



Canadian Agricultural Partnership (CAP)

www.cap.alberta.ca | 310-FARM (3276)

Programs available for primary producers and currently accepting applications are:

- ▶ Efficient Grain Handling
- ▶ Farm Technology – funding list updated March 2022
- ▶ Water
- ▶ Market Assurance

Both Efficient Grain Handling and Farm Technology programs require a current Environmental Farm Plan (EFP).

Producers can work on their EFP while their project is in progress; however, the EFP needs to be complete by their project end date. To be current, an EFP needs to be less than ten years old. Renew or start a new EFP at www.albertaefp.com.

The counties' sustainable agriculture program coordinator can assist you with the EFP process and CAP program applications. Contact the coordinator at **780-387-6182**.



Courtesy of brzphotography.com

Federal On-Farm Climate Action Fund (OFCAF)

Recipient organizations selected to deliver funds across Canada were announced in February 2022.

The fund objective is to support farmers in adopting beneficial management practices that store carbon and reduce greenhouse gases. Direct support to farmers will fall under the following target areas:

- ▶ Cover cropping
- ▶ Nitrogen management
- ▶ Rotational grazing

Each group will administer their own program. Sign up for program updates or newsletters from groups you are

interested in. Organizations delivering programs in Alberta will be:

- ▶ Cover cropping - Results Driven Agriculture Research, ECOCERT Canada
- ▶ Nitrogen management - Canola Council of Canada, Results Driven Agriculture Research, ECOCERT Canada*
- ▶ Rotational grazing - Results Driven Agriculture Research, The Canadian Forage and Grassland Association, ECOCERT Canada*

*ECOCERT Canada relates to organic production



Seed cleaning co-ops in Alberta and your local seed cleaning plant

For more than 70 years, farmer-owned cooperative seed cleaning plants have played a significant role in Alberta's crop industry. This network of producer owned and operated facilities is unique to Western Canada. The provincial government, working with rural municipalities and area farmers, established the seed cleaning plant network.

Initially, the primary objective was to remove weed seeds out of seed lots so farmers could establish cleaner crop stands. Since then, the network of seed cleaning facilities has grown into much more. Many facilities have diversified and expanded their role to farmers and industry and serve the unique needs of their communities.



There are 67 individual farmer-owned seed- and grain-processing co-ops located throughout Alberta and the Peace Region of British Columbia. Forty-six of the sites handle pedigreed seed, such as in the form of a full Registered Seed Establishment — as licensed to CFIA standards — or as a bulk storage facility.

All seed-cleaning facilities that commercially clean seed in Alberta are subject to inspection and licensing under the Alberta *Weed Control Act*. Agricultural fieldmen, employed by rural municipalities, collect and inspect cleaned seed samples throughout the year and plants are inspected annually. Licenses to operate under the Act are

issued based on these inspections. Agricultural fieldmen receive in-service training to complete this process.

Seed cleaning procedure

There are six machines involved in the general stationary cleaning procedure:

1. **Debearder** - polishes, clips oats, clips barley beards, clips hairs and tails off wild oats.
2. **Aspirator** - removes straw, chaff and other foreign material.
3. **Indent** - separates grain by length from short to long, removes wild oats, ergot and weed seeds.
4. **Air and Screen** - seed is run over different screen sizes, along with air, to remove weeds, chaff, and small kernels. This provides a uniform seed size for a more consistent flow of seed when seeding.
5. **Gravity Table** - separates based on density, using air to separate light and foreign materials
6. **Colour Sorter** - optical separation can identify and remove selected rejects by colour.

Other than cleaning, additional seed services provided by cooperative seed cleaning plants are seed treatment and germination or disease testing.

While most seed cleaning plants are managed as not-for-profit co-operatives, they do need to operate as a business. The objective may not be to generate dividends for the shareholders, but to create sufficient revenue for ongoing maintenance and facility improvements.

Local seed cleaning co-operatives

The Warburg Seed Cleaning Co-op Ltd. and the Wetaskiwin Seed and Grain Co-operative Ltd. serve local farmers and receive support from Leduc and Wetaskiwin counties.

Warburg Seed Cleaning Co-op Ltd.

www.warburgseed.com

 Warburgseed

► The Warburg plant is located far from a major centre and strives to provide members with a one-stop shop. Certified graders and operators are onsite with bin storage for 35 pedigreed seed growers. They also provide seed bins for Nutrien Ag Solutions and sell herbicides, fertilizer and feed in mini-bulk totes and bags. Recent upgrades include a 90-foot truck scale, overhead bins and a new colour sorter. This spring, a new office building is in the works.

Wetaskiwin Seed and Grain Cooperative Ltd.

 WetaskiwinSeedandGrain

► The Wetaskiwin plant began in 1949 and has existed in its current location since the early 1970s. Two certified graders and operators are onsite, and the plant distributes seed for Co-op Agro and Nutrien Ag Solutions. It also has storage for independent pedigreed seed growers and has up-to-date sorting and cleaning equipment. When asked about their colour sorter, the plant manager described it as a “fine-tuning machine” that provides a final and more precise level of cleanliness. The plant has a licensed pesticide seed applicator on staff and can offer seed treatment. Northstar lawn seed and black sunflower seeds are also sold at the plant.



Retaining Canada's Grasslands Using Carbon Offset Markets pilot project

Retaining Canada's Grasslands Using Carbon Offset Markets project aims to pilot the carbon offset protocol with a select number of landowners to assess its feasibility and better understand the challenges and opportunities associated with an avoided conversion of grasslands program.

The Canada Grassland Project is already developed, but the pilot project, which is currently ongoing, is testing technical and practical applications with landowners. Nine landowners participated in the first year of the two-year project, which represented 6,165 acres in Alberta.

One of the pilot project's goals is to demonstrate the protocol's usefulness for the Canadian compliance market by testing alignment with the Alberta and Canadian compliance carbon offset systems. The Canadian Grasslands protocol is currently in the voluntary market space.

What is the Canada Grasslands Protocol?

The baseline assumption is that grassland will be converted to annual cropping. Both native and tame grasslands can qualify for the protocol.

What are the basic components to participate?

- ▶ Land must be at risk of conversion. The project is the act of conserving the grassland.
- ▶ Credits are generated for the avoided loss of soil carbon stores.
 - ▶ *Credits are not generated for additional carbon sequestration*

▶ Credits generated for assumed loss of soil carbon if land was cultivated:

- ▶ *option 1 generate credits for 30 years with 130+ year easement term*
- ▶ *option 2 (investigating in second year of pilot): generate fraction of credits for shorter easement terms (20-130 year)*

If the farmer/rancher meets basic eligibility criteria, they must be willing to sign an easement to participate. Monitoring and verification are also part of the process.

Carbon value is determined through several steps with projects likely aggregated. In the first year, pilot projects received 0.5 T carbon dioxide equivalents /acre/year on average and ranged from 0.1 – 1.5 t/acre/year.

More project information, including how to become involved and pilot frequently asked questions, are available on the Canadian Forage and Grassland Association website at www.canadianfga.ca/projects/canada-grassland-protocol



Winter webinars

Nutrient management series

A three-part series hosted by Lethbridge County and partners

In winter 2022, Lethbridge County and partners hosted a three-part webinar series on nutrient management. You can view the three-part series online at www.lethcounty.ca/p/nutrient-management.

Day one: Trevor Wallace, Alberta Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Economic Development - "Creating a Nutrient Management Plan" and Christina Seidel, Recycling Council of Alberta - "On-Farm Composting."

Day two: Edith Olson, Lethbridge College - "Soil Salinity" and Steven Tannas, Tannas Conservation Services Ltd. - "Nutrient Loads in Feedlot and Storm Ponds, and the use of Floating Islands."

Day three: Trevor Wallace, Alberta Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Economic Development - "Regulations of Spreading and Storing Manure" and Rob Lavoie, Air Terra - "Use of Biochar on Feedlots."

Kim's corner: resilience

The last few years have tested our collective resilience. Oxford's English dictionary defines resilience as *the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties; toughness*.

Farming requires an inherent level of resilience. Many factors that directly affect operations and profitability, like weather and input costs, largely remain out of a farmer's control. Which leads us to Merriam-Webster's definition of adaptation: *the act or process of adapting, adaptation to changing circumstances*.

Farming requires resilience and adaptation now more than ever. Fighting to maintain the status quo takes energy and resources away from the process of adopting and adapting and makes us less resilient. John C Maxwell authored the following quote: "Change is inevitable, but growth is optional."

West Central Forage Association hosted an adaptive grazing webinar series this spring. Blain Hjertaas was one of the speakers and his bio caught my attention: "I have 45 years of farming experience. The first 25 were the high-tech way and the last 20 with a regenerative approach. The regenerative approach is much easier, more enjoyable and more profitable."

Input costs are driving some to consider different approaches like poly-cropping or cover crops, which work very well for operations that include livestock. Are you familiar with Fertilizer Canada's 4R Nutrient Stewardship program (Right Source @ the Right Rate, Right Time, and Right Place®)? Incorporating nutrient stewardship practices increases economic performance for growers while reducing input costs per unit of crop yield produced. Learn more at fertilizercanada.ca/stewardship.

There are grants available to help farmers adopt new practices and equipment, some with the added bonus of expertise to help with implementation. Farming has changed immensely in our lifetime, prepare to ride the next wave of change and position your farm for the future.

Stay connected

Leduc County

Sign up for Ag Matters, Leduc County's monthly agricultural e-newsletter. Subscribe at www.leduc-county.com/agriculture.

County of Wetaskiwin

Do you want to receive email/text message updates directly to your phone from the County of Wetaskiwin about agricultural services including mowing, spraying, the ALUS program, weeds, pest control and so much more?

To sign up, visit www.county.wetaskiwin.ab.ca/list, enter your email address, scroll down to News Flashes and select the letter(email) or phone(text) icon next to Agricultural to subscribe. For assistance, contact **780-361-6220**.

Looking for more?

If you have any questions or wish to bring a matter to the attention of your Agricultural Service Board, please contact:

- ▶ County of Wetaskiwin No. 10 Agricultural Services: 780-361-6226 or visit www.county.wetaskiwin.ab.ca
- ▶ Leduc County Agricultural Services: 780-955-4593 or visit www.leduc-county.com

Twine recycling

In Alberta, a pilot, 'Alberta Ag Plastic. Recycle it!' is underway to give farmers the option to take baler twine to one of dozens of collection centres throughout the province, giving old twine a new life.

How to Prepare Twine for Recycling

The pilot program enables twine recycling by offering large, free, twine collection bags. The next three steps are straightforward:

1. Shake – Remove as much debris, snow or ice as possible. Excessive organics and other materials (such as net wrap) mixed with the twine will cause it to be rejected or result in the material being sent to the landfill. Recycling processors wash and shred the plastic, so they need it as clean as possible.

2. Bag – Place loose twine in a clear collection bag. Bags are available at no cost to farmers and can be obtained from pilot collection sites and select County/MD offices. If using your own clear bag, poke holes in the bottom to drain moisture. With any bag, once full, secure it closed with twine or a zip tie.

3. Return – Please contact your local pilot collection site prior to dropping off material if unloading assistance is required and if you are unsure if you have prepared it properly.

Learn more online at cleanfarms.ca/alberta-ag-plastic-recycle-it-program.

