



# Agri-News

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## September 2<sup>nd</sup> Deadline for ACIDF Proposal Letters

The Alberta Crop Industry Development Fund (ACIDF) considers a wide range of projects that benefit Alberta farmers. The September 2, 2009 deadline for Letters of Intent for project proposals is quickly approaching. All interested applicants must register on the application system available on the ACIDF website.

“ACIDF provides resources for projects that will benefit Alberta farmers and will increase Alberta’s competitiveness through leadership in innovation, market development and research,” says Doug Walkey, executive director, ACIDF. “This fund is dedicated to innovation and creativity. The board considers a wide range of projects, working closely with sponsor organizations to ensure the greatest benefit to the farmers of Alberta.”

Criteria used to evaluate the pre-proposals:

- meet the priorities of the individual funding agency
- meet the priorities of the agricultural industry
- benefit the Alberta agriculture industry
- advance knowledge in agriculture and agriculture food
- rely on collaboration with researchers
- industry endorsement

“The five members of the Agriculture Funding Consortium and the 10 associate members accept proposals year-round,” says Walkey. “However, we do try to handle the majority of the proposals during the fall, hence the September 2 deadline for Letters of Intent.”

ACIDF grants typically range from \$10,000 to \$200,000 over the life of the project. A complete list of the ACIDF members and a list of the projects funded to-date are available on the ACIDF website at [www.acidf.ca](http://www.acidf.ca)

“The additional support ACIDF provides is essential to many of the projects funded, especially to some of the smaller projects,” says Walkey. “We are happy to talk to advocates of large and small projects, especially in areas that are not presently receiving adequate attention and support from other funding sources.”

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### ***This Week***

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The online application section includes a printable working copy for off-line use and includes a template that can be saved to individual computers. All of the 'working' information can then be pasted into the electronic application when the applicant is ready to submit the application and the supporting documentation.

ACIDF is an independent, not-for-profit company operating under the direction of the crop industry. It funds and supports selected crop-related industry development activities, including market development, research and extension.

For further information, visit the ACIDF website at [www.acidf.ca](http://www.acidf.ca)

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## **Consider Seeding a Winter Cereal this Fall**

The unusually dry and cool spring weather conditions across much of central and southern Alberta during May and June, and into July, resulted in below normal growth and yield potential for some crops, with canola often being the most significantly affected.

"In the latter part of July and first two weeks of August, weather was unusually wet resulting in better soil moisture conditions," says Dr. Ross McKenzie, research scientist – agronomy with Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development. "The continued cool wet weather in August will further delay fall harvest across Alberta. However, for farmers with fields that will be harvested before the end of August, seeding a winter cereal in fields with good soil moisture could be considered."

Winter cereal crops are excellent for inclusion into a crop rotation. Winter cereals include winter wheat, fall rye and winter triticale.

"Winter wheat is an excellent crop for many southern and central Alberta farmers to consider growing," says McKenzie. "It is usually harvested several weeks earlier than spring wheat the following year. Including winter wheat in the crop rotation spreads out the workload and results in good time management for farmers. In most years, winter wheat potentially can be up to 20 per cent higher yielding than spring wheat, making it an economically attractive crop."

Growing winter wheat is fairly straight forward; however, management practices are quite different. To successfully grow winter wheat, a number of specific management practices must be followed: selection of the best variety for the area; seeding date, rate and depth; proper fertilizer types; amounts and time of application; and, weed control.

"In southern Alberta, AC Bellatrix and Radiant are the newest and best varieties for farmers to grow," says McKenzie. "Both varieties were developed at the Lethbridge Research Centre by

Dr. Rob Graff. In central Alberta, farmers could also consider CDC Osprey, which is very good for both quality and winter hardiness."

Ideally, winter wheat should be direct seeded into standing stubble. Seeding into canola, mustard or pea stubble offers crop rotation advantages such as reduced weed problems, volunteer is easy to control, and there is reduced potential for insect and disease problems. Standing stubble will help trap snow, acting as an insulator. Four inches of snow will normally provide sufficient insulation to ensure over winter survival.

In southern Alberta, farmers should ideally seed winter wheat in the first two weeks of September. Farmers in central Alberta should consider seeding winter cereal crops in the last week of August or first week of September. Recent research has shown that seeding delays can result in significant (20 to 30 per cent) yield decrease with both winter wheat and winter triticale.

"The ideal seeding rate for winter wheat is higher than what most growers use for spring wheat," says McKenzie. "Generally, winter wheat should be seeded at a minimum rate of 120 pounds per acre to achieve a plant stand of 250 plants per square meter (23 plants per square foot). Actual seeding rate should be based on the 1000 kernel weight of the seed to be planted. Winter wheat has considerable ability to tiller, but best yields are obtained with higher seeding rates. Ideally, narrower row spacing of seven to nine inches is best.

"Winter wheat has a very short coleoptile, the extension of the seed embryo that pushes its way through the soil to the surface, from which the first leaf develops. It is very important to seed winter wheat 0.5 to 1.0 inch (1.5 to 2.5 cm) deep. Winter wheat which is seeded deeper than one inch will result in reduced emergence."

"Soil temperature can dramatically affect the time it takes winter wheat to germinate," says McKenzie. "In a moist soil, winter wheat will take only seven days to germinate and emerge at a soil temperature of 20 °C, while it takes 12 and 25 days to emerge at soil temperatures of 10 and 5 °C, respectively. Later seeding results in a longer germination period, later emergence and delayed crown development, which increases the risk of poor winter survival."

When it comes to fertilizing winter cereals, research has shown that phosphate placed with or near the seed at the time of seeding improves plant growth in the fall resulting in better winter hardiness. An amount of approximately 20 to 25 lb/ac of phosphate is usually adequate and is most effective when placed with the seed.

It is wise to soil test to determine N and P soil levels, to accurately determine N and P fertilizer requirements. If time does not permit soil testing, or if fall soil moisture conditions are very dry, it is best to apply approximately 40 to 70 per cent of estimated nitrogen requirements at the time of seeding, soil test in late fall and then apply additional nitrogen in early spring based on soil moisture conditions.

For further information on fertilizing winter wheat refer to the fact sheet ***Fertilizing Winter Wheat in Southern Alberta*** (Agdex 112/542-1), available on Alberta Agriculture's website at [www.agriculture.alberta.ca/publications](http://www.agriculture.alberta.ca/publications)

"Due to the competitive nature of vigorously growing winter wheat, weed pressure tends to be lower than with other crops," says McKenzie. "Winter annuals, such as stinkweed and flixweed are the greatest problem. However, these can often be controlled with inexpensive products such as 2,4-D or MCPA.

"Although it is a hearty crop, winter wheat should only be seeded into 'clean fields', without any green volunteer cereal growth. Volunteer grain can harbour an insect called the leaf curl mite, which can transmit a virus called wheat streak mosaic. Any actively growing green vegetation such as volunteer grain or grasses can serve as a host for the mites. If winter wheat is seeded into stubble with green volunteer or by adjacent green fields, the mites will move from the host plants into the winter wheat after emergence and spread the virus. The damage from this disease can range from severe to complete crop failure. Cultural controls are the only way to control this disease. AC Radiant is the only variety to grow, if there is a concern with the wheat curl mite. This is the only variety with wheat curl mite resistance."

Winter wheat can be an excellent crop to include in a crop rotation. By following simple, straightforward management practices it can be an easy and very profitable crop to grow.

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## ***Fitting Clubroot-Resistant Canola in to Crop Rotations***

Including canola more than once in a four-year rotation is not recommended, even if farmers plant clubroot-resistant canola.

"Earlier this year, 45H29 was registered on a three-year, interim basis and is available for farmers under this registration," says Murray Hartman, oilseed specialist with Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development. "There was a limited amount of seed available this year, but next year there should be a good supply of commercial seed for farmers."

Crop specialists stress, however, that even if using clubroot resistant canola seed farmers should still not tighten up the rotation more than the recommended once every four years.

"The reason for a one in four rotation for canola is to slow down the breakdown of resistance, which has happened in other parts of the world. Then, we once again would face a clubroot problem in the province," says Hartman. "If farmers start planting canola on fields sooner than the recommended

rotation, we can expect that the resistant varieties will quickly lose their resistance."

There hasn't been a lot of clubroot reported this year. The dry weather experienced in spring and early summer hindered clubroot, especially during the month of May when the infection usually starts.

Several fact sheets as well as the Alberta Clubroot Management Plan are posted to Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development's website, simply search *Clubroot* when you visit [www.agriculture.alberta.ca/publications](http://www.agriculture.alberta.ca/publications)

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## ***What Interest Rate is Your Pasture Paying?***

Most pasture plants are in debt this year as the dry conditions and cold spring put most plants behind in their spring "loan payments" to their root systems. Overgrazed plants had a further set back. They are operating at credit card interest rates on fully borrowed operating loans. Add to that early dormancy due to the very dry conditions which in many areas stopped plant growth and even caused plants to go dormant. These plants had to tap into their "operating loan" and will have more 'root debt', to pay back at "operating loan interest" (if not overgrazed) when growth starts again. The solution is to pay "plant debt" down through good pasture management decision-making, starting now with no overgrazing.

"Overgrazing is leaving animals on pasture too long or bringing them back too soon," says Grant Lastiwka, grazing/forages/beef specialist with Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development. "When animals regraze the regrowth before plants have had a chance to fully recover lost root reserves from previous grazing, or dormant season period, they're overgrazed.

"If pastures are overgrazed they will continue to pay high interest until grass plants have reached the 3-leaf stage of new growth or, in my opinion, even more growth. After the 3-leaf stage, plant root systems are fully recovered from the last grazing. When the next well-managed grazing incident occurs, the roots will be able to sustain it."

If moisture and rest come right away there may be enough time for grazed pastures to recover this fall. If recovery doesn't happen this year, it must happen with good spring-time management next year.

Three examples of overgrazing at 'credit card interest rates' of repayment:

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1. extending the grazing season by leaving animals out on a pasture in late summer and fall when little growth is occurring and regrazing all regrowth is happening until they run out of grass and have to be pulled
2. animals are returned to a paddock in a rotational grazing system before plants have had a long enough rest period for full recovery (time varies biologically and not in calendar time)
3. animals are turned out in spring on growing pastures before plants have reached the 3-leaf stage or more of new development

“Grazing during early spring prior to range readiness... deprives grass plants of needed leaf area and results in reductions in grass growth, herbage production and economic returns (Manske, 2001. *Grazing Before Grass is Ready*). Hugo Gross, forage scientist from Ag Canada, Brandon, MB, said, “Turning animals out one day too early in the spring means a loss of three grazing days in the fall.”

To maintain a healthy tame or native pasture, grazing in spring should start only after the 3 - 3.5 leaf stage of plant development (Manske 1999a).

“Rest in the spring is the most crucial and cheapest rejuvenation for hammered pastures,” says Lastiwka. “As a general rule, spring grazings on these types of pastures should be two to four weeks later than normal and then be only a light grazing. Couple this with suitable rests between grazings in the summer. These rests need to be long enough for plants to regrow three to three and a half new leaves. In droughts, regrowth is slower so rest periods need to be longer. Also the more residual growth left after any grazing the faster cattle can be brought back to graze again.”

Management practices for adequate pasture recovery time:

- seed a winter annual before the end of the first week in September so that when moisture comes there will be fall and spring growth to graze for early turnout
- look into renting pasture
- community pastures will have openings for next spring, apply in early January for a spot
- don't keep yearlings back to graze, or sell some cows so less pasture is needed
- wait until after the 3-leaf stage of new growth in spring before turning animals out onto pasture – if continuous grazing this is too early, so wait two weeks longer

“As tough as times are in the livestock business, we cannot afford to dig ourselves into a hole we cannot get out of,” says Lastiwka. “Having highly productive pastures to rely on are the key to trying to survive in the cow/calf or yearling grazing business.”

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## **4-H Leadership Through Counselling 2009 Seminar**

Enthusiasm was in the air as 76 senior 4-H members from all corners of the province came together in July for the counsellor-in-training program, Leadership Through Counselling Seminar (LTCS).

The LTCS summer program, held at the Alberta 4-H Centre, is the kick-off to the many summer programs offered by 4-H. During the program, senior members' leadership skills are optimized through hands-on training that will see them become counsellors for the programs that take place both at the regional and provincial level throughout the summer.

The theme for this year's LTCS program was *Sharing the Beat*. Delegates worked in harmony and teamwork through technical and personal skill sessions focused on behaviour management, first aid and conflict resolution. They also worked on trust building exercises, decision making and leadership skills and crisis management. The members then put their skills to use in planning activities for the program events.

“LTCS is a crucial rung on a 4-H member's ladder to success because they receive valuable training that helps to enhance their overall 4-H experience,” explains Rita-Marie Leask. “In return, our organization benefits by developing leaders who can serve as mentors at camps and programs.”

At the end of the program, delegates were assigned a summer camping program to counsel and are spending the remainder of the summer continuing their personal development while mentoring the future counsellors of the 4-H program.

Alberta 4-H is committed to seeing its members' communication and leadership skills, confidence and self awareness flourish and develop. It is the organization's hope that the skills imparted through 4-H programming will prove to set members up for numerous successes and achievements.

The LTCS program is sponsored by Penn West Energy Trust, Agrium, the Government of Alberta, Monsanto, and Olds College, as well as supported by the Alberta Wheat Board and the 4-H Foundation of Alberta.

To learn more about summer programs and the Alberta 4-H program, please visit the website at [www.4h.ab.ca](http://www.4h.ab.ca)

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## Agri-News Briefs

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### Calling All Green Thumbs ?

The Edmonton Horticultural Society is inviting Albertans to enter their home-grown produce in the 100th Anniversary Flower and Vegetable Show at Fort Edmonton Park on August 29 and 30, 2009. Contend for prizes by exhibiting flowers, fruit, veggies, plants, floral designs and more. Exhibits must be delivered by 10 a.m., August 29, 2009. Park admission is free for entrants on August 29 and 30, 2009. For more information, call Dale at 780-467-8984 or visit [www.edmontonhort.com](http://www.edmontonhort.com)

**And** – the Edmonton Horticultural Society extends an open invitation to attend its 100th Anniversary Celebration where the prize-winning exhibits in the Flower and Vegetable Show can be viewed; local vocal entertainment and dance groups can be enjoyed; and, attendees can join the Society in celebration at the Centennial tea. The public event is being held in Fort Edmonton Park on Sunday, August 30, 2009, from 10:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m., regular Park admission applies. For more information, visit [www.edmontonhort.com](http://www.edmontonhort.com)

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### BioEnterprise Photo Contest

From the farm to the lab and everything in between – BioEnterprise Cop rotation wants Canadians to show off their agriculture-related photos. BioEnterprise Corporation wants to see pictures of Canada's agricultural diversity for a chance to win \$500 and other great prizes. The photo contest closes on October 18, 2009. For full contest rules and information, visit their website at [www.bioenterprise.ca](http://www.bioenterprise.ca)

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### 4<sup>th</sup> Annual PIPA Conference 2009 - Solving the Privacy Puzzle

The agenda for the 4th Annual *PIPA Conference 2009 - Solving the Privacy Puzzle* was recently posted to the PIPA website. This year's conference is presented by the Privacy Commissioner of British Columbia and Alberta, and is being held in Vancouver on October 14 to 16, 2009. New to the conference this year are pre-conference workshops:

- PIPA for Non-Profits
- What Every Privacy Professional Needs to Know About Electronic Record Keeping
- Privacy Officer Bootcamp
- The ABC's of Access and Severing

These workshop additions are offered in addition to the conference, which consists of case studies, plenary lectures and expert-led sessions provided by organizations across British Columbia and Alberta. The early bird registration rate of \$499 expires on September 18, 2009. For further information and to register, contact Crystal Wong, marketing coordinator, at 613-226-8317, e-mail: [cwong@verney.ca](mailto:cwong@verney.ca), or visit the conference website at [www.verney.ca/pipa2009/index.php](http://www.verney.ca/pipa2009/index.php)