



MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF GREENVIEW

MEDIA RELEASE

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Greenview's Agricultural Challenges and Advocacy Efforts

Valleyview, Alberta – Greenview’s Agricultural Service Board and Council recognize the importance of actively engaging in advocacy on behalf of Greenview’s Agricultural producers to ensure the long-term viability and prosperity of its agricultural sector. We sat down with Greenview’s Agricultural Service Board (ASB) Chair Warren Wohlgemuth, ASB Vice Chair, Deputy Reeve Bill Smith, and ASB Council Member Dave Berry to shed some light on what steps Greenview’s ASB has taken to help agricultural producers in Greenview.

“On August 23, 2023, Greenview’s Agricultural Service Board took a significant step by urging Greenview Administration to delve into the possibility of declaring an Agricultural Disaster. The thorough investigation encompassed the review of crop reports spanning from May to September 2023, consultations with producers, and reaching out to the Agriculture Financial Services Corporation (AFSC). While annual crops saw record yields, forages faced a challenging year. Despite these circumstances and as the criteria for declaration had not been met, on September 27, 2023, the board chose not to recommend a declaration to Council.” This underscores the intricate decisions we face in navigating the dynamic realities of our agricultural landscape.” - Warren Wohlgemuth, ASB Board Chair

Criteria for a Declaration of Agricultural Disaster

To meet the criteria for such a declaration, 25%-50% of hectares of crops and forages must be rated as "poor." This benchmark serves as a measure of the severity of agricultural challenges within a municipality.

Exclusion from the Canada-Alberta Drought Livestock Assistance Program

“Greenview's exclusion from the Canada-Alberta Drought Livestock Assistance Program in 2023 raised eyebrows. Despite lobbying efforts by the Province for the inclusion of all municipalities, the federal government declined the request. A closer examination revealed that the affected municipalities are primarily comprised of extensive forested crown lands with smaller zones of privately held agricultural lands. The Canadian Drought Monitor's aggregation of weather data failed to account for the nuanced differences in precipitation patterns between these areas, leading to an incomplete understanding of the challenges faced by local producers.” – Bill Smith, ASB Vice Chair and Deputy Reeve

Advocacy Efforts by Greenview's Agricultural Service Board

In response to the exclusion, Greenview's Agricultural Service Board, in collaboration with Brazeau County and the MD of Lesser Slave River, took a proactive stance. On February 2, 2024, they addressed their concerns in a letter to the Federal Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, expressing discontent with the decision and urging reconsideration.

Empowering Local Producers to Advocate

Dave Berry, ASB Council Member, underscores the need for advocacy, stating, “Local producers play a crucial role in amplifying the advocacy efforts. By contacting their respective Member of Parliament and Minister of the Legislative Assembly, they can contribute to the collective voice seeking fair representation and support for Greenview's agricultural sector. The call to action is clear: support the endeavors to secure assistance and recognition for the challenges faced by the local agricultural community.”

Concluding Thoughts

Greenview's agricultural community is at the heart of a dynamic and challenging landscape. The ASB's tireless efforts mirror a deep dedication to understanding and tackling the complexities that define agriculture in our region.

As we come together in these advocacy efforts, we envision a future where our farming community not only survives but truly thrives. We hope for policies that understand the distinct challenges and valuable contributions of Greenview.

ASB Chair Warren Wohlgemuth stated, “Though the road ahead may be tough, with everyone pitching in and working together, we believe our agricultural sector in Greenview can not only weather the challenges but come out even more robust and resilient than before. I want to emphasize that Greenview Council recognizes the paramount importance of actively engaging in advocacy to safeguard the long-term viability and prosperity of our agricultural sector.”

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