



# AGENDA

## Agricultural Service Board Meeting

9:00 AM - Thursday, March 27, 2025  
Council Chambers

Page

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	<b>A. CALL TO ORDER</b>
	<b>B. CONFIRMATION OF AGENDA</b>
	<b>C. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES</b>
3 - 5	1. <b><u>Agricultural Service Board Meeting Minutes</u></b> <a href="#">Agricultural Service Board - 22 Oct 2024 - Minutes</a>
	<b>D. DELEGATIONS</b>
6 - 15	1. <b><u>9:30 a.m. - Alan Efetha - ASB Provincial Specialist, Alberta Agriculture &amp; Forestry</u></b> <a href="#">Lethbridge County Field Visit 2025 Letter</a> <a href="#">ASB Field Visit Checklist 2025</a> <a href="#">Field Visit FAQ-2025</a>
	2. <b><u>10:00 a.m. - Neha Vaid Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Sustainable Agriculture, Department of Biological Sciences, U of L</u></b>
	<b>E. NEW BUSINESS</b>
16 - 40	1. <b><u>Agricultural Service Board 2025 Level of Service</u></b> <a href="#">Agricultural Service Board 2025 Level of Service</a>
	<b>F. CORRESPONDENCE</b>
	1. <b><u>Bill C-293</u></b>
41	2. <b><u>Summer Tour</u></b> <a href="#">ASB Summer Tour Letter - Wheatland County 2026</a>
42 - 44	3. <b><u>Declared Disasters</u></b> <a href="#">MD of Smoky River - Declaration of Ag Disaster for Honey</a> <a href="#">Birch Hills County - Declaration of Agricultural Disaster - Signed</a> <a href="#">Northern Sunrise County - Declaration of Natural Disaster for Honey</a>

[Production](#)

- 45 - 49      4.    **ASB Provincial Conference Decorum/Code of Conduct**  
[City of Northern Lights](#)  
[Big Lakes County](#)  
[MD of Spirit River](#)
- 50 - 51      5.    **Tariffs on Canadian Agriculture Products**  
[Tariffs on Canadian Agriculture Products](#)
- 52            6.    **Farmer Pesticide Certification Program**  
[Farmer Pesticide Certification Program](#)

**G. OTHER BUSINESS**

1.    **Extension Update - Matthew Wells**
2.    **ASB Resolution Summary - Chairman John Kuerbis**
- 53 - 59      3.    **ASB Position Statements**  
[ASB Position Statement - Farm-Saved Seed](#)  
[ASB Position Statement - Richardson's Ground Squirrel Control](#)

**H. ADJOURN**



# MINUTES

## Agricultural Service Board Meeting

9:00 AM - Tuesday, October 22, 2024  
Council Chambers

The Agricultural Service Board of Lethbridge County was called to order on Tuesday, October 22, 2024, at 9:00 AM, in the Council Chambers, with the following members present:

**PRESENT:** Councillor Klaas VanderVeen – Chair  
Deputy Reeve John Kuerbis  
Councillor Lorne Hickey  
ASB Member at Large Ken Coles  
ASB Member at Large Dan Chapman  
ASB Member at Large Logan Miller  
Chief Administrative Officer Cole Beck  
Executive Assistant Candice Robison  
Manager, Utilities and Agricultural Services Gary Secrist  
Senior Project Manager Bill MacMillan  
Rural Extension Specialist Matthew Wells  
Assistant Agriculture Fieldman Derek Vance

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Klaas VanderVeen called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.

**B. CONFIRMATION OF AGENDA**

9-2024 Deputy Reeve Kuerbis MOVED that the October 22, 2024 Agricultural Service Board Meeting Agenda be approved, as presented. CARRIED

**C. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

**C.1. Agricultural Service Board Meeting Minutes**

10-2024 ASB Member at Large Chapman MOVED that the April 22, 2024 Agricultural Service Board Meeting Minutes be approved, as presented. CARRIED

**D. REPORTS**

**D.1. Manager, Agriculture Services Report**

Gary Secrist, Manager, Agricultural Services & Utilities presented the Agriculture Services Report.

Chairman Klaas VanderVeen recessed the meeting at 10:00 a.m.  
Chairman Klaas VanderVeen reconvened the meeting at 10:05 a.m.

**E. DELEGATIONS**

**E.1. 10:00 a.m. - Michele Konschuh - University of Lethbridge Research Associate - Research Collaboration: Soil Health and Irrigation Expansion**

Michele Konschuh, University of Lethbridge Research Associate was present to discuss research collaboration projects on soil health and irrigation expansion.

**F. NEW BUSINESS**

**F.1. South Region Conference Agenda and Resolutions**

The South Region ASB Conference agenda was reviewed. There will be no resolutions coming forward.

**G. CORRESPONDENCE**

The Agricultural Service Board reviewed the following correspondence items:

- G.1. ASB Report Card Final
- G.2. 2024 Lethbridge County DED Survey Report
- G.3. Ag for Life Letters
- G.4. Ag Know Letters
- G.5. ASB Conference Letters
- G.6. PMRA Letters
- G.7. Weed Control Regulation Letters
- G.8. Wild Boar Farming
- G.9. Kneehill County ASB Letter to Minister

**H. CLOSED SESSION**

**I.1. - 2025 Bank of Montreal/Calgary Stampede Farm Family Awards Program (FOIP Section 19 - Confidential Evaluations)**

11-2024 Councillor Hickey MOVED that the Agricultural Service Board Meeting move into Closed Session, pursuant to Section 197 of the Municipal Government Act, the time being 10:40 a.m. for the discussion on the following:

I.1. - 2025 Bank of Montreal/Calgary Stampede Farm Family Awards Program (FOIP Section 19 - Confidential Evaluations)

Present during the Closed Session:  
 Agricultural Service Board  
 Chief Administrative Officer  
 ASB Staff  
 Administrative Staff  
 CARRIED

12-2024 Deputy Reeve Kuerbis MOVED that the Agricultural Service Board Meeting move out of the closed session at 10:58 a.m. CARRIED

**I.1. 2025 Bank of Montreal/Calgary Stampede Farm Family Awards Program (FOIP Section 19 - Confidential Evaluations)**

13-2024 Deputy Reeve Kuerbis MOVED that the Agriculture Service Board nominates three families, in order of preference, to be contacted by the Manager, Agriculture Services for acceptance of the 2025 Bank of Montreal Farm Family Award. CARRIED

**F. NEW BUSINESS**

**F.2. Chair and Vice Chair**

14-2024 Councillor Hickey MOVED to recommend to Council that John Kuerbis be appointed as Chair of the Agricultural Service Board. CARRIED

15-2024 Deputy Reeve Kuerbis MOVED that Lorne Hickey be appointed the Vice Chair of the Agricultural Service Board. CARRIED

16-2024 Deputy Reeve Kuerbis MOVED to recommend to Council that John Kuerbis and Lorne Hickey are the voting members for the ASB. CARRIED

**I. OTHER BUSINESS**

**H.1. Soil Erosion Video**

Matthew Wells, Rural Extension Specialist presented the soil erosion video.

**J. ADJOURN**

17-2024 Deputy Reeve Kuerbis MOVED that the Agricultural Service Board Meeting adjourn at 11:39 a.m. CARRIED

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ASB Chairman

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CAO



**Crop Assurance Programming  
Section**  
Room 107, J.G. O'Donoghue Bldg.  
7000 – 113 Street  
Edmonton, AB T6H 5T6  
Phone: 780-938-4149  
[www.agriculture.alberta.ca](http://www.agriculture.alberta.ca)

March 4, 2025

John Kuerbis, Chair  
Agricultural Service Board  
Lethbridge County  
100, 905 – 4<sup>th</sup> Ave South  
Lethbridge, AB  
T1J 4E4

Dear John Kuerbis:

The Agricultural Service Board (ASB) Program Team is co-ordinating 14 field visits across Alberta this year, including a visit to your municipality. The purpose of our visit is to strengthen our relationships with ASBs and to fulfill recommendations made by the Office of the Auditor General. This is a unique opportunity for the ASB to highlight programs, accomplishments and meet with provincial ASB staff. In the past, ASBs have felt the visits are beneficial as there is often significant learning opportunities discovered, both by the municipality and by provincial ASB staff.

We would like to schedule a date to meet with the ASB between June and mid-September 2025. We know this is a busy time of year for ASB programs, but, as the objective of our visit is to see your program results, this is most successful when programs are operating.

If you have any health, biosecurity or safety protocols please let us know as our ASB team will comply with all requirements in effect on the day of the field visit. To ensure compliance, we will work closely with your Agricultural Fieldmen to ensure our team has discussed these protocols and has made any necessary modifications to the visit prior to arrival.

A typical field visit is a full day process starting with a short meeting (approx. one hour) with your ASB board members followed by an office and field tour with your Agricultural Fieldman and any staff or board members that you wish to have there. The primary focus of the field visit is to tour the municipality to see examples of programs implemented under the Legislative and if applicable Resource Management and/or Rat Program Funding Streams of the ASB Grant

Program. The field visit focuses on the outcomes and deliverables of your ASB program, and we have included a checklist outlining the requirements and supporting documentation we will review for the field visit.

To make the most of the field visit we are requesting that you provide us with copies/links for the documentation in advance of the visit. This allows us to focus on verifying outstanding items with more time to showcase your projects and programs. We have also included a “Frequently Asked Questions” document with this letter that provides a general overview of the field visit process.

Once you have selected the dates that will work for your field visit, please contact Alan Efetha, Provincial ASB Specialist at [alan.efetha@gov.ab.ca](mailto:alan.efetha@gov.ab.ca) or phone (403) 381-5121, as he will be coordinating the dates for the 14 field visits scheduled this year. You can also contact Alan if you have any questions regarding the field visit.

We look forward to the opportunity connecting with you this summer.

Sincerely,



Kerriane Koehler-Munro, Manager  
Agricultural Service Board Program

Enclosure

cc: Gary Secrist, Agricultural Fieldman  
Cole Beck, CAO

## 2024 ASB Field Visit Checklist

For each requirement criteria please provide the requested documentation in advance to the AGI staff assigned to your field visit or have the documents ready and available for review at the field visit.

### Section 1: Legislated Duties & Requirements

#### Requirement 1: Legislated activities reported to council as per section 4 of ASB Act

(Summary of activities - Minimum annually)

<u>Criteria</u>	<u>Requested Documentation</u>	<u>Documentation Provided or Available for Review</u>	
ASB is appointed by council Ag Fieldmen is appointed by council	- Council minutes; - Council minutes; valid inspector card	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
ASB members meet section 3 (3) of ASB act (knowledgeable on ag and qualified to develop ag related policies)	- ASB orientation training - ASB members are familiar with agricultural concerns	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
ASB is active	- ASB meeting minutes; frequency of meetings: minimum quarterly	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Summary of activities provided to council	- Report - Council minutes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Minimum one report(s) provided to council per year	- Council minutes: # reports/year	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Council accepts the annual report	- Council minutes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

#### Requirement 2: ASB acts as an advisory body to council to support section 2 (a) through (e) of ASB Act.

<u>Criteria</u>	<u>Supporting Findings</u>	<u>Documentation Provided or Available for Review</u>	
ASB provides input into municipal plans on areas of agricultural interest	- Municipal strategic plan, - ASB Strategic plan (Document) - Date of last review - Documents – show ASB input to Council	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



**Requirement 3: Promote and develop agricultural policies as per ASB Act Section 2e**

Minimum annually; Current within year; policies and bylaws for the following:

- **Weed Control Act**
- **Agricultural Pests Act**
- **Soil Conservation Act**
- **Animal Health Act**
- **ASB Act**

<u>Criteria</u>	<u>Documentation Requested</u>	<u>Documentation Provided or Available for Review</u>	
ASB has and applies policies and/or bylaws for <i>WCA</i>	- List or links to applicable policies and/or bylaws - Examples of application	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
ASB has and applies policies and/or bylaws for <i>APA</i>	- List or links to applicable policies and/or bylaws - Examples of application	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
ASB has and applies policies and/or bylaws for <i>SCA</i>	- List or links to applicable policies and/or bylaws - Examples of application	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
ASB has and applies policies and/or bylaws for <i>AHA</i>	- List or links to applicable policies and/or bylaws - Examples of application	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
ASB has and applies policies and/or bylaws for <i>ASB act</i>	- List or links to applicable policies and/or bylaws - Examples of application	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Requirement 4: Appeal committees meet requirements of Acts.**

<u>Criteria</u>	<u>Documentation Requested</u>	<u>Appeal Committee Names</u>	<u>Documentation Provided or Available for Review</u>	
ASB has appeal committee that meets the <i>WCA</i>	- Council minutes - Committee names		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
ASB has appeal committee that meets the <i>APA</i>	- Council minutes - Committee names		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
ASB has an appeal committee that meets <i>SCA</i>	- ASB in place (Policy, motion)		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Requirement 5: Inspector Appointments and Inspections**

<u>Criteria</u>	<u>Documentation Requested</u>	<u>Documentation Provided or Available for Review</u>	
Local authority appoints inspectors under the WCA 7(1)	- Council minutes – inspector appointment date(s) Seasonal; part/full time	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Local authority provides inspectors with identification WCA 10 (1)	- Photo of valid Inspector ID'(s)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Local authority appoints sufficient # inspectors under the APA 9 (1) (2) 10 (1) (2)	- Council minutes – inspector appointment date(s) Seasonal; part/full time	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Local authority provides inspectors with identification APA 17 (3)	- Photo of valid Inspector ID'(s)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Inspector(s) with Form 7 certification APA Regulation 14 (2)	- Photo of valid Form 7 certification	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Local authority appoints at least one inspector under the SCA 15 (1) (2)	- Council minutes – inspector appointment date(s)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Municipality meets requirements listed in section 2c of ASB Act for AHA	- List of activities, emergency response plan, policy –ability to assist in reporting of/ control of notifiable animal disease	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Requirement 6: Act Compliance & Enforcement**

<u>Criteria</u>	<u>Documentation Requested</u>	<u>Documentation Provided or Available for Review</u>	
Local authority has procedures in place for issuing notices and tracking enforcement under the WCA Part 3	WCA procedures and programs in place for: - Issuing notices - Controlling/eliminating weeds - Tracking enforcement - Copy of notice issued - Photo/description/example of tracking enforcement process - Photo/description of control/elimination programs: spray records; mowing; biological	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Seed cleaning plants licensed WCA Regulation Part 1 (2) – (7)	- Inspection/licensing procedure - # licensed seed cleaning plants - Copy of inspection report/license(s) issued	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Requirement 6: Act Compliance & Enforcement continued**

<u>Criteria</u>	<u>Documentation Requested</u>	<u>Documentation Provided or Available for Review</u>
Local authority has procedures in place under the <i>APA</i> 12 (1)- (4), 13 (1) and <i>APA</i> Pest & Nuisance Control Regulation 14 (2) (3) (6 (7) (8) (9) (13)	<p><i>APA</i> procedures and programs for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Issuing notices</li> <li>- Controlling/eliminating pests</li> <li>- Tracking enforcement</li> <li>- Copy of notice issued</li> <li>- Photo/description/example of tracking enforcement process</li> <li>- Photo/description of control/elimination programs: treatment records; biological</li> </ul>	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
Local authority has procedures in place under the <i>SCA</i> 4 (1) (2), 5 6 (1) – (3) * Procedure to monitor soil condition is mandatory; actions taken are based upon local circumstances	<p><i>SCA</i> procedures and programs for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Monitoring soil condition</li> <li>- Issuing notices*</li> <li>- Tracking enforcement*</li> <li>- Photo/description/example of tracking enforcement process*</li> <li>- Copy of notice issued*</li> </ul>	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

**Requirement 7: Program & Policy Awareness (Section 2 of ASB Act)**

<u>Criteria</u>	<u>Documentation Requested</u>	<u>Documentation Provided or Available for Review</u>
ASB has Awareness & Education (A&E) programs in place for all legislated responsibilities under ASB Act 2 (b) – (c)	<p>List of A&amp;E activities (website, social media et al) for:</p> <p><i>WCA</i> * <i>APA</i> * <i>SCA</i> <i>AHA</i> <i>ASB Act</i></p>	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
ASB has programs in place for all legislated responsibilities under ASB Act 2 (d) (e)	<p>List of A&amp;E activities (website, social media et al) that promote and protect viable and sustainable agriculture with a view to improving the economic viability of the agricultural producer and meet the needs of the municipality</p>	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

**Section 2: Resource Management Requirements**      **Received Resource Management Funding: Yes No**

**Requirement 8: Resource Management Programming (as per grant agreement)** - describe activities and programming supported under this funding stream.

<u>Criteria</u>	<u>Documentation Requested</u>	<u>Documentation Provided or Available for Review</u>	
ASB – SCAP programming	List of activities; photos	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
ASB – EFP programming	List of activities; photos	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
ASB –Resource management programming	List of activities; photos	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Section 3: Rat Program Requirements**      **Received Rat Program Funding: Yes No**

**Requirement 9: Rat Programming (as per grant terms and conditions)** - describe activities and programming supported under this funding stream

<u>Criteria</u>	<u>Documentation Requested</u>	<u>Documentation Provided or Available for Review</u>	
Area 1, 2, 3 monitoring	List of activities; photos	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Area 1, 2, 3 control	List of activities; photos	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Bait stored securely, tracking bait issued	Bait type and quantity tracked; photos of secure bait storage	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## **Field Visit FAQs**

### **Why do you do field visits?**

The ASB Program has been asked by the Auditor General to conduct a field visit approximately every five years to ensure that the grant dollars we allocate are supporting activities related to enforcement of delegated legislation and resource management extension activities. To accomplish this, we conduct a field visit that focuses on learning about and verifying the ASB's activities that provide assurance for compliance and meet the terms and conditions for your ASB legislative, and if applicable resource management and/or rat programs.

### **How many field visits do you do every year?**

Our goal is to do 15 field visits every year. We select two - five municipalities per region for a field visit annually. We will be doing 15 field visits in 2025.

### **What time of year will you come for the field visit?**

The field visits are scheduled between mid June and mid September.

### **What is the process for a field visit?**

A field visit consists of three components: meeting with the ASB members, reviewing outstanding documentation and then a field tour with the Agricultural Fieldman.

We prefer to keep the meeting with the ASB members short to allow us to look at as many projects as possible. One to two hours is generally enough time for us to meet with the ASB members. This is their opportunity to ask questions regarding the program and to discuss any concerns.

We want to spend the majority of our time in the field looking at examples of your programs and accomplishments. We want to see examples of your inspection and control programs, resource management projects, and anything that you do that is unique in your municipality. We will need time to stop and take pictures of the different projects you have completed or are currently working on.

We understand that it may not always be possible to visit with your ASB members as this is the busiest time of year for them. If this is the case, we will arrange to meet with the Fieldman during the spring /summer and then schedule a time in the winter to meet with ASB members as needed.

### **Who will be coming to do our field visit?**

A member of the Crop Assurance Programming Section plans to attend every field visit. In some instances, another AGI staff member may attend the field visit. For example, Regional Liaisons, Plant Bee Health Surveillance Section, Natural Resource, Wild Boar and Rat program colleagues may be invited to attend to gain a better understand the role of ASBs and agricultural fieldmen.

### **Should my ASB members come on the “field” portion of the visit?**

It is up to each individual ASB to decide whether the ASB members come for the “field” portion of the visit. You may also wish to have other staff members or partners join us at some stops.

### **What will you be looking for?**

The purpose of a field visit is to be able to verify to the Auditor General that ASBs are using the ASB Grant dollars allocated to them to support programs related to enforcement of delegated legislation and if applicable resource management extension and rat program. This means we want to see if you have inspection, enforcement and control programs in place related to the *Agricultural Pest Act*, *Soil Conservation Act* and *Weed Control Act* and that you are prepared to assist with the *Animal Health Act*. We will also ask questions to see if you are in compliance with duties related to the *Agricultural Service Board Act*. Please reference the checklist for examples of the documentation we will be looking for.

For example, questions we may ask:

- Did you provide a report of your activities to your council? Did council accept the report?
- Has the municipality appointed the appropriate appeal committees for the Acts you are delegated to enforce?
- Do you have policies in place for administering the Acts you are delegated to enforce and support?

We will provide you with a checklist in advance of the field visit that outlines the requested documents which includes the examples listed below. If possible, we are requesting that you send copies/links in advance of your visit to allow as much time as possible to see examples of your programs and projects. Examples of requested documentation includes but is not limited to:

- Records for your inspection and spraying programs
- Newsletters or other advertisements for extension events you hosted
- Policies
- Form 7 certificates
- Appointment of inspectors
- Inspector ID cards
- Letters issued for enforcement

## Typical Field Visit Activities

- Meet in the office to review maps and data related to inspection and application programs
  - Take pictures or get copies of notices issued, maps for spraying programs, examples of newsletters or advertisements for extension events
  - Look at AIMS/other programs that collect data for inspection programs
  - Copies of policies that you work under
  - Certification (i.e., Form 7) and inspector/officer identification
- Tour the shop to look at equipment for programs
  - Herbicide storage
  - Toxicant storage
  - Rental equipment yard
- Meet with inspectors and other Agriculture Program staff
  - Inspectors may be asked to produce their identification
- Road tour:
  - Look at areas where roadside vegetation program has been completed
  - Roadside seeding
  - Biocontrol projects
  - Fields where notices have been issued/enforcement completed
  - Resource management projects
    - Solar water demonstration sites
    - Riparian sites
    - Bioengineering projects
    - Ag plastics recycling
  - Rat program
    - Inspection and control sites
    - Investigation records
  - Other activities your ASB may be involved in
    - Tank loader sites
    - Water pipeline
  - Any other project related to enforcement of the Acts or included on your ASB Strategic Plan and grant application
  - Problems you are currently managing
  - Areas where a problem has been successfully managed
  - Unique programs/projects you are working on
  - Areas that are unique to your municipality

# AGENDA ITEM REPORT



**Title:** Agricultural Service Board Level of Service  
**Meeting:** Agricultural Service Board - 27 Mar 2025  
**Department:** Agriculture Service Board  
**Report Author:** Gary Secrist

## APPROVAL(S):

Candice Robison, Executive Assistant

Approved - 17 Mar 2025

## STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT:



**Governance**



**Relationships**



**Region**



**Prosperity**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Agricultural Service Board has updated the Level of Service(LOS) document formalize the activities that will be performed by the department in 2025. Each year as the budget is set the Level of Service document will be brought forward with any revisions for the ASB to review. This document must then be forwarded to Council for approval.

## RECOMMENDATION:

Moved that the Agricultural Service Board 2025 Level of Service be recommended to County Council for approval.

## REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S):

To provide an accurate and measurable Level of Service that is formed on an approved budget. Department staff will work within the budget to deliver the services based on Council priorities and field-level observation of maintenance needs. The goals set forward in this document will require flexibility as weather conditions can be a major factor in delivering Agricultural Services programs.

## PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION / POLICY:

Council has previously approved the Agriculture Department Level of Service on a yearly basis.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Agricultural Service Board Level of Service Document will provide clear and measurable target for ASB activities that will be set annually by Council. Modifications to the document must take into consideration our baseline obligations under the ASB Grant which will be renewed for a five year term from 2025-2029. The document will be available to the public who will gain a better understanding of service levels provided and approved.

## ALTERNATIVES / PROS / CONS:



That the Agricultural Service Board can suggest changes to the LOS to administration to be brought forward for council resolution at a future meeting. This could include increases or decreases which would be estimated by administration for proposed budget amendments.

**FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

The budget for 2025 is the main consideration of the Level of Service that can be provided. As the budget amounts have been considered and passed the Level of Service provides a business plan to carry our ASB services with the set budget amount as a template.

**LEVEL OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:**

Inform       Consult       Involve       Collaborate       Empower

**ATTACHMENTS:**

[Level of Service](#)

# Agricultural Service Board

Level of Service

Created July 2022, Revised January 2025





## Agricultural Service Board Business Plan

### Vision

Lethbridge County Agricultural Service Board effectively supports one of the strongest agricultural economies in Canada.

### Mission

Lethbridge County council and staff will support Agriculture Sustainability in all sectors through strong leadership and empowered employees. Our parks environment will inspire residents to be active and involved in their rural community.

### Values

**Service:** Agriculture is the foundation of Lethbridge County. We are committed to achieving the highest level of customer service through evolving programs that support Agriculture.

**Financial Accountability:** Lethbridge County Agricultural Service Board will make wise use of financial resources in providing efficient and effective services.

**Empowered Staff:** Lethbridge County Agricultural Service Board intends to recruit and retain committed staff by providing a positive work environment that encourages teamwork, initiative, safety, respect, innovation, learning and hard work. Support and resources are provided to help employees succeed and contribute to our goals.

**Strong Relationships:** Lethbridge County Agricultural Service Board is committed to maintaining strong working relationships with provincial and federal governments, provincial and regional associations, agricultural commodity groups, neighboring municipalities, research and training institutions and educational institutions.

**Sustainability:** We are committed to using our resources wisely, thinking about long-term success and continuity in our operations and the services we provide. Our staff perform their duties safely and thoroughly, taking the time to make informed decisions to work efficiently and effectively. We measure new ideas and innovations carefully to make sure they'll have a positive impact and keep us strong for the long haul.

**Continuous Improvement:** We regularly look at how we can improve our processes and systems, ensuring our producers, residents, landowners and businesses are receiving services that are relevant and meaningful. Our staff are committed to learning and growing their skillset to best serve our community.



## Table of Contents

Agricultural Service Board Business Plan.....	2
Vision.....	2
Mission .....	2
Values .....	2
Purpose, Considerations, and Level of Service.....	6
Scope of Responsibility.....	7
Level of Service (LOS).....	7
Delivery/Support of the Weed Control Act .....	7
Strategy.....	7
Level of Service Measures.....	7
Delivery/Support of the Agricultural Pests Act.....	8
Strategy.....	8
Level of Service Measures.....	8
Annual Inspections or Trapping Requirements .....	8
Delivery/Support of the Soil Conservation Act .....	8
Strategy.....	8
Level of Service Measures.....	9
Support of the Animal Health Act.....	9
Strategy.....	9
Level of Service Measures.....	9
Resource Management/Rural Extension Program.....	9
Strategy.....	9
Level of Service Measures.....	9
Roadside Mowing.....	10
Strategy.....	10
Level of Service Measures.....	10
Rental Equipment .....	10
Strategy.....	10



Level of Service Measures.....	10
Parks, Cemetery, Hamlet, and Subdivision Maintenance .....	11
Strategy.....	11
Level of Service Measures.....	11
Parks.....	11
Cemetery.....	11
Hamlets/Subdivisions.....	11
Brushing/Tree Removal/Pruning Program.....	11
Strategy.....	11
Level of Service Measures.....	11
Delay of Maintenance Operations.....	12
Conclusion.....	12
Guidelines and Procedures .....	13
Appendix A: Weed Control and Vegetation Management.....	13
Appendix B: Agricultural Pest Act Policies.....	13
Appendix C: Soil Conservation Act.....	13
Appendix D: Roadside Mowing.....	13
Appendix E: Rental Equipment and ASB Schedule of Fees.....	13
Appendix F: Parks Policies .....	13
Appendix G: Maps .....	13
Appendix A: Weed Control and Vegetation Management .....	14
Guidelines and Procedures.....	14
1. Integrated Weed Management.....	14
2. Weed Inspections.....	14
3. Weed Notices .....	15
4. Leafy Spurge and Knapweed.....	15
5. Prohibited Noxious Weeds.....	15
6. Clubroot Inspection and Control.....	16
7. Seed Cleaning Plants .....	17



Appendix B: Pest Control and Management .....	17
Guidelines and Procedures.....	17
1. Surveys.....	17
2. Live Traps.....	17
3. Norway Rat .....	17
4. Coyotes .....	18
5. Skunks .....	18
6. Grasshopper Control.....	18
Appendix C: Soil Conservation Management .....	19
Guidelines and Procedures.....	19
1. Soil Conservation.....	19
Appendix D: Roadside Mowing.....	20
Guidelines and Procedures.....	20
1. Roadside Mowing.....	20
Appendix E: ASB Rental Equipment.....	20
Guidelines and Procedures.....	20
1. Rental Equipment .....	20
Appendix F: Parks, Cemetery, Hamlet, and Subdivision Maintenance .....	21
Guidelines and Procedures.....	21
1. Parks.....	21
2. Playground & Trail Inspection.....	21
3. Supplemental .....	21
Lethbridge County Roadside Mowing – Map.....	22
Lethbridge County Roadside Spraying – Map.....	23



## Purpose, Considerations, and Level of Service

Lethbridge County Agricultural Service Board (hereinafter referred to as ASB) was officially formed in 1958. Operating under the Agricultural Service Board Act, Lethbridge County has always been a strong proponent in administering Provincial Legislation including:

- Alberta Weed Control Act
- Alberta Soil Conservation Act
- Alberta Agricultural Pest Act
- Animal Health Act

The Agricultural Service Board (ASB) is committed to the promotion of the quality of life in a rural environment. The ASB does this by providing services, information, and new technology in cooperation with other governments, jurisdictions, and agencies. This is achieved by establishing “levels of service” that ensure statutory requirements are met with consideration for the collective interests of residents and clients.

The ASB receives a portion of its funding from the provincial government for implementing the delegated legislation at the ground level. The ASB carries out mowing, spraying, and seeding programs for industry, landholders (i.e., owners and lessees) other County departments and several parks and cemeteries in the County. The County also rents specific equipment to county landholders to help them maintain their obligations under the County’s various legislative responsibilities. The ASB partners with the province and other partners to provide Rural Extension programming aimed at delivering Alberta’s agriculture environmental sustainability initiatives. Vegetation management constitutes a large portion of the ASB duties, including both mowing and spraying activities on all County owned right of way. Other ASB Vegetation Management areas include Cemeteries, Hamlets, Subdivisions, and County-owned Yards, Grader Camps and Water and Wastewater sites. The Parks department is also an additional service of the ASB.

Lethbridge County actively delivers weed and pest control programs that support agriculture production. Programs are designed to assist producers in both identification and control measures for designated weeds and pests. Weed control efforts give special attention to areas of concern that focus on:

- lands adjacent to the bed and shores of water resource features,
- haul routes to intensive livestock operations and other agricultural/rural businesses,
- CPKC Railway right of ways and,
- Recent road construction projects.

Roadside mowing efforts also contribute to the integrated program as ASB staff operate a fleet of mowers and are given the flexibility to control weed infestations occurring outside the first pass.



## Scope of Responsibility

Lethbridge County ASB is responsible for Vegetation Management on all County owned right of way and public areas. Herbicide applications are also performed for Alberta Transportation on all Provincial Highways that are within County Municipal Boundaries.

## Level of Service (LOS)

It is the expectation of County landholders, citizens, and the agriculture community that the ASB programs maintain a Level of Service that supports agriculture production and rural living. The Level of Service is achieved through funding for a balance between legislated commitments and the needs of our rural population.

## Delivery/Support of the Weed Control Act

### Strategy

To control the spread and establishment of noxious and prohibited weeds in Lethbridge County on both private and public land with guidelines provided under the following guidelines and procedures included in Appendix A; Weed Control and Vegetation Management:

- Weed Notices.
- Weed Extension and Inspections
- Leafy Spurge and Knapweed Vegetation Management
- Prohibited Noxious Weed Control
- Seed Cleaning Plants
- Integrated Weed Management

### Level of Service Measures

- Two weed inspectors will be continuously appointed.
- 33% of municipal right of way will be sprayed to control regulated weeds. The 33% rotation is illustrated in the Spraying LOS map.
- All newly seeded roads will be mowed on an as needed basis to control weeds until the grass can withstand a chemical application.
- Revisit the GPS (200+) marked weed sites and hand pull or apply herbicide where necessary.
- Enter into a yearly service agreement with Volker Stevin to provide weed control on Alberta Transportation highways in the County. The contract will provide chemical weed control with allocations used on previously identified weed infestation or hot spots. Funding amounts for this service will depend on the Provincial budget.
- Work with the Planning and Development Department to develop a permitting program/system for Solar and other large industrial developments to include submission of vegetation and pest control plans to ensure compliance with the Weed Control and Pest Control Acts.



## **Delivery/Support of the Agricultural Pests Act**

### **Strategy**

To control the spread and establishment of declared pests and nuisances as outlined in the Pest and Nuisance Regulation with guidelines provided under the following guidelines and procedures included in Appendix B Pest Control and Management:

- Surveys
- Norway Rat
- Coyotes
- Skunks
- Live Traps
- Grasshopper Control

### **Level of Service Measures**

- Two (2) pest inspectors are continuously appointed.
- Up to date pest information is available on the County website and in County Newsletters, which are published at least once a year.

### **Annual Inspections or Trapping Requirements:**

- In cooperation with Alberta Agriculture, a total of ten (10) fields are inspected for Clubroot and Virulent Blackleg.
- Two (2) fields will be monitored for Bertha Army Worm.
- Bacterial Ring Rot inspections will take place on potato fields with locations supplied by the Alberta Potato Growers Association.
- Each township in the County will be surveyed for grasshoppers annually.
- Lethbridge County will have a supply of twenty (20) traps for Magpie and Skunk Control.

## **Delivery/Support of the Soil Conservation Act**

### **Strategy**

To prevent or stop soil erosion from occurring as outlined in the Soil Conservation Act with guidelines provided under guidelines and procedures in Appendix C Soil Conservation Management.

### **Level of Service Measures**

- Two (2) soil conservation officers will be appointed.
- All known instances of soil erosion will be inspected.
- Current information on how to control soil erosion will be posted on the County website and will be promoted through the County newsletter and social media.
- Lethbridge County will have available tractors, straw crimper, cultivator with lister shovels and heavy equipment to carry out control measures when necessary.
- Work with the Planning and Development Department to develop a permitting program/system for Solar and other large industrial developments to include submission of soil conservation and plans to ensure compliance with the Soil Conservation Act.

## **Support of the Animal Health Act**

### **Strategy**

To support the Chief Provincial Veterinarian should a disease outbreak occur in Lethbridge County.

### **Level of Service Measures**

Have staff trained on relevant diseases and how to support an animal disease outbreak situation should one occur. Training is provided during mandatory In-Service Training for Members of the Association of Agricultural Fieldmen or other seminars that may occur.

## **Resource Management/Rural Extension Program**

### **Strategy**

To provide rural extension programming that supports rural living and sustainable agricultural practices.

### **Level of Service Measures**

- Collaboration of internal staff to provide Resource Management services and activities.
  - External expertise is leveraged to further support the program, as appropriate.
- Deliver Environmental Farm Plans to County producers.
- Assist producers with Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership Programs.
- Collaborate with various stakeholders and support applied research projects that support sustainable agriculture.
- Work with drag line manure applicators to identify and install culvert road crossings that are mutually beneficial to producers and the County.
- Work with commercial manure applicators to extend Agricultural Operations Practices Act regulations and guidelines regarding appropriate manure management and application.
- Publish three newsletters to support Rural Living and Agricultural Services programs.

- Provide and promote programs to improve Riparian Health in the County
  - Work cooperatively with the four watershed groups.
  - Maintaining open communication with the Oldman Watershed Council, Cows and Fish and other groups and agencies focused on environmental sustainability.

## Roadside Mowing

### Strategy

To maintain a mowing program that is aesthetically pleasing while also providing: weed control, elimination of sightline issues and snow drift prevention with guidelines provided in Appendix D Roadside Mowing.

### Level of Service Measures

- Paved roads will be mowed starting in the beginning of June. Mowing will then be treated on an as-needed basis during the growing season.
- All gravel roads will be mowed twice throughout the growing season commencing in mid- June. If re-growth is minimal a second cut may not be required. Mowing LOS map indicates the dryland areas of the County where a second cut is typically not required in dry years.
- A deeper cut into the ditch is made where heavy weed infestations or excess vegetation that may cause snow drift issues are identified.

## Rental Equipment

### Strategy

To provide a variety of agriculture related equipment to loan or rent to producers with guidelines provided in Appendix E ASB Rental Equipment.

### Level of Service Measures

- The following pieces of equipment will be available: Brillion Drills, Plastic Mulcher, Tree Planter, and Chisel Plow with Lister shovels, Plastic Roller, and Straw crimper.
- Yearly rental rates will be set on an annual basis through the Lethbridge County Schedule of Fees Bylaw #25-001.



## **Parks, Cemetery, Hamlet, and Subdivision Maintenance**

### **Strategy**

To maintain all public areas to a consistent and set standard that Lethbridge County stakeholders can rely on as described in the following Appendix F Parks, Cemetery, Hamlet, and Subdivision Maintenance.

- Parks Vegetation Management
- Playgrounds and Trail Inspection

### **Level of Service Measures**

#### **Parks**

- Parks are maintained on an as needed basis from May until October. Cycle times for mowing will vary on moisture conditions, cycling from 10-14 days between maintenance.
- Playgrounds are inspected by staff certified in playground inspection every two months, at a minimum.
- Trail Systems are inspected for safety related issues in the Spring and Fall.
- Enhance and renew playground equipment in cooperation with community groups.

#### **Cemetery**

- Cemeteries are mowed twice per year, subject to prevailing drought or excess moisture conditions.
- Mowing events are scheduled by the Supervisor of Agriculture on an "as needed" basis.

#### **Hamlets/Subdivisions**

- Hamlets are mowed twice a year, or more, depending on moisture conditions.
- Water and Wastewater Lagoons will be mowed and cleared of woody plants once per year or more depending on regrowth.
- Back-alley gravel levelling is completed, as needed, in the Spring and Fall.

## **Brushing/Tree Removal/Pruning Program**

### **Strategy**

To maintain all Lethbridge County Roadways, Water and Wastewater Lagoons, Parks, and Environmental Reserve land to address overgrowth and hazards created by trees, brush, and general vegetation.

### **Level of Service Measures**

- Three (3) staff members are available for brushing work during the months of November to March when weather conditions allow.
- Priority brushing is completed where intersection obstruction is noted.
- Brushing will only take place from June to October for downed trees or brush caused by adverse weather conditions.
- Tree maintenance is performed in Parks and Environmental Reserves on an on an as needed basis.



## **Delay of Maintenance Operations**

Vegetation Management on public spaces are impacted by multiple factors that can disrupt services and/or affect maintenance operations timelines, such as:

- Unsuitable or inclement weather.
- Equipment breakdowns.
- Intense farm activity causing safety considerations.
- Manpower shortage due to illness or absenteeism.
- Municipal emergencies.
- Public health emergencies (e.g., pandemic).

## **Conclusion**

Lethbridge County ASB activities are a balance between legislated responsibility and levels of service defined by Council as representatives of the public. The ASB Grant, which provides supplemental funding, was renewed for a five-year term in 2025 (i.e., 2025 – 2029), all legislated activity is also set out in this document. The province requires annual reporting on ASB activities to demonstrate that the County's commitments are met for both the Legislative and Resource Management Grant funding streams.

# Appendices

## Guidelines and Procedures

### Appendix A: Weed Control and Vegetation Management

1. Integrated Weed Management
2. Weed Extension and Inspections
3. Weed Notices
4. Leafy Spurge and Knapweed Vegetation Management
5. Prohibited Noxious Weed Control
6. Clubroot Inspection and Control
7. Seed Cleaning Plants

### Appendix B: Agricultural Pest Act Policies

1. Surveys
2. Live Traps
3. Norway Rat
4. Coyotes
5. Skunks
6. Grasshopper Control

### Appendix C: Soil Conservation Act

1. Soil Conservation Management

### Appendix D: Roadside Mowing

1. Roadside Mowing

### Appendix E: Rental Equipment and ASB Schedule of Fees

1. ASB Rental Equipment
2. Schedule of Fees/ASB Related Portion of Bylaw #25-001

### Appendix F: Parks Policies

1. Parks Vegetation Management
2. Playground and Trail Inspection

### Appendix G: Maps

1. Roadside Mowing
2. Roadside Spray Program



## Appendix A: Weed Control and Vegetation Management

### Guidelines and Procedures

#### 1. Integrated Weed Management

- 1.1. To control weeds in Lethbridge County on a timely basis; to ensure compliance with the Weed Control Act.
- 1.2. Paved and oiled roads receive priority.
- 1.3. Spraying is carried out on a three-year rotation within the County, as follows:
  - Area 1 – All right-of-way west of RR-23-0 north of 519, west of 22-0 south of 519 and west of Highway 4 south of Lethbridge.
  - Area 2 – All right-of-way south and east of the Oldman River and east of Highway 4.
  - Area 3 – All right-of-way east of RR 23-0 north of 519 and south of 519 east of RR 22-0. The areas not scheduled for spraying will receive spot treatment.
- 1.4. Weeds that are too mature to be effectively controlled with chemicals or that are located too close to sensitive crops are mowed to control the spread of seeds. It is recognized that inclement weather could impede implementation of portions of the LOS.
- 1.5. Only chemicals registered for right-of-way use are employed.
- 1.6. Spray truck operators will exclude areas such as farmstead frontages and where canals, drainage channels, sloughs, and ponds encroach on the road allowance. Spray booms are also turned off 100 meters on either side of visible beehives.
- 1.7. Landowners that do not want their road allowances sprayed must visibly post DO NOT SPRAY signage so that operators have sufficient time to react.
- 1.8. "Do Not Spray" signs are available at the Lethbridge County office.
- 1.9. a. Landholders posting "Do Not Spray" must sign a "No Spray Zone" Agreement with Lethbridge County.
- 1.10. The County's rights-of-way are not considered as a "buffer zone" for organic farming purposes.
- 1.11. Operators will only spray when weather and wind conditions warrant and will keep a daily log of roads sprayed, weather conditions, wind direction and speed and the PCP number of the chemical being applied.
- 1.12. Difficult to control noxious or prohibited noxious weeds located in rights-of-way in small, contained infestations are mowed, pulled or hand-sprayed with a selective herbicide registered for control of the specific species involved.
- 1.13. The roadside spraying program is advertised prior to commencement of spray activities.
- 1.14. Roadside spraying is coordinated with roadside mowing to avoid duplication.

#### 2. Weed Inspections

- 2.1. The Weed Inspector will enforce the Provincial Weed Control Act during the growing season from May to September.
- 2.2. The Inspector conducts their duties under the supervision of the Agricultural Fieldman or their designate.
- 2.3. The Inspector will contact landholders to provide weed control extension materials, where necessary.



- 2.4. County employees will always exercise suitable public relation skills when engaging landholders by applying a firm but fair approach.

### **3. Weed Notices**

- 3.1. Notices to remedy a weed problem are issued at the discretion of the Agricultural Fieldman or their designate.
- 3.2. Notices are issued under the provisions outlined in the current Alberta Weed Control Act.
- 3.3. When a landholder demonstrates non-compliance with a weed notice, remedial work will be implemented by the County, or its agents, and all related costs are applied against the landowner.
- 3.4. Where payment is not received for remedial work, the amount owing is placed on the tax roll as an additional levy against the affected lands.
- 3.5. In cases of continued non-compliance, the Agricultural Fieldman, or their designate, may determine that prosecution is the only remaining compliance instrument. In such cases, the ASB Committee will review the case and approve or reject initiation of legal action in a Court of Law.

### **4. Leafy Spurge and Knapweed**

- 4.1. During the growing season, the ASB will send operators to systemically survey, map and treat Knapweed and Leafy Spurge within the bed and shore and vacant public lands adjacent to water resource features.
  - 4.1.1. The County is compensated for costs associated with the water resource protection program through the ASB grant and a grant from Alberta Environment and Protected Areas.
- 4.2. Landowners adjacent to the bed and shore are encouraged to treat infestations of these weeds on their land. Where necessary, the County's Weed Inspector provides information to help landholders achieve effective results.
- 4.3. If the landowner does not respond to treatment requests for these species, a weed notice will be issued.

### **5. Prohibited Noxious Weeds**

- 5.1. When a prohibited noxious weed infestation is discovered or reported, the County will conduct a thorough inspection to determine the area affected and the number of plants present.
- 5.2. Where necessary, the affected landholder is issued a Weed Notice, as outlined under the Weed Control Act.
- 5.3. Where the landholder is provided with the option to treat infestations occurring in row cropped fields.
- 5.4. The landholder is obliged to hand rogue or spot spray, as many times as the Weed Inspector deems necessary, to destroy all prohibited noxious plant material.
- 5.5. Spot spraying must be with a non-selective herbicide registered for control of the prohibited noxious weed.
- 5.6. All impacted plant material must be disposed of as directed by the Weed Inspector.
- 5.7. Where the weed inspector determines that:
  - 5.7.1. Rogueing or spot spraying a prohibited noxious weed occurring in a row crop is not feasible, or
  - 5.7.2. The noxious weed infestation eradication was not conducted effectively.



- 5.8. The affected area will, at the discretion of the Agricultural Fieldman, be the eradicated of all vegetation within the infested area though:
  - 5.8.1. The application of a non-selective herbicide to the entire infested area or,
  - 5.8.2. By plowing under the entire infested area.
- 5.9. Harvest of a previously affected row crop field must be supervised by the Weed Inspector to reduce potential cross-contamination risks.
- 5.10. Eradication methods for prohibited noxious weed infestations identified in non- row cropped areas are determined by the Weed Inspector.
- 5.11. Persons failing to comply with a noxious weed notification are subject to the provisions set out under the Weed Control Act.

## 6. Clubroot Inspection and Control

- 6.1. Field Surveys
  - 6.1.1. Yearly inspections for Clubroot in Canola are completed by Agricultural Services Staff.
  - 6.1.2. Clubroot survey method, sampling technique, reporting and calculation of disease incidence must follow standard protocols provided by the Alberta Clubroot Management Committee.
  - 6.1.3. Positive identification of Clubroot in canola shall be confirmed by certified laboratory testing. Submit samples to two independent accredited laboratories.
- 6.2. Disease Spread Reduction
  - 6.2.1. A "Notice to Control Pests" shall be issued to any landowner found to own the land infested with clubroot, pursuant to the Agricultural Pests Act.
  - 6.2.2. The "Notice to Control Pests" may include any or all the following conditions:
    - A four-year prohibition from growing canola, mustard, and brassica crops.
    - Following the four (4) year prohibition period, the landholder must notify the Agricultural Fieldman, in writing, of their intent to grow canola variety. Whereby, the canola must be a registered clubroot resistant variety.
    - An owner or occupant must follow a Clubroot Management Plan, intended to reduce the spread of the disease through movement of soil or equipment<sup>1</sup>.
    - All other users of the said field(s) must adhere to the same best management practices for Clubroot sanitation.
    - Prohibited crops grown within the four-year prohibition period will be destroyed, at the expense of the grower, using any appropriate means.
    - All neighboring landowners and all industries having genuine commercial interest will be notified of the confirmed positive Clubroot incidence and its location.
    - Canola growers in high-risk situations/locations should follow traditional Canola rotation recommendations (1 in 4 years) to reduce the risk of Clubroot introduction to clean fields.
    - Lethbridge County will review these guidelines and procedures within one year of a positive Clubroot result with the County.



## 7. Seed Cleaning Plants

- 7.1. Seed cleaning plants in the County and City of Lethbridge, or Village or Town whose borders are surrounded by the County will be inspected, as outlined in the Weed Control Act, Seed Cleaning Plant Regulations.
- 7.2. Seed plants are inspected once a year by the Agricultural Fieldman, or their designate.
- 7.3. A minimum of 20 samples per plant will be collected randomly throughout the year.
- 7.4. License issuance is based on test results, in conjunction with the licensing form provided under the Seed Cleaning Regulations of the Weed Control Act.

## Appendix B: Pest Control and Management

### Guidelines and Procedures

#### 1. Surveys

- 1.1. At the request of senior government, agricultural pest surveys are undertaken by ASB staff for diseases such as the Blackleg and Clubroot in Canola, Ring rot in Potatoes, Fusarium in cereals and the Grasshopper Forecast survey.
- 1.2. The Agricultural Fieldman will negotiate survey methodology and cost share agreements prior to any survey being undertaken.
- 1.3. Surveys are completed with consideration to optimum survey timing, accounting for competing county programs and staffing needs.

#### 2. Live Traps

- 2.1. Live traps are available to County landowners or lessees to enable control of Magpies, Raccoons, or Skunks.
- 2.2. A "Use Agreement," valid for 30 days, is required to obtain a live trap. The agreement includes the name, address, legal land description, telephone number and signature of the responsible landowner or lessee.
- 2.3. The landholder is charged for Live Traps in accordance with the Schedule of Fees Bylaw.

#### 3. Norway Rat

- 3.1. All valid, reported sightings of a Norway Rat are investigated immediately.
  - 3.1.1. The validity of Norway rat sightings is determined by the Agricultural Fieldman or their designate.
- 3.2. Where the investigation identifies a positive sighting, where the animal(s) cannot be readily eradicated, the Provincial Rat Specialist will be contacted for assistance.
- 3.3. Lethbridge County will contact the individual(s) who originally submitted the sighting to disclose the outcome of the investigation.

#### **4. Coyotes**

- 4.1. All complaints involving Coyote predation on domestic livestock will be investigated as soon as is feasibly possible.
- 4.2. The investigating officer, as outlined under the Agricultural Pests Act, will determine the best method for eliminating the predator responsible.
- 4.3. The appropriate forms must be completed prior to issuance of pest control devices, such as poison or snares.
- 4.4. In particularly difficult cases the Provincial Predator Control Specialist will be contacted to assist the producer.

#### **5. Skunks**

- 5.1. All complaints involving skunks behaving abnormally are dealt with immediately. Residents in rural areas are encouraged to eliminate the skunk immediately, preferably without destroying the head or brain.
- 5.2. Where the resident is unable, for any reason, to eliminate the animal, the investigating Officer will trap or eliminate any skunk(s) behaving abnormally on behalf of the complainant.
- 5.3. The Provincial Wildlife Disease Specialist will be contacted to assist with having the animal tested. Results obtained from the Animal Disease Research Institute (ADRI) will be shared with the complainant.
- 5.4. Where positive results are established, the Provincial Wildlife Disease Specialist will cooperate with Canadian Food Inspection Agency (lead agency), the Agricultural Fieldman and ADRI to organize the necessary control measures.
- 5.5. Live traps are available to residents wishing to remove nuisance skunks from their property. Live traps issuance is provided in accordance with the Schedule of Fees Bylaw.

#### **6. Grasshopper Control**

- 6.1. Lethbridge County will cooperate with landholders wishing to control the severity of grasshopper infestations on adjacent County owned rights-of-way.
- 6.2. Landholders planning to perform grasshopper control on County owned right-of- way must have approval from the Agricultural Fieldman or their designate.
- 6.3. Grasshopper control methodologies must use procedures that minimize risks to road users/traffic.
- 6.4. Applicants for grasshopper control on County lands must include a signed waiver agreement prior to execution of county implemented control measures.
- 6.5. Grasshopper control approvals are issued where pest numbers are above the economic threshold, as per provincial guidelines.
- 6.6. Control methodologies must follow label directions provided for an approved pesticide brand formulation registered for use on grasshoppers.



## **Appendix C: Soil Conservation Management**

### **Guidelines and Procedures**

#### **1. Soil Conservation**

- 1.1. Lethbridge County's ASB recognizes the protection of soil quality and integrity is vital to agricultural, environmental, and human sustainability.
  - 1.1.1. Alberta's Soil Conservation Act, its associated regulations, as periodically amended, provide the legislated mandate to prevent loss or deterioration of the soil resource.
  - 1.1.2. The County is authorized by the province to enforce the Soil Conservation Act
- 1.2. Soil Conservation notices are issued at the discretion of the Agricultural Fieldman or their designate.
- 1.3. When a notice is issued, non-compliance may result in remedial work, either by the County or a Contractor designated by the County.
- 1.4. Remedial work may include mitigation work in the affected field(s) or removal of resulting soil deposits in County owned roadways or drainage ditches.
- 1.5. When remediation of County owned/controlled ditches is deemed necessary, the landholder will be notified prior to commencement of the work, including an estimate of cost.
- 1.6. Costs for the work are calculated using current Alberta Roadbuilders and Heavy Construction Association rates as authorized by the County's Schedule of Fees bylaw.
- 1.7. Upon completion, costs for the remedial complete by the County or its contractor, the legally titled landholder is issued an invoice.
- 1.8. Where the invoice is not paid on or before the due date, the amount will be subject to penalties and interest charges.
- 1.9. All outstanding invoices 120 days or more overdue will be placed on the County tax roll and collected based on County Tax bylaws and policy.
- 1.10. In cases of continued non-compliance, the Agricultural Fieldman or their designate. may determine that prosecution is the only remaining compliance instrument. In such cases, the ASB Committee will review the case and approve or reject initiation of legal action in a Court of Law.

## **Appendix D: Roadside Mowing**

### **Guidelines and Procedures**

#### **1. Roadside Mowing**

- 1.1. This program is developed, planned, and implemented by the Agricultural Department, in conjunction with Public Works operations.
- 1.2. Paved or oiled roads are mowed beginning in June, on an as-needed basis, during the growing season.
- 1.3. If necessary, all gravel roads will be mowed twice throughout the growing season, commencing in mid-June.
  - 1.3.1. Where re-growth is minimal, a second cut may not be required.
  - 1.3.2. Inclement weather, such as heavy rain events or early winter, could prevent the completion of the program.
- 1.4. Grader operations are coordinated and implemented in a manner that minimizes interference with and efficiency of mowing operations.
- 1.5. Roadside spraying operations are coordinated and implemented in a manner that minimizes interference with and efficiency of mowing operations.

## **Appendix E: ASB Rental Equipment**

### **Guidelines and Procedures**

#### **1. Rental Equipment**

- 1.1. ASB rents equipment for use exclusively on land located within Lethbridge County boundaries.
- 1.2. A current ASB rental equipment list and fees are advertised annually.
- 1.3. A chronological applicants list is maintained, and equipment distribution is provided on a first come, first-serve basis, as near as practical.
- 1.4. County personnel are responsible for moving rental equipment to and between farms.
- 1.5. The applicant is responsible to service, clean and maintain rental equipment, as necessary, before it is returned to the County and/or passed onto the next applicant.
- 1.6. The applicant will provide suitable equipment and competent personnel to operate County equipment.
- 1.7. Customers are assessed fees on a per acre or maximum daily charge, as specified by the Schedule of Fees Bylaw, at the discretion of the County.
- 1.8. The program is evaluated annually to implement necessary LOS or guideline changes.

## **Appendix F: Parks, Cemetery, Hamlet, and Subdivision Maintenance**

### **Guidelines and Procedures**

#### **1. Parks**

- 1.1. County Parks maintenance is the responsibility of the Agricultural Department.
- 1.2. The Parks department consists of the following:
  - 1.2.1. All municipal designated hamlet playgrounds and equipment.
  - 1.2.2. Municipal designated green space and walking paths.
  - 1.2.3. Inactive municipal school yards.
  - 1.2.4. Cemetery maintenance at Elinor, Albion Ridge, White Lake, and Barons cemeteries.

#### **2. Playground & Trail Inspection**

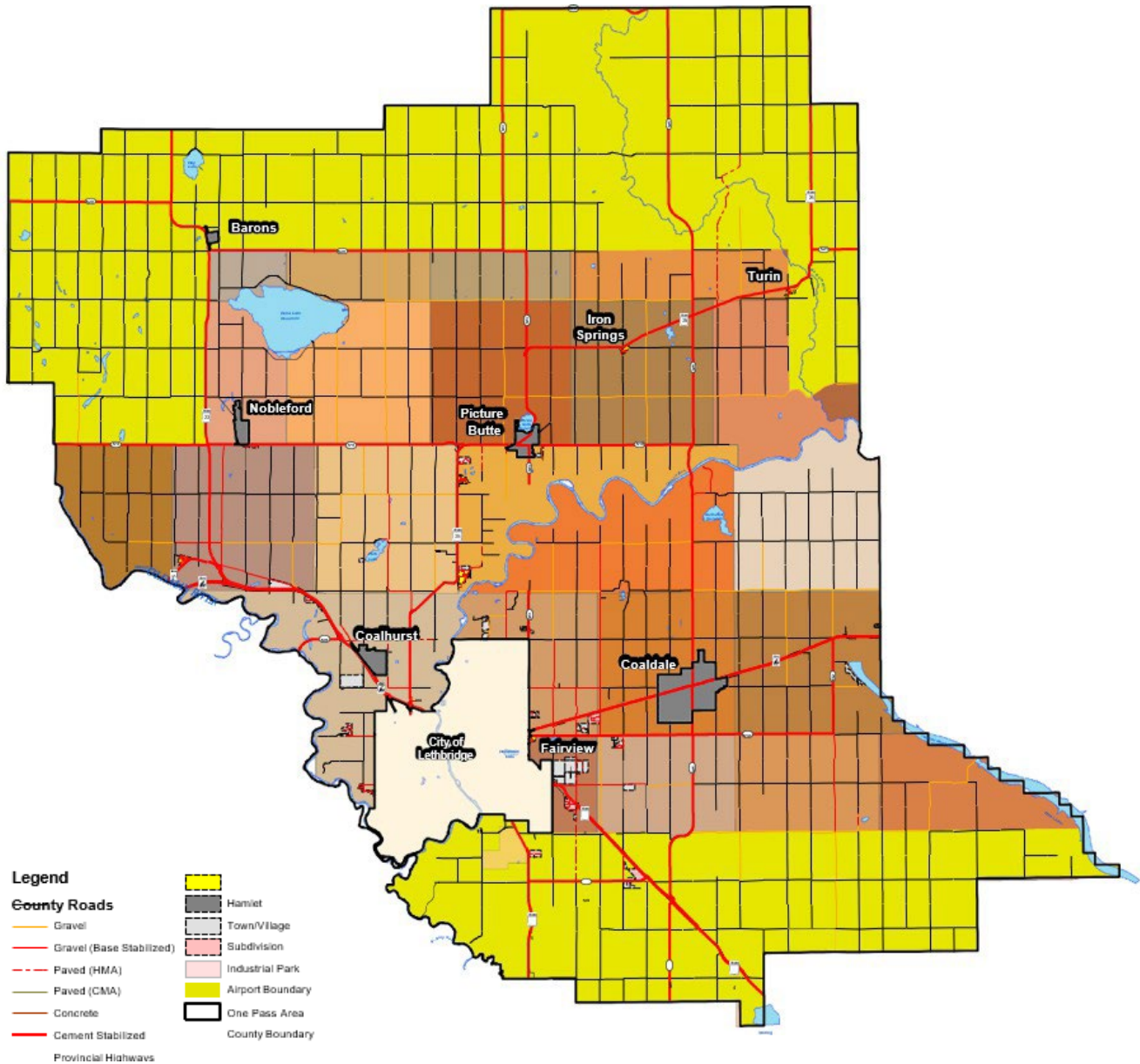
- 2.1. Playgrounds are inspected by staff certified in playground inspection every two months, at a minimum.
- 2.2. Lethbridge County trail systems are inspected by a department staff member on a semi-annual basis.
- 2.3. Inspections are recorded on the appropriate forms, including:
  - 2.3.1. Hazardous or potentially hazardous conditions.
  - 2.3.2. Corrective action required or taken to address identified hazards.
  - 2.3.3. Inspection date and inspector's signature.
  - 2.3.4. Inspection forms are submitted to the Agricultural Fieldman for review and coordination of necessary actions.

#### **3. Supplemental**

- 3.1. Playground equipment and Trails are also inspected by County crews during maintenance activities.
- 3.2. All equipment, facility and trail deficiencies identified by County maintenance crews are recorded and, wherever possible, corrected immediately.
- 3.3. Any debris, broken glass, foreign objects, etc. are removed from the site during inspection or maintenance activities.
- 3.4. Where identified deficiencies cannot be corrected immediately:
  - 3.4.1. The inspector or maintenance crew will erect caution tape to isolate the affected area.
  - 3.4.2. In such cases, qualified staff will be notified immediately to schedule the necessary corrective action as soon as is feasibly possible.

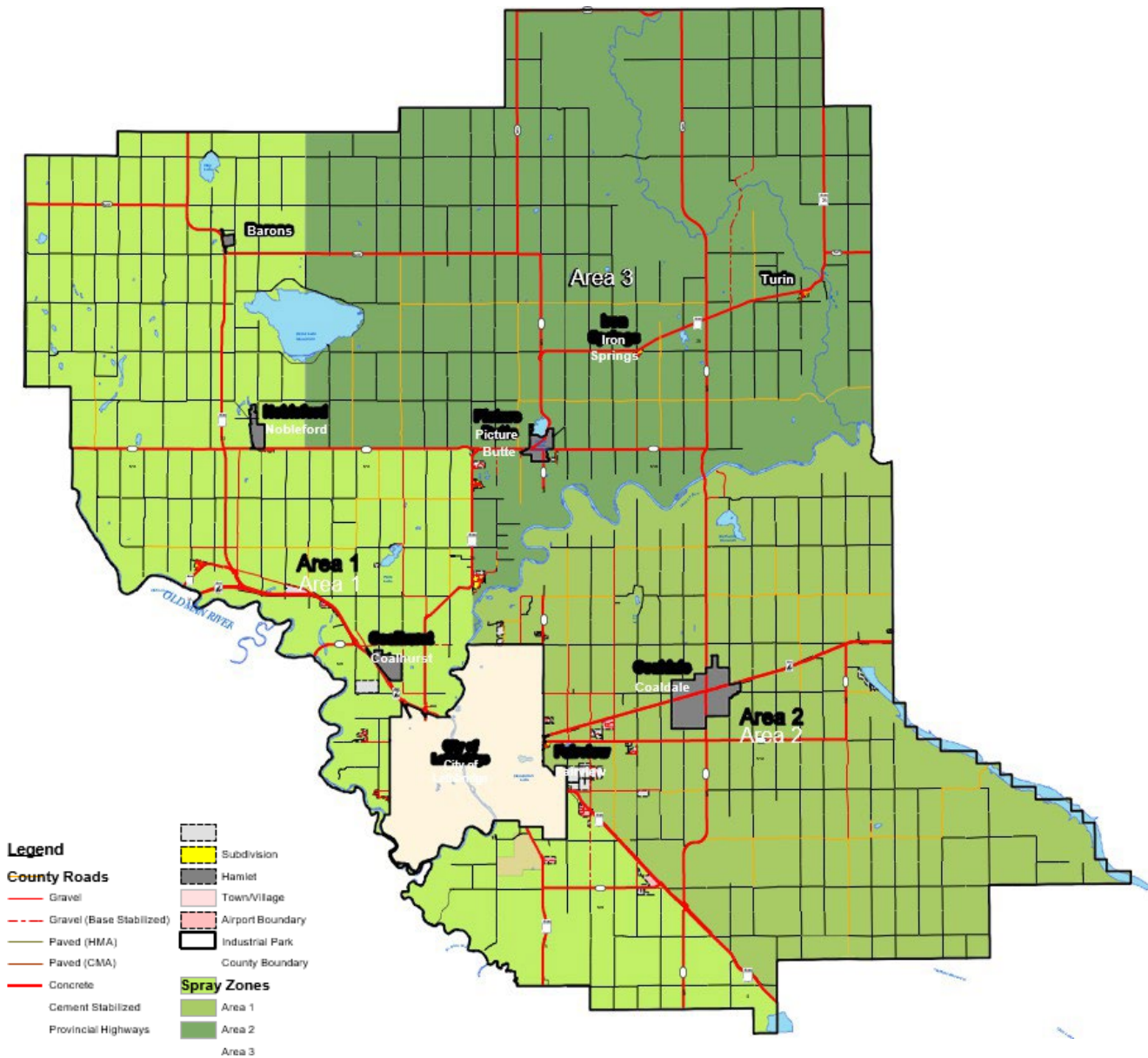


## Lethbridge County Roadside Mowing – Map





### Lethbridge County Roadside Spraying – Map







Office of the Chair, Wheatland County Agricultural Service Board

February 4, 2025

The Association of Alberta Agricultural Fieldman President Stephen Bevans  
Box 580  
Cardston, AB  
TOK 0K0

**RE: Provincial Agricultural Service Board Tour**

The Wheatland County Agricultural Service Board is pleased to express its interest in hosting the Provincial Agricultural Service Board Tour in 2026.

Although Wheatland County was originally scheduled to host the Tour in 2022, unforeseen budget constraints and uncertainty surrounding the Covid-19 pandemic led to the difficult decision to withdraw our name at that time. However, we are now confident in our ability to proceed with hosting the event in 2026.

We are excited about the opportunity to showcase Wheatland County's agricultural industry and the many highlights of our region. We look forward to welcoming Agricultural Service Boards from across the province and sharing what Wheatland County has to offer.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Shannon Laprise".

Shannon Laprise  
Agricultural Service Board Chair, Wheatland County

Address: 242006 Range Road 243, Wheatland County, AB T1P 2C4  
Email: [Shannon.laprise@wheatlandcounty.ca](mailto:Shannon.laprise@wheatlandcounty.ca)  
[www.wheatlandcounty.ca](http://www.wheatlandcounty.ca)



## Municipal District of Smoky River No. 130

P.O. Box 210 FALHER, ALBERTA T0H 1M0

Phone: (780) 837-2221

Fax: (780) 837-2453

November 19, 2024

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

Dear Minister Sigurdson;

**RE: Declaration of Agricultural Disaster - Extreme Loss of Honey Production**

The Council of the MD of Smoky River #130 has declared an Agricultural Disaster for Extreme Loss of Honey Production. Local honey producers reported losses between 60% to 90% of average annual production from their hives. Agronomic and environmental factors played a role in decreased honey yields in the MD of Smoky River. The Agronomic factors being a shortened flowering period and heat blast during the flowering period of Canola. The high temperatures during July of 2024 coupled with heavy rainfall immediately afterward had detrimental impacts on the canola flowers. With Canola making up to ½ of the crops in the MD this was a significant impact to the availability of flowers to develop the nectar required for honey production. This declaration is intended to provide awareness to the challenges of the local honey industry which is an important sector of agriculture in the MD of Smoky River.

Sincerely,

Robert Brochu

Reeve

c.c. Via Electronic copy.  
Todd Loewen, MLA - Grande Prairie-Smoky  
Arnold Viersen, MP -Peace River-Westlock  
Agricultural Service Board Provincial Committee  
Rural Municipalities of Alberta  
Provincial Agricultural Service Boards  
Alberta Beekeepers Commission  
Agriculture Financial Services Corporation



November 13, 2024

Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation,  
131 Legislature Building  
100800-97 Avenue,  
Edmonton, Alberta,  
T5K 2B6

Attention Honourable RJ Sigurdson

**RE: Declaration of Agriculture Disaster – Birch Hills County**

Birch Hills County has declared an Agriculture Disaster for honey production on November 12, 2024, due to decreased honey production because of multiple widespread adverse environmental conditions.

Birch Hills County has experienced an exceptionally dry spring entering the 2024 growing season. According to the moisture situation updates provided by the Provincial Government, half of the municipality entered into the growing season in a once in 50-year, 180-day precipitation deficit while the other half entered in a once in 25 to 50-years moisture deficit. These drought conditions inhibited the early season forage growth, affecting the availability of food sources available to the honeybees.

The flowering stage of canola is critical for honey production in Birch Hills County. The rapid accumulation of growing degree days in 2024 shortened the canola flowering stage by six days in the east and fifteen days in the west of the County. This shortened flowering window was also affected by extreme heat which caused decreased nectar production followed by heavy rains which caused the crop to drop the remaining petals prematurely. This has had a negative impact on the bee's ability to forage. Birch Hills County also experienced many days of poor air quality due to wildfire smoke. Bees do not forage when the air quality is poor. In total there were 11 days when the Air Quality index was either high Risk or very high risk. Five of these days have corresponded to when the canola was flowering.

This declaration is being made to bring awareness to the difficulties that our honey producers are facing. The honey production decrease has affected all honey producers within the County. Thank you for your continued advocacy for Alberta producers dealing with devastating conditions, and your work with the federal Government to implement initiatives to protect the stability of the agricultural industry.

Sincerely,



Albert Poetker  
Reeve

Cc: Todd Loewen, Member of the Legislative Assembly for Central-Peace Notley  
Kara Westerlund, President of Rural Municipalities of Alberta  
Kelly Smith-Fraser, Chair of the Board of Directors Agriculture Financial Services Corporation  
Linda Hunt, Executive Assistant, Agriculture Service board Provincial Committee  
Aaron Van Beers, President of the Association of Alberta Agricultural Fieldman  
Curtis Miedema, President of Alberta Beekeepers Commission



February 13, 2025

Honourable RJ Sigurdson  
Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation,  
131 Legislature Building  
100800-97 Avenue,  
Edmonton, Alberta, TSK 2B6

**RE: Declaration of Agriculture Disaster for Honey Producers in Northern Sunrise County**

Northern Sunrise County declared an Agriculture Disaster for honey production on February 11, 2025, due to significant losses in honey production among local honey producers in 2024.

In 2024, honey yields in Northern Sunrise County were reported as 30-40% of normal production levels. Neighbouring municipalities, including the Municipal District of Smoky River No. 130 and Birch Hills County, declared an Agriculture Disaster for honey production on November 19, 2024, and November 12, 2024, respectively. The Municipal District of Smoky River No. 130 reported honey production losses ranging from 60-90%, primarily due to adverse agronomic and environmental factors.

Dr. Shelley Hoover, an Associate Professor at the University of Lethbridge, and Connie Phillips, Executive Director of the Alberta Beekeepers Commission, have highlighted several key factors affecting honey production in 2024. These included a shortened canola bloom period, high heat, and water stress. High temperatures, particularly during the canola flowering stage, negatively impacted nectar yields. The bees themselves also faced stress from the heat and moisture, diverting their efforts toward water collection rather than nectar gathering, further affecting honey yields. According to Agriculture Financial Services Corporation (AFSC), the average honey yield in the region is 130 lbs per hive. However, in 2024, the average yield was only 30-40 lbs per hive, largely due to weather-related factors. AFSC has also reported a significant increase in honey-related claims within the Peace Region for 2024.

This declaration of an Agriculture Disaster for honey production losses in Northern Sunrise County will help raise awareness of the challenges faced by local honey producers. Thank you for your ongoing support of Alberta producers facing challenging conditions and for the collaboration with agencies to introduce initiatives that safeguard the stability of the agricultural industry.

Sincerely,

Jason Javos  
Vice-Chairperson  
Agricultural Service Board  
Northern Sunrise County



Northern Sunrise County is a supportive  
community where people can grow,  
prosper, and belong.  
We've got it all!



COUNTY OF  
**Northern Lights**

#600, 7th Ave NW, PO Box 10, Manning AB T0H 2M0  
Phone 780-836-3348 Fax 780-836-3663  
Toll Free 1-888-525-3481

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The Agricultural Service Boards  
Provincial Committee  
C/O Quinton Beaumont  
Box 1270  
Stettler, AB  
T0C 2L0

15.40.10

January 24, 2025

**Re: 2025 ASB Conference**

The County of Northern Lights ASB recently attended the 2025 ASB Provincial Conference in Edmonton and was represented by 4 board members and the Agricultural Fieldman. This conference is always much anticipated by our board members as it offers many valuable updates, keynote speakers, networking opportunities, tradeshow and most importantly, the chance to present resolutions.

Resolutions have a long history of bringing regional and provincial agricultural matters forward. After a democratic process of presenting the resolutions, they are often debated, amended and then put to the assembly for a vote. Those that are approved then go to the ASB Provincial Committee, who in turn send them out for responses, grade the responses and then advocate for the resolution's intent. I want to bring attention to some inappropriate conduct during the resolution session on January 22<sup>nd</sup>. The County of Northern Lights brought forward 2 resolutions; one (8-25) was presented on the January 21<sup>st</sup>, and the second (13-25) on January 22<sup>nd</sup>. We always welcome debate and potential small amendments during the presentation and understand that in true democratic fashion, the subsequent vote determines whether the resolution passes or fails. What we do not agree with is condescending and disrespectful remarks.

These actions were displayed by an ASB member from Vulcan County who provided opposition to 13-25 and seemed frustrated that the resolution process was taking too long, as indicated by his comments and theatrical behavior regarding resolution 3-25 the day before. The comments that were made did not attempt to debate ideas, but attacked the resolutions as a waste of time, burdensome and that certain municipalities were sponsoring too many resolutions. "It is only an issue for a municipality that sponsored over half the resolutions" was the comment, while it doesn't sound too terrible on paper, the leadup, sentiment and delivery was enough to draw audible gasps and muttering from the crowd. After the conclusion of the Resolution Session, we received numerous commiserations for the exaggerated reaction, as it went too far.



COUNTY OF  
**Northern Lights**

#600, 7th Ave NW, PO Box 10, Manning AB T0H 2M0  
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Our feeling is, if this type of behaviour is allowed to continue with no intervention from the board, the potential for mudslinging and chaos will be inevitable and credibility of this great organization will be compromised. I have been approached by many ASB's that were witness to this uncalled-for comment, who strongly agree that it was totally inappropriate and needs to be addressed. These types of comments stifle debate, lead to less participation and dissuade future resolutions in fear of humiliation and ridicule.

These types of sessions are critical to generating solutions and change, if you disagree with an idea then say why you are against it—it doesn't need to be turned into a personal indiscretion against another municipality that is sponsoring the idea. The main purpose of the conference is to debate the resolutions, and debate should follow the correct code of conduct.

Thank you for your consideration,

Terry Ungarian  
Reeve and ASB Chair,  
County of Northern Lights

Cc: AAAF and ASB's of Alberta

February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Provincial Agricultural Service Board Committee

**RE: Provincial Conference procedure, conduct, and preparation**

Dear committee members,

Our ASB left this year's Provincial ASB conference with three concerns regarding our resolution sessions: parliamentary procedure, conduct, and preparation.

We felt that the handling of debate and amendments could have been handled with greater leadership and procedural adherence. This did hamper the effective handling of some resolutions (like 3-25) and left many members on the floor frustrated. As such, we ask that the Provincial ASB Committee take measures to ensure effective proceedings are utilized and enforced to facilitate discussion and changes to resolutions more productively.

This leads us to our second concern: appropriate and constructive conduct by participants. The County of Northern Lights and Northern Sunrise County both have written letters to address the specifics of the poor decorum exhibited around resolution 13-25. We would like to add another layer to the consequences of poor decorum.

Our resolution process asks for humility and trust in each other to have meaningful and respectful discussions on topics prioritized by each region. Our geographic differences naturally lend to differences of opinion and priority across a province as vast as ours. But these differences should be treated with respect and with trust for the regional process to avoid the potential for regional rifts. The events of the resolution session fully violated said trust and increased the risk of regional divides within the province which risks jeopardizing our voice as a unified provincial organization. One of the critiques around resolution 13-25 was the suggestion that too many resolutions came from one municipality. Such criticism undermines our regional process, a process that requires regions to debate and vote on local resolutions put forward so to act as regional filters before resolutions come to the provincial level. If there is concern about the quantity or quality of resolutions coming from a region, it is better addressed through the Provincial Committee. These critiques are not suited to the provincial conference floor, or to be used as tools to shame or denigrate another municipality. Discussion must be meaningful and respectful, and this can only be achieved when individuals can trust that the debate has originated from positions of good faith. This leads to our final concern: preparation.

We are often asked to support regionally specific challenges in the context of a wider provincial lens. This often requires actions to be taken to further our knowledge, understanding, or sense of priority associated with a resolution. This year provided plenty of time between the release of the resolution package and the conference itself to undertake thorough pre-briefing and discussion regarding the



February 6, 2025

Page 2

resolutions. Some revisions and amendments will always bubble up from the energy and creativity of quality discussion on the floor, but many revisions and amendments can be carefully considered, crafted, and pre-communicated to enhance the quality of debate and to ease the process of forwarding amendments (friendly or otherwise). Open communication between municipalities ahead of resolution sessions benefits all parties involved, whether it be to challenge, clarify, or sponsor a resolution.

A role common to all of us ASBs is the legislated responsibility to advise the Minister responsible for agriculture. As much as this is a legislated responsibility, we should not take this role for granted. By ensuring we achieve quality procedural dynamics, adhere to high standards of conduct, and do our best to be as prepared as possible, we help gain and maintain a reputation for both the quality of resolutions forwarded and the quality of discussions and deliberation that go into refining and passing them. This would make attendance at our conference a meaningful and desired space for Ministers to allocate their scarce time.

Sincerely,



Tyler Airth  
Big Lakes County Reeve and ASB Chair

CC: all provincial municipal Agricultural Service Boards







## Municipal District of Spirit River No. 133

Box 389 Spirit River, Alberta T0H 3G0  
E-mail: [mdsr133@mdspiritriver.ab.ca](mailto:mdsr133@mdspiritriver.ab.ca)

Telephone (780) 864-3500  
Fax: (780) 864-4303

The Agricultural Service Boards  
Provincial Committee  
C/O Quinton Beaumont  
Box 1270  
Stettler, AB  
T0C 2L0

February 14, 2025

The Chair, two members and the Agricultural Fieldman of the Municipal District of Spirit River's Agricultural Service Board recently attended the 2025 ASB Provincial Conference in Edmonton. The MD of Spirit River's ASB can appreciate the time, effort, and care that goes into preparing important resolutions to be presented at the conference year after year. These resolutions help bring regional and provincial agricultural matters forward, and offer innovative solutions that contribute to the viability, sustainability, and prosperity of agriculture in rural Alberta.

The County of Northern Lights brought forward two resolutions, 8-25, and 13-25, to be heard at the conference, giving ASB members the ability to vote in favour of or against. This process enables ASB's to have an active role in important agricultural decision-making, and has long been a respected process.

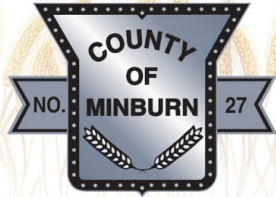
Unfortunately, an ASB member from Vulcan County displayed inappropriate behaviour by verbally attacking the proposed resolutions, citing them as a waste of time. The comments and behaviour produced by this particular member were disrespectful and a far cry from the code of conduct expectations of all members. Although resolution processes spark important conversations and debates, it is expected that these are conducted in a respectful manner and are productive for the purpose of agricultural progression and development.

Therefore, the Municipal District of Spirit River's Agricultural Service Board is in support of the County of Northern Lights and their belief that the code of conduct be upheld for all ASB's and their members, to ensure respect is maintained and so the conference itself can have continued success leading to effective decision making and the generation of valuable agricultural solutions.

Sincerely,

Tony Van Rootselaar  
Reeve, MD of Spirit River No.133

Cc: AAAF and ASB's of Alberta



## COUNTY OF MINBURN NO. 27

P.O. Box 550  
4909 - 50th Street  
Vegreville, Alberta  
Canada T9C 1R6

Phone: (780) 632-2082  
Fax: (780) 632-6296

www.MinburnCounty.ab.ca  
E-Mail: info@minburncounty.ab.ca

March 14, 2025

Honourable Minister Lawrence MacAulay  
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Dear Honourable Minister MacAulay:

**Re: Urgent Concerns Regarding China's Retaliatory Tariffs on Canadian Agricultural Products**

On behalf of the County of Minburn No.27 and our agricultural producers, we write to express our deep concern regarding China's announcement on March 20, 2025 imposing a one hundred percent retaliatory tariff on Canadian rapeseed oil, rapeseed meal, and pea imports. These measures pose a significant threat to the livelihood of our farmers and the broader agricultural sector, already burdened by years of drought and escalating production costs.

Agricultural producers in our County, and across Canada, cannot afford another financial setback. Many are still recovering from consecutive years of unfavorable weather conditions, supply chain disruptions, and the rising costs of inputs such as fertilizer, fuel, and equipment. These additional tariffs not only create instability in our export markets but also place our producers in the middle of an international trade conflict beyond their control.

The County of Minburn No.27 urges the federal government to take immediate action to support our agricultural sector during this crisis. We call upon the Government of Canada to engage in diplomatic negotiations to resolve these trade tensions, seek alternative markets for our impacted commodities, and implement financial relief measures to assist affected producers. Without swift intervention, our farmers will face unsustainable economic losses that will have long-term consequences for our rural communities and the national agricultural industry.

If these tariffs come into effect on March 20, 2025 we ask that the government implement a comprehensive assistance plan for affected agricultural producers. This should include direct financial support, subsidies to offset rising input costs, emergency loan programs, and expanded market diversification initiatives. Additionally, we request an increase in crop insurance support and disaster relief funding to help mitigate the economic strain on farmers facing uncertain market conditions.

We appreciate your attention to this urgent matter and request an update on the steps being taken to mitigate the impact of these tariffs. Our producers need assurance that their voices are heard and that their concerns are being addressed at the highest level.

Thank you for your time and dedication to supporting Canadian agriculture. We look forward to your response and any initiatives that may be implemented to protect our farmers and the industry at large.

Sincerely,



Reeve Roger Konieczny

c: *Shannon Stubbs, MP for Lakeland*  
*Jackie Armstrong-Homeniuk, MLA Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville*  
*Brenda Knight, Chair, ASB Provincial Committee*  
Stephen Bevans, President, Association of Alberta Agriculture Fieldman  
Kara Westerlund, President, *Rural Municipalities of Alberta*  
Rebecca Bligh, President, *Federation of Canadian Municipalities*



# Municipal District of **GREENVIEW**

March 17, 2025

Minister of Environment and Protected Areas  
204 Legislature Building  
108000 - 97 A venue  
Edmonton, AB TSK 286

Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation  
131 Legislature Building  
10800 - 97 Avenue  
Edmonton, AB TSK 2B6

**Attention: Honourable Minister Rebecca Schultz and Honourable Minister RJ Sigurdson**  
**Subject: Farmer Pesticide Program and Updated Registration of Sodium Monofluoroacetate**

On January 14<sup>th</sup>, Kneehill County wrote a commendable letter requesting an update to the Farmer Pesticide Program that detailed required amendments to the certification. The letter specified the programs reliance on municipal facilitators for delivery, as opposed to provincial representatives or inclusion in the Lakeland College's suite of pesticide certification programs. The Farmers Pesticide Certification is the only pesticide certification program in Alberta outside of the Colleges purview.

With the changes announced to the Pest Management Regulatory Agency's registration for sodium monofluoroacetate (1080), released on March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2024 in RVD2024-04, specific actions the registrant must take for the continued registration of 1080 as regards product stewardship were listed. One of the four points within these requirements is as follows:

- Develop and implement a training program on how to properly use sodium monofluoroacetate and dispose of poisoned baits and carcasses. This includes making sure people know that they can only use the product after all other predator management methods have failed.

Training exists for municipal staff dispensing 1080, so we can only surmise that this training requirement is for producers accessing the product when all other manner of control of coyote predation have been exhausted.

We echo and agree with the concerns expressed by Kneehill County. We would like to add that in light of the changed registration of 1080, an important tool we feel needs to remain in livestock producers' toolboxes, that the required modernization and alignment with current standards for the Farmers Pesticide Certification be prioritized by both ministries. In addition, we would like to emphasize the importance of producers being able to access this training readily through Lakeland College in an online format as opposed to only being delivered by municipal facilitators.

Dave Gibbard, Chair  
Greenview Agricultural Service Board

cc: Provincial Agricultural Service Boards  
Alberta Association of Agricultural Fieldman

# Agricultural Service Board Position Statement

January 2025 DRAFT

## **FARM- SAVED SEED ([link to feedback form](#))**

### **Overview: Farmers' Rights to Save Seed**

The practice of saving seed is fundamental to the economic viability and sustainability of Alberta's agriculture. This practice empowers farmers to maintain autonomy over their operations and fosters the growth of crops uniquely adapted to Alberta's unique climatic and soil conditions. The Canadian Food Inspection Agency's (CFIA) Seed Regulatory Modernization (SRM) initiative, which proposes royalties on farm-saved seed, is complex and presents challenges that require careful navigation to balance the interests of all stakeholders. While the ASB acknowledges the importance of funding robust plant breeding programs, it emphasizes safeguarding farmers' economic interests while minimizing administrative concerns.

### **Benefits of Farm-Saved Seed**

- **Adaptability:** Supports locally tailored crop varieties suited to Alberta's unique agricultural landscape.
- **Cost-Effectiveness:** Offers an affordable option for producers, especially for small and medium-sized farms.
- **Resilience:** Reduces dependency on external markets and supports regional food security.

### **Key Issues**

#### **1. Farmers' Rights and Local Adaptation**

- Farm-saved seed enables Alberta farmers to adapt crop varieties to local conditions.
- Introducing royalties could potentially increase costs and discourage the use of locally adapted seed, potentially reducing genetic diversity and increasing dependency on higher-cost commercial seed varieties.

#### **2. Economic Impact and Public Breeding Programs**

- Royalties on farm-saved seed would disproportionately affect small and medium-sized producers, including increasing costs and threatening their financial stability.
- Public breeding programs, which provide affordable and region-specific crops (e.g., canola) face declining resources and reduced funding as private industry gains influence. The result is higher seed costs and less choice.

January 2025, Page 1 of 3

### **3. Global Alignment and Market Access**

- While aligning Canada's seed regulations with international standards under UPOV-91 could improve market access and trade opportunities, local farmers may face increased costs and reduced flexibility.

### **4. Equity and Transparency in Funding**

- Farmers already contribute to breeding programs through checkoffs and levies. Greater transparency in the allocation of these funds is essential to ensure investments benefit public breeding initiatives and align with farmer priorities.

## **What is the ASB's Position on Farm-Saved Seed?**

The ASB stands firmly in support of Alberta farmers' rights to save, store, and replant seed.

Farm-saved seed is an essential practice for Canadian farmers, and maintaining its viability is closely tied to the health of public breeding programs and the wider agricultural economy. The ASB supports a balanced, level-headed approach that protects farmers' rights while addressing the need for innovation.

Public breeding programs have historically provided affordable, high-performing seed varieties. These programs, funded through a mix of government investment and contributions from the ag industry, face increasing pressures from reduced funding and the growing influence of private breeding companies.

A royalty system on farm-saved seed could offer a potential solution, but only if it is designed to maintain farmers' autonomy, limit the financial burden, and support the public breeding sector. Without this support, the public breeding system risks collapse, paving the way for private industry to dominate. That will result in increased dependence on private seed companies, reduced access to locally adapted seed, and higher costs for farmers.

This is not a choice between tradition and progress but between protecting long-term sustainability and over-reliance on external players. Farmers must play a central role in shaping these policies, working collaboratively with government, breeders, and other stakeholders to ensure the long-term resilience of Canadian agriculture.

## **What the ASB believes is required to achieve a balanced outcome:**

### **1. Inclusive Governance and Local Representation**

The ASB should have a prominent role in policy development and implementation to ensure regional considerations, particularly those unique to Alberta, are addressed.

### **2. Access to Clear, Localized Information**

Farmers need straightforward resources to understand the implications of royalties, the benefits of seed adaptability, and compliance requirements.

**3. Continuous Farmer Engagement**

Establish robust communication channels, including regular consultations and feedback mechanisms, to ensure farmers' voices guide policy decisions.

**4. Support for Public Breeding Programs**

Allocate funds transparently to ensure public breeding initiatives continue to deliver region-specific, cost-effective seed options.

**Summary Questions**

- 1. How important is it to the ASB to protect farm saved seed?**
- 2. How important are the benefits to farm saved seed? Any other benefits that should be added?**
- 3. How important are the key issues discussed in the Position Statement, are there others that should be included? Any other feedback?**
- 4. Do you have any feedback on the ASB's Position on Farm saved seed?**
- 5. How important are the actions suggested in the Position Statement? Any more that should be added? Any other comments?**
- 6. What previous initiatives can we draw on to help defend farm saved seed?**

2025 ASB Position - Farm Saved  
Seed Feedback



Link to feedback Form: <https://forms.office.com/r/BaPw6vGCNv>

# Agricultural Service Board

## Position Statement

### Richardson's Ground Squirrel Control

The Richardson's Ground Squirrel (RGS) has been a persistent challenge across the Canadian Prairies, posing significant risks to agricultural productivity and economic stability. For decades, these pests have caused extensive damage to crops, infrastructure, and pasturelands, leading to substantial losses for producers. Historically, the use of strychnine has been a cornerstone in effective control, offering a cost-efficient and reliable solution. However, the discontinuation of this product has left producers without an equally effective alternative.

Current alternatives include anticoagulants like chlorophacinone (e.g., Rozol, Ground Force) and fumigants such as aluminum phosphide (e.g., Phostoxin). While these products are registered for RGS control, they present significant application limitations including precise timing and multiple applications during busy spring seeding and calving.

Recent studies evaluating the efficacy of these alternatives were done under field research applications so did not effectively evaluate their practical application on farm or consider regional challenges. These studies contributed to the 2020 decision by PMRA to discontinue the registration of 2% strychnine for RGS control, and producers continue to report increasing populations and concerns for production losses. This regulatory change has left agricultural producers without access to a previously effective and economical tool for managing Richardson's Ground Squirrel populations, underscoring the urgent need for alternative solutions that are both efficient and environmentally sustainable.

The development and approval of such products are essential to ensure the long-term viability of prairie agriculture while minimizing unintended impacts on ecosystems.

### Statement of Position

The Agricultural Service Boards (ASB) of Alberta acknowledges the critical challenge posed by RGSs to agricultural operations in the Canadian Prairies. Recognizing the need for effective, cost-efficient, and environmentally responsible control methods, the ASBs recommends the following positions:

#### Position 1: Advocacy for the Reinstatement of 2% Liquid Strychnine

ASBs strongly advocate for the reinstatement of 2% liquid strychnine under strict regulatory oversight to ensure its safe use. Strychnine has been a historically effective single-feed bait, enabling producers to manage infestations cost-effectively and efficiently. While there is



*Agricultural Service Board Position Statement: RGS Control/Strychnine*

evidence of non-target species being impacted, this needs to be considered. Strychnine has been used since 1928 without significant detrimental impacts. Given the lack of equally effective alternatives, its availability would significantly benefit agricultural producers while mitigating severe infestations. Enhanced safety protocols and certified applicator requirements could accompany this reinstatement to minimize environmental risks and non-target impacts.

**Call to Action:** ASB calls on the federal and provincial governments to collaborate with Health Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) to reinstate 2% liquid strychnine for Richardson's Ground Squirrel control. This reinstatement may include clear guidelines for certified applicators and robust monitoring to ensure environmental safety.

## Position 2: Development and Registration of New, Effective Alternatives

ASB supports increased investment in the research and development of innovative pest control solutions that can match or exceed the efficacy of strychnine. Alternatives such as zinc phosphide have shown promise in recent studies but require further refinement to address limitations, such as bait uptake and environmental considerations. Additionally, it is essential to evaluate all alternative products for their practical on-farm application to ensure they meet the needs of producers. Collaboration with Health Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) and other stakeholders is essential to expedite the registration of these products and confirm their effectiveness in real-world agricultural settings.

**Call to Action:** ASB urges federal and provincial governments to increase funding and prioritize research into alternative pest control solutions. This includes fostering partnerships with industry, academia, and agricultural producers to accelerate the development and testing of practical and effective alternatives.

## Position 3: Enhanced Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Strategies

ASB encourages the adoption of comprehensive IPM strategies, combining cultural, biological, and chemical control methods. While alternatives like chlorophacinone, diphacinone, and fumigants are available, their effectiveness can vary based on timing, environmental conditions, and application methods. Producers should be provided with training and resources to optimize the use of these alternatives while incorporating non-chemical approaches such as habitat modification and predator encouragement.

**Call to Action:** ASB calls for enhanced educational programs and support for producers to implement Integrated Pest Management (IPM) strategies effectively. This includes providing accessible resources, training sessions, and incentives for adopting sustainable pest management practices.

## **Supporting Arguments**

Incorporating the recommendations from the Federal-Provincial-Territorial (FPT) Working Group on Pesticides Management, the Agricultural Service Board (ASB) of Alberta presents the following supporting arguments for each position:

### **Position 1: Advocacy for the Reinstatement of 2% Liquid Strychnine**

- **Recognizing the Value of Pest Management Tools:** The FPT Working Group emphasizes the importance of understanding a pesticide's health, safety, environmental benefits, and socio-economic impact. Strychnine has historically been a critical tool for producers, offering effective and economical control of Richardson's Ground Squirrels. Its reinstatement, under stringent regulatory oversight, would address current pest management challenges faced by the agricultural community.

### **Position 2: Development and Registration of New, Effective Alternatives**

- **Supporting Access to Integrated Pest Management Solutions:** The Working Group recommended that federal and provincial governments invest further in research and knowledge transfer to support the adoption of effective, innovative, and diverse pest control products and approaches in the agriculture sector. By prioritizing the development and registration of new alternatives, such as improved formulations of zinc phosphide or biopesticides, we can enhance pest management strategies that are both effective and environmentally responsible.

### **Position 3: Enhanced Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Strategies**

- **Enhancing Engagement and Collaboration in Risk Assessment:** The Working Group highlights the need for early consultation and meaningful participation of federal and provincial departments in the Pest Management Regulatory Agency's (PMRA) risk assessment process. By fostering collaboration among stakeholders, we can develop comprehensive IPM strategies that integrate cultural, biological, and chemical control methods, tailored to the specific needs of producers while ensuring environmental stewardship.

These positions align with the FPT Working Group's recommendations, aiming to balance efficacy, cost-efficiency, and environmental sustainability in pest management practices across the Canadian Prairies.

## **Conclusion**

Richardson's Ground Squirrels continue to pose a significant challenge to agricultural productivity and environmental balance in the Canadian Prairies. By addressing the urgent need

for effective control methods through the reinstatement of strychnine, the development of innovative alternatives, and the promotion of Integrated Pest Management strategies, the ASB aims to safeguard the long-term viability of prairie agriculture. Collaboration between governments, industry, and producers is essential to ensure that solutions are effective, cost-efficient, and environmentally sustainable. The ASBs remain committed to advocating for practical and innovative pest management solutions that support both agricultural success and ecological stewardship.

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