

Agricultural Service Board Bulletin

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Did you know?

- A single horse can produce up to 23kg (50lbs of manure per day)
- Wild boar weigh between 45 -150kg (99-330lbs)
- There are over 490 milk-producing farms in Alberta (2021)
- Sheep have been domesticated for 8,000-10,000 years
- There are around 800 different types of bees in Canada
- Cattle chew their cud for 6 or 7 hours each day, usually while lying down
- The horse's early ancestor *Hyracotherium* appeared 50-55 million years ago and had 4 toes rather than hooves
- Flannel can be traced back to the 117th century, where it was used by Welsh farmers to protect against harsh weather
- The area of wheat farmed in Canada is roughly equivalent to the size of South Korea (±100,000 sq km).

RESILIENT AGRICULTURAL LANDSCAPE PROGRAM (RALP)



Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership

The Resilient Agricultural Landscape Program (RALP) is a new program being offered under the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership (Sustainable CAP). The RALP objective is to accelerate the adoption of Beneficial Management Practices (BMPs) that maximize provision of Ecological Goods & Services (EG&S), particularly increased carbon sequestration and enhanced climate resilience.

Eligible Applicants

- Primary producer responsible for day-to-day management and input costs of an agricultural operation (crop, bee, or livestock) and produce at least \$25,000 worth of farm commodities annually.
- Groups such as Grazing Reserve Associations and Community Pastures.
- Approved Indigenous applicants (First Nation, Métis Nation, Inuit).

and

- Has a current Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) certificate or letter or will receive one before the end of the project term. The name on the EFP does not need to match the name on the grant application but must be for the same farm.

Funding

Funding is offered on a per-acre payment basis for a term of three years. Per-acre fee calculated as:

Implementation Costs + Opportunity Cost (if applicable) + Impact Adjustment

Approved projects will be funded to:

- minimum grant of \$2,000
- maximum grant of \$150,000 for Primary Producers
- maximum grant of \$300,000 for Indigenous (First Nations, Inuit, Metis) and groups such as Grazing Reserve Associations and/or Community Pastures

Note: the program is retroactive to April 3, 2023.

Funding List

- Funding list may change.
- Check website for most up-to-date list.
- Subscribe to the program for automatic updates: www.alberta.ca/sustainable-cap.aspx.

Additional Information

- Applications are reviewed as they are received and evaluated according to the eligibility criteria and funding availability.
- Incomplete applications will be returned to the applicant.
- Email questions to RALP@gov.ab.ca or call 310-FARM (3276).

Eligibility and Applications

- Can RALP projects be done on rented land?
 - Yes, leased land is eligible for RALP projects provided the Applicant has landowner permission to complete the project and to implement the BMP over the 3-year term.
- If I received funding from other government programs, am I eligible to apply for funding under RALP on the same project?
 - You cannot combine funding from other government programs on the same project items applied for under RALP. The only exception to this is for the Wetland category, as wetland projects must have been conducted under the Wetland Replacement Program to be eligible.
- Can I apply for multiple Beneficial Management Practices (BMPs) in the same application?
 - Yes, you can apply for multiple BMPs within a single application. It is strongly advised to apply once for all activities you are interested in applying for.

Funding

- How do I know how much funding I can receive if I apply to the RALP program for my project?
 - Funding is dependent on the BMPs and activities implemented, use the application form available on the RALP website to enter your expected activities and expenses and the form will calculate the total funding you may be eligible for.
- How will my funding amount be paid?
 - The funding amount determined for your three-year project will be paid in two payments. 50% will be paid after application approval and 50% will be paid at the end of the three-year term.

To learn more about the RALP and apply, visit <https://www.alberta.ca/resilient-agricultural-landscape-program>.

FARM TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM

The Farm Technology Program supports the adoption of innovative technology that minimizes agricultural waste, optimizes farm efficiency, and encourages the adoption of best management practices in farm security. The program will enable primary producers to better anticipate and manage risks, while reducing environmental impacts and protecting their farm.

Innovative data systems are transforming modern agriculture and technology and connectivity are advancing risk management, optimizing efficiencies and securing property. As farms progress from sensors that collect digital information through software that processes vast amounts of data to automated tasks, producers save time and money and gain a competitive advantage.

This program provides financial incentives on new technologies that are commercially available and already demonstrated under Alberta conditions. To be eligible for funding, the program targets technology that is proven but not yet widely adopted within an applicant's farm type.

The Farm Technology Program has 2 streams:

- Farm Technology Stream – supports adoption of innovative technology that minimizes agricultural waste and optimizes farm efficiency. Technology examples include agriculture-specific drones, weather stations, and farm management software.
- Farm Security Stream – supports producers in their efforts to secure business assets by encouraging the adoption of best management

practices in farm security. Examples of eligible expenses include GPS equipment tags, driveway alert systems, and door sensors.

Eligible applicants include an individual or corporation registered in Alberta that is responsible for day-to-day management and input costs of a crop, bee, or livestock operation and produce at least \$25,000 worth of farm commodities annually. Applicants must have a current Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) certificate or letter or will receive one before the end of the project term.

Grants will be funded on a 50% cost-share basis.

Eligible expenses for approved projects will be funded to:

- minimum grant of \$500/applicant
- maximum grant of \$48,000/applicant for Farm Technology Stream
- maximum grant of \$2,000/applicant for Farm Security Stream

Remember, funding is not guaranteed until your application has been approved. You may proceed at your own risk. If your application is not approved, you will not be reimbursed for any expenses associated with your project.

To learn more about the Farm Technology Program, call 310-FARM (3276), email s-cap.ftp@gov.ab.ca, or visit <https://www.alberta.ca/farm-technology-program>. Program applications are also available at the above website.

COLD STRESS IN BEEF CATTLE

The following is adapted from the Alberta Farm Animal Care infographic of the same name. For more information about cold stress in livestock, visit <https://tinyurl.com/ykre3t5b>.

Cattle tolerate cold temperatures well if acclimated. However, calves, cattle in poor condition, wet cattle, and those fed a low-energy diet are more sensitive to cold stress.

What Is Cold Stress?

Cold stress or hypothermia occurs when the body's temperature drops below average (38°C). Beef cattle in Alberta can usually handle -20°C in the winter, assuming calm winds (or shelter from the wind), good body condition, and a dry winter coat. However, if cattle still have their summer coats, are in poor body condition, and if they don't have access to shelter, then they cannot handle such low temperatures. Furthermore, small calves lose body heat faster than adults and cannot handle as low temperatures.

What Are The Signs?

- Shivering (but cattle may stop if it worsens)
- Low rectal temp (<35°C)
- Cold mouth

- Not suckling (calves)
- Unable to get up
- Frostbite

What Can I Do?

- Protect from the wind
- Provide water
- Use a winter feeding protocol with additional high energy feeds
- Keep cattle clean & dry
- Bed cattle well
- Monitor the weather

Learn More!

Find more information in the National Farm Animal Care Council's *Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Beef Cattle* found at <https://tinyurl.com/5n83x6rv>.



KNOW WHAT'S IN YOUR GRAIN CONTRACT

Grain contracts are common marketing tools when selling and delivering canola. With various contracts available to farmers, the terms and conditions vary between buyers, therefore making a direct comparison of their legal nature a challenge.

Knowing what's in (and what's not in) your grain contract is critical to maximizing canola's profitability. Check out CCGA's Practical Guide to Navigate Grain Contracts to learn about common contract features,

sample clauses, and practical advice to negotiate and manage contract risk.

Better understand contract negotiation, interpretation, and obligations in CCGA's contract guide. It includes sample contract clauses from major grain buyers and summarizes what to look for and important questions to ask.

Download a free version by visiting <https://tinyurl.com/3thwvzdw>.

SCOUTING POST-HARVEST

The following is adapted from Farming Smarter's article of the same name. To view the full article, visit <https://tinyurl.com/yx6up33w>.

Harvest means the end of the crops, but the job's not done yet. A thorough field scouting after harvest is important to provide insight into the future wellbeing of your crops. There are still insects & diseases to inventory. Knowing they're there when we're rotating crops & managing fields allows us to understand what potential diseases or problems might have come with the seeds.

Scouting for Sclerotinia

Sclerotinia spawns late in the season and a fall scout means its already done its damage. However, post-harvest scouting makes it easier to assess the extent of the damage. It provides a better understanding of the disease prevalence and informs decisions on crop rotations.

Scouting for Blackleg

A canola disease that develops later in the growing season. It can be an issue to scout for but it's not going to give you an idea of the whole

field. Assessing after harvest lets you get a better grasp of problem areas and the reach of the disease.

Wheat Stem Saw Fly

- Sample 4 sites 50 metres apart along the field edge (4th or 5th row in)
- Count the number of long stems cut by the swather and the number of short stubs (with closed tops) cut by saw flies. It can be easier to find the stubs if you pull or dig up the stubble. Feeling for the stubs that are not easily distinguishable from swather cut stems is recommended. The stubs will feel more solid and rough at the cut point than the unaffected stubble.

Wheat Midge

- Before or after assessing for wheat stem saw fly you can take soil samples to send to a lab to assess for wheat midge larvae
 - With a bucket and a soil sampler walk in a horseshoe pattern into the field and take 17 (3/4-inch core) to 10 cores (1 inch core) 10 meters apart.
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2023 CANADA-ALBERTA DROUGHT LIVESTOCK ASSISTANCE

The following is excerpted from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's October 27, 2023 news release. To view the full release, visit <https://tinyurl.com/jre9dwhe>. To view all program details and submit an application, visit AFSC's AgriRecovery page <https://tinyurl.com/y94t37bp>.

Applications open October 30 for the 2023 Canada-Alberta Drought Livestock Assistance program, providing livestock producers with up to \$165 million to maintain breeding herds.

The governments of Alberta and Canada are partnering on the 2023 Canada-Alberta Drought Livestock Assistance program to support livestock producers facing extraordinary costs due to this year's dry conditions. Funding for this joint AgriRecovery initiative is through the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership (Sustainable CAP).

Livestock producers who altered their usual grazing practices due to drought conditions for more than 21 days this season can apply for financial support to cover losses incurred to manage and maintain female breeding animals such as cattle, bison, horses, elk, sheep,

goats, alpacas, yak, musk ox, deer, water buffalo and llamas. A minimum of 15 animals per type of livestock are required to qualify.

Benefits will be based on a feed-need calculation for feed costs incurred resulting from lost grazing days for eligible breeding animals on hand as of December 31, 2023. Eligible producers could access up to \$150 per head to help maintain the breeding herd in drought regions.

Agriculture Financial Services Corporation (AFSC) will administer the initiative and livestock producers can get more information and apply online on AFSC's website. The application deadline is January 15, 2024 and extraordinary costs can be incurred until March 31, 2024.

This announcement is part of a larger disaster response totaling \$365 million in federal-provincial cost-shared funding under the AgriRecovery Framework to help farmers and ranchers in British Columbia, Alberta and Saskatchewan with extraordinary costs due to this year's extreme weather conditions.

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Any comments or suggestions for the ASB Bulletin can be made to Trevor Kerr by phone or email
tkerr@countypaintearth.ca

Test Your Knowledge

1. Can RALP projects be done on rented land?
2. To what date is the RALP retroactive to?
3. What is the minimum grant awarded under the Farm Technology Program?
4. Below what body temperature does hypothermia begin to have an effect?
5. What are 4 pests you should scout for post-harvest?
6. What is the charge to producers to rent the grain bag roller?
7. Where can you find more information about the Farm Sustainability Readiness Tool?

Test Your Knowledge Answers

1. Yes, with landowner permission.
2. April 3, 2023.
3. \$500/applicant.
4. 38°C.
5. Sclerotinia, blackleg, wheat stem sawfly, wheat midge.
6. \$0, there is no charge!
7. farmsustainability.ca

GRAIN BAG ROLLER NOW AVAILABLE TO PRODUCERS

The County of Paintearth, in partnership with Paintearth Regional Waste Management (PRWM), has invested in a Grain Bag Roller to assist producers with recycling agricultural plastics.



The Grain Bag Roller will be offered to producers at no charge. The unit, mounted on a 20' trailer, is independently powered by a gas engine. Depending on the number of grain bags you have rolled, they can be brought to the nearest collection site (Castor or Coronation transfer stations) on the trailer before returning the unit to the County yard.

Alberta farmers have generated 2,605 tonnes of used plastics that has been collected since the inception of this program in 2019 according to the Agricultural Plastics Recycling Program (APRG). There has been 13,280 kg of grain bags and 3,720 kg in twine collected in Paintearth alone since 2019.

Recently, the federal government called for a ban of single use plastics in the residential sector. The ban doesn't apply to plastics in the agricultural sector, but it should serve as an important call to action. We all have a responsibility to ensure resource materials in all sectors, including agriculture, are recovered for recycling and proper disposal, if needed. Farmers generally agree the negative environmental impact of resource materials is a deterrent, and they welcome better management options for the used plastic.

Grain bags are converted into plastic pellets which are shipped to manufacturers across Canada and the USA to be used in the production of various plastic items such as plastic bags and construction sheeting, composite dimensional lumber, and agricultural fence posts. Research and development is underway to use these pellets in the manufacturing of new grain bags as well.



Grain bags on average are 150-500' long, 8-10 mm thick and weigh approximately 300 lbs per bag. Loosely rolled grain bags require a lot of space in collection facilities. They're also difficult to manage and inefficient to transport for recycling. Please follow these 3 steps before you

bring bags to a collection site:

1. Remove Debris – Grain bags need to be free of as much foreign material (spoilage, dirt, rocks, etc.) as possible. Using the County's grain bag roller can help achieve that objective.
2. Roll – Grain bags need to be rolled tightly with a mechanical grain bag roller or old hay baler (most grain bag extractors roll the bags too loosely), and then secured tightly with twine.
3. Return – Bring grain bags that are rolled and tied securely to the collection site. Collection sites cannot accept unrolled, extractor rolled, or hand-rolled grain bags. Please contact your local collection site to check hours of operation or if you are unsure if you have prepared it properly.

The grain bag roller is available to producers free of charge. To book the roller, please call the County's ASB Department at (403) 882-3211.



FARM SUSTAINABILITY READINESS TOOL

Introducing [FarmSustainability.ca](https://farmsustainability.ca) – an online tool to advance farm sustainability

Team Alberta [a working collaboration of 8 of Alberta's crop commissions] is pleased to launch farmsustainability.ca. This farm sustainability readiness tool is a web-based, voluntary, self-assessment and action planning resource that aims to advance on-farm sustainability in Canada.

The readiness tool removes the guesswork by asking questions compiled from three of the most comprehensive, internationally recognized, sustainability certification programs in a user-friendly format. The tool addresses the drivers behind sustainable sourcing and certification and will increase producers' understanding of sustainability in Canada.

Farmers can complete an assessment of their farm when

they visit farmsustainability.ca, which will generate an action plan tailored to their operation. The aggregated data gleaned from this tool will give the commissions insight for directing future resources for research and extension of beneficial management practices.

The farm sustainability readiness tool was developed by the four crop commissions in conjunction with Alberta Agriculture and Forestry and Groupe Agéco.

Visit farmsustainability.ca to learn more about the tool and to start your assessment today!

