

ACROSS THE FENCE



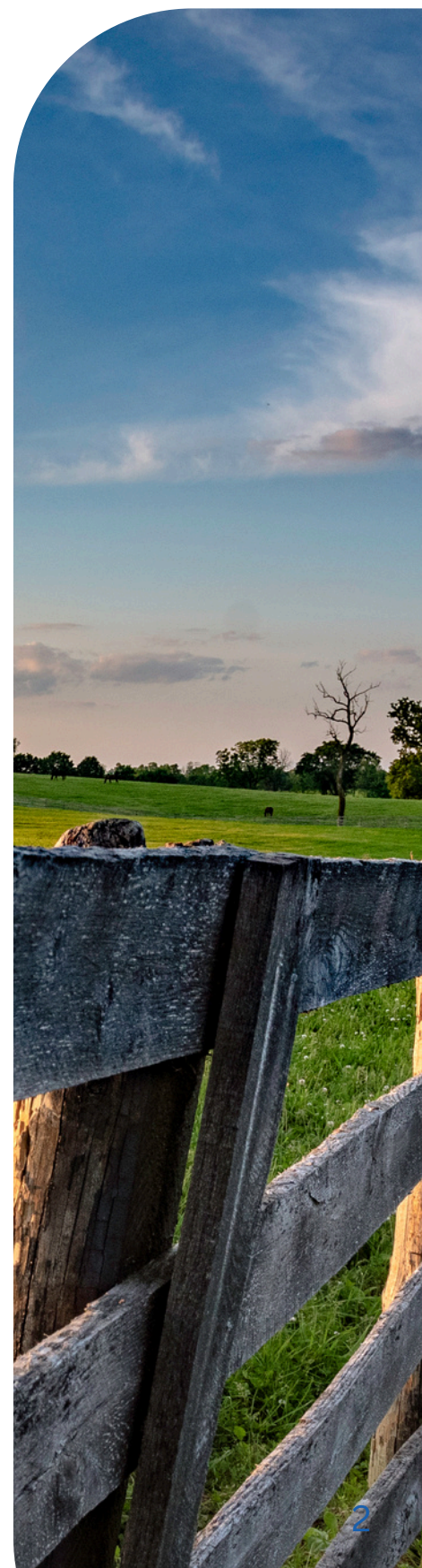
SUMMER 2025
NEWSLETTER

[ALBERTAAGSOCIETIES.CA](https://albertaagsocieties.ca)



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MESSAGE FROM THE CEO



Tim Carson

CEO of Alberta Association of
Agricultural Societies

Half way through the year. Time seems to fly by, especially when we're busy. I'm certain all our members have been more than busy planning and executing the multitude of events and programs that take place every year. To the thousands of volunteers that make living in Alberta special, thank you for all you do.

The 2025 Wildfire season has been tremendously challenging once again. Evacuations of people and livestock are significant logistical undertakings, as well as very stressful for all involved. As usual, our members continue to step up with access to facilities and services to support our fellow Albertans. These amazing organizations are nimble, connected, and able to adapt to nearly every situation when required. Thank you for making us proud.

On April 28th, Canada voted and Mark Carney became the nation's Prime Minister. Only time will tell how the new government leader will find success in dealing with USA tariffs, global economies, and provincial government demands. Somewhere buried in the paperwork whirlwind is the Livestock Traceability file. AAAS, along with our provincial and federal counterparts, will be contacting federal departments to ensure the successes achieved with the livestock traceability policy is not lost in the shuffle. We do anticipate the continued support from CFIA and others in the industry.

On April 24th, Agriculture Minister RJ Sigurdson announced new support for the Regional Agricultural Societies. This marked the culmination of advocacy the Regional Ag Societies initiated to gain further financial support. The Minister remarked, "It's hard to overstate the impact regional agricultural societies have on rural Alberta. From event organizing to infrastructure upkeep, they energize folks and bring communities together. This funding will ensure our regional agriculture societies are able to keep up their good work and continue to be pillars of their communities."

Alberta's government is helping regional agricultural societies mitigate increasing costs and plan ahead with a one-time cash injection of more than \$7.4 million. New funding includes \$4.03 million in one-time supports distributed among the seven regional ag societies to help them manage cost pressures and allow them to plan for the future, including achieving more sustainable operational models. It also includes a one-time investment of \$2.87 million to support business transformation projects and funding set aside for a third-party consultant to help with those efforts. This is on top of the continued annual total funding of \$2.8 million for regional agricultural societies through the Agricultural Societies Grant Program.

AAAS has enhanced our government relations partnerships. The association's intent is to gain a better understanding of the perception of AAAS and Ag Societies with elected officials as well as government staff. Our goals are to gain increased support for Ag Societies of all sizes to accomplish their mandate and increase their impact to Alberta's future, both socially and economically. Additionally, to have AAAS positioned as the "go to organization" when it comes to anything Ag Society or rural, as well as supporting AAAS in its efforts to support Ag Societies in reaching their potential. This work has always been a priority for AAAS, and we believe the investment in this initiative will assist in accelerating our success.

Alberta Gaming Liquor & Cannabis released their new [Charitable Gaming Policies](#) handbook on April 1st. Many of the concerns expressed by AAAS were addressed in the revision provided. AAAS had the opportunity to present to the Board of AGLC and provide feedback on the new policy document. This collaboration continues, and we believe will continue to provide positive enhancements to support all organizations utilizing gaming funds to support communities across Alberta.

The 13th edition of Alberta's Open Farm Days is set to take place August 16th & 17th. There are nearly 170 unique hosts participating this year and that includes 11 Ag Societies. We are extremely pleased at the continued growth of this important program. We anticipate the provincial wide program will have a significant impact on Alberta and Albertans again this year.

In this edition of our summer newsletter, you will find a complete list of the upcoming fall meetings. These are a great opportunity to gain firsthand knowledge of what is happening in the industry, network with other Ag Societies and provide valuable feedback for AAAS. Once again, the department will be participating and providing valuable information from the government of Alberta and program perspective. These meetings are open to any member of an Ag Society or even guests of an Ag Society. Please take the time to find a date and location that works best for you and join us for food, information, and fellowship.

On behalf of the Board and Staff of AAAS, I wish nothing but sunny skies for your events, warm rains in between, and a summer full of fun and appreciation!

I'll see you at the fair/rodeo.

Tim Carson

CEO of Alberta Association of Agricultural Societies



Regional Meetings Are Coming Up!

We're excited to announce our annual Regional Meetings, taking place this fall across Alberta. These meetings are open to anyone from any region—no matter where you are, you're welcome to attend!

Mark your calendar for the following dates:

- October 6 — Fort Macleod
- October 15 — Indus
- October 16 — Berry Creek (Pollockville)
- October 20 — Hay Lakes
- October 21 — Elnora
- October 28 — Vilna
- October 29 — Hardisty
- November 3 — Lakedell
- November 4 — Whitecourt
- November 7 — Wembley
- November 8 — Peace River

Click here to register for regional meetings 



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AGRICULTURAL UPDATES

AGRICULTURE NEWS

Latest Ag updates in
Alberta in June 2025

Investing in Agri-Food Innovation

Farm Credit Canada (FCC) has announced a significant capital investment to support Canada's agri-food sector, with a focus on driving innovation and economic growth. As Canada's largest agricultural lender, FCC recognizes the critical role that technology and research play in ensuring the long-term success and sustainability of the industry.

This new investment aims to empower farmers, agri-businesses, and entrepreneurs to adopt cutting-edge practices and technologies that can improve productivity, enhance environmental stewardship, and increase competitiveness both locally and globally. From precision agriculture to value-added

processing, this funding will help producers and businesses modernize and adapt to evolving market demands.

FCC's commitment underscores its belief in the potential of Canada's agricultural community to lead the way in innovation. By fostering collaboration between producers, researchers, and technology developers, this investment is designed to build a more resilient and forward-thinking agri-food sector.

Learn more about this exciting development and how it can benefit your farm or agri-business at fcc-fac.ca.



2025 Alberta Approved Farmers' Markets Now Open

Alberta's farmers' markets are now open for the 2025 season, bringing fresh local produce, handmade goods, and a vibrant community atmosphere to towns and cities across the province. These markets support Alberta's

growers, artisans, and entrepreneurs, helping to strengthen local economies and foster connections between consumers and producers. With over 140 approved farmers' markets operating annually, there's always a new product or vendor to discover.

Visit alberta.ca/farmersmarkets for a complete list of markets and their schedules—get out there and shop local!

Funding Alert: ASIRP Grant Intake Opens June 23

The Agricultural Societies Infrastructure Revitalization Program (ASIRP) is back for 2025—and **applications open at 8:15 a.m. on Monday, June 23.**

This capital grant program provides up to \$100,000 to support major repairs and upgrades to existing agricultural society facilities, including arenas, ag halls, barns, curling rinks, and more.

Visit [the program guidelines page here](#) for program guidelines and application downloads.

NORTH AMERICA'S



Power Line Contacts Can Be Fatal

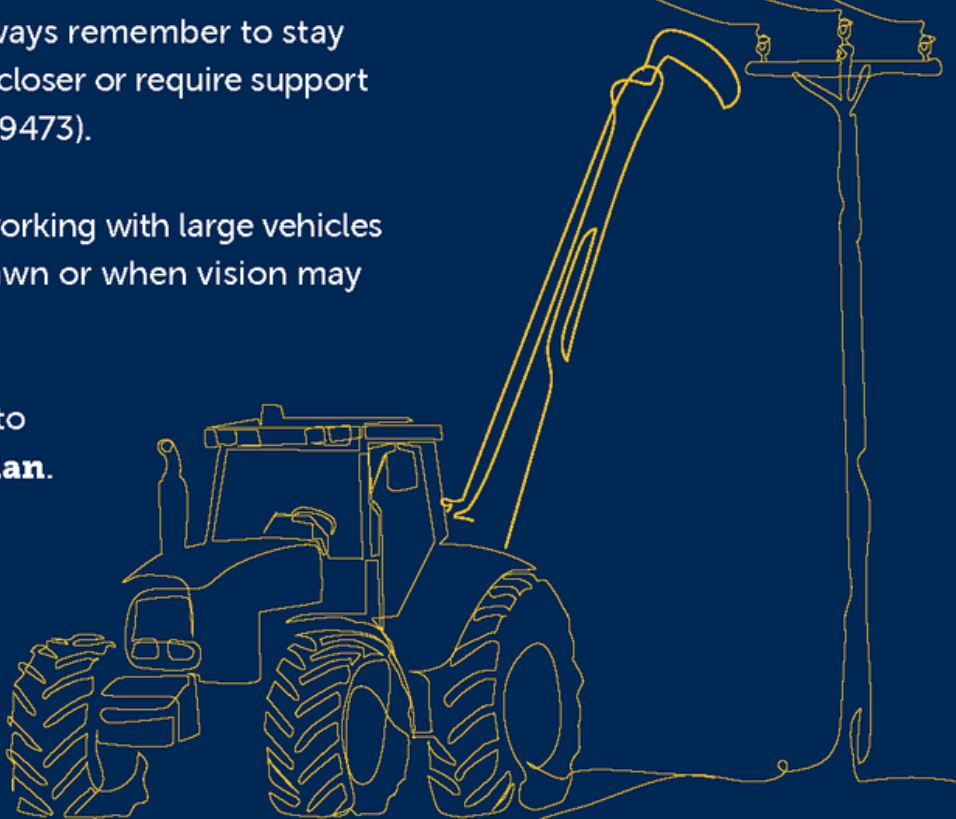
When working near power lines, always remember to stay **7 METRES SAFE**. If you need to get closer or require support from FortisAlberta, call **310-WIRE** (9473).

Watch out for overhead lines when working with large vehicles or equipment, especially at dusk, dawn or when vision may be obstructed.

Visit fortisalberta.com/farmsafety to download our **Power Line Safety Plan**.

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2026 AAAS CONFERENCE & TRADE SHOW

Now Friday - Sunday!

Building on the momentum of a highly successful 2025 Convention —where over 500 attendees joined Alberta Ag Societies, industry leaders, and community champions to celebrate, share insights, and strengthen connections—we can't wait to bring our community together again for an even more impactful 2026 event.

This year, we're excited to introduce a Friday-to-Sunday format designed to better fit everyone's busy schedules—while still delivering the exceptional experience you've come to expect.

Save the date

Friday, February 6 – Sunday, February 8, 2026
RiverCree Resort & Casino, Edmonton, AB

Stay Tuned

Registration, accommodation, session details, and exhibitor opportunities will open in the fall.

Keep an eye on albertaagsocieties.ca for updates.

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BUILDING STRONGER VOLUNTEERS

Looking to get involved in your community?

We're always looking for passionate volunteers to lend a hand—join us! Be sure to visit our Stronger Volunteers website at:

www.albertaagsocieties.ca/strongervolunteers/

The site is packed with resources designed to support both new and seasoned volunteers, as well as board members.

We offer:

- Certified Board Volunteer Training
- Bylaw Review Workshop
- Free Resources

Explore A range of templates and workbooks to guide you through essential tasks. Additionally, check out our video series: How to Make the Most of Your AGM, which offers tips and strategies to help your meeting run smoothly.

Whether you're a new volunteer or a longstanding board member, there's plenty of valuable information to ensure your success!

We provide a wealth of resources to promote leadership development and knowledge for personal growth, ensuring individuals have the tools they need to succeed.

BENCH SHOW JUDGING STANDARDS



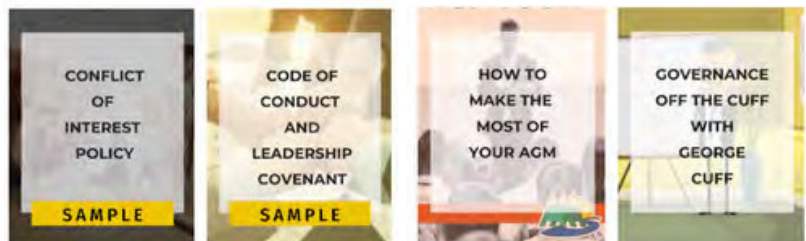
GUIDE BOOKS



TEMPLATES AND WORKBOOKS




VIDEOS



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



A man and a woman are standing on a gravel path in front of a yellow farm building. They are both wearing heavy-duty work jackets and jeans. The woman is on the left, looking towards the man on the right. They appear to be in a conversation. The background shows a clear blue sky and some trees in the distance.

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Awards & Scholarships

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HONOUR ROLL NOMINATIONS

The Alberta Association of Agricultural Societies invites agricultural societies to nominate a member of their association for their outstanding contribution to the development and advancement of agricultural societies in Alberta. Two members will be awarded the Honorary Life Memberships. This prestigious award recognizes outstanding volunteers for their dedication to local, regional and provincial levels of agriculture. Application Deadline October 31

[NOMINATE SOMEONE TODAY](#)

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS

The Alberta Association of Agricultural Societies have 7 Scholarship awards that will be given to outstanding post-secondary students continuing their education, who have volunteered their time and energy to their communities and agricultural societies. ** TWO FORMS (Student application & Ag Society Nomination Form) Application Deadline October 31

[LEARN MORE & APPLY HERE](#)

MARKETING AWARD SUBMISSIONS

The Marketing Awards Contest has six categories. It is held annually during the AAAS Convention. Attendance during the convention is not a requirement to enter the contest; however, winners will be announced and presented with their awards during the Saturday Night-themed gala at the Convention. Deadline for Submissions October 31st, 2024

[LEARN MORE](#)

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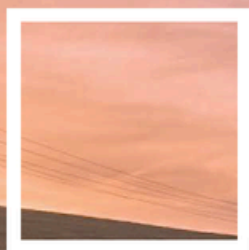
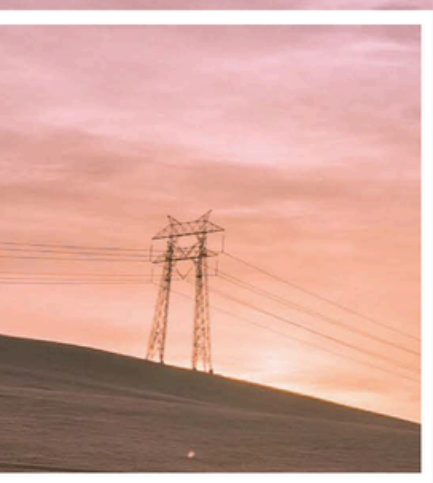
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Talk to the team to learn more or get started. We will help you explore the benefits, walk you through our transparent approach, and discuss the right strategy for you.

Connect with our team at AAASenergy@abmunis.ca or visit us online.

The Fair and Its New Challenges

by North American Midway Entertainment



NORTH AMERICAN MIDWAY
ENTERTAINMENT

The fair in North America has always meant something different to everyone. It's a place to gather with friends and family, to be seen, to create lifelong memories, and to enjoy food, rides, and entertainment. It's woven into the fabric of the communities it serves and brings with it an undeniable economic boost. But lately, there's been a shift—one that fair organizers across the continent can no longer ignore.

Swarming events—groups of youths storming through fairs, creating chaos—have become more frequent, more organized, and far more disruptive. These aren't random acts. They're planned in advance through social media, with instigators sorting out timing, location, and execution. Their motivation? Clout. Likes. Retaliation. Whatever the reason, the result is panic. Fights break out. Bear spray gets deployed. And in rare, alarming cases, weapons come into play.

This isn't entirely new—fairs have dealt with unruly crowds before but the sheer scale and regularity of these incidents today are different. What's worse is that local law enforcement often feels handcuffed, caught between enforcing order and avoiding public backlash over how the level of force that they use is viewed. Young people have caught on and are taking full advantage of the system's limitations.

Fair organizers are left in a tough spot. Security costs are skyrocketing—more scanners, cameras, and patrols—and at the same time, public perception is deteriorating. Word spreads fast, especially on social media. People start to feel like

fairs just aren't safe anymore. And once that sets in, it's hard to recover. Lower attendance leads to lower revenue, and the vicious cycle begins.

To combat this, some fairs have implemented policies like mandatory adult accompaniment for youth after 6 p.m. Others have limited hours, opening earlier and closing before the trouble usually starts. Some are testing mandatory gate admission and ride passes after a certain time to keep the bad actors out. Are these perfect solutions? No. But they're something.

Meanwhile, new tools like AI are being explored to monitor for signs of planned disruptions. Some fairs are also leaning into community-based solutions—like recruiting Cultural Ambassadors from diverse neighborhoods to help engage guests in a more meaningful, positive way. These programs are early in development but showing promise.

Bottom line: the fair must stay fresh, exciting, and—above all—safe. If people don't feel secure, they simply won't come. We all need to take a hard look at how we operate, who we're serving, and what changes are necessary to preserve what makes the fair so special. We've always prided ourselves on being affordable and accessible for everyone, and that can't change. But we can't ignore what's happening either. We need to act—with thought, with care, and with urgency—before the damage becomes irreversible.

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Ag Societies Step Up to Support Wildfire Evacuees

As wildfires continue to impact rural Alberta, Agricultural Societies across the province are stepping up to provide critical support for evacuees. Many facilities are opening their grounds to offer temporary space for trailers, camping, and even livestock pens—providing much-needed relief for those displaced by the fires.

To help connect evacuees with available support, AAAS has created an online map showing which Ag Society facilities are currently offering space. If your Ag Society has the capacity to assist, we encourage you to add your facility to the list by filling out the form linked on our wildfire support page.

Visit albertaagsocieties.ca/wildfire-support to view the map, access resources, or sign up your Ag Society to provide support. Together, we can help our neighbours stay safe and supported.

CLICK HERE TO VIEW MAP



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2. Financial Security covers legal defense costs, settlements, and medical expenses, preventing the association from facing crippling financial losses.


3. Risk Management & Peace of Mind as it allows the association to focus on organizing activities without constant concern of excluded claims occurring.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

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Ag Society Event Listings

Is your Ag Society hosting an upcoming event?
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Help us showcase the great work happening across Alberta by submitting your event to be featured on our [Events Map](#).

It's a great way to boost visibility, connect with new audiences, and highlight the vibrancy of your local community.

Submit your event today and let's celebrate what makes your Ag Society shine!

[CLICK HERE TO SUBMIT AN EVENT](#)



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AAAS-OAAS CONVENTION EXCHANGE PROGRAM

Connecting Young Ag Leaders Across Provinces



AAAS and the Ontario Association of Agricultural Societies (OAAS) have partnered to offer a unique convention exchange program for young professionals aged 18–40. Selected participants will have their meals, accommodations, and convention registration fully covered.



This initiative gives emerging Ag leaders the chance to attend each other's annual conventions, share ideas, and bring fresh perspectives back to their home communities.

LEARN MORE & APPLY



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- 1st Vice President: Fred Young
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- Treasurer: Natasha Dombrosky
- Past President: Brett Warder

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- Region 1: Petra Klempnauer
- Region 2: Shan Simpson
- Region 3: Linda Toews & Jesse Miller
- Region 4: Jackie Tomayer & Sebastien Dutrisac
- Region 5: Natasha Dombrosky & Fred Young
- Region 6: Audrey Hewing

AAAS INSPIRES VIBRANCY IN ALBERTA COMMUNITIES

Education, Facilitation and collaboration creates opportunities that empower Agricultural Societies, Inspiring Rural Alberta to reach its highest potential

Excellence in direction and execution. Success through collaboration. Motivation through education and engagement. Advocacy through example. Dedicated to strengthen Agricultural Societies and their communities.

ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE

Effective, Consistent Improvement, Innovative, Continual Leadership, & Legacy-Longevity.

- Board Governance – Succession Planning
- Board – New Membership Recruitment
- Staff – Capacity Building
- Foundation – MOU & Operational Alignments

RURAL ADVANCEMENT

Community, Stability, Growth, Diversification, Attractant, Renewal, Vision, & Engagement

- Leadership Training – Expand Online Training Modules
- Diversification – New Programming
- Volunteering – Provincial-Wide Campaign
- Funding Model – Preserve & Grow



ALBERTA ASSOCIATION OF
AGRICULTURAL SOCIETIES



CONTACT US

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