

Alberta Agricultural Products Marketing Council

CODE OF CONDUCT

I. Preamble

The Code of Conduct (Code) applies to the members of the Alberta Agricultural Products Marketing Council (Marketing Council). The Code reflects a commitment to Council's values and provides a framework to guide ethical conduct in a way that upholds the integrity and reputation of the Marketing Council. Members are expected to behave in a way that aligns with this Code. They understand that this Code does not cover every specific scenario. Therefore, they use the spirit and intent behind this Code to guide their conduct, exercise care and diligence in the course of their work with the Marketing Council.

To demonstrate commitment to transparency and accountability, this Code is available to the public on the Marketing Council's website.

II. Core Values

- a. Members act with impartiality and integrity.
- b. Members demonstrate respect and accountability.

III. Guiding Principles

These principles guide the behaviour and decisions of members:

- a. Each member confirms in writing on an annual basis their understanding of, and commitment to, the Code's expectations.
- b. The actions and decisions of members are made to promote the public interest and to advance the mandate and long-term interests of the agency.
- c. Members are responsible stewards of public resources.
- d. To serve the public interest, members have a responsibility to uphold the Marketing Council's mandate.
- e. Members have a responsibility to act in good faith and to place the interests of the Marketing Council above their own private interests.
- f. Members behave in a way that demonstrates that their behaviour and actions are fair and reasonable in the circumstance.

- g. Members enjoy the same rights in their private dealings as any other Albertan, unless it is demonstrated that a restriction is necessary in the public interest.
- h. When a member, as an individual, is subject to more than one code of conduct, the member or employee must consider the expectations in all. Members understand that this Code is not intended to conflict with other Codes of Conduct, and will discuss any potential conflicts with the Code Administrator.
- i. The Code applies to all members unless a specific exemption is granted by the Code Administrator.
- j. Members know that when they become aware of an actual or perceived conflict of interest, they must at the first opportunity disclose this conflict to the Code Administrator.
- k. Members understand that disclosure itself does not remove a conflict of interest.
- l. Members encourage their colleagues to act fairly and ethically and know that they are able to raise concerns about a suspected breach by another to their supervisor or the Code Administrator without fear of reprisal.
- m. Members know that breaches of this Code may result in disciplinary action, up to and including removal of the member.
- n. Members know that if they have any questions about the Code, or are not sure how to apply these principles, they should consult with the Code Administrator.

IV. Behavioural Standards

Behavioural standards help members and employees make appropriate decisions when the issues they face involve ethical considerations. Behavioural standards cannot cover all scenarios but provide guidance in support of day-to-day decisions. All members and employees must adhere to the following standards:

- a. Members must not engage in any criminal activity and comply with all relevant laws, regulations, policies and procedures.
- b. Members must not use their status or position with the agency to influence or gain a benefit or advantage for themselves, their families, their business associates or others with whom they have a significant personal or business relationship.
- c. Member conduct contributes to a safe and healthy workplace that is free from discrimination, harassment or violence.
- d. Members must not use drugs or alcohol in a way that affects their performance and safety or the performance and safety of their colleagues, or that negatively impacts the reputation or operations of the Marketing Council.

- e. Members must act in a way that is consistent with the Marketing Council's protocols on public comment.
- f. Members must take reasonable steps to avoid situations where they may be placed in a conflict between their private interests and the interests of the Marketing Council. In other words, actions or decisions that members take on behalf of the Marketing Council must not provide them with an opportunity to further the private interests of themselves, their families, their business associates or others with whom they have a significant personal or business relationship.
 - 1. Confidential Information
Members must respect and protect confidential information, use it only for the work of the Marketing Council and do not use it for personal gain. Members must comply with protocols that guide the collection, storage, use, transmission and disclosure of information.
 - 2. Gifts and Gratuities
Members must not accept or receive gifts and gratuities other than the normal exchange of gifts between friends or business colleagues, tokens exchanged as part of protocol or the normal presentation of gifts to people participating in public functions.
 - 3. Outside Activities
Members must avoid participating in outside activities that conflict with the interests and work of the Marketing Council. For example:
 - i. Business Interests: Members must not hold interests in a business directly or indirectly through a relative or friend that could benefit from, or influence, the decisions of the Marketing Council.
 - ii. Employment: Members must not take employment that affects their performance or impartiality with the Marketing Council.
 - iii. Political Activity: Members may participate in political activities including membership in a political party, supporting a candidate for elected office or seeking elected office. However, they must not use their position with the Marketing Council to seek contributions for a political party or activity from current or future clients or entities doing business with the Marketing Council. In addition, any political activity must be clearly separated from activities related to the work for the Marketing Council, must not be done while carrying out the work of the Marketing Council and must not make use of Marketing Council facilities, equipment or resources in support of these activities. If a member is planning to seek an elected municipal, provincial or federal office, they must disclose their intention in writing as soon as possible to the Code Administrator for guidance relating to their duties with the Marketing Council.

- iv. **Volunteer Activity:** If members are involved in volunteer work, the activity must not influence or conflict with decisions relating to the Marketing Council.
4. **Pre-Separation**
Members considering a new offer of appointment must be aware of and manage any potential conflicts of interest between their current position and their future circumstance, and must remove themselves from any decisions affecting their new appointment.
5. **Post-Separation**
Once members have left the Marketing Council, they must not disclose confidential information that they became aware of during their time with the Marketing Council and must not use their contacts with their former colleagues to gain an unfair advantage for their current circumstance.
6. **Property**
Members may have limited use of the Marketing Council's premises and equipment for authorized incidental purposes providing such use involves minimal additional expense to the Marketing Council, must not be performed on the member's work time, must not interfere with the mission of the Marketing Council and must not support a personal, private business.
7. **Related Persons or Parties**
Members must avoid dealing with those in which the relationship between them might bring into question the impartiality of the member.

V. Administrative Processes

- a. **Administration**
Council's Governance Committee Chair is the Code Administrator. Council members of the Governance Committee, excluding the Governance Committee Chair, are the Code Administrator in a case where the Governance Committee Chair is the subject of an alleged breach of the Code.

The Code Administrator is responsible for:

- providing advice and managing concerns and complaints concerning potential breaches of the Code, including conflicts of interest within Marketing Council,
- notifying the Council chair of an alleged breach, and
- receiving and ensuring the confidentiality of all disclosures and any conflict of interest is effectively managed.

Government of Alberta employees, including the General Manager, who support the Marketing Council, are subject to the Code of Conduct and Ethics for the Public Service of Alberta.

- b. **Disclosure**

It is the responsibility of each member to declare in writing to the Code Administrator those private interests and relationships that they think could be seen to impact the decisions or actions they take on behalf of the Marketing Council. When there is a change in their responsibilities within the Marketing Council or in their personal circumstance, members and employees shall disclose in writing any relevant new or additional information about those interests as soon as possible. Where a conflict of interest cannot be avoided, members must take the appropriate steps to manage the conflict.

Members disclose these conflicts of interest so that the Code Administrator is aware of situations that could be seen as influencing the decisions or actions they are making on behalf of the agency. This provides members, following a review by the Code Administrator, an opportunity to take action to minimize or remove the conflict. To actively manage a conflict of interest, options include:

- removing themselves from matters in which the conflict exists or is perceived to exist;
- giving up the particular private interest causing the conflict; or
- in rare circumstances, resigning their position with the Marketing Council.

c. Reporting a Potential Breach by Another

Members are encouraged to report in writing a potential breach of this Code by another to the Code Administrator. When reporting a potential breach in good faith and with reasonable grounds, members are protected from retaliation for such reporting.

d. Responding to a Potential Breach

When a potential breach has been reported, the Code Administrator will review the circumstance and details of the potential breach and will notify the member in question. The member in question has the right to complete information and the right to respond fully to the potential breach. The identity of the reporter will not be disclosed unless required by law or in a legal proceeding.

The Code Administrator will involve the Governance Committee in deliberations to determine a recommendation to Marketing Council. Marketing Council, excluding the member in question, will make the final internal decision on whether a breach occurred. If the internal decision is that a breach occurred, Marketing Council will submit a recommendation to the Minister for a final decision on the alleged breach and the consequence for the member in question.

e. Consequences of a Breach

Members who do not comply with the standards of behaviour identified in this Code, including taking part in a decision or action that furthers their private interests, may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including removal of the member.

f. Review of a Decision

As outlined in the *Review and Appeal Regulation*, members can request in writing a review of a decision that was made by Marketing Council about a breach of the Code.

VI. Affirmation

The Code of Conduct for the Agricultural Products Marketing Council was introduced on March 1, 2010, revised in November 2011 and June 2013, and is reaffirmed annually by the Board to ensure it remains current and relevant.

I understand and agree to adhere to the Code of Conduct as presented in this document.

Bruce Beattie Date

Norine Moore Date

John Brown Date