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## **New wheat and oat commissions benefit producers**

### ***Producer-led organizations will enhance profitability, market development and research***

*Edmonton...* The Government of Alberta is supporting producer requests to establish two new commissions to help build a stronger, more competitive provincial grain industry.

The Alberta Wheat Commission and the Alberta Oat Growers Commission, formed through regulations approved under the *Marketing of Agricultural Products Act*, will advocate on behalf of producers and fund research and marketing projects.

“Producers recognize the need to have organizations that will serve as a strong voice on their behalf and help ensure the grain industry remains competitive, profitable and on the leading edge of innovation,” said Verlyn Olson, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development. “We couldn’t agree more and that is why we are delivering on a commitment that will ensure that all producers are well-represented and that there is sustained base-funding for research, market development and other initiatives that will benefit Alberta’s wheat and oat industries.”

Steering committees for each commission consulted with producers and grain buyers over the past two years. Based on support from producers and industry, requests were submitted to the minister by the steering committees to establish the commissions.

“This is an exciting time for Alberta’s wheat producers and represents the conclusion of several years of hard work,” said Kent Erickson, Co-Chair of the Alberta Wheat Commission Steering Committee. “Producers have been very supportive of establishing an all-wheat commission that will help ensure the long-term success of our industry.”

“The Alberta Oat Growers Commission is a big step for oat producers in our province,” added Gordon Pope, Director of the Alberta Oat Growers Commission Steering Committee. “Until now, an organization dedicated to the specific needs of Alberta’s oat growers didn’t exist. The new commission will work with our partners in Saskatchewan and Manitoba on initiatives that will benefit the western Canadian oat industry as a whole.”

The Alberta Wheat Commission will replace the Alberta Winter Wheat Producers Commission and Alberta Soft Wheat Producers Commission. The new all-wheat commission will assess a refundable service charge (check-off) of \$0.70/tonne on wheat sold in Alberta. The estimated \$3.5 million per year raised by collecting the check-off will be used for wheat research and market development.

A refundable service charge of \$0.50/tonne for oats, raising an estimated \$140,000 per year, will allow the Alberta Oat Growers Commission to fund oat research, market development and advocacy initiatives for oat-related issues.

Both commissions are required to fully refund service charges if requested to do so by producers. The start-up dates for both commissions will be August 1. The Agricultural Products Marketing Council will appoint interim boards of directors until producer-elected boards are in place. The election process will be completed by Spring 2013.

Currently, there are 14 agricultural commissions in Alberta, representing commodities such as barley, canola, beef and pork.

For more information about the Alberta Wheat Commission, go to [www.albertawheat.com](http://www.albertawheat.com). For more information about the Alberta Oat Growers Commission, go to [www.poga.ca](http://www.poga.ca).

More information about Alberta's [wheat and oat industries](#).

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