and other noxious weeds along the Oldman River bed and shore and vacant public land. In 2026 most of this allotment was spent picking Knapweed and spraying Blueweed at an abandoned Provincial gravel pit.

Level of Service Measures: All targets have been met, and Roadside Spraying has achieved the 33% target of roads to be blanket sprayed. When road top applications are taken into consideration approximately 43% of roads seen a chemical application.

Pest Control

- A private contractor was hired to do a survey for Dutch Elm disease South of the Jail Road for 4 miles, with no suspect trees found. Dutch Elm is a large concern as many more infected trees were found in Edmonton this summer.
- The annual grasshopper survey showed numbers decreased for 2026 and projections for 2027 will be available this winter once data is collected from around the province.
- The 2026 Bacterial Ring Rot Survey included 16 fields with no sign of the disease present. One sample was sent in for testing and came back negative.
- The Bertha Army worm survey was carried out by ASB staff with numbers down from last year, although some neighboring municipalities are considered at high risk.
- Staff completed 14 wheat head and 2 barley surveys for disease including Fusarium.
- A total of 10 fields were surveyed for Canola diseases including Clubroot and Blackleg.
- Trap loan outs saw 3 magpie traps going out and 5 for skunks.
- Lethbridge County received 20 cases of Strychnine and sole 18 bottles.

Soil Conservation

- The early spring of 2026 saw conditions favorable for soil erosion and there were 10 consultations with landowners with 5 resulting in ditches and culverts that needed to be cleaned. There were also a high number of fields recorded that land owners had already taken action without being prompted.
- Crop rotations and high wind were the biggest factors for soil erosion in 2026 in particular fields that had corn and potatoes seeded in 2025.

Level of Service Measures: **Soil erosion targets depend on many factors that are out of our control. All known instances have been inspected and there has been an increase in staff time spent on this activity over the past 5 years.**

ASB Resolutions

The 2026 South Region ASB Conference was hosted by the County of Forty Mile on October 6 at the Conquerville Community Hall. Here is a summary of the Resolutions from ASB Chair Eric Van Essen:

All four resolutions passed and will go forward to the Provincial ASB Conference in January.

1. Census of Agriculture Timing (Cypress County

Asks the federal government to move the Census of Agriculture to early January, since the current May–July window falls in the busiest part of the farm year.

2. Student Loan Forgiveness for Vets and Animal Health Techs (Foothills County)

Asks that vets and animal health technicians who commit to rural practice be added to the federal student loan forgiveness program, which was recently expanded to other professions but left them out.

3. Reliable Rural Cellular Coverage (Vulcan County)

Asks the province to push Ottawa, the CRTC and cell carriers for rural coverage standards based on actual usable service, plus investment to eliminate dead zones.

4. Separating Hunting from Recreation on the Stock Return Form (Cypress County)

Asks the province to list hunting on its own line on the grazing lease stock return form, since leaseholders can allow hunting while refusing other recreational access.

Roadside Seeding

- ASB crews undertook the seeding of drains and road construction. Staff use a combination of hydro-seeder and harrow and spread.

Level of Service Measures: This service is provided to the Public Works Department by the ASB Department. Seeding activities are coordinated between spring and fall, depending on the individual project completion timing.

Rental equipment

- 8 Brillion Drill rentals were delivered in 2026 with a total revenue of $1,680. In 2025 rentals were nearly double at 15.
- The plastic roller for sileage and grain bag plastic saw heavy use with it going out 20 times.

Brushing

- Dry weather in late winter and early spring was ideal for this activity. All trees and brush spots that are controlled are GPS marked for future reference. Herbicide is used where applicable.

Parks

- Parks, playground, and shop yard maintenance were quite busy all summer as moisture conditions kept crews hopping.
- Safety inspections for playground equipment and pathways are performed on a regular basis by trained staff.
- In 2026 crews resurfaced approximately 2 miles of pathway in Mountain Meadows with limestone. Results and feedback from the community were very positive.
- In 2027 the intention is to tear down and replace the Monarch court area and in 2028 a similar project is planned for Diamond City.

Level of Service Measures: We are meeting our maintenance goals in parks with turnaround times of 10-14 days during peak season. As construction on the Link pathway continues additional resources will need to be added.

Farm Family

- The 2026 Calgary Stampede BMO Farm Family was the Rod Gschaid Family who have a cattle operation East of Lethbridge

Other Activities

- $5,000 was donated to the Farm Safety Centre to provide in-classroom farm safety training.
- Participated in Ag-Expo as an Exhibitor

Rural Extension Activities

- (Spring and Fall). Feedback has been positive, with the magazine reaching an audience beyond the County. Environmental Farm Plan (EFP): Lethbridge County continues to see strong producer participation in the EFP program. As of October 10, 2026, 23 EFPs have been approved.
    - An EFP workshop is scheduled for November 4 in partnership with County of Warner, Foothills Forage and Grazing Association, and Lethbridge and District Agriculture Society.
        - Workshop attendance:
    - Matthew continues to be an active member of the EFP Operations Committee.
- Sustainable-Canadian Agriculture Partnership Program (SCAP): The County continues to promote available SCAP funding opportunities to local producers. Funding is currently closed for all programs except the Water program.
    - The On-Farm Efficiency Program remains in high demand, with the most recent intake closing within one day of opening. Producers are being encouraged to prepare in advance and apply as soon as the next intake becomes available.
- On-Farm Climate Action Fund (OFCAF): The County continues to promote OFCAF and share information about program availability with producers.
- Legislation (Awareness & Education): The County continues to promote awareness of agricultural legislation and the responsibilities of rural residents and landowners. Areas of focus include:
    - Soil Conservation Act
    - Weed Conservation Act
    - Agriculture Pest Act
    - Animal Health Act
- Agroforestry and Agroclimate Reporting: The Alberta Agroforestry Crop and Agroclimate Impact Report is completed monthly to support ongoing reporting and awareness of agricultural and agroclimatic conditions.
- Workshops and Educational Events: The County continues to coordinate and participate in educational opportunities that promote sustainable agriculture practices, knowledge sharing, and producer engagement.
    - Shelterbelts and Resilient Landscapes Workshop (April 16th)
        - Supporting and providing information to residents in maintaining and creating a shelterbelt.

- Innovations in the Field (June 10th)
    - Organized in partnership with Foothills Forage and Grazing Association. The event was cancelled this year due to poor weather conditions. 30 residents had registered, with an additional 30 presenters and booth participants anticipated. The event is planned to return 2027.
- Oldman Watershed Annual Group Meeting
    - Cancelled for 2026. The meeting is being moved to June 2027 in hopes of improving attendance and avoiding a particularly busy period for participants.
- Environmental Farm Plan Workshop (November 4th)
    - Planned in partnership with the County of Warner, Foothills Forage and Grazing Association, and Lethbridge and District Agriculture Society.

- Booths and Exhibits: The County participated in agricultural outreach opportunities to connect with producers and the public, share information, and promote available resources.
    - Farming Smarter Field School (June 25th and July 16th)
    - Open Farm Days (August 15th)
- School Presentations:
    - R. I. Baker School Presentation
        - The planned presentation was cancelled due to construction in the area. The school has invited the County to return in 2027.

- Rural Living Magazine: Continue to publish two editions each year
    - Folks are obtaining the magazine from friends and requesting to subscribe to the magazine.
- Rural Living Video's, County Drive Podcast: Worked with Communications to review program needs and determine the direction for future video and podcast initiatives.
    - Will be publishing video's and podcast episodes in the New Year
- Upcoming 2027 Programming:
    - Nutrient Management Webinar Series (January 25th, February 1st, and 8th)
    - Huntsville School Presentation (late January, beginning of early February; date to be determined)
    - Growing Opportunities Workshop (March 17th)
        - Have partnered with Foothills Forage and Grazing Association, focusing on succession planning.
    - Shelterbelts and Resilient Landscapes Workshop (April 14th)
    - Aggie Days (May 5th-7th)
        - Booth and presentations for students that attend.
    - Innovations in the Field (June 9th)

- Partnered with Foothills Forage and Grazing Association. Will have various booths and presentations to support local producers.

<u>Level of Service Measures</u>: We are meeting the goals outlined in our grant by delivering a wide range of extension activities. We continue to expand our communication methods, engaging with producers, rural communities, and students effectively.

RESOLUTION X-27
CANADIAN CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE

WHEREAS: The Census of Agriculture is mandated by Statistics Canada under the Statistics Act;

WHEREAS: Participation is mandatory under law for every census farm and agricultural operator;

WHEREAS: The Census of Agriculture and Census of Population open at the same time to coincide and leverage collection and processing activities, saving millions of taxpayer dollars;

WHEREAS: The collection window was May 4, 2026, to July 31, 2026; and

WHEREAS: The collection window is during a very busy time of year for agricultural producers.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED
THAT ALBERTA'S AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARDS REQUEST:
That the Government of Canada consider commencing the Census of Agriculture to early January.

SPONSORED BY: Cypress County
MOVED BY: _____
SECONDED BY: _____
CARRIED: _____
DEFEATED: _____
STATUS: Provincial
DEPARTMENT: The Ministry of Innovation, Science and Economic Development

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Census of Population collects demographic, social and economic information from every household in the country. Meanwhile, the Census of Agriculture collects information about every agricultural operation in Canada and every farm operator must participate. Together, they paint a complete portrait of Canada's population and agriculture sector, providing high-quality information that helps Canadians make important decisions that affect their families, their communities and their businesses.

DRAFT

The information provided helps plan programs and services in communities across the country that support innovation, employment, transit, education, health care and more.

Statistics Canada is required by law to conduct a Census of Agriculture every five years. The Census of Agriculture provides a comprehensive profile of the physical, economic, social and environmental aspects of Canada's agriculture sector every five years. The Census of Agriculture is the only official source for high-quality agricultural data for small geographic areas in Canada.

A wide range of data is published at the national, provincial and subprovincial levels, such as:

- the number of farms by farm types, land use and practices
- agricultural commodities including various crops and livestock as well as other agricultural products such as mushrooms and bees
- business operating arrangements as well as operating revenues and expenses.

The Census of Agriculture is essential for understanding changes in Canada's agriculture sector over time. Consequently, it serves as a basis for informed public and private decision making, as well as research and analysis in areas of concern to the people of Canada.

The Census of Agriculture works within the Census of Population timelines to leverage their collection and processing activities, saving taxpayers millions of dollars. The timing of the larger Census of Population is carefully planned to reach the highest number of Canadians at home during collection.

The Census of Agriculture counts all operations that produce agricultural products for which they report revenues or expenses to the Canada Revenue Agency. If an agricultural operation has multiple business numbers, each one of the business numbers associated with the sale of primary agricultural commodities will receive a separate questionnaire. To ensure accurate reporting, it is essential for respondents to complete each questionnaire using the unique secure access code provided in each invitation letter.

The Census of Agriculture is a nation-wide endeavour that involves collecting information from every agricultural operation in Canada. The collection, follow-up, quality checks, processing, validation, tabulation, and publication of data from such an extensive process take about one year to complete.

Statistics Canada takes these steps to ensure that the data are accurate across all variables, geographies, and farm types. This process is critical as it ensures that local issues affecting farm operators, agricultural operations and farming communities are reflected in the data, and that they can be used effectively to support decision-making by farmers, the agriculture and agri-food industry, and governments at all levels.

RESOLUTION XX: Federal Student Loan Forgiveness Program – Inclusion of Veterinarians and Animal Health Technicians

WHEREAS the Canada Student Loan Forgiveness Program was implemented to attract and retain essential professionals in rural and underserviced areas, including Family Doctors, Family Medicine Residents, Licensed Practical Nurses, Nurse Practitioners, Registered Nurses, Registered Psychiatric Nurses and Registered Practical Nurses; and

WHEREAS on December 31, 2025, the program was expanded to include dentists, dental hygienists, early childhood educators, midwives, personal support workers, pharmacists, physiotherapists, psychologists, social workers, and teachers; and

WHEREAS veterinarians and animal health technicians were not included among the newly eligible occupations, despite carrying significant educational debt and providing essential services that support rural economies and food production systems, including the beef industry. As a result, they do not receive comparable federal support to help reduce student loan burdens or encourage recruitment into rural practice; and

WHEREAS rural and remote communities, defined as *a population centre with a population of 30,000 or fewer, as defined by Statistics Canada and as determined by the most recent Census of Population, or a rural area, based on data published in the most recent census,* face significant workforce challenges, including shortages of veterinary professionals who directly affect animal health, herd productivity, disease surveillance, animal welfare, and the economic stability of agricultural producers; and

WHEREAS retaining veterinarians and animal health technicians in rural areas is essential to preventive care, disease management, herd health planning, and emergency response, including foreign animal disease preparedness; and

WHEREAS rural practices struggle to compete with urban clinics and corporate employers when student debt influences early-career decisions;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Albertas Agricultural Service Boards request that the Minister of Employment and Social Development amend the Canada Student Loan Forgiveness Program to include veterinarians and animal health technicians who commit to practicing in rural, remote, or underserved communities as eligible professions for federal student loan forgiveness benefits with terms comparable to other rural-critical professionals;

SPONSORED BY: Foothills County

MOVED BY: _____

SECONDED BY: _____

CARRIED: _____

DEFEATED: _____

STATUS: Provincial

DEPARTMENT: Government of Canada (Canada Student Loan Program)
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
Minister of Employment and Social Development

Background information:

Although recent changes to the Canada Student Loan Forgiveness Program added several professions, veterinarians and animal health technicians remain excluded. Rural communities continue to face labour shortages where these professionals play a critical role in supporting livestock production, agricultural operations, and rural economies. This resolution urges the Government of Canada to extend program eligibility to veterinarians and animal health technicians, helping to reduce financial barriers, improve recruitment and retention, and strengthen Alberta's agricultural sector and rural livelihoods.

References:

Canada Student Loan Forgiveness - Canada.ca

RMA resolution 3-26S: Inclusion of Veterinarians and Animal Health Technicians in the Federal Student Loan Forgiveness Program – RMA

RESOLUTION XX: RELIABLE CELLULAR PHONE AND DATA COVERAGE IN RURAL ALBERTA

WHEREAS reliable cellular service is an essential component of modern agricultural operations, rural communities, emergency communications, farm and machinery operations, irrigation management, weather information, precision agriculture, remote monitoring, livestock management, business communications, and access to essential services;

WHEREAS many rural farms and acreages are now dependent on cellular phones as their primary or only means of voice communication, as landline service has been discontinued, deemed unavailable, or impossible to restore where former lines are no longer serviceable;

WHEREAS agricultural producers frequently operate in areas well beyond the boundaries of urban centres and require reliable cellular coverage across large geographic areas;

WHEREAS cellular dead zones can prevent or delay emergency calls, location sharing, public alerts, and communication between residents, dispatch centres, and first responders;

WHEREAS ongoing changes to cellular technologies, networks, infrastructure, and spectrum use should not reduce the availability, reliability, or geographic reach of cellular service in rural and agricultural areas;

WHEREAS coverage statistics based mainly on population or household access can conceal significant dead zones across agricultural land, local roads, and travel corridors where emergencies and farm incidents occur.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED
THAT ALBERTA'S AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARDS REQUEST

The Government of Alberta advocate to the Government of Canada to require the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC), Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED), and cellular service providers to ensure that current and future cellular technologies provide reliable, usable, and measurable cellular coverage in rural and agricultural areas.

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED
THAT ALBERTA'S AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARDS REQUEST

The federal government establish and enforce measurable rural cellular coverage standards that reflect actual usable coverage, rather than relying primarily on population-based coverage statistics or theoretical coverage maps.

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED
THAT ALBERTA'S AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARDS REQUEST

The Government of Alberta advocate to cellular service providers for targeted investment in towers, shared infrastructure, spectrum, backhaul, and other appropriate technologies needed to eliminate cellular dead zones and provide reliable, usable service throughout rural and agricultural Alberta.

SPONSORED BY:	Vulcan County
MOVED BY:	_____
SECONDED BY:	_____
CARRIED:	_____
DEFEATED:	_____
STATUS:	Provincial
DEPARTMENT:	Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation, Alberta Ministry of Technology and Innovation, CRTC, ISED, Minister of Canadian Identity and Culture

BACKGROUND INFORMATION
Reliable cellular coverage is no longer optional for most rural agricultural operations. Farms and acreages increasingly rely on cellular phones because landline service has been discontinued, is unavailable for new connections, or cannot be restored where existing lines have been abandoned or damaged. As agricultural operations adopt connected equipment, remote monitoring, and mobile business tools, gaps in coverage affect both productivity and safety.

Inadequate cellular coverage affects the ability to access agriculture and livestock related apps and services, communicate with family, co-workers, employees, and contractors, arrange equipment repairs, order parts and farm inputs, and conduct time-sensitive sales and supplier communications.

In areas such as the Bow River Irrigation District and East Irrigation District in Southern Alberta, some remotely controlled irrigation pivots that depend on cellular service have required costly cellular boosters to communicate reliably, even where major carrier towers were visible from nearby fields. Without dependable connectivity, producers are left unable to receive timely alerts or remotely shut systems down during an emergency

or malfunction, resulting in wasted water, field flooding, and equipment damage.

For equipment that requires a strong and consistent connection, some producers are installing mobile satellite internet receivers on machinery and adding these devices to monthly service plans. While this approach may improve connectivity for individual pieces of equipment, it creates significant additional costs and functions as a workaround for a cellular network that should already provide reliable rural service.

Dropped calls and data interruptions are common in rural areas, creating challenges for producers, employees, contractors, service technicians, delivery drivers, visitors, and emergency responders. When cellular phone and data service fail, users may lose access to navigation tools, be unable to communicate directions, and have difficulty contacting assistance in unfamiliar or remote areas.

Inadequate cellular coverage creates significant safety concerns for agricultural producers, farm employees, contractors, and other rural residents who work alone or in remote locations and may be unable to contact 911 following an accident, medical emergency, fire, or other hazardous event. Limited coverage can also impede first responders and municipal services in their efforts to respond to emergency situations, communicate with dispatch, and coordinate emergency response.

Rural municipalities in Alberta have previously raised concerns that reported cellular coverage does not always match the service experienced by rural residents, businesses, and emergency responders. The CRTC has recognized that rural mobile coverage lags behind the Canadian average.

Rural municipalities and agricultural organizations have long advocated for improved rural high-speed internet, and recent advances have helped address some broadband gaps. However, improved internet access does not replace the need for reliable cellular voice and data coverage. Future solutions should consider all appropriate technologies, including cellular infrastructure, shared towers, backhaul improvements, and emerging satellite-based connectivity models, to restore dependable communication throughout rural Alberta.

Sources:
Canadian Telecommunications Market Report 2026
https://crtc.gc.ca/pubs/cmr_ctmr_2026-en.pdf?utm_source=chatgpt.com

RMA Resolution 5-23S Access to Mobile Wireless (Cellular) Services
https://rmalberta.com/resolutions/5-23s-access-to-mobile-wireless-cellular-services/

SAB-03-25 – Notice of amendment to spectrum limit condition of licence in the 3900 MHz band under the non-competitive local licensing framework https://ised-isde.canada.ca/site/spectrum-management-telecommunications/en/learn-more/key-documents/spectrum-advisory-bulletins-sab/sab-03-25-notice-amendment-spectrum-limit-condition-licence-3900-mhz-band-under-non-competitive?utm_source=chatgpt.com

RESOLUTION X-27

SEPARATE HUNTING FROM RECREATION ON THE STOCK RETURN FORM

WHEREAS: Under the Public Lands Administration Regulation, grazing disposition holders must complete and submit a stock return form annually to report livestock use of the grazing disposition;

WHEREAS: Failure to submit a stock return form may result in compliance action, such as a monetary penalty or non-renewal of the grazing disposition;

WHEREAS: The holder of an agricultural disposition shall, in accordance with the regulations, allow reasonable access to the land that is the subject of the disposition to persons who wish to use the land for recreational purposes;

WHEREAS: Holders of an agricultural disposition may allow hunting but not other recreational activities; and

WHEREAS: The leaseholder may deny access or specify conditions for access and use of Agricultural Crown land, if certain conditions are not met;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED
THAT ALBERTA'S AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARDS REQUEST:
That the Government of Alberta consider clarification and separating hunting from recreational access on a separate line in the Stock Return form.

SPONSORED BY: Cypress County
MOVED BY: _____
SECONDED BY: _____
CARRIED: _____
DEFEATED: _____
STATUS: Provincial
DEPARTMENT: Ministry of Forestry and Parks

DRAFT

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Alberta has over 8 million acres (3.3 million hectares) of forest, shrublands, grasslands and associated riparian areas on Crown land that are grazed by livestock. Under the Public Lands Administration Regulation, grazing disposition holders must complete and submit a stock return form annually to report livestock use of the grazing disposition. Holders must submit the stock return form regardless of whether the disposition was grazed.

Stock return forms are due annually by January 31 for the previous year. Failure to submit a stock return form may result in compliance action, such as a monetary penalty or non-renewal of the grazing disposition.

The information collected on a stock return form is used to monitor and manage Crown lands under a grazing disposition. We rely on the disposition holder to be a good steward and manager of the grazing land. Filing an annual stock return form with us is part of that responsibility and commitment.

The Rangeland Stewardship Audit Program (RSAP) is where agricultural disposition holders can submit their stock return forms, as well as their recreational access contact and conditions form.

Leaseholder may allow hunting, but not other recreational activities, therefore reporting on two sperate lines is desirable.

The Recreational Access Regulation states:
Section 1
(j) “recreational purposes” includes, without limitation, any of the following activities when carried out for recreational purposes:

(i) hunting within the meaning of the Wildlife Act;
(ii) camping;
(iii) fishing;
(iv) boating, swimming and other water sports;
(v) berry picking, mushroom picking and picking of other fruits or herbs;
(vi) picnicking;
(vii) hiking;
(viii) nature study and viewing or photographing scenic sites;
(ix) snow skiing, snowshoeing, skating, sledding and other winter sports;
(x) hang-gliding;
(xi) hot air ballooning;
(xii) bicycling;
(xiii) the use of animals for transportation;
(xiv) the use of motor vehicles;
(xv) the discharge of firearms for the purposes of target

DRAFT

Duty to allow access

6(1) Where a person wishing to gain access for recreational purposes to land that is the subject of an agricultural disposition that is a grazing lease or a farm development lease to use the land complies with section 5, the agricultural disposition holder shall allow access to the agricultural disposition land unless one or more of the following circumstances exist:

(a) the proposed use would involve the use of one or more bicycles, animals for transportation or motor vehicles;

(b) the proposed use would occur

(i) in a fenced pasture unit where livestock are present in accordance with the terms and conditions of the agricultural disposition and the Act, or

(ii) on cultivated land on which a crop is growing or has not been completely harvested;

(c) a fire ban imposed by a competent authority under any law in force in Alberta is in effect in respect of all or part of the agricultural disposition land;

(d) the proposed use would involve hunting within the meaning of the Wildlife Act at a location that is unreasonably close to a fenced pasture in which livestock of the agricultural disposition holder are present in accordance with the terms and conditions of the agricultural disposition and the Act;

(d.1) the proposed use would involve the discharge of a firearm or use of an explosive at a location that is unreasonably close to a fenced pasture in which livestock of the agricultural disposition holder are present in accordance with the terms and conditions of the agricultural disposition and the Act;

(d.2) the proposed use would involve the discharge of a firearm for the purposes of target shooting or the use of an explosive for those purposes;

(e) the proposed use is camping;

(f) the proposed use would be contrary to a recreational management plan, to terms and conditions imposed under section 10 or 11 or to an order of a director under section 12.

(3) Where an agricultural disposition holder refuses access under subsection (2)(c), the holder shall give to the person wishing to gain access reasons orally or in writing as to why access was refused.

DRAFT

Last updated October 9, 2026

ALBERTA Invasive Species COUNCIL

2026 YEAR IN REVIEW

abinvasives.ca



OUTREACH EVENTS

ATTENDED BY AISC

42

36 IN-PERSON

8 VIRTUAL

BIOCONTROL RELEASES

30

OF LEAFY SPURGE BEETLES, HOUND'S TONGUE AND YELLOW TOADFLAX WEEVILS

AISC AT A GLANCE

47 PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS ACROSS ALBERTA

4 STAFF MEMBERS

16 BOARD MEMBERS

180 INDIVIDUAL & STUDENT MEMBERS

63,000+ WEED&TREE GUIDES

DISTRIBUTED TO DATE

9 CAMPAIGNS

SUPPORTED BY AISC

grow me instead

Play Clean Go

Wildflowers not weeds

3,688 REPORTS

85 DIFFERENT SPECIES

EDDMapS find · map · track

REPORTERS **151**

152,109 INFESTED ACRES

160+ FACTSHEETS

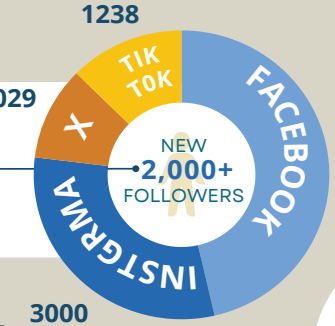
FOR INVASIVE PLANTS, ANIMALS, INVERTEBRATES & DISEASES

50+ VIDEOS

350+ PHOTOS

SOCIAL MEDIA

STATISTICS



3,300+ NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIBERS

300 POSTS

1,000,000+ REACH

4562



CD3 UNITS 6

245 PLUG REMOVER

980 TONGS

2,323 AIR HOSE

1,388 BRUSH

13TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

2 DAYS HELD IN-PERSON

5 APPLICATOR CREDITS OFFERED

208 ATTENDEES

8+ HOURS OF CONTENT

22 SPEAKERS

NEW OUTLOOK CREATED

HIGHLIGHTING PRIORITY INVASIVE SPECIES

October 8, 2026

Gary Secrist
Lethbridge County
#100, 905-4th Avenue South
Lethbridge, AB T1J 4E4

Subject: Thank You for Your Partnership with AISC

Dear Gary Secrist and Members of the Agricultural Service Board,

Thank you for Lethbridge County's continued partnership with the Alberta Invasive Species Council (AISC). Your investment helps make our province-wide work possible, and we are grateful to have rural municipalities like yours supporting invasive species prevention and management across Alberta.

Alberta's rural municipalities and Agricultural Service Boards are on the front lines of invasive species management. Invasive plants and agricultural pests such as invasive wild boar and rats affect agricultural productivity, municipal operations, natural areas and local economies, while new and emerging invasive species continue to create challenges. Invasive species already cost Alberta's economy more than $2 billion annually, making prevention, early detection and effective management an important investment in Alberta's future.

Since 2006, AISC has worked alongside municipalities, Agricultural Service Boards and invasive species practitioners to prevent the introduction and spread of invasive species and support effective management across the province. We serve as a provincial hub for invasive species information, education, training and collaboration, providing practical resources and programs that complement and support the work being done locally.

With the support of partners like you, AISC works across the continuum from prevention and public education to early detection and management. We developed and deliver **Rat on Rats!, Protect Our Waters** and **Wildflowers Not Weeds**, and deliver established prevention campaigns in Alberta including **Squeal on Pigs!, Clean Drain Dry** and **Don't Let It Loose**. We support early detection and reporting through **EDDMapS** and provide training, professional development and practical identification and management resources for municipal staff, landowners, producers and the public.

In 2026, we released the **Alberta Invasive Species Outlook**, highlighting priority invasive species across taxonomic groups and at different stages of invasion, from species we are working to prevent from reaching Alberta to those requiring eradication, containment or ongoing management. We also completed a major overhaul of our invasive plant resources following changes to Alberta's Weed Control Regulation, including the fifth edition of the **Invasive Plants of Alberta Guide** and updates to our extensive library of **invasive species factsheets**. These freely available resources support municipalities in fulfilling their responsibilities under the *Weed Control Act*, including providing landowners with identification and management information when issuing weed notices. Since taking over production and distribution of the **Invasive Plants of Alberta Guide** in 2021, AISC has printed **63,000 copies.** Through sponsorships and grant funding, we subsidize the cost of the guides to keep this important weed identification and management resource affordable and widely accessible across Alberta.

We are also preparing to launch a new **Tree Pests of Alberta Guide and complementary e-learning course** to support awareness, identification and early detection of invasive tree pests. In addition, we continue to support biological control in Alberta through our **Biocontrol Release Program**, which facilitates the distribution of biological control agents, and the newly established **Alberta Biocontrol Consortium**, which advances research and development of new biological control tools.

AISC receives no ongoing core funding. Despite this, we have secured millions of dollars in competitive grants to deliver invasive species initiatives across Alberta. These grants enable substantial projects but are generally restricted to specific activities and timelines and often require matching contributions.

Partnership funding provides essential flexible capacity to pursue larger funding opportunities, provide matching funds, maintain important programs and freely available resources between grants, and respond to emerging priorities. In this way, partner contributions help AISC leverage additional investment and extend the reach and impact of our work across Alberta.

We are incredibly grateful for the role your municipality has played in supporting this work and hope we can count on your continued support in two ways.

First, we hope we can count on your municipality's continued partnership in 2027. Your support is essential to sustaining our programs and resources and leveraging additional funding for invasive species prevention and management across Alberta. We invite you to renew your partnership at the same or an increased level. Partnership opportunities and benefits are enclosed for your consideration.

Second, we are seeking letters of support for our request for provincial core funding. AISC has recently submitted a request to the Government of Alberta for ongoing core administrative funding to provide greater organizational stability and strengthen our

capacity to deliver province-wide invasive species prevention and management programs. This funding would complement existing partnerships and project grants, helping sustain the organizational capacity needed to deliver and expand our work. We would be grateful if your municipality would consider submitting a letter to the Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation in support of this request. Letters from municipalities and other stakeholders would help demonstrate the value of AISC's work and the importance of sustained provincial investment. We have enclosed a sample letter of support that your municipality may adapt, along with additional information about our funding request.

Thank you again for your partnership and for helping make this work possible. We greatly value our relationship with Lethbridge County and look forward to continuing to work together to protect Alberta's agricultural lands, communities and natural resources from invasive species.

Sincerely,

Megan Evans

Megan Evans
Executive Director
Alberta Invasive Species Council
execdirector@abinvasives.ca | (587) 999-0954

2027 Partnership Opportunities

Partnership contributions directly support AISC's province-wide invasive species prevention, education, early detection, and management efforts.

Partner Benefit	Bronze Partner ($1,000)	Silver Partner ($2,000)	Gold Partner ($5,000)	Platinum Partner ($10,000+)
Access to EDDMapS, EDDMapS Pro, and ISM Track apps	✓	✓	✓	✓
Recognition on the AISC website	✓	✓	✓	✓
Recognition in our quarterly newsletter and at AISC's Annual Conference	✓	✓	✓	✓
Exclusive access to AISC's Newsletter Archive	✓	✓	✓	✓
Access to campaign promotional and educational materials	✓	✓	✓	✓
Annual AISC Memberships (with AGM vote)	2	3	4	5
Member rate for AISC Conference Registration	2	3	4	5
Member rate on select items in the AISC online store	2	3	4	5
Free conference registration(s)	—	—	1	2
Customized virtual presentation	—	—	✓	✓
Customized in-person presentation	—	—	—	✓

[Municipal Letterhead]

[Date]

The Honourable Tara Sawyer
Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation
Government of Alberta

Re: Support for Alberta Invasive Species Council Core Funding Request

Dear Minister Sawyer,

On behalf of [Municipality/Agricultural Service Board], I am writing to express our support for the Alberta Invasive Species Council's (AISC) request for $300,000 annually over five years, beginning in 2027–28, to strengthen its core organizational capacity for invasive species prevention and management across Alberta.

Municipalities and Agricultural Service Boards play an important role in managing invasive species, which threaten agricultural productivity, natural areas, infrastructure and local economies. Effective prevention, early detection and management require access to reliable information, practical resources, training and collaboration across jurisdictions.

AISC is an important provincial partner in these efforts, providing programs and services that support municipal invasive species management. Resources such as the *Invasive Plants of Alberta Guide*, EDDMapS reporting and mapping tools, invasive species identification resources, professional training and public awareness campaigns help municipalities and Agricultural Service Boards carry out their responsibilities and engage their communities.

[OPTIONAL: Include a paragraph describing how AISC's programs, resources or partnerships have benefited your municipality or Agricultural Service Board. Examples could include staff training, weed identification resources, EDDMapS, biological control, public education campaigns, technical support or other initiatives that have strengthened local invasive species management.]

We recognize that much of AISC's funding is tied to individual projects, making it challenging to maintain the organizational capacity needed to deliver ongoing programs and services. AISC's request for $300,000 annually reflects the funding needed to sustain its province-wide operations, support effective administration and coordination, and leverage additional project funding. The proposed amount was also informed by provincial funding models for other environmental and agricultural organizations.

We encourage the Government of Alberta to give favourable consideration to AISC's request. Investing in the long-term capacity of this established provincial delivery partner would help municipalities and other organizations continue their work to protect Alberta's agricultural lands, communities and natural resources from invasive species.

Sincerely,

[Name]
[Title]
[Municipality/Agricultural Service Board]

Cc:
The Honourable Danielle Smith, Premier of Alberta
The Honourable Grant Hunter, Minister of Environment and Protected Areas
The Honourable Todd Loewen, Minister of Forestry and Parks
The Honourable Brian Jean, Minister of Energy and Minerals
The Honourable Devin Dreeshen, Minister of Transportation and Economic Corridors
The Honourable Jason Nixon, Minister of Treasury Board and Finance

Lac La Biche County
welcoming by nature.

Office of the Mayor

September 4, 2026

The Honourable Tara Sawyer
Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation
Members of Executive Council
Executive Branch
131 Legislature Building
10800 - 97 Avenue
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

RE: Declaration of Agricultural Disaster

Dear Minister Sawyer,

On behalf of Lac La Biche County Council, this letter serves as formal notice that Lac La Biche County is declaring a State of Agricultural Disaster due to excessive and persistent precipitation experienced throughout the 2026 growing season.

The prolonged wet conditions have resulted in overly saturated fields, restricted field access, delayed agricultural operations, crop deterioration, and significant challenges with harvesting. Agricultural producers throughout the County are facing substantial crop losses, reduced crop quality, increased operating costs, and the potential loss of crops that cannot be harvested due to field conditions.

Council recognizes that these circumstances extend beyond the normal challenges associated with seasonal weather and have placed significant financial and operational pressure on local producers and the broader agricultural community.

Lac La Biche County Council is therefore formally declaring a State of Agricultural Disaster and calling upon the Government of Alberta, the Federal Government, and relevant agricultural agencies to recognize the severity of these conditions and the impacts they are having on local agricultural producers.

Council urges the appropriate authorities to assess the extent of agricultural losses and consider the circumstances facing producers when reviewing existing agricultural programs and supports.

Lac La Biche County Council remains committed to advocating for local agricultural producers and supporting the long-term viability of our agricultural community.

Sincerely,

Paul Reutov
Mayor, Lac La Biche County

cc: Laila Goodridge, Member of Parliament, Fort McMurray—Cold Lake
The Honourable Brian Jean, Minister of Energy and Minerals, MLA for Fort McMurray-Lac La Biche
Manny Deol, Chief Administrative Officer, Lac La Biche County
Agriculture Financial Services Corporation (AFSC)
Kara Westerlund, President, Rural Municipalities of Alberta
Agricultural Service Board Provincial Committee
Association of Alberta Agricultural Fieldmen

COUNTY OF
TWO HILLS

P.O Box 490, Two Hills AB T0B 4K0
Telephone: (780) 657-3358 Fax: (780) 657-3504

DECLARATION OF STATE OF AGRICULTURAL DISASTER

On August 31, 2026 the County of Two Hills Council unanimously declared a state of Agricultural disaster for the County of Two Hills No. 21. This declaration was made to call attention to the excess moisture that has been seen throughout the County. Across the entire County, Crops are flooded, hay land and pastures have water sitting everywhere, crop yields and quality are extremely poor, and feed quality is extremely poor. Due to the amount of moisture received this spring, many producers struggled to get the crops planted, thus numerous quarter sections were not seeded, the significant rainfall received across the County has left crops decimated. Producers have been faced with record amounts of rain in this growing season, and the financial hardships will be affecting every producer in our Municipality. Producers are encouraged to consult AFSC or visit their website for updated information on assistance programs.

The County of Two Hills Council issued this declaration of Agricultural Disaster to encourage the Provincial and Federal Governments to initiate necessary programs that may provide relief to producers. In the past, such relief has varied from income tax deferral programs to Farm Disaster Assistance programs that could assist with decimated crops, flooded fields and very poor-quality hay crops.

The County of Two Hills Council declares a local State of Agricultural Disaster due to the hardship weather conditions and excessive moisture and flooding have placed on local farmers. The County of Two Hills will notify Provincial and Federal Governments of the State of Agricultural Disaster and request a disaster recovery program be set up to address this agricultural disaster. Producers are encouraged to contact AFSC at 1-877-899-2372 or visit their website -- www.afsc.ca -- for the most updated information.

For information regarding the declaration of Agricultural Disaster contact the County of Two Hills Agricultural Services Department, Agricultural Fieldman, Elden Kozak at 780-657-3358.

cc:
Tara Sawyer, Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation
Minister Rick Wilson, Minister of Mental Health and Addiction
Kara Westerland, President Rural Municipalities of Alberta
Agricultural Financial Services Corporation
Shannon Stubbs, MP Lakeland
Jackie Armstrong-Homeniuk; MLA Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville
Association of Alberta's Agricultural Fieldmen

Go back to All News

POSTED ON OCT 27, 2026

Leduc County Declares Municipal State Of Agricultural Disaster

Agriculture Mayor and council

Leduc County Council declared a Municipal State of Agricultural Disaster at its regular Council meeting this afternoon, in response to record amounts of rainfall throughout the growing season.

In a report shared with Council, Administration shared statistics gathered throughout the season, with highlights that include:

- **367 to 478 mm** of precipitation fell between May 1 and Aug. 31, with more than half of that amount falling in a two-week period in June.
- **One quarter** of annually cropped acres were lost due to oversaturated soil.
- **75 per cent** of pea and barley crops are in poor condition.
- **30 per cent** of wheat crops are in poor condition.
- **50 per cent** of canola crops are in poor condition.

"These statistics all point to what Council has directly or indirectly saw this year. We've heard from producers across the County that are struggling, and I want to tell our farmers that we recognize the issues they are facing,

and the impact these adverse conditions are having on their livelihoods. By making this declaration, we want to draw attention to the issue and encourage other levels of government to provide support where possible."

Leduc County Mayor Tanni Doblanko

In addition to the excessive moisture received during the growing season, producers faced harvesting challenges as well. Morning dew, frost and cool daytime temperatures limited the amount of harvesting producers were able to accomplish each day, with many crops needing to be artificially dried to prevent storage issues.

A declaration of an agricultural disaster is a tool that allows municipalities to bring awareness to the issues impacting local farmers. The declaration does not automatically trigger access to increased funding from either the provincial or federal government; however, it can open access to already existing programs.

Go back to All News

More News

OCT 27

Leduc County Council reappoints Tanni Doblanko…

At this morning's organizational meeting, Mayor Tanni Doblanko was reappointed…

OCT 26

Western Inland Ports form alliance to strengthen…

October 26, 2026 – Ottawa, ON – CentrePort Canada, Global Transportation Hub…

SEP 22

Leduc County Council approves 2026-2029 Strategic…

At the Sept. 22, 2026, regular Council meeting, Leduc County Council approved its…

STRATHCONA COUNTY

September 29, 2026

The Honourable Tara Sawyer
Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation
131 Legislature Building
10800- 97 Avenue
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

Dear Minister Sawyer,

Declaration of Agricultural Disaster

On behalf of Council, I am writing to inform that on September 15, 2026, Strathcona County Council passed a motion to declare a state of agricultural disaster due to excessive moisture conditions.

Record rainfall through June and July, surpassed records dating back to 1901. These extreme weather conditions have left the agricultural community facing significant hardship. Crop yields have been significantly reduced due to prolonged flooding and local supplies of high-quality hay are minimal. As of September, it is estimated that 20-25% of cropped acres have been completely flooded while much more are experiencing lower yields due to crop stress.

As a result, agricultural producers across Strathcona County have experienced severe and ongoing impacts, including reduced weed control, vulnerability to disease pressure, and drown-out losses. Pasture and hay production have also been significantly affected. This situation creates a serious risk of feed shortages heading into the winter-feeding season.

Livestock operations also face challenges, including increased incidence of animal health concerns, such as hoof rot. Due to delayed crop and forage development producers face increased production costs associated with sourcing, transporting, or purchasing feed from other parts of Alberta.

Strathcona County is home to many horticultural operations that grow a diverse number of crops from vegetables to flowers. Unfortunately, due to operating on a small land base, many of these producers were affected with nearly 100% yield losses this year. Several of these crop types are also not covered under crop insurance programs further aggravating the losses.

While the full financial impact of this growing season has yet to be determined, it is already evident many producers will experience substantial losses. The numerous damages and ongoing uncertainty are placing considerable financial pressure on farm operations, while also contributing to increased stress and mental health challenges for farm families throughout the County and the broader central Alberta region.

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
2001 Sherwood Drive
Sherwood Park, Alberta, T8A 3W7

780-464-8000
www.strathcona.ca

Strathcona County respectfully requests that the Government of Alberta recognize the severity of this agricultural disaster and continue working collaboratively with municipalities, industry partners, and other orders of government to support producers in responding to and recovering from these extraordinary conditions. We encourage the Province to assess the effectiveness of existing programs and consider appropriate measures to address gaps where significant impacts are not currently covered.

Furthermore, Strathcona County Council requests that the Government of Alberta work with the Agriculture Financial Services Corporation (AFSC) to help ensure they refrain from using data collected during the 2026 growing season when determining future flood insurance rates. While insurance rates are appropriately adjusted based on claims history, the flooding experienced in 2026 is exceptional and not representative of typical growing conditions. Incorporating this unprecedented year into future rate calculations could skew premiums and result in insurance costs not accurately reflecting the long-term flood risk faced by producers.

Agriculture remains a cornerstone of Alberta's economy and the vitality of its rural communities. With over 500 farms and 700 agribusiness operators, Strathcona County remains a strong contributor to the region and the provincial economy. Providing timely support to affected producers will help local farm families recover from the impacts of this disaster and strengthen the long-term resilience of Alberta's agricultural sector.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter. Strathcona County appreciates your attention to the challenges facing our agricultural producers and looks forward to working with the Province to support their recovery.

Sincerely,

Rod Frank, JD
Mayor
Strathcona County

Cc: Honourable Danielle Smith, Premier of Alberta
Honourable Rick Wilson, Minister of Mental Health and Addictions
Honourable Nate Glubish, MLA for Strathcona County- Sherwood Park
Honourable Jackie Armstrong-Homeniuk, MLA for Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville
Kara Westerlund, President, Rural Municipalities of Alberta
Agricultural Financial Services Corporation
Agricultural Service Board Provincial Committee
Alberta Association of Agricultural Fieldman

COUNTY OF Barrhead

5306 – 49 Street, BARRHEAD, ALBERTA T7N 1N5
Phone: 780-674-3331; Fax: 780-674-2777
Email: info@countybarrhead.ab.ca
www.countybarrhead.ab.ca

November 24, 2026

Office of the Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation
307 Legislature Building
10800-97 Avenue
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

RE: COUNTY OF BARRHEAD DECLARATION OF A STATE OF AGRICULTURAL DISASTER – 2026 GROWING SEASON

Dear Minister Sawyer,

On behalf of County of Barrhead Council, I am writing to advise you that, at its November 17, 2026, meeting, Council declared a State of Agricultural Disaster because of excessive precipitation during the 2026 growing season.

Between June and end of July, rainfall totals across the County ranged from 15 to over 24 inches. The resulting excessive moisture and overland flooding affected seeded acres, forage crops, pastureland, agricultural infrastructure, crop development, and crop quality.

Field saturation reached maximum levels in many areas throughout the County, with standing water reported in seeded and sprayed crops and made field access impossible in most areas of the County. Weather conditions created challenges for agricultural producers and heightened the economic strain on farming operations throughout the County of Barrhead.

The County of Barrhead Council asks the Provincial Government to assess the extent and severity of these impacts and to consider implementing an assistance program for affected producers in 2026.

We appreciate your consideration and support with the challenges facing Alberta's agricultural producers in this difficult year. We look forward to hearing from your department.

Sincerely,

Walter Preugschas
Deputy Reeve

cc: Hon. Danielle Smith, Premier of Alberta
Hon. Todd Loewen, Minister of Forestry and Parks
Hon. Grant Hunter, Minister of Environment and Protected Areas
Hon. Rick Wilson, Minister of Mental Health and Addictions
Glen van Dijken, MLA Athabasca-Barrhead-Westlock
Kara Westerland, President Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA)
Agricultural Financial Services Corporation
Agricultural Service Board Provincial Committee
Alberta Association of Agricultural Fieldman

RESOLUTION to Repeal Alberta Bill 22,
the Animal Protection Amendment Act, 2026

RESOLUTION to Repeal Alberta Bill 22, the Animal Protection Amendment Act, 2026

WHEREAS Bill 22 was rushed through the Alberta legislature this spring, with only 24 days between introduction and passage of third reading, without meaningful consultation with the rank-and-file producers it regulates; and

WHEREAS Bill 22 provides peace officers, the courts and the Alberta government with significantly expanded powers over animal owners; and

WHEREAS Bill 22 allows the Minister to add new legally-binding regulations in at least 20 subject areas, regulations that producers and the public have not seen, and on which MLAs have not voted;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Alberta's Agricultural Service Boards request that the Alberta Ministery of Agriculture and Irrigation repeal Alberta Bill 22 before it comes into force.

SPONSORED BY: Provincial Agricultural Service Board Committee
MOVED BY: _____
SECONDED BY: _____
CARRIED: _____
DEFEATED: _____
STATUS: Provincial
DEPARTMENT: Alberta Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Note: Small superscript numbers refer to supporting citations below.

Slide 1: We are a group of farmers in central Alberta who are concerned about Alberta Bill 22, the Animal Protection Amendment Act, 2026.[1] As animal owners, we care deeply about the health and welfare of our animals, and we fully support actions that protect them. The existing Alberta Animal Protection Act[2] was well designed and contained all the tools governments needed to protect animals. Most animal abuse or neglect stems from economic hardship, mental health issues, or family or societal breakdown, and Alberta Bill 22 does nothing to address those fundamentals. Instead, Bill 22 provides increased powers of policing, penalties and government control over animal owners. It will not reduce animal suffering, but it will endanger animal welfare and the autonomy and economic viability of family farms and the food supply.

Slide 2: This is our resolution. Bill 22 was rushed through the legislature before most producers were even aware of it, and with no time for proper consultation. We are concerned about the significantly expanded powers for peace officers, the government and the courts. We are also concerned that Bill 22

was passed and received royal assent even though the minister can add an unlimited number of regulations to Bill 22[1], and nobody has seen the regulations.

Slide 3: Alberta Bill 22 was introduced in the legislature on March 30, 2026. It quickly and quietly passed third reading on April 23, during the height of the busy spring season. Bill 22 received royal assent on May 14, only 45 days after it was introduced. Hansard transcripts show there was no acknowledgement or discussion in the legislature regarding the potential harms of Bill 22 to family farms in Alberta[3]. The Alberta Beef Producers, Alberta Pork and Alberta Cattle Feeders' Association submitted a joint letter to the Alberta Government in May of 2025 expressing their concerns, but those concerns were not addressed. At the regional meetings of the Alberta Beef Producers in October, a resolution requesting more consultation about Bill 22 was passed at all eight meetings at which it was presented. We have held meetings and information sessions with our own MLAs and the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation over the spring, summer and fall. To our knowledge they have not swayed from their determined course.

Slide 4: Under Alberta Bill 22, peace officers can take action against animal owners **before any charge is laid**, based only on their **opinion** of distress or potential **future** distress[1]. They don't need proof. They can:

- Issue a corrective action order "including any terms and conditions the peace officer considers appropriate" (S. 3-3a),
- "Enter any land, vehicle or place"(S. 3-4). (Entry to a private home without a warrant is not allowed except once a prohibition order has been issued) (S. 4-2; S. 12-8c).
- Take custody of an animal and/or order it to be transported or kept on the premises and cared for as ordered by the peace officer (S. 3-3b, 3-3c, 3-5, 3-6, 3-7),
- "Humanely destroy an animal or cause the animal to be humanely destroyed, and the ower of the animal is liable for the costs of destroying and disposing of it" (S.3-12).

Slide 5: Under Alberta Bill 22, peace officers have the power, **before any charge is laid**, to apply to the courts for a **prohibition order**.[1] A prohibition order is a loss of rights. A person can be prohibited from owning or residing with animals for the rest of their lives, and peace officers must know your residential address at all times. Under a prohibition order they can enter your house without a warrant.[1]

Slide 6: Some of the peace officers' new powers of investigation seem geared towards disease control. They can examine and copy records and electronic documents, take samples from and test animals and their food and water, and they can require any person to answer all questions related to animals, all while excluding everyone from the questioning except the person's counsel.[1] They can inspect all these things without a warrant. Allowable sites include facilities used for boarding, training, sale, assembly, slaughter and transport, but they can expand this list by regulation to "any other land, vehicle or place."[1]

Slide 7: Bill 22 introduces jail terms and massively increased financial penalties. Punitive measures appear designed not to protect animals but to financially destroy animal owners if they dare object to government over-reach. Jail time and penalties of $250,000 per animal per day are stipulated,[1] with no definition of the conditions under which such harsh deterrence is applied. I don't think family farms are meant to survive penalties of $250,000 per animal per day, let alone jail time.

Slide 8: Animal owners are liable for the costs of all culling, and the costs of seizure, custody, transport, medical care and legal fees, while the government, courts, peace officers and vets are free from all liability if they act in quote "good faith", [1] which is impossible to disprove. Again, animal abuse is more likely to occur in cases where owners are not able to pay reparations.

Slide 9: Bill 22 aligns with Section 48 of the federal CFIA's Health of Animals Act.[4] Both Bill 22 and Section 48 allow for actions such as what the CFIA calls "disposal" or "treatment" without proof of distress or disease.

Slide 10: Many animal owners in Canada have experienced the devastation when the CFIA acts without proof of disease or distress, and several have testified under oath about their experiences,[5, 6, 7] like when their entire herds are culled because of the suspicion of disease.

Slide 11: Regulations are the "instrument of choice" for the CFIA.[8] Alberta Bill 22 was passed and given royal assent without MLAs or the public having any knowledge of the regulations to be contained in Section 15. Section 15 allows the government to write, in more than 20 subject areas, new legally-binding regulations governing, quote "any matter the Minister considers necessary to administer this Act", meaning that we are being asked to accept an Act whose rules have not been written and on which none of us were ever consulted. At this time, the public still doesn't have access to the regulations that will be incorporated in Section 15. We do know, however, that Regulation 15-1q allows the government to "make regulations respecting the care of animals", and we do know that Section 15(2) permits outside codes and standards to be incorporated wholesale into binding regulation[1]. Where will they get these "outside codes and standards" for animal care?

Slide 12: It seems that they might be planning to incorporate the animal care codes currently being developed by the National Farm Animal Care Council (NFACC) for all types of farm animals.[9] Each NFACC *Code of Practice* contains many ***Requirements*** that "may be enforceable under federal and provincial regulation," or coercion by industry associations. One **Requirement** in NFACC's new draft *Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Beef Cattle*[10] is that "A Veterinary-Client-Patient Relationship, or **VCPR, must** be established and maintained with a licensed practicing veterinarian." A VCPR means "The client has given responsibility of medical care to the veterinarian and agreed to follow the veterinarian's instructions." So under a VCPR, even though you might own your animals, you don't get to decide what medical treatments they receive. A "recommended practice" is to "establish a risk-based vaccine program."[10] We have received no assurance that the NFACC Codes,

including the mandatory VCPR for beef cattle, won't be incorporated as a legally-binding regulation within Section 15 of Bill 22.

Slide 13: Who is the National Farm Animal Care Council? NFACC is a division of Animal Health Canada. Animal Health Canada (AHC) was started in 2010 as a not-for-profit corporation jointly funded by members for the purpose of controlling animal disease.[11] In addition to the NFACC division, Animal Health Canada includes the divisions of *Canadian Animal Health Surveillance System* and *Emergency Management*.[11] Animal Health Canada, or AHC's, first guiding principle is "One Health."[12] On the surface "One Health" sounds like a good thing. But you don't have to go far down into the weeds to find out what "One Health" really means – it means we have to eat less farmed animal protein to save the planet.[13]

Slide 14: I'm taking quotes from this paper published in 2023[13] to illustrate how they start with something innocuous – we should, quote, "consider the interrelationships between human, animal, and environmental wellbeing to achieve a healthier and more sustainable world"[13] but it quickly devolves into the idea that it's peoples' need for healthy farmed food that is ruining the environment and causing disease, and **that's** why we have to reduce our consumption of meat and animal protein.[13] It's pretty funny that they say farming is the problem. No mention of all the AI data centres planned for Alberta, which will take over our farm land, use up the water, destroy the environment, and be used, not to grow food, but for technocratic control of humanity. The government of Canada, the CFIA, and Animal Health Canada all adhere to the "One Health" framework.[14]

Slide 15: Primary members and funders of AHC include the CFIA, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, all provincial governments and three major meat processors.[11] Primary members and funders also include the Canadian Cattle Association, the National Cattle Feeders Association, and nine other major federal producer groups, including those for veal, dairy, poultry, eggs, pork, and horses.[11] The success of our producer groups presumably rests on the production of animal products, and the livestock industry is integral to our economy, so it is surprising that these groups are primary members in a corporation who's first guiding principle is reduced meat consumption under the One Health paradigm.

Slide 16: Animal Health Canada and the CFIA have for several years been making detailed preparations for an outbreak of foot and mouth disease, or FMD,[15, 16] even though Canada has been free of FMD since 1952, and we enjoy the status of "FMD-free where vaccination is not practiced." The CFIA and Animal Health Canada both have detailed plans for an emergency response to FMD, including tracing, surveillance, quarantine, culling and vaccination.[17, 18] To quote from the Animal Health Canada, or AHC, website, they have been working with "industry stakeholders" and Chief Veterinary Officers to "identify gaps", and "clearly define roles and responsibilities" "to ensure a smooth and coordinated response" where "everyone knows what to do during an FMD outbreak."[17] AHC states they will use vaccination "to slow the spread until the culling can be performed," and that their goal is to ensure "clear and actionable protocols for effective vaccination.[17]

Slide 17: Vaccination might seem like a good way to deal with an FMD disaster until you look at the details. Traditional vaccines for foot-and-mouth disease have been available since the early 1900s, but the CFIA has given more than $57.5 million to biotech firms for the development of a completely new form of injectable, based on self-amplifying mRNA, also called self-replicating mRNA.[18, 19, 20, 21, 22] The money was funneled through Canada's IDRC[19], which also adheres to One Health principles.[20]

Slide 18: Self-amplifying products are much more potent than regular mRNA products, because the antigens enter cells and replicate for the rest of an animal's life. There is no off switch. Epidemiologists are concerned about the potential for self-amplifying mRNA to cause severe adverse health effects in animals and the humans that consume them,[23, 24, 26, 26] and they are calling for a moratorium and recall of these products.[24]

Slide 19: No government website ever declares which FMD vaccines they are planning to use. However, they are spending an awful lot of money on development of the self-amplifying mRNA versions, and they repeatedly stress their benefits over traditional vaccines. The CFIA clearly states on their website that they have never conducted any testing for the safety of mRNA products in animals or the humans who eat the meat or drink the milk, nor do they have any plans to do so. Quote: "No special monitoring of the human safety of the product will be carried out."[27] An FMD outbreak might be a justification for emergency use authorization without testing.

Slide 20: Meat and milk from animals infected with FMD is completely safe to eat and the disease is not transmissible to humans.[28] Animals vaccinated for FMD can never be exported. CFIA confirms that all of the vaccinated animals must either be slaughtered (vaccinate to kill) or inventoried and subject to movement restrictions for the duration of their lives (vaccinate to live).[16]

Slide 21: Animal Health Canada and the CFIA are both making extensive preparations for a disease outbreak that would devastate our livestock industry and family farms. Farmers face prohibitive fines and even jail time for non-compliance with any of the stipulations for government over-reach in Alberta Bill 22. The CFIA and Animal Health Canada both operate on the One Health assumption that livestock production and consumption are bad for the health of people and the planet. As farmers, we know the opposite is true. Is Bill 22 one of the pieces necessary "to ensure a smooth and coordinated response" to an FMD outbreak? By their primary membership in Animal Health Canada, are the Alberta government and producer groups unwittingly supporting the destruction of the livestock industry, which would be terrible for livestock producers, consumers, Alberta's economy, and all Albertans?

Slide 22: Alberta Bill 22 paves the way for government overreach that seriously threatens the viability of family farms, livestock and our food supply. Bill 22 does not need further consultation; it needs to be repealed before it is proclaimed and comes into force.

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