


# Agricultural Societies Program



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## Agriculture and Forestry Update

2020 AAAS Fall Regional Meetings

Alberta

# Agenda

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- Agricultural Societies Program Team
- COVID-19
- Grant Update
- Annual Returns
- Bylaws

# Agricultural Societies Program Team



# Agricultural Societies Program Team

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- Carmen Andrew, Director
- Colin Gosselin, Sr. Project Coordinator
- Monika Warring, Grant Program Support

# Carmen

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- Director pursuant to the *Agricultural Societies Act*
- Powers and duties as established by the *Act*

# Colin

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- Bylaw approvals
- Grant approvals/calculations
- *Agricultural Societies Act* and Agricultural Societies Regulation questions

# Monika

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- First point of contact for the program
- Receives and processes:
  - annual returns and grant applications
  - bylaw submissions
  - changes to directors and/or contact information
- Documents and forms



COVID-19





# COVID-19

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- We are aware that COVID-19 has been a major challenge for agricultural societies
  - Financial impacts from lost event revenue while continuing to incur fixed costs
  - Relaunch challenges

# COVID-19 Agricultural Society Support

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- Maintaining and expediting payment of the \$11.5 million agricultural society grant program
- Up to \$5,000 under Alberta's Small and Medium Enterprise Relaunch Grant
  - 37 had payment sent or pending; another 18 are draft or under review
- Supporting the Canadian Association of Fairs and Exhibitions' (CAFE) request to the federal government for \$74 million

# Relaunch Guidance

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- Alberta Biz Connect
  - <https://www.alberta.ca/biz-connect.aspx>
- Public Health Inspectors
  - <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/eph/eph.aspx>
  - 1-833-415-9179
- Because of the diversity of agricultural societies, there isn't a specific agricultural society sector guidance document

# 2021 Grant Update



# 2021 Grant Update

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- We are aware that COVID-19 event cancellations will impact regular grant applications
- Options are being considered to respond to this
- No decisions have been finalized yet
- We will advise societies as soon as we know

# Annual Returns





# Annual Returns

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- Due February 15, 2021
- Required to be in good standing under the *Act*, which is an eligibility requirement for the grant
- No changes to form/process for 2021

# Annual Return Checklist

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- ☐ Directors List
- ☐ 2020 Activities Report
- ☐ Copy of the minutes of the most recent AGM
- ☐ Copy of the minutes of the 2<sup>nd</sup> most recent AGM (as adopted at the most recent AGM)
- ☐ AGM membership sign-in sheet (to verify quorum was achieved)
- ☐ Financial Statements
  - ☐ Must be approved at the annual general meeting by your membership
  - ☐ Must be signed by **two directors** of the agricultural society and the **accountant**
  - ☐ Must be a review engagement or audit report prepared by a professional accounting firm

# Virtual Workshop

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- November 25 (early evening, details to be confirmed)
- Monika will be going over the details of successfully completing your annual returns and grant applications
- Ideally suited for the person(s) tasked with filling out these forms for your society
- “Tips and tricks” to get it right the first time

# Bylaws



# Bylaws

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- The new Agricultural Societies Regulation (2019) now specifies the requirements for bylaws going forward
- All societies have to review and update their bylaws by the end of the three-year transition period
- Seven have been approved under the new regulations (276 to go!)

# Updating Bylaws

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- You can keep using your current bylaws until June 30, 2022 (only two more AGM cycles to amend)
- Modernized legislation provides greater flexibility for organizational structure based on your unique needs
- You are free to keep your current organizational structure if you are happy with it



# Bylaw support

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- AAAS has updated their Recommended Best Practice Agricultural Society Bylaws template
  - 149 societies have now taken the workshop/webinar
- Agriculture and Forestry Checklist
  - We can review draft bylaws prior to your AGM if you give us sufficient lead time
  - If you haven't addressed all items on the first page of the checklist, we can't approve them

# Bylaw Checklist

<b>Membership Bylaws (Section 6 of Regulation)</b>	<b>List Section</b>
Classes of membership & eligibility criteria	
Circumstances when sale of new memberships are suspended (e.g. when a special meeting is called until the business of the meeting is concluded; can also state there are no circumstances but must address in bylaws)	
Payment of membership fee & conditions of membership	
Manner and criteria for suspension or cancellation of membership	
<b>Society Meetings Bylaws (Section 7 of Regulation)</b>	
Method of notification of members and public (public must be notified of your AGM)	
Specify Items on Agenda for AGM	
Specify process of meeting to address serious concerns initiated by no fewer than 10 members	
<b>Quorum Bylaws (Section 8 of Regulation)</b>	
Quorum for a meeting of society	
Quorum for a board of directors meeting	
<b>Voting Bylaws (Section 9 of Regulation)</b>	
Govern the voting, including voting by proxy	

# Code of Conduct

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- All societies must establish a Code of Conduct
- Required by the new Regulations (section 12)
  - Must include provisions respecting conflicts of interest
  - Directors and employees must sign
- Can reference this requirement in your bylaws, but don't recommend putting them in the bylaws

# Contact Information

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- Carmen – [carmen.andrew@gov.ab.ca](mailto:carmen.andrew@gov.ab.ca) 403-742-7542
- Colin – [colin.gosselin@gov.ab.ca](mailto:colin.gosselin@gov.ab.ca) 780-968-3518
- Monika – [monika.warring@gov.ab.ca](mailto:monika.warring@gov.ab.ca) 780-968-3517

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# Questions or Comments

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