

Redford government pushes for better rail service

Feb. 21, 2014

The Alberta government is calling for greater rail system accountability to deal with the grain movement backlog in Western Canada.

“The weaknesses in our grain-handling transportation system need to be fixed. While this year’s harvest was exceptional, higher yields are becoming the new norm in Western Canada and the problem will continue to grow unless appropriate steps are taken.”

- Premier Alison Redford

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development Verlyn Olson will assert Alberta’s position in Winnipeg on February 24 during a meeting with Federal Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz, the Canada Grain Commission, and agricultural stakeholders. Olson will advocate for federal legislative changes to ensure all segments of the grain transportation system are held financially accountable for inadequate service.

“Unlike producers and grain companies, railways are not assessed immediate penalties when they fail to meet their grain-delivery obligations. That needs to change. The consequences of poor service need to be shared by all to ensure our products move to port as quickly and efficiently as possible.”

-Verlyn Olson, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development

The 2013 western Canadian harvest has produced an estimated 75.9 million metric tonnes of major grain crops, nearly 40 per cent more than the five-year average.

Under the [Building Alberta Plan](#), our government is investing in families and communities, living within our means, and opening new markets for Alberta's resources to ensure we're able to fund the services Albertans told us matter most to them. We will continue to deliver the responsible change Albertans voted for.

Editor’s note: Minister Olson will be available for comment during a media teleconference at 1 p.m. today. Reporters should dial in 15 minutes ahead to ensure participation.

Teleconference information:

Media dial-in: 1-888-231-8189

Conference ID: 3072304

Multimedia

The Media conference will be posted on Sound Cloud

Media inquiries

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Agriculture and Rural Development

- Reporters must provide their conference ID, name, affiliation, and telephone number to the conference operator
- Reporters are encouraged to dial in 15 minutes early to ensure participation
- Participants will be able to hear all questions and responses
 - To ask a question: Press *1
 - To exit question queue: Press #