



MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF GREENVIEW No. 16

REGULAR AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARD MEETING AGENDA

Wednesday, June 26th, 2024

9:30 AM

Council Chambers
Administration Building

#1	CALL TO ORDER		
#2	ADOPTION OF AGENDA		
#3	MINUTES	3.1 Regular Agricultural Service Board Meeting minutes held Wednesday, May 26 th , 2024, to be adopted.	1
		3.2 Business Arising from the Minutes	
		3.3 Action Items	5
#4	DELEGATE	4.1 SARDA 2023-24 Presentation	6
#5	BUSINESS	5.1 Ag for Life	18
		5.2 Ag Know	27
		5.3 ASB Resolution Grading	67
		5.4 Letter to Alberta Transportation and Economic Corridors	74
		5.5 Events Fees	78
		5.6 ASB Resolution – Weather Stations & AgriStability	81
		5.7 Managers Report	86

#6 MEMBERS REPORTS

- Chair Warren Wohlgemuth
- Vice Chair Bill Smith
- Councillor Dave Berry
- Member Joshua McMillan
- Member Dave Gibbard
- Member Jeff Laughlin
- Member Jake Drozda

#7 CORRESPONDENCE

1. Alberta Crop Reports
2. Country of Grande Prairie Letter
3. Precipitation Maps
4. Soil Moisture Reports
5. University of Lethbridge Letter

89

#8 ADJOURNMENT

Minutes of a
REGULAR AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARD
MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF GREENVIEW NO. 16
Greenview Administration Building,
Valleyview, Alberta, on Wednesday, May 29, 2024

**#1
CALL TO ORDER**

Member Dave Gibbard called the meeting to order at 9:31 am

PRESENT

A.S.B. Member – Deputy Reeve
A.S.B. Member
A.S.B. Member
A.S.B. Member
A.S.B. Member

Bill Smith
Dave Berry
Josh McMillan
David Gibbard
Jeff Laughlin

ATTENDING

Manager, Agriculture Services
Recording Secretary

Sheila Kaus
Brooke Kobe

ABSENT

Chair
A.S.B. Member

Warren Wohlgemuth
Jake Drozda

**#2
AGENDA**

MOTION: 24.05.53 Moved by: MEMBER JOSHUA MCMILLAN
That the Agricultural Service Board adopt April 24, 2024, Regular Agricultural
Service Board Meeting Agenda as amended.

CARRIED

**#3.1
REGULAR
AGRICULTURAL
SERVICE BOARD
MEETING MINUTES**

MOTION: 24.05.54 Moved by: COUNCILLOR DAVE BERRY
That the Agricultural Service Board adopt the March 27, 2024, Regular
Agricultural Service Board Meeting Agenda as amended.

CARRIED

**#3.2
BUSINESS ARISING
FROM MINUTES**

3.2 BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES
- Change wording of MOTION 5.4 from deferred to defeated.

**#3.3
ACTION ITEMS**

3.3 ACTION ITEMS

MOTION: 24.05.55 Moved by: COUNCILLOR DAVE BERRY
That the Agricultural Service Board accept the Action Items, as presented.

CARRIED

**#5.0
BUSINESS**

5.0 BUSINESS

#5.1
ALBERTA INVASIVE
SPECIES COUNCIL

5.1 ALBERTA INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL

MOTION: 24.05.56 Moved by: MEMBER JEFF LAUGHLIN

That the Agricultural Service Board recommend to Council the approval of a requested \$2,500 increase to the Alberta Invasive Species Councils 2024 funding to a total of \$7,500 to come from the Community Services Grants budget.

CARRIED

MOTION: 24.05.57 Moved by: MEMBER JOSHUA MCMILLAN

That the Agricultural Service Board request Administration provide the Alberta Invasive Species Council with the drafted letter of support for the 2024 Environmental Damages Fund grant application, as presented.

CARRIED

5.2 AVIAN FLU IN CATTLE

#5.2
AVIAN FLU IN
CATTLE

MOTION: 24.05.58 Moved by: DEPUTY REEVE BILL SMITH

That the Agricultural Service Board accept the report on 2024 Avian Flu in Cattle for information, as presented.

CARRIED

5.3 CARCASS DISPOSAL RESOLUTION

#5.3
CARCASS DISPOSAL
RESOLUTION

MOTION: 24.05.59 Moved by: MEMBER JEFF LAUGHLIN

That the Agricultural Service Board provide Administration the following edits to the 2024 Carcass Disposal Resolution, and request Administration return with the updated draft to the June 26th ASB meeting.

WITHDRAW

5.31 CARCASS DISPOSAL LETTER

#5.31
CARCASS DISPOSAL
LETTER

MOTION: 24.05.60 Moved by: MEMBER JEFF LAUGHLIN

The Agricultural Service Board request administration to draft a letter to Alberta Transportation regarding proper disposal of roadkill wildlife.

CARRIED

5.4 MANAGERS REPORT

#5.4
MANAGERS
REPORT

MOTION: 24.05.61 Moved by: COUNCILLOR DAVE BERRY

That the Agricultural Service Board accepts the Manager's report, as presented.

CARRIED

#6 MEMBERS'
BUSINESS &
REPORTS

6.0 MEMBERS' BUSINESS & REPORTS

CHAIR WARREN WOHLGEMUTH updated the Agriculture Service Board on his recent activities, which include;

VICE CHAIR – DEPUTY REEVE BILL SMITH updated the Agriculture Service Board on his recent activities, which include;

- Predator issues – Grizzly causing issues to producers. Fish and Wildlife handled this problem. Coyotes
- Attended a Grazing Lease Committee meeting
- Attended the Minister Advisory Committee meeting

COUNCILLOR DAVE BERRY updated the Agriculture Service Board on his recent activities, which include;

- Drought and Fire Ban. See if people can take their wood piles to transfer stations
- Ag Minister will be in the area on June 10. Tyler Olsen is working on setting up meetings with him.

MEMBER JAKE DROZDA updated the Agriculture Service Board on his recent activities, which include;

- Absent

MEMBER JOSHUA MCMILLAN updated the Agriculture Service Board on his recent activities, which include;

- Nothing to report

MEMBER DAVID GIBBARD updated the Agriculture Service Board on his recent activities, which include;

- Discussion on the fires

MEMBER JEFF LAUGHLIN updated the Agriculture Service Board on his recent activities, which include;

- Inquired about Heavy Harrows size, seeing if smaller implements are possible.

#6 MEMBER'S
BUSINESS AND
REPORTS

MOTION: 24.05.62 Moved by: MEMBER JEFF LAUGHLIN
That the Agricultural Service Board accepts the Member's reports as information.

CARRIED

#7
CORRESPONDENCE
ASB
CORRESPONDENCE

7.0 CORRESPONDENCE

MOTION: 24.05.63 Moved by: MEMBER JOSHUA MCMILLAN
That the Agricultural Service Board accepts the correspondence for information, as presented.

CARRIED

#8
ADJOURNMENT

8.0 ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: 24.05.64 Moved by: MEMBER JEFF LAUGHLIN
That this Agricultural Service Board meeting adjourn at 11:13 p.m.

CARRIED

MANAGER, AGRICULTURAL SERVICES

ASB CHAIR

UNADOPTED

3.3 Action Items - Agricultural Services Motion Tracker

No.	Motion	Assigned to	Status
MOTION: 22.07.78 July 27, 2022	That the Agricultural Service Board approve the importing of Canada Thistle Stem Mining Weevils from the United States, to facilitate a locally available rearing site for eventual weevil distribution on acceptable sites throughout Greenview.	Sarah Cairns, Landcare Coordinator	In Progress
MOTION: 24.03.31 March 27, 2024	That the ASB recommend to Council the replacement of the valmar attachment on ASB0043 at an upset limit of \$25,000, to come from the 2024 Capital Budget.	Sheila Kaus, Agricultural Services Manager	Completed – June 25 th Council Meeting
MOTION: 24.04.40 April 24, 2024	The Agricultural Service Board request that Administration draft an ASB resolution on 2023 Alberta Wildfire Ratepayer Agricultural Damage presentation.	Sheila Kaus, Agricultural Services Manager	In Progress
MOTION: 24.04.44 April 24, 2024	That the Agricultural Service Board request Administration explore replacement of the Farm Family Awards with a Greenview specific option to present to the Board at the July, 2024 Agricultural Service Board meeting.	Sarah Cairns, Landcare Coordinator	In Progress
MOTION: 24.05. May 29, 2024	The Agricultural Service Board request Administration to draft a letter to Alberta Transportation regarding proper disposal of roadkill wildlife.	Sheila Kaus, Agricultural Services Manager	In Progress



REQUEST FOR DECISION

SUBJECT:	SARDA 2023-24 Presentation		
SUBMISSION TO:	AGRICULTURAL SERVICES BOARD	REVIEWED AND APPROVED FOR SUBMISSION	
MEETING DATE:	June 26, 2024	CAO:	MANAGER: SK
DEPARTMENT:	AGRICULTURE	DIR:	PRESENTER:
STRATEGIC PLAN:	Economy	LEG:	

RELEVANT LEGISLATION:

Provincial:

Council Bylaw/Policy:

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

MOTION: That the Agricultural Service Board accept the report on SARDA's activities in 2023-24 for information, as presented.

BACKGROUND/PROPOSAL:

Greenview has a long-standing relationship of supporting SARDA (formerly Smoky Applied Research and Demonstration Association), a regional non-profit agricultural research association. SARDA has had a busy field season and has come to the Agricultural Service Board to update them on the activities in 2023-24 of the organization.

BENEFITS OF THE RECOMMENDED ACTION:

1. The benefit of the Agricultural Service Board accepting the recommended motion is that the Board will be made aware of the activities of SARDA over 2023-24.

DISADVANTAGES OF THE RECOMMENDED ACTION:

1. There is no disadvantage to the recommended motion.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Alternative #1: The Agricultural Service Board has the alternative to alter or deny the recommended motion.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATION:

The financial implications of the recommended action are currently unclear.

STAFFING IMPLICATION:

There is no staffing implication to the recommended action.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT LEVEL:

Greenview has adopted the IAP2 Framework for public consultation.

INCREASING LEVEL OF PUBLIC IMPACT

Inform

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL

Inform - To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.

PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC

Inform - We will keep you informed.

FOLLOW UP ACTIONS:

Should the Agricultural Service Board choose an alternative action, Administration will carry out the wishes of the Board.

ATTACHMENT(S):

- SARDA 2023-24 Presentation

SARDA Ag Research: Research Updates

Mission:

To facilitate the transfer of unbiased ideas and information between research institutions, industry and agricultural producers.



Surendra Bhattarai, Vance Yaremko

June 26, 2024

Grants and Funding



- Core Grant increased from \$190k to \$330k (2023-2025).
- Capital Grant announcement of \$3.2 million for April 1st 2024 for provincial ARAs.
- Municipal Grant for 2023 (\$280k).
 - Big Lakes County, Northern Sunrise County, County of Grande Prairie, MD of Smoky River, MD of Greenview.
- AgriScience to support next 4 years of SARDA Ag Research program.
 - Operating (~\$200k+) with 50% matching.
 - Capital (~\$100k) with 50% matching.
- RDAR (\$100k) supported Forage Seed Specialist position for 2023.
- RDAR (\$150k+) proposal submitted for 2024-2028.
- RBC grant for (100k) to support SARDA Ag Research program.
- Grant from Crop Commission changed to project vs program funding.

SARDA Ag Research: Research Capacity



SARDA Ag Research: Research Capacity



SARDA Ag Research: Research Activities



Turf and Forage Seed Production

- 1. Yield*
- 2. Quality*
- 3. Agronomic management*



Peace Region Living Lab

- 1. Small plot experiments*
- 2. Farmer's field scale experiments*



Annual crops

- 1. Cereals*
- 2. Pulses*
- 3. Oil Seed*
- 4. Industrial Hemp*
- 5. Crop Diversification*



Industry trials



Environment Program

2023 Research at DeBolt Site

- Lupin Agronomy
 - Lupin Seeding rate
 - Lupin P fertility
 - Lupin K fertility
 - Lupin S fertility
- RVT Yellow Pea
- RVT Green Pea
- Pea inoculant trial



2023 Extension

- Agricultural Trade Show *March 16-18 (~3500)*
- Field day and grand opening *July 26 (~110)*
- **Forage Field day Debolt *July 6 (~50)***
- Big Lakes extension *November 30 (~40)*
- 3 newsletters
 - Trade Show Issue *(3500 copies)*
 - April Issue *(2400 copies)*
 - October Issue *(2400 copies)*
- Current Events Email Program
- 2 articles in the Northern Horizon
- SARDA was acknowledged in another 23 articles
(Northern Horizon, Canadian Agronomist, Western Grains Research Foundation, Top Crop Manager, South Peace News, and the Alberta Seed Guide)
- 4 Scientific Journal articles
- 1 Published Book

SARDA Ag Research: upcoming events

COFFEE & CROPS *With Sarda Ag Research*



JULY 22, 2024



9:00am - 12:00pm



GPS 55.431256, -116.539857
NW 22-74-17 W5
High Prairie, AB
Parking on Range Road 173



Event Highlights

- ▶ 2024 Local Crop Agronomy with *Tanner Pollack*
- ▶ Canola Agronomy with *Jason Casselman*
- ▶ Lupin Agronomy with *Surendra Bhattarai*
- ▶ Field Pea Varieties with *Megan Allard*
- ▶ Wheat Fertility & Seeding Rate with *Shelleen Gerbig*

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
www.sarda.ca
780-837-2900



Alberta CROP DIAGNOSTIC DAY WITH *Sarda Ag Research*



July 24, 2024



9:00am - 3:00am



SARDA Ag Research
21018 Highway 2, Donnelly AB

**TRANSPORTATION & LUNCH
PROVIDED**

Pre-registration Required by July 19th

Event Highlights

- Lupin Agronomy with *Mark Olson*
- Pulse Agronomy with *Robyne Davidson*
- Canola Agronomy with *Jason Casselman*
- Cereal Agronomy with *Dr. Kelly Turkington*
- SARDA Ag Research Updates

For more information and registration please
visit www.sarda.ca or call 780-837-2900



PRFSA & SARDA Ag Research: upcoming events



**PEACE REGION FORAGE
SEED TOUR**

July 9, 2024

Rycroft Ag Centre

9:00 AM Registration

9:30 AM Bus Leaves

Tour Highlights

- Landview Aerial Spraying Drone Demo
- Insect & Cutworm Update
- Establishing and Removing Fescue and Brome Fields With Direct Seeding
- Seed Fields and Grower Practices (fescue and brome grasses)
- Herbicide, Fungicide and Growth Regulator Trials
- Market Updates



Transportation and Lunch will be provided

Pre-registration required by July 5th

TO REGISTER EMAIL:

coordinator@peaceforageseed.ca

For more information contact:

Talon: 1-877-630-2198

Calvin: 1-780-864-7663

Thank you for your continued support!!!



**NORTHERN SUNRISE
COUNTY**
We've got it all!



PEACE REGION
LIVING LAB



*Peace Region Forage
Seed Association* 



Canada 





REQUEST FOR DECISION

SUBJECT:	2025 Ag for Life Sponsorship Request		
SUBMISSION TO:	AGRICULTURAL SERVICES BOARD	REVIEWED AND APPROVED FOR SUBMISSION	
MEETING DATE:	June 26, 2024	CAO:	MANAGER: SK
DEPARTMENT:	AGRICULTURE	DIR:	PRESENTER: SK
STRATEGIC PLAN:	Environment	LEG:	

RELEVANT LEGISLATION:

Provincial:

Council Bylaw/Policy:

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

MOTION: That the Agricultural Service Board approve the requested \$2,500 funding for 2025 with the requirement that “Ag for Life” commit to attendance at one of the following three agricultural events within Greenview in 2025:

1. Cranberry Rodeo
2. Valleyview Rodeo
3. Grovedale Agricultural Fair

BACKGROUND/PROPOSAL:

On June 3rd, administration received a letter from “Ag for Life” detailing the programming they deliver throughout the province and a request for funding in the amount of \$2,500 that is presented as an annual membership.

Founded by UFA, Rocky Mountain Equipment, Nutrien, Adfarm, and GlacierFarmMedia, Ag for Life took over the formerly provincially delivered Classroom Agriculture Program, for which they receive funding from the Province of Alberta to deliver. Of note, requests from Peace Region municipalities for Ag for Life to attend Peace Region agricultural events as a booth or bringing their safety trailer for families to walk through at larger events have been declined.

While the organization states they would like to have more of a presence in the Peace region, funding prior to a committed presence may be ill advised. Administration is recommending there be a commitment of attendance at one of the three larger agriculturally related events in Greenview, prior to following through with disbursement of funds.

BENEFITS OF THE RECOMMENDED ACTION:

1. The benefit of the recommendation is that the Agricultural Service Board will be aware of the request for funding prior to the finalization of the 2025 budget.
-

DISADVANTAGES OF THE RECOMMENDED ACTION:

1. There is no disadvantage to the recommended action.
-

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Alternative #1: The Agricultural Service Board may choose to request for Administration arrange for the organization to attend a future ASB meeting as a delegation to explain their request.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATION:

There are no financial implications to the recommended action.

Direct Costs:

Ongoing / Future Costs:

STAFFING IMPLICATION:

There are no staffing implications to the recommended motion

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT LEVEL:

Greenview has adopted the IAP2 Framework for public consultation.

INCREASING LEVEL OF PUBLIC IMPACT

Inform

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL

Inform - To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.

PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC

Inform - We will keep you informed.

FOLLOW UP ACTIONS:

Once the Agricultural Service Board has made a recommendation, Administration will follow through with the wishes of the board.

ATTACHMENT(S):

- 2023 correspondence
- 2024 Letter, May 21,2024

FW: Rural Safety Unit Booking inquiry

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Subject: Re: Rural Safety Unit Booking inquiry

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Great! Yes, please do send what I do you have and we will keep working on our end to try to make it happen. Thank you for the offer. I will be in touch if we have any news about this.

Thanks!

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Thank you for your reply. I will reach out and try to get some numbers for this event. There will also be fairs in Grovedale and Valleyview. If funding is an issue, please let me know some costs can we could likely cover the costs to get the unit, or some type of representation, in the MD of Greenview.

Thanks!

[REDACTED]

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello Sarah,

Thank you for your recent inquiry.

Unfortunately, we are not going to be in the area to be able to attend on August 19th, based on our other bookings. I have noted your event, and if things change, we will get in touch. It is on our radar to get up to your area, and we are working on our funding to be able to support this. We are striving to have some sort of representation this year for the area - if even for a limited window outside of our trailers - with a booth, or presentations, but it is still very much in the works.

If you can give me an idea of your expected demographics and numbers for this event, that can be useful information when we make proposals to our sponsors.

Otherwise, I will let you know if/when our plans change.

Kind regards,

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Good afternoon,

I was wondering if your Rural Safety unit would be available to book for August 19th, 2023. There is an agricultural society fair in DeBolt and we would like to have this present. Please let me know. Thank you

Sarah Cairns

Landcare Coordinator

Municipal District of Greenview No.16 | Valleyview, Alberta T0H 3N0

Tel: [780-524-7600](tel:780-524-7600) | Fax: | Toll Free: [888-524-7601](tel:888-524-7601) | 24/7 Dispatch: [866-524-7608](tel:866-524-7608) |

Direct: [1-780-524-7604](tel:1-780-524-7604)

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Thank you

--

Ag for Life

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

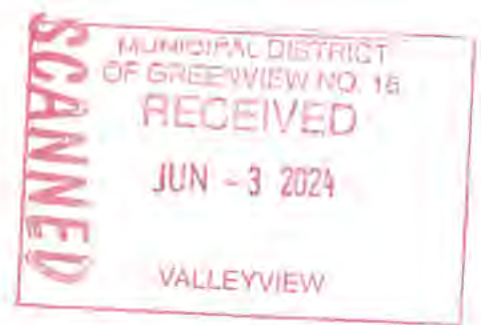


[Redacted text block]

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May 21, 2024

Sheila Kaus
Manager, Agriculture Services
MD of Greenview
4806 – 36 Avenue, PO Box 1079
Valleyview, AB T0H 3N0



Re: INVESTING IN TOMORROW

Food connects us all to agriculture, yet our youth are becoming increasingly disconnected from the story of their food and Alberta's rural heritage. At Agriculture for Life, Inc. (Ag for Life), we envision a province where all Albertans understand and appreciate the agriculture industry and the impact it has on their lives. Education is the key to achieving this vision.

As members of Alberta's agriculture community, we need:

- Tomorrow's consumers to understand the care, excellence, and pride Alberta's agriculture industry dedicates to producing safe, healthy foods for our communities, our province, and our world. This understanding is essential for Alberta producers and agriculture communities to continue to grow and prosper.
- Tomorrow's decision-makers to appreciate the challenges our producers face and the importance of our industry to the economy – and our lives.
- Tomorrow's workforce to be excited and inspired to consider a career in the agriculture and agri-food sector.

Misconceptions about agriculture are widespread, parents don't always have the answers, and teachers often lack the resources. This is where Ag for Life steps in, providing essential support to bridge these gaps. As the voice of Agriculture in the Classroom Alberta, Ag for Life provides factual, balanced, curriculum-linked agriculture literacy programs and resources to Alberta's educators and students.

Like us, the Rural Municipalities of Alberta recognize the importance of education in sustaining the agriculture industry and vibrancy of rural communities. Their Position Statement emphasizes that **"Teaching children in schools about farming and ranching is vital for building understanding between agricultural producers and non-farming Albertans."**

Sharing this aligned vision, Ag for Life offers invaluable support in advancing this by:

- Developing and delivering new educational programs, resources, and activities tailored to Alberta's unique agricultural landscape.
- Reaching more classrooms across the province, ensuring widespread agricultural literacy.
- Empowering teachers with the knowledge and tools they need to educate the next generation about agriculture.





- Connecting students directly with the food they eat and the people who produce it, fostering a deeper appreciation and understanding.
- Inspiring students to consider careers in agriculture, ensuring a robust and skilled future workforce.

Ag for Life is your bridge to future innovators, educators, consumers, and decision-makers. By partnering with Ag for Life, you can directly contribute to the education and empowerment of our youth, securing a strong future for Alberta's agriculture industry and its rural communities.

We invite you to make a difference, showing your support of this mission. An annual membership of \$2,500 will significantly enhance our ability to provide these essential educational resources and programs. Your support will directly impact the future of agriculture in Alberta, fostering a generation that is informed, engaged, and connected to their food and its sources.

Join us today in making a difference. Together, we can build a more informed and connected community, ensuring the sustainability and success of Alberta agriculture and rural communities for years to come.

I'd be delighted to arrange a call to provide more details about the membership or to explore further collaboration opportunities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Beth Halford', is written over the typed name and title.

Beth Halford
Manager, Strategic Partnerships

CC: Reeve Tyler Olsen



About Agriculture for Life

For over a decade, Agriculture for Life (Ag for Life) has been connecting educators, as well as students and their families to the food they eat through our science-based, balanced, curriculum aligned programs and resources.

We have established partnerships with a wide range of professional organizations, government agencies and academic institutions to advance the public understanding of Alberta agriculture and food systems.

Our goal is to educate Albertans about agriculture's role in feeding the world as it relates to food security, environment and climate change, economic diversification, innovation, careers and sustainability while building public trust along the entire value chain.

We bring agriculture to life!

Partnering With Ag For Life

Ag for Life is a strong voice in the promotion of agriculture and food literacy – combating myths and misperceptions, while building greater trust in our food system. But we don't do it alone! Ag for Life is supported by a diverse group of stakeholders with shared-values and a commitment to communicate and advance agriculture education that drives sound food policies and consumer choices now and into the future.

If your organization shares our vision, we would be proud to have your support. For more information contact info@agricultureforlife.ca.



Our Priority Areas

Agriculture and Food Literacy

Ensuring that all people have access to sustainable, sufficient, safe, healthy and culturally relevant food is a key global challenge today. Human health and wellbeing are inextricably linked with a sustainable food system. Today more than ever, people are disconnected from agriculture with many being two or three generations removed from the farm. This disconnect leaves questions about food, its origins and its production. There is a real need for agriculture and food education if we are to cultivate informed and healthy citizens alongside a vibrant, healthy, sustainable industry. The good news is that there is a demand for this knowledge in schools, communities and homes across Alberta. We believe everyone should understand where their food comes from.

Advocacy

Consumers have questions about their food and how it is being produced. There is a myriad of complex, mis- and contradictory information, from Netflix documentaries to BuzzFeed articles, to the grocery store aisle and Instagram posts, leaving many consumers generally confused about agriculture and food production practices. This confusion, if not addressed, can become irrationally contagious and quickly spiral into mistrust of the entire industry. Misinformation feeds mistrust and we need to be proactive to negate this effect.

Ag for Life advances science-based information, promotes critical-thinking and amplifies Alberta agriculture's story through our robust media and public relations efforts and original content disseminated through our communications channels. Ag for Life is active on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, and out in the communities with our Know Your Food Mobile Education Unit.

Rural and Farm Safety

We believe anyone who gets to work, grow up on or visit a farm is blessed. Agriculture is full of possibilities. However we know it can be a dangerous occupation for primary producers and their families. While some injury risks for youth exist in both urban and rural environments, there are major injury risks that are unique to rural settings such as large equipment, livestock, open bodies of water, rural roads and suffocation hazards. Ag for Life's goal is to greatly reduce the number of rural and farm injuries and fatalities by providing educational safety awareness programming to rural youth and their families.

Our Reach

Our unique combination of programming has allowed us to foster deep grass-roots relations with multiple target audiences including primary producers, landowners, and farm families, educators, students, consumers, government, corporations and other industry stakeholders. In 2022, Ag for Life initiatives reached over half a million Albertans.





REQUEST FOR DECISION

SUBJECT:	2024 Urgent Funding Request - AgKnow		
SUBMISSION TO:	AGRICULTURAL SERVICES BOARD	REVIEWED AND APPROVED FOR SUBMISSION	
MEETING DATE:	June 26, 2024	CAO:	MANAGER: SK
DEPARTMENT:	AGRICULTURE	DIR:	PRESENTER: SK
STRATEGIC PLAN:	Culture, Social & Emergency Services	LEG:	

RELEVANT LEGISLATION:

Provincial:

Council Bylaw/Policy:

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

MOTION: That the Agricultural Service Board recommend to Council to approve \$5,000 in on-time urgent funding for AgKnow, to be sourced from the Community Services Grants and Sponsorship budget.

BACKGROUND/PROPOSAL:

On June 12th, Administration received a letter from “AgKnow” with an urgent, one-time funding request for the 2024 year. Established with support from the province in response to Provincial Agricultural Services Board resolutions, the organization aims to reduce barriers to mental health supports in the agricultural industry and provide the community with counsellors that understand the unique pressures and challenges Agricultural Producers face.

Agricultural Services is working with Communications to make referral cards to the services the organization provides available in all Greenview public service buildings, with FCSS, at the administrative building, and in the Agricultural Services office. Work has also begun on a mental health related event for Greenview ratepayers after harvest.

While the organization is approaching all 68 remaining rural municipalities with his request, Administration recommends the Board approve more than double the requested funding to offset the impact of some municipalities that may not be able to fit such an unbudgeted request into the 2024 year.

BENEFITS OF THE RECOMMENDED ACTION:

1. The benefit of the recommendation is that the Agricultural Service Board will clarify to Council the importance of “AgKnow” to the Agricultural Community in relation to the urgent request

DISADVANTAGES OF THE RECOMMENDED ACTION:

1. The disadvantage to the recommended motion is that while the Community Services Grants and Sponsorship budget may have room, this was not an expense that was anticipated.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Alternative #1: The Agricultural Service Board may choose to request for Administration arrange for the organization to attend a future ASB meeting as a delegation to explain their request.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATION:

The financial implication is a one-time contribution of \$5,000.

Direct Costs:

Ongoing / Future Costs:

STAFFING IMPLICATION:

There are no staffing implications to the recommended motion

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT LEVEL:

Greenview has adopted the IAP2 Framework for public consultation.

INCREASING LEVEL OF PUBLIC IMPACT

Inform

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL

Inform - To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.

PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC

Inform - We will keep you informed.

FOLLOW UP ACTIONS:

Once the Agricultural Service Board has made a recommendation, Administration will follow through with the wishes of the board.

ATTACHMENT(S):

- AgKnow Annual Report
- Greenview Letter

AGKNOW

ALBERTA FARM MENTAL HEALTH NETWORK



AN ARECA
INITIATIVE



FOR FARMERS SUSTAINABLE FUTURE



ANNUAL ²⁰²⁴ REPORT

AN ALBERTA APPROACH
TO FARM MENTAL HEALTH

LEARN MORE AT [AGKNOW.CA](https://agknow.ca)



2024 ANNUAL REPORT

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada and the Government of Alberta through the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership, a federal-provincial-territorial initiative.



AgKnow acknowledges that the land we call Alberta, and where Albertan farms reside, is the traditional and ancestral territory of many peoples, presently subject to Treaties 6, 7, and 8. Namely: the Blackfoot Confederacy – Kainai, Piikani, and Siksika – the Cree, Dene, Saulteaux, Nakota Sioux, Stoney Nakoda, and the Tsuu T'ina Nation and the Métis People of Alberta. This includes the Métis Settlements and the Six Regions of the Métis Nation of Alberta within the historical Northwest Métis Homeland. We acknowledge the many First Nations, Métis, and Inuit who have lived in and cared for these lands for generations before us.

We are grateful for the traditional Knowledge Keepers and Elders who are still with us today and those who have gone before us. We would not be here without them. We make this acknowledgement as an act of reconciliation and gratitude to those whose territory we reside, farm and live on. While recognizing the historical impacts of settlement on these lands, we wish to express our common goal to care for our water and natural resources for all future generations to share in.

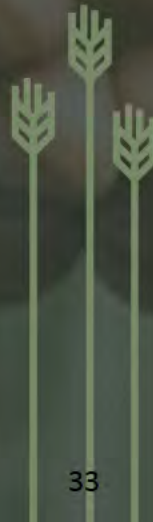
MISSION

To address the unique challenges faced by farmers, Agknow collaborates with stakeholders to identify needs and approaches that ensure accessible and effective mental health support for Alberta farmers, their families, employees and communities.



VISION

At Agknow we are driven by a passion for the well-being of farmers and a commitment to cultivating resilient farming communities where mental health is prioritized, contributing to the overall prosperity of Alberta's agriculture sector for long-term impact.



A YEAR IN REVIEW

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2023 was a year of growth for AgKnow, particularly in laying the groundwork to address crucial aspects of farm mental health in Alberta going forward.

Stakeholder engagements early in the year were instrumental in shaping the direction of our efforts, which were backed by the unwavering support and collaborative spirit of volunteers and staff. With their help, we developed a Suicide Awareness and Prevention Training course and trained nine facilitators. Many of those involved in this project have a personal connection to the impact of suicide in rural areas, and they went above and beyond to provide and, notably, donate time and resources.

Our involvement in inter-agency meetings and tradeshow has helped to increase awareness of AgKnow and provided direction to inform our development. Partnerships with Counselling Alberta and EaseCare represent significant strides toward identifying accessible counselling options for rural Albertans, and we continue to engage with them to increase their capacity to provide farm-informed counselling.

The re-launch of free counselling sessions for farm families in September was a notable achievement, and we are pleased to also extend the programs to support veterinarians and registered veterinary technicians. Free





IT'S TIME TO CHANGE THE CULTURE OF AGRICULTURE

sessions can be booked by visiting the farm-informed AgKnow Therapist Network (ATN) on our website. The expansion of the ATN to cover the province remains a top priority. We continue to develop training and provide learning opportunities for mental health and health care professionals and service providers working in rural Alberta.

Securing funding through the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership, supported by the provincial and federal governments, allowed us to grow our team. This ensures our capacity to develop evidence-based resources tailored to rural farming communities. It also fuels ongoing research initiatives, like the depopulation study initiated in 2023 and the stress and coping assessment, which identified five priority areas for Alberta farmers. Anticipating further research results in 2024, our goal is to optimize mental health and health care services for the benefit of the farming community.

Early in 2024, the establishment of an Industry Advisory Group presented an exciting opportunity for interested parties to connect and contribute. The commitment, perseverance, and teamwork of our supporters continue to make a difference in the lives of farmers and their families.

Linda Hunt

Linda Hunt, Program Director

AGKNOW
ALBERTA FARM MENTAL HEALTH NETWORK

AN **ARECA**
INITIATIVE

ALBERTA FARM MENTAL HEALTH NETWORK

WHO IS AGKNOW?

The AgKnow Alberta Farm Mental Health Network was established in 2022 with over \$500,000 in grant funding from the Canadian Agricultural Partnership as the result of a province-wide assessment of the mental health support services available and accessible to farmers and farming communities throughout most of rural Alberta. The team also examined the stressors farmers typically face and how they can affect their well-being and impact their business and personal relationships.

AgKnow is farmer-led. It focuses on building tangible tools and services tailored to the needs of producers and their families based on resources and tips from real farmers. The Network partners with professionals across the province to get farmers support when they need it most.

AgKnow is an initiative of the Agricultural Research and Extension Council of Alberta (ARECA), a not-for-profit organization working with producers to enhance and improve their operations sustainability through access to cutting edge information, field research, and new technology.

AGKNOW STAFF



LINDA HUNT
Program Director



CORNELIUS WILLIAMS
Digital Marketing and IT Specialist



KATIE SONGER
Communications Campaign Manager



LINDSAY FLETCHER
Virtual Assistant

AgKnow was established in direct response to the expressed need for mental health support within Alberta's agriculture community. At AgKnow, we provide effective support and evidence-based, practical resources for all Alberta farmers and aim to:

REDUCE
BARRIERS TO SERVICE

DE-STIGMATIZE
MENTAL HEALTH

COLLABORATE AND STRENGTHEN
PARTNERSHIPS WITH GOVERNMENT BODIES, MENTAL HEALTH ORGANIZATIONS, AND AGRICULTURAL STAKEHOLDERS

STAY RELEVANT AND CURRENT
WITH THE ISSUES IMPACTING THE AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY IN ALBERTA

INCREASE RESILIENCY
IN FARMING COMMUNITIES



WHAT WE VALUE

- ☀ FOCUSING ON THE FARMER
- ☀ THE IMPACT OF OUR WORK
- ☀ EVIDENCE-BASED SOLUTIONS
- ☀ COLLABORATION
- ☀ RESILIENCY
- ☀ CHOICE

FOR FARMERS SUSTAINABLE FUTURE



AN OVERVIEW OF

FARMING IN ALBERTA

Alberta is an agricultural powerhouse with the second-largest total farm area (behind Saskatchewan) in the country, making up 32% of Canada's total. Alberta reported a total farm area of 49.2 million acres in 2021.

In 2021, farms classified as oilseed and grain accounted for the largest total farm area in the province, with 46.4%. This was followed by farms classified as beef and feedlots (39.6%) and other crop farms (7.9%). Alberta has more than a quarter of Canada's field crop area.

In 2021, farms in Alberta reported 25.6 million acres of hay and field crops. The province accounted for 27.6% of Canada's field crop and hay area. The three biggest crop contributors in Alberta were canola, spring wheat, and barley. Alberta was the top grower of barley in Canada and grew the second-highest number of acres of canola and spring wheat.

With 57,605 farm operators working on 41,505 farms in 2021, Albertan farmers made up only 1.3% of the population. The average age of farm operators in Alberta is 56.5 years old.

FARMS IN ALBERTA
CAN BE DIVIDED INTO

46.4%
OILSEED & GRAIN

36.9%
BEEF & FEEDLOTS

7.9%
OTHER CROPS

POPULATION OF ALBERTA
4,262,635

FARM OPERATORS
57,605
IN ALBERTA

AVERAGE AGE
OF FARM OPERATORS
56.5

ONE
OUT OF EVERY 100
ALBERTANS IS A FARMER



FARMS IN ALBERTA

41,505

TOTAL FARM AREA

49.2 MILLION

ACRES OF CROPLAND & PASTURE

COMPRISING

32%

OF CANADA'S TOTAL FARMLAND

NET FARM INCOME IN 2021

\$5.96 BILLION

AGRI-FOOD INDUSTRIES CONTRIBUTED

\$11.2 BILLION

TO ALBERTA'S GDP IN 2022



Alberta has the second-highest rate of succession planning in Canada with 14% of farms in Alberta reporting a succession plan in 2021. By comparison, 12% of farms in Canada reported a succession plan. In 2021, farms in Alberta accounted for more than a quarter (25.4%) of Canada's share of farms that reported a succession plan.¹

IT IS ESTIMATED THAT 75% OF CANADIAN FARMS WILL NEED TO CHANGE HANDS IN THE NEXT 10 YEARS.

¹ Source: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/96-325-x/2021001/article/00009-eng.htm>

A CASE STUDY IN FARM MENTAL HEALTH RESPONSE

THE ONTARIO APPROACH

In Ontario, farm families and employees now have access to the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) delivered by Telus Health. A farm-specific phone line connects callers to farm-informed clinicians if available, with the option to direct callers for crisis support. Currently 25-30% of farm callers require crisis intervention, far exceeding the normal expected rate of 2-3%. Despite functioning since 2022 without a comprehensive communications strategy, recent funding to the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) Ontario has led to a steady increase in service use. Notably, farmers are not always able to connect with a farm-informed clinician, and the province pays Telus on a per-farmer basis regardless of the number of users. The CMHA coordinator actively engages with Telus clinicians about the current stressors faced by the industry.

Education and knowledge transfer is the most effective way to overcome stigma. CMHA Ontario has established a network comprising about 40 health promotion facilitators, although realistically 10 are currently active. Their primary task is to administer "In the Know," a four-hour mental health literacy course developed by the Canadian Centre for Agricultural Wellbeing (CCAW) at the University of Guelph. The government currently funds CMHA Ontario to oversee the coordination of "In the Know" training delivery, which has seen significant uptake from farm boards and delegates. Over the past year, they have trained around 60 individuals, with more than half of the sessions being conducted virtually, and have set a target of reaching 100 participants in the upcoming year. Three full-time staff are dedicated to promotion, active engagement with agriculture industry businesses and associations, and the responsibility of scheduling and contracting regional CMHA health promotion facilitators to deliver the training locally.

Finally, CMHA Ontario has adapted a successful suicide prevention program from Quebec known as the Sentinel program. Ontario's Guardian Network trains volunteers who are frequently in contact with farmers with strategies and tools to identify when someone is struggling with their mental health and connect them with appropriate services. There are 220 Guardians spread throughout the province.

Currently, CCAW is developing and testing a farm culture course for health care and mental health professionals and is piloting it in Ontario.





FARMS IN ONTARIO

48,346

TOTAL FARM AREA

11.8 MILLION

ACRES

COMPRISING

7.7%

OF CANADA'S TOTAL FARMLAND

NET FARM INCOME IN 2021

\$2.28 BILLION

FARM OPERATORS

67,390

IN ONTARIO



ONE

OUT OF EVERY 212
ONTARIANS IS A FARMER



POPULATION OF ONTARIO

14,223,942

THE LANDSCAPE OF

FARM MENTAL HEALTH IN ALBERTA

Research shows that farmers commonly struggle with depression and anxiety, and are at a high risk of suicide. According to a national study of 1,132 farmers in 2015-16, Dr. Andria Jones-Bitton and colleagues at the University of Guelph found that 35% of Canadian farmers experienced depression, 57% experienced anxiety, and 45% reported high stress. All these values were higher than those reported by the general population.

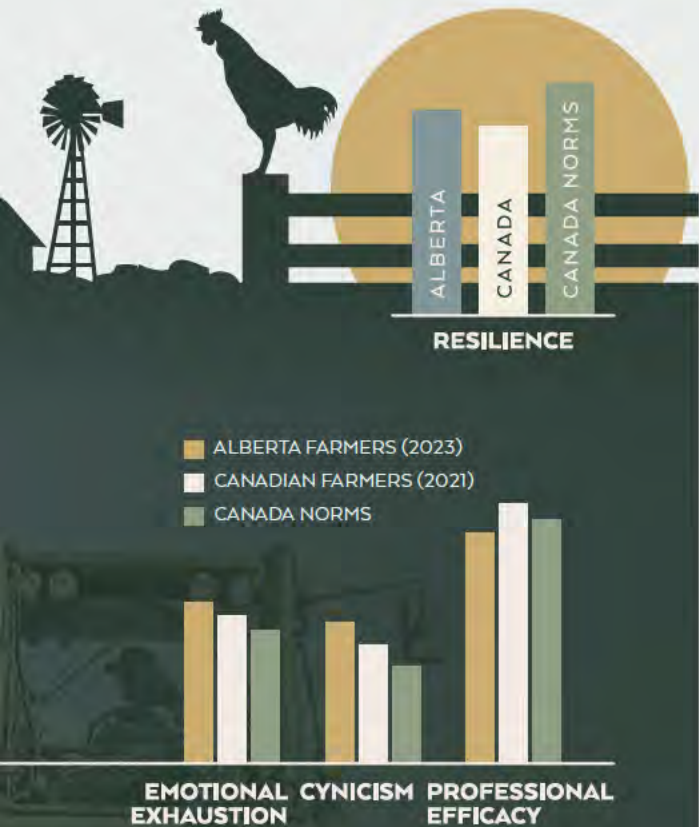
In 2023, Dr. Rebecca Purc-Stephenson of the University of Alberta led a survey on the rate of stress, mental outcomes, and coping strategies among Alberta farmers. The goal of this research was to gain baseline knowledge of the state of mental health in Alberta farmers and to have data that can be compared to the findings of national farmer mental health research.

Preliminary results from the study show that Alberta farmers are aligned with the rest of the country in terms of mental health challenges. The final results of this study are to be published this spring, and there may be deviation in those results due to further analysis.

- **Depression among farmers** The survey found that 66.7% of Alberta farmers experienced mild to severe symptoms of depression, compared to 57.7% of farmers in national data collected in 2021.
- **Anxiety among farmers** While national data in 2021 found that 49.3% of farmers experienced symptoms of anxiety, 78.5% of Alberta farmers reported experiencing mild to severe symptoms of anxiety, a significantly higher percentage.
- **Burnout among farmers** Burnout, the result of too much stress, is characterized by exhaustion (feeling overextended, depleted emotionally, physically tired), cynicism (disengaged, negative, withdrawn from the job, resentful), and feeling unproductive (low self-evaluation, seeing yourself as ineffective). Alberta farmers reported higher rates of burnout compared to both the national data on farmers and general population norms.
- **Resilience among farmers** While Alberta farmers reported higher rates of resilience compared to the national data on farmers, this was still lower than the general population norms across Canada.

ALBERTA FARMERS REPORTED HIGHER RATES OF BURNOUT





66.7%
EXPERIENCED MILD TO SEVERE SYMPTOMS OF DEPRESSION

78.5%
EXPERIENCED MILD TO SEVERE SYMPTOMS OF ANXIETY

The top five stressors as identified in this study (most to least stressful) are:

- 0.1 UNEXPECTED WORK DISRUPTIONS**
Dealing with bad weather, equipment breakdowns, time pressure, lack of manpower
- 0.2 FARM AND FINANCIAL PLANNING**
Getting loans, planning for retirement/transition
- 0.3 REGULATIONS AND PUBLIC PRESSURE**
Environmental regulations, policy changes, public perception of farming
- 0.4 OCCUPATIONAL HAZARDS**
Operating machinery, handling chemicals
- 0.5 ISOLATION**
Lack of close neighbours, distance to shopping centres

It is worth highlighting that the three highest stress categories are all outside of the farmer’s control, whereas the last two stressors have always been inherent to farming and rural life (albeit not as burdensome as they are presently).

The study also identified common coping strategies among farmers. These are mostly distraction and escapism strategies that help them to manage their emotions and gives them a cognitive break from the stress. They rarely engage in therapy. The top barriers to seeking help are stigma/pride, time, lack of access to service, and lack of awareness.

The preferred methods of receiving support reported are as follows, from highest to lowest:

1. Professional, in person
2. Another farmer/peer
3. Internet resources with tips/advice
4. Professional, telephone or online; a family member (tied)
5. Self-directed help/app
6. Religious leader/pastor



A CASE FOR FARM TRANSITION

It is well established that farm transition is an ongoing concern and, despite multiple efforts to increase adoption and engagement from farmers, significant barriers remain. Finding the right professional is confusing and difficult, there is no provincial coordination of farm transition resources and services in Alberta, and there is a need for professional development supports to ensure a new generation of farm transition specialists is entering the workforce.

THE ALBERTA APPROACH TO FARM MENTAL HEALTH

METRICS OF SUCCESS

GOAL • REDUCE BARRIERS TO SERVICE

In 2021, the Canadian Psychological Association reported that in rural communities, the ratio of psychologists to population was one psychologist for every 28,500 people, whereas in urban communities, the ratio was one psychologist for every 3,848 people.²

Farmers often encounter significant barriers to accessing mental health services. Some of the primary obstacles farmers face are the distance from mental health services, the relative scarcity of resources, lengthy wait times, unpredictable working hours that hinder keeping appointments, and practitioners who do not understand agriculture. Additionally, the financial burden associated with therapy services presents a significant barrier, as farmers prioritize investing in their operations over personal well-being.

To address these challenges, the AgKnow initiative has identified and promoted farm-informed counsellors and therapists through the development of the AgKnow Therapist Network (ATN) and has piloted a free session program. The AgKnow Professional Network is made up of agriculturally informed and connected practitioners across Alberta. Information on each member of our network is available on our website, and each member bio includes detailed information regarding service areas, areas of specialty, and connection to agriculture. Therapists can be contacted directly through their individual inquiry forms on our website.

Our current free sessions pilot program covers up to two free counselling sessions for farmers, their families, farm employees, veterinarians, and registered veterinary technicians, which will be bumped up to four free sessions in 2024. The purpose of the pilot is to reduce barriers to farmers trying therapy supports and try to establish a baseline for the amount of counselling services needed to meet the demands of the industry. Adoption in Alberta, like the other provinces, has been slowly increasing over time, but as of yet a baseline for how much the services are needed has not been established. Activities that address stigma and increase awareness are still needed, as well as a consistent funding model to make the service reliable.

² House of Commons, AGRI, Evidence, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 22 November 2018, 0950 (Karen R. Cohen, Chief Executive Officer, Canadian Psychological Association).



KEY HIGHLIGHT

Since AgKnow's launch, 17 agriculturally-informed therapists and counsellors have provided free 34 mental health sessions to 18 farmers.

"A LOT OF TIMES THE ONLY ONES WHO UNDERSTAND US ARE OTHER PRODUCERS."

Sean Stanford, Southern Alberta farmer



WHY FARM-INFORMED THERAPY MATTERS

Between November 2021 and April 2022, AgKnow conducted a needs assessment of farm mental health in Alberta. One of our findings was that health care providers and mental health professionals do not understand farm culture, which results in a breakdown in patient-provider communication and delays in farmers seeking care.

In many rural settings, general practitioners are the first point of contact, but they may not be equipped to assess or address mental health issues. Farmers report they often delay seeking care because they feel providers do not understand farm culture and farm stressors well, which is supported by research (e.g., Hagen et al., 2020). Farmers are more likely to connect with health care providers when they reach crisis/breakdown.

Cultural competence refers to an understanding of cultural knowledge and "encourages clinicians to consider clients' cultural background in every stage of treatment, including intake, assessment,

conceptualization, and the delivery of intervention strategies," as described by clinical psychologist Monnica T. Williams in *Psychology Today*.

"Cultural competence makes health care services more accessible and effective for people of different cultural backgrounds. It reduces the risk of misdiagnosis, improves compliance with therapy, and decreases health care disparities," Williams states.

While cultural competence is often used in addressing systemic racism in health care, it can also be applied to the care of individuals in communities that often feel separate from or misunderstood by the public, such as rural and agricultural communities. If a therapist or counsellor understands the community, culture, and environment in which an individual lives and works, there is a greater opportunity for connection and support.

³ House of Commons, AGRI, Evidence, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 2 October 2018, 1010 (Sean Stanford).



THE ALBERTA APPROACH TO FARM MENTAL HEALTH

REACHING THE COMMUNITY

GOAL • DE-STIGMATIZE MENTAL HEALTH

Many farmers opt to leave their mental health symptoms unaddressed. A study revealed that nearly 40% of farmers indicated they would be unlikely to seek help for their mental health. Consequently, some farmers may ignore their symptoms while others try to 'tough it out' and hope things will improve on their own. However, without intervention, mental health symptoms are unlikely to improve on their own. Instead, they often exacerbate over time, potentially leading to the development of more severe mental illnesses.

The stigma surrounding mental illness perpetuates the misconception that mental health struggles are rare or shameful. Yet, recent research in Canada suggests that nearly 50% of Canadians will experience a mental health issue by the age of 40. Farmers living with mental health issues often internalize negative assumptions about themselves, leading to self-isolation and decreased self-esteem. Furthermore, farmers are concerned that they will be publicly judged for their lack of competency as farmers and,

in turn, receiving treatment will potentially jeopardize their ability to secure bank loans and other business opportunities integral to farm operations.

In 2023, AgKnow made a concerted effort to combat both mental health stigma within the agricultural community and to address the lack of agricultural competency within mental health industry professionals. AgKnow created a series of farm mental health presentations that were adapted to specific audiences and delivered in community. Our approach is to be ready and willing to build awareness of mental health supports, services and approaches in the context of current concerns of the industry. For 2023, resiliency in the face of drought, flooding and wildfires was the most requested topic. We adapted our series of presentations to fit the various audiences and delivered as many as we could. Audiences remarked that the farmer's voice was the most effective in delivering sensitive topics. They asserted that stigma is most effectively tackled when conveyed by farmers themselves using their past lived experiences within the community.

We also attended trade shows, wellness fairs, and conferences to reach farmers and the businesses and community members they connect with. Messages delivered in these community events were amplified through social media marketing campaigns and mainstream agriculture media outlets. Feedback from stakeholders and the network found that they like how products are customized for the local context and the focus on addressing current concerns and situations.



KEY HIGHLIGHT

In 2023, AgKnow held more than 30 workshops and webinars and reached more than 1,600 farmers and therapists.



14 VIRTUAL EVENTS REACHING
493 PEOPLE



17 IN-PERSON EVENTS REACHING
1192 PEOPLE

- MENTAL HEALTH/HEALTH CARE
- FARMERS/AG INDUSTRY
- COMBINED
- GOVERNMENT

MEDIA COVERAGE
6 INTERVIEWS

↑ 29% INCREASE**
WEBSITE ↗
9,200
 UNIQUE VISITORS
13,200
 VISITS

↑ CONSISTENT GROWTH
NEWSLETTER
789
 SIGN-UPS
13
 SENT

↑ 210% INCREASE**
FACEBOOK f
23.3K
 IMPRESSIONS
807
 ENGAGEMENTS

↑ 33.8K% INCREASE**
INSTAGRAM @
1.1M
 IMPRESSIONS
338
 ENGAGEMENTS

↑ INCREASING**
X (TWITTER) x
4852
 IMPRESSIONS
40
 NEW FOLLOWERS

↑ 704% INCREASE**
LINKED-IN in
7.5K
 IMPRESSIONS
555
 ENGAGEMENTS



**HOW ARE YOU,
REALLY?**

▶ **WATCH THE AGKNOW VIDEO**

*From February 2023 – 2024 **From August 2023 – February 2024

THE ALBERTA APPROACH TO FARM MENTAL HEALTH

STRONGER TOGETHER

GOAL • COLLABORATE AND STRENGTHEN PARTNERSHIPS WITH GOVERNMENT BODIES, MENTAL HEALTH ORGANIZATIONS, AND AGRICULTURAL STAKEHOLDERS

In *Mental Health: A Priority for our Farmers, Report of the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food*, Andria Jones-Bitton highlighted the absence of a national strategy for farmers, emphasizing that duplicative efforts were undermining the effectiveness of initiatives aimed at addressing farm mental health. In this same report, Bob Guest, Chairman of the Canadian Farmers with Disabilities Registry, reported that the sooner an intervention, the greater the chance that the persons concerned will go back to farming.⁴

In 2023, as part of AgKnow's commitment to building mental health capacity among farmers and agricultural communities, we focused on identifying existing resources within the mental health landscape in Alberta that could be mobilized to help farmers in times of crisis. To augment the AgKnow network of counsellors made up of private practitioners who have limited ability to take on clients, we have partnered with Counselling Alberta (refer to page 21) and EaseCare, a virtual mental health clinic covered by Alberta Health Services, to enhance therapy accessibility for rural Albertans. These services provide province-wide counselling to all Albertans, and AgKnow is pleased to endorse them on our platforms, particularly for farmers in rural areas.


In Southern Alberta, we identified FCSS.ca Farm Family Counselling as a key partnership in our network. They provide multiple free sessions to residents in Lethbridge County, Warner County, and MD of Taber, including many of the towns and villages. Their team comprises experienced counsellors who serve 16 predominantly agriculture-driven rural communities. Several counsellors have roots in farming communities themselves and possess expertise in assisting low German Mennonite, Spanish-speaking, and new Canadian individuals and families.

We have been actively working to increase the capacity and competency of a network of rural farm-informed therapists that are ready and able to provide emergency *(Continued on page 22)*



KEY HIGHLIGHT

In 2023, AgKnow developed partnerships with Counselling Alberta, EaseCare, and Farm Family Counselling (FCSS.ca) to build mental health capacity in rural Alberta.



“ONE IN FIVE OF US WILL HAVE A MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEM IN ANY GIVEN YEAR AND, BY THE TIME WE TURN 40, HALF OF US WILL HAVE EXPERIENCED A MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEM.”

Counselling, Alberta



COUNSELLING ALBERTA

Counselling Alberta is a non-profit that provides province-wide online and in-person counselling programs in response to the growing need for mental health services across Alberta. With the support of the Government of Alberta, they provide farmers with quick access to highly effective counselling without financial barriers.

Services are online in rural and remote areas and can be accessed in person in select cities including Edmonton, Lethbridge, Grande Prairie, Red Deer, Fort McMurray, and Medicine Hat.

Counselling Alberta is the provincial outreach of the Calgary Counselling Centre, and since 2020 they have delivered more than 100,000 hours of counselling to individuals, couples, families, children, and youth with client results being equal to or more effective than in-person counselling. Online counselling addresses common barriers such as scheduling, mobility, and stigma.

Through this partnership we work to increase awareness of services available right now to rural communities and increase the understanding of the current concerns in the farming community specifically. Counselling Alberta will be tracking the number of farmers who access their services, directing farmers to therapists who are farm informed, and staying engaged with AgKnow on current concerns impacting the agriculture industry.



(Continued from page 20) recovery support after traumatic events like floods, fires, devastating drought, and livestock disease outbreaks. Several organizations have expressed interest in collaborating, with diverse approaches ranging from possible inclusion in a community-based support list for farm crisis recovery, co-developing farm-informed training material for mental health professionals, sharing ideas to catalyze broad systemic changes, to providing financing support for current and future initiatives. We anticipate announcing new partnerships in 2024.

Continued investment in programs that prioritize the mental health and well-being of those working in our agricultural sector is crucial. In late 2023, the Government of Alberta announced more than \$380,000 in additional funding provided through

the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership (Sustainable CAP) to support evidence-based mental health programs, tools, and learning resources to help farm families and farming communities thrive.

We are also grateful to our current partners who have provided financial support to AgKnow: **Alberta Canola, Alberta Cattle Feeders, Gulls Give Foundation, and G3 Canada Limited.** Funds generated from corporate partnerships and individual memberships are essential for providing the matching needed for our grants and subsidizing the ongoing maintenance costs for the website and staff not covered by grant funding. These organizations are ensuring that Alberta's farming communities have the necessary resources and tools available when they need them the most.



KEY HIGHLIGHT

Our oldest corporate partners Alberta Canola, and Alberta Cattle Feeders' Association were joined by new partners Gulls Give Foundation and G3 Canada.



“AGKNOW IS AN INCREDIBLE ORGANIZATION THAT PROVIDES FARMERS WITH OPPORTUNITIES, RESOURCES, AND SUPPORT, AND FCSS IS PROUD TO COLLABORATE WITH THEM TO PROVIDE SUPPLEMENTARY SERVICES AND SUPPORTS TO RURAL RESIDENTS IN OUR SERVICE AREA.



AgKnow has provided our staff with training, insight, and an opportunity to learn more about farmer mental health. We are so grateful for this partnership, and we are excited to see it continue to flourish and grow over time. AgKnow is a vital partner, and we appreciate their commitment to the wellbeing of our rural communities."

Kaitlynn Weaver, MA, Outreach
Services Supervisor, Family and
Community Support Services

THE CIRCLE OF CARE SUMMIT

In November 2023, we participated in the inaugural Circle of Care Summit alongside 23 other organizations dedicated to mental health in agriculture. We extend our gratitude to the Canadian Centre for Agricultural Wellbeing (CCAW) and Do More Agriculture for the invitation to this significant event. The Summit fostered meaningful discussions and shared aspirations for the wellbeing of our agricultural community.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

We gained valuable insights into the collective impact of various organizations, highlighting the strength in our collaborative efforts.

Exploring the challenges we face allowed us to recognize them as opportunities for improved support.

The Summit provided a platform to explore collaborative opportunities, emphasizing the power of unity in creating a robust circle of care.

The Summit was more than just a meeting; it was a testament to what we can achieve when we unite for a common cause. The conversations had, the connections made, and the strategies discussed have set the stage for a brighter future in agricultural mental health.

THE ALBERTA APPROACH TO FARM MENTAL HEALTH

FOCUSED ON THE FARMER

GOAL • STAY RELEVANT AND CURRENT WITH THE ISSUES IMPACTING THE AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY IN ALBERTA

No two years of farming are ever the same. In the 2023 farm input price review published by the Government of Alberta, Azam Nikzad, market analyst and coordinating researcher, explains “the farm input market has faced many challenges in recent years, from logistical hurdles and labour market disruptions to interruptions in the production of base inputs for manufacturing, congested delivery channels, rising wages, global supply concerns and escalating transportation costs. This unprecedented confluence of challenges had tangible impacts on the escalation of farm input prices.”

The nationwide Farm Inputs Price Index confirms this trend, indicating that Canadian farmers encountered a significant increase in production costs, nearly one-fifth higher when comparing the second quarter of 2022 to the corresponding period in the previous year. Alberta’s farmers ranked third nationally, experiencing a 19.2% rise in costs. Issues such as inflation, climate change, and drought readiness further compound the challenges for farmers on an annual basis, changing from year to year.

HIGHLIGHTING THE KEY TOPICS

One of AgKnow’s most valuable assets is our strong connection to the farming community as they encounter stressors throughout the season. By amplifying the voices of farmers, we offer valuable insights and perspectives to mental

health and healthcare professionals, enriching their understanding and effectiveness in serving rural populations. For instance, the depopulation of livestock due to diseases such as Chronic Wasting Disease in cervids, Avian Influenza in poultry, or African Swine Fever in pork can have distressing psychological impacts. This situation has the potential to become a crisis event for Alberta producers, veterinarians, public health officials, and other decision-makers involved in depopulation efforts.

In early November, we collaborated with the Alberta Poultry Industry Emergency Management team to organize a webinar featuring Dr. Elizabeth Strand, the founder of the Foundation of Veterinary Social Work at the University of Tennessee. During the webinar, Dr. Strand presented the Animal Depopulation Resiliency Check-In Tool (ADRCT), a five-question public health protocol for stakeholders who are preparing for, participating in, and recovering from animal depopulation. Despite depopulation not being previously acknowledged as a concern within the mental health community, the increased focus on this topic has elevated its significance with counsellors. Of note, a small number of counsellors on the AgKnow professional network have first-hand experience with depopulation, an asset in helping stakeholders through the process.

AGKNOW INDUSTRY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

AgKnow has established an Industry Advisory Committee (IAC) to provide guidance and advice for the development of farm-specific mental health resources and services through Alberta's Farm Mental Health Network initiative. Composed of representatives from collaborating partners, stakeholder groups, and members at large with a preference for members with direct farm experience, the IAC serves to provide strategic direction and crucial feedback on the AgKnow initiative and bring to the table their collective wisdom and connections.

Three topics have come to the surface during the needs assessment and through our ongoing engagement with the agriculture industry stakeholders and partners:

- Increased capacity to support livestock farmers and veterinarians during a depopulation event
- Increased use of mental health and agriculture professionals to assist with farm transitions
- Increased suicide prevention and awareness and adoption or creation of programs to support people impacted by suicide in rural areas.

These three topics continue to be the focus of the activities of AgKnow and provide the structure for ongoing work.



ROSS BEZOVIE

Director, Alberta Chicken Producers



ROBERT CHRENEK

Representative, Agricultural Service Board Provincial Committee



CARLEY FRERICHS

Alberta Egg Producers



ALAN HALL

Executive Director, ARECA



ART LANGE

President and Consultant, AJL Consulting



FRED MERTZ

Farm Transition Consultant, Fred Mertz Professional Corporation



LEANNE PHARIS

Board Member, ARECA



JESSICA TUROWSKI

Project Manager, CMHA/Rural Mental Health Network



JOEL BOKENFOHR

Business Advisor, Farm Credit Canada (FCC)



MICHAEL FEDUNEC

Counselling Services Supervisor, Counsellor, FCSS Coaldale



MIKE FROESE

Owner, Operator Five Mile Farms



CATHY KEOUGH

Director, Counselling Initiatives, Counselling Alberta



KAREN LANGTVED

Veterinary Technician, Farmer



DR. DELORIS PETERS

Manager, Agriculture and Irrigation (AGI) Animal Health Surveillance Unit



DR. MARK REDMOND

CEO, RDAR



JODY WACOWICH

Executive Director, AgSafe

THE ALBERTA APPROACH
TO FARM MENTAL HEALTH

SUPPORT FOR FARM FAMILIES

PRELIMINARY SURVEY RESULTS

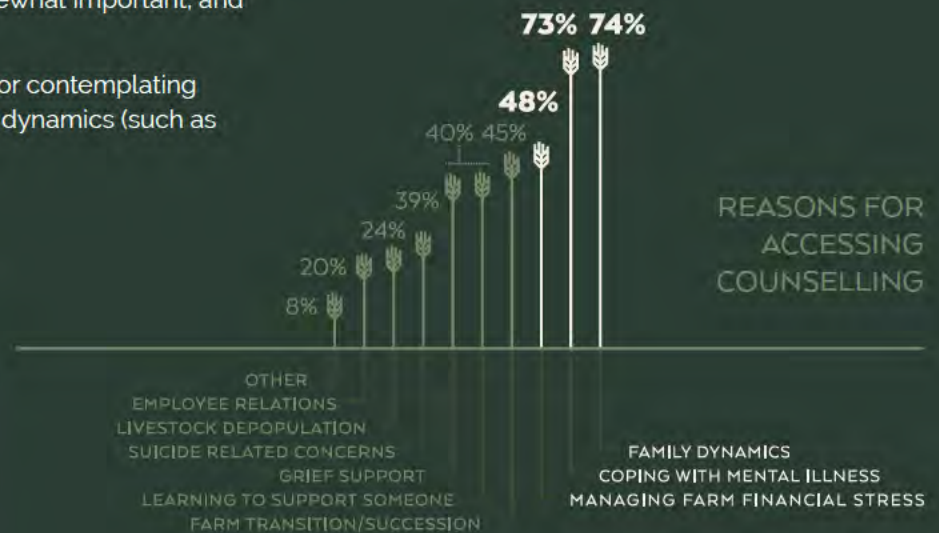
During late 2023 and early 2024, AgKnow conducted an informal survey with the goal of gathering insights to shape the development of mental health initiatives tailored to the needs of the Alberta agricultural community. By February 20, 2024, we had received 168 responses from farmers and various stakeholders of the agriculture community.

Primarily consisting of current or retired farmers (91%), participants were asked about the importance of having access to farm-informed counsellors. These counsellors could either be farmers themselves, grew up on a farm, have trained in agriculture, or have experience counselling farm clients. Results showed 67% found it important, 26% somewhat important, and 7% not important.

The primary reasons for seeking or contemplating counselling services were family dynamics (such as

relationships with spouses, children, and extended family members) and coping with mental illness (like depression, anxiety, or dementia). These were followed by challenges related to managing financial stress on the farm, navigating farm transition/succession, and seeking grief support, respectively.

Respondents who hadn't sought counselling were asked to provide their top three reasons for refraining. The primary hurdle reported was cost, followed by not having enough time during the day and concerns about counsellors lacking an understanding



168
RESPONDANTS

91%
CURRENT OR RETIRED FARMERS

60%
HAD RECEIVED COUNSELLING OR
HAD A FAMILY MEMBER WHO DID

WHAT MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMMING BEST MEETS THE NEEDS OF ALBERTA FARMERS?



55% ALBERTA BASED FARM-INFORMED COUNSELLING

- ALBERTA-BASED FARM INFORMED COUNSELLING (55%)
- COST SHARE INSURANCE PROGRAM FOR MENTAL HEALTH (26%)
- TAXPAYER-SUPPORTED SLIDING SCALE ONLINE COUNSELLING (8%)
- NATIONAL TELUS HEALTH COUNSELLING PROGRAM (8%)

of agriculture. Other barriers noted included privacy concerns, not knowing enough about counselling, and lack of access to counselling services in their area.

Respondents ranked an Alberta-based, farm-informed counselling program as their top option to meet the needs of Alberta farmers (55%). This was followed by a cost-share insurance program for mental health, taxpayer-supported sliding scale online counselling, and the national Telus Health counselling program. Notably, 88% believed that an Alberta-based, farm-informed counseling program better served the needs

of Alberta farmers compared to the national Telus Health Counselling Program. Additionally, 81% considered the Alberta-based, farm-informed counselling program more suitable for Alberta farmers than taxpayer-supported sliding scale online counselling.

The survey requested farmers to evaluate a number of programs supported by the Sustainable Canadian Agriculture Partnership (SCAP). Farmer wellness/mental health came in fourth place, following Crop Insurance (AFSC), Agristability/Agri-Recovery, and Farm Safety, which comprised the top three rankings.

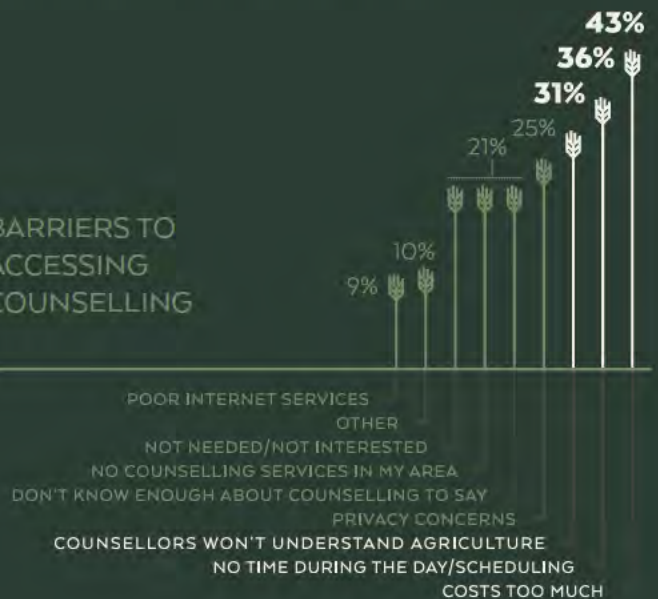
HOW IMPORTANT WAS HAVING A FARM-INFORMED COUNSELLOR?



67%
IMPORTANT

- IMPORTANT (67%)
- SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT (26%)
- NOT IMPORTANT (7%)

BARRIERS TO ACCESSING COUNSELLING



THE ALBERTA APPROACH TO FARM MENTAL HEALTH

INCREASING RESILIENCY

GOAL – INCREASE RESILIENCY IN THE FARMING COMMUNITY

Farming and ranching rank among the most stressful occupations, with unique factors potentially leading to poor mental health outcomes, including suicide. Certain factors can increase suicide risk on Canadian farms, including financial uncertainty, barriers to mental health services, isolation, a blurred distinction between work and home life, and easy access to firearms. When multiple risk factors outweigh factors that build resiliency, there is an increased likelihood of suicidal ideation (Sharam et al., 2021). In Canada, farmers experience twice the rate of suicidal ideation compared to the general population. One in four farmers surveyed reported their life was not worth living, wished they were dead, or had thought of taking their own life during the past 12 months (Jones-Bitton et al., 2020). Suicide affects male farmers disproportionately.

In response to concerns from our needs assessment, we've developed training tailored to enhance resilience and mental health support within the agriculture industry. Partnering with Abridge Consulting, we've adapted proven suicide prevention and awareness training for the agriculture industry with the launch of two new courses. Unlike most mental health or suicide prevention training, *"Introduction to Suicide Prevention for Agriculture"* is a concise 90-minute session,

tailored for delivery either in person or virtually, and developed for peer-to-peer dissemination within agricultural community groups. This course is designed to complement longer events. This course is delivered by trained facilitators and can seamlessly complement longer events.

Additionally, we developed *Building a Safer' Ag Community*, a comprehensive program spanning three hours of course material delivered over a week, ideal for corporate settings. This course incorporates highly effective resources from LivingWorks and the Centre for Suicide Prevention. Virtual sessions can be easily arranged through our website or by reaching out to any of our dedicated staff at AgKnow.

Both of these courses foster open discussions and empower community members to engage



KEY HIGHLIGHT

In 2023, AgKnow trained nine facilitators to deliver suicide prevention courses in rural communities.

“OUR GOVERNMENT IS GRATEFUL FOR PARTNERS THAT ARE SUPPORTING MENTAL WELLNESS THROUGH INITIATIVES LIKE AGKNOW. AS ONE OF ALBERTA’S MOST PROMINENT INDUSTRIES, WE ARE COMMITTED TO PROVIDING FARMERS, RANCHERS, AND THEIR FAMILIES THE SUPPORT THEY NEED.”

Dan Williams, Minister of Mental Health and Addictions



in potentially lifesaving conversations by equipping them with the skills to ask tough questions and connect individuals in crisis with available support networks. AgKnow is ready to deliver virtual sessions now, and we are applying for funding support to make in-person sessions affordable in the next year.

It should be noted that one of the obstacles we encounter is the impact of suicide on many rural communities. While there's a widespread acknowledgment of the value of prevention training, there's a reluctance to schedule and promote such events. It seems that personal invitations or mandatory attendance policies may be necessary to kickstart participation.

Alongside our suicide prevention training efforts, AgKnow has collaborated with AgSafe Alberta for the past two years to promote the "In the Know" farm mental health literacy training developed in Ontario. While this training has seen widespread adoption in Ontario, Alberta has faced significant barriers to its implementation. One major obstacle has been the cost associated with in-person train-the-trainer sessions. Additionally, the four-hour duration of the training has proven to be a deterrent for farmers themselves, despite its appeal to professionals and farmer supporters.

We continue to work to investigate stressors impacting farmers such as farm transition and depopulation so we can bring awareness of these issues to the medical community.



LOOKING TO THE FUTURE OF FARM MENTAL HEALTH IN ALBERTA

CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

DE-STIGMATIZE MENTAL HEALTH

CHALLENGE

Recent Canadian research, including preliminary findings from Alberta, highlights that farmers identify stigma as their primary obstacle to seeking mental health support. Overcoming mental health stigma and fostering trust to address sensitive topics requires sustained investment and the development of personal relationships, often facilitated through in-person community events.

At present, the industry is focused on raising awareness and promoting mental health but is challenged when it comes to achieving widespread adoption. Hurdles include assessing the impact of mental health promotion on farm productivity and knowing the topics and approaches that will engage the desired audience. Additionally, the relatively new introduction of farm-specific mental health supports and services in Alberta makes estimating the demand and required funding a challenge. This uncertainty is compounded by the unpredictable nature of future needs, which are contingent on environmental factors. In times of crisis, such as droughts or wildfires, the shift from awareness to adoption can occur rapidly. As a result, maintaining agility and adequate resources is imperative to effectively adapt to the current situation.

OPPORTUNITY

The increased awareness and compassion around mental health struggles in the broader Alberta society is helping to address stigma in the agriculture industry. While there is still a reluctance to talk openly about sensitive topics like suicide, participants at our in-community events are receptive and engaged. As mental health becomes more normalized within the agricultural discourse, there is a high likelihood that we will continue to receive a growing number of requests for supports and services. Legislative and regulatory emphasis on psychological health and safety, coupled with farmers sharing their stories, helps to incorporate mental health into daily farm life. Staying connected to mental health and health care service providers to encourage growth to meet the increased demand will be key.



“IT’S ESSENTIAL FOR AGKNOW TO CONTINUE BRINGING AWARENESS ON MENTAL HEALTH AND HELP FARM FAMILIES GET THE SUPPORTS THEY NEED TO MANAGE LIFE’S STRESSORS.”

RJ Sigurdson, Alberta Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation



REDUCE BARRIERS TO SERVICE

CHALLENGE

Cost, location, and therapist availability persist as obstacles to providing adequate support to farm clients. Rural municipalities and wellness initiatives have identified that rural counselling options are needed, so there has been a lot of engagement and promotion of our free session program. However, the four free sessions currently offered may still not meet the required duration for effective therapy. Most farms in Alberta are family farms that do not have the extended health plan, so cost remains a barrier particularly for Hutterites,

Feedback from our network indicates that ideally therapists need to be located far enough away to provide anonymity, but close enough to allow for in-person sessions. Most report that they prefer an in-person session to develop trust and then prefer the convenience of virtual sessions. However, therapists in rural areas with farm specialization are rare, so there is a high risk of long wait times or multiple booking attempts. Further recruitment is necessary, but the number of therapists required to meet industry needs remains unclear.

Therapists in rural areas face challenges in finding supportive therapeutic programs and agriculture services for their clients, hindering wrap-around care.

OPPORTUNITY

The free session program provides an opportunity to engage with rural mental health service providers, municipalities, ag business professionals and farmers to come up with innovative solutions to overcome these barriers. Additionally, having a network of therapists engaged with the agriculture industry provides the opportunity for in-community support after a farm-related accident or natural disaster like the current wildfires in the Peace. Recruitment activities, coupled with the free session program, highlight the need and encourage therapists to live rural and specialize in farm issues. Access to therapeutic programs and business support can be improved by hosting a directory of services that can be searched by geographic location.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE OF FARM MENTAL HEALTH IN ALBERTA

CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

🌾 ADVOCATE FOR RURAL RESOURCES FOR FARMERS

CHALLENGE

At present, there is insufficient investment to provide blanket mental health support and services across rural communities in Alberta, and local short-term grassroots lead initiatives are funded throughout the province. This allows innovative communities to respond to local concerns; however, the unintended consequence is broader provincial strategies struggle for engagement, resources and traction. It becomes difficult for response lines to know how to direct people to services in their area. How can we create a system that has a backbone of basic mental health support that can then refer people to customized local supports?

An additional challenge is there isn't one professional association representing farmers that can advocate for industry-specific mental health supports and services. Alberta farmers are diverse and spread over a large area with diverse priorities so a large investment in communication and engagement activities is required to reach them all. The existing farmer-led associations typically have mandates focusing on agronomic practices and do not consider mental health supports and services as part of their mandates. As a result, it is difficult to encourage the investments needed that will deliver long-term positive change for farmers, their families, employees and the industry and communities where they exist.

OPPORTUNITY

Crisis situations such as droughts, wildfires, or depopulation offer opportunities to start conversations about mental health and support services. Recent situations are prompting agricultural associations to consider integrating mental health and wellbeing supports into their strategies. Municipalities and other industry partners are hearing from their ratepayers and clients and are looking for ways to respond. In addition, ongoing health care reform provides another opportunity to integrate rural mental health into the broader health care system. The momentum to develop and implement e-mental health strategies provides an opportunity to broaden the reach of services typically only available in urban centres. Leadership is needed to bring partners together and develop a strategy that will connect rural communities and services to the opportunities that are coming online.



“Our farmers and their families face unique demands and challenges as they work to feed Canada and the world.

IT’S VITALLY IMPORTANT THAT WE CONTINUE TO INVEST IN PROGRAMS THAT SUPPORT THE MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF FOLKS WORKING IN OUR AGRICULTURAL SECTOR.”

Lawrence MacAulay, Federal Minister of Agriculture and Agri-food



ENGAGE FARM-INFORMED SUPPORTS

CHALLENGE

Agriculture is a unique industry that is served best by professionals who have lived agriculture experience. It is also an industry that is increasing in age and declining in numbers. Keeping a good supply of farm informed professionals with lived experience is a challenge. The blurred lines between work and life on the typical farm mean that nearly every business decision has direct implications on family relationships. Having farm informed professionals that understand and respect this balance is essential to outcomes that result in viable multigenerational farms that contribute to thriving rural communities.

Research has shown that having a written business plan is a good strategy for improving wellbeing of farm operators. Agriculture business professionals are often challenged to have the kind of conversations needed to navigate family relationships and to create business plans. Therapists are challenged to know how to support clients that are struggling with business planning. How can we connect the two types of professionals for better referrals and support?

OPPORTUNITY

Both the farm-informed therapists and the ag business professionals that are engaged with AgKnow are interested in exploring the concerns challenging farmers and the industry at a deeper level with the intention of being better positioned to offer farm specific approaches. Creating opportunities for both types of professionals to explore and share insight on mutual topics of interest we feel will lead to greater ability to provide appropriate referrals and increase overall wellbeing. Key learnings and stories from these activities could potentially be captured and made available as learning resources for new professionals looking to specialize in agriculture.

Based on our research and interactions within our network, it's evident that farmers tend to seek support from someone who understands the pressures of farming. Enhancing collaboration between the agriculture industry and healthcare professionals can improve support for farmers and veterinarians. Sustained communication with farmers regarding their ongoing challenges is essential for perpetuating discourse around their mental health requirements.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE OF FARM MENTAL HEALTH IN ALBERTA

CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

🌾 INCREASE RESILIENCY IN FARMING COMMUNITIES

CHALLENGE

There has been low adoption of mental health-related training by the agriculture industry, particularly farmers, who tend to not participate in long training sessions due to time constraints. Participants interested in taking the farm-adapted training tend to be those supporting or wanting to support farmers, and they are interested in learning how the training is adapted for the farmer audience.

The delivery model that seems to work in western Canada is shorter one-hour to 90-minute courses delivered at industry events traditionally attended by farmers. There are several farm mental health courses being developed, but so far, none are delivered in this format.

The geographic area for delivering training in Alberta is extensive and so far, there doesn't exist a network of health promotion professionals to deliver local training sessions, so the cost of delivery is a barrier. A significant number of farmers have off-farm employment, so it is likely they have had some training already.

OPPORTUNITY

Feedback through our network indicates that the industry and farmers are warming up to the idea of increasing mental health capacity through training. Developers of the training seem willing to work with us to adapt current offerings to fit the Alberta context, and there is good interest by mental health professionals and farmers with lived experience to deliver training in-community. There also seems to be interest by corporations and businesses to invest in activities that promote community resiliency. We are optimistic the financial barriers can be overcome for event delivery and we have the community engagement needed to get uptake.



WITH GRATITUDE

To the volunteers who did the audio recordings
for our suicide prevention courses:

Doreen Blumhagen (Organizer)

Josh Blumhagen (Editor)

Joanne McMahon (Voice of Jodi) – Galahad, AB

Don Sisson (Voice of Steve) – Castor, AB

Edward Reis (Voice of Dustin), Castor, AB

Richard and Beth Elhard (Voices of Jeff & Wilma) – Castor, AB

Jaymi Rausch (Voice of Nancy) – Halkirk, AB

Shannon Blumhagen (Voice of Cody) – Halkirk, AB



To the actor in our “How are you, Really?” video – Peter Kuelken



To past staff who have graced us with their contributions
and passion – Dani Groenveld and Crystal Fullerton



We are especially grateful for the outpouring of
community support behind AgKnow. The time and
resources donated by volunteers have been essential
to helping reach the farming community.





SUPPORT
BLUE COLLAR
Travis DeGroot





BASIC
SKILLS



AGKNOW

ALBERTA FARM MENTAL HEALTH NETWORK

Alberta Farm Mental Health Network www.agknow.ca

AN ARECA INITIATIVE @agknowca    

June 12, 2024

Warren Wohlgemuth
M.D. of Greenview
Box 1079
Valleyview, AB. T0H 3N0
Subject: Urgent Funding Need for AgKnow

Dear Warren Wohlgemuth,

As you know, AgKnow was established as a direct response to the 2019 ASB resolution aimed at addressing mental health on farms and ranches across Alberta. Your vision in founding this initiative has provided the means to begin developing effective, evidence-based, and practical resources that enhance the resilience of farmers and their families, and to address the barriers that prevent farmers from seeking assistance.

While considerable progress has been made in raising awareness and advocating for mental health in farming communities, the challenge lies in ensuring the widespread adoption of supports and services that deliver [REDACTED] change for farmers and their families.

[REDACTED]
We currently face a critical funding gap between our last grant and the anticipated funding for our next one. This inconsistency in funding jeopardizes our ability to provide continuous support to farm families year-round as they cope with the daily challenges of farm life and navigate times of crisis.

We urgently need your financial assistance to bridge this gap and sustain the ongoing delivery of services including:

- **Free Counselling Pilot Program** – Since its launch, 19 agriculturally-informed therapists and counselors have provided 123 free therapy sessions to 54 farmers, farm family members, veterinarians, and registered veterinary technicians. Demand for this program has tripled since February 2024, highlighting the need for this service.
- **Suicide Prevention Training** – In 2023, we adapted proven suicide prevention and awareness training specifically for the agriculture industry, launching two new courses and training 14 facilitators. The diversity and distribution of Alberta farmers requires substantial investment in communication and engagement activities to deliver these courses and give farm families the skills to support those impacted by suicide. Funding is needed to deliver these courses to rural communities.
- **Crisis Recovery Support** – The recent wildfires and drought risk in certain areas of the province emphasize the need for crisis recovery support. During the wildfires, the AgKnow therapist network (APN) was mobilized for immediate sessions, while resources like a shelter-in-place document adapted from Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation, along with crisis response cards, were distributed to affected communities. Our goal is to deploy the APN in community post-crisis and provide briefings to mental health professionals on current issues affecting agriculture, but we need resources to plan and implement these tasks effectively.
- **Priority Areas** – Our needs assessment and ongoing engagement with industry stakeholders have led us to identify priority areas with the potential to impact Alberta farmers. Among these, increasing capacity to support farmers and veterinarians during a depopulation event, and integrating mental health and agriculture professionals to assist with farm transition have been recognized as priority areas which continue to provide strategic direction and the structure for ongoing work.

Your support will enable us to continue to invest in programs that prioritize the mental health and well-being of farming communities, ensuring producers and their families have the necessary resources and tools available when they need them most. To contribute, please visit https://fnd.us/72MKTe?ref=sh_fD8xLb_sh_oP2HK5R0PqB0P2HK5R0PqB, use the QR code enclosed at the end of this letter, or call 587-200-2552 Extension 2.

I am available to present virtually to your counsel about the initiative. Our annual report can be found on our website with more details about our mission and accomplishments to date. We are deeply grateful to Wheatland County for being the first to donate \$2000 in one time bridge funding and hope that you will consider doing the same. Together, we can continue to make a meaningful difference in the lives of Alberta's farmers, and the rural communities they support.

Sincerely,

Linda Hunt





REQUEST FOR DECISION

SUBJECT: Provincial ASB Committee 2024 Resolution Grading
SUBMISSION TO: AGRICULTURAL SERVICES BOARD REVIEWED AND APPROVED FOR SUBMISSION
MEETING DATE: June 26, 2024 CAO: MANAGER: SK
DEPARTMENT: AGRICULTURE DIR: PRESENTER: SK
STRATEGIC PLAN: Governance LEG:

RELEVANT LEGISLATION:

Provincial (cite) – N/A

Council Bylaw/Policy (cite) – N/A

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

MOTION: That the Agricultural Service Board approve the following grades and comments to the Provincial Agricultural Service Board 2024 Resolutions:

#	Name	Grade	Comments
1-24	AGRICULTURAL EQUIPMENT HIGHWAY SIGNS	Incomplete	
2-24	COMPENSATING PRODUCERS FOR ECOSYSTEM SERVICES	Accept in Principle	
3-24	CREATION OF LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION INSURANCE	Accept in Principle	
4-24	SUPPORTING A COMPENSATION MULTIPLIER	Accept in Principle	
5-24	WILD BOAR AND THE ALBERTA AGRICULTURAL PEST ACT	Accept the Response	
6-24a	IMPROVING THE SUSTAINABILITY OF CANADIAN APICULTURE THROUGH BEE PACKAGE IMPORTS	Accept the Response	AGI Response Grade
		Accept in Principle	Provincial Committee should follow up at end of June for results of risk assessment
6-24b	IMPROVING THE SUSTAINABILITY OF CANADIAN APICULTURE THROUGH THE CONTROL OF VARROA MITES	Accept the Response	AGI Response Grade
		Accept in Principle	PMRA is the appropriate authority for this portion of the resolution
7-24	RE-REGISTRATION OF 2% LIQUID STRYCHNINE FOR CERTIFIED APPLICATORS	Accept the Response	
E2-24	SUPPORT FOR THE EXPORT OF LIVE HORSES FOR SLAUGHTER	Accept in Principle	
PC1-24	FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY FOR FIELD CROP DEVELOPMENT CENTRE (FCDC)	Accept the Response	

BACKGROUND/PROPOSAL:

On June 3rd, Administration received a request from the Provincial ASB Committee to provide grading to the 2024 Resolution Responses before June 30th. If responses are sent after this date, they will not be included in the final rating of the resolution response.

The Provincial Committee has provided an initial grading to the responses that have been received. Of note, Resolutions 1-24 has not received a response. Resolution 6-24a received a response from the Alberta Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation on time for the Provincial Committee to rate the response as “Accept in Principle”. but the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) response was not received until June 5th. The communication states that a risk assessment of United States honeybee imports is anticipated to be completed by the end of June, with the development of a risk management framework document to follow. The correspondence further details that the risk reduction proposals may sufficiently reduce the risk of the identified hazards associated with honeybee importation sufficiently for the current border closure to be reconsidered. It is anticipated that had the Provincial Committee received this prior to the deadline, the entire grading would have been “Accept in Principle”.

Resolution 6-24b received a response from the Alberta Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation that was graded as “Accept in Principle”, but the Canadian Food Inspection Agency response was rated as incomplete as it directed the Provincial Committee to the Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) as the Resolution is asking for the registration of a miticide.

The response package was sent to the Greenview ASB for review on June 11th to inform the June 26th, 2024 Greenview ASB Meeting. Grade selections and their associated definitions are included below:

Accept the Response: addresses the resolution as presented or meets the expectations of the Provincial ASB Committee.

Accept in Principle: addresses the resolution in part or contains information that indicates that further action is being considered.

Incomplete: does not provide enough information or does not completely address the resolution. Follow up is required to solicit information for the Provincial ASB Committee to make an informed decision on how to proceed.

Unsatisfactory: does not address the resolution as presented or does not meet the expectations of the Provincial ASB Committee.

BENEFITS OF THE RECOMMENDED ACTION:

1. The benefit of the Agricultural Service Board providing grades for the 2024 resolution responses is that Greenview will have fulfilled an important advocacy role on behalf of Greenview Agricultural Producers.

DISADVANTAGES OF THE RECOMMENDED ACTION:

1. There are no perceived disadvantages to the recommended motion.
-

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Alternative #1: The Agricultural Service Board has the alternative to delay providing grading on the 2024 Provincial ASB Resolution responses, however, Administration is not recommending this alternative because the due date for responses is June 30th, 2024

Alternative #2: The Agricultural Service Board has the alternative to decline providing grading on the 2024 Provincial ASB Resolution responses, however, Administration has not recommended this option as providing grading to the Provincial Committee is the most direct method of affecting change on behalf of Greenviews' producers, a chief mandate of the Agricultural Service Board.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATION:

There are no financial implications to the recommended motion.

STAFFING IMPLICATION:

There are no staffing implications to the recommended motion.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT LEVEL:

Greenview has adopted the IAP2 Framework for public consultation.

INCREASING LEVEL OF PUBLIC IMPACT

Inform

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL

Inform - To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.

PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC

Inform - We will keep you informed.

FOLLOW UP ACTIONS:

Administration will forward the Board's grading and comments on the ten (10) resolution to the Provincial Committee for inclusion in their final rating at the provincial level.

ATTACHMENT(S):

- 2024 ASBPC Resolutions Grading Sheet
- CFIA Bee Imports Response

2024 ASBPC Initial Resolution Grading

The ASBPC reviewed the resolutions and responses on April 17, 2024 and on May 24, 2024. Their responses are given below for your information. The final grade in the Report Card will be determined by compiling the responses of individual ASBs.

Resolution Number	Resolution	ASBPC Grade recommendation
1-24	AGRICULTURAL EQUIPMENT HIGHWAY SIGNS	Incomplete
2-24	COMPENSATING PRODUCERS FOR ECOSYSTEM SERVICES	Accept in principle
3-24	CREATION OF LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION INSURANCE	Accept in Principle
4-24	SUPPORTING A COMPENSATION MULTIPLIER	Accept in principle
5-24	WILD BOAR AND THE ALBERTA AGRICULTURAL PEST ACT	Accept the Response
6-24a	IMPROVING THE SUSTAINABILITY OF CANADIAN APICULTURE THROUGH BEE PACKAGE IMPORTS	Accept the Response Incomplete (CFIA)
6-24b	IMPROVING THE SUSTAINABILITY OF CANADIAN APICULTURE THROUGH THE CONTROL OF VARROA MITES	Accept the Response Incomplete (CFIA)
7-24	RE-REGISTRATION OF 2% LIQUID STRYCHNINE FOR CERTIFIED APPLICATORS	Accept the Response
E2-24	SUPPORT FOR THE EXPORT OF LIVE HORSES FOR SLAUGHTER	Accept in Principle
PC1-24	FINANCIAL STABILITY FOR FIELD CROP DEVELOPMENT CENTRE (FCDC)	Accept the Response

CFIA Reassessing Risks of Bee Imports from the US

Wed 6/5/2024 12:28 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

[Read on blog](#) or [Reader](#)

 Site **Agricultural Service Boards**
In an

CFIA Reassessing Risks of Bee Imports from the US

 **asbexecassistant**
June 5

[Resolution 6 24a](#)

An email from the Executive Director of the CFIA was received by the ASBPC this morning with their response to Resolution 6 24a, which asks that the CFIA "permit Honeybee shipments from the United States for the purpose of hive repopulation, to combat the depopulation of Canada's Honey Bee hives;" See below:

"Dear Mrs Knight,

I thank you for contacting the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) with your inquiry. Upon review of the Alberta Agriculture Service Board's recently passed resolutions, regarding the first item pertaining to the United States (US) border closure for honeybee package imports due to the presence of Varroa mites resistance to miticides, the CFIA is currently in the process of reassessing risks posed by US honeybee imports and anticipates having this US risk assessment completed by the end of June 2024. At this time, a risk management framework document which explains the expectations for any risk mitigation proposals will be shared with a number of stakeholders as well as the USDA. Any risk mitigation proposals submitted to CFIA will then

be reviewed to assess if they may sufficiently reduce the risk posed by the hazards identified. Until this time, no decision regarding the import of US honeybee packages can be made.

With respect to the approval of miticides, this inquiry would be the responsibility of the Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA). Please reach out to PMRA, if you haven't already.

Please do not hesitate to contact the CFIA regarding any additional inquiries.

Sincerely,

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]



REQUEST FOR DECISION

SUBJECT: Letter to Alberta Transportation and Economic Corridors – Roadkill Carcass Disposal

SUBMISSION TO: AGRICULTURAL SERVICES BOARD **REVIEWED AND APPROVED FOR SUBMISSION**

MEETING DATE: June 26, 2024 **CAO:** **MANAGER:** SK

DEPARTMENT: AGRICULTURE **DIR:** **PRESENTER:** SK

STRATEGIC PLAN: Environment **LEG:**

RELEVANT LEGISLATION:

Provincial:

Council Bylaw/Policy:

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

MOTION: That the Agricultural Service Board approve the drafted letter to Alberta Transportation and Economic Corridors concerning Roadkill Carcass disposal by Alberta Highways Contractors as presented.

BACKGROUND/PROPOSAL:

On May 29th, the Agricultural Service Board were presented with the 2024 draft ASB Resolution entitled “Roadkill Carcass Disposal” and made the following motion:

Motion: The Agricultural Service Board request administration to draft a letter to Alberta Transportation regarding proper disposal of roadkill wildlife.

In response to this motion, Administration prepared the attached draft letter for the Boards approval. Within the letter, the points made in the draft resolutions are reiterated with more of a specific focus on Greenview, as opposed to the entire province.

Should the Board approve of the letter, Administration will send the letter to the Minister.

BENEFITS OF THE RECOMMENDED ACTION:

1. The benefit of the recommendation is that the Agricultural Service Board will have provided feedback on the drafted letter prior to the correspondence being sent.
-

DISADVANTAGES OF THE RECOMMENDED ACTION:

1. There is no disadvantage to the recommended action.
-

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Alternative #1: The Agricultural Service Board may choose to request Administration make edits prior to the letter being sent to the Minister.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATION:

There are no financial implications to the recommended action.

Direct Costs:

Ongoing / Future Costs:

STAFFING IMPLICATION:

There are no staffing implications to the recommended motion

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT LEVEL:

Greenview has adopted the IAP2 Framework for public consultation.

INCREASING LEVEL OF PUBLIC IMPACT

Inform

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL

Inform - To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.

PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC

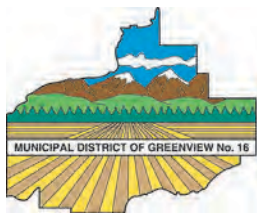
Inform - We will keep you informed.

FOLLOW UP ACTIONS:

Once the Agricultural Service Board has made a recommendation, Administration will follow through with the wishes of the Board.

ATTACHMENT(S):

- Letter to Minister of Transportation and Corridors, DRAFT



June 26, 2024

Honourable Devin Dreeshen
Minister of Transportation and Economic Corridors,
127 Legislature Building, 10800 - 97 Avenue
Edmonton, AB, T5K 2B6

Subject: Carcass Disposal of Roadkill Ungulates

In Alberta, there are five approved carcass disposal methods for livestock producers listed within the **Disposal of Dead Animals** regulation. These methods are burning/incinerating, burial, rendering, composting, and natural disposal. These methods have listed advantages and disadvantages within the Livestock Mortality Management publication from Alberta Agriculture and Forestry (2021) except natural disposal, which is listed with the following provision: “Disposal of carcasses by scavengers is a permitted method in Alberta but because of the very high probability of disease spread and of creating a public nuisance, this method is not recommended.” The requirements for natural disposal in an acceptable form includes many buffer zones from flowing water, property lines, provincial highways, and residences. Of note, the regulation specifies that it does not apply to wildlife as defined in the Wildlife Act, except in limited circumstances listed within the regulation. These circumstances do not extend to roadkill.

A thorough review of regulation and legislation related to the disposal of roadkill from provincial highways revealed there are no requirements currently listed in the Standard Specification for Highway Maintenance, Edition 5. What is provided is that roadkill must be disposed of in an approved site, but no definition for an approved site, nor legislative or regulatory reference, is cited.

Within Greenview, roadkill carcass disposal is currently permitted at a location within Crown Land along Highway 43, south of Valleyview and presents a concern to our livestock producers. This area has been experiencing statistically higher predation than other areas within the municipality and is adjacent to the Valleyview Grazing Reserve. This is of concern to livestock producers. The location is within an area of Greenview experiencing elevated instances of predation of livestock, which we suspect is related to the carcass disposal site.

The site has no controlled access and has become a free-for-all for all manner of carcass disposal. from pets, roadkill, hunting remnants, equine deadstock and yes, even livestock. The Greenview Agricultural Service Board is concerned that this may be contributing to the elevated levels of predation in this area, as well as presenting a biosecurity risk from a multitude of concerning diseases including but not limited to chronic wasting disease (CWD) and bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE). These cited pathogens are of higher concern as they are prion based. Prion

based pathogens are persistent in the environment and could be catastrophic to our livestock producers.

We would like to ask what requirements are given to highway maintenance contractors to approve a carcass disposal site and that they be incorporated into the next Standard Specification for Highway Maintenance produced by the Ministry.

Respectfully,

Warren Wohgelmuth, Chair
Greenview Agricultural Service Board

cc: Tyler Olsen, Reeve, MD of Greenview
Stacey Wabick, CAO, MD of Greenview
Michelle Honeyman, Director, Community Services
Roger Autio, Director, Infrastructure & Engineering
Honourable Todd Loewen, Minister of Forestry, Parks and Tourism



REQUEST FOR DECISION

SUBJECT:	Cost For Event Attendance		
SUBMISSION TO:	AGRICULTURAL SERVICES BOARD	REVIEWED AND APPROVED FOR SUBMISSION	
MEETING DATE:	June 26, 2024	CAO:	MANAGER: SK
DEPARTMENT:	AGRICULTURE	DIR:	PRESENTER: SC
STRATEGIC PLAN:	Governance	LEG:	

RELEVANT LEGISLATION:

Provincial: N/A

Council Bylaw/Policy: N/A

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

MOTION: That the Agricultural Service Board recommend to Administration the preference to give Greenview ratepayers a discounted entry fee cost compared to the public entry fee cost to Greenview Agriculture events.

BACKGROUND/PROPOSAL:

On June 28, 2023 the Agricultural Service Board was presented the Request For Decision-5.6 Extension Events. This document outlined possible options for the future of Greenview extension events, and the following motions was made:

MOTION: That the Agricultural Services Board move to Solution 5, as amended.

Solution 5 stated: "Reallocate the Agriculture Appreciation event to the educational events. Host more higher end speakers at a highly reduced cost, but ratepayers would still be charged for some cost recovery."

This was explained further that the events would be heavily discounted to Greenview ratepayers, but still have a charge associated with them. This would allow Administration to source more expensive speakers and presentations to be held each year. Solution 5 was aimed at maintaining most of the events being free of charge to attend, but more expensive events would have a charge associated with them to be able to accommodate them within budgetary realities.

Organizing bringing in high end speakers often requires planning far into the future and as such today's decision may not play a role until the fall of 2024 or even the fall of 2025, depending on how far out some speakers are booked.

As Administration aims to bring in popular speakers, this brings the potential issue of many people from outside of the municipality signing up for the event. While Greenview does aim to welcome many different people, the priority of Greenview is Greenview ratepayers, and not those from neighbouring municipalities.

Administration considered the following options :

Option 1) charge the same entry fee regardless of where people are from (ex: \$50 registration fee for everyone)

Option 2) open the registration to Greenview ratepayers only for a limited time, then open registration to others (ex: the registration is open for 1 week for Greenview ratepayers only, then open to the public)

Option 3) give Greenview ratepayers a discounted entry fee cost compared to the public entry fee cost (ex: \$50 registration fee for Greenview ratepayers, \$75 for the public)

Administration recommends that free events remain free for everyone to attend, and that a discounted rate for Greenview ratepayers be applied to the more high-profile speakers Administration aims to bring. While neighbouring municipal ratepayers will be welcome, the fee for attendance will be set at cost-recovery. This decision would apply only to events where Greenview will be charging for attendance.

BENEFITS OF THE RECOMMENDED ACTION:

The benefit of the recommended action is that Administration can move forward with booking speakers for larger events. This results in better outreach and education being provided in Greenview. This will also address the complications of charging a fee at certain events.

DISADVANTAGES OF THE RECOMMENDED ACTION:

A disadvantage of the recommended action is that neighboring municipal ratepayers may be upset at the increase of price or limitation of registration. This could also impact attendance to some events.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Alternative #1: The Agricultural Service Board has the option to approve any of the listed options or combination of options.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATION:

Direct Costs: N/A

Ongoing / Future Costs: N/A

STAFFING IMPLICATION:

There are no staffing implications to the recommended motion.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT LEVEL:

Greenview has adopted the IAP2 Framework for public consultation.

INCREASING LEVEL OF PUBLIC IMPACT

Inform

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL

Inform - To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.

PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC

Inform - We will keep you informed.

FOLLOW UP ACTIONS:

Administration will move forward with the proposed activity.

ATTACHMENT(S):



REQUEST FOR DECISION

SUBJECT: 2024 Drought & Livestock Tax Deferral Criteria and AgriStability
SUBMISSION TO: AGRICULTURAL SERVICES BOARD **REVIEWED AND APPROVED FOR SUBMISSION**
MEETING DATE: June 26, 2024 **CAO:** **MANAGER:** SK
DEPARTMENT: AGRICULTURE **DIR:** **PRESENTER:** SK
STRATEGIC PLAN: Economy **LEG:**

RELEVANT LEGISLATION:

Provincial:

Council Bylaw/Policy:

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

MOTION: That the Agricultural Service Board approve the drafted ASB Resolution “2023 Drought & 2024 Livestock Tax Deferral Criteria and AgriStability”, as presented.

BACKGROUND/PROPOSAL:

On January 31st, the Agricultural Service Board made the following motion:

That Administration complete a draft resolution to separate drought criteria, for livestock, and crop as well as zones attribute to geographical size.

In response to the motion, Administration analyzed the federal mapping for the 2023 Canadian Drought Monitor. This analysis included a review of the drought monitor ratings, and consideration for location of privately held agricultural lands versus crown lands. It was quickly determined that the areas that represent privately held agricultural zones in Greenview experienced consistent dry to moderate drought conditions (D0-D1) with the Grovedale area experiencing severe drought (D2) for quite some time. A review of the other 7 rural municipalities not included in the relief funding revealed that all have vast areas of crown lands.

A GIS map was created with the crown lands area of the drought monitor removed. This led to a stark visual that Greenview, Big Lakes County, the MD of Lesser Slave River, Brazeau County and Yellowhead County had experienced similar drought conditions to rural municipalities within proximity to their borders. A letter was drafted, along with a time-lapse video link, to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada requesting clarification. Yellowhead County and Greenview Administration collaborated on the draft of the resolution with the Yellowhead ASB scheduled to review the draft at their upcoming meeting..

BENEFITS OF THE RECOMMENDED ACTION:

1. The benefit of the recommendation is that the Agricultural Service Board will be aware of the drafted resolution and be able to provide further comment, context and input to the finalization of the draft.

DISADVANTAGES OF THE RECOMMENDED ACTION:

1. There is no disadvantage to the recommended action.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Alternative #1: The Agricultural Service Board may choose to request for Administration research the issue more fully, returning with a new draft at the July 31st, 2024 ASB meeting.

Alternative #2: The Agricultural Service Board may choose to accept the resolution for information, as presented.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATION:

There are no financial implications to the recommended action.

Direct Costs:

Ongoing / Future Costs:

STAFFING IMPLICATION:

There are no staffing implications to the recommended motion

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT LEVEL:

Greenview has adopted the IAP2 Framework for public consultation.

INCREASING LEVEL OF PUBLIC IMPACT

Inform

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL

Inform - To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.

PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC

Inform - We will keep you informed.

FOLLOW UP ACTIONS:

Once the Agricultural Service Board has made a recommendation, Administration will propose incorporation of the recommendations into the finalized documents.

ATTACHMENT(S):

- 2024 Drought & Livestock Tax Deferral Criteria and AgriStability

RESOLUTION XX
Drought and Livestock AgriStability

WHEREAS over the last ten years, four of the ten most extreme and expensive weather-related disasters in Canada have occurred in Alberta, and federal modelling for Western Canada projects increasing changes and weather extremes;

WHEREAS the current federal drought monitoring system aggregates weather data, including precipitation received on forested crown land that is not available to privately held agricultural lands in its assessment, and this data was the deciding criteria in selecting areas for participation in the Canada-Alberta Drought Livestock Assistance program and the 2023 Livestock Tax Deferral;

WHEREAS the Government of Canada has forecast the continued extreme weather impacts on the agricultural industry through modelling and federal business risk management, programs are in place to safeguard producer's financial resiliency from impacts including AgriStability;

WHEREAS the Office of Audit and Evaluation of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) conducted an evaluation of AgriStability to assess relevance, design, delivery, efficiency and effectiveness and found that federally supported risk management programming help to protect Canada's agriculture sector against severe income losses due to a wide array of risks and while AgriStability has the potential to meet this need, it is not fully doing so;

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

That Alberta Agricultural Service boards advocate to the Federal government to re-evaluate the current weather mapping program and the Drought Monitoring System to include and more heavily weigh data from weather stations within agricultural lands, better acknowledging municipalities straddling the transition from agricultural white zone into forested Crown green zone, coupled with making efforts to capture in these maps the extreme weather events that are now a reality.

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT that Alberta Agricultural Service Boards of Alberta advocate for and ensure the recommended improvements to AgriStability as identified by the Office of Audit and Evaluation of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) were put in place, by April of 2024; 1: Identify ways to simplify AgriStability to reduce producer administrative burden, 2: Find ways to make interim and final payments more predictable and to improve the timeliness of final payments, 3: develop and implement a means to increase access to AgriStability by underrepresented populations.

SPONSORED BY: Yellowhead County
MOVED BY: _____
SECONDED BY: _____
CARRIED: _____
DEFEATED: _____
STATUS: Provincial and Federal
DEPARTMENT: Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation (AGI)
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In 2023, the impacts of drought within Alberta were far reaching and in response to the situation, Canada and Alberta partnered on a one-time funding initiative called the Canada-Alberta Drought Livestock Assistance initiative. On October 20th, 2023, the Alberta Government announced the inclusion of 41 rural municipalities in the program, leaving a further 28-member rural municipalities out of the program. On January 25th, a further 20 rural municipalities were announced as additions to the funding. Oddly, Kananaskis, Calgary and Edmonton were included in the January 25th announcement. This left 8 rural municipalities out of the funding program. Letters were sent to the federal and provincial governments asking for explanation and the response provided was that these municipalities had received average to above average precipitation over the course of the 2023 growing season.

A review of the Canadian Drought Monitor revealed that these municipalities are comprised of large areas of forested crown lands with relatively small zones of privately held agricultural lands. Further analysis suggested that while these agricultural areas experienced significant drought impacts, when balanced against moisture in the crown lands, the municipalities appeared to receive adequate moisture. GIS mapping proved more definitive when the map of crown lands were excluded.

Precipitation patterns are highly variable between white and green zones. If entire areas are being aggregated in the Canadian Drought Monitor assessments, it is not a fair reflection of what is being experienced by producers in white zones that are adjacent to green zones. Aggregate weather data loses the nuance of seasonal variation and other contributing factors. Moisture that falls within forested crown lands does not address moisture deficits experienced in privately held agricultural lands.

[Evaluation of AgriStability - agriculture.canada.ca](https://www.agriculture.canada.ca/evaluation-of-agri-stability)

[Canadian Drought Monitor - agriculture.canada.ca](https://www.agriculture.canada.ca/canadian-drought-monitor)

Locations of weather stations in Alberta <https://acis.alberta.ca/weather-data-viewer.jsp>



MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF GREENVIEW No. 16

Manager's Report

Department: Agricultural Services

Submitted by: Sheila Kaus

Date: 6/26/2024

Environment- Goal 3; Create a balance between development and natural resources

MANAGED INFESTATIONS			
STATUS	WHITE ZONE	GREEN ZONE	TOTAL
TOTAL MANAGED	2268	1328	3596
CONTROLLED	22	3	25
MONITOR	200	24	224
MODERATE	156	18	174
SEVERE	4	2	6
EXTREME - NOTICE	5	0	5
REMOVE	46	0	46
NOT CONTACTED	2	0	2
NEW	62	30	92
TOTAL UPDATED	482 OR 13%		

To clarify the progress by the seasonal crews, Administration put together this chart that differentiates between the total number of managed infestations in Greenview and then separated those cases based on if they occur in the Green Zone or the White Zone and the statuses of each infestation has been simplified. It is hoped this will allow the Agricultural Service Board and Council to more clearly understand the progress of the team. 1,389 of the total managed infestations are Canada Thistle. These infestations will not enter the numbers for status updates until the end of July.

Over 600 acres of herbicide has been purchased from the department by those enrolled in the weed incentive program. In addition to this, there are four producers who purchased chemical elsewhere. Once these fields have been checked for control, the status of the infestations will be changed. Administration has created a new category entitled "REMOVE". These are infestations that the teams have continued to check but have been weed free for over 5 years.

The roadside spray program was delayed by weather through the first half of June but is making up for that lost time. The rotational control in Grovedale has been completed and work has begun in the DeBolt and

Puskwaska area. A total of 928 kilometers of ditch have been sprayed.

On June 11th, two fields with active pest notices were found to be planted to canola. The producer was informed the crop needed to be destroyed on June 14th and elected to till the seedlings under and plant the fields to barley for the season. This control work was confirmed on June 19th. Broadleaf control will be completed in the subsequent barley crops, and this should control any seedlings that manage to re-root after being tilled. While this is a challenging issue with no easy answers, the producer electing to perform the control work themselves mitigates further losses that would have been impactful if enforcement had been necessary and is the best-case outcome for this issue. Prompt inspections for compliance have been adopted by the department to allow Administration to address non-compliance prior to further inputs, such as herbicide and fungicide being applied to the crop and to lessen reproduction of more clubroot spores. Due to this prompt response, the producer was able to plant the field to barley ahead of AFSCs insurance deadline of June 20th.

Problem Wildlife Work Orders

File Status	Beaver- MD	Beaver- Ratepayer	Customer Service	Predation	Totals
In Queue	-	-	-	-	
Open	12	11	6	11	40
Closed	6	6	8	3	23
TOTALS	18	17	14	14	63

The problem wildlife team has been keeping up on problem beaver removal with 153 having been removed from trouble areas. The team removed five dams impacting Greenview infrastructure with Operations using a track-hoe. Operations has let the Problem Wildlife Team know that if dams are requiring track-hoe work that is not immediately impacting Greenview infrastructure, the department will need to contract out the work. The Valleyview Problem Wildlife Officer has requested contractor information to facilitate this, should it be required.

Coyotes continue to cause livestock producers grief and due to this, the team has removed 12 problem coyotes. These areas continue to be monitored, in the hopes that the pressure will result in the coyotes moving on.

Trapping on the Grazing Reserve south of Valleyview has been hampered by individuals moving cattle and setting off traps with sticks. The Valleyview Problem Wildlife Officer has relayed this concern to the board, requesting that the practice be stopped.

Extension and Outreach Activities

June saw the first "Pond Days" event coordinated and hosted by Greenview. This event was delivered by Agricultural Services and Outdoor Recreation at Johnson Park on June 14th to the grade five class from Harry Gray Elementary School. Participants took part in stations that utilized a large percentage of the park.

Students were split into groups of 6 and rotated through 4 stations. Greenview Search and Rescue demonstrated to the students what to do and not do if they find themselves lost in the woods. Fish and Wildlife spoke to the students about bear awareness, including a bear banger presentation and a demonstration of a live bear trap, used to removed habituated animals. The Manager of Agricultural Services handled aquatic invertebrates with a live pool full of critters, chatting with the students about the importance of the different organisms to the food web, as well as how certain types of organisms can indicate poor water quality. The Landcare Coordinator took them along the trails to point out the native vegetation and its importance to healthy water and ecosystems. The teachers were quite happy with the event and have stated they would like to see it become an annual event.

June 18th saw the first Peace Region Woman’s Grazing School in Goodfare, in partnership with the County of Grande Prairie, Peace Country Beef and Forage Association, Peace Region Living Labs and Cows and Fish. Similar Women’s Grazing Schools take place annually throughout Alberta but this is the first time it has been attempted in the Peace Region. There were 35 attendees who went on a tour of a ranch taking specific steps to sustainably graze the land, toured a water improvement site with an emphasis on riparian health with discussion on how it relates to increased rate of gain, among other topics. It was well received by all attendees.

Economy- Goal 2; Create a diverse economy

VSI Quarterly Reports and Service Breakdown – 2023

Veterinary Services Incorporated (VSI) encourages livestock producers to access veterinary care and maintain herd health, protecting the economic viability of their livestock operation. The first quarter financials were received on May 1st and for the quarter, there was a 7.53% drop in the total charges when compared to the 2023 fiscal year.

	# Services	2024	+/- (%)	2023
1 st Quarter	84	\$20,760.79	-7.53	\$22,540.38
2 nd Quarter				\$41,281.84
3 rd Quarter				\$11,534.28
4 th Quarter				\$49,639.40
TOTAL Claims	84	\$20,760.79	-7.53	\$124,905.90

C-Sections: 6
 Preg Checks: 1195
 Semen Tests: 188

The Agricultural Equipment Rental Program contributes to the economic viability of agricultural producers by providing equipment for rent that is cost-prohibitive to purchase when measured against the frequency of use. Rental Equipment stands at 313.5 rental days up to June 20th, without rental days from the satellite locations. This is ahead of the 4-year average of 239.5 rental days to the end of June. Reports from the satellite locations state that both yards have been steady compared to previous years.

While repairs to the rental equipment have been occurring at a steady pace, the budget thus far has been adequate to meet the needs of the program.



REQUEST FOR DECISION

SUBJECT: Correspondence

SUBMISSION TO: AGRICULTURAL SERVICES BOARD

MEETING DATE: June 26, 2024

DEPARTMENT: AGRICULTURE

STRATEGIC PLAN: Level of Service

REVIEWED AND APPROVED FOR SUBMISSION

CAO: MANAGER: SK

DIR: MH PRESENTER: SK

LEG:

RELEVANT LEGISLATION:

Provincial (cite) – N/A

Council Bylaw/Policy (cite) – N/A

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

MOTION: That the Agricultural Service Board accept the correspondence for information, as presented.

ATTACHMENT(S):

- Alberta Crop Reports
- Country of Grande Prairie Letter
- Precipitation Maps
- Soil Moisture Reports
- University of Lethbridge Letter

UPCOMING EVENT(S):

- | | | |
|--|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Ag Tech Days | June 25, 2024 | Calgary |
| 2. Deepening the Roots of Food Justice in the Prairies | June 25-26, 2024 | Online |
| 3. PCBFA Regenerative Small Scale Farm Tour | June 26, 2024 | Birch Hills County |
| 4. Farming Smarter Field School | June 26-27, 2024 | Lethbridge County |
| 5. Soil Builders School | July 3, 2024 | Rimby |
| 6. Junior Agarians | July 4, 11, 18, & 25 2024 | Fairview |
| 7. Seeds Canada Annual Conference | July 8-10, 2024 | Edmonton |
| 8. Alberta Range Stewardship Course | July 17-28, 2024 | Consort |
| 9. Southern Alberta Grazing School for Women | July 24-25, 2024 | Seven Persons |
| 10. PCBFA 10th Annual Field Day | July 25, 2024 | Fairview |
| 11. AgSmart | July 30 & 31, 2024 | Olds |
| 12. PFRA Grazing Management Series | August 6, 13, 20, & 27 2024 | Online |
| 13. PCBFA Saddle Hills Variety Trials Tour | August 9, 2024 | Saddle Hills |

BENEFITS OF THE RECOMMENDED ACTION:

1. The benefit of the Agricultural Service Board accepting the recommended motion is that the Board will be made aware of the events, seminars and conferences within the agricultural community throughout the Province.

DISADVANTAGES OF THE RECOMMENDED ACTION:

1. There are no perceived disadvantages to the recommended motion.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Alternative #1: The Agricultural Service Board has the alternative to alter or deny the recommended motion.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATION:

There are no financial implications to the recommended motion.

STAFFING IMPLICATION:

There are no staffing implications to the recommended motion.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT LEVEL:

Greenview has adopted the IAP2 Framework for public consultation.

INCREASING LEVEL OF PUBLIC IMPACT

Inform

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL

Inform - To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.

PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC

Inform - We will keep you informed.

FOLLOW UP ACTIONS:

There are no follow up actions to the recommended motion.

Alberta Crop Report

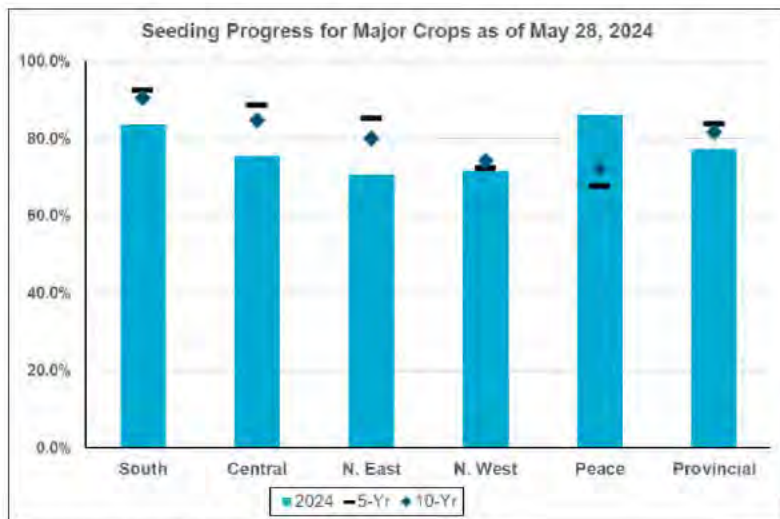
Crop conditions as of May 28, 2024 (Abbreviated Report)

Scattered light showers across the province continued with the majority of the province receiving at least a few millimeters whereas areas along the west side of the North West and Central Regions received up to 30-40 mm. Short seeding delays occurred but provincial seeding progressed 20 per cent to 77 per cent complete, which is below the 5-year average of 84 per cent (See Table 1). The most advanced regions are the Peace Region at 86 per cent complete and the South Region at 84 per cent complete. The North East and North West Region have the most left to seed with 71 and 72 per cent complete, respectively. Emergence of major crops doubled over the last week to 40 per cent emerged. Despite concerns that the cool wet weather is delaying crop progress, emergence is marginally ahead of the 5- and 10-year averages. As well, growth stages of provincial cereals are on track with their historical averages.

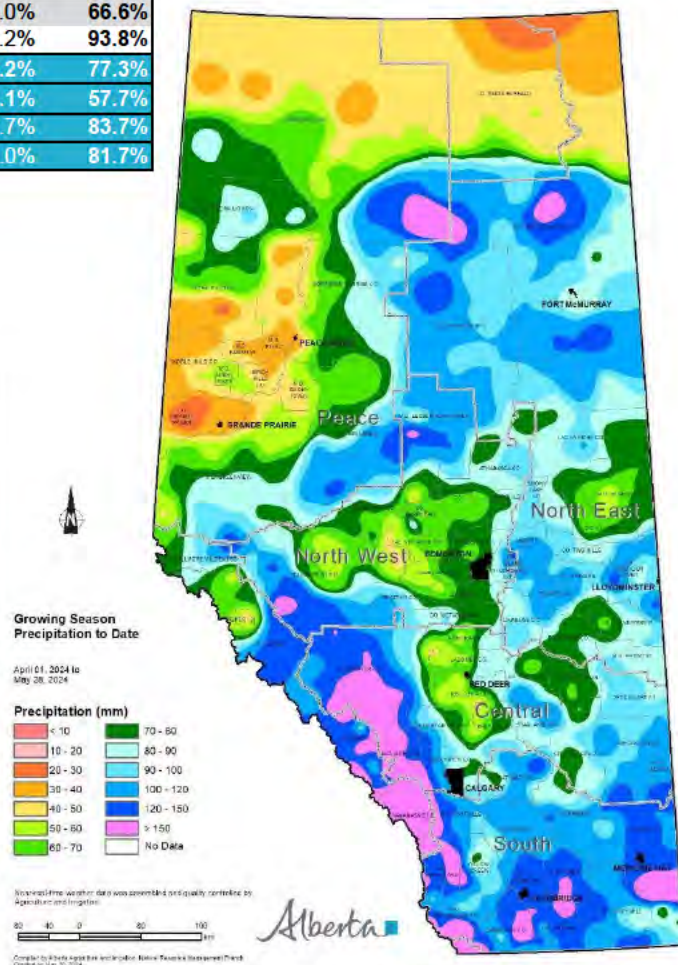
Table 1: Alberta Major Crop Seeding Progress as of May 28, 2024

	% Seeded					
	South	Central	N East	N West	Peace	Alberta
Spring Wheat *	87.3%	85.0%	91.3%	88.1%	93.3%	88.7%
Barley *	89.0%	70.4%	46.8%	65.0%	75.0%	72.2%
Oats *	82.0%	60.7%	40.7%	53.2%	71.8%	56.4%
Canola *	66.6%	66.2%	57.5%	61.3%	85.0%	66.6%
Dry Peas *	95.7%	88.2%	99.0%	95.1%	91.2%	93.8%
Major Crops (*), May 28	83.6%	75.5%	70.7%	71.6%	86.2%	77.3%
Major Crops (*), May 21	70.6%	57.2%	42.3%	49.4%	71.1%	57.7%
5-year (2019-2023) Avg	92.5%	88.7%	85.3%	72.5%	67.7%	83.7%
10-year (2014-2023) Avg	90.4%	84.6%	80.0%	74.3%	72.0%	81.7%

Source: AGI/AFSC Crop Reporting Survey



Source: AGI/AFSC Crop Reporting Survey



Source: Time weather data was assembled and quality controlled by Agriculture and Irrigation

Compiled by the Agriculture and Irrigation, Saskatchewan Irrigation Districts and the Saskatchewan Irrigation Districts on May 31, 2024

Visit weatherdata.ca for additional maps and meteorological data

Surface soil moisture conditions declined slightly across the province despite light showers in many regions, however, they remained above the 5- and 10-year averages (See Table 2). Surface soil moisture rated good to excellent is the highest in the North East at 91 per cent and the North West at 82 per cent. The lowest conditions were in the Peace Region at 64 per cent good to excellent. Over the past week, conditions declined by 5 per cent in the South to 71 per cent, 2 per cent to 80 per cent in the Central, 5 per cent to 82 per cent in the North West and 6 per cent to 64 per cent in the Peace. The only region that had an increase was the North East Region, up 1 per cent to 91 per cent good to excellent.

Table 2: Alberta Surface Soil Moisture Ratings as of May 28, 2024

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	Excessive
South	0.0%	28.8%	63.6%	7.3%	0.3%
Central	1.2%	18.9%	55.0%	24.6%	0.3%
North East	0.0%	5.7%	62.4%	28.7%	3.2%
North West	0.0%	10.9%	55.8%	25.8%	7.5%
Peace	4.1%	31.6%	54.9%	9.4%	0.0%
Alberta	0.8%	20.0%	59.1%	18.5%	1.6%
5-year (2019-2023) Avg	10.6%	24.0%	49.2%	15.1%	1.1%
10-year (2014-2023) Avg	8.8%	22.2%	44.2%	22.0%	2.8%

Source: AGI/AFSC Crop Reporting Survey

Sub-surface soil moisture conditions were quite stable across the province, though there were small decreases in the Peace Region and small increases in the Central Region. Provincial conditions rated good to excellent were stable at 66 per cent. Regional sub-surface soil moisture conditions (per cent rated on May 21, 2024) rated good to excellent were 55 (54) in the South Region, 67 (64) per cent in the Central Region, 78 (78) per cent in the North East, 65 (65) in the North West and 82 (87) per cent in the Peace Region. While surface and sub-surface soil moisture conditions were quite stable in most regions, the drier week allowed seeding to progress, crops to grow and moisture conditions are still ahead of their historical averages.

Table 3: Pasture Growth Conditions as of May 28, 2024

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
South	2.4%	36.8%	52.4%	8.4%
Central	2.0%	14.2%	82.6%	1.3%
North East	0.3%	27.4%	64.1%	8.3%
North West	4.9%	21.9%	47.0%	26.3%
Peace	14.2%	45.7%	39.4%	0.8%
Alberta	3.0%	27.0%	62.9%	7.2%
5-year (2019-2023) Avg	15.3%	33.7%	47.3%	3.7%

Source: AGI/AFSC Crop Reporting Survey

Provincial pasture and tame hay conditions rated good to excellent increased 2 per cent to 70 per cent, and 3 per cent to 68 per cent, respectively. All regional pasture ratings improved except for the North West Region which decreased 4 per cent to 73 per cent good to excellent but is still more than 25 per cent above both historical averages. Pastures across the province were reported to be improving after recent rains and are having cattle turned out on them soon. Tame hay growth conditions were reported to improve in all regions except the North West. As of May 28, tame hay conditions (last week's rating) were rated 65 (58) per cent in the South Region, 85 (82) per cent in the Central Region, 64 (59) in the North East Region 76 (80) in the North West and 41 (40) in the Peace Region. All regional tame hay ratings, except the Peace, are currently rated above their historical averages.

Regional Assessments:

Region One: South (Strathmore, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Foremost)

- Seeding progress has been delayed due to showers across the region but was still able to progress 13 per cent to 84 per cent, behind the 5-year average of 93 per cent complete.
- While the rains have improved growing conditions, there are reports of standing water in the south west part of the region and needs for sun and heat remain. Surface soil (sub-surface) moisture conditions are rated 0 (10) per cent poor, 29 (35) per cent fair, 64 (44) per cent good, 7 (11) per cent excellent, 0 (0) per cent excessive.
- Some areas in the south east of the region reported spraying or reseeding due to flea beetles and cutworms.
- Tame hay conditions (5-year average) are rated as 3 (11) per cent poor, 32 (33) per cent fair, 56 (51) per cent good, and 9 (6) per cent excellent.

Region Two: Central (Rimbey, Airdrie, Coronation, Oyen)

- Scattered showers throughout the region delayed seeding and in some low areas, cool evenings resulted in frost. Seeding progress is behind the 5-year average of 89 per cent at 76 per cent complete.
- Pasture conditions have improved due to rain around the region, but some areas still look behind due to over-grazing during the last two summers. Tame hay (5-year average) conditions are rated as 2 (13) per cent poor, 13 (21) per cent fair, 83 (61) per cent good and 2 (5) per cent excellent.
- Surface soil (sub-surface) moisture conditions are rated 1 (5) per cent poor, 19 (28) per cent fair, 55 (61) per cent good, 25 (6) per cent excellent, 0 (0) per cent excessive.

Region Three: North East (Smoky Lake, Vermilion, Camrose, Provost)

- Consecutive dry days between showers allowed seeding to progress 28 per cent to 71 per cent complete.
- The north part of the region remains excessively wet with standing water being reported in many fields and some fields are being worked in an attempt to dry up. Currently, surface soil moisture (sub-surface) is rated as 0 (7) per cent poor, 6 (15) per cent fair, 62 (57) per cent good, 29 (20) per cent excellent and 3 (1) per cent excessive.
- Forages have taken the moisture well and grasses are well established as there are reports of cattle being turned out. Tame hay conditions (5-year average) are currently rated as 0 (25) per cent poor, 36 (37) per cent fair, 60 (37) good, 4 (2) per cent excellent.

Region Four: North West (Barrhead, Edmonton, Leduc, Drayton Valley, Athabasca)

- Seeding progressed 22 per cent to 72 per cent complete, on par with the 5-year average.
- While seeding was able to progress, low lying areas that would have been seeded in a dry year may go unseeded or be seeded later due to wet soil conditions. Surface soil moisture (sub-surface) is rated as 0 (8) per cent poor, 11 (27) per cent fair, 56 (49) per cent good, 26 (16) per cent excellent and 8 (0) per cent excessive.
- Dependent on upcoming weather, fields that are still wet may see acres go into silage crops. Tame hay (5-year average) conditions are rated 4 (6) per cent poor, 20 (42) per cent fair, 47 (48) per cent good and 29 (4) per cent excellent.

Region Five: Peace (Fairview, Falher, Grande Prairie, Valleyview)

- Showers were reported around the region but a few 20+ degree days accelerated seeding progress and emergence. Seeding progressed 15 per cent to 86 per cent, ahead of the 5-year average of 68 per cent.
- Surface soil moisture (sub-surface) is rated as 4 (2) per cent poor, 32 (16) per cent fair, 55 (71) per cent good, 9 (11) per cent excellent and 0 (0) per cent excessive.
- Consecutive warm days helped with pasture and hay growth. Tame hay (5-year average) conditions are now rated 16 (11) per cent poor, 43 (35) per cent fair, 41 (49) per cent good, and 1 (5) per cent excellent.

Contact

Agriculture and Irrigation
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Our thanks to Alberta Agricultural Fieldmen and AFSC staff for their partnership and contribution to the Alberta Crop Reporting Program. Agriculture and Irrigation compiles the climate map.

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Alberta Crop Report

Crop conditions as of June 4, 2024

Seeding across the province is virtually complete this week. Recent widespread rains brought moisture across the province, delaying seeding of some low-lying areas; however, it was favourable overall for crop emergence. Provincially, seeding progress of all crops is at 97 per cent, which is similar to the five-year average of 97 per cent and 10-year average of 96 per cent (see Table 1). Seeding progress in most regions is in line with historical averages, with the Peace Region being a notable exception. Seeding in the Peace is well ahead of the historical five-year average of 88 per cent and 10-year average of 89 per cent.

Provincial emergence of all crops is reported at 67 per cent, in line with the five-year average of 67 per cent and 10-year average of 66 per cent. Regional crop emergence for all crops is at 72 per cent in the South, 71 per cent in the Central Region, 65 per cent in the North East, 54 per cent in the North West, and 63 per cent in the Peace. An extended period of warmer weather would be welcome in all areas to help promote plant development.

Table 1: Alberta Seeding Progress as of June 4, 2024

	% Seeded					
	South	Central	N East	N West	Peace	Alberta
Spring Wheat *	99.0%	99.9%	99.0%	96.3%	99.7%	99.0%
Durum	98.2%	100.0%	-	-	-	98.5%
Barley *	98.1%	94.0%	87.8%	91.5%	93.1%	93.9%
Oats *	96.5%	89.0%	84.9%	87.0%	92.9%	88.5%
Canola *	98.4%	98.9%	92.6%	95.1%	98.4%	96.3%
Dry Peas *	99.4%	99.9%	100.0%	100.0%	99.3%	99.6%
Mustard	93.7%	100.0%	-	-	-	93.9%
Flax	97.5%	100.0%	100.0%	-	-	98.0%
Potatoes	100.0%	100.0%	-	98.0%	-	100.0%
Chickpeas	99.9%	100.0%	-	-	-	99.9%
Lentils	95.7%	100.0%	-	-	-	96.5%
Corn	99.0%	100.0%	-	-	-	99.5%
All Crops, June 4	98.0%	98.0%	94.6%	94.7%	98.0%	96.8%
Major Crops (*), June 4	98.6%	98.0%	94.6%	94.7%	98.0%	96.9%
5-year (2019-2023) Avg	99.5%	98.8%	97.3%	93.8%	88.3%	96.7%
10-year (2014-2023) Avg	98.9%	97.3%	93.8%	93.8%	89.2%	95.5%

Source: AGI/AFSC Crop Reporting Survey

Tame hay and pasture have continually improved in most areas thanks to the recent precipitation, with reports of cattle being turned onto pastures in areas of the Central, North West and North East Regions. Throughout the province, 73 per cent of pasture growth is rated as good or excellent, surpassing the five-year average of 53 per cent (see Table 2). Similarly, tame hay growth stands at 71 per cent rated as good or excellent, exceeding the province's five-year average of 56 per cent. Regional ratings of good to excellent pasture (tame hay) growth conditions are 63 (64) per cent for the South, 84 (85) per cent for the Central, 76 (69) per cent for the North East, 86 (86) per cent for the North West, and 45 (44) per cent for the Peace (see Figure 1). It is anticipated that the full benefits of recent moisture on both tame hay and pasture could be realized with the arrival of warmer temperatures.

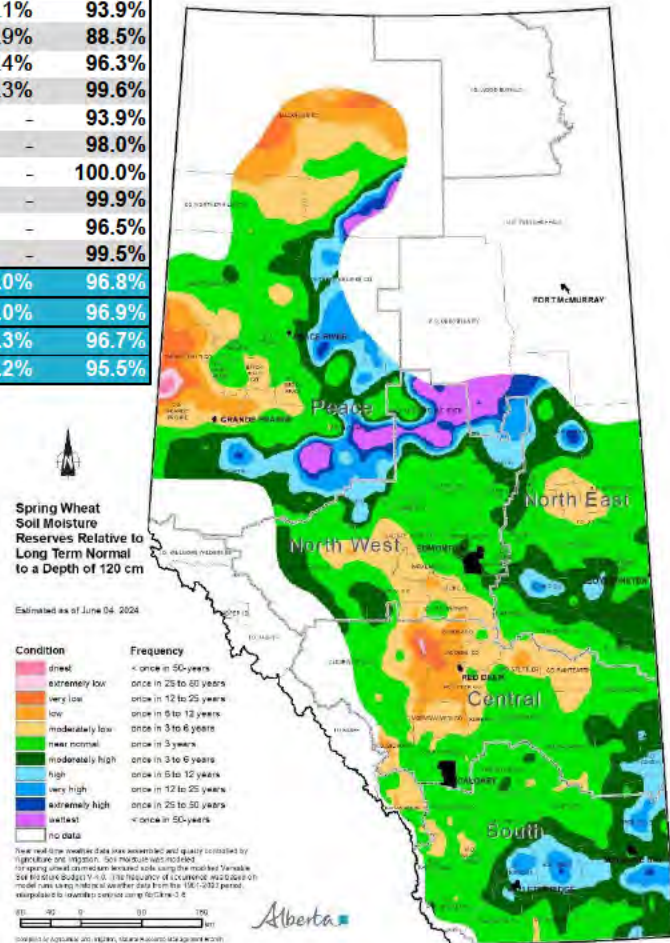


Figure 1: Pasture and Tame Hay Growth Conditions as of June 4, 2024

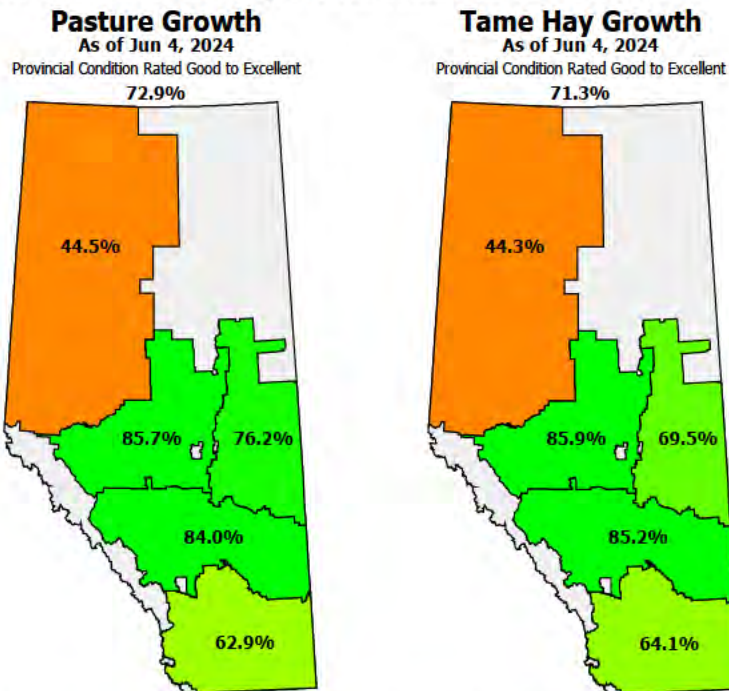


Table 2: Pasture Growth Conditions as of June 4, 2024

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
South	4.7%	32.3%	60.4%	2.5%
Central	2.3%	13.7%	77.7%	6.3%
North East	0.3%	23.6%	67.7%	8.4%
North West	0.0%	14.3%	57.4%	28.3%
Peace	13.2%	42.3%	43.2%	1.3%
Alberta	3.4%	23.7%	65.9%	7.0%
5-year (2019-2023) Avg	15.6%	31.2%	48.0%	5.1%
10-year (2014-2023) Avg	13.8%	28.4%	49.8%	8.0%

Source: AGI/AFSC Crop Reporting Survey

Both surface and sub-surface soil moisture conditions remained reasonably stable across most areas of the province. Provincial surface moisture (sub-surface moisture) good-to-excellent ratings were reported as 75 (65) per cent, a change of -3 (-1) per cent from last week, which is above the five-year historical average of 56 (55) per cent for this week. Regional surface moisture (sub-surface moisture) conditions reported as good-to-excellent are reported as 60 (54) per cent in the South, 79 (60) per cent in the Central, 92 (77) per cent in the North East, 82 (72) per cent in the North West and 69 (83) per cent in the Peace.

Table 3: Alberta Surface Soil Moisture Ratings as of June 4, 2024

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	Excessive
South	3.2%	36.4%	48.5%	11.7%	0.2%
Central	1.9%	19.0%	70.7%	8.4%	0.0%
North East	0.0%	5.9%	63.2%	29.0%	1.9%
North West	0.0%	9.0%	51.8%	30.6%	8.6%
Peace	4.1%	25.6%	49.4%	20.0%	0.9%
Alberta	2.0%	21.6%	58.0%	16.9%	1.5%
5-year (2019-2023) Avg	13.9%	28.8%	43.5%	12.8%	1.0%
10-year (2014-2023) Avg	12.5%	25.0%	40.1%	19.7%	2.6%

Source: AGI/AFSC Crop Reporting Survey

Regional Assessments:

Region One: South (Strathmore, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Foremost)

- South seeding progress for all crops (major crops) is 98 (99) per cent complete, compared to the five-year average of 100 (100) per cent.
- Pest pressure from grasshoppers, flea beetles and army cutworms are noted as over threshold in some areas.
- Sub-surface moisture is 8 per cent poor, 38 per cent fair, 46 per cent good, 8 per cent excellent, and 0 per cent excessive.
- Conditions of tame hay are reported as 5 per cent poor, 31 per cent fair, 61 per cent good, and 3 per cent excellent.

Region Two: Central (Rimbey, Airdrie, Coronation, Oyen)

- Central progress for seeding of all crops (major crops) is 98 (98) per cent complete, compared to the five-year average of 99 (99) per cent.
- Pest pressure from flea beetles are slightly over threshold in some areas of the region.
- Sub-surface moisture is 7 per cent poor, 33 per cent fair, 59 per cent good, 1 per cent excellent, and 0 per cent excessive.
- Conditions of tame hay are reported as 2 per cent poor, 13 per cent fair, 73 per cent good, and 12 per cent excellent.

Region Three: North East (Smoky Lake, Vermilion, Camrose, Provost)

- North East seeding progress for all crops (major crops) is 95 (95) per cent complete, compared to the five-year average of 97 (97) per cent.
- No pests are currently identified as over threshold, with limited pressure from grasshoppers and flea beetles reported.
- Sub-surface moisture is 7 per cent poor, 15 per cent fair, 57 per cent good, 20 per cent excellent, and 1 per cent excessive.
- Conditions of tame hay are reported as 0 per cent poor, 30 per cent fair, 65 per cent good, and 5 per cent excellent.

Region Four: North West (Barrhead, Edmonton, Leduc, Drayton Valley, Athabasca)

- North West progress on seeding of all crops (major crops) is 95 (95) per cent complete, compared to the five-year average of 94 (94) per cent.
- No pests are currently identified as over threshold, with limited pressure from flea beetles reported.
- Sub-surface moisture is 7 per cent poor, 21 per cent fair, 51 per cent good, 21 per cent excellent, and 0 per cent excessive.
- Conditions of tame hay are reported as 0 per cent poor, 14 per cent fair, 56 per cent good, and 30 per cent excellent.

Region Five: Peace (Fairview, Falher, Grande Prairie, Valleyview)

- Seeding progress for all crops (major crops) is 98 (98) per cent complete, compared to the five-year average of 88 (88) per cent.
- No pests are currently identified as over threshold, with limited pressure from flea beetles and army cutworms reported.
- Sub-surface moisture is 2 per cent poor, 15 per cent fair, 66 per cent good, 17 per cent excellent, and 0 per cent excessive.
- Conditions of tame hay are reported as 15 per cent poor, 41 per cent fair, 43 per cent good, and 1 per cent excellent.

Contact

Agriculture Financial Services Corporation
Product Innovation Department
Insurance Products and Product Innovation Unit

Geoff Backman - Product Coordinator
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Email: mediainquiry@afsc.ca

Our thanks to Alberta Agricultural Fieldmen and AFSC staff for their partnership and contribution to the Alberta Crop Reporting Program. Agriculture and Irrigation compiles the climate map.

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April 24, 2024

Agricultural Service Boards of Alberta
Distributed via Association of Alberta Agricultural Fieldmen (AAAF)

Dear Alberta Regional Agricultural Service Boards,

The County of Grande Prairie Agricultural Service Board (ASB) would like to express concerns regarding the centralization of the Provincial Agricultural Service Board conference for the next three years (2025-2027).

At the conclusion of the 2024 Provincial ASB Conference it was announced that for the next three years the Provincial ASB Conference will be held in Edmonton at the Delta Hotels Edmonton South Conference Center. The reason given for that decision was the ease of hosting in an area more central to the hosting regions of Central, Northwest and Northeast.

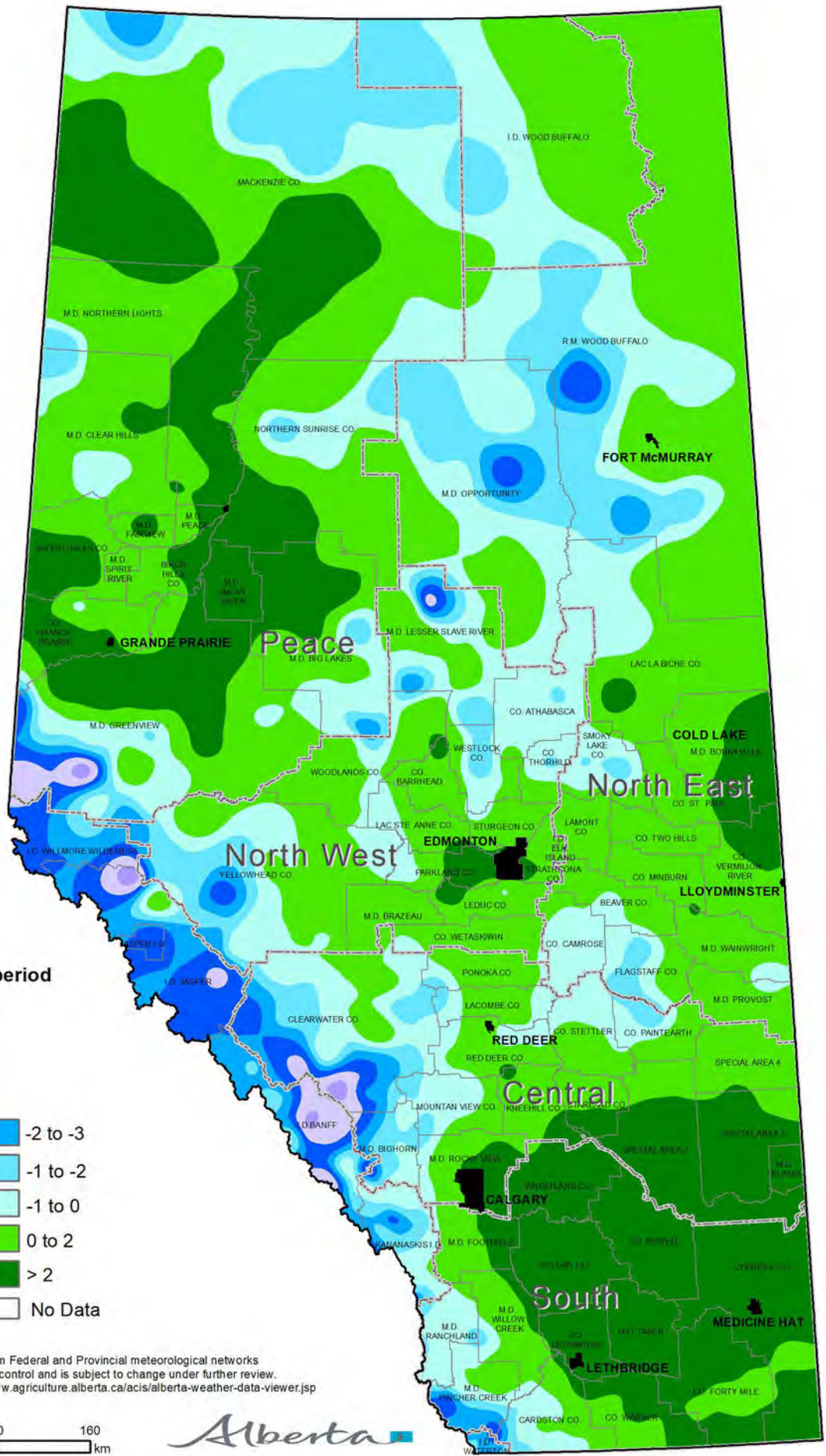
Our ASB understands that the AAAF executive also wished to take advantage of the opportunity to negotiate savings by having a three-year contract with a centralized hotel and event center to keep conference costs and registration costs lower, which in turn benefits all members.

Our concern is that if future conferences continue to be centralized, our region will not get a chance to host in one of our local venues, leading to yearly increased travel costs for our members. As well, our region would lose out on tourism opportunities and the economic benefits associated with hosting a large-scale conference. We also feel it is equally important to host these events in rural locations where possible, to showcase to our members the venues that our rural agricultural communities work so hard to maintain.

Sincerely,

Bob Chrenek
Chair, County of Grande Prairie Agricultural Service Board

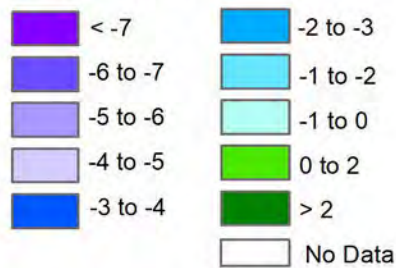
cc: Association of Alberta Agricultural Fieldmen (AAAF)



Lowest Recorded Temperature During the 3.42-day period

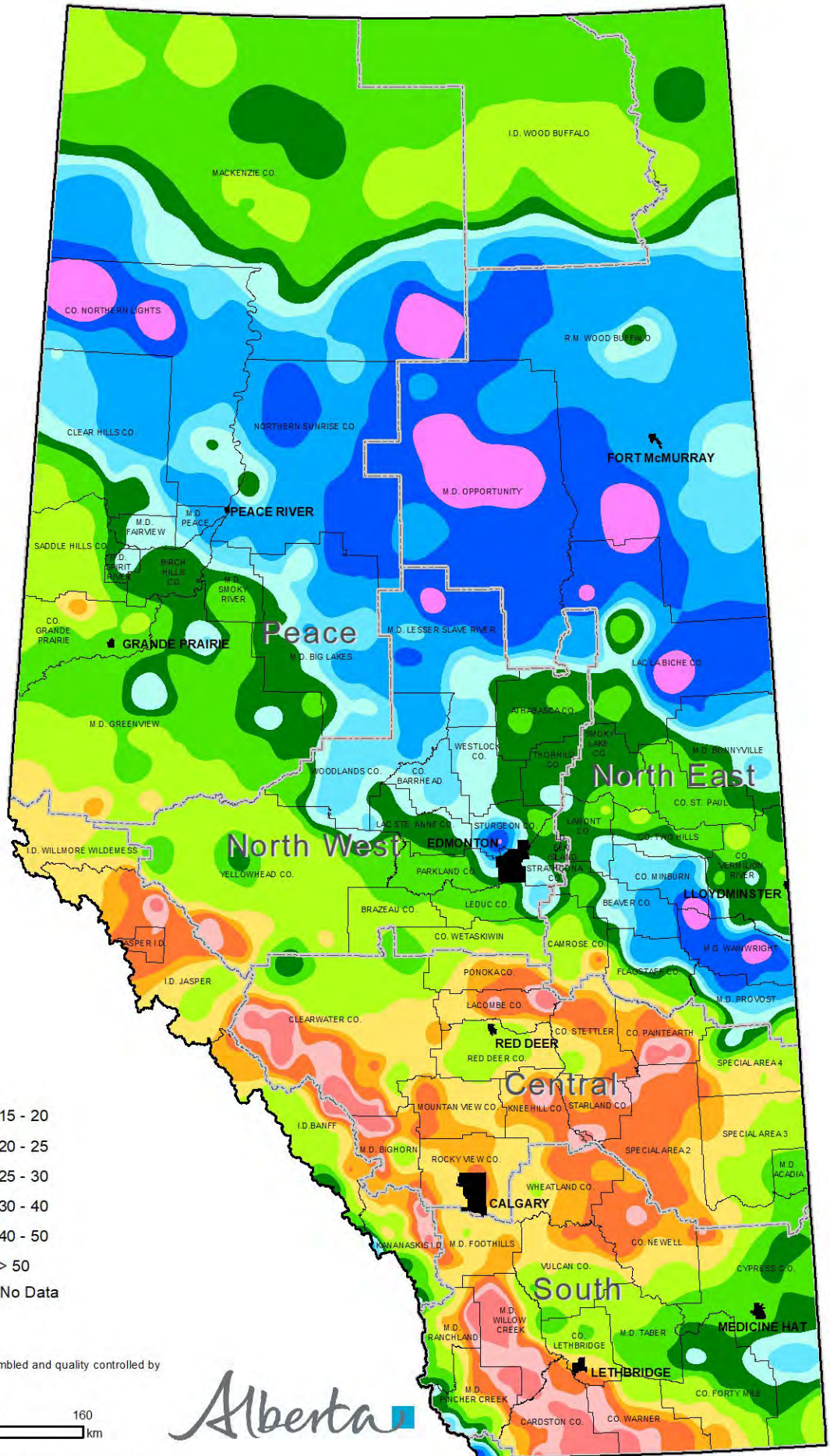
June 15, 2024 to
June 18, 2024 approx. 1000 hrs

Degree Celsius



Near-real-time data was collected from Federal and Provincial meteorological networks
Data has passed preliminary quality control and is subject to change under further review.
Live station data can be viewed at www.agriculture.alberta.ca/acis/alberta-weather-data-viewer.jsp





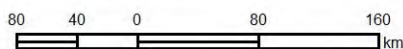
Precipitation Received During the Past 07-days

May 30, 2024 to June 05, 2024

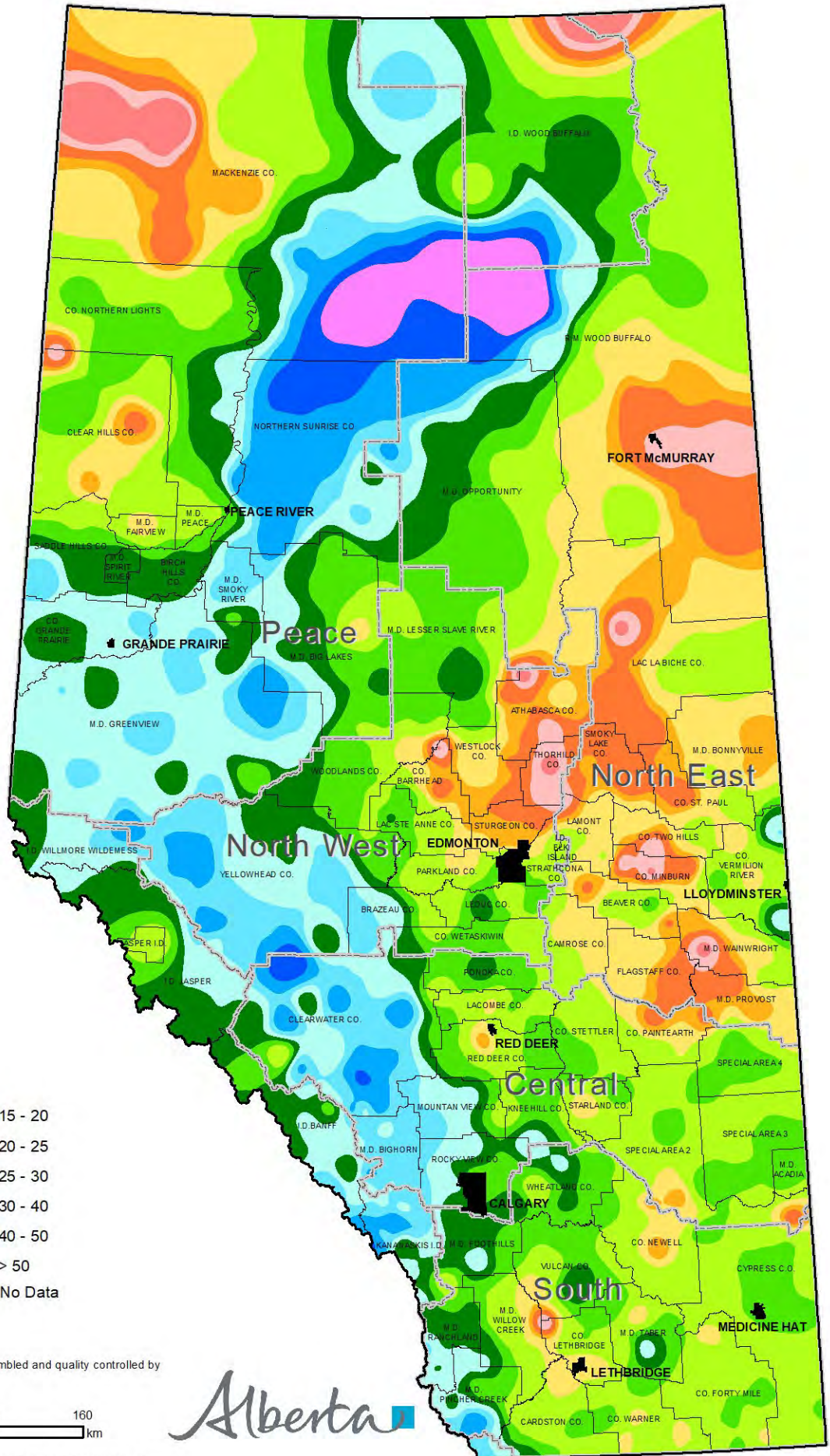
Precipitation (mm)

	< 0.5		15 - 20
	0.5 - 1.0		20 - 25
	1 - 2		25 - 30
	2 - 3		30 - 40
	3 - 5		40 - 50
	5 - 10		No Data
	10 - 15		

Near-real-time weather data was assembled and quality controlled by Agriculture and Irrigation.



Compiled by Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation, Natural Resource Management Branch
Created on June 06, 2024



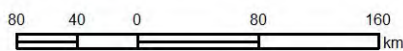
Precipitation Received During the Past 09-days

May 21, 2024 to May 29, 2024

Precipitation (mm)

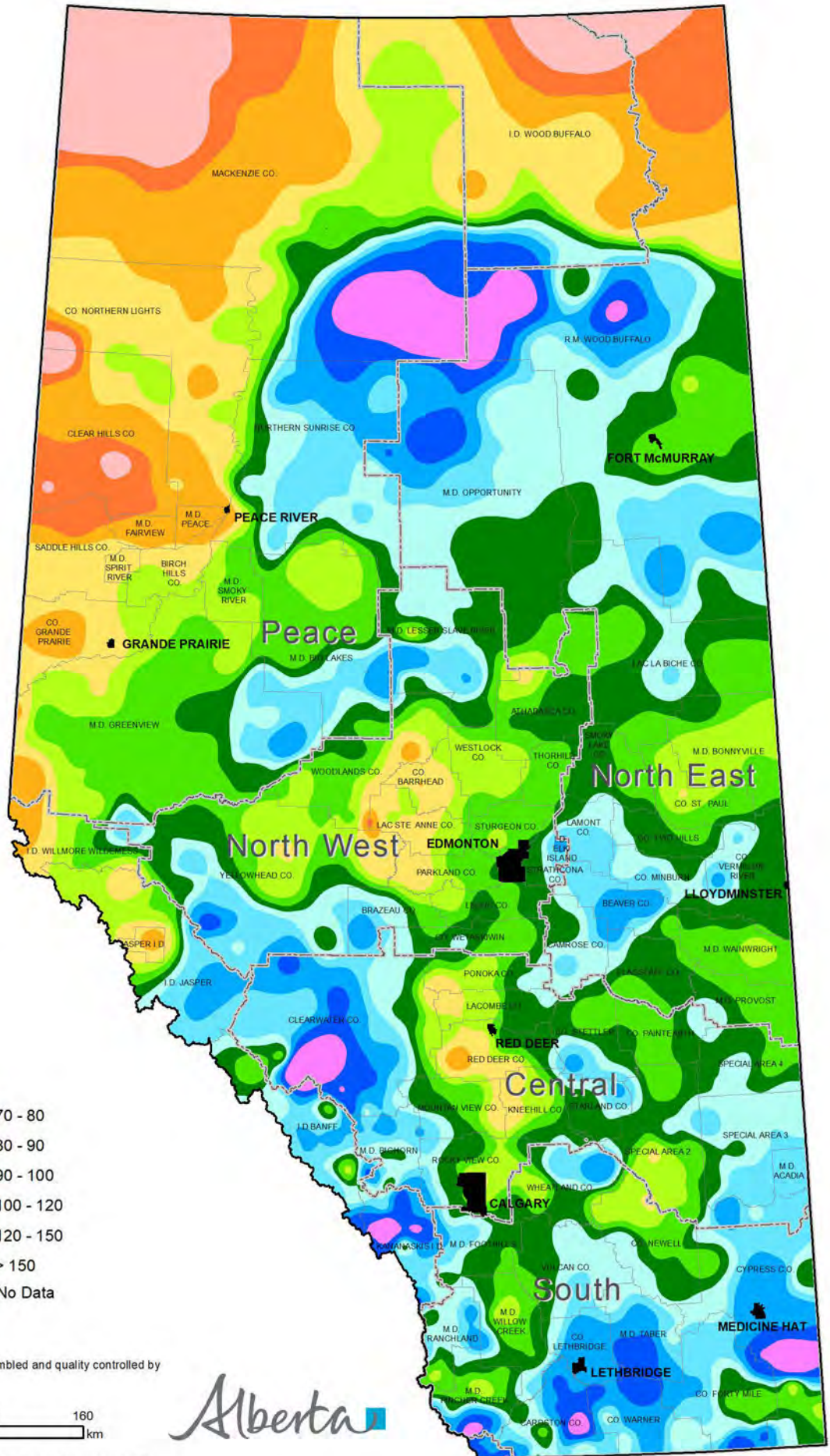
	< 0.5		15 - 20
	0.5 - 1.0		20 - 25
	1 - 2		25 - 30
	2 - 3		30 - 40
	3 - 5		40 - 50
	5 - 10		> 50
	10 - 15		No Data

Near-real-time weather data was assembled and quality controlled by Agriculture and Irrigation.



Compiled by Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation, Natural Resource Management Branch
Created on May 30, 2024

Alberta



Precipitation Received During the Past 30-days

April 30, 2024 to May 29, 2024

Precipitation (mm)

■ < 10	■ 70 - 80
■ 10 - 20	■ 80 - 90
■ 20 - 30	■ 90 - 100
■ 30 - 40	■ 100 - 120
■ 40 - 50	■ 120 - 150
■ 50 - 60	■ > 150
■ 60 - 70	 No Data

Near-real-time weather data was assembled and quality controlled by Agriculture and Irrigation.



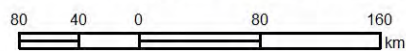
Compiled by Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation, Natural Resource Management Branch
Created on May 30, 2024

Growing Season Precipitation Accumulations Relative to Long Term Normal

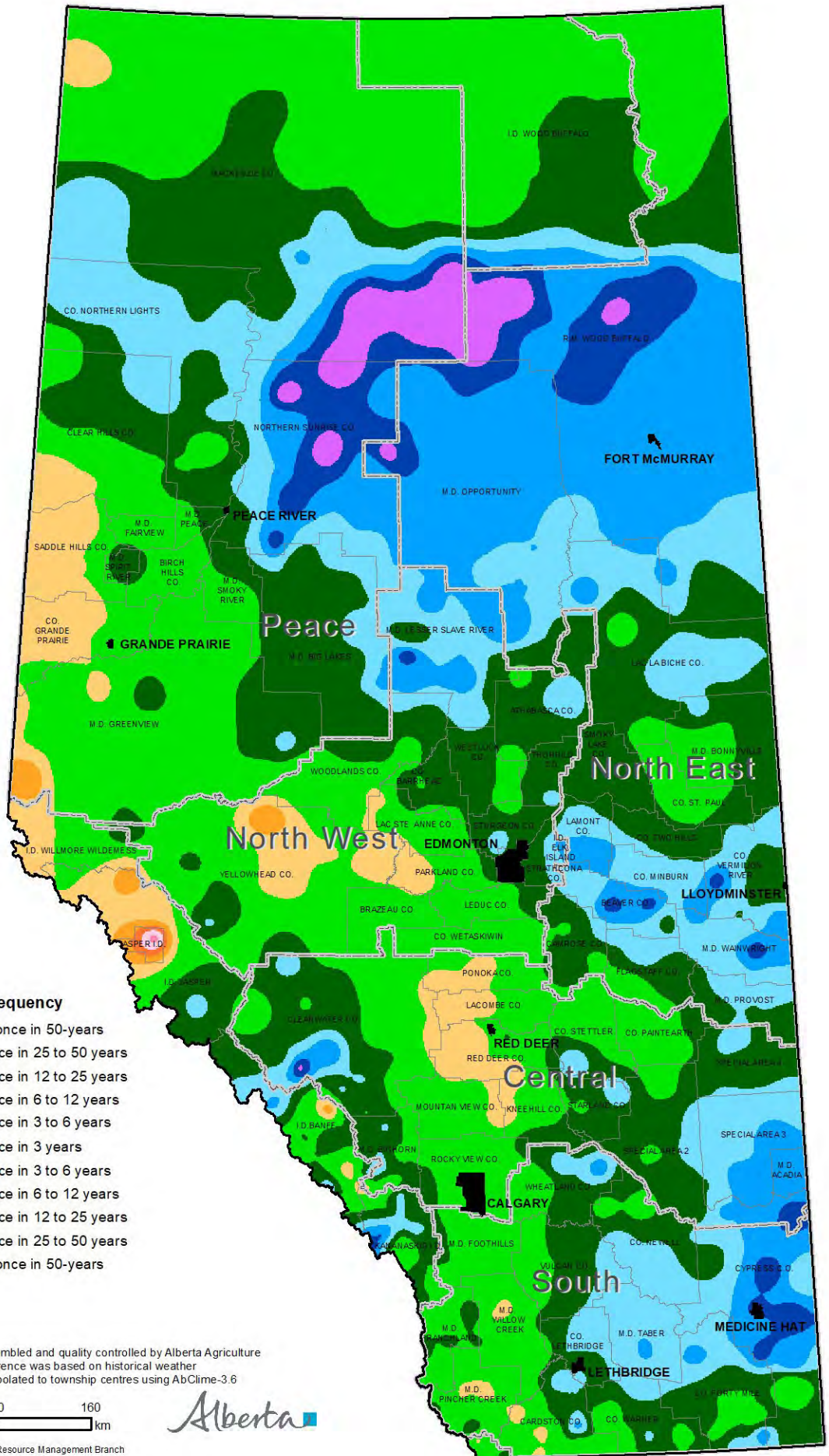
April 01, 2024 to June 05, 2024

Condition	Frequency
	< once in 50-years
	once in 25 to 50 years
	once in 12 to 25 years
	once in 6 to 12 years
	once in 3 to 6 years
	once in 3 years
	once in 3 to 6 years
	once in 6 to 12 years
	once in 12 to 25 years
	once in 25 to 50 years
	< once in 50-years
	no data

Near-real-time weather data was assembled and quality controlled by Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation. The frequency of occurrence was based on historical weather data from the 1961-2023 period, interpolated to township centres using AbClime-3.6















Compiled by Agriculture and Irrigation, Natural Resource Management Branch
Created on June 06, 2024

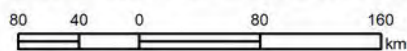


30-Day Precipitation Accumulations Relative to Long Term Normal

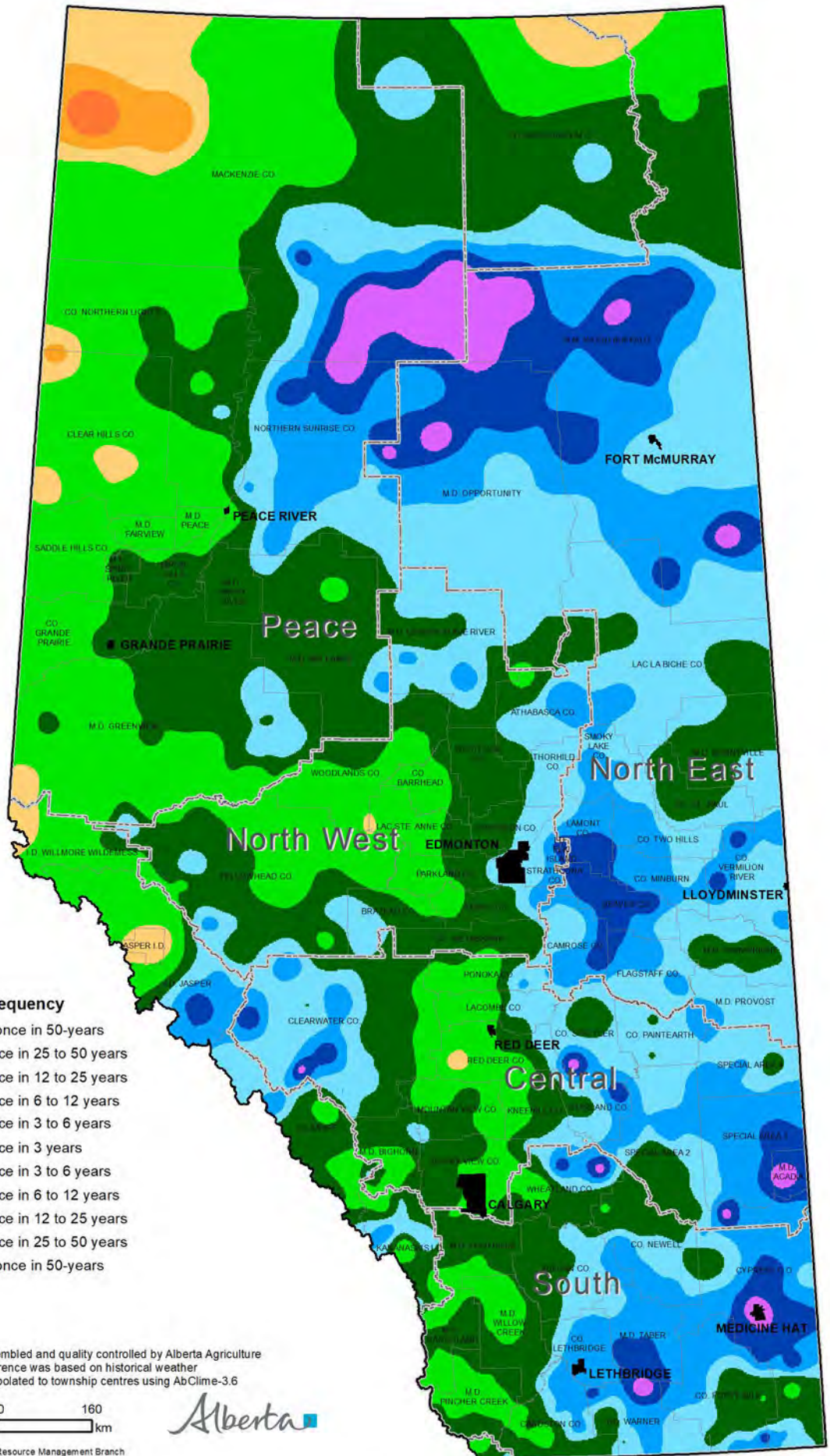
April 30, 2024 to
May 29, 2024

Condition	Frequency
 driest	< once in 50-years
 extremely low	once in 25 to 50 years
 very low	once in 12 to 25 years
 low	once in 6 to 12 years
 moderately low	once in 3 to 6 years
 near normal	once in 3 years
 moderately high	once in 3 to 6 years
 high	once in 6 to 12 years
 very high	once in 12 to 25 years
 extremely high	once in 25 to 50 years
 wettest	< once in 50-years
 no data	

Near-real-time weather data was assembled and quality controlled by Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation. The frequency of occurrence was based on historical weather data from the 1961-2023 period, interpolated to township centres using AbClima-3.6



Compiled by Agriculture and Irrigation, Natural Resource Management Branch
Created on May 30, 2024





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June 19, 2024

Honorable RJ Sigurdson
Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation

AGRIC.Minister@gov.ab.ca

Subject: Weed Control Regulation (WCR) Review

Vulcan County Agricultural Service Board has several concerns that have arisen regarding the proposed changes to the Alberta Weed Control Regulation. In reiteration of the concerns raised by the Municipal District of Willow Creek, Vulcan County ASB is concerned that the proposed changes to the Regulation will negatively impact our municipality, agricultural producers, and the land on which we reside and operate.

In review of the proposed changes Vulcan County Agricultural Service Board found there to be multiple inconsistencies in reasoning for removal of some weeds from the Regulation, and addition of others. While some species such as Yellow Nutsedge are being proposed for removal due in part to limited establishment within the province, others such as African Rue are being proposed for addition for similar reasons. Many comparable inconsistencies are found in the rationale provided by the Weed Regulatory Advisory Committee for the proposed changes.

Removing invasive plants from the Weed Control Act, with few exceptions, seems to be a step in the wrong direction for control of these weeds. In many cases, it can be argued that the reason some species have not become abundant in the province is due in part to the current legislation. Given this success, in combination with the threats these plants pose to agricultural production and ecosystems within Alberta, the removal of weeds from the Regulation may come at a steep price.

Another stand-out issue identified is the proposed removal of all aquatic invasive species, to be regulated instead under Alberta Environment and Protected Areas (EPA). The removal of Eurasian Water Milfoil, Flowering Rush, Pale Yellow Iris, and Purple Loosestrife from the Weed Control Regulation has the potential to result in massively decreased levels of monitoring and coordinated control efforts currently in place throughout the province. Staffing in the EPA is very limited in comparison with the large number of municipal weed inspectors that have been appointed through the Weed Control Act. Changes to this legislation has a high likelihood of delaying the identification and control of invasive plants that interfere with irrigation infrastructure and threaten sensitive aquatic and riparian ecosystems.



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We appreciate the efforts made to receive feedback from Agricultural Service Boards and other participants, and ask that additional time is dedicated to obtaining further feedback from these groups as the review of the WCR progresses.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Doug Logan", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Doug Logan

Chair

Vulcan County Agricultural Service Board

cc: Alberta Environment and Protected Areas
Provincial Agricultural Service Boards



M.D. OF RANCLAND No. 66

PO BOX 1060 ♦ NANTON, AB · TOL IRO ♦ 403-646-3131 ♦ MDRANCLAND.CA

June 4, 2024

The Honourable RJ Sigurdson
Minister of Agriculture & Irrigation
Executive Branch 131 Legislature Building
10800 – 97 Ave, Edmonton AB T5K 2B6

Re: 2024 Proposed Changes to the Weed Control Regulations

To the Honorable Minister RJ Sigurdson:

The Municipal District of Ranchland No. 66 is writing to share our concerns regarding the proposed changes to the Alberta Weed Control Regulations. While we have concerns about how the proposed addition or deletion of individual species may affect our municipality, we understand that these would vary for each jurisdiction throughout the province.

In consideration of this, we feel that proposed amendments to the regulations should be paused until a formal, well defined, invasive species management strategy is in place. While the Weed Control Regulations would form part of that strategy, before invasive plant species can be placed into management groups, a management plan is required.

The first step of a formal strategy should be to clearly identify goals. These goals should be based on leading research in the field of invasive species management, including the invasion curve and established principles such as EDRR (Early Detection and Rapid Response) strategies.

Clearly identifying goals is fundamental in building a purpose orientated process for the management of invasive species and would serve as the foundation on which everything else, including the Weed Control Act and Regulations, are based on.

A formal management strategy would help answer critical questions such as:

- What is the function and mandate of the Weed Control Act and Regulations?
Is it to protect the agricultural productivity of land or are other factors such as protecting our native vegetation & biodiversity also part of the mandate?
- How do we address concerns regarding the level of enforcement of the act and regulations in urban areas or in adjacent rural municipalities. Should the province actively enforce minimum standards related to the act & regulations?

- How is a plant's status as Prohibited Noxious or Noxious determined, is there a clear definition of each? Are two categories enough to meet management goals?
- How do we account for the diverse variation of species establishment across a province as vast as Alberta? Does a one size fits all approach align with management goals or would an area-based approach that considers natural regions and subregions, municipal, provincial and international borders as well as distribution pathways (railroads, rivers, highways etc.) be better for species already established in some but not all areas of the province?
- At what frequency should the regulations be reviewed or should adding and/or delisting species be an ongoing process in consideration of the increasing rate on new species introduction?

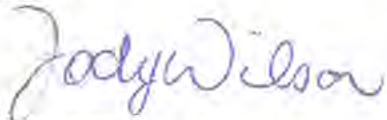
Further, we feel members of the AAAF are significantly underrepresented on the review committee. Agricultural Fieldman and the Agricultural Service Boards they represent, are responsible for enforcing the Weed Control Act & Regulations within their jurisdiction and have in-depth knowledge of the current distribution of invasive species and the potential threat of new species introduction.

Another area of concern is the training and networking limitations placed on provincial staff working on, and advising provincially elected officials, regarding the Weed Control Regulations. It is essential that provincial staff working in this capacity can attend professional development opportunities such as the North American Invasive Species Management Association (NAISMA) conference, regardless of the location. This would provide them with access to the latest information on invasive species management strategies, potential new threats, and networking opportunities with leading experts in this regard.

We request that the province form a task force for the purpose of developing a well-defined, formal invasive species management strategy with clearly identified goals. Additionally, this strategy should be based on leading research in the field of invasive species management, including the invasion curve and established principles such as EDRR (Early Detection and Rapid Response) strategies.

In closing, we value the efforts of committee members, provincial staff and elected officials working to update the Weed Regulations. We believe pausing the current process, addressing the concerns raised in this letter, and working together, will ensure that the list of regulated species is part of an effective strategy to address invasive plant species.

Regards,














Jody Wilson
 Chairperson, Agricultural Service Board
 Municipal District of Ranchland No. 66

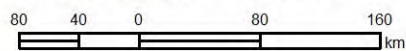
Cc: Chelsae Petrovic, MLA Livingstone-Macleod
 Provincial Agricultural Service Board's
 Weed Control Regulation Review Committee

Spring Wheat Soil Moisture Reserves Relative to Long Term Normal to a Depth of 120 cm

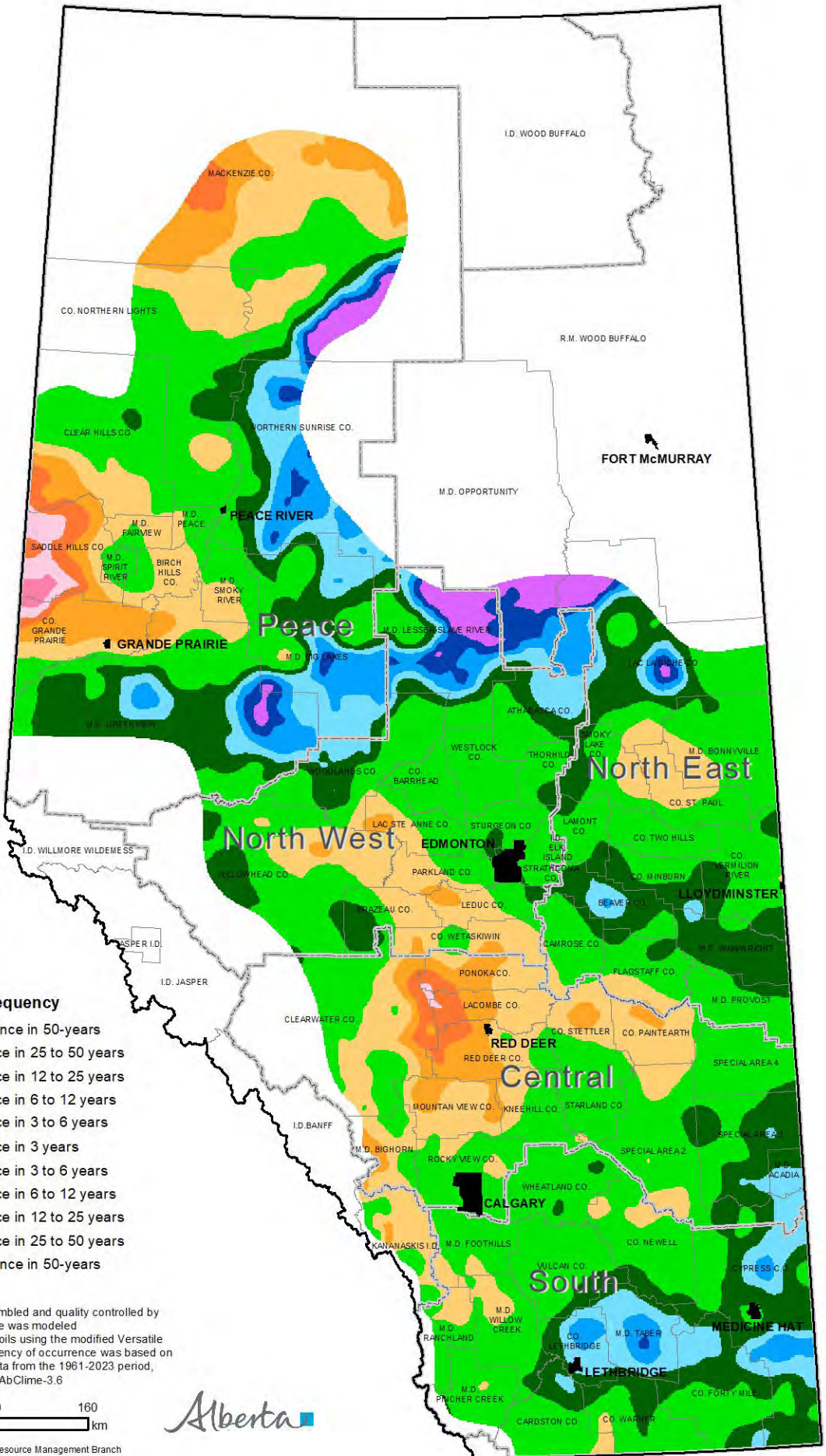
Estimated as of June 05, 2024

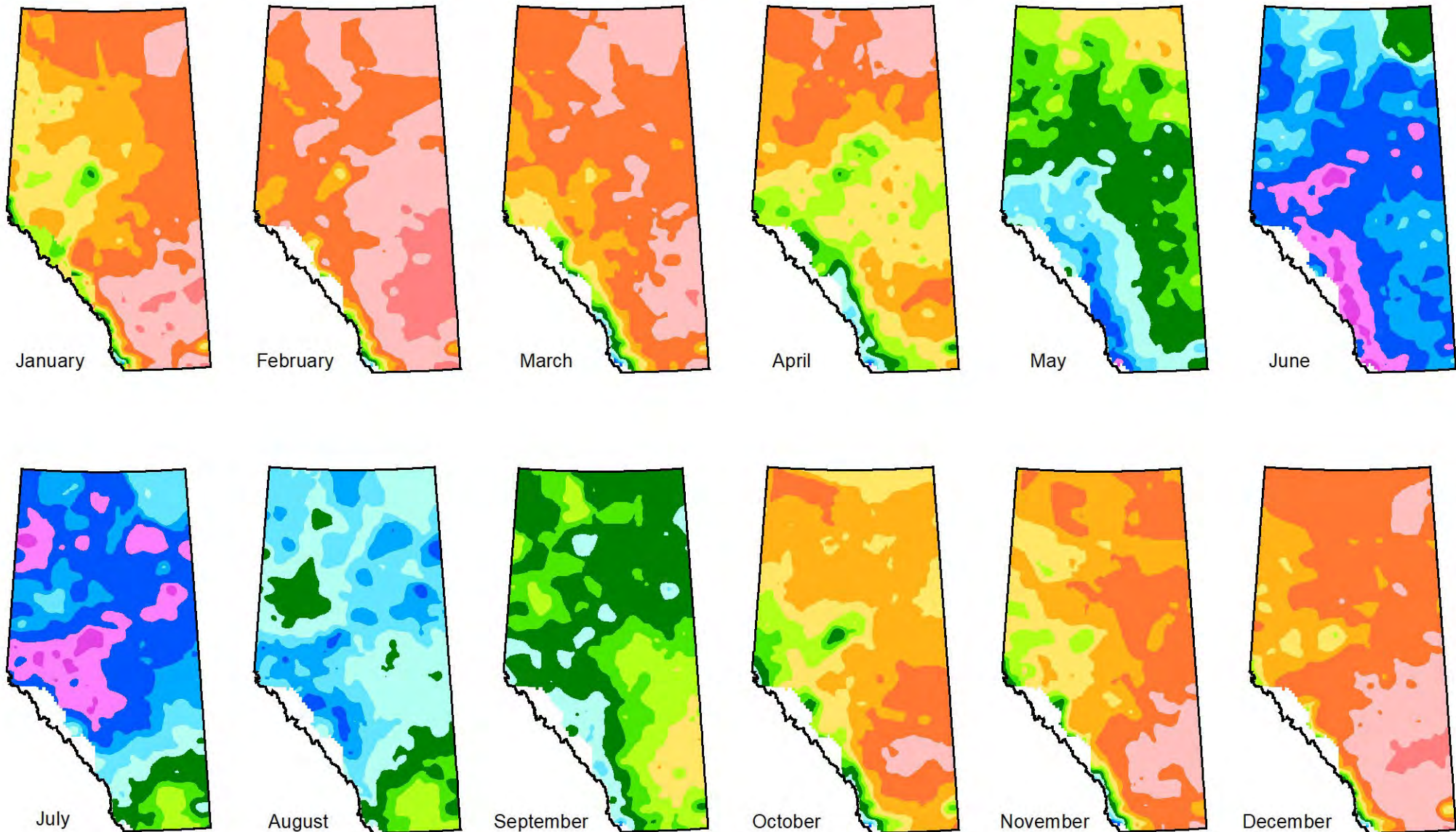
Condition	Frequency
 driest	< once in 50-years
 extremely low	once in 25 to 50 years
 very low	once in 12 to 25 years
 low	once in 6 to 12 years
 moderately low	once in 3 to 6 years
 near normal	once in 3 years
 moderately high	once in 3 to 6 years
 high	once in 6 to 12 years
 very high	once in 12 to 25 years
 extremely high	once in 25 to 50 years
 wettest	< once in 50-years
 no data	

Near-real-time weather data was assembled and quality controlled by Agriculture and Irrigation. Soil moisture was modeled for spring wheat on medium textured soils using the modified Versatile Soil Moisture Budget V-4.0. The frequency of occurrence was based on model runs using historical weather data from the 1961-2023 period, interpolated to township centres using AbClime-3.6



Compiled by Agriculture and Irrigation, Natural Resource Management Branch
Created on June 06, 2024





Normal Monthly Precipitation Accumulations

1991-2020

Weather data was assembled and quality controlled by Agriculture Forestry and Rural Economic Development then interpolated to township centres using AbClime-3.6

Compiled by Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Economic Development, Natural Resource Management Branch
Created on March 29, 2022













Precipitation (mm)



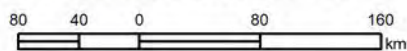
Alberta

Spring Wheat Soil Moisture Reserves Relative to Long Term Normal to a Depth of 120 cm

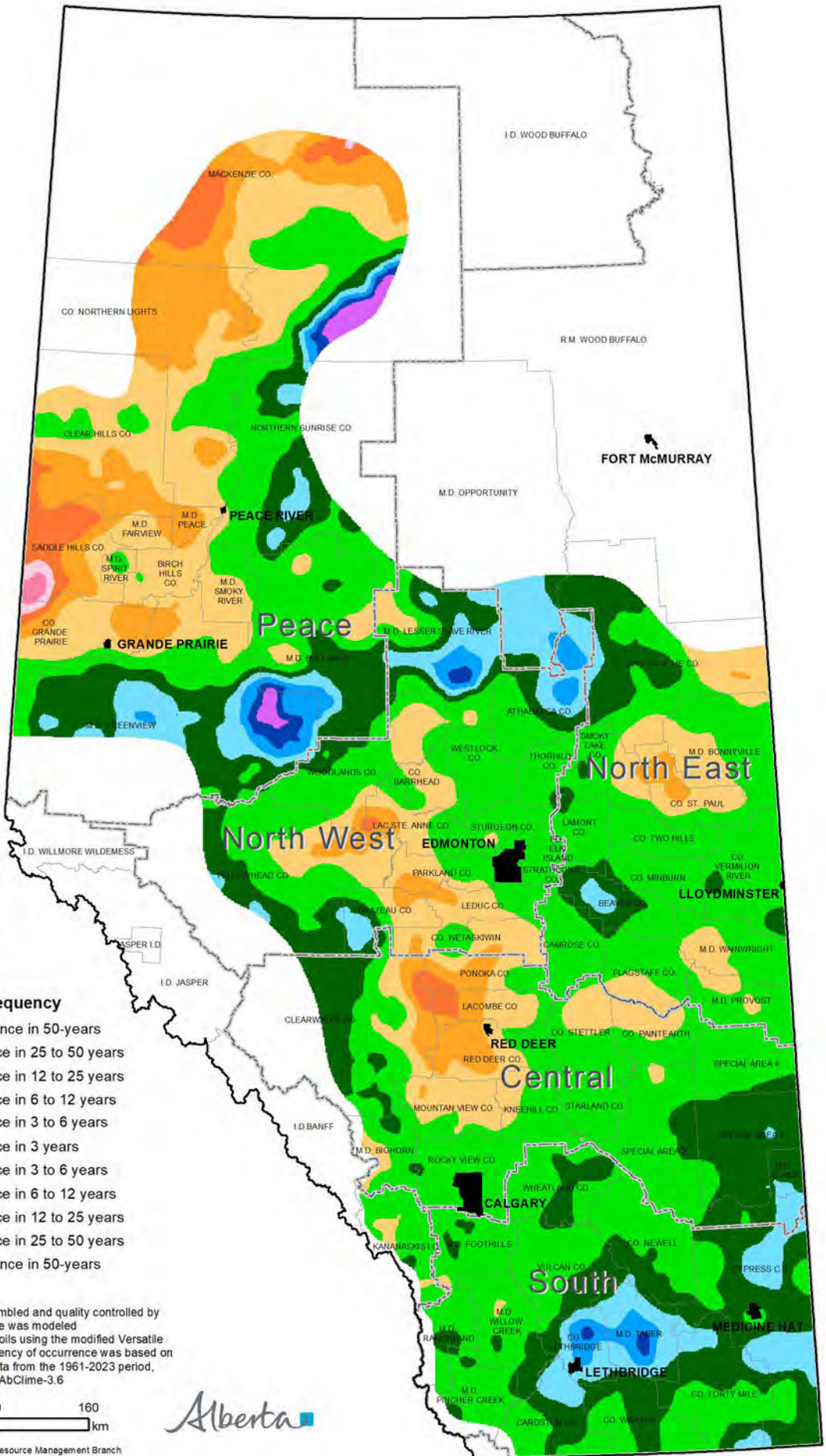
Estimated as of May 29, 2024

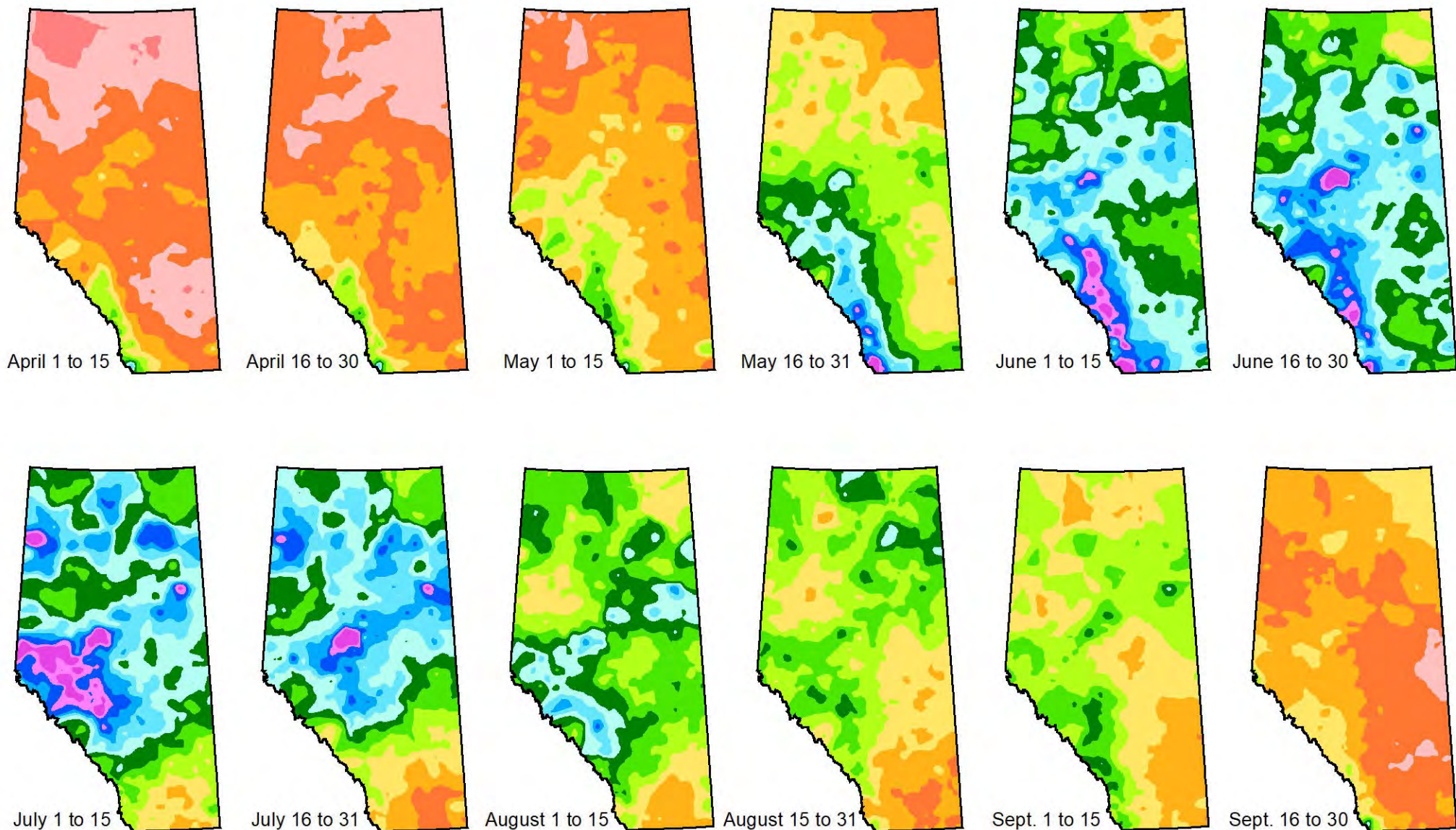
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 very low	once in 12 to 25 years
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 extremely high	once in 25 to 50 years
 wettest	< once in 50-years
 no data	

Near-real-time weather data was assembled and quality controlled by Agriculture and Irrigation. Soil moisture was modeled for spring wheat on medium textured soils using the modified Versatile Soil Moisture Budget V-4.0. The frequency of occurrence was based on model runs using historical weather data from the 1961-2023 period, interpolated to township centres using AbClime-3.6



Compiled by Agriculture and Irrigation, Natural Resource Management Branch
Created on May 30, 2024





Normal Semi-Monthly Growing Season Precipitation Accumulations

1991-2020

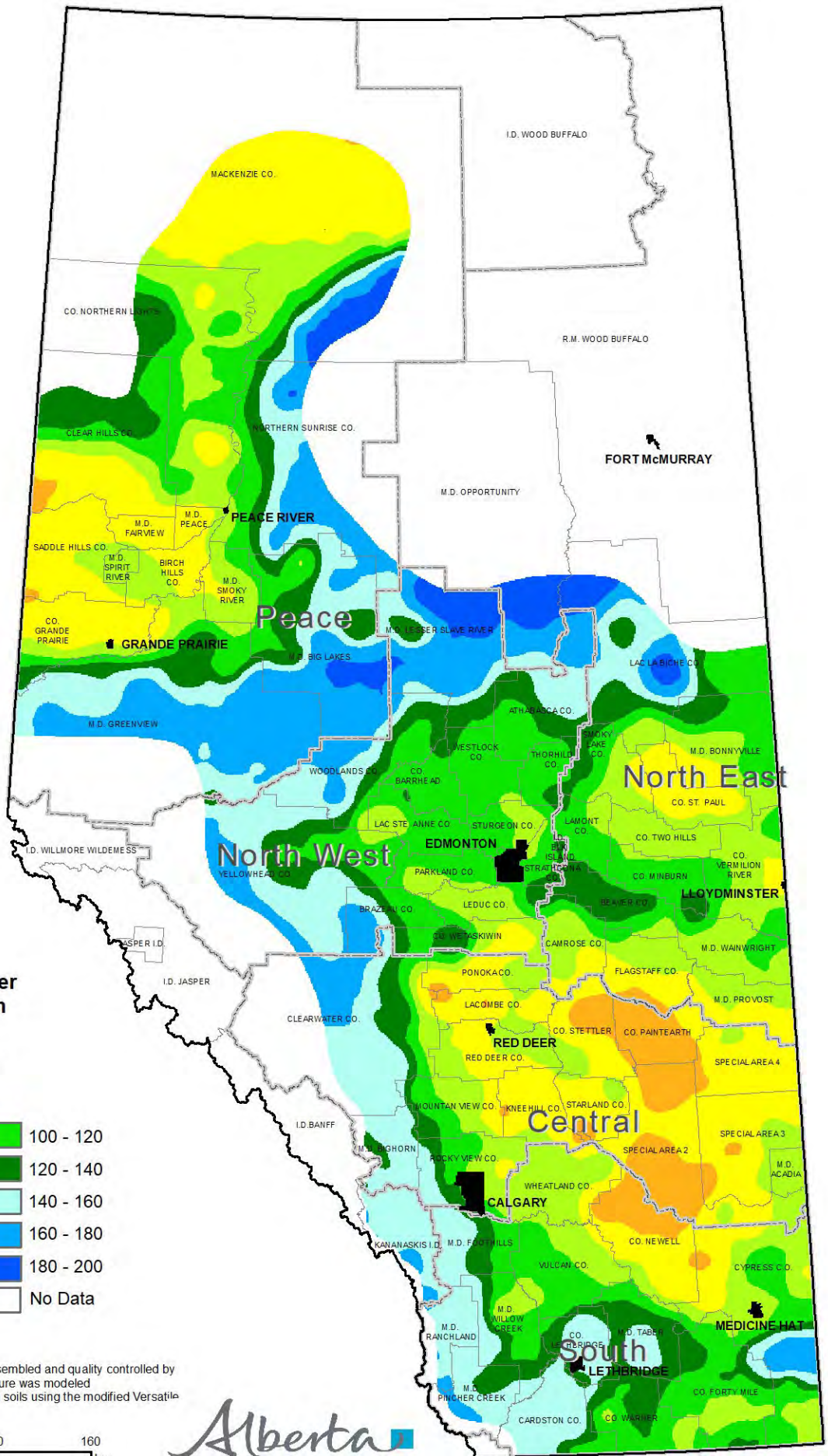
Weather data was assembled and quality controlled by Agriculture Forestry and Rural Economic Development then interpolated to township centres using AbClime-3.6

Compiled by Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Economic Development, Natural Resource Management Branch
Created on July 26, 2023

Precipitation (mm)



Alberta



**Spring Wheat
Soil Moisture as
Plant Available Water
to a Depth of 120 cm**

Estimated as of June 05, 2024

Soil Moisture (mm)

0 - 10	100 - 120
10 - 20	120 - 140
20 - 40	140 - 160
40 - 60	160 - 180
60 - 80	180 - 200
80 - 100	No Data

Near-real-time weather data was assembled and quality controlled by Agriculture and Irrigation. Soil moisture was modeled for spring wheat on medium textured soils using the modified Versatile Soil Moisture Budget V-4.0.



Alberta

Compiled by Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development, Environmental Stewardship Division, Technology and Innovation Branch
Created on June 06, 2024



Faculty of Arts & Science

May 14, 2024

MD of Greenview
PO Box 1079
4806 – 36 Avenue
Valleyview, AB, T0H 3N0



Dear friends in AAAF, counties, municipal districts, improvement districts, and special areas.

I enclose the results of grasshopper species identification for your submitted sweep samples. I had originally intended to do these year by year, but the lab closures and other complications of 2020-2021 pushed things together. We have produced a comprehensive list of what was submitted to me (via Shelley Barkley, others traveling to Lethbridge, or given to me from your freezer samples when I visited the four northern regions in short field trips during 2017-2021.

Your results are shown in the table. I identified over 20,000 grasshoppers for 2015-2019, received from the four northern regions, with additional specimens that I collected. I identified 12,686 from the four northern regions, in 27 species, (plus thousands I collected, as well) but the good news is that only 5 species covered 97% of the 12,686 submitted grasshoppers. Learning to recognize these 5 is quite doable.

Overall, 61% were Bruner's Spur-throat Grasshopper. The next most common was a non-pest, Marsh Meadow Grasshopper, that is often found in roadside grass and pastures. I took photos of major species to help. I also include photos of some important grasshoppers at one day of age, to help with recognition in late May and early June, if there is interest in what is hatching. The information from your submitted specimens is very important in helping to explain timing and the high and low cycles of certain species in your area.

I would be happy to identify samples in the future, if we can discuss this and use some standard methods of sampling. A good way is 25 full 180-degree sweeps with a large (usually 38 cm diameter) net, while walking quickly. For identification, frozen is best, but even wrapped in paper towels is OK. Plastic bags result in grasshopper soup in a hurry.

Other news:

1. Jason Cheng has started an MSc at the University of Lethbridge with research on the history and data of grasshopper numbers in Alberta, including new aspects of GIS analysis, and we will be working on various projects related to weather, vegetation, and diversity.
2. Some species are changing their ranges, and I will let you know if it has an impact in your area.
3. We have a separate project now on grasshoppers and their allies in natural and protected areas, so if you have any information on parks, heritage rangeland, etc., I am interested in hearing about it.
4. Since the late 1990s, from time to time I have tried to convince others that the Lesser Migratory Grasshopper is very rare in northern regions. It still is, but if I see a change, during the few drives I can manage to the zone from Manning to Peace River to Cold Lake, I will let you know.

Sincerely,



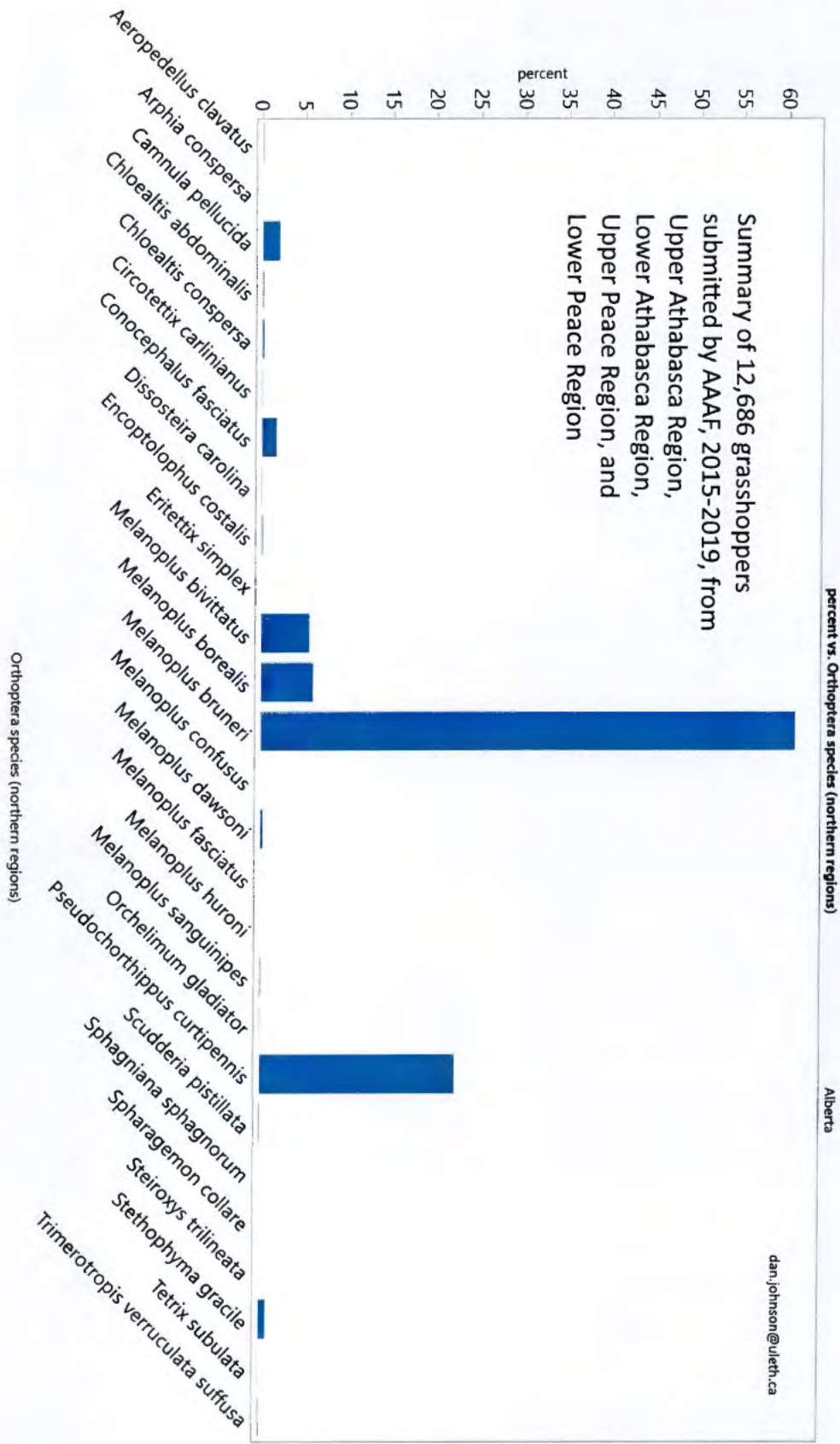
Dan L. Johnson, PhD
Professor (2003-present)
Department of Geography and Environment
University of Lethbridge
4401 University Drive West
Lethbridge, AB, T1K 3M4

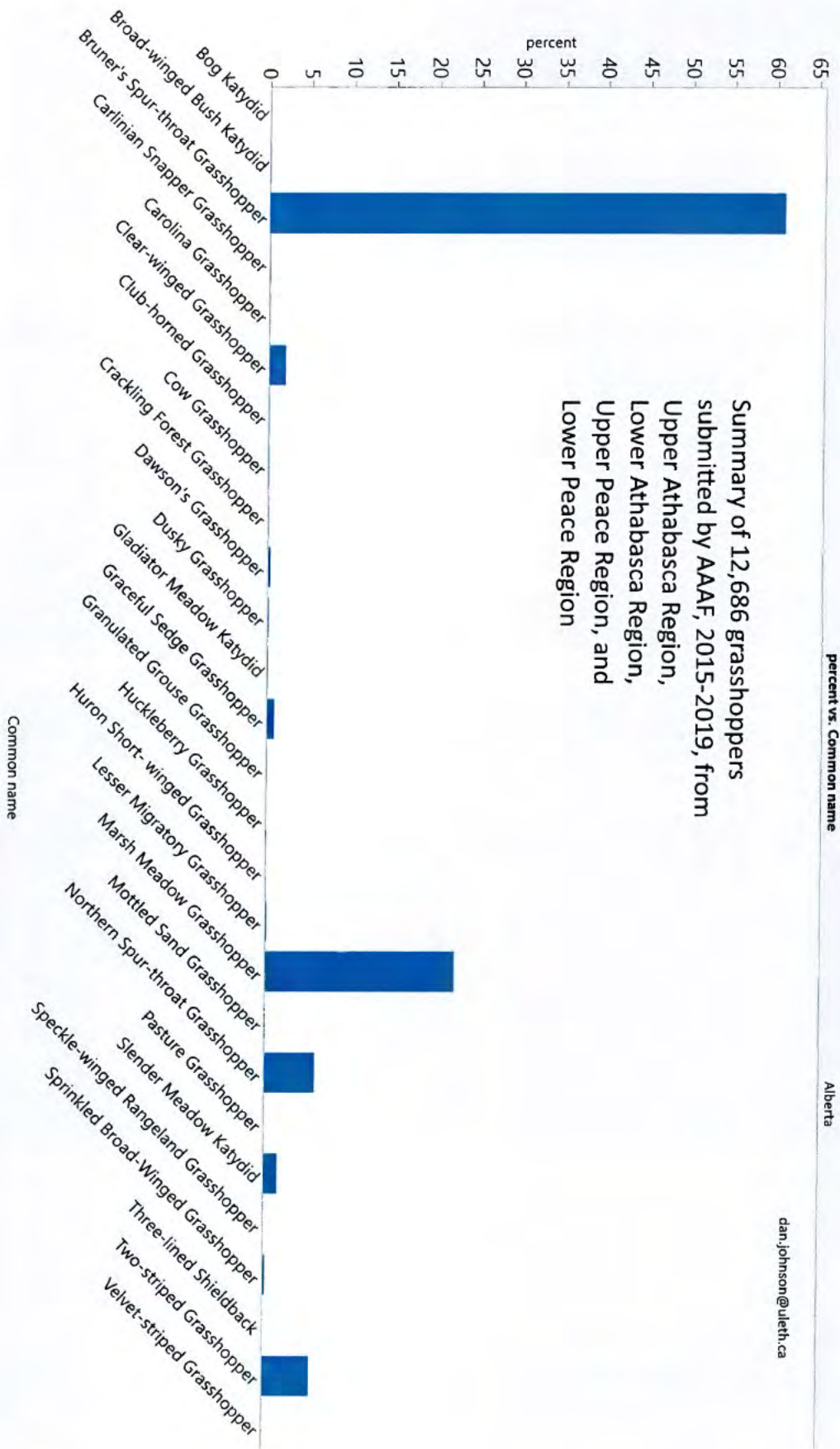
Cell 403 634-7213 dan.johnson@uleth.ca @DanJohnsonAB
www.uleth.ca/~dan.johnson

MD of Greenview, AB.			
Summary of previous identifications of grasshoppers			
MD of Greenview, AB			
2015	<i>Grasshoppers collected by AAAF. Identified by Dan Johnson.</i>		
	Species	n	%
	Cow Grasshopper (<i>Chloealtis abdominalis</i>)	1	0.4
	Two-striped Grasshopper (<i>Melanoplus bivittatus</i>)	11	4.9
	Northern Spur-throat Grasshopper (<i>Melanoplus borealis</i>)	5	2.2
	Bruner's Spur-throat Grasshopper (<i>Melanoplus bruneri</i>)	173	77.6
	Marsh Meadow Grasshopper (<i>Pseudochorthippus curtipennis</i>)	31	13.9
	Graceful Sedge Grasshopper (<i>Stethophyma gracile</i>)	2	0.9
	Total	223	100.0
MD of Greenview, AB			
2017	<i>Grasshoppers collected by AAAF. Identified by Dan Johnson.</i>		
	Species	n	%
	Bruner's Spur-throat Grasshopper (<i>Melanoplus bruneri</i>)	4	100.0
	Total	4	100.0
MD of Greenview, AB			
2018	<i>Grasshoppers collected by AAAF. Identified by Dan Johnson.</i>		
	Species	n	%
	Clear-winged Grasshopper (<i>Camnula pellucida</i>)	2	100.0
	Total	2	100.0
MD of Greenview, AB			
2019	<i>Grasshoppers collected by AAAF. Identified by Dan Johnson.</i>		
	Species	n	%
	Sprinkled Broad-Winged Grasshopper (<i>Chloealtis conspersa</i>)	1	0.3
	Clear-winged Grasshopper (<i>Camnula pellucida</i>)	9	2.4
	Velvet-striped Grasshopper (<i>Eritettix simplex</i>)	2	0.5
	Two-striped Grasshopper (<i>Melanoplus bivittatus</i>)	38	10.1
	Northern Spur-throat Grasshopper (<i>Melanoplus borealis</i>)	12	3.2
	Bruner's Spur-throat Grasshopper (<i>Melanoplus bruneri</i>)	274	72.7
	Lesser Migratory Grasshopper (<i>Melanoplus sanguinipes</i>)	1	0.3
	Marsh Meadow Grasshopper (<i>Pseudochorthippus curtipennis</i>)	35	9.3
	Graceful Sedge Grasshopper (<i>Stethophyma gracile</i>)	5	1.3
	Total	377	100.0

Grasshoppers submitted from northern regions of Alberta by AAAF, 2015-2019

n	percent	Orthoptera species (northern regions)	Common name
8610	62.76	<i>Melanoplus bruneri</i>	Bruner's Spur-throat Grasshopper
2875	20.84	<i>Pseudochorthippus curtipennis</i>	Marsh Meadow Grasshopper
773	5.61	<i>Melanoplus borealis</i>	Northern Spur-throat Grasshopper
749	5.43	<i>Melanoplus bivittatus</i>	Two-striped Grasshopper
273	1.97	<i>Camnula pellucida</i>	Clear-winged Grasshopper
208	1.55	<i>Conocephalus fasciatus</i>	Slender Meadow Katydid
114	0.83	<i>Stethophyma gracile</i>	Graceful Sedge Grasshopper
35	0.26	<i>Melanoplus dawsoni</i>	Dawson's Grasshopper
26	0.19	<i>Chloealtis conspersa</i>	Sprinkled Broad-Winged Grasshopper
14	0.10	<i>Chloealtis abdominalis</i>	Cow Grasshopper
12	0.09	<i>Melanoplus sanguinipes</i>	Lesser Migratory Grasshopper
11	0.08	<i>Encoptolophus costalis</i>	Dusky Grasshopper
9	0.07	<i>Scudderia pistillata</i>	Broad-winged Bush Katydid
5	0.04	<i>Aeropedellus clavatus</i>	Club-horned Grasshopper
5	0.04	<i>Trimerotropis verruculata suffusa</i>	Crackling Forest Grasshopper
5	0.04	<i>Tetrix subulata</i>	Granulated Grouse Grasshopper
2	0.01	<i>Circotettix carlinianus</i>	Carlinian Snapper Grasshopper
2	0.01	<i>Dissosteira carolina</i>	Carolina Grasshopper
2	0.01	<i>Orchelimum gladiator</i>	Gladiator Meadow Katydid
2	0.01	<i>Eritettix simplex</i>	Velvet-striped Grasshopper
1	0.01	<i>Arphia conspersa</i>	Speckle-winged Rangeland Grasshopper
1	0.01	<i>Melanoplus confusus</i>	Pasture Grasshopper
1	0.01	<i>Melanoplus fasciatus</i>	Huckleberry Grasshopper
1	0.01	<i>Melanoplus huroni</i>	Huron Short-winged Grasshopper
1	0.01	<i>Spharagemon collare</i>	Mottled Sand Grasshopper
1	0.01	<i>Sphagniana sphagnum</i>	Bog Katydid
1	0.01	<i>Steiroxys trilineata</i>	Three-lined Shieldback
13739	100.00	Collected by AAAF and Dan Johnson	Identified 2023; dan.johnson@uleth.ca



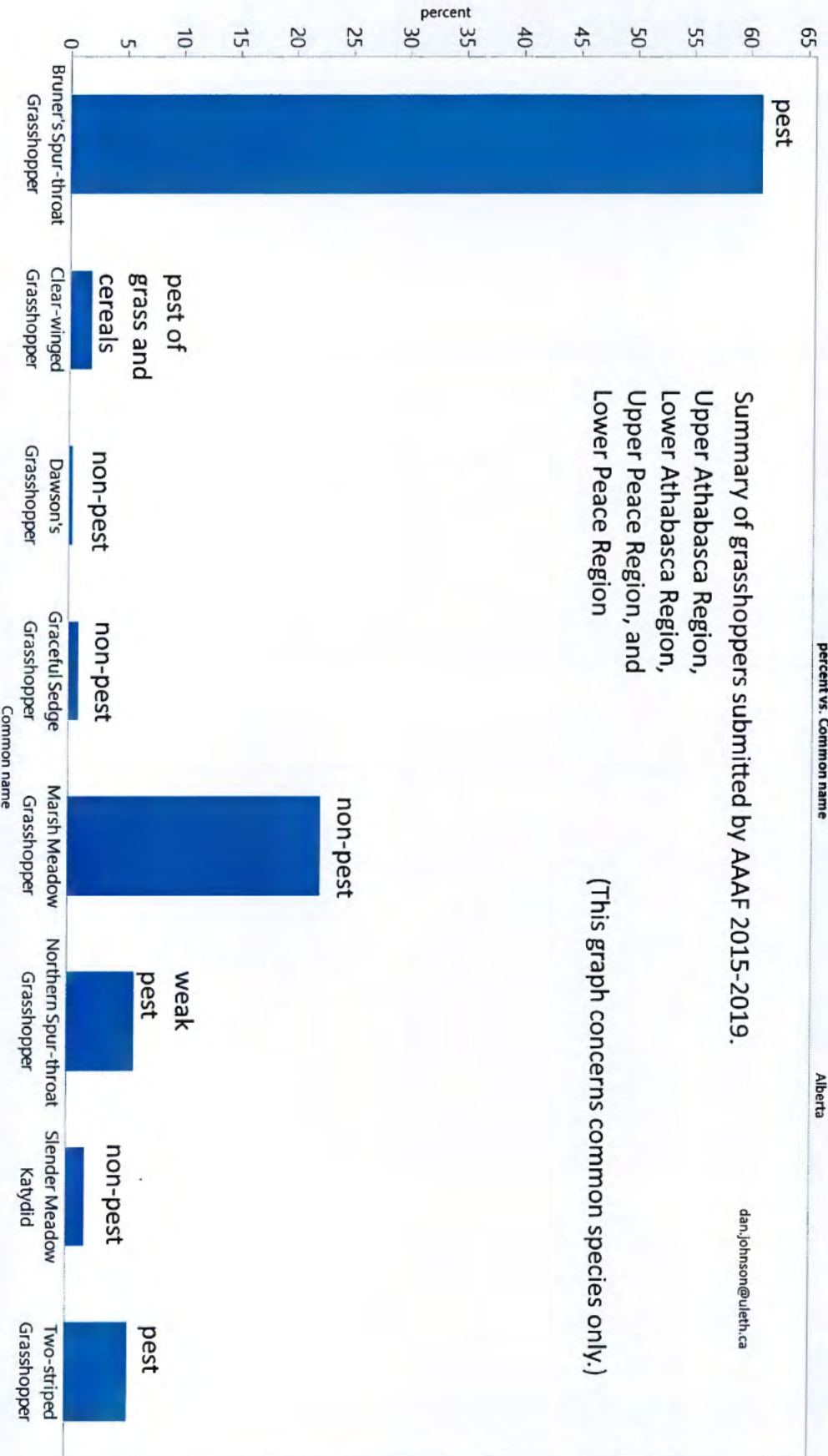


Summary of grasshoppers submitted by AAAF 2015-2019.

dan.johnson@uleth.ca

Upper Athabasca Region,
Lower Athabasca Region,
Upper Peace Region, and
Lower Peace Region

(This graph concerns common species only.)



The appearance of key pest species of grasshoppers, one day old.

dan.johnson@uleth.ca



Clear-winged Grasshopper

Camnula pellucida

Foremost, Alberta, Canada
June 15, 2021. Dan Johnson

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Bruner's Spur-throat Grasshopper

Melanoplus bruneri

Manning, Alberta, Canada

Dan Johnson
March 22, 2022



Lesser Migratory Grasshopper

Melanoplus sanguinipes

Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada

Dan Johnson
March 24, 2022



Two-striped Grasshopper

Melanoplus bivittatus

Carmangay, Alberta, Canada

Dan Johnson
March 25, 2022

The appearance of key pest species of grasshoppers, one day old.

dan.johnson@uleth.ca

Clear-winged Grasshopper



Foremost, Alberta, Canada
June 15, 2021 Dan Johnson

Camnula pellucida

127



Manning, Alberta, Canada

Dan Johnson
March 22, 2022

Bruner's Spur-throat Grasshopper

Melanoplus bruneri

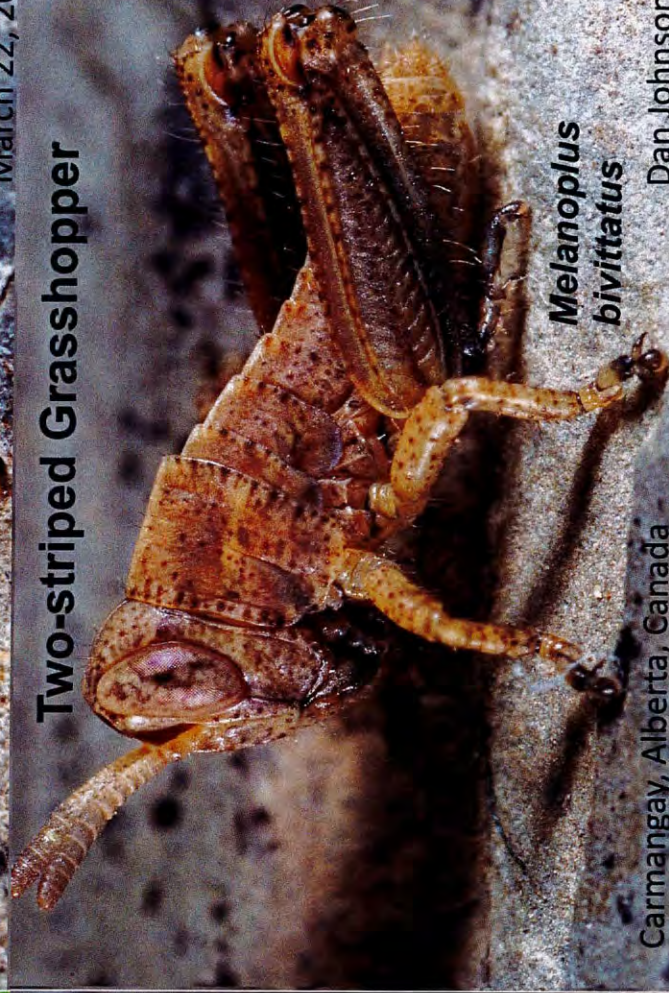
Lesser Migratory Grasshopper



Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada

Dan Johnson
March 24, 2022

Melanoplus sanguinipes



Carmangay, Alberta, Canada

Dan Johnson
March 25, 2022

Two-striped Grasshopper

Melanoplus bivittatus

COMMON GRASSHOPPERS OF NORTH CENTRAL AND NORTHERN ALBERTA



Lesser migratory grasshopper
Melanoplus sanguinipes



Two-striped grasshopper
Melanoplus bivittatus



Striped sedge grasshopper
Stethophyma gracile and *S. lineatum*



Northern grasshopper
Melanoplus borealis



Bruner's spur-throat grasshopper
Melanoplus bruneri



Marsh meadow grasshopper
Pseudochorthippus and *curtipennis*



Clear-winged grasshopper
Camnula pellucida



Huckleberry grasshopper
Melanoplus fasciatus



Broad-winged bush katydid
Scudderia pistillata

PHOTOS AND IDENTIFICATIONS: DAN JOHNSON, 2019

COMMON GRASSHOPPERS OF NORTH CENTRAL AND NORTHERN ALBERTA



Lesser migratory grasshopper
Melanoplus sanguinipes



Two-striped grasshopper
Melanoplus bivittatus



Striped sedge grasshopper
Stethophyma gracile and *S. lineatum*



Northern grasshopper
Melanoplus borealis



Bruner's spur-throat grasshopper
Melanoplus bruneri



Marsh meadow grasshopper
Pseudochorthippus and *curtipennis*



Clear-winged grasshopper
Camnula pellucida



Huckleberry grasshopper
Melanoplus fasciatus



Broad-winged bush katydid
Scudderella pistillata

PHOTOS AND IDENTIFICATIONS: DAN JOHNSON, 2019



Grasshoppers that are not pests but are important for spring bird food.

dan.johnson@uleth.ca

Speckle-winged Rangeland Grasshopper (*Arphia conspersa*)



In some years we have a slightly different mix, but these are the most common spring species.

Northern Green-striped Grasshopper (*Chortophaga viridifasciata*)



Velvet-striped Grasshopper (*Eritettix simplex*)

These three grasshoppers were photographed March 19, 2019, by Dan Johnson.



Grasshoppers that are not pests but are important for spring bird food.

dan.johnson@uleth.ca

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Northern Green-striped Grasshopper (*Chortophaga viridifasciata*)



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The fifth instar of the Two-striped Grasshopper will molt once more. Green and brown forms become a normal green adult.



The stripe of the immature hind leg can be solid or broken in the later immature stages and the adult. There is variation in most years (green, brown, solid, banded).



This fourth instar is about 4 days younger than the fifth, and has a small angular wing bud. It is typically tan, brown, or green.



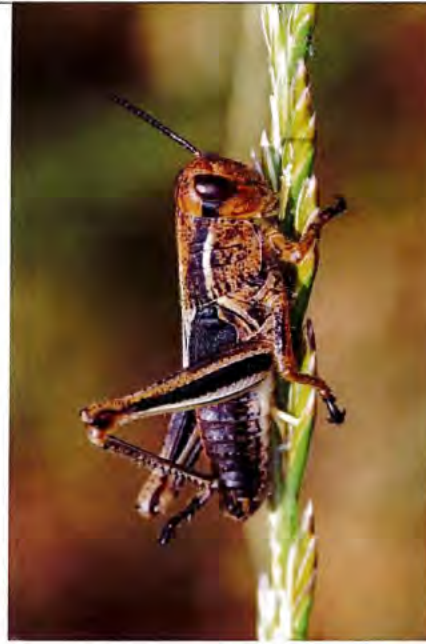
The third instar has a small wing bud. Younger stages are smaller and smooth, often with very light stripes on the back.

Photos and text: Dan Johnson, dan.orthop@gmail.com, dan.johnson@uleth.ca

Hatching begins in late May and continues into June, and can be delayed to mid-June by cool weather. Warm, dry weather during June increases survival and development of immature stages, but there is always a range of instars observed, because some are in positions more suitable to hatch earlier. Warm, dry weather in July and August will increase reproduction. Eggs look like long-grain brown rice.



The fifth instar of the Two-striped Grasshopper will molt once more. Green and brown forms become a normal green adult.



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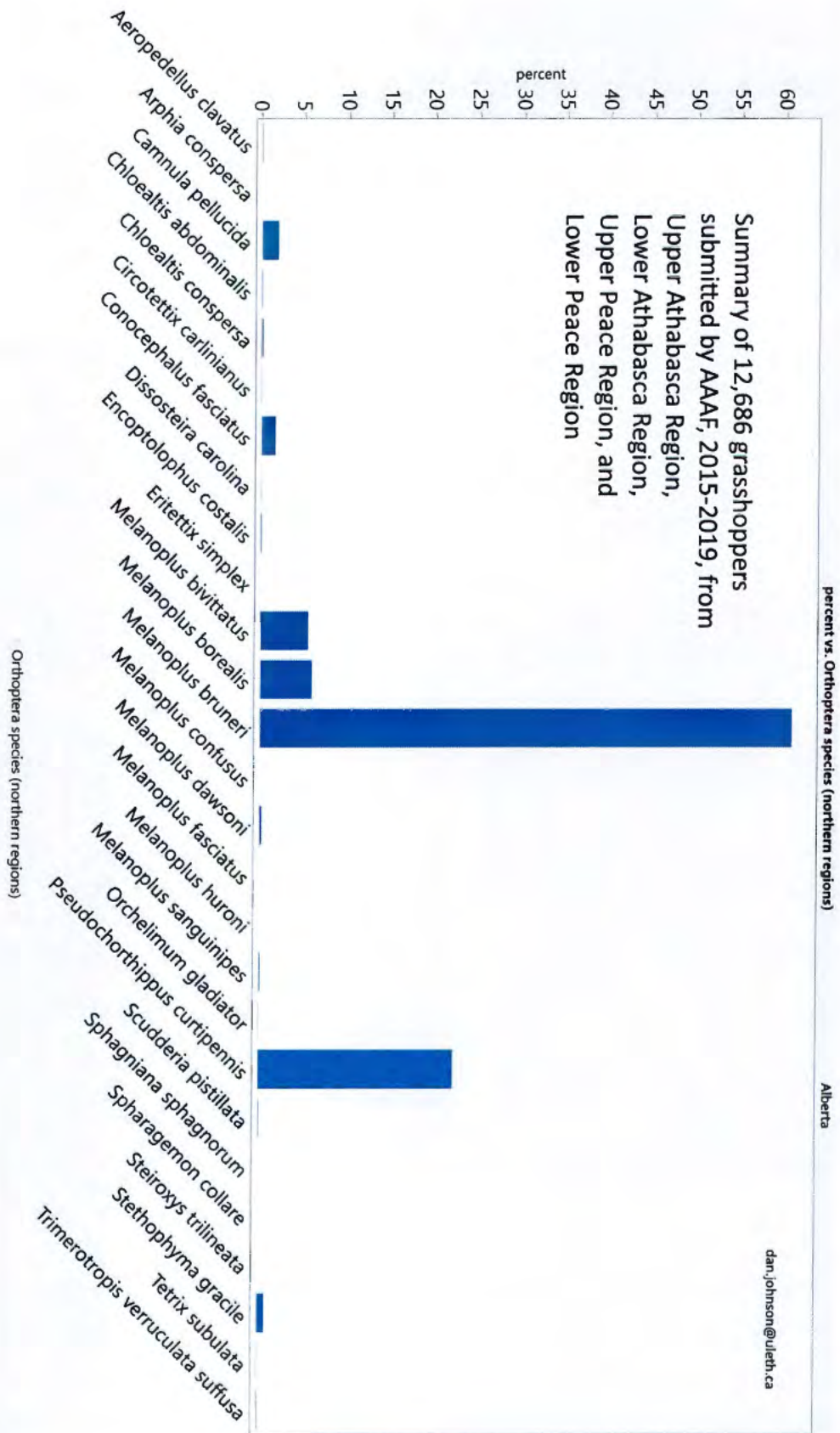
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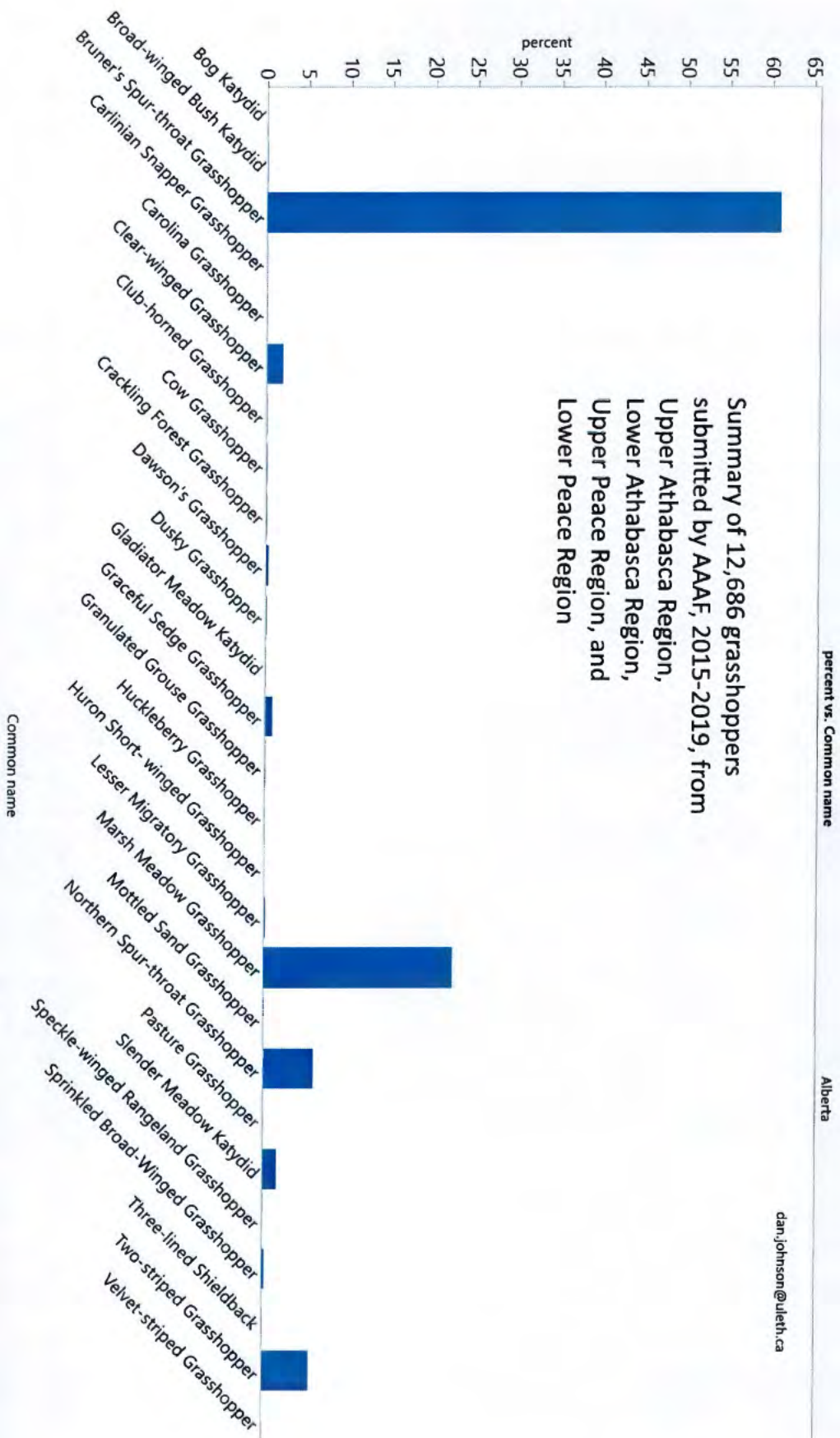


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Photos and text: Dan Johnson, dan.orthop@gmail.com, dan.johnson@uleth.ca

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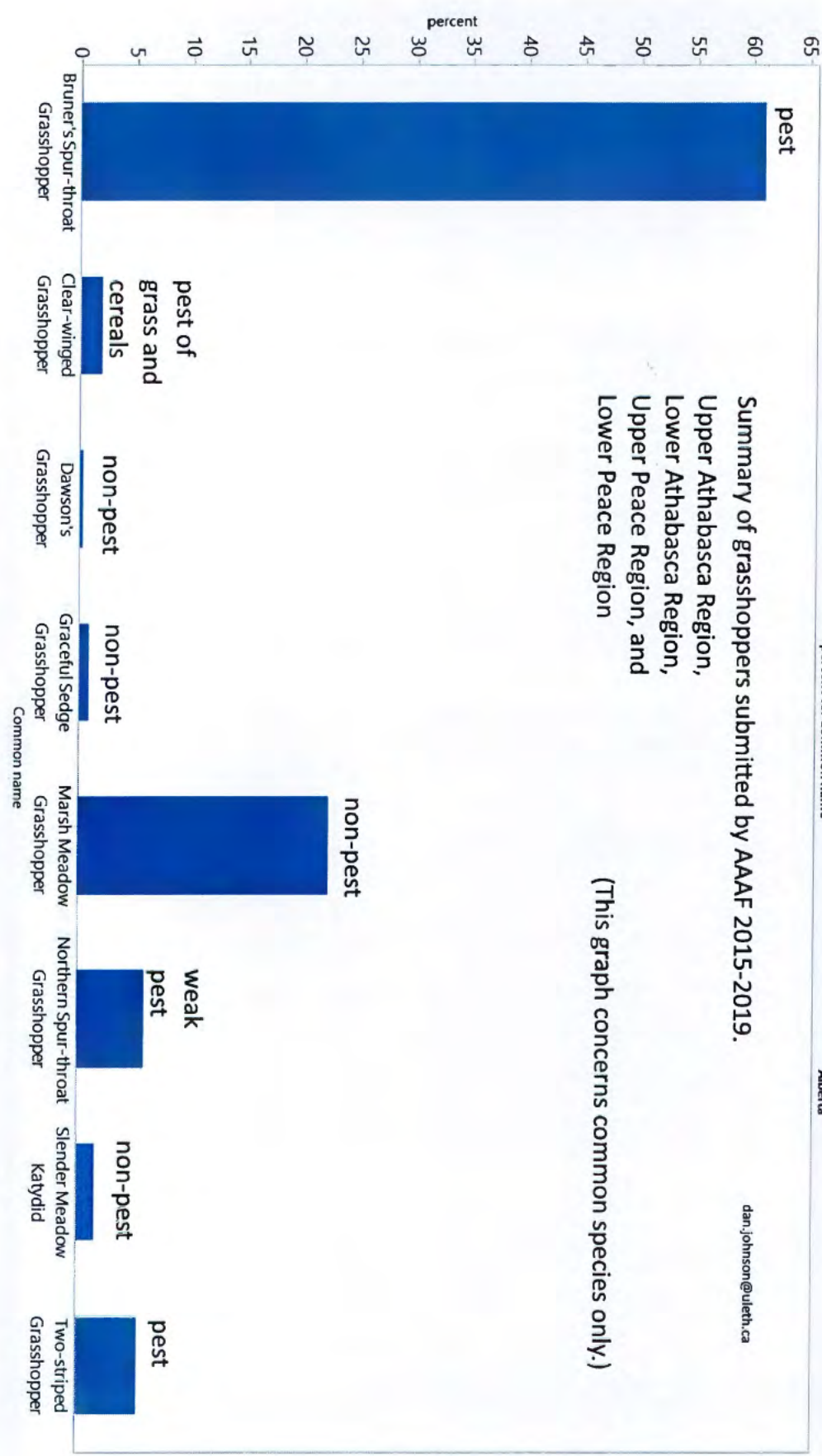


Summary of grasshoppers submitted by AAAF 2015-2019.

dan.johnson@uleth.ca

Upper Athabasca Region,
Lower Athabasca Region,
Upper Peace Region, and
Lower Peace Region

(This graph concerns common species only.)





Lesser migratory grasshopper
Melanoplus sanguinipes



Two-striped grasshopper
Melanoplus bivittatus



Northern grasshopper
Melanoplus borealis



Bruner's spur-throat grasshopper
Melanoplus bruneri



Clear-winged grasshopper
Camnula pellucida



Huckleberry grasshopper
Melanoplus fasciatus

PHOTOS AND IDENTIFICATIONS: DAN JOHNSON, 2019

