



## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **For Immediate Release: Alberta Association of Agricultural Societies Convention takes on a southern Alberta flavour in Lethbridge, February 10 - 12**

President of the Alberta Association of Agricultural Societies (AAAS) and Convention Chairperson Grace Duff reports that local interest is high as the preparations near completion for Lethbridge to host the provincial convention and annual meeting February 10<sup>th</sup> -12<sup>th</sup>.

“We are pleased to provide expertise from this region for both seminars and entertainment”, said Grace Duff. Noted speakers Linda Kavanagh from WOW Communications and Jeff Nish will speak to 455 delegates from agricultural societies from all six regions of Alberta on sponsorship development and volunteers’ management issues. The content of the convention will focus on issues faced by member agricultural societies in the past year. Local and regional speakers will make presentations on facility management, energy conservation, and financial management. There will be a workshop on engaging youth to address concerns that volunteer boards are having as they try to attract more youth 18 to 35 years to fill needs of succession in the community.

Showcasing is a significant part of the convention. Regional favourites Carly Henry, Trevor Panczak & Rough Stock join other entertainers as they vie for the attention of entertainment buyers from fairs and exhibitions across Alberta. The tradeshow is sold out this year with companies that provide product coming from as far away as BC and Quebec to attend.

This convention will have a positive economic impact on Lethbridge as delegates and industry members fill more than 300 rooms in four hotels as well as shop and eat in the city from Friday through Sunday.

The convention will feature an Open Forum. Board of Director Charlie Moore reports, “Minister of Restructuring and Government Efficiencies Luke Ouellette will moderate a panel consisting of a dozen MLAs and Ministers. The Forum was extremely popular last year, offering participants an opportunity to discuss grassroots issues and rural development.”

Agricultural societies are the heart of 294 communities in Alberta. They are volunteer driven organizations that vary greatly from one another in size and programming. But all offer unique services required by their communities including operating facilities and programs that contribute to the growth and development of rural Alberta in the areas of leadership capacity building, health and well being and the support of agriculture.

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