



## Agricultural Service Board

### Agenda

Council Chamber, County Centre, Nisku, AB

**Monday, September 8, 2025**

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1. **Order – 10:00 a.m.**
  2. **Adoption of agenda**
  3. **Adoption of previous minutes**  
- June 9, 2025 Agricultural Service Board meeting ✓
  4. **Public presentations**  
No presentations scheduled
  5. **Department reports and recommendations**

a) Action items progress report	✓	A. Van Beers
b) Agricultural Services department activity report	✓	Ag Svs staff
c) Local Food program – five year summary	✓	A. Van Beers
d) Agricultural Plastic waster management survey	✓	N. Berg
e) Precipitation and soil moisture – verbal update	✓	A. Van Beers
f) Harvest update – verbal	✓	R. Kushinski
g) Agricultural Service Board Northwest Regional Conference	✓	A. Van Beers
  6. **Information items**

a) Livestock Deferral Regions	✓	A. Van Beers
b) Agricultural Disaster	✓	A. Van Beers
c) AgKnow	✓	A. Van Beers
d) Gopher (Richardson Ground Squirrel)	✓	A. Van Beers
e) On-Farm Slaughter Sales	✓	A. Van Beers
f) Cleanfarms Collection Event	✓	N. Berg
g) CAFLA-Blade Magazine	✓	K. Barkwell
  7. **Next meeting date – Monday, November 10, 2025**
  8. **Adjournment**

✓ Attachment provided



## Agricultural Service Board

### Minutes

*Council Chamber, Leduc County Centre, Nisku, AB*

*Monday, June 9, 2025*

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#### Order and roll call

The meeting was called to order at 10:01 a.m. on Monday, June 9, 2025 by Glenn Belozar as chair and board members Kelly-Lynn Lewis, Tanni Doblanko, Ray Scobie, Larry Wanchuk, and public members-at-large Debbie Hofstra and Russell Kushinski present.

Board members Dal Viridi and Rick Smith were absent with regrets.

#### Other attendees

- Garrett Broadbent, Director – Road Operations and Agricultural Services
- Aaron Van Beers, Manager – Agricultural Services
- Nathanael Berg, Coordinator – Agricultural Services
- Sharon Faye, Coordinator – Local Food
- Kim Barkwell, Coordinator – Sustainable Agriculture
- Nicole Fuhsel, Administrative Assistant – Agricultural Services
- Dillis Pelletier – Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation (AGI)
- Kerriane Koehler-Munro – Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation (AGI)
- Trevor Wallace – Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation (AGI)

#### Agenda adoption

**009-2025** Board member Wanchuk – that the agenda for the Monday, June 9, 2025 Agricultural Service Board meeting be adopted as circulated, with the addition of 5. g) Non-Potable Water Point update, verbal report and 5. h) Town Hall, verbal report.

Carried Unanimously

#### Previous minutes – *March 24, 2025*

**010-2025** Board member Doblanko – that the minutes for the March 24, 2025 Agricultural Service Board meeting be adopted as circulated.

Carried Unanimously

Member Ray Scobie entered Chambers at 10:03

#### Public Presentation – *Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation (AGI)*

- AGI does a field visit rotating through all municipalities on a 5 year cycle.
- Required by the Auditor General to do these visits.
- ASB's are 80 years old; ASB's are unique to Alberta, and are nowhere else in North America
- Purpose of visit is to validate how the grant money is spent, as well as build the relationship with the ASB Boards.
- The visits allow AGI to share successes and suggestions of other ASBs, as well as give recommendations and requirements for our improvement.
- The visit is to check if there is a clear pathway from the ASB (advice, recommendations) to Council. For example, are recommendations in our ASB minutes and Council's minutes? It protects the ASB and the County.
- AGI will provide feedback after the field visit with possible enhancements or practices that potentially need to be changed.

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- Question to AGI: This field visit is based on the agreement that was already in place. A new agreement is going to be coming. Will there be changes to the format based on the new agreement?
    - The format of the report is going to change, but the checklist and requirements will be still similar. They will be more comparable to the application moving forward so that the whole process is better understood by all parties.
  - Question to AGI: Will there be an increase in funding?
    - There is still room for discussion on future ASB funding increases. Budgets are already set for this year but the request for increased funding can be addressed in future years.

**011-2025** Board member Lewis – that the Agricultural Service Board accept the Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation presentation as information.

Carried Unanimously

**Action items progress report**

**012-2025** Board member Kushinski – that the Agricultural Service Board accept the action items progress report as information.

Carried Unanimously

**Agricultural Services department activity report**

**013-2025** Board member Doblanko – that the Agricultural Service Board accept the Agricultural Services department activity report for the March-May 2025 reporting period as information.

Carried Unanimously

**Poultry processing – verbal report, Nathanael Berg**

- History on this topic is the Pigeon Lake plant has shut down, and Leduc County was asked for help to see if crates could be added to the rental program.
- Crate rentals are not recommended for sanitation and safety reasons (e.g. Avian flu).
- The Warburg colony and Pine Haven colony are not able to assist with those needing services.
- There will be an auction for the Pigeon Lake processors inventory.
- Trevor Wallace will reach out the appropriate provincial inspector to see if they can come to a future ASB meeting and explain why the plant was shut down.

**014-2025** Board member Scobie – that the Agricultural Service Board accept the verbal Poultry processing report as information.

Carried Unanimously

**ASB Resolution response grading**

**015-2025** That the Agricultural Service Board accept the June 9, 2025, report with reference to the 2025 Provincial Agricultural Service Board resolution grading responses as information and further, direct administration to submit a response which agrees with Agricultural Service Board Provincial Committee response grading.

Carried Unanimously

**Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI)**

**016-2025** Board member Lewis – that the Agricultural Service Board accept the June 9, 2025, report regarding Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza as information.

Carried Unanimously

**City of Edmonton Mosquito Management Program**

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**017-2025** Board member Doblanko – that the Agricultural Service Board direct administration to respond to the City of Edmonton, granting permission to conduct their 2025 mosquito monitoring and control program activities on Leduc County owned, operated, or leased lands utilizing products containing *Bacillus thuringiensis israelensis (Bti)* only within Sections 4,5,6,8, and 9-51-24-W4.

Carried Unanimously

**Non-Potable Water Point – verbal report, Aaron Van Beers**

- For the last couple of years, this has been an open area for residents in the area for basic water requirements (gardening, etc.); not to be used for large usage requirements (spraying).
- Overall it has been working quite well, except for a bit of line repairs in winter.
- In the first weekend in May, there was excessive usage, with 95 individual usages in 2 days.
- Administration received calls the site was down. Administration inspected and it seemed fine.
- Administration again received calls, and an electrician was called in. It was discovered the cistern was dry.
- Since the beginning of May, the water is below the intake.
- The system has been shut down since then, and is continuing to be monitored for when and if the intake comes back up.
- If it comes back up, options such as limited usage, increased cisterns, etc. might need to be considered. The water monitoring company will be asked to check the system and give recommendations.
- Most users are doing well with the access, though there are definitely some that are accessing it much more than the 1000 litre allowance.

**018-2025** Board member Hofstra – that the Agricultural Service Board accept the Non-Potable Water Point report as information.

Carried Unanimously

**Town Hall with Assistant Deputy Minister John Conrad – verbal report, Nathanael Berg**

- The vet school in Calgary has gone from 55 to 100 seats available.
- Abandon well site weed notices go back on the land owner. The province is working on the notices going back to the companies instead.
- Wild boar updates: trappers are getting more sounders; more training being provided.
- Solar farms: a document is being created indicating that solar farms will not be allowed on class 1 and 2 soils. For areas without class 1 or 2 soils, there is discussion on how to still preserve the best soil areas.

**019-2025** Board member Kushinski – that the Agricultural Service Board accept the Town Hall with Assistant Deputy Minister John Conrad verbal report as information.

Carried Unanimously

**Information items**

**020-2025** Board member Wanchuk – that the Agricultural Service Board accept the following correspondence as information:

- a) AgKnow-Cypress County
- b) Bill C-293-Parkland County

Carried Unanimously



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**Adjournment**

**021-2025** Board member Scobie – that the Agricultural Service Board meeting be adjourned.

Carried Unanimously

The Agricultural Service Board meeting adjourned at 11:47 a.m.

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*Agricultural Service Board Chair*

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*Manager - Agricultural Services*

Date	Item	Follow Up	Assigned	Status	Recall
Mar 11/24	<b>Out of recommendation at the March 11, 2024 ASB meeting 009-2024</b> – that the Agricultural Service Board accept the report, and direct Administration to develop a stand alone wild boar by-law, and bring to the Agricultural Services Board for review by the end of quarter three 2024.	Draft Wild Boar Bylaw has been sent to Legislative Services for review	NB, AVB	Ongoing	
Jun 9/25	<b>Out of recommendation at the June 9, 2025 ASB meeting 015-2025</b> – that the Agricultural Service Board accept the June 9, 2025, report with reference to the 2025 Provincial Agricultural Service Board resolution grading responses as information and further, direct administration to submit a response which agrees with Agricultural Service Board Provincial Committee response grading.	Draft and send response to Provincial Agricultural Service Board	AVB	Completed June 17, 2025	



## Agricultural Services Activity Report

### Reporting Period: June-August 2025

#### PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Highlights
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Five seasonal staff have completed their employment and are returning to school. The remaining seven staff have been extended for the month of September to wrap up seasonal programs using available budget.</li> <li>Work is progressing on preparing the new Pest Control Officer vehicle for use. The welder/fabricator is building a new deck for the unit.</li> </ul>

#### CROP PESTS

- Surveying for Bertha armyworm was conducted at three sites again this year. Numbers remained below the threshold outlined by Alberta Agriculture & Irrigation (AGI).
- Grasshopper surveys were also conducted for Alberta Agriculture & Irrigation. One quarter per township was surveyed for grasshoppers and the numbers found were recorded online for AGI. This survey is used to forecast pest populations and damage risk for the following year. The numbers of grasshoppers found in the survey are higher than what was found in any of the past five years, although still below the threshold provided.
- As of August 29, 2025, 589 canola fields have been inspected for clubroot. Of the fields inspected, 84 have been confirmed positive for the presence of clubroot. Only one has a Disease Severity Index greater than 20 (six have a DSI between 10 and 20).

#### LOCAL FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL INNOVATION

##### Creating Awareness/ Promotion of Local Food-Local Ag

- Leduc County Days** (June 19 and August 14) – Coordinated local producers. Twelve producers participated in one or more ways: as vendors, providing items for the gift baskets, or ingredients for the meal (lettuce, cucumbers, tomatoes, and buns). Worked with staff to prepare additional signage that showcased local producers. Sunnybrook had over 280 people attend and New Sarepta had over 500 people attend.
- Discover Leduc Region (DLR)**
  - Collaborated with The Chamber to review the existing list of local food/ag businesses. Reached out to businesses for updates and invited additional businesses to sign up.
  - Visited the Leduc, Devon, Calmar, and Beaumont Famers' Markets
  - DLR promotion during the growing season – Worked with Communications and The Chamber to promote Discover Leduc Region on social media, over the growing season (spring-to-fall)
- Directory: The Alberta Government** – Sent a request to Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation to add the Discover Leduc Region (DLR) to their list of Alberta producers and processors “to find local products.” The DLR listing is now included under the Capital Region. [Alberta food directories | Alberta.ca](https://alberta.ca/alberta-food-directories/)
- Summary of Local Food Initiative** – Prepared an overview of the Local Food & Ag Innovation program, which includes past activities, past partnerships, and potential opportunities.

# Agricultural Services Activity Report

## Reporting Period: June-August 2025

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### Building Connections and Networking

- **Strathcona County – Connect for Food project** – Met with Strathcona County and team to plan for their fall summit in 2025.
- **Alberta Farm Fresh Producers Association (AFFPA)** – Advisor to the group, attending meetings and connecting them to resources.
- **Networking with Warburg committee** – Met with members who previously hosted tours. Explored future tour ideas related to local food and agriculture businesses in the area; provided them with funding options; and connected them with the Business and Entrepreneur Centre.
- **Producer Connections meeting – Leduc Farm Friends and Food Artisans of Camrose County (FACC)** – There is a growing interest amongst Leduc producers and FACC to meeting and sharing ideas. Coordinated a networking meeting between the two groups. Over 20 people planned to attend; final attendance was 17, with 13 from Leduc County. Many more were interested but could not make it. The gathering was held at a local farm within Leduc County.

### Workshops and Webinars

- **Farming Forward** – will explore co-hosting another livestock series with them in 2026.
- **“Create a No-Till Garden”** – collaborating with Sustainable Agriculture Coordinator Kim Barkwell to host the workshop on Saturday, September 27. The workshop will include a presentation and hands-on field component to transition a garden into a no-till garden. Reached out to local producers to arrange for a garden location.
- **Dig into Horticulture** – Met with the team from Parkland County, Sturgeon County, and Woodlands County to plan for the fall series, planned for November 26 and December 3.
  - Series: **New Management Recommendations** for Saskatoon berry, haskap, raspberry, sour cherry, and strawberry (a two-part series)
    - Session 1: **Orchard renovation and Pruning** - Saskatoon berry, haskap, raspberry, and sour cherry”
    - Session 2: **Strawberry High Tunnel Production**

## **SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE PROGRAM**

### Environmental Farm Plan (EFP)

- One to one email, telephone and in-person producer support.
- Six EFPs reviewed.

### Increase producer awareness and implementation of beneficial management practices. Promote agriculture to the public.

- June 2 – participated in Inside Education’s Cultivate Youth Summit Advisory meeting. Cultivate Youth Leadership Summit is open to Grade 9-12 students across the province and focused on what sustainable agriculture looks like in Alberta. [www.cultiv8summit.ca](http://www.cultiv8summit.ca)
- June 9 – Classroom Agriculture Program – Presentation to Grade 4, Millet school.

# Agricultural Services Activity Report

## Reporting Period: June-August 2025

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- June 10 – Across the Field: Strategies for Pasture Management via Grazing, Wetaskiwin Agricultural Society and McGladrie farm. Partnered with Central Alberta Forage and Livestock Association (CAFLA, formerly Grey Wooded Forage Association). Provided ALUS presentation and toured ALUS and On Farm Climate Action Fund projects. Thirty-six registrations; 31 attended (21 farmers and 10 industry/staff/presenters).
- ASB News and Views Fall edition – Research and planning for article creation.
- Planning for No-Till Gardening workshop and demonstration – September 27. Working with Leduc County Local Food Coordinator Sharon Faye. Leduc County project.
- August 14 – Table at Leduc County Days, New Sarepta
- August 20 – Table at County of Wetaskiwin's Buck Lake open house

### **ALUS Wetaskiwin-Leduc**

- July 16 ALUS PAC meeting preparation.
- Site visits for new projects, project renewals, project establishment and in-house monitoring.
- Prepare contract agreements and monitoring reports.
- Pigeon Lake Watershed outreach mailout.
- Launched ALUS participant photo contest.
- Planning for ALUS Wetaskiwin-Leduc 10<sup>th</sup> season celebration, November 15, Glen Park Hall.
  - Nate the Great performing
- ALUS Wetaskiwin-Leduc featured four weeks on digital billboard north of Hwy 616 and Hwy 2 junction through Joint Economic Development Initiative (JEDI) at no charge. See item 5. b) i)
- Interim reporting as required for the Alberta Conservation Association Conservation, Community and Education Grant.
- RALP PAL duties:
  - Answer program calls and record in database.

### **Funding opportunities for adoption of beneficial management practices**

Provided in-person application assistance and answered inquiries through phone and email on some of the following programs:

- Alberta VBP+ Incentive Program <https://abpdaily.com/alberta-vbpplus-incentive/>
- Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership (SCAP) <https://www.alberta.ca/sustainable-cap-programs>
  - Water – open to applications. Supports new wells, dugouts, decommissioning old wells and more.
  - On-Farm Value-Added Program – opened to applications May 15 and will receive applications until funding has been allocated. Stream A is for producers – supports projects which add value past harvest or slaughter.
  - On Farm Efficiency program – application intake opened April 1, and program fully subscribed by April 15. Slated to reopen April 2026.

# Agricultural Services Activity Report

## Reporting Period: June-August 2025

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- Resilient Agricultural Landscape Program (RALP) – intake began February 3 and fully subscribed February 25. This was the final intake.
- On Farm Climate Action Fund (OFCAF)
  - Results Driven Agriculture Research (RDAR) – **Was temporarily closed in July and reopened to applications on August 1.** Nitrogen management, rotational grazing, and cover crop practices. <https://rdar.ca/funding-opportunities/ofcaf>
  - Canadian Forage and Grassland Association – project intake was April 1-30. **Applications for developing a rotational grazing plan with a mentor will be accepted all year.** Funding for rotational grazing and pasture improvement. <https://www.canadianfga.ca/en/projects/farm-climate-action-fund/>

### VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

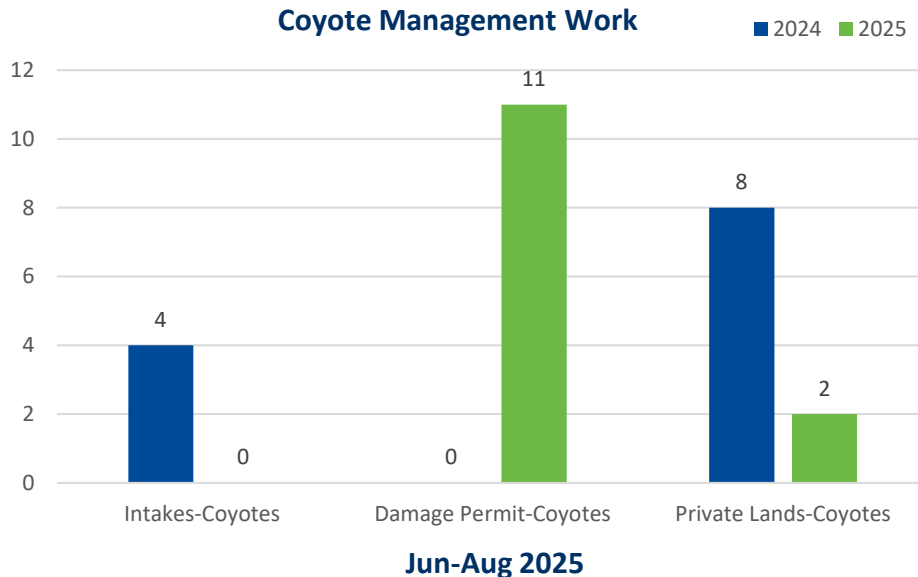
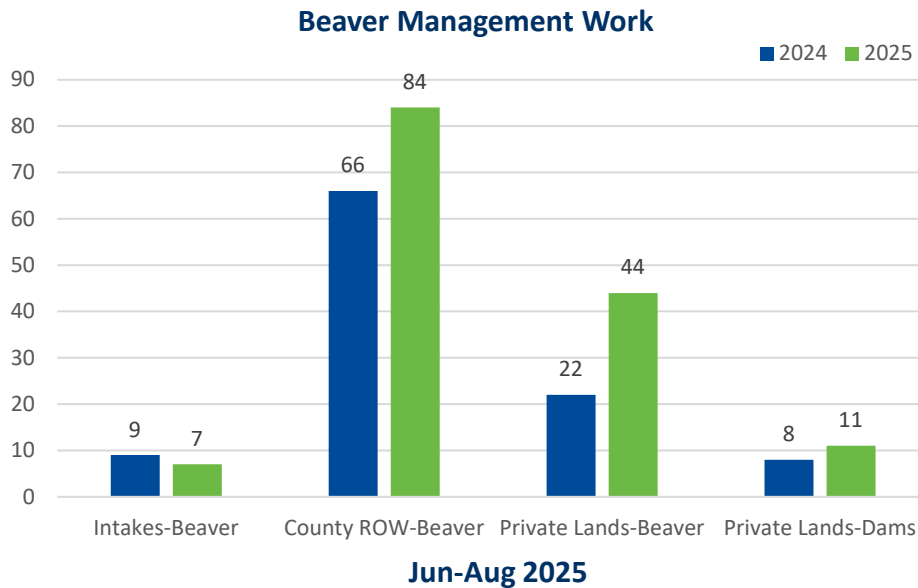
- Mowing – A second pass on all County paved roads is in progress. Identified sightline concerns along roads and intersections will be addressed as the mower enters each area.
- Spraying – Second pass of spot spraying is over halfway complete. Yellow toadflax and leafy spurge spots identified in previous years are having a follow up spray. Areas mulched by Road Operations are being sprayed to avoid re-growth.
- Weed Inspections – Property inspections continue to occur. Weed inspectors are wrapping up inspections and identifying issues that will require follow-up early in the spring of 2026 to achieve weed control. As of August 27, 2025, there have been 2,166 individual weed inspection reports for properties completed.
- Results of all vegetation management programs will be presented at the November Agricultural Service Board meeting.

# Agricultural Services Activity Report

## Reporting Period: June-August 2025

### VERTEBRATE PEST CONTROL

In addition to beaver and coyote control, the Pest Control Officer also removed 2 foxes and 12 muskrats.



### WELDER/FABRICATOR/HANDYMAN

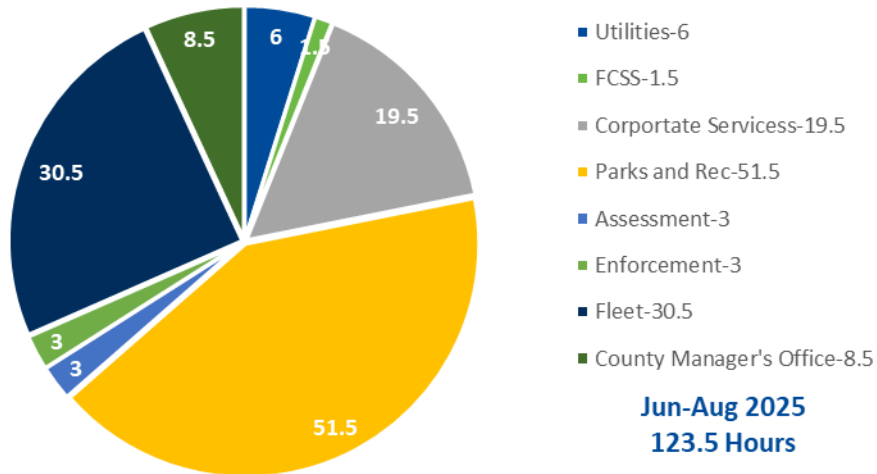
In addition to the usual activities performed in support of the Agricultural Services department for welding repairs, fabrication, and the modification and maintenance of Agricultural Services equipment and vehicles, the following support is provided through a work request process for other Leduc County departments and facilities:

# Agricultural Services Activity Report

## Reporting Period: June-August 2025

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### Handyman Work Requests









## Recommendation to Agricultural Service Board *Public*

### REPORT NAME

Local Food five-year summary report

### RECOMMENDATION

That the Agricultural Service Board accept the September 8, 2025, report regarding the Local Food five-year summary as information.

### IMPLICATIONS

**Reason:** Program update

**Authority:** (MGA section/bylaw/policy number): Municipal Policy AP-06 Local Food

**Amount of funding required:** N/A

**Funding source:** Annually approved in budget

### BACKGROUND

- In 2015, Leduc County began work on developing an Agriculture Strategy to inform and guide the development of a vision for the long term future of agriculture in Leduc County. With the support of a consultant, this strategy was developed and adopted by Council in 2016.
- Although there were several outcomes recommended in the Strategy, one of the principles outlined was that Leduc County should “dedicate resources to economic development initiatives for food and agriculture whether it’s for events, promotion of local food...community gardens, agri-tourism, etc. This will require the development of a focused economic development strategy for the agri-food sector.”
- In 2018, Leduc County Council developed a strategic plan for the term of the election cycle. Tying the strategic plan to the Agriculture Strategy was one of the strategic priorities: “Agricultural Innovation and Support for Local Food.” The statement outlining this priority was “Leduc County encourages and supports agricultural innovation, the protection of agriculture land, agribusiness and local food initiatives.”
- At the time of development, the focus areas for strategic priority were:
  - Develop a plan framework for the re-visioning of smallholding agricultural activity
  - Support integration of agri-science and innovation in agricultural production
  - Support local food initiatives
  - Be an advocate for agriculture and foster agri-tourism
  - Develop a phased roll-out for the 2016 Agricultural Strategy

**Submitted by:** Aaron Van Beers, Manager – Agricultural Services

**Reviewed by:** Garrett Broadbent, Director – Road Operations, Fleet and Agricultural Services

**Date:** 09/08/25

- As there were no dedicated resources specifically for supporting local food initiatives in 2018 and early 2019, efforts were focused on providing workshops such as the two Chicken and Coops workshops (with over 70 attendees).
- In early 2019, the horticulturalist announced her retirement for March 2019. With this retirement, there was an opportunity to revise the position to focus on local food initiatives while providing horticultural support. The creation of a revised position – Local Food Coordinator – was approved and in August 2019 Sharon Faye became the Local Food Coordinator for Leduc County.
- One of the first steps undertaken by the coordinator was to host a screening of the documentary *Before the Plate*, in which a chef traces the ingredients from one plate of food back to the farms they came from. This viewing was used to engage the 33 participants to identify what local food meant to them. The discussions with the participants after the viewing helped create the foundation of activities that the coordinator would work on.
- The COVID-19 pandemic began shortly after the documentary screening. This significantly hampered efforts to host in-person events and hosting opportunities. However, it also created opportunities to try different outreach activities and begin operating virtually.
- The focus areas from the strategic plan were into three main areas for the Local Food Coordinator to focus on and develop:
  - Support Leduc County residents by being a resource to develop and strengthen their capacity as local food producers
  - Provide education for producers through hosting workshops, webinars and field days on a variety of topics
  - Create support networks that connect consumers to local producers as well as producers to each other
- The majority of the work of the Local Food Coordinator over the first five full years of the local food program has been focused in these main areas.

**Resource for strengthening capacity**

- A major project that the coordinator undertook initially was the creation of the CanadaGAP webinar series. CanadaGAP is an internationally recognized food safety standard and certification system for fresh produce suppliers. Utilizing a grant from the Canada Agricultural Partnership program and with support from Alberta Agriculture and Forestry (AAF), the in-person workshop that was normally offered by AAF was reimaged as a virtual 14-session webinar series for interested producers in 2020. The initial series had 22 participants from several municipalities attend virtually. The webinar series was offered several times in the following years.
- Another project that the local food program supported was the Leduc-Nisku-Wetaskiwin Chamber and their development of the Discover Leduc Region website. The Local Food Coordinator was able to work with the Chamber to develop an agriculture and local food section of the webmap. Producers can register their businesses and products through the website to put them on the webmap and help

promote their operations. There are currently over 50 unique Leduc County local food producers listed on the Discover Leduc Region map.

- A Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) tour of nearby operations was organized by the Local Food Coordinator. CSA's are a type of direct marketing for producers where consumers can pledge support to the operation in return for securing produce from that farm. Eighteen local producers attended this tour to learn about the sales model and gauge whether it could work for them.

#### **Provide education opportunities**

- From 2020 through 2024, 12 workshops were hosted (both online and in person) in which 480 individuals attended. Topics from these workshops ranged from e-commerce applications for selling products to food safety to berry production and site selection.
- With the COVID-19 pandemic limiting in-person events in 2020 and 2021, the Local Food Coordinator needed to shift focus on how to deliver education for county residents. Partnering with other municipalities to host online webinars enabled the Local Food Coordinator to target key presenters that would be cost-prohibitive to speak at an in-person workshop for a small number of attendees and share the cost with other municipalities. The shared cost and increased attendance helped support additional workshops that are of interest to local producers.

#### **Create support networks**

- The Local Food Coordinator works with the Alberta Farm Fresh Producers of Alberta (AFFPA) and acts as an advisor to their Board. Being involved with this provincial organization has allowed Sharon to support both the AFFPA and local producers with information and opportunities. The 2020 AFFPA Farm-to-Market-to-Table Conference was held in Nisku with support from Leduc County and the Local Food Coordinator. There were 206 participants in the Conference which was held at the Coast Nisku Inn and Conference Centre.
- Support networks have been a key focus for the local food program. The Leduc Farm Friends is a loose connection of local producers that the Local Food Coordinator brought together in the first year of the local food program. This group of producers is a sounding board for the local food program and helps to put on major events, such as the Ag Tours held in 2021 and 2022. In each year, two separate tours which saw over 450 people visit 23 farms of local producers (12 in 2021 and 11 in 2022). In 2023, the group hosted a Farm-to-Table Dinner which included a bus tour of several farms and ended with a dinner and small market for the 61 registered attendees. These projects help to build connections between local producers and has raised the awareness of local food production within the Leduc County region.
- Connections to producers outside of Leduc County have also been created by the Local Food Coordinator. The Food Artisans of Camrose County is a more formal group of local producers that operate in the neighboring municipality. The Local Food Coordinator has initiated meetings between the Leduc Farm Friends and the Food Artisans to support and learn from each other.
- Networking and connections have also been made at the program level to help support the activities that are provided. The Local Food Coordinator has collaborated internally with the Economic Development and Parks & Recreation departments, and externally with Alberta Agriculture & Irrigation,

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the Leduc-Nisku-Wetaskiwin Chamber of Commerce, numerous municipalities and the Farming Forward Association. Working with these groups has allowed for larger events to be hosted, provided access to unique speakers, and increased the awareness of the local food impact within Leduc County.

- Projects being undertaken in 2025 have focused on similar activities as the first five years of the local food program. Work continues with the Chamber on the Discover Leduc Region website. A resident survey was released Q2 2025 to identify topics of interest and this is being used to develop workshops in Q4.

#### **ATTACHMENTS**

- None





## Recommendation to Agricultural Service Board *Public*

### REPORT NAME

Agricultural plastics management engagement

### RECOMMENDATION

That the Agricultural Service Board receive the September 8, 2025 report regarding the agricultural plastics management engagement as information and further, direct administration to complete the Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation's online survey on behalf of the Leduc County Agricultural Service Board before September 12, 2025 to share input on using a regulatory approach for managing agricultural plastics waste.

### IMPLICATIONS

**Reason:** Information update

**Authority (MGA section/bylaw/policy number):** N/A

**Amount of funding required:** N/A

**Funding source:** N/A

### BACKGROUND

- Agricultural plastic recycling in Alberta is currently limited to certain materials and relies on a voluntary approach. Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation (AGI) is looking into a regulatory approach to aid economies of scale for better processing facilities, and for long term certainty for material management. Other waste materials that can be recycled are currently dealt with in two ways: Extended producer responsibility (EPR) and Stewardship.
- Extended producer responsibility means plastics producers are responsible for operating and funding a system to collect, process and recycle plastic agricultural materials. This approach to plastic recycling currently includes non-agricultural examples such as single-use products, packaging and paper. Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Quebec, and PEI all use EPR for agricultural plastics. Saskatchewan only regulates grain bags while other jurisdictions also cover totes and drums, bale wrap, and silage plastics.
- Under a stewardship program, plastics producers would be responsible for funding but not managing the system to collect, process and recycle the materials they supply. The management is the responsibility of a third party organization that would be identified in regulation. Clean Farms is a Canadian non-for-profit environmental stewardship organization that would likely be the third-party manager. Current non-agricultural examples of stewardship include electronics, paint and paint containers, tires, used oil, and beverage containers.
- Both of Alberta's current waste management regulatory approaches do not mandate how obligated producers fund the programs, and as a result the plastics producers typically choose to pass costs on to consumers. AGI did surveys in 2019 and 2023 where 83% of farmers understood the need to support a

**Submitted by:** Nathanael Berg – Agricultural Services Coordinator

**Reviewed by:** Aaron Van Beers – Manager, Agricultural Services

**Date:** 09/08/25

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recycling program for agricultural plastics, but did not like having to pay additional costs. 60% were strongly opposed to having to pay any additional costs.

- AGI has proposed a phased in approach for the management of agricultural plastics. Phase 1 would launch January 1, 2028 and include: grain bags; seed pesticide and inoculant bags; 23-liter pesticide and fertilizer jugs; pesticide and fertilizer totes and drums; and baler twine. Phase 2 would launch January 1, 2030 and include bale wrap, silage cover, and sileage bags. Phase 3 would launch January 1, 2032, and include net wrap.
- Agricultural service boards, farmers, plastics producers, and recycling organizations can complete an online survey by September 12, 2025 to share input on using a regulatory approach for managing agricultural plastics waste. The survey includes types of agricultural plastics to include, material recovery rate targets, service standards for material collection, and cost implications. Additional information can be found at [Agricultural plastics management engagement | Alberta.ca](https://www.alberta.ca/agricultural-plastics-management-engagement) (<https://www.alberta.ca/agricultural-plastics-management-engagement>)

## **ATTACHMENTS**

- [Agricultural Plastic Waste webinar](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bnm7EQotXR0) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bnm7EQotXR0>)

# Agricultural Moisture Situation Update

## August 21, 2025

### 14-Day Synopsis

#### Precipitation

The pattern of rainfall over the past two weeks was more typical for the province, with the north receiving more precipitation than the south (**Maps 1, 2, and 3**).

The South Region received between 10 and 20 mm (**Maps 1 and 2**), which is typical for this time of year (**Map 3**). However, areas within Cypress County, Forty Mile County, and Special Area No. 3 received more than 20 mm, while municipalities such as Pincher Creek, Cardston, and Warner received less than 5 mm.

In the Central Region, precipitation ranged from 5 to 30 mm two weeks ago but dropped to less than 3 mm this past week (**Maps 1 and 2**). This is slightly above the typical rainfall for this time of year (**Map 3**). The lower rainfall is favourable, as most crops have matured and harvest activities are underway.

The North East Region received between 15 and 30 mm of precipitation over the past two weeks (**Maps 1 and 2**). Meanwhile, the North West Region recorded the highest rainfall, with totals ranging from 20 mm to over 50 mm; well above the long-term average (**Map 3**). More modest rainfall occurred this past week, with several areas reporting less than 3 mm.

Rainfall across the Peace Region was variable (**Maps 1, and 2**). The southeast portion received 25 mm to over 50 mm of precipitation, while the northern Peace Region, including Mackenzie and Northern Lights Counties, received 30 to 60 mm of precipitation. In contrast, areas within Grande Prairie, Clear Hills, and Northern Sunrise Counties received less than 20 mm over the past two weeks.

#### Temperature

Over the past two weeks, average daily mean temperatures across most of the province were near normal to moderately cooler than the long-term average (**Maps 4 and 5**). A few areas in the North East, North West, and Peace Regions experienced moderately warmer temperatures two weeks ago, followed by near-normal conditions this past week.

### Growing Season Trends

Precipitation received over the past two weeks has improved overall growing season accumulations in many areas across the province. (**Map 6**).

Growing season precipitation accumulations continue to trend from near normal to above normal across most of the South, Central, and North West Regions (**Map 6**). Small pockets within the municipalities of Yellowhead, Rocky View, Foothills, Wheatland, Newell, and Special Areas No. 2 and No. 3 have received higher precipitation relative to the long-term average. In these areas, growing season totals range from 130% to 150% of normal (**Map 7**).

Parts of Forty Mile and Cypress Counties continue to experience moderately low growing season precipitation. However, cumulative totals have improved, now ranging from 70% to 90% of the long-term average (**Map 7**).

Growing season precipitation remains moderately to extremely low (**Map 6**) across northern Alberta, particularly north of a line extending through the municipalities of Provost, Flagstaff, Camrose, Ponoka, continuing northward through Leduc, Parkland, and Barrhead, then westward through Woodlands and Greenview. However, rainfall over the past two weeks has helped improve accumulation totals in some areas of this region.

In the North East Region, precipitation accumulation has improved, but many areas, particularly within the municipalities of Provost, Wainwright, Bonnyville, St. Paul, Smoky Lake, Lac La Biche, and Athabasca, remain very low to extremely low (**Map 6**). Current growing season totals in these areas are approximately 50% to 70% of the long-term average (**Maps 7**).

In the northern half of the North West Region, growing season precipitation accumulation remains moderately low to low compared to the long-term average (**Map 6**). Further north and west into the Peace Region, precipitation over the past two weeks has led to some improvement. However, growing season totals in most areas still range from low to very low, with cumulative amounts equivalent to 70% to 90% of the long-term average (**Map 7**).



As crops begin to mature, plant water uptake will decline, allowing precipitation to start recharging soil moisture reserves.

## Soil Moisture Reserves

South of a line running through the municipalities of Mountain View, Red Deer, Flagstaff, and Special Area No. 4, estimated soil moisture reserves remain normal to very high relative to the long-term average, to a depth of 120 cm (**Map 8**). Due to lower precipitation in recent weeks, soil moisture in localized areas within Foothills, Rocky View, Wheatland, and Special Area No. 2 has declined from extremely high to high or very high levels. In these areas, plant-available water is estimated to range from 40 to 140 mm to a depth of 120 cm (**Map 9**). This translates to an additional 15 to 50 mm of moisture compared to normal (**Map 10**). In contrast, soil moisture reserves in the County of Warner remain moderately low to low relative to the long-term average.

Precipitation over the past two weeks has improved soil moisture reserves across the North East, North West, and Peace Regions. Most areas have improved to moderately low levels relative to the long-term average, up from extremely low or low conditions two weeks ago (**Map 8**). In these regions, plant-available water is estimated to range from 10 to 40 mm to a depth of 120 cm (**Map 9**), representing a departure of 15 to 50 mm from normal (**Map 10**).

Several pockets across the North East, North West, and Peace Regions have now reached near-normal soil moisture conditions (**Map 8**). The most notable improvement occurred in the municipalities of Brazeau and Yellowhead, where reserves increased from near normal or moderately low to moderately high or among the wettest relative to the long-term average. In these areas, soil moisture reserves range from 80 to 180 mm to a depth of 120 cm (**Map 9**). This is approximately 25 to 75 mm above normal (**Map 10**).

Encouragingly, both the number and size of areas with low soil moisture reserves in the North East, North West, and Peace Regions have markedly decreased. This recent precipitation has helped reduce crop stress and, in some areas, improved soil moisture conditions.

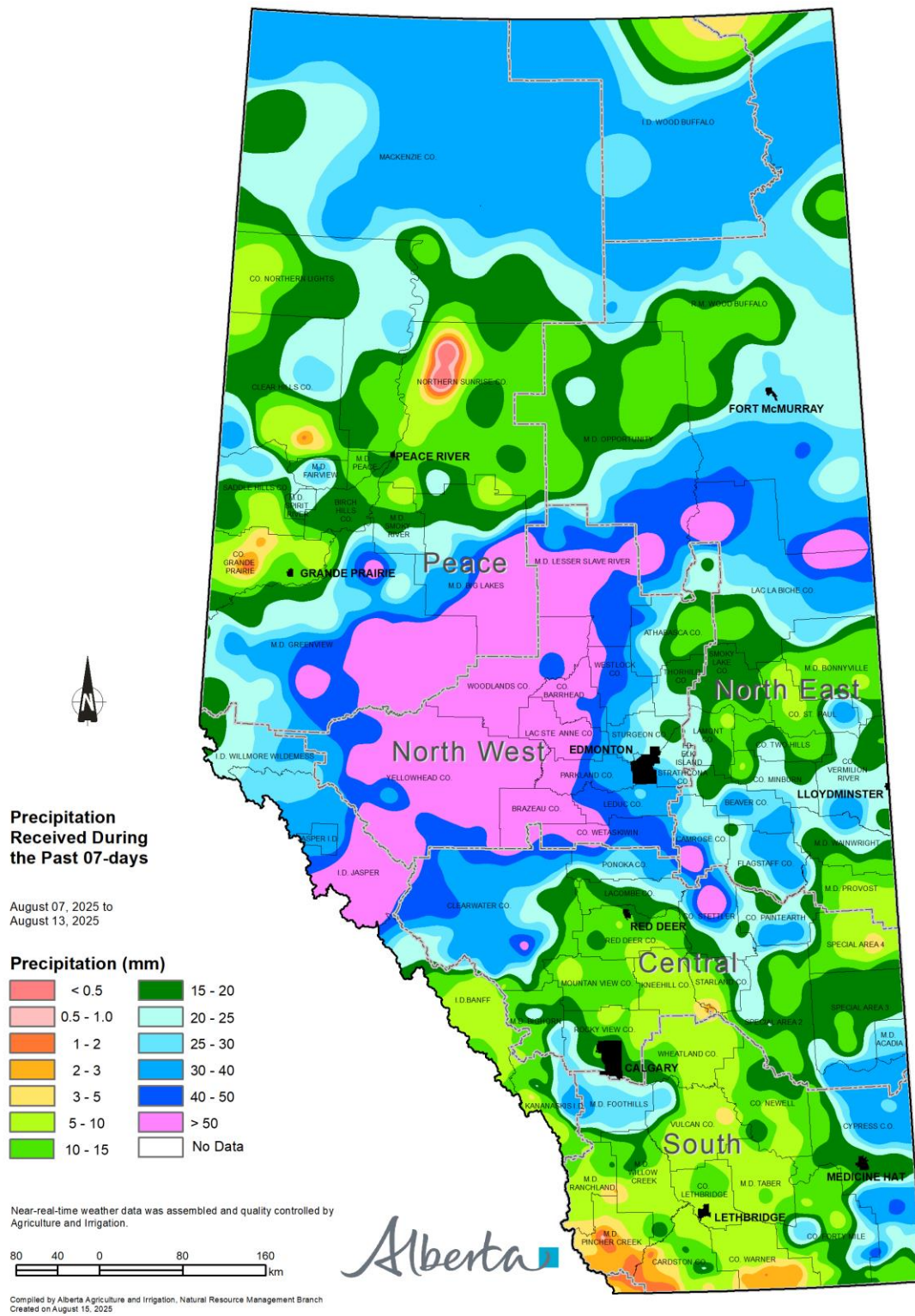
## Perspective

As of August 20, areas south of a line running from the M.D. of Provost through Brazeau County into the M.D. of Greenview have received near-normal to above-normal growing season precipitation relative to long-term averages. Most of the South Region and parts of the Central and North West Region are experiencing normal to high precipitation accumulation relative to long term normal. This area is experiencing normal to moderately warmer average daily mean temperatures, relative to long term normal. These conditions are expected to have a positive impact on crop growth and yield potential. However, exceptions remain in portions of Cypress County, where growing season precipitation remains moderately lower relative to long term normal.

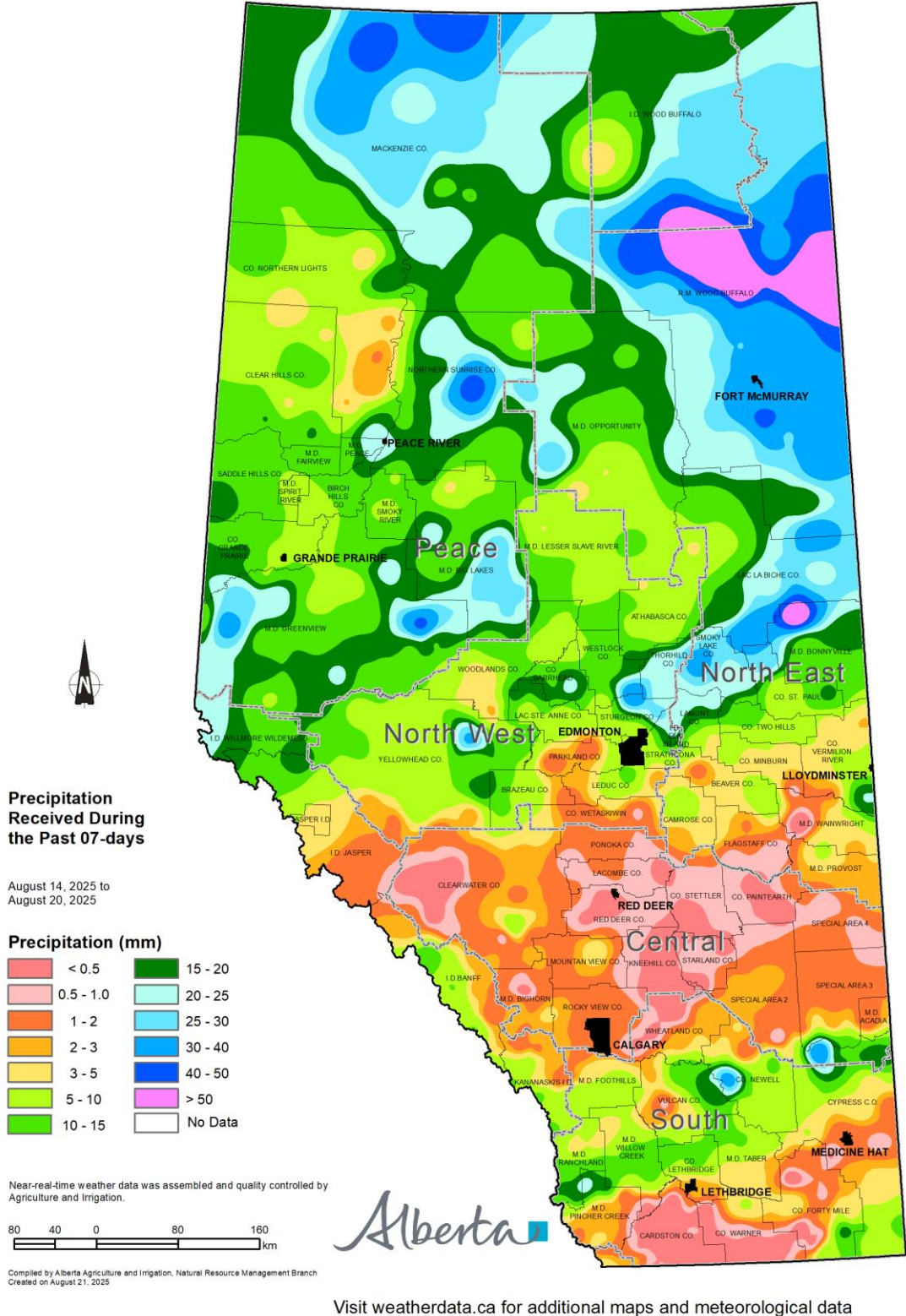
In contrast, municipalities north of this line have moderately to very low growing season precipitation relative to long-term normal. Recent rainfall over the past two week provided some relief across the Peace, North West, and North East Regions, improving growing season precipitation accumulation. This area is experiencing normal to moderately warmer average daily mean temperatures, relative to long term normal.

As we move into harvest, annual crop water utilization will end, and precipitation additions will begin to replenish soil moisture reserves.

# Map 1

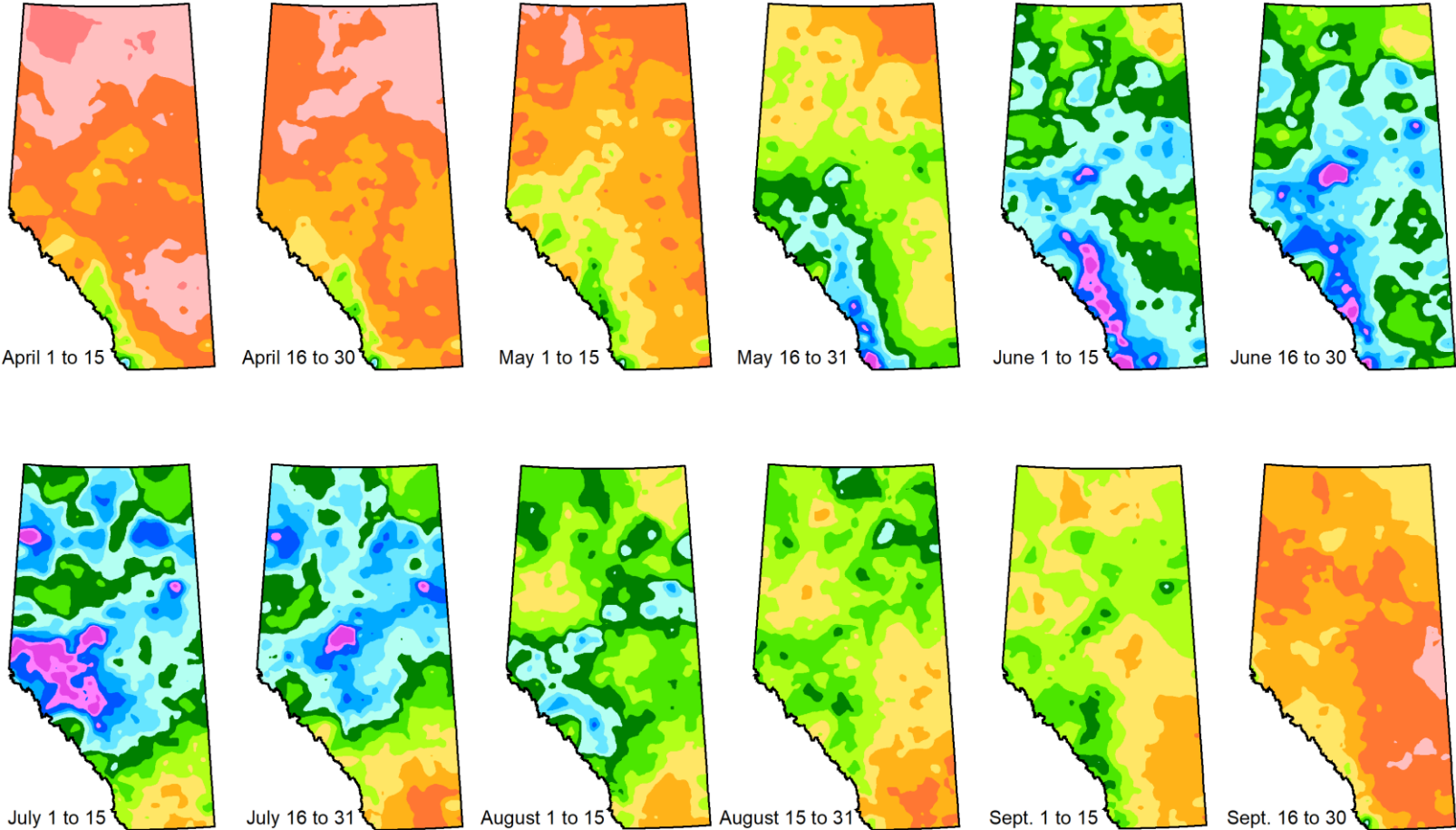


Map 2





Map 3



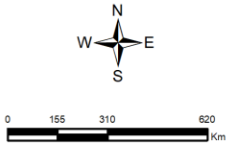
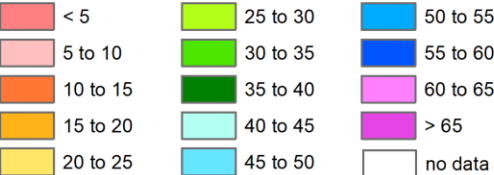
**Average Semi-Monthly  
Growing Season  
Precipitation Accumulations**

1991-2020

Weather data was assembled and quality controlled by  
Agriculture and Irrigation  
then interpolated to township centres using AbClima-3.6

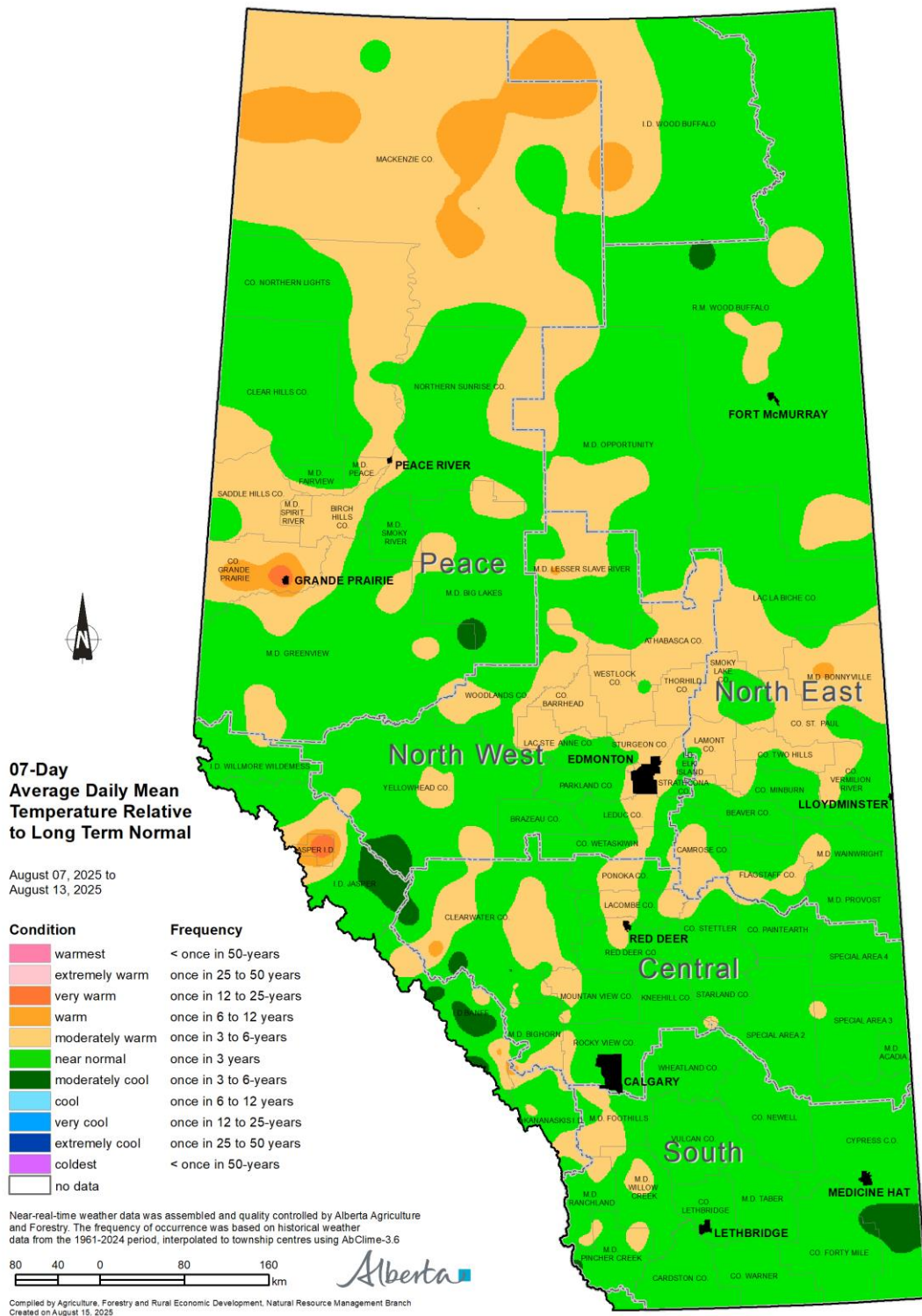
Compiled by Agriculture and Irrigation, Natural Resource Management Branch  
Created on January 15, 2025

**Precipitation (mm)**



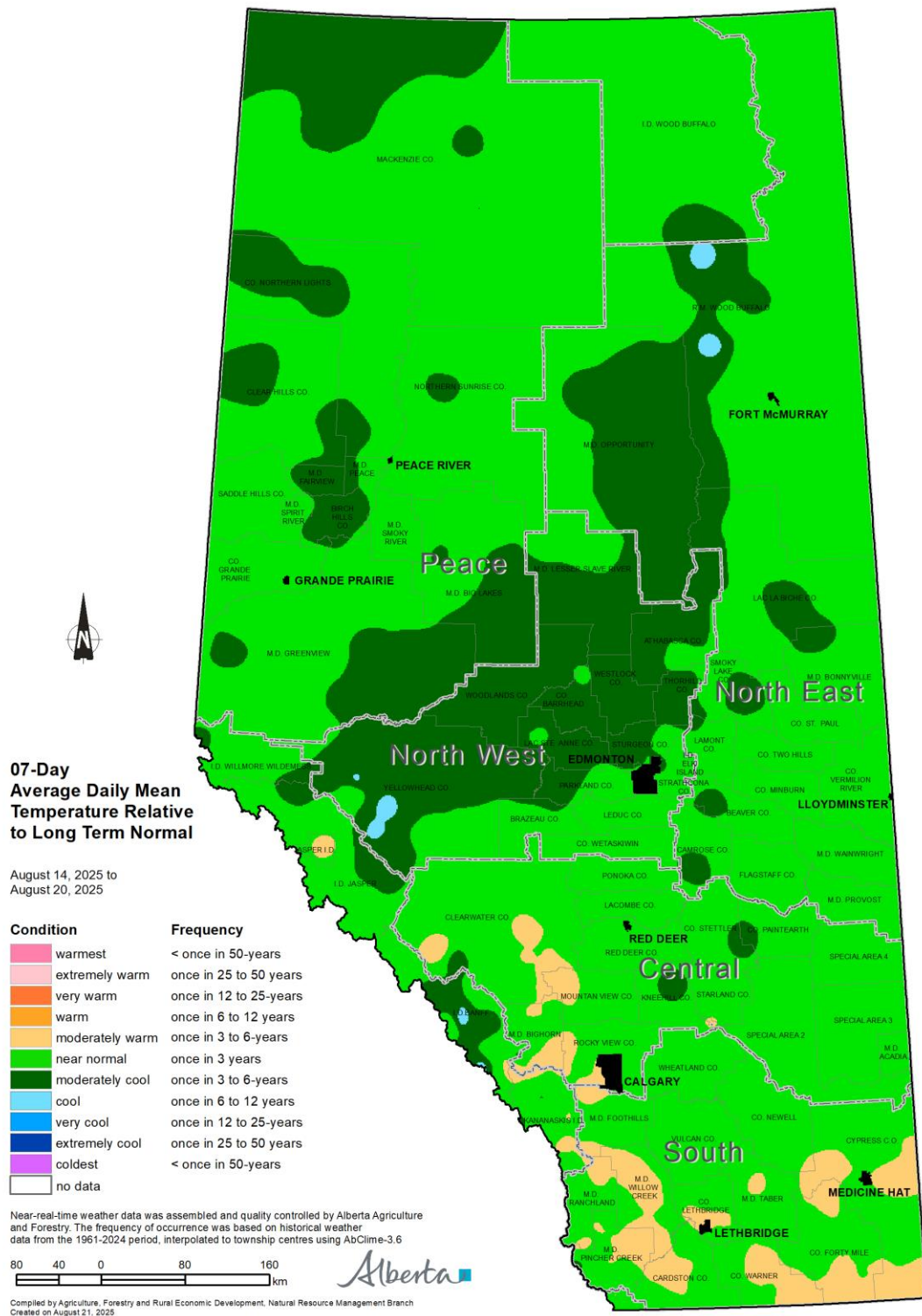
Alberta

## Map 4



Visit [weatherdata.ca](https://weatherdata.ca) for additional maps and meteorological data

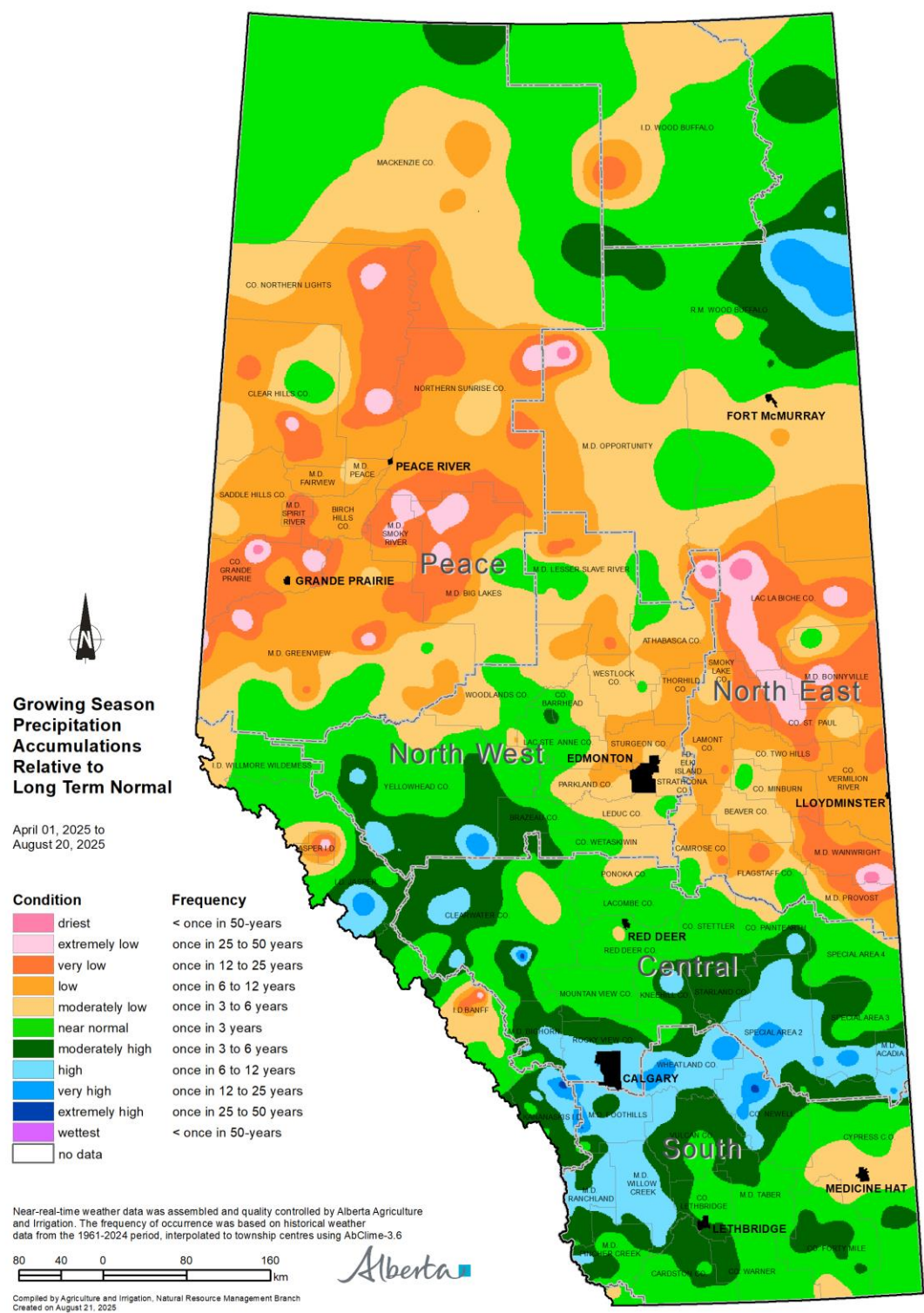
## Map 5



Visit [weatherdata.ca](https://weatherdata.ca) for additional maps and meteorological data



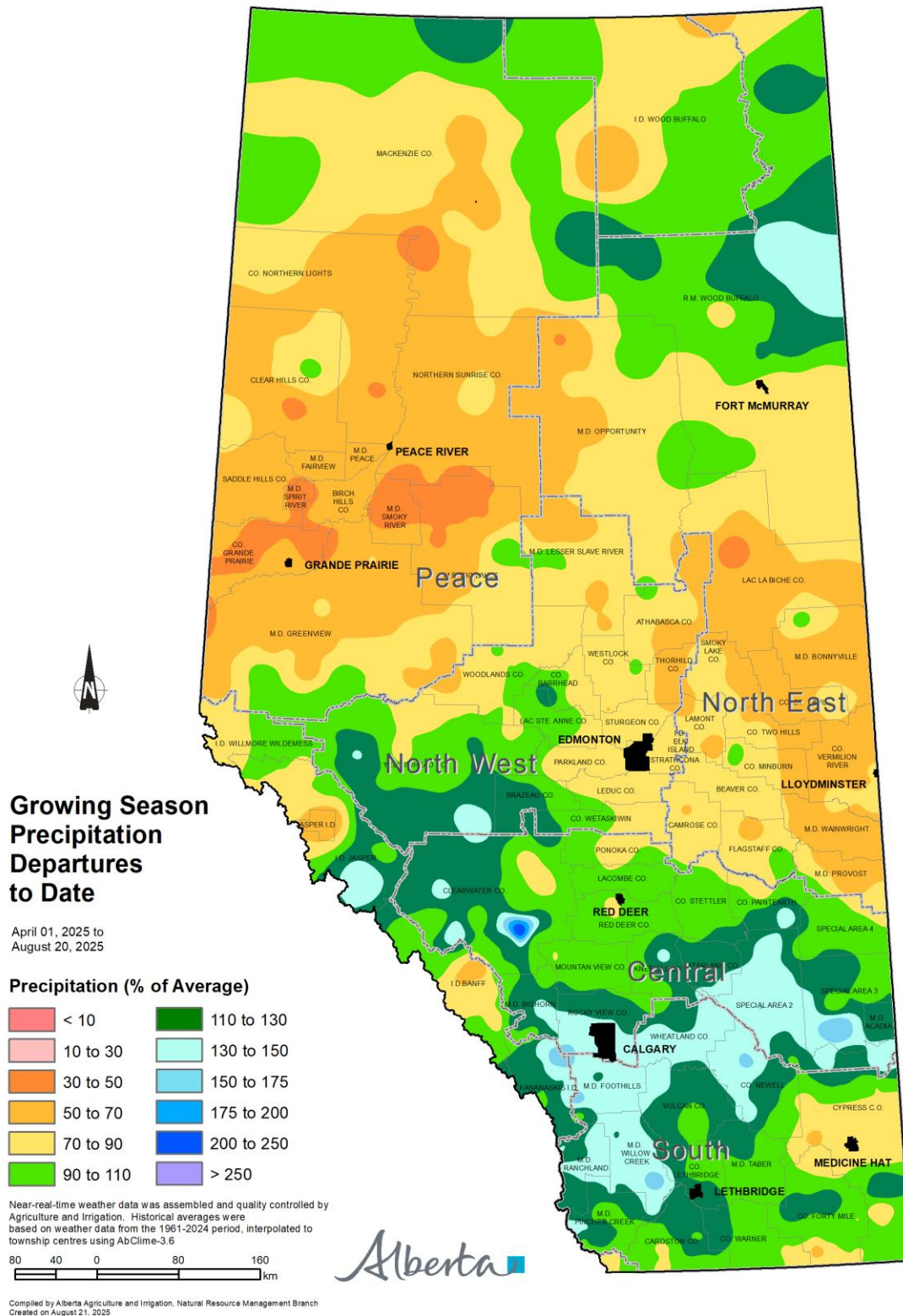
Map 6



Visit [weatherdata.ca](https://weatherdata.ca) for additional maps and meteorological data

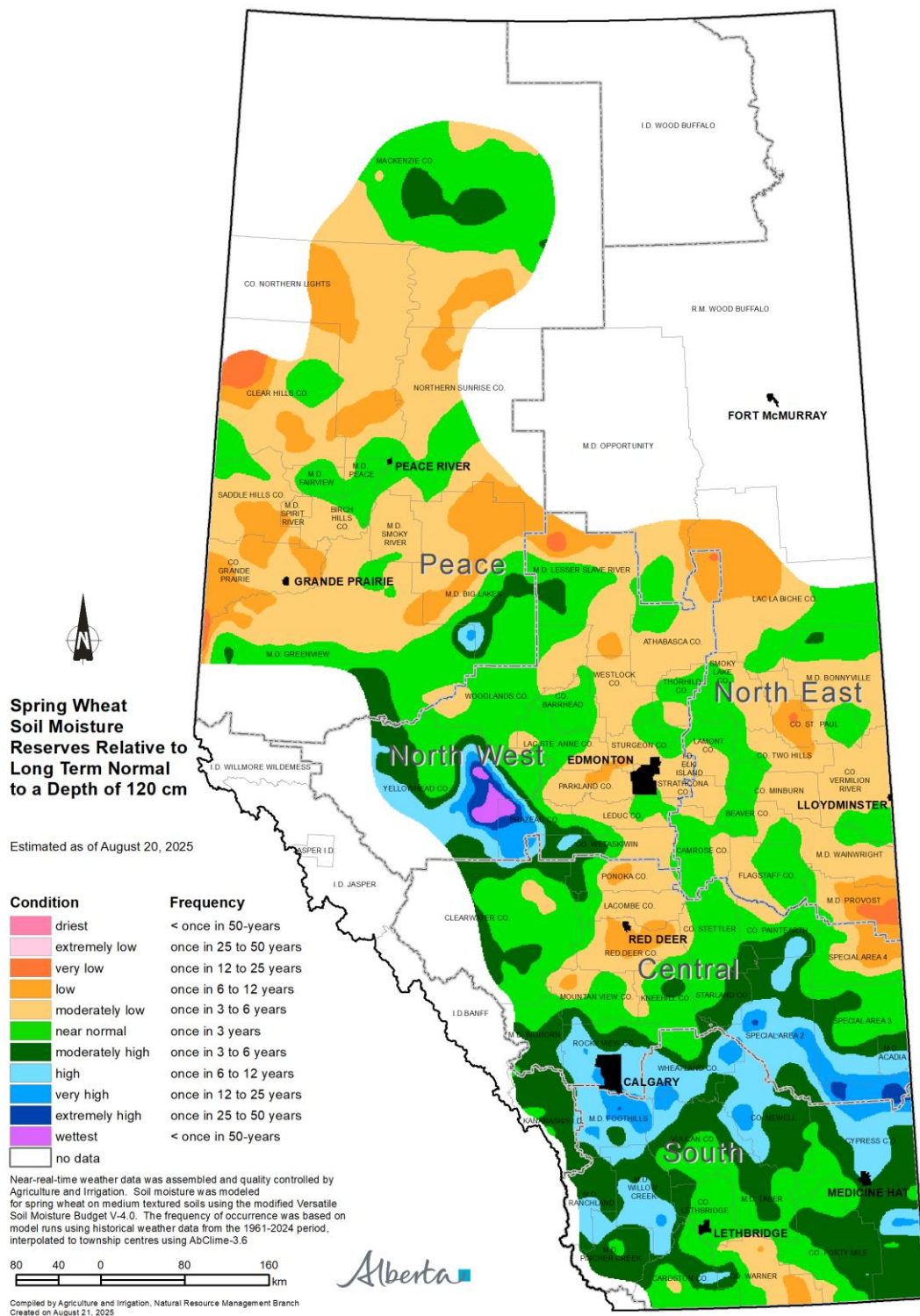


## Map 7



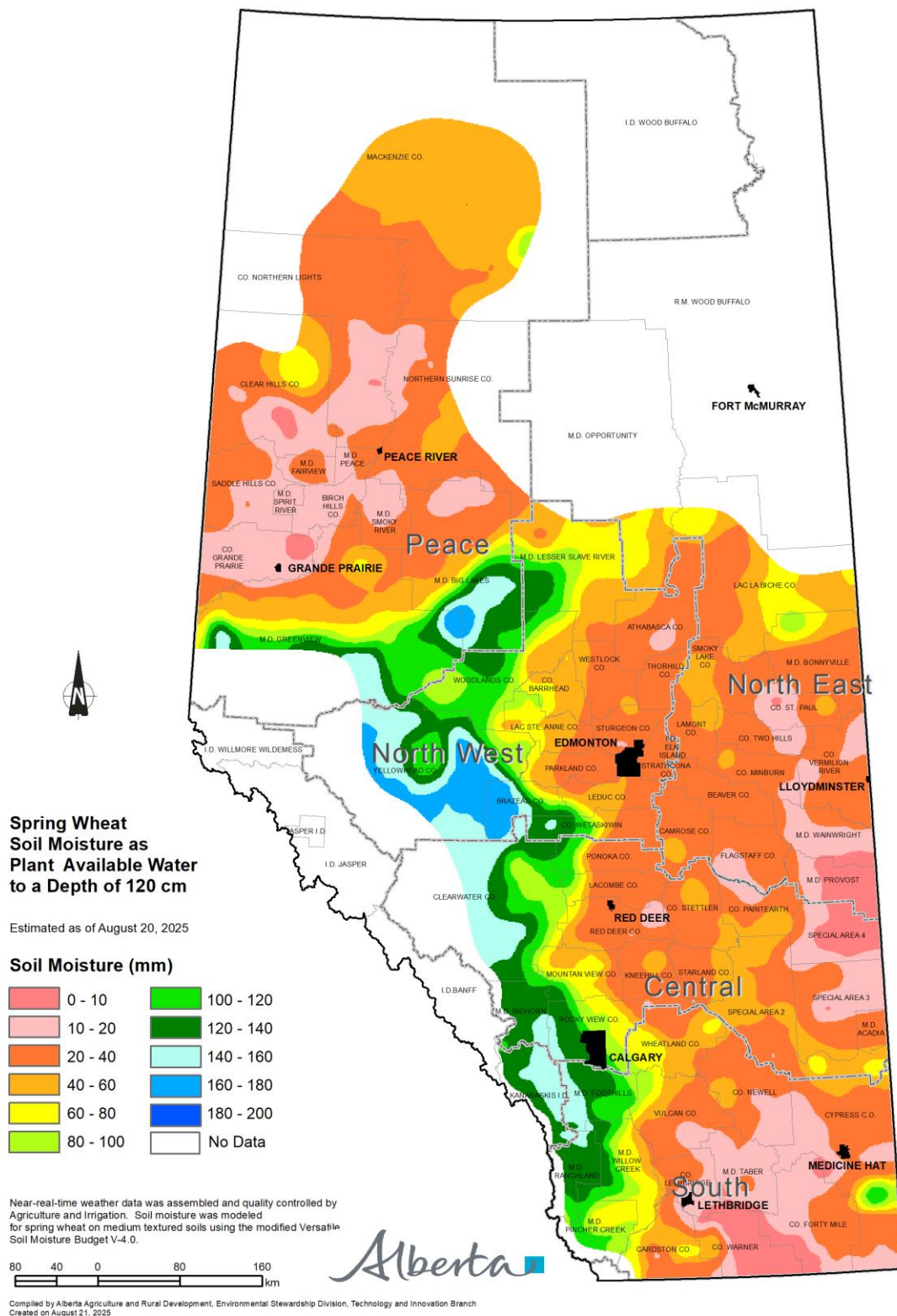


## Map 8

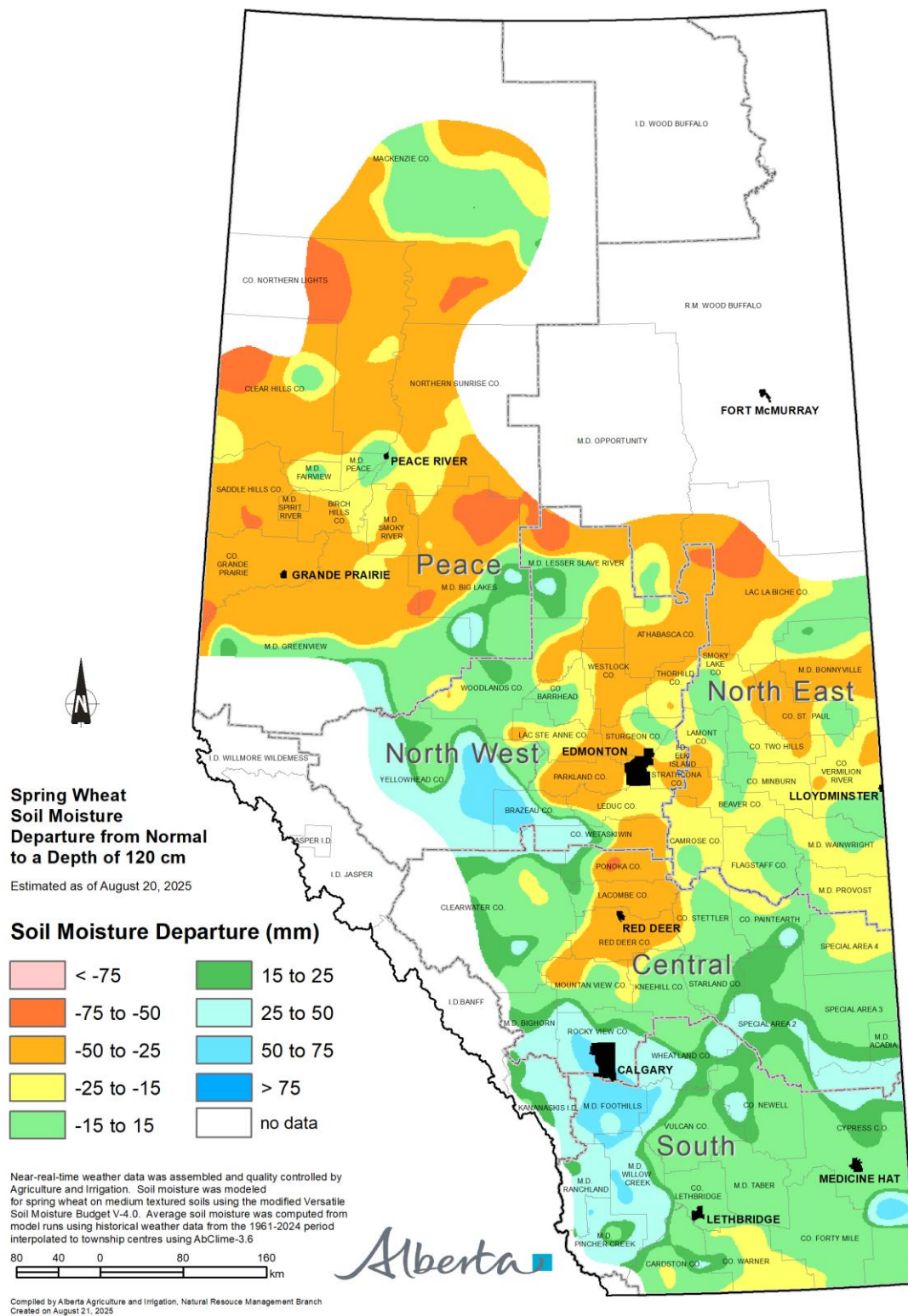


Visit [weatherdata.ca](https://weatherdata.ca) for additional maps and meteorological data

## Map 9



## Map 10





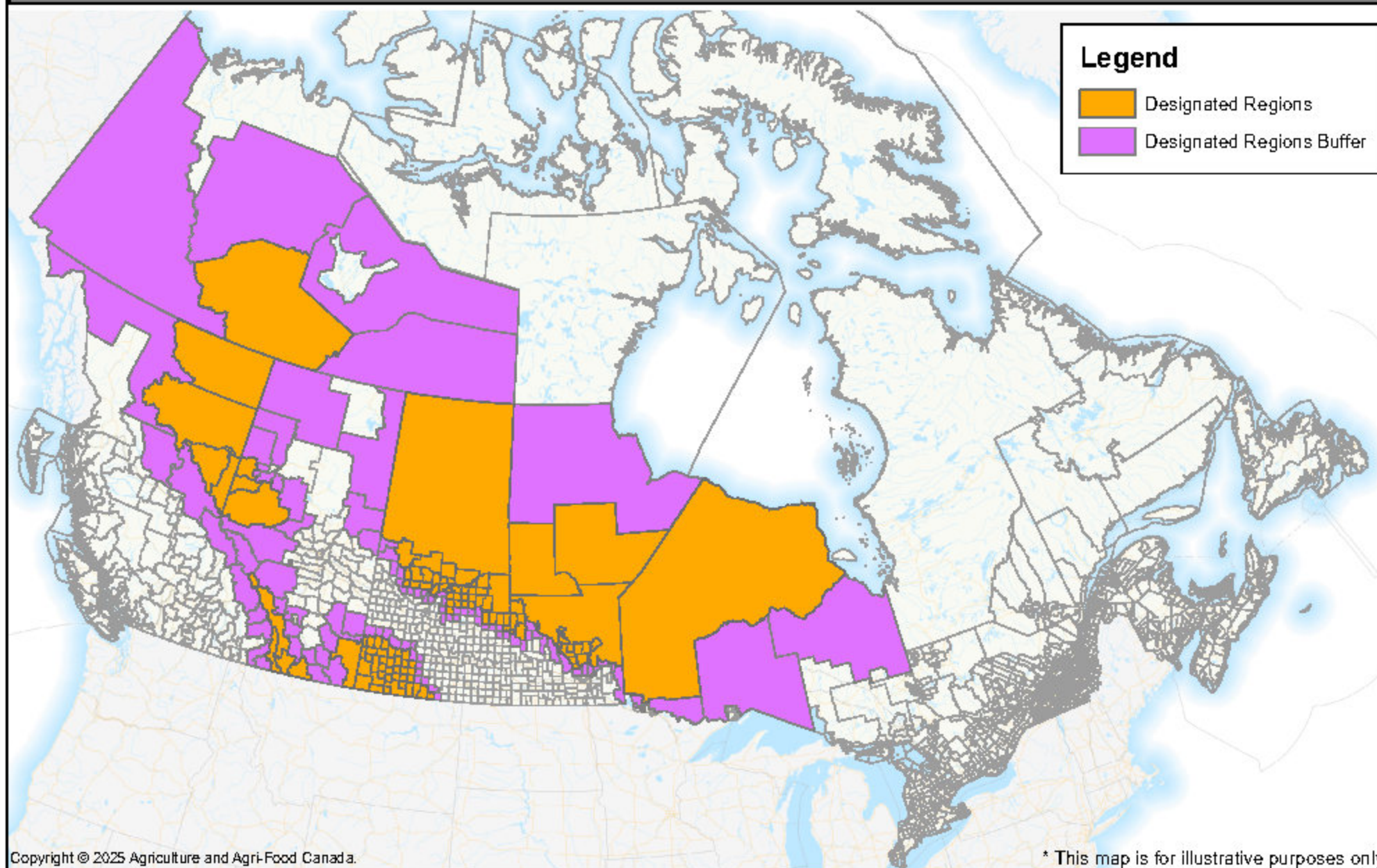


Agriculture and  
Agri-Food Canada

Agriculture et  
Agroalimentaire Canada

Canada

## 2025 Livestock Tax Deferral Assessment - Designated Regions



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\* This map is for illustrative purposes only

Prepared by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's National Agroclimate Information Service (NAIS)

Created: 2025/07/28  
[www.agr.gc.ca/drought](http://www.agr.gc.ca/drought)

August 14, 2025

The Honourable Heath MacDonald  
Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food  
1341 Baseline Road, Tower 7  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0C5

Re: Request for Inclusion of Lac Ste. Anne County in the Federal Livestock Tax Deferral Program

---

On behalf of Lac Ste. Anne County Council and the Lac Ste. Anne County Agricultural Service Board, we are writing to request that our municipality be added to the list of prescribed regions eligible for the 2025 Federal Livestock Tax Deferral Program.

Our agricultural producers are once again experiencing significant challenges due to ongoing drought conditions. These conditions have persisted through multiple growing seasons and continue to plague our farms and ranches in 2025. The most recent *Agricultural Moisture Situation Update* from Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation (August 6, 2025) indicates that pockets within Lac Ste. Anne County received less than 5 mm of precipitation in the past week, with cumulative growing season totals remaining moderately low to extremely low compared to long-term averages. Soil moisture reserves are critically depleted, with plant-available water in many areas below 40 mm to a depth of 120 cm, conditions that rank among the lowest in the province. Despite recent rainfall in parts of the municipality, these showers have come late in the season to make any meaningful impact on forage recovery, crop yields, or water reserves.

These weather impacts are having profound effects on our producers:

- Pasture and forage shortfalls, Recovery has stalled, and hay yields are well below average, forcing many livestock producers to consider herd reductions.
- Reduced cereal and oilseed production, Crop development has been hampered by prolonged dryness and heat stress, leading to reduced yield and quality projections.
- Water shortages, Dugout levels are declining, and supplemental water hauling is increasingly required.

Our situation mirrors that of neighboring municipalities in the Northwest Region that have already declared agricultural disasters and requested inclusion in the deferral program. Like them, we are facing:

- Feed shortages going into the fall and winter months.
- Heightened financial pressures due to sourcing feed and water at inflated market prices; and






- The mental health toll on producers who are making difficult decisions regarding herd viability and long-term operations.

While we continue to promote and facilitate access to provincial and municipal assistance programs, the scale of the current drought exceeds the capacity of local support mechanisms. Inclusion in the Federal Livestock Tax Deferral Program would provide critical financial flexibility, enabling producers to better manage the economic impact of herd liquidations and retain a pathway to recovery.

We respectfully request that your office expedite a review of conditions in Lac Ste. Anne County and approve our inclusion in the 2025 list of prescribed regions for the Livestock Tax Deferral. This support is urgently needed to safeguard the stability of our livestock sector, protect rural livelihoods, and sustain the long-term viability of our agricultural economy.

We appreciate your consideration and look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,



Joe Blakeman  
Reeve, Lac Ste. Anne County

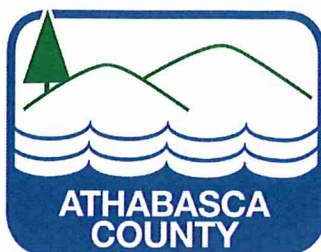


Ross Bohnet  
Chair, Lac Ste. Anne County Agricultural Service Board

CC:

Hon. RJ Sigurdson, Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation  
Hon. Shane Getson, MLA, Lac Ste. Anne–Parkland  
Kara Westerlund, President, Rural Municipalities of Alberta  
Agricultural Service Board (ASB) Provincial Committee  
Alberta Association of Agricultural Fieldmen (AAAF)

Phone: (780) 675-2273  
FAX: (780) 675-5512  
[www.athabascacounty.com](http://www.athabascacounty.com)



3602-48 Avenue  
ATHABASCA, ALBERTA  
T9S 1M8

Office of the Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation  
131 Legislature Building  
10800-97 Avenue  
Edmonton, Alberta  
T5K 2B6

August 6, 2025

Attention: Honourable RJ Sigurdson

**RE: Athabasca County Declares a Municipal Agricultural Disaster**

Athabasca County is declaring a Municipal Agricultural Disaster due to drought conditions that are affecting our region.

Our growing season precipitation accumulation relative to long term normal is rated as low (6-12 years) to driest (once in 50 years) in portions of the County. Most of the rain we have received was earlier in the growing season, with sporadic rain events in July. Our soil moisture reserves are heavily depleted at very low (12 to 25 years) to driest (once in 50 years) causing hayfields and pasture production to decline which may cause producers to need to start feeding sooner in the year. Field crops are in the filling and podding stage and with little to no rain, that will harm this critical stage of growth. There are also pest level concentrations of grasshoppers found throughout the County which are consuming whatever forage is available.

There is a concern for the livestock industry, primarily for feed availability throughout the fall and winter months. Hay crops have been low yielding and second cuts are not likely due to poor condition. Additionally pastures are decreasing in quality which will require producers to feed earlier. These compounding factors along with the increased grasshopper pressure could lead to herd dispersals and increased feed costs for producers.

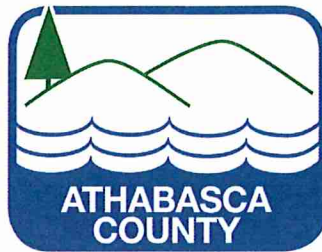
We encourage the Minister to include Athabasca County in the federal Livestock Tax Deferral Program eligibility and to advocate for support during this stressful time. Mental health programming is important and we are going to be encouraging producers to seek help through the Agknow program if they require it. We join other municipalities in the area in declaring an Agricultural Disaster, and hope the provincial and federal governments can make coordinated approach to support the ag industry in the County.

We appreciate your attention and thank you for your support of Albertas Agricultural Communities.

Sincerely,

Tracy Holland  
Reeve, Athabasca County

Phone: (780) 675-2273  
FAX: (780) 675-5512  
[www.athabascacounty.com](http://www.athabascacounty.com)



3602-48 Avenue  
ATHABASCA, ALBERTA  
T9S 1M8

Cc: Hon. Danielle Smith, Premier of Alberta  
Hon. Todd Loewen, Minister of Forestry and Parks  
Hon. Rebecca Schulz, Minister Environment and Protected Areas  
Hon. Rick Wilson, Minister of Mental Health and Addictions  
Hon. Glen van Dijken, MLA Athabasca-Barrhead-Westlock  
Hon. Shannon Stubbs, MP Lakeland  
Kara Westerland, RMA President  
Agricultural Financial Services Corporation  
Agricultural Service Board Provincial Committee  
Alberta Association of Agricultural Fieldmen



# Big Lakes COUNTY

5305-56 Street Box 239  
High Prairie, AB  
T0G 1E0

August 13, 2025

Honourable RJ Sigurdson  
Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation  
229 Legislature Building  
10800 – 97 Avenue  
Edmonton, Alberta T5K 2B6

Honourable Heath MacDonald  
Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food  
1341 Baseline Road, Tower 7  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0C5

Dear Ministers,

RE: Big Lakes County Declaration of Municipal Agricultural Disaster

Big Lakes County has declared a Municipal Agricultural Disaster regarding the extreme moisture deficit. Lack of precipitation, an early thaw/melt cycle, existing moisture stress from previous years, minimal snowpack, and low runoff have compounded the existing drought conditions. These conditions have put excessive stress on our agricultural producers, their lands, crops, livestock, mental health, and livelihoods.

Livestock feed availability is low due to lack of moisture as the pastures cannot sustain the typical stocking rate, and winter feed is difficult to source. When found, feed is in far less quantity and quality than usual, while being far higher priced. This places a strain on the producers' financial stability and mental health as they are forced into tough decisions on culling livestock, selling herds, low yields, and high feed prices. Grasshopper populations have exceeded threshold in multiple areas within the County which has contributed significantly to pasture and hay loss.

Crops are expected to have reduced yield due to the moisture stress. In some areas crops are already approaching the end of their life cycle and are not anticipated to fill in at a rate adequate to a sufficient yield. At this point in time, even with precipitation, it would be too late to recover pastures or most crops.



August 13, 2025

Page 2

Weather stations nearest to the highest concentrations of agricultural land within Big Lakes County from June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025, to July 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025, show 34-53% precipitation compared to average amounts, with the precipitation average among these stations 43% of the typical average. The Agricultural Moisture Situation Update from July 24<sup>th</sup>-July 30<sup>th</sup> puts Big Lakes County at having 1-5mm of precipitation within agriculture land. For growing season precipitation accumulation relative to normal (April 1 to July 30), Big Lakes County is rated at the extremely low to very low range and in the driest to low categories for soil moisture reserves relative to normal to a depth of 120cm.

The Alberta Crop Report as of July 29<sup>th</sup> puts the Peace Region crops at an average of 75% of crops rated poor to fair. Soil moisture ratings across the Peace are at 68% poor to fair, of which Big Lakes County has a higher percentage due to worsening drought conditions. The Tame Hay Growth across the Peace is 78% poor to fair. Producers are not expected to acquire a second cut of hay, nor a second grazing of pastures.

Due to these concerns and related issues caused by the extreme moisture deficit, it is requested that the Ministry includes Big Lakes County in the prescribed regions eligible for AgriRecovery, including any program that may be available to assist agricultural producers, including the Livestock Tax Deferral. It is requested that the Minister advocates to the federal government to release the AgriRecovery prescribed region list early, with Big Lakes County included, to relieve some of the mental and financial stress on our agricultural producers. Big Lakes County also requests that the Ministry advocate at both the provincial and federal levels of government on behalf of the impacted agricultural producers to ensure they receive the necessary support at this critical time.

Big Lakes County recognizes that agriculture plays a vital role in our community and economy. We are committed to working collaboratively with all stakeholders including provincial and federal partners to navigate these challenges as we strive to strengthen and support the agriculture industry.

Sincerely,



Tyler Airth  
Reeve, Big Lakes County



August 13, 2025

Page 3

CC:

Honourable Danielle Smith, Premier of Alberta  
Honourable Todd Loewen, Minister of Forestry and Parks  
Honourable Rebecca Schulz, Minister Environment and Protected Areas  
Honourable Rick Wilson, Minister of Mental Health and Addictions  
Honourable. Dan Williams, Minister of Municipal Affairs  
Mr. Arnold Viersen- MP Peace River—Westlock, Alberta  
Mr. Scott Sinclair, MLA Lesser Slave Lake  
Ms. Kara Westerland, RMA President  
Agricultural Financial Services Corporation  
Agricultural Service Board Provincial Committee  
Alberta Association of Agricultural Fieldmen  
Agricultural Service Boards of Alberta  
Rural Municipalities of Alberta  
Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation  
Agriculture and Agrifood Canada







August 27, 2025

Hon. RJ Sigurdson  
Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation  
131 Legislature Building  
10800 – 97 Avenue  
Edmonton, AB.  
T5K 2B6  
[AGRIC.Minister@gov.ab.ca](mailto:AGRIC.Minister@gov.ab.ca)

Hon. Heath MacDonald  
Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food  
1341 Baseline Road, Tower 7  
Ottawa, ON.  
K1A 0C5  
[heath.macdonald@agr.gc.ca](mailto:heath.macdonald@agr.gc.ca)

**RE: Declaration of Agriculture Disaster for Hay and Pasture Production – Birch Hills County**

Dear Ministers,

Birch Hills County has declared an Agriculture Disaster for hay and pasture production on August 26, 2025, due to low soil moisture reserves and a lack of precipitation during the growing season.

Livestock feed availability is extremely low due to lack of moisture as the pastures cannot sustain typical stocking rates. In addition to the moisture deficit, Birch Hills County is affected by grasshoppers exceeding thresholds throughout the County. These insects devastated the forages that were already under stress from lack of moisture, contributing significantly to pasture and hay loss.

Overall, our hay production yield was 10 – 25 percent of normal for the fields that could be harvested. Many fields did not produce enough to cut for winter feed. There is no regrowth for second cuts or fall grazing. This has affected 100% of the producers in our County. Our grazing associations will be pulling cattle from the grazing reserves by September 1<sup>st</sup>, leaving those producers two months short for their typical grazing season. Several producers moved their heifers and will be moving other cattle out of the region to areas with better conditions but adding significant cost to their operations. All producers are expecting to start feeding early.

Winter feed is difficult to source; increased transportation costs and lower quality are all issues. This places additional strain on producers' financial stability and mental health as they are forced to make complex decisions regarding herd reduction, future operations and the financial impacts that may result from a herd dispersal. We note that some producers have already started down this path.

Birch Hills County has experienced multiple years of low precipitation leaving our soil without moisture reserves. Although we had an average snowpack for the winter of 2024-2025, it was not enough to compensate for the soil moisture deficit from multiple years of low precipitation. In addition to low soil moisture reserves, there was little precipitation during the growing season. Some areas of the County received less than 2" of total precipitation throughout the growing season. Our current soil moisture, as plant available water to a depth of 120 cm is 10-20mm, for most of our County with a small portion having 20-40mm. Available plant water is 50% of normal in BHC. Our growing season precipitation accumulations relative to normal are low (one in 6-12 years) and very low (one in 12-25 years) with the very low areas being the areas where many of our livestock producers are concentrated.

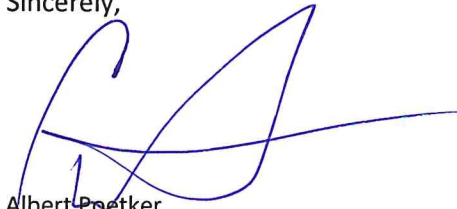
Birch Hills County has two ACIS weather stations within our County. One is in Peoria to the Southwest and the other in Eaglesham to the Northeast. The weather station in Eaglesham is reporting that it received 57.5% of normal accumulated precipitation from April 27, 2025, to August 25, 2025. The Peoria weather station is reporting that it received 55.1 % of normal precipitation from April 27, 2025, to August 25, 2025. This indicates that the precipitation shortfall affects our entire County.

In closing, we join other municipalities in the region in our concern for our producers as tame hay and pasture are in poor condition, bringing significant concern for the livestock industry. Specifically feed quality and availability through the fall and winter months. We urge both the Government of Alberta and the Government of Canada to recognize the seriousness of this situation and employ a coordinated approach to support this vital industry and its producers.

On behalf of producers, we request that the Provincial and Federal Government implement all available assistance programs including the implementation of the AgriRecovery Program, including the inclusion of Birch Hills County in the prescribed area for the Livestock Tax Deferral provision, to mitigate the negative impact for our producers.

Birch Hills County recognizes that agriculture plays a vital role in our community. We are committed to working with all levels of government and stakeholders collaboratively to strengthen and support the agriculture industry.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Albert Poetker', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Albert Poetker  
Reeve

cc: Hon. Danielle Smith, Premier of Alberta  
Hon. Todd Loewen, Minister of Forestry and Parks, MLA for Central-Peace Notley  
Hon. Rebecca Schulz, Minister Environment and Protected Areas  
Hon. Rick Wilson, Minister of Mental Health and Addictions  
Hon. Arnold Viersen, MP Peace River – Westlock, Alberta  
Ms. Kara Westerland, RMA President  
Agriculture Financial Services Corporation  
Agriculture Service Board Provincial Committee  
Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation  
Agriculture and Agrifoods Canada  
Association of Alberta Agricultural Fieldmen  
BHC Ag Service Board Chair



July 25, 2025

Honourable RJ Sigurdson  
Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation  
131 Legislature Building  
10800 – 97 Avenue  
Edmonton, Alberta T5K 2B6

via email: [AGRIC.Minister@gov.ab.ca](mailto:AGRIC.Minister@gov.ab.ca)

Honourable Heath MacDonald  
Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food  
1341 Baseline Road, Tower 7  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0C5

via email: [heath.macdonald@agr.gc.ca](mailto:heath.macdonald@agr.gc.ca)

Dear Ministers,

Re: Municipal Agricultural Disaster in the Municipal District of Bonnyville No. 87

On July 22, 2025, the Municipal District of Bonnyville Council voted to declare a State of Agricultural Disaster for the Municipal District of Bonnyville No. 87 (M.D.). Field inspections conducted earlier this week revealed that Canola and Cereal crop yields will be significantly reduced at harvest. The Northern portion of the M.D. has been especially affected by this year's lack of moisture.

Additional observations from the inspections included water levels in dugouts are low, pastures show no signs of regrowth, and hay crops have only reached roughly 50% of their normal yield, with no possibility for a second cut this season. If these conditions continue, farmers will need to start supplement with feed. Additionally, winter feed reserves will be lower than usual. With little to no moisture over the past month, cereal crops are suffering considerably, with less than 50% of the heads filling properly. Canola crops are also likely unable to fill their pods, leading to further losses for farmers. Moreover, frost has caused significant damage to silage corn in certain areas of the municipality.

The Agricultural Moisture Situation Update from July 17, 2025, reported that the M.D. has received only 30 - 50 % of its normal precipitation levels. As a result, soil moisture reserves are at a 1 in 50 year low, as shown in Maps 9, 10, and 11.

The Municipal District of Bonnyville recognizes the vital role of agriculture in our community. We fully support the resources being made available through the AgriRecovery program, and appreciate the swift actions already taken.



However, we strongly urge both Ministries to:

Include the M.D. of Bonnyville in the federal Livestock Tax Deferral program eligibility; and  
Advocate on behalf of our livestock producers to ensure timely and adequate federal support during this critical time.

We are committed to working collaboratively with provincial and federal partners to help our producers navigate the current challenges and prepare for a more sustainable future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Barry Kalinski", written over a horizontal line.

Barry Kalinski  
Reeve  
Municipal District of Bonnyville No. 87

cc:

Honourable Premier Danielle Smith, Premier of Alberta  
Honourable Scott Cyr, Member of the Legislative Assembly, Bonnyville-Cold Lake-St. Paul  
Shannon Stubbs, Member of Parliament, Lakeland  
Laila Goodridge, Member of Parliament, Fort McMurray-Cold Lake  
Kara Westerland, Rural Municipalities of Alberta President  
Agricultural Financial Services Corporation  
Provincial Agricultural Service Board Committee  
Alberta Association of Agricultural Fieldmen



## **CLEAR HILLS COUNTY**

---

August 13, 2025

File: 11-02-02

RJ Sigurdson, Honourable  
Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation  
131 Legislature Building  
10800-97 Avenue  
Edmonton, Alberta  
T5K 2R6

### **RE: Declaration of Agricultural Disaster – Clear Hills County**

Clear Hills County Council declared an Agricultural Disaster on August 12, 2025, due to the prolonged lack of precipitation, and resulting drought conditions. According to the Alberta Climate Information Service, growing season precipitation accumulations are well below long-term averages across most of the County.

These conditions have severely impacted both crop and livestock producers. Crop yields are well below normal, with many fields ripening prematurely. Forage and hay yields are less than 50% of normal, pastures are depleted, and grasshopper infestations are further damaging crops and feed sources. The lack of available feed is forcing some cattle producers to reduce herd sizes, while others are considering the same.

This declaration is intended to bring awareness to the difficult circumstances our producers face and to request that the provincial and federal governments implement assistance programs similar to those offered in 2023, including:

- AgriRecovery for extraordinary expenses such as feed, water, and transportation for livestock.
- AgriStability, AgriInvest, and AgriInsurance for financial recovery and stability.
- Advance Payments Program to support producer cash flow during recovery.

Clear Hills County appreciates the continued advocacy for Alberta producers and urges swift action to ensure timely support during this crisis.

Sincerely,

Amber Bean  
Reeve

Cc: Nate Horner, Minister of Finance

Todd Loewen, Member of the Legislative Assembly for Central-Peace Notley

Kelly Smith-Fraser, Board Chair AFSC

Kara Westerlund, President, Rural Municipalities of Alberta

Laura Poile, Secretary (AAAF)

Linda Hunt, Executive Assistant, ASB Provincial Committee



July 21, 2025

Honourable RJ Sigurdson  
Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation  
131 Legislature Building  
10800 - 97 Avenue  
Edmonton, Alberta  
T5K 2B6  
[AGRIC.Minister@gov.ab.ca](mailto:AGRIC.Minister@gov.ab.ca)

Honourable Heath MacDonald  
Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food  
1341 Baseline Road, Tower 7  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0C5  
[heath.macdonald@agr.gc.ca](mailto:heath.macdonald@agr.gc.ca)

Dear Ministers,

**Re: Municipal Agricultural Disaster declared for County of Grande Prairie.**

We are writing to inform you that the County of Grande Prairie (County) has declared a Municipal Agricultural Disaster due to ongoing and severe drought conditions affecting the entirety of our region.

Precipitation and soil moisture data for the County confirms conditions are “very low” (once in 12-25 years) to driest (less than once in 50 years). On July 17, 2025, County Council approved this declaration following a report presented by Administration based on this data and other information gathered from site inspections, producer feedback, and consultation with our Agriculture Service Board.

The lack of significant moisture to recharge soil moisture levels, coupled with the “very low” to “driest” precipitation seen this growing season, gives great concern as we enter a critical stage in the growing season. Current conditions are further impacted by the successive drought conditions we have faced over the past number of years. This dire lack of moisture is further confirmed by the “water shortage” or “low flow” advisories currently in place by the province for all watersheds throughout the County.

There is significant concern for the livestock industry, specifically around feed availability through fall and winter months. Hay crops are extremely poor this year—most reports are under 50%, with some cases less than 10% of average yields—and very little carry-over inventory both locally and across the province.

Tame pasture is in very poor condition and lack of water availability for livestock is an increasing issue being reported.

Annual crops have been consistently later than normal throughout the growing season, slowing even further and showing signs of stress in the past few weeks due to minimal precipitation and higher temperatures. Some areas saw very poor germination rates, are well behind the expected growth stage for this time of year and are no longer considered viable. There is a general concern for continued growth and yields as low moisture levels have impacted germination, density and growth rates throughout the season. With little to no soil moisture available, continued growth and yields will rely solely on moisture from rainfall.

Additionally, we have noted grasshoppers in the moderate range, further pressuring and stressing crops this year.

Another poor year will further exacerbate the challenging times producers in our municipality have faced in recent years. Many of our producers will face tough decisions on the future of their operations this year; we are increasingly concerned for the mental health impacts they will face. We continue to learn more about the true depth of mental health issues in our agricultural industry, not only across Alberta, but throughout the country.

The County joins other municipalities in Alberta and Western Canada in declaring an Agricultural Disaster. We urge both the Government of Alberta and Government of Canada to recognize the seriousness of the situation and take a coordinated approach to support the industry and individual producers.

We respectfully request that the County of Grande Prairie be eligible for any assistance programs, including but not limited to the federal Livestock Tax Deferral program, to ensure our producers receive the necessary support they require.

We appreciate your attention to this urgent matter and thank you for your continued support of Alberta's agricultural communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Bob Marshall', with a stylized, cursive script.

Bob Marshall,  
Reeve, County of Grande Prairie

Cc: Hon. Danielle Smith, Premier of Alberta  
Hon. Todd Loewen, Minister of Forestry and Parks  
Hon. Rebecca Schulz, Minister Environment and Protected Areas

Hon. Rick Wilson, Minister of Mental Health and Addictions  
Hon. Martin Long, Minister of Infrastructure  
Hon. Chris Warkentin, MP Grande Prairie-Mackenzie  
Ron Wiebe, MLA Grande Prairie-Wapiti  
Nolan Dyck, MLA Grande Prairie  
Kara Westerland, RMA President  
Agricultural Financial Services Corporation  
Agricultural Service Board Provincial Committee  
Alberta Association of Agricultural Fieldmen



July 30, 2025

The Honourable Heath MacDonald  
Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food  
1341 Baseline Road, Tower 7  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0C5

*Sent via email to: [heath.macdonald@agr.gc.ca](mailto:heath.macdonald@agr.gc.ca)*

**Re: Municipal Agricultural Disaster in Lac La Biche County Alberta**

Dear Minister MacDonald,

On July 29, 2025, Lac La Biche County Council unanimously declared a Municipal Agricultural Disaster in response to the escalating impacts of extreme drought conditions across our region.

Persistent dry weather throughout several critical growing periods has severely affected crop and pasture performance. Many producers are reporting well below-average yields, with hay crops producing only about half of what is typically expected. Pasturelands are struggling to recover, and water shortages are becoming increasingly concerning as dugout levels continue to drop. These conditions were further exacerbated by a late frost, which damaged already stressed crops. Combined with the ongoing lack of moisture, early indications suggest the 2025 harvest will be significantly reduced.

According to the Agricultural Moisture Situation Update, Lac La Biche County lies within one of the most moisture-deficient zones in Alberta. Soil moisture reserves are now among the lowest recorded in decades, with indicators showing 1-in-50-year lows.

Lac La Biche County has prioritized sharing information with our agricultural community, including updates on:

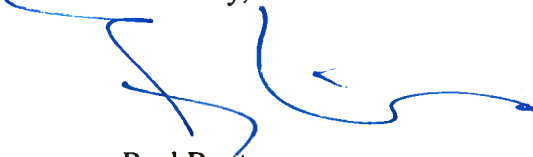
- Sustainable CAP programming;
- The AgriStability enrolment extension to July 31, 2025, and information on contacting Agriculture Financial Services Corporation (AFSC) regarding additional financial programs;
- The provincial Water Pumping Program for on-farm water access;
- Equipment rentals to support rotational grazing and other adaptive measures; and
- Emergency assistance from County Fire Services in cases where livestock are at risk due to water shortages.

While we continue to offer local supports, the scale and severity of the situation exceed what municipalities can manage alone. We respectfully urge that Lac La Biche County be included in all relevant drought response measures, including eligibility for the federal Livestock Tax Deferral and commit to an AgriRecovery response. We also encourage your office to consider enhanced federal supports to help producers facing significant financial and operational losses.

Minister MacDonald  
Page 2

We appreciate your continued leadership and thank you for your attention to the urgent needs of Alberta's agricultural producers.

Sincerely,



Paul Reptov  
Mayor, Lac La Biche County

cc: Hon. Danielle Smith, Premier of Alberta  
Hon. RJ Sigurdson, Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation  
Hon. Brian Jean, MLA Fort McMurray – Lac La Biche  
Laila Goodridge, MP, Fort McMurray – Cold Lake  
Kara Westerlund, RMA President  
Agriculture Financial Services Corporation (AFSC)  
Agricultural Service Board Provincial Committee  
Alberta Association of Agricultural Fieldmen  
Lac La Biche County Council





July 30, 2025

The Honourable RJ Sigurdson  
Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation  
131 Legislature Building  
10800 – 97 Avenue  
Edmonton, Alberta T5K 2B6

*Sent via email to: [AGRIC.Minister@gov.ab.ca](mailto:AGRIC.Minister@gov.ab.ca)*

**Re: Municipal Agricultural Disaster in Lac La Biche County**

Dear Minister Sigurdson,

Lac La Biche County Council has formally recognized the escalating severity of this year's drought conditions and on Tuesday, July 29, 2025, passed a resolution declaring a Municipal Agricultural Disaster.

Widespread drought across the region has placed considerable pressure on our producers. Crop development has been significantly hampered by prolonged dryness, with many fields showing signs of stress. Early indications suggest that both yields and quality for cereals and oilseeds will be impacted. Pasture recovery has stalled, dugout levels are shrinking, and hay production is falling short with many producers estimating just half of their normal yields. We even experienced a frost that further damaged crops and our producers are also contending with grasshoppers.

According to the Agricultural Moisture Situation Update, soil moisture levels have reached historical lows, with data showing reserves at a 1-in-50-year deficit.

In response, the County has taken steps to ensure our producers are informed of available support. We've actively shared information about:

- The AFSC AgriStability enrolment deadline extension to July 31, 2025, and to connect with AFSC about financial assistance programs;
- Alberta's Water Pumping Program;
- Sustainable CAP programs;
- The County's local Fire Services Department will assist in an emergency situation if livestock are without water.

To further assist local producers, Lac La Biche County maintains a rental program that includes:

- Silage and bale wrapping equipment;
- Electric fencing and solar waterers for rotational grazing;
- Grasshopper bait spreaders.

Minister Sigurdson  
Page 2

We are doing what we can locally, but our producers need broader support. We respectfully request that Lac La Biche County be considered for inclusion in the federal Livestock Tax Deferral program. We also urge to begin the AgriRecovery process and stress for continued advocacy at the provincial and federal levels to expand access to emergency programs and financial relief tailored to the needs of both livestock and crop producers.

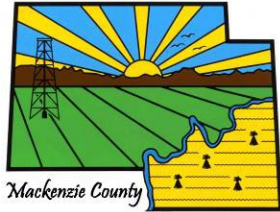
Thank you for your consideration and continued partnership in supporting Alberta's agricultural communities.

Sincerely,



Paul Reutov  
Mayor, Lac La Biche County

cc: Hon. Danielle Smith, Premier of Alberta  
Hon. Brian Jean, MLA, Fort McMurray – Lac La Biche  
Laila Goodridge, MP, Fort McMurray – Cold Lake  
Kara Westerlund, Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) President  
Agriculture Financial Services Corporation (AFSC)  
Agricultural Service Board Provincial Committee  
Alberta Association of Agricultural Fieldmen  
Lac La Biche County Council



## Mackenzie County

P.O. Box 640, 4511-46 Avenue, Fort Vermilion, AB T0H 1N0  
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[www.mackenziecounty.com](http://www.mackenziecounty.com)  
[office@mackenziecounty.com](mailto:office@mackenziecounty.com)

July 25, 2025

The Honourable RJ Sigurdson, M.L.A.  
Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation  
Members of Executive Council  
Executive Branch  
131 Legislature Building  
10800-97 Avenue  
Edmonton, AB  
T5K 2B6

Email: [AGRIC.Minister@gov.ab.ca](mailto:AGRIC.Minister@gov.ab.ca)

Dear Minister:

### **RE: MUNICIPAL DECLARATION OF AGRICULTURAL DISASTER**

This letter is to officially inform you that Mackenzie County has declared an Agricultural Disaster following the motion carried at the July 24, 2025 Special Council Meeting.

Mackenzie County has experienced extended periods of dry weather and insufficient rainfall over the past several years and the situation has further deteriorated in 2025. As of July 23, 2025, data from Alberta Climate Information Service (ACIS) indicates that Mackenzie County has an accumulated an average of 30 mm precipitation, which is 120 mm below the 30-year average.

As a result, all cereal crops, canola, legumes and hay fields are far below adequate production levels. Pastures are being depleted as there is very little forage regrowth and cattle are estimated to be pulled from the Provincial Grazing Reserve 40 days earlier than expected due to lack of forage. In addition to drought, an influx of grasshoppers is further destroying fields. Livestock producers will be forced to source feed from outside the region at an unprecedented price per bale excluding the added cost of trucking.

In response to this disaster, Mackenzie County respectfully requests that the Government of Alberta aid agricultural producers by granting the opportunity to access Crown lands for additional feed/grazing that would give some relief to our local producers as their grazing season has being cut short. Tax deferrals,

The Honourable RJ Sigurdson, M.L.A

Page 2

July 25, 2025

payment deferrals and freight subsidies would also alleviate the devastating financial effects that this drought has caused.

Mackenzie County agricultural producers are experiencing severe difficulties with their ability to maintain crops, and any assistance that the province can provide will be greatly appreciated.

We would be pleased to meet with you or your staff to further discuss this issue. Should you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at 780-926-7405 or our Chief Administrative Officer, Darrell Derksen at 780-927-3718 or by email [cao@mackenziecounty.com](mailto:cao@mackenziecounty.com).

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Josh Knelsen'.

Joshua Knelsen  
Reeve  
Mackenzie County

c: Hon. Danielle Smith, Premier of Alberta  
Hon. Todd Lowen, Minister of Forestry and Parks  
Hon. Rebecca Schulz, Minister of Environment and Protected Areas  
Hon. Rick Wilson, Minister of Mental Health and Addictions  
Hon. Martin Long, Minister of Infrastructure  
Hon. Dan Williams, MLA Peace River  
Kara Westerland, RMA President  
Agricultural Financial Services Corporation  
Agricultural Service Board Provincial Committee  
Alberta Association of Agricultural Fieldman  
Mackenzie County Council



# COUNTY OF Northern Lights

#600, 7th Ave NW, PO Box 10, Manning AB T0H 2M0  
Phone 780-836-3348 Fax 780-836-3663  
Toll Free 1-888-525-3481

Office of the Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation  
229 Legislature Building  
10800 – 97 Avenue  
Edmonton, Alberta  
T5K 2B6

July 24, 2025

Attention: Honourable RJ Sigurdson  
**Re: County of Northern Lights Declares an Agricultural Disaster**

The County of Northern Lights is experiencing worsening drought conditions starting last summer resulting in increasing pest pressure and poor pasture, hay, and silage yields. The resulting drought stress will lead to feed shortages and destocking. The sporadic and lack of rainfall has severely limited yield potential of all crops in most areas; the forecast moving forward will not offer any relief.

Drought conditions and pest pressure have weakened uneven crops; yield and quality reductions will be the norm for most crops. Hot and dry conditions have been persistent through the flowering, filling and podding stages. The Provincial Crop Report for the Peace Region has Tame Hay and Pasture Conditions rated at 80.6% as poor to fair. Current Crop Condition aren't much better, being rated at 72.4% poor to fair for all major crops. These conditions will contribute to the lack of feed and destocking we are bringing awareness too. Low yields, limited gains on livestock and rising costs will put most producers in an out-of-pocket loss this year, even with insurance programs.

At this time, the County of Northern Lights would request the Minister work with the Federal Government to release the prescribed regions early and be added to the 2025 Livestock Tax Deferral Provision as a prescribed region. We believe being added to the list early will help producers plan for winter and possibly offer some mental relief. We would humbly request the Minister engage with Agriculture Financial Services Corporation to retroactively increase the Low Yield Allowance in affected areas to allow more crops to be converted to feed. Lastly, if the drought affected areas continue to grow, we would hope AgriRecovery will be initiated and a disaster package developed.

We look forward to updates on further programing and understand we aren't alone in facing these challenging circumstances.

Sincerely,

Terry Ungarian  
Reeve  
County of Northern Lights



Cc: Honourable Premier Danielle Smith, Premier of Alberta  
Honourable Todd Loewen, Minister of Forestry and Parks  
Honourable Martin Long, Minister of Infrastructure  
Honourable Dan Williams, Minister of Municipal Affairs  
Mr. Chris Warkentin, Member of Parliament, Grande Prairie - Mackenzie  
Agricultural Service Boards of Alberta  
Provincial Agricultural Service Board Committee  
Rural Municipalities of Alberta  
Agriculture Financial Services Corporation



August 14, 2025

Honourable Heath MacDonald  
Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food  
1241 Baseline Road  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0C5

Honourable RJ Sigurdson  
Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation  
131 Legislature Building  
10800 – 97 Avenue  
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

Honourble Ministers:

**RE: State of Agricultural Disaster for Livestock Producers– Northern Sunrise County**

On August 8, 2025, Northern Sunrise County Council declared an Agricultural Disaster for livestock producers due to the extreme drought conditions and impacts it has had on agriculture production in the municipality.

Precipitation across the County has been well below normal, measuring just 30% to 47% of the 30-year average. These extreme conditions are severely affecting all agricultural producers within the municipality. Livestock producers, in particular, are facing especially difficult circumstances. Pasture conditions are extremely poor, and hay and greenfeed production has been significantly reduced. Due to minimal pasture regrowth, many producers have already begun feeding hay, placing them in a difficult position as they prepare for the upcoming fall and winter. With hay yields at approximately 25% of normal and much of the Peace Region experiencing similar drought conditions, sourcing feed from outside the region has become necessary, albeit at considerable costs. Additionally, dugouts in some areas are drying up, further compounding the situation. Without significant rainfall in the near future, conditions are expected to worsen.

At this time, the County requests to be added as a prescribed region for the 2025 Livestock Tax Deferral program. It is anticipated that being added to this list will help producers plan for the winter and offer much-needed mental health relief.

We would also like to request that both levels of government fast track the initiation of all programs that may mitigate the negative impact on our producers.

... 2



Honourable Minister MacDonald  
August 14, 2025  
Page 2

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Honourable Minister Sigurdson

We appreciate your attention to this important matter and thank you for your support of our agricultural producers.

Sincerely,



Corinna Williams  
Reeve  
Northern Sunrise County

c: Honourable Danielle Smith, Premier of Alberta  
Honourable Arnold Viersen, MP for Peace River-Westlock  
Honourable Dan Williams, MLA for Peace River  
Honourable Scott Sinclair, MLA for Lesser Slave Lake  
Kara Westerlund, President, Rural Municipalities of Alberta  
Agricultural Financial Services Corporation  
Agricultural Service Board Provincial Committee  
Alberta Association of Agricultural Fieldman



August 14, 2025

The Honourable RJ Sigurdson  
Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation  
131 Legislature Building  
10800 – 97 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta T5K 2B6

[AGRIC.Minister@gov.ab.ca](mailto:AGRIC.Minister@gov.ab.ca)

Dear Minister Sigurdson,

**RE: Declaration of Agricultural Disaster – Municipal District of Peace No. 135**

Municipal District of Peace No. 135 Council has formally recognized the severity and prolonged nature of this year's drought conditions and, on Tuesday, August 12, 2025, passed a resolution declaring a Municipal Agricultural Disaster.

The widespread drought conditions and heightened pest pressure in the municipality have placed considerable pressure on our livestock and crop producers. Low carryover moisture from the previous year, combined with less than 20 mm of precipitation in April, May, and early June, has significantly reduced hay and pasture yields, as well as crop yields. The extensive grasshopper infestation has further exacerbated the situation. According to the latest Alberta Crop Report for the Peace Region, 78% of hay pasture conditions are rated as poor to fair, and crop conditions are estimated to be at least 30% below normal. These prevailing conditions will contribute to less feed availability, limited livestock weight gains, low yields and quality, and rising costs, placing most producers in a precarious financial situation – even with insurance programs.

We respectfully request that the Municipal District of Peace No. 135 be considered for inclusion in the federal Livestock Tax Deferral Program. We also urge the immediate initiation of the AgriRecovery process and emphasize the need for continued advocacy at the provincial and federal levels to expand access to emergency programs and financial relief tailored to the needs of both livestock and crop producers.

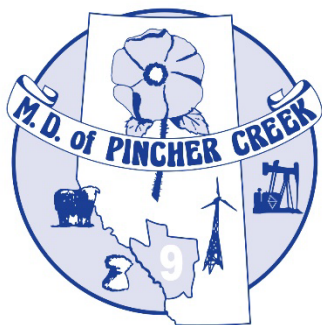
We appreciate your attention and look forward to further programming to alleviate the challenges faced by our producer community.

Sincerely,

Robert Willing  
Reeve, Municipal District of Peace No. 135



cc. Honourable Premier Danielle Smith, Premier of Alberta  
Honourable Heath MacDonald, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada  
Honourable Dan Williams, Minister of Municipal Affairs  
Honourable Todd Loewen, Minister of Forestry and Parks  
Mr. Arnold Viersen, Member of Parliament, Peace River-Westlock  
Agriculture Service Boards of Alberta  
Provincial Agricultural Service Board Committee  
Rural Municipalities of Alberta  
Agricultural Financial Services Corporation



1037 Herron Ave.  
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Pincher Creek, AB  
T0K 1W0  
p. 403.627.3130  
f. 403.627.5070  
[info@mdpinchercreek.ab.ca](mailto:info@mdpinchercreek.ab.ca)  
[www.mdpinchercreek.ab.ca](http://www.mdpinchercreek.ab.ca)

June 23, 2025

Honourable RJ Sigurdson  
Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation  
131 Legislature Building  
10800 – 97 Avenue  
Edmonton, Alberta T5K 2B6  
[AGRIC.Minister@gov.ab.ca](mailto:AGRIC.Minister@gov.ab.ca)

Honourable Heath MacDonald  
Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food  
1341 Baseline Road, Tower 7  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0C5  
Canada  
[heath.macdonald@agr.gc.ca](mailto:heath.macdonald@agr.gc.ca)

**Re: Municipal Agricultural Disaster in the Municipal District of Pincher Creek No. 9**

Dear Ministers;

As we are sure you are aware of the mounting drought related situation facing the agriculture community in Alberta, we would like to inform you that Council for the Municipal District of Pincher Creek No. 9 (MD) motioned on June 10, 2025, to declare a Municipal Agricultural Disaster due to drought.

This declaration comes after a presentation from Administration to Council, detailing the many aspects of what is and isn't a disaster in the municipality. Current conditions within the MD are specifically dire for one of our biggest agricultural industries, livestock. The recommendation as presented is supported by the Agriculture Service Board and all producers in the municipality involved in the raising of livestock.

There are almost no areas in our highly variable municipality that are not showing a lack of soil moisture reserves, with moisture 6" down at poor for 75% or more of our MD. After a few years of similar weather, more than 50% of our livestock producers are already short of water at this point early in the season. Most of the rest will be in a similar situation as the summer goes on, as we are moving into what is usually our 'dry' season.

While some timely rains and good farming practices have made our Wheat and Barley crop just slightly below average relative to normal, high temperatures and overall lack of moisture from the beginning of May have made these crops much less than what they could be. While it's still early in the season, a significant percentage of our (early seeded) barley crop has headed out, with the possibility of just an average amount of silage shrinking every day for these crops, even with rain. They might still produce an average amount of bushels but with noticeably uneven growth stages within fields this is increasingly unlikely. A looming lack of local feed makes this important.

What has been consistently poor and getting worse in ratings has been hay, pasture and range conditions. With a very low snowpack, early thaw, low spring rainfall overall, the result has been poor quality and quantity of vegetation on these areas. The MD operates dams from the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration (PRFA) era. The water levels in these dams are far below normal due to a very limited snowpack and run-off. Feed availability will be low, and some will either sell animals or pull animals off summer pasture and start feeding on what are limited supplies of hay earlier than usual. Low moisture has also impacted availability of livestock watering options for many, with hauled water being the only option in some cases.

We realize that while this declaration does not trigger increased access to funding, it is meant to provide an indication of the severity of the situation facing the MD cattle producers.

We appreciate your attention to this situation and the impact it has on our local agricultural community and the greater agricultural economy of Alberta.

Yours truly,



Rick Lemire  
Reeve, MD of Pincher Creek No.9

cc:

Hon. Danielle Smith, Premier of Alberta  
Hon. Chelsae Petrovic, MLA Livingstone-McLeod  
Hon. John Barlow, MP Foothills  
Kara Westerland, RMA President  
Agricultural Financial Services Corporation  
Agricultural Service Board Provincial Committee  
Alberta Association of Agricultural Fieldmen

Condition Statement Tool						
Date		15-May-25				
Municipality		MD of Pincher Creek				
Total Area Impacted		90% of Municipality				
Map Included		No				
Next Report Due		01-Jun-25				
		Ranking	Drought	Excessive Moisture	Floods	Pests
Annuals Impacted (% rated poor)						
Cereals						
	Barley		10%	N/A	N/A	Grasshoppers
	Wheat		10%	N/A	N/A	Grasshoppers
Oil Seeds						
	Canola		25%	N/A	N/A	Grasshoppers
Others		none				
Perennials Impacted (% rated poor)						
Tame Hay			25%	N/A	N/A	Grasshoppers
Tame Pasture			35%	N/A	N/A	Grasshoppers
Native Pasture			35%	N/A	N/A	Grasshoppers
Other: (please indicate)						
Alfalfa			N/A	N/A	N/A	Alfalfa Weevil
Water for Livestock			80%	N/A	N/A	
Soil Moisture (surface)			5%	N/A	N/A	
Soil Moisture 6"			75%	N/A	N/A	

**NOTES:** Small but timely rains have kept hopes for crops up but haven't been enough to impact runoff, soil moisture levels at 6", water for livestock or small basin water storage levels. Water for Livestock was already a serious problem in May, with some people hauling water already. More than 75% of dugouts, lakes, sloughs and local (small) reservoirs were at 20 to 50 year lows after snowmelt (end of April). Canola acres are way down, with 2024 seeing the summer/fall heat and lack of moisture cause a significant percentage of the crop to fail. Alfalfa Weevils have been impacting hay yields across the MD for about the last ten years but with this years drought and last five years low rainfall and hay production, the impacts are felt more keenly. It's a little early to spot them yet.

Condition Statement Tool						
Date		01-Jun-25				
Municipality		MD of Pincher Creek				
Total Area Impacted		90% of Municipality				
Map Included		No				
Next Report Due		15-Jun-25				
		Ranking	Drought	Excessive Moisture	Floods	Pests
Annuals Impacted (% rated poor)						
Cereals						
	Barley		25%	N/A	N/A	Grasshoppers
	Wheat		15%	N/A	N/A	Grasshoppers
Oil Seeds						
	Canola		15%	N/A	N/A	Grasshoppers
Others		none				
Perennials Impacted (% rated poor)						
Tame Hay			45%	N/A	N/A	Grasshoppers
Tame Pasture			60%	N/A	N/A	Grasshoppers
Native Pasture			65%	N/A	N/A	Grasshoppers
Other: (please indicate)						
Alfalfa			N/A	N/A	N/A	Alfalfa Weevils
Water for Livestock			85%	N/A	N/A	
Soil Moisture (surface)			45%	N/A	N/A	
Soil Moisture 6"			85%	N/A	N/A	

NOTES: Water for Livestock has been getting worse and producers are regularly hauling and pumpng water for cattle. More than 75% of dugouts, lakes, sloughs and reservoirs were at 20 to 50 year lows after snowmelt (end of April) and there have been no big precipitation events that would fill them and bring the water table up. Soil moisture at 6 inches is almost non-existent. Barley is starting to head out in about 5% of (early plantings) of crop. Fall crops are at about 25% headed out and less than a foot high in many cases. Hay is fast approaching large scale failure while tame and native pastures are mostly dried out. Alfalfa Weevils haven't been reported as a problem yet but we'll know soon if they are going to be as alfalfa is a week away from blooming in some areas already.



Condition Statement Tool						
Date		15-Jun-25				
Municipality		MD of Pincher Creek				
Total Area Impacted		90% of Municipality				
Map Included		No				
Next Report Due		30-Jun-25				
		Ranking	Drought	Excessive Moisture	Floods	Pests
Annuals Impacted (% rated poor)						
Cereals						
	Barley		45%	N/A	N/A	Grasshoppers
	Wheat		20%	N/A	N/A	Grasshoppers
Oil Seeds						
	Canola		20%	N/A	N/A	Grasshoppers
Others		none				
Perennials Impacted (% rated poor)						
Tame Hay			45%	N/A	N/A	Grasshoppers
Tame Pasture			70%	N/A	N/A	Grasshoppers
Native Pasture			75%	N/A	N/A	Grasshoppers
Other: (please indicate)						
Alfalfa			45%	N/A	N/A	Alfalfa Weevils
Water for Livestock			85%	N/A	N/A	
Soil Moisture (surface)			25%	N/A	N/A	
Soil Moisture 6"			85%	N/A	N/A	

NOTES: A rain event on June 12th brought surface soil moisture up in some areas but never got down very far, leaving the six inch soil moisture unchanged. Barley has continued to head out very low to the ground (less than a foot) in many of the earliest seeded crops. Wheat is starting to be stressed out as well but was mostly revived by the rain. Water for Livestock was not helped and mostly has gotten worse. Water hauling is common and pumping is happening wherever they have a source to pump from. More than 75% of dugouts, lakes, sloughs and reservoirs were at 20 to 50 year lows after snowmelt (end of April).

2025-07-25

Hon. RJ Sigurdson  
Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation  
131 Legislature Building  
10800 – 97 Avenue  
Edmonton, AB.  
T5K 2B6  
[AGRIC.Minister@gov.ab.ca](mailto:AGRIC.Minister@gov.ab.ca)

Hon. Heath MacDonald  
Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food  
1341 Baseline Road, Tower 7  
Ottawa, ON.  
K1A 0C5  
[heath.macdonald@agr.gc.ca](mailto:heath.macdonald@agr.gc.ca)

**RE: Declaration of Agricultural Disaster in Saddle Hills County**

Dear Ministers,

As of July 22, 2025, Saddle Hills County has declared an Agricultural Disaster due to the severe nature of the ongoing drought conditions occurring throughout our region.

Precipitation and soil moisture reserves across the Peace Region during this growing season, continue to range from 'low' to 'extremely low' relative to long-term normal, with areas across the region receiving as little as 30% of their average precipitation. Current conditions are exacerbated by the successive drought conditions faced in the region over the past number of years and the dire lack of moisture is further confirmed by the provincial water shortage advisories currently in place for watersheds throughout the region.

All local grain elevators report dry or very dry conditions and warn that the area needs more precipitation heading into grain fill or yields are likely to further decline. This season, the Peace Region is reporting a considerably lower percentage of good to excellent quality crops and a significant decrease in the amount of good to excellent quality pasture growth, compared to the rest of the province, as well as the 5 and 10 year averages. In order for crops to survive to harvest, the Peace Region will need



ongoing, regular periods of rain. Unfortunately, throughout this growing season, the average daily mean temperature has been warmer than normal, with no changes forecast for the foreseeable future.

We join other municipalities in the region in our concern for producers, as low moisture levels have impacted germination, density, and growth rates throughout the season. Tame pasture is in poor condition, bringing significant concern for the livestock industry, specifically around feed availability through the fall and winter months. In addition to this, Saddle Hills County noted grasshoppers in the moderate to severe range, further stressing crops.

Many of our producers face tough decisions on the future of their operations in the months ahead, and we are increasingly concerned for both their livelihoods and the mental health impacts they may face. We are not alone, either in the province or the region, in these concerns and we urge both the Government of Alberta and the Government of Canada to recognize the seriousness of this situation, and employ a coordinated approach to support this vital industry and its producers.

On behalf of our producers, we urge you to include Saddle Hills County in the regions eligible for the federal Livestock Tax Deferral program and encourage your continued advocacy on behalf of our region and impacted producers.

Respectfully,

Kristen Smith, Reeve

cc: Hon. Danielle Smith, Premier of Alberta  
Hon. Todd Loewen, Minister of Forestry and Parks  
Hon. Rebecca Schulz, Minister Environment and Protected Areas  
Hon. Rick Wilson, Minister of Mental Health and Addictions  
Hon. Martin Long, Minister of Infrastructure  
Hon. Chris Warkentin, MP Grande Prairie-Mackenzie  
Ron Wiebe, MLA Grande Prairie-Wapiti  
Nolan Dyck, MLA Grande Prairie  
Kara Westerland, RMA President



Agricultural Financial Services Corporation  
Agricultural Service Board Provincial Committee  
Alberta Association of Agricultural Fieldmen

Junction of Highway 49 and Highway 725, RR 1, Spirit River, Alberta, Canada, T0H 3G0  
Phone: 780-864-3760 | Fax: 780-864-3904 | Toll Free: 1-888-864-3760

[saddlehills.ab.ca](http://saddlehills.ab.ca)



**Smoky Lake County**

P.O. Box 310  
4612 McDougall Drive  
Smoky Lake, Alberta T0A 3C0  
Phone: 780-656-3730  
1-888-656-3730  
Fax: 780-656-3768  
[www.smokylakecounty.ab.ca](http://www.smokylakecounty.ab.ca)

July 25, 2025

## **DECLARATION OF A MUNICIPAL AGRICULTURAL DISASTER**

At a Special Council Meeting held on July 24, 2025, Smoky Lake County Council unanimously voted to declare a Municipal Agricultural Disaster in response to the ongoing drought and extremely dry conditions impacting the region.

This declaration is intended to draw attention to the significant challenges local producers are currently experiencing—and are expected to continue facing in the weeks and months ahead. The declaration also emphasizes the vital importance of agriculture to our municipality, our province, and the global food supply chain.

Letters will be sent to both the Provincial Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation and the Federal Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food to highlight the urgent situation and advocate for support for our agricultural community.

To stay informed, producers are encouraged to:

- View the most recent Alberta weather maps using the link;  
<http://agriculture.alberta.ca/acis/climate-maps.jsp>
- Contact AFSC or visit their website for current information on available assistance programs.  
[www.afsc.ca](http://www.afsc.ca)





# Municipal District of Smoky River No. 130

P.O. Box 210 FALHER, ALBERTA T0H 1M0

Phone: (780) 837-2221

Fax: (780) 837-2453

August 6, 2025

Honourable RJ Sigurdson  
Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation  
131 Legislature Building  
10800 - 97 Avenue Edmonton, Alberta  
T5K 2B6  
[AGRIC.Minister@gov.ab.ca](mailto:AGRIC.Minister@gov.ab.ca)

Dear Honourable Minister Sigurdson;  
RE: Declaration of Agricultural Disaster – Drought

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The MD of Smoky River No.130 has declared the MD as an Agricultural Disaster area due to drought conditions. The primary impact is to ranchers who have seen losses of up to 80% of their hay crops and severe deterioration of pasture lands. Drought coupled with grasshopper numbers rearing or at economic thresholds have had additional challenges for our producers. Annual crops are also suffering and anticipated losses to Cereal crops being estimated at 30% less than normal and Canola around 20% less than normal. If we get some rains these crops may improve somewhat but the hay and pasture lands will not recover in 2025.

We request that if there are any additional provincial/federal programs where a municipality is required to be included in an "affected area" drought impact map we request that the MD of Smoky River be included in that map. Adding to the challenge, most of our ratepayers are still on dugout water and without rain recharging dugouts we fear that the situation will only get worse heading into the winter months. Water storage and transfer are still large issues in the MD of Smoky River.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Brochu", is written over a faint, circular official stamp.

Robert Brochu  
Reeve

C.C.  
Honourable Danielle Smith, Premier of Alberta  
Honourable Heath MacDonald Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food  
Honourable Todd Loewen Minister of Forestry and Parks  
Agricultural Service Board Provincial Committee ASBPC  
Rural Municipalities of Alberta RMA



August 12, 2025

Via email: [AGRIC.Minister@gov.ab.ca](mailto:AGRIC.Minister@gov.ab.ca)

Office of the Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation  
229 Legislature Building  
10800-97 Avenue  
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

**Attention: Honourable RJ Sigurdson**

**RE: Request for Agricultural Disaster Declaration and Inclusion in the 2025 Livestock Tax Deferral Provision for Westlock County**

Dear Minister Sigurdson,

On behalf of Westlock County Council and the agricultural producers within our region, we are writing to formally declare an agricultural disaster in Westlock County due to severe drought conditions and to request the inclusion of our municipality as a prescribed region under the 2025 Livestock Tax Deferral provision.

According to recent Alberta Agriculture Moisture Maps, Westlock County continues to experience critically low moisture levels. This prolonged deficit has resulted in extremely poor pasture conditions and significantly diminished feed stands across the region. Many producers are reporting that hay and forage yields are coming in at 10–25% of average production.

In addition, annual crops are now beginning to show signs of deterioration. Producers are observing that pods are not filling properly, and in many cases, crops are burning off prematurely. The stress on the crops from heat and drought has been compounded by grasshopper infestations that are now well above economic thresholds, causing further loss of forage and grain potential.

These combined pressures are forcing livestock producers to consider early herd reductions due to limited and costly feed supplies. Without timely and targeted support, these decisions could result in long-term financial hardship for producers and lasting economic impacts on the broader agricultural community in our region.

.../2

Given these conditions, we respectfully request that Westlock County be included in the list of prescribed regions eligible for the 2025 Livestock Tax Deferral program. This tool is critical to help producers manage income and feed security challenges as they navigate another extremely difficult production year.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. Westlock County welcomes the opportunity to further discuss the needs of our producers.

Sincerely,



Christine Wiese  
Reeve, Westlock County

cc: The Honourable Danielle Smith, Premier of Alberta  
Mr. Arnold Viersen, Member of Parliament, Peace River–Westlock  
Mr. Glenn van Dijken, MLA, Athabasca–Barrhead–Westlock  
Agricultural Service Boards of Alberta  
Provincial Agricultural Service Board Committee  
Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA)  
Agricultural Financial Services Corporation (AFSC)  
Tony Kulbisky, CAO, Westlock County



## **ASB Update on AgKnow - June 27, 2025**

Thank you for your continued support of and advocacy for AgKnow. Many ASBs and other sponsors have been financially helping out AgKnow. Although limited finances over the past few months have curtailed AgKnow daily operations, this financial support has enabled us to continue to contract Linda Hunt on a part-time basis. We are grateful for Linda's leadership and passion in making a significant positive impact in assisting farmers and ranchers in need.

We are grateful for the strong ongoing support and advocacy that ASBs have been providing.

Some recent developments are giving us a sense that we may be turning the corner on getting new financing in place. These include:

- Sponsorship funds continue to come in from multiple sources including ASBs
- We have received approval for a 3-year S-CAP grant
- We are awaiting approval of a second 3-year S-CAP grant, and it will hopefully be approved soon
- We are negotiating an arrangement with a mental health charity foundation that when finalized will open the door to attract significant charity funds to support AgKnow
- We have retained the services of a professional fundraising organization in developing our fund-raising campaign. The grants require matching funding and some of the costs of AgKnow are not an eligible use of grant funds. Hence a concerted effort on fund raising is a must do.

Through these five things happening on the fundraising front, we are cautiously optimistic that we will secure much improved financial stability over the next three years and beyond. Once these are in place, we anticipate that later this summer we will be contracting additional staff to help Linda with AgKnow.

We are in the process of transferring our group of AgKnow farm informed counsellors to Counselling Alberta and will be working with Counselling Alberta to ensure smooth transition of these services that AgKnow previously provided. AgKnow in the past with strong sponsorship funding support, has provided approximately 300 individual counselling sessions to individual



producers. The farm informed counselling program with Counselling Alberta has secured significant new funding to continue this service for the coming year.

We are putting in place a strong AgKnow Growth and Sustainability Committee whose members will be a mix of influential experts drawn from the agricultural and mental health communities. This group will help Linda and ARECA through:

- Define and oversee AgKnow's long term strategic direction
- Determine where AgKnow best delivers value to producers in Alberta's mental health ecosystem
- Define and oversee AgKnow's fundraising and advocacy initiatives
- Provide direction and oversight to scale services in a resilient, sustainable manner
- Provide direction and financial oversight to drive AgKnow operational excellence

We feel we are turning the corner to better days ahead for AgKnow.

Although we do not yet have final decisions on all these efforts yet, we are careful not to "count our chickens" until these finances are in place.

With kind regards

Alan Hall, Executive Director ARECA





July 11, 2025

RE: Letter to AgKnow Stakeholders and supporters

Dear stakeholders,

Well 2024 is in the bag and we are already 6 months into 2025, time flies. I wanted to just take a moment and acknowledge what we were able to accomplish in 2024, because it was truly an amazing example of rural values and culture. I am so proud to be part of an initiative that is making an impact in Alberta, nationally and internationally.

**We couldn't have done it without you!**

2024 was a challenging year for resourcing. Although we finished off the 2023-24 fiscal year with provincial grant funding and were able to get an extension to keep the Free counselling session program going into July, it was you, our stakeholders that carried the program through to the end of 2024 and continue to support us into 2025.

Just over \$180,000 was raised for 2024:

- **25% from 21 Rural Municipalities**
- **34% from 9 Agriculture Associations**
- **27% from 9 Businesses**
- **14% from 20 private donations**

In 2024 and we were able to:

- Retain 3 full time staff until the end of October 2024
- Add 11 resources to the website for download
- Distribute 7 newsletters distributed to over 1100 subscribers and 50% open rate
- Pay for 155 Farm informed counselling sessions
- Deliver 39 events delivered to approximately 1500 participants
- Partnership started to create a charitable fund for AgKnow

**And the Work Continues:**

In January of this year, we received one of the two Sustainable CAP grants we applied for and kickstarted the Community of Practice project with a webinar series and communications campaign to attract participants.

We were also fortunate to have the Ministry of Mental Health and Addiction support our efforts to create a farm informed counselling program and we are working with Counselling Alberta to transition the AgKnow Free Counselling pilot project to a more permanent

July 11, 2025

delivery model. With your continued engagement and support we have an opportunity to help shape a Farm Informed Counselling program to be one of the responses to the current situation.

My focus remains on building the capacity to support farm families in Alberta to ensure thriving rural communities as part of our safe, sustainable and ethical food production system for generations. Wherever possible we will continue to work within established programs and services to increase their capacity to support farm families by adapting to meet their unique needs and encouraging adoption.

### **Forever Grateful**

I am grateful to the ARECA board who continue to support the efforts of the AgKnow program and their support to create a Growth and Stability Committee to set the strategic direction for the next few years.

I am grateful for Katie and Cornelius who stuck it out with month over month uncertainty and had unwavering commitment. I will be forever grateful for their efforts in a very challenging work environment.

And I am grateful for the in kind and financial support from you are stakeholders who continue to encourage and support the effort. I would not still be working on this without your willingness to provide feedback, connection to you networks and continued encouragement.

Working for a better future,

*Linda Hunt*

Linda Hunt  
AgKnow Program Director  
780-678-5984  
[Linda@agknow.ca](mailto:Linda@agknow.ca)

**From:** ASBPC Executive <ASBPC\_EA@agriculturalserviceboards.com>

**Sent:** Monday, August 18, 2025 12:29 PM

**To:** Laura Poile <lpoile@rockyview.ca>; Brenda Knight <bknight@lacombecounty.com>; Sebastien Dutrisac <sdutrisac@thcounty.ab.ca>; Walter Preugschas <wpreugschas@countybarrhead.ab.ca>; Bob C <bchrenek@countyp.ab.ca>; Stephen Bevans <stephen@cardstoncounty.com>; Kerriane Koehler-Munro <kerriane.koehler-munro@gov.ab.ca>; Rob Siewert <Rob.Siewert@FoothillsCountyAB.ca>; Kevin Wirsta <kwirsta@rmalberta.com>; Dawn Fortin <dawn.fortin@woodlands.ab.ca>; Stephanie Cerny <stephanie.cerny@gov.ab.ca>; Corinna Williams <cwilliams@northernsunrise.net>; Ross Bohnet <rbohnet@lsac.ca>; ghrabec <ghrabec@beaver.ab.ca>; tietsiahuyzer <tietsiahuyzer@gmail.com>; John Van Driesten <john.vandriesten@mdwillowcreek.com>

**Subject:** ASB Gopher (RGS) Impact Survey

Good Morning Laura and ASBPC,

Could you please send this out to the AAAF email list.

The ASBPC in response to the request from MP John Barlow has created a 11 quick question survey with opportunity to comment and upload pictures. This survey was posted on the ASB website blog and LinkedIn pages on the weekend. [Join the 2025 ASB Gopher Impact Survey Today – Agricultural Service Boards](#)

Please take the time to send this opportunity to farmers you know that have been impacted and to share in your media.

Our goal is 200 responses or December 1, whichever comes first. The information collected will be created into a report and shared with the ASBs, Province and Federal ministers.

A dedicated page was created for the website with links to information and the survey: [Impact of Richardson's Ground Squirrels: Join Our 2025 Survey](#)

If you have a LinkedIn account please find the ASB page and connect:

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/agricultural-service-board>

I also share the survey on facebook and instagram on my personal profiles, if anyone has an X account with farmers on it please share it there as well.

If there is anything more I can do to assist sharing this information and encouraging responses please let me know. I have had the best luck just sharing the links to the survey through text.

<https://forms.gle/T68xGrqm1qHVRxcV8>

The QR code and details are on the page and the blog post.

On behalf of the Committee,

Linda Hunt  
Executive Assistant  
ASB Provincial Committee  
Cell: 780-678-5984



4909-50 Street | Box 550  
Vegreville, AB T9C 1R6  
Ph: 780-632-2082  
Fax: 780-632-6296  
Email: [info@minburncounty.ab.ca](mailto:info@minburncounty.ab.ca)

August 13, 2025

The Honourable Heath MacDonald  
Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Dear Minister MacDonald,

**RE: Reinstatement of Previously Approved Gopher Control Methods**

I am writing on behalf of the County of Minburn to respectfully request that your office consider reinstating previously approved and effective methods of gopher control for agricultural and rural landowners across Canada.

Richardson ground squirrels (commonly known as gophers) continue to pose a significant threat to crops, pasturelands, and rural infrastructure. Their population growth in recent years has been exacerbated by limited control options and changing environmental factors. Without effective and practical control tools, producers are increasingly struggling to manage infestations that result in economic losses and long-term land degradation.

Historically, certain control methods, such as 2% Liquid Strychnine have proven effective and affordable for producers, particularly in the Prairie provinces. The discontinuation or restriction of these tools has left landowners with fewer, less effective, and often more expensive alternatives that do not provide adequate control on a broad scale.

While we understand and respect the importance of environmental and wildlife safety in regulatory decisions, we believe that a balanced approach is both possible and necessary. The reinstatement of specific gopher control products, under regulated use and with modern safeguards, would empower producers to manage pests more effectively while continuing to uphold public and environmental safety.

We urge Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada to collaborate with provincial governments, producer organizations, and municipalities to revisit the regulatory status of these tools and consider their reintroduction under clear, science-based guidelines.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We would welcome the opportunity to further discuss this issue and share the local impacts of the current control limitations.

Sincerely,



Roger Konieczny, Reeve

c: Shannon Stubbs, MP for Lakeland  
Jackie Armstrong-Homeniuk, MLA Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville  
Brenda Knight, Chair, ASB Provincial Committee  
Stephen Bevans, President, Association of Alberta Agriculture Fieldman  
Kara Westerlund, President, Rural Municipalities of Alberta  
Rebecca Bligh, President, Federation of Canadian Municipalities





4909-50 Street | Box 550  
Vegreville, AB T9C 1R6  
Ph: 780-632-2082  
Fax: 780-632-6296  
Email: [info@minburncounty.ab.ca](mailto:info@minburncounty.ab.ca)

August 13, 2025

The Honourable RJ Sigurdson  
Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation  
229 Legislature Building  
10800 – 97 Avenue NW  
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

Dear Minister Sigurdson,

**RE: Continued Support for Unlimited On-Farm Slaughter Sales in Alberta**

On behalf of County of Minburn Council, we are writing to express our full support for the continuance of unlimited on-farm slaughter sales in Alberta. We are grateful the Government of Alberta has paused the implementation of proposed limits on annual sales per farm. This action reflects your government's willingness to listen to producers and rural communities, and we thank you for that.

Council believes the proposed limits are unnecessary. Alberta already has robust rules and oversight in place to ensure public health and food safety. Additional restrictions would create more red tape without improving consumer protection or producer accountability.

On-farm slaughter plays a critical role in supporting local food systems, rural economies, and producer viability, particularly for small and mid-sized livestock operations. Limiting the number of allowable sales per farm would directly undermine the sustainability of Alberta's livestock industry, reduce consumer access to local meat, and weaken direct marketing channels that many producers rely on.

We encourage the Government of Alberta to continue supporting on-farm slaughter as a safe, responsible, and economically vital practice, and to maintain a regulatory environment that reflects the realities of agriculture in Alberta.

Thank you again for your commitment to Alberta's agricultural producers and rural communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Roger', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Roger Konieczny, Reeve

- c. Jackie Armstrong-Homeniuk, MLA Fort Saskatchewan-Vegreville  
Brenda Knight, Chair, ASB Provincial Committee  
Stephen Bevans, President, Association of Alberta Agriculture Fieldman  
Kara Westerlund, President, Rural Municipalities of Alberta

# 2025 Collection Events for Unwanted Pesticides and Old Livestock/Equine Medications are Coming to Northern Alberta (north of Red Deer)

October 6 to October 10



## FARMERS!

**Got unwanted pesticides or  
livestock/equine meds?**

Safely dispose of unwanted pesticides or  
livestock/equine meds at a Cleanfarms  
collection event – **no charge!**

Collection events run from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

### BARRHEAD

**Tuesday, Oct. 7th**  
Nutrien Ag Solutions  
6201 46th St.

### BENALTO

**Friday, Oct. 10th**  
Benalto Agri Services Ltd.  
38531 Range Rd. 2-4

### CALMAR

**Monday, Oct. 6th**  
Leduc Co-op  
49451 Range Rd. 263

### EDBERG

**Friday, Oct. 10th**  
Crop Management  
Network  
44264 Range Rd. 201

### LAMONT

**Tuesday, Oct. 7th**  
Richardson Pioneer  
553032 RR 195, 1 mile E  
of Lamont on Hwy. 15

### LEGAL

**Thursday, Oct. 9th**  
Sturgeon Valley Fertilizers  
57402 RR 252A

### MARWAYNE

**Monday, Oct. 6th**  
Parrish & Heimbecker  
212 Railway Ave.

### NEERLANDIA

**Monday, Oct. 6th**  
Neerlandia Co-op  
3224 Twp. Rd. 615A

### PONOKA

**Thursday, Oct. 9th**  
UFA  
3604 67th St.

### PROVOST

**Thursday, Oct. 9th**  
Synergy AG  
Hwy 13, 1 mile E of  
Provost, quarter mile N  
on Range Rd. 23

### SEDGEWICK

**Friday, Oct. 10th**  
Wild Rose Co-op  
12473 Twp. Rd. 441

### STETTLER

**Wednesday, Oct. 8th**  
UFA  
7007 50th Ave (on Hwy.  
12 E)

### STURGEON COUNTY

**Friday, Oct. 10th**  
Sturgeon Valley Fertilizers  
55003 Range Rd 253,  
St. Albert

### VEGREVILLE

**Wednesday, Oct. 8th**  
Crop Management  
Network  
5926 60th St.

### VERMILION

**Tuesday, Oct. 7th**  
Cargill  
Range Rd 63, 1 mile E of  
Vermilion

### VIKING

**Thursday, Oct. 9th**  
Wild Rose Co-op  
5130 55th St.

### WAINWRIGHT

**Wednesday, Oct. 8th**  
Parrish & Heimbecker  
Intersection of Hwy. 14 &  
Hwy. 41, 2 miles S on  
Hwy. 41

### WASKATENAU

**Monday, Oct. 6th**  
Richardson Pioneer  
19409 Hwy 656

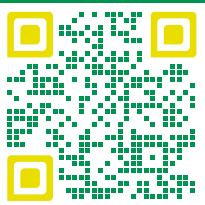
### WESTLOCK

**Wednesday, Oct. 8th**  
Nutrien Ag Solutions  
10116 108th St.

### WETASKIWIN

**Tuesday, Oct. 7th**  
Wetaskiwin Co-op  
3702 47th St.

Partner



SCAN ME


- Next collection events in this region in 2028.
- For collection dates in other regions, visit: [cleanfarms.ca/materials/unwanted-pesticides-animal-meds/](https://cleanfarms.ca/materials/unwanted-pesticides-animal-meds/)

**Cleanfarms.ca**

[info@cleanfarms.ca](mailto:info@cleanfarms.ca) [f](https://www.facebook.com/cleanfarms) [i](https://www.instagram.com/cleanfarms) [X](https://www.twitter.com/cleanfarms) [y](https://www.youtube.com/cleanfarms)

**cleanfarms** **15**  
YEARS

# ACROSS THE FIELD: STRATEGIES FOR PASTURE MANAGEMENT THROUGH GRAZING



Ken McGladrie shows his pasture and watering systems to producers during the field walk.



BY MARTINA HUBL *Communications Coordinator  
Central Alberta Forage and Livestock Association*

On June 10, the Central Alberta Forage and Livestock Association (CAFLA), in partnership with the County of Wetaskiwin, hosted Across the Field: Strategies for Pasture Management via Grazing Management. Held at the Wetaskiwin Ag Society Grounds and followed by a field walk at local producer Ken McGladrie's farm, the event brought together 33 producers to explore practical approaches to improving pasture and grazing systems.

Proudly sponsored by ATB and supported by Results Driven Agriculture Research (RDAR), and

the Canadian Forage and Grassland Association (CFGA), the event spotlighted emerging strategies, funding opportunities, and hands-on solutions aimed at building resilient, climate-smart grazing operations.

## OPENING THE GATE TO OPPORTUNITY

The day kicked off with a welcome from Tatyana Pavlovets of CAFLA, setting



IF YOU  
FOLLOW YOUR  
HEART, THE MONEY  
WILL FOLLOW YOU.  
~ Ken McGladrie

a collaborative tone. Christy Hoy from RDAR presented an overview of the On-Farm Climate Action Fund (OFCAF), explaining the program's goals of reducing greenhouse gas emissions through three main streams: Improved Nitrogen Management, Cover Cropping, and Rotational Grazing. She highlighted that funding is available on a first-come, first-served basis—an important note for producers eager to implement these practices.

Sonja Shank, representing CFGA, followed with a detailed look at how producers can access OFCAF funding through CFGA's platform. She introduced CFGA's online rotational grazing course, designed by producers, for





producers, to guide planning and implementation from the ground up.

Kim Barkwell, the ALUS representative for the Wetaskiwin-Leduc region, also spoke about the complementary role of ALUS in supporting producers through cost-sharing for Beneficial Management Practices (BMPs). ALUS helps fund both the establishment and ongoing management of projects, offering annual payments to producers who maintain and steward their land. Kim highlighted a Riparian Management project with Ken McGladrie, where fencing—made possible through ALUS funding—allowed him to manage grazing in sensitive areas, reduce fire risk, and enhance long-term land health through targeted stewardship.

Lee Irvine of ATB followed with a Market Cattle Update that opened the gate to further opportunity—this time through a lens of market trends and strategic herd management. He noted the significantly low number of head of cattle in the province this year and the ongoing “shock and awe” surrounding calf prices, which remain high. Yet amid tight supply, Irvine pointed to early signals of a positive shift: producers are reportedly beginning to retain heifers on grass, hinting at the initial stages of herd rebuilding. He walked the audience through Canfax projections, explaining how heifer retention may affect steer prices in the future. While consumer demand continues to grow and retail beef prices climb, Irvine posed a pressing question: how long can consumers continue to absorb these rising costs at the meat counter?

## GRAZING BASICS FOR SUCCESS

The highlight of the day came in the form of a dynamic and practical keynote from Albert Kuipers, a well-respected voice in adaptive grazing management. Kuipers took the stage to deliver an in-depth session titled “Grazing Basics for Success”, packed with foundational insights and advanced grazing strategies tailored to the Alberta landscape.

Rather than focusing solely on grazing methods, Kuipers urged producers to think holistically—to manage pastures as living systems. He covered topics including:

Capturing sunlight and water for plant growth, Soil health and nutrient access, Grazing intensity: the difference between overgrazing and severe grazing, Stock density vs. stocking rate, Bale grazing and winter management, Cow power as a tool for land management, and Designing systems for adaptability.

“It’s all about what you leave behind,” Kuipers stressed, emphasizing that sustainable grazing is less about consumption and more about residual biomass and recovery.

Kuipers also shared insights from new research, including the use of sainfoin to reduce bloat, and strategies for extending the grazing season—an increasingly important goal for producers looking to grow herds while reducing reliance on stored feed. He challenged producers to begin planning grazing systems before the growing season, not during it.



*Producers viewing Ken McGladrie's modified gate system for rotational grazing.*





Producers viewing Ken McGladrie's modified watering system on his farm.

on skids make relocation easy with a quad—no tractor needed.

McGladrie referenced Greg Judy's principle that cattle should ideally travel no more than 800 feet to water, reinforcing the importance of layout in rotational grazing systems.

#### GROWING FORWARD

Across presentations and pasture walks, Across the Field showcased the strength of Central Alberta's forage and livestock community. With support from RDAR, CFGA, ALUS, and the inspiration of producers like Ken McGladrie, the event was more than an information session—it was a movement toward smarter, more sustainable agriculture. 🐄



Ken McGladrie is very pleased with his rotational grazing system, he added alfalfa this year as a project funded through RDAR.

Producers left the session energized, with not just information—but a new mindset.

#### LEARNING FROM THE LAND

The afternoon transitioned into practical learning, starting with a Q&A featuring host producer Ken McGladrie, who candidly shared his experiences with pasture and water system development. Ken highlighted the use of tracer wire in water line installations for future upgrades, and advised producers to be thoughtful

with gate placement when designing corrals.

Following the Q&A, producers boarded a bus in Ken's pasture, where they toured his innovative watering systems and infrastructure.

Ken demonstrated how closing water lines when specific paddocks aren't in use improves water efficiency and reduces maintenance. His setup exemplifies the kind of low-cost, high-impact innovations that can make a big difference in daily operations. He also showed how portable mineral feeders



Producers viewing Ken McGladrie's Riparian Management project with ALUS.