

# OPEN FARM DAYS - Program Opportunity

Agricultural Societies are invited to become involved with Alberta's Open Farm Days by creating complementary programming that educates consumers and celebrates the region's agricultural products and producers.

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## What is Open Farm Days?

Alberta Open Farm Days is a collaborative, province-wide, two-day event that gives visitors an opportunity to experience the farm and understand where their food comes from. It is a backstage pass to meet the farmer, experience Ag-tourism in Alberta, and taste local foods direct from the producer.

This is the seventh year for Open Farm Days and dates of this year's event are August 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>, 2019. For additional information on the event we encourage you to go to the website at <http://www.albertafarmdays.com/>

## Opportunity for Agricultural Societies

Potential revenue generation for the Agricultural Society

- **Admission fees to any host farms are not allowed**, however fees for bus transportation, culinary events, additional experiences, retail sales are allowed and encouraged.

To create an event or opportunity to assist the Open Farm Days Committee in meeting the following objectives:

- More farmers are introduced to the concept and business opportunities provided through Ag-tourism.
- Albertans understand how their food is made and where their food comes from.
- Albertans receive an experiential learning opportunity to connect with rural lifestyles.
- Albertans are more aware of Ag-tourism operators throughout Alberta
- Tourism revenue and visits within Alberta are increased.

**Some examples** of what Agricultural Societies have or could do are:

- Host a bus tour of regional farms, culminating in a communal dinner (at the host Ag Society) featuring foods from all the farms visited that day. The bus would transport consumers from farm to farm, hosted by a tour guide who will share and highlight agricultural stories of the region. While on the farms, guests would be toured around by the producers to learn about their products and processes. At the end of the day, bus tour participants will enjoy a dinner prepared using products from all of the farms visited throughout the day. Additional tickets to the dinner could be sold to other members of the public for additional revenue.
- Another example is to have demonstrations or workshops at the Ag Society's facility and coordinate a self-guided tour of farms in the area.
- Work with other Host farms in the Agricultural Society's area by providing volunteers, opening the hall, assisting with marketing and promotion, looking after demonstrations, helping with parking etc.

## Support from Open Farm Days

- Up to a maximum of \$2,500 for the participating Agricultural Society to offset costs of being involved (Funding is for the expenses incurred for the project and current year applied for in this application)
- Assistance with event logistics;
- Access to network of Alberta chefs and potential tour guides;
- Promotional assistance via Open Farm Days materials, including promoting ticket sales;
- Ongoing support for future planning.
- Access to Agricultural Education Consultant (to provide suggestions or help develop Ag Education experiences or programs)
- Provincial marketing of Open Farm Days thru various media avenues (TV, radio, newsprint, social media, press releases, etc.)

## Eligible expenses include:

- Sourcing of Alberta product with priority given to sourcing farms participating in Open Farm Days
- Cost of hosting a guest chef at your event
- Transportation/Busing of open farm day participants
- Wages for a short term/contract open farm days/ag education coordinator or tour operator
- Advertising Costs
- Rental Costs (ie tent/tables/chairs)

## Requirements of the Ag Society

- Take the lead in organizing all event logistics (such as bus rentals, securing/hiring tour guide, planning itinerary/event, obtaining insurance, selling tickets);
- Assist with recruiting participating farms in the area to create a cluster around the Agricultural Society
- Must offer a unique and authentic agricultural and/or culinary tourism experience
- Sustainability – successful applicants are expected to be an active participant in Open Farm Days for more than one year (funding may or may not be available in future years so it is expected that the successful applicants put a basic strategy or plan together for sustainability ie: sponsorship, revenue generation, etc.)
- Complete and return the grant completion report by September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2019 (Grant dollars will be forwarded to the Agricultural Society once the completion report has been received back)

## To Get Involved:

We are accepting a minimum of 8 Agricultural Societies for this year with a grant of up to a maximum of \$2500 going to each Agricultural Society.

## Application Process:

To ensure your event/project is included in the Open Farm Days publications the **deadline for application is May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019**. To apply please submit a brief proposal outlining your event including the following items:

Organization Name

Location of Event

Date and Time of the Event

Host Farms participating (if applicable)

Budget for the event

Description of the event (this will be posted on the Open Farm Days Website for promotion of the event)

Key Contact Information

Please contact Nathan Anderson at 780-427-2174 or [info@albertaagsocieties.ca](mailto:info@albertaagsocieties.ca). The spaces will be filled on a first come, first served basis, so be sure to get your application in early! However, preference may be given to those who have not received funding previously for this Open Farm Days initiative.



# PARTNERS