

# Agricultural Services 2021 OPS Budget

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## **DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW**

The Agricultural Services Department sets policies for Agricultural producers within the County of Wetaskiwin. We strive for the betterment of agriculture in the County. The department is staffed by:

- Director of Agriculture Services
- ASB Foreman
- Administrative Assistant
- Sustainable Agriculture Coordinator
- Seasonal: 2 Truck Drivers, 6 Weed Inspectors, 3 Mower Operators, Sprayer Operator  
2 Summer Students, Beaver Trapper and 1 Horticulturist

We continue to provide services and programs to the Farming Community within the County of Wetaskiwin and work with various departments providing a variety of duties.

- Disaster/Fire Services Department:
  - install fire ban signs
  - issue stubble burning permits
- Planning and Economic Development Department
  - Review development plans
  - Agricultural Leases of County Property
- Administration building & County Shop:
  - Office Renovations and Office Furniture purchases
- Public Works Department:
  - remove beaver dams from culverts, assist with culvert placements and drainage concerns.
  - Vegetation Management of transfer stations, lagoon sites, build transfer station attendant sheds.
  - Vegetation Management along the shoulder of roads including weeds, brush and reclaiming gravel.

The Core Services of Agricultural Services are:

- Administration – The Agricultural Service Board of the County of Wetaskiwin is responsible for numerous facets of promoting and sustaining agricultural production within the County’s boundaries. Legislation in the form of the Weed Control Act, the Pest Control Act, the Water Act, the Soil Conservation Act, the Agricultural Operations Practices Act and the Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act help the County set policies to ensure that producers are using sound farming practices on their land.
- Producer Awareness – promotes programs relating to agriculture using various communication strategies.
- Vegetation Management – The County of Wetaskiwin is committed to helping producers maximize crop production as well as the prevention of losses through sound agricultural programs.
- Water Management – Agricultural Services attempts to secure funding to complete water management projects where flooding of agricultural land is a concern to producers.
- Pest Management- to promote stewardship during farming production while conducting field surveys to ensure producers are aware of potential pest issues that would affect their production.

**FINANCIAL**

	<b>Budget 2020</b>	<b>Budget 2021</b>	<b>% Variance</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 1,292,587</b>	<b>\$ 1,190,940</b>	
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$ (369,903)</b>	<b>\$ (349,297)</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 922,684</b>	<b>\$ 841,643</b>	<b>-8.8</b>

The overall 8.8% reduction from 2020 reflects a decrease in the Roadside Mowing Program, a decrease in the Beaver Control project due to the use of the personal vehicle by the beaver trapper, an increase in funding for ALUS, and a reduction in ASB provincial grant.

**KEY OBJECTIVES**

This budget represents a status quo with respect to existing levels of service with the exception of the Roadside Mowing Program which was reduced by \$50,000 in the 2020 Strategic Planning Sessions for the 2021 Budget. Key objectives are to run the department as efficiently and effectively as possible given the available resources. The Department is always looking into how methods and systems that can be improved, and the department strives to deliver its services.