

Agriculture Research and Extension Associations

Supported through the Agriculture Opportunity Fund (AOF)

The annual impact of the research and extension associations supported by the Agriculture Opportunity Fund (AOF) increased Alberta's **total income by an estimated \$41.3 million, and provided over 588 full time equivalent jobs**. These associations have been an important part of the rural landscape, in some cases since the 1970's.

Enhanced Food Production System

Small plot variety trials are the first step in determining which varieties are best adapted to local growing conditions.



- In 2016, the associations collectively delivered over **80 regional crop variety projects**, with data contributing to the Alberta Seed Guide.
- Data was collected from over **400 crop pest monitoring sites**, and submitted to the Alberta Insect Pest Monitoring Network and canola crop disease forecast and monitoring projects.
- **Unbiased, regionally specific agronomic information is made available to all Alberta farmers through these associations.**

- In 2016 the associations **organized and hosted nearly 300 events**, including crop walks, field tours, technology demonstrations, conferences, workshops and webinars.

Research and Innovation



Associations are currently involved in various hemp projects across the province to determine best agronomic practices by region. One of the uses for hemp is natural alternative to fibreglass.

- In 2016, the associations worked on an estimated **94 agriculture research trials** and employ 10 PhD scientists, 13 technicians, and 14 certified professionals.
- Associations are collaborating on a project to quantify the recovery of crops under various amounts of hail damage to improve risk management tools for farmers.
- Looking for solutions to the declining productivity of pastures in Alberta, the associations are working on a project to determine the regional adaptability of a newly released sainfoin variety under grazing pressure.

Agriculture Research and Extension 2016-17 Year in Review

Leaders in Environmental Stewardship



Tom Thompson, member of the West Central Forage Association, with his ABP Stewardship award.

- In 2016, the associations collectively delivered over **350 activities** on environmental stewardship topics including solar energy, soil health, and water quality.
- Alberta's Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) program is delivered by the Agriculture Research and Extension Council of Alberta (ARECA) and they are leading the National EFP discussion.
- 7 out of the last 10 Alberta Beef Producer Environmental Stewardship Awards have gone to members of the agriculture research and extension associations.
- Associations are participating in the round table discussions for sustainable beef, and bring information back to their members.

Did you know?

The province supports 12 research and extension associations and their umbrella organization (ARECA) through the Agriculture Opportunity Fund (AOF).

Over **10,000 participants** attended nearly **700 educational opportunities** in 2016.

Membership is open to any Alberta farmer, regardless of where you are in the province because of the public support through the AOF fund.

82% of the rural municipalities in Alberta collaborate with AOF funded associations; representing over **42 million acres of farm land**.

There were just over **170 Alberta Environmental Farm Plans** completed in 2016, and environmental programming delivered in over 44 municipalities.

Associations currently receiving funding include:

- Agriculture Research and Extension Council of Alberta
- Battle River Research Group
- Chinook Applied Research Association
- Farming Smarter
- Foothills Forage and Grazing Association
- Gateway Research Organization
- Grey Wooded Forage Association
- Lakeland Agriculture Research Association
- Mackenzie Applied Research Association
- North Peace Applied Research Association
- Peace Country Beef and Forage Association
- SARDA
- West Central Forage Association

You can find links to association websites through the Applied Research and Extension association webpage.

[http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$department/dept_docs.nsf/all/webdoc7493](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/dept_docs.nsf/all/webdoc7493)