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Guide to Agriculture Canada's programs and services

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Agriculture Canada offers a wide variety of programs and services to all Canadians. This publication deals mainly with federal government support of the agricultural industry, but it also attempts to put the industry into perspective in terms of its contribution to the nation's general well-being.

Guide to Agriculture Canada's programs and services

AGRICULTURE

Agriculture is one of the country's oldest and most important industries. Farm cash receipts were \$18.8 billion in 1983 and Canada's exports of farm produce were worth \$10 billion.

In fact, agriculture and its related activities make up the country's second largest primary industrial sector, after energy and mining. About 15% of wage-earning Canadians work in agriculture or related jobs – from the people who cultivate crops and raise livestock to those who drive milk trucks, work in food processing plants, manufacture farm machinery and market produce.

The primary concern of Agriculture Canada is to help maintain a healthy food production industry, and the department has programs and services designed to meet the needs of all Canadians. So whether you're a full-time farmer or a city dweller worried about the health of your apple tree, Agriculture Canada can help and advise you.

The federal and provincial governments share the responsibility for agriculture. The federal government cooperates with the provinces and with universities doing research.

Inspectors from Agriculture Canada check out and grade most of the meat, poultry, dairy products, fruits and vegetables sold in Canada, to ensure that consumers can buy wholesome products of guaranteed quality.

The research branch of the department operates some 53 research establishments across the country where scientists wage a never-ending campaign to help the agri-food sector increase productivity.

Agriculture Canada is responsible for administering more than 40 acts of Parliament, covering everything from dairy subsidies to fur farms. The department supervises racetracks and pari-mutuel betting, so you can be sure everyone is playing by the rules.

There are also other federal government departments and agencies that offer services to agriculture and related industries. They include the Department of Regional Industrial Expansion, External Affairs, Employment and Immigration Canada, Health and Welfare Canada, Consumer and Corporate Affairs, and Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. This publication briefly describes some of the major services and agencies of Agriculture Canada. Addresses where you can obtain more information are included.

SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Any farmer will tell you that farming is an uncertain business. You are at the mercy of natural and economic forces beyond your control. Bad weather can turn a potential bumper crop into a disaster. And even if the elements are kind and the harvest bountiful, it's not much comfort when the market is poor and prices are low.

Our agricultural policies and programs are designed to take some of the uncertainty out of farming, not only by helping to sell produce, but also by stabilizing markets and prices wherever possible.

Here are some examples of major programs and agencies and how they work.

Canadian Dairy Commission

The Canadian Dairy Commission was created in 1966 to give efficient producers of milk and cream the opportunity of earning a fair return for their labor and investment. It also assures consumers of a good supply of quality dairy products.

The commission has the authority to buy and sell dairy products, and it supports the market price of major processed goods, mainly butter and skim milk powder. Producers receive payments for industrial milk and cream that are related to these support prices.

The commission also makes direct payments to producers from federal government funds to supplement their income and make dairy products more affordable to consumers.

The Comprehensive Milk Marketing Plan is a prime example of federal-provincial cooperation. It began when the commission signed agreements with the milk marketing agencies of Quebec and Ontario. Since then, other provinces have joined, with the result that all milk and cream sold in Canada for manufacturing and processing is handled under a national system of market sharing, using individual producer production quotas. For more information, write to:

Canadian Dairy Commission
2197 Riverside Drive
Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0Z2
Tel: (613) 998-9490

Agricultural Stabilization Board

The Agricultural Stabilization Board supports and stabilizes prices of nine specific agricultural commodities – slaughter cattle, hogs, sheep, industrial milk, industrial cream, corn, soybeans, and oats and barley produced in regions where these two grains are not handled by the Canadian

Wheat Board. It does this through offers to purchase at prescribed prices, deficiency payments, and other subsidies.

When circumstances warrant, the board can step in to stabilize prices of other agricultural commodities as well.

The board also provides funding for the dairy industry through the Canadian Dairy Commission. That funding and other stabilization payments amount to more than \$300 million a year.

For more information, contact your nearest Agriculture Canada office or write to:

Agricultural Stabilization Board
Agriculture Canada
Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0C5
Tel: (613) 994-1610

Canadian Wheat Board

The wheat board was a prairie idea that grew out of the Great Depression, when farmers and government recognized the need to introduce some order to the chaos of grain marketing.

The board was established in 1935, and it is the sole marketing agency for domestic and export sales of wheat, oats and barley grown on the prairies.

Approximately 143 000 farmers in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba rely on the board to sell their grain and they share in the benefits of pooled returns.

The Canadian Wheat Board administers the world's second largest wheat export sales program. In 1984, export income was more than \$5.1 billion. For more information, write to:

Canadian Wheat Board
423 Main Street
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R3C 2P5
Tel: (204) 949-3416

Western Grain Stabilization Program

The Western Grain Stabilization Program is designed to protect Prairie grain growers from fluctuating prices. It is a joint producer-federal program covering wheat, barley, rye, oats, flax, canola and mustardseed grown in the area designated in the Canadian Wheat Board Act. For each dollar contributed by a producer, the federal government contributes \$2. In years when net western grain receipts are below average, farmers who participate

in the plan share in a payment to make up the shortfall. For more information, write to:

Western Grain Stabilization Administration
Room 935
303 Main Street
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R3C 3H5
Tel: (204) 949-3384

Marketing boards

Federal and provincial governments work together organizing and administering farm products marketing boards. The National Farm Products Marketing Council was created in 1972 to advise the Minister of Agriculture on the establishment of marketing agencies, and to represent the public interest in their supervision. Three national marketing boards – the Canadian Egg Marketing Agency, the Canadian Turkey Marketing Agency, and the Canadian Chicken Marketing Agency – were established during the 1970s. Agencies can be set up to market any agricultural commodity, as and when producers and provincial authorities decide they are needed to promote more orderly and efficient marketing on a national scale.

There are also about 130 regional farm marketing boards operating in Canada. They perform a variety of services for their members ranging from supply management to promotion, in addition to acting as information centers. By the end of 1983, nearly 70% of all farm cash receipts were made through marketing boards. For more information, write to:

National Farm Products Marketing Council
13th Floor, Martel Building
270 Albert Street
Ottawa, Canada
K1P 6L4
Tel: (613) 995-2297

Canadian Grain Commission

The three commissioners of the Canadian Grain Commission (CGC) administer the Canada Grain Act from headquarters at Winnipeg. Commission offices are located in 18 centers across Canada, with a total staff of around 850.

The CGC inspects, grades and weighs grain across Canada. Claims concerning grades assigned by inspectors to grain samples are examined by the Grain Appeal Tribunal.

The commission also operates a Grain Research Laboratory, and an economic and statistics division that gathers and publishes information on the industry. For more information, write to:

Canadian Grain Commission
Room 600
303 Main Street
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R3C 3G8
Tel: (204) 949-2770

Grain Marketing Bureau

The Grain Marketing Bureau (GMB), of External Affairs Canada develops and implements policy and programs for grains, oilseeds and their products, with the objective of expanding trade, achieving greater market stability and assisting with industrial development.

Although it is not part of Agriculture Canada, the GMB works closely with the department and the Canadian Wheat Board in its efforts to sell prairie wheat, oats and barley to foreign buyers. It also actively promotes exports of eastern Canadian grains. For more information, write to:

Grain Marketing Bureau
External Affairs Canada
1st Floor West
235 Queen Street
Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0G2
Tel: (613) 996-8322

HELPING THE FARMER

Selling farm produce and helping to stabilize markets and prices are key elements in maintaining a healthy and productive agricultural industry. But there are other major programs, policies and agencies that help farmers increase their production, weather emergency situations and, in some cases, head off disasters before they can happen.

Crop insurance

Hail, drought, grasshoppers, an early killing frost – these things can spell disaster for farmers. However, under the Crop Insurance Act of 1959, the federal government helps the provinces finance all-risk insurance coverage.

Depending on the terms of the agreement signed with individual provinces, the federal government pays 25% of the premium and 50% of the administrative cost, or 50% of the premium if the province pays all of the administrative cost. Farmers must also pay a share of the premium and they must decide individually whether to cover their crops. For more information, contact your provincial agriculture department, or:

Farm Income Services Branch
Agriculture Canada
Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0C5
Tel: (613) 993-6671

Livestock Feed Board of Canada

The Livestock Feed Board of Canada was established by Parliament in 1966 in response to frequent problems of feed grain shortages and unstable prices.

The objectives of the board are to ensure the availability of feed grain to meet the needs of livestock producers and adequate storage space in the Atlantic provinces, Quebec, British Columbia, the Northwest Territories and Yukon.

Through the Feed Freight Assistance Program, the board subsidizes part of the transportation costs for moving certain feed grains and products to areas where they are needed.

The board studies the availability and requirements for feed grain and storage facilities. It also monitors and reports on feed grain prices and market conditions. For more information, write to:

Livestock Feed Board of Canada
5180 Queen Mary Road
Montreal, Quebec
H3W 3E7
Tel: (514) 283-7505

Health of animals

Healthy farm animals help keep Canadians healthy by providing meat that is wholesome and of high quality. And for farmers and ranchers, it goes without saying that healthy livestock is good business.

More than 90% of animals slaughtered for food in Canada are processed in plants operating under federal government meat inspection and humane slaughter regulations.

There are strict controls over livestock being imported into Canada. Before animals are admitted, they must be quarantined, inspected and tested.

Import permits are not issued for livestock from countries where serious contagious diseases are found among animals.

Veterinarians anywhere in Canada may have diseases diagnosed by sending specimens to federal government animal pathology laboratories. Veterinary officers are stationed in all regions where livestock is raised, to help private veterinarians, farmers and ranchers.

Sometimes, when a herd becomes infected with a serious disease, the animals must be slaughtered to prevent the infection from spreading. When slaughter is ordered, the federal government compensates the farmer.

Canadian livestock destined for export also comes under federal inspection, testing and control. This helps keep important foreign markets open to Canadian livestock producers. For more information, write to:

Health of Animals Directorate
Agriculture Canada
Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0Y9
Tel: (613) 995-5433

Research

The primary objective of agricultural research is increased productivity. This pays huge dividends through better earnings for farmers, guaranteed food supplies and stable prices for consumers.

The branch tackles not only existing problems, but finds solutions to anticipated ones. At 53 research establishments across the country, scientists are working to develop new and improved varieties of plants and animals; reduce losses caused by disease, insects and weeds; improve management techniques for crop and animal husbandry; and to devise new and better methods for processing, preserving and using foodstuffs.

During a single recent year, seven new forage varieties, three new wheat varieties, two oilseed and several horticultural varieties were developed and licensed; several integrated pest-management programs were initiated or expanded; and improved feeding practices were established. Research led to better methods for blanching and packaging fruits and vegetables. New dairy products were developed and new grading methods for meat were introduced. Improved methods for storing apples were developed.

Although most branch research is conducted in-house, some is contracted out to the private sector. For more information on research, write to:

Research Branch
Agriculture Canada
Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0C6
Tel: (613) 995-5301

Regional development

The Regional Development Branch plans and evaluates strategies for the agri-food industry in all provinces.

It integrates the department's activities with those of the provinces, producer and industry groups, and ensures regional needs and opportunities are recognized within a national policy.

In each province the main contact point with provincial governments and regional organizations is the Agriculture and Food Development Office. For more information, check your telephone directory for the Agriculture Canada office nearest you.

New Crop Development Fund

This program stimulates the development and adaptation of new crops and varieties that have commercial promise. Canadian food and agriculture organizations, companies and/or public institutions are eligible for financial assistance. For more information, write to:

Regional Development Branch
Agriculture Canada
Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0C5
Tel: (819) 994-0086

(See list of Regional Development addresses, p. 17.)

Fruit and Vegetable Storage Construction Financial Assistance Program

This program assists producers, associations, cooperatives and boards construct or renovate cold storage facilities in order to extend the marketing season. The financial assistance is approximately one-third of construction costs to a maximum of \$500 000. For more information, write to:

Marketing and Economics Branch
Agriculture Canada
Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0C5
Tel: (613) 995-5880

Market information reports

Up-to-date information on major national and international livestock markets is available through a toll-free phone service. Dial 1-800-267-8360.

Comprehensive summaries of national commodity prices, positions and situations are available. Commodities covered include livestock (weekly), poultry (weekly), dairy (bi-monthly), horticulture (weekly) and special crops (weekly). As well, annual reviews are available for each one. For more information, write to:

Market Information Services
Agriculture Canada
Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0C5
Tel: (613) 995-5880

Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration (PFRA)

PFRA has been assisting prairie farmers, ranchers and communities in developing water resources and combating soil drifting since its creation by Parliament in 1935.

PFRA offers technical and financial assistance in the development of dugouts, wells, irrigation projects and stockwatering dams on farm properties. Larger schemes involving one or more neighbors are encouraged and qualify for larger grants.

The PFRA Tree Nursery at Indian Head, Saskatchewan, provides about 6 million tree and shrub seedlings to prairie farmers and Indian reserves each spring. These are used in farmstead, field, and roadside shelterbelts and provide protection from soil erosion. The seedlings are free; farmers pay only transportation costs.

Nearly 90 community pastures, involving more than 800 000 ha are provided by PFRA in the Prairie Provinces, for grazing from spring to fall each year. This allows farmers to use their own land for raising cereal crops or winter feed for their livestock.

More than 100 major projects have been undertaken during the years, including construction of the Gardiner Dam, which created Lake Diefenbaker in Saskatchewan. For more information, consult your telephone directory for the office nearest you or write to:

PFRA
1901 Victoria Avenue
Regina, Saskatchewan
S4P 0R5
Tel: (306) 780-5070

Canadian Forestry Service

The Canadian Forestry Service protects and manages Canada's forest resources. For further information, consult your telephone directory for the office nearest you or write to:

Canadian Forestry Service
3rd Floor
Place Vincent Massey
351 St-Joseph Boulevard
Hull, Quebec
K1A 0C5
Tel: (819) 994-1879

CREDIT SERVICES

Like any business, farming requires capital investment. A person starting a career in agriculture must acquire land, buildings, equipment and livestock.

Established farmers also need major infusions of cash from time to time to maintain efficient and economically sound operations. Often the money has to be borrowed, so credit must be available if the industry is to remain financially healthy. There are several agencies that offer credit services of interest to the agricultural community.

Farm Credit Corporation Canada

The Farm Credit Corporation Canada (FCC) makes long-term mortgage loans available to farmers. To qualify, the farmer must have plans that show promise of yielding an income sufficient to meet operating, maintenance, household and family living expenses, with enough left to pay off debts with interest over a specified period.

The maximum loan to a single farm business is \$350 000 when there is one qualifying applicant and \$600 000 when there is more than one. A borrower may take a maximum of 30 years to repay a loan. The interest rate varies depending on the prime rate.

Loans may be used to purchase farm land, equipment and breeding stock, erect farm buildings, pay debts or for any purpose that will promote the efficient operation of the farm.

The corporation will also lend money to syndicates. They can be formed by three or more farmers who sign an agreement acceptable to the corporation. Cooperative farm associations and some farming corporations

may also qualify as syndicates for borrowing purposes. For more information, check your local telephone directory, or write to:

Farm Credit Corporation Canada
P.O. Box 2314, Station D
Ottawa, Canada
K1P 6J9
Tel: (613) 996-6606

Farm improvement loans

Under the Farm Improvement Loans Act farmers may obtain intermediate-term credit to purchase equipment and livestock, and to finance a wide range of farm improvement projects. The loans are made by the chartered banks; the federal government guarantees repayment. For more information, write to:

Farm Improvement Loans
Regional Development Branch
Agriculture Canada
Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0C5
Tel: (613) 995-9554

Cash advances

The Advance Payment for Crops Act applies to all storable crops grown in Canada, except for wheat, oats and barley grown on the prairies. These grains are covered by similar legislation through the Canadian Wheat Board. Under both programs, interest-free cash advances of up to \$15 000 for individuals and \$45 000 for enterprises like cooperatives or incorporated farms are made available through producer groups. This means farmers can receive partial payment for their crops while waiting for them to be sold. The federal government guarantees loans to make these advance payments, and finances the interest charges. For more information, write to:

Program Coordinator
Advance Payment for Crops Act
Marketing and Economics Branch
Agriculture Canada
Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0C5
Tel: (613) 995-5880

CONSUMER SERVICES

The Food Advisory Division of Agriculture Canada can help you choose food that promotes good health and gives you the best value for your food dollar. They also can advise you on safe food practices that conserve energy and maintain food quality. For more information, write to:

Food Advisory Division
Agriculture Canada
Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0C5
Tel: (613) 995-5880

FOR MORE INFORMATION

There's a lot more information available on federal programs and services related to agriculture. For a start, you might like to obtain a copy of *Free Publications from Agriculture Canada*, Publication 5155. This catalog lists publications written for consumers. Agriculture Canada also produces technical material for farmers.

For information on publications, programs and services or agriculture in general, write to:

Public Inquiries
Communications Branch
Agriculture Canada
Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0C7
Tel: (613) 995-5222

In addition, there are various branches and agencies with offices located throughout the country. Check your local telephone directory.

Agriculture Canada Regional Offices

Regional Director, B.C.
Regional Development Branch
Agriculture Canada
80 - 6th Street, Room 307
NEW WESTMINSTER, British Columbia
V3L 5B3
Tel: (604) 666-6344

Regional Director, Alberta
Regional Development Branch
Agriculture Canada
Corner Point Building
10179 - 105 Street
EDMONTON, Alberta
T5J 1E2
Tel: (403) 420-4141

Regional Director, Saskatchewan
Regional Development Branch
Agriculture Canada
101 - 2050 Cornwall Street
REGINA, Saskatchewan
S4P 2K5
Tel: (306) 359-5545

Regional Director, Manitoba
Regional Development Branch
Agriculture Canada
P.O. Box 44
WINNIPEG, Manitoba
R3B 2B3
Tel: (204) 949-3032

Regional Director, Ontario
Regional Development Branch
Agriculture Canada
420 - 102 Bloor Street West
TORONTO, Ontario
M5S 1M8
Tel: (416) 973-8172

Regional Director, Quebec
Regional Development Branch
Agriculture Canada
5 Samuel Holland Park, Suite 164
QUEBEC, Quebec
G1S 4S2
Tel: (418) 648-4775

Regional Director, New Brunswick
Regional Development Branch
Agriculture Canada
633 Queen Street, 2nd Floor
FREDERICTON, New Brunswick
E3B 4Z7
Tel: (506) 452-3706

Regional Director, P.E.I.
Regional Development Branch
Agriculture Canada
P.O. Box 2949
CHARLOTTETOWN, Prince Edward Island
C1A 8C5
Tel: (902) 566-7300

Regional Director, Nova Scotia
Regional Development Branch
Agriculture Canada
P.O. Box 698
TRURO, Nova Scotia
B2N 5E5
Tel: (902) 895-1623

Regional Director, Newfoundland
Regional Development Branch
Agriculture Canada
354 Water Street, 2nd Floor
ST. JOHN'S, Newfoundland
A1C 5R4
Tel: (709) 772-4063

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