



AFA in Action

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Farmers and Farm Workers: Apply for an extension for Class 1 licences under the pre-MELT process before Nov. 30, 2019.



MELT Training extension for farmers

AFA was pleased to participate in discussions and consultation with the Alberta Government regarding an extension to the deadline for farm workers to comply with new training requirements for commercial truck drivers.

Alberta introduced a Mandatory Entry Level Training (MELT) program for drivers applying for a Class 1 or Class 2 driver's licence, which came into effect on March 1. However, concerns were raised by a number of organizations throughout the province's agriculture industry that the deadline could put undue pressure on seeding and harvesting operations through the 2019 growing season.

"AFA understands that the safety of our roads must be a top priority," said AFA director Humphrey Banack. "However, we had some real concerns about how these changes would affect seasonal farm workers as farmers look to get into the fields for this crop year."

To be eligible, farmers must apply for the extension by filling out the application form on behalf of their employees. Drivers who get their Class 1 licence under the extension must still meet the new MELT standards. These drivers must take and pass the enhanced knowledge and road test (based on the new Class 1 MELT curriculum) by March 1, 2020, in order to retain their Class 1 licences.

"We were happy to see the province reach out to agriculture organizations to ensure farmers did not experience issues this season," noted Banack. "We hope to participate in further discussions on the specific training needs of farm workers looking to obtain a Class 1 license."

More information on the application process and how to get and keep your farmer's extension Class 1 licence is included in the *MELT: Agriculture Industry Fact Sheet* here: <https://www.alberta.ca/assets/documents/trans-melt-famers-fact-sheet.pdf>

Development of alternative value creation models

Following concerns raised by producers during preliminary consultations on the two value creation models brought forward by AAFC in late 2018, AFA, along with representatives from the Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan and Keystone Agricultural Producers, explored whether an alternative model(s) could better respond to the concerns of farmers.

“At our AGM earlier this year, we pulled together a panel to really lay out this issue for our members, who had already been voicing concerns about the idea of a royalty on farm-saved seed,” noted President Lynn Jacobson. “Our board decided to call upon our counterparts from APAS and KAP to discuss our concerns and brainstorm what another model option might look like.”

While still early in its development, and recognizing that the details require considerable discussion across the value chain and further consultation with producers, work has continued to progress taking the following criteria into consideration:

- Maintain and enhance public research, development and finishing of new varieties
- Preserve or enhance current public funding
- Involve producers in funding decisions
- Be transparent and report to producers
- Maintain the privilege of farm saved seed
- Be administered fairly but at a minimal cost
- Ensure producers can remain competitive in the world marketplace.

AFA is committed to work with our provincial counterparts, as well as CFA, to push for the inclusion of the alternative model(s) in the consultation that AAFC continues to conduct this spring.

We're monitoring canola exports to China situation

With the planting of the 2019 crop just weeks away, AFA continues to be concerned with the halt of Canadian canola exports to China and the impact on Alberta farmers. We are in close contact with our provincial counterparts and will continue to monitor the situation for further developments.

AFA's presentation to the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future

AFA recently presented at an inquiry into the potential impact of the Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement (CUSMA) on Alberta agriculture by the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future, March 14 in Edmonton, Alberta. For an official transcript of the meeting and to read the presentation given by AFA's Humphrey Banack, click [here](#).

Canadian Federation of Agriculture (CFA) 2019 AGM recap

AFA's Executive Team, Lynn Jacobson, Keith Degenhardt and Grace MacGregor, attended the CFA 2019 Annual General Meeting on February 27 & 28 in Ottawa. More than 200 delegates and observers gathered to explore policy issues and industry priorities at sessions designed around the theme 'Producing Prosperity'. CFA looked at the many ways that investment in rural Canada and the agri-food sector could benefit the nation as a whole. During the AGM meeting, elections were held and those in attendance welcomed an entirely new executive team to the organization. The AGM drew a wide range of participants, including farm and agricultural industry leaders, government and industry representatives, elected officials and national media.

View CFA's AGM recap [here](#).

Cleanfarms launches new website

The cleanfarms.ca website has been updated to help farmers navigate information on tangible

ways to address agricultural waste management and find resources in the community more quickly and easily. Here are three key pieces of information to be found on the new website.

What to recycle and where

Information on each of Cleanfarms Canadian recycling and ag-waste management programs including maps to collection sites.

Programs by province

Offers a snapshot of ag-recycling programs in each province.

Promotion and education materials

Posters, web banners, statement stuffers and more to help share Cleanfarms' programs.



AFA in the News

The latest coverage on AFA in the news media.

We discuss the issues of importance to Alberta's farmers, ranchers and agribusiness.

Alberta's Election and Bill 6: Lynn Jacobson speaks on options being proposed

March 24, 2019 via Lethbridge Herald

Throw out Bill 6 or enhance it? Farm leaders, including AFA President Lynn Jacobson, talk about some options being proposed in the provincial election. Read more [here](#).

Federal Budget: Lynn Jacobson welcomes broadband commitment

March 20, 2019 via Farms.com

AFA President Lynn Jacobson welcomes news of a commitment to broadband improvements nationwide in the federal budget. This is big news for those in rural areas who rely on the Internet, especially farmers and ranchers. More in this [post](#).

AFA helps bring agricultural plastics recycling pilot program to Alberta

Feb. 19, 2019 via Alberta Farmer Express

Our organization is part of the The Agricultural Plastics Recycling Group of 20 members, including Alberta Beef, Alberta Barley, Cattle Feeders of Alberta, Alberta Milk and more. The pilot will look for a permanent solution to AG plastics recycling in Alberta. More [here](#).

AFA, KAP and APAS push for additional options on seed variety funding

Feb. 7, 2019 via Manitoba Co-operator

A third option has emerged for funding new crop varieties as an alternative to the two proposed seed royalty options farm leaders say lack widespread farmer support. More [here](#).

Lynn Jacobson says AFA is helping to explore alternate models for seed royalties

Feb. 7, 2019 via Manitoba Co-operator

AFA President Lynn Jacobson and University of Saskatchewan Ag Economist Richard Gray look at other ways a value creation experience for seed varieties could unfold. More [here](#).

Alberta Farmer Express attends AFA AGM and reports on the Seed Value Creation panel

Jan. 28, 2019 via Alberta Farmer Express

Read about the messages that came out of a discussion on the controversial seed royalty proposals at the January Alberta Federation of Agriculture AGM [here](#).

Missed our AFA AGM in January?

Read our blog [here](#) for more information on the discussions and resolutions we had at our AGM regarding some of the complex issues facing agriculture today.

Items of interest from the Canadian Federation of Agriculture (CFA) newsletters are included in our AFA in Action to keep you informed on the national discussions on agricultural policy.

CFA's views on the 2019 Federal Budget - Highlights

CFA was pleased to see the 2019 Federal Budget address a number of CFA priority areas, albeit with a number of critical details still to needing further clarification. A number of CFA's pre-budget recommendations and ongoing priorities were addressed within the budget.

To see the CFA news release on the budget click [here](#).

The most noteworthy announcements include:

- National Food Policy focusing on food access, security, food waste and branding
- Small Business Deduction for farmers and fishers selling to affiliated corporations
- \$3.9 billion to Supply Managed Sectors for market access concessions
- Introduction of regulatory roadmaps
- Addressing challenge of African Swine Fever
- \$5-6 billion to provide 100% of Canada with highspeed internet by 2030

CFA Meets with new Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food

CFA President Mary Robinson and 1st Vice-President Keith Currie met with Agriculture and Agri-food Minister Marie-Claude Bibeau on March 25th. Mary and Keith introduced the new Minister to the CFA, outline the CFA's 2019 election campaign 'Producing Prosperity in Canada'. They also touched on CFA's take on agriculture initiatives announced in the 2019 budget and expressed the CFA's concerns over the ban of Canadian canola exports into China. They requested the government to take the necessary actions to remedy this situation. Mary closed the meeting by highlighting the CFA's ongoing commitment to work with the government to find solutions to this and other issues facing producers across the country.

CFA Lobby Day April 9 and 'Producing Prosperity' discussions

CFA's Annual Lobby Day is set for Tuesday, April 9. Farm leaders from across the country will head to Parliament Hill to meet with urban and rural MPs to help spread the word about the importance and potential of the Canadian agriculture sector. That evening, CFA and Fertilizer Canada will hold a joint 'Producing Prosperity' reception with farm leaders, industry representatives, key political figures, staff and influencers.

AAFC seeking stakeholder feedback

on proposed revisions to voluntary *Product of Canada* guidelines

In the 2018 Report of Canada's Economic Strategy Tables, the Agri-Food Table recommended a review of the guidelines for *Product of Canada* and *Made in Canada* labels "to respond to consumers increasingly looking to purchase Canadian products and enable greater industry usage of the claims". One of the six signature initiatives proposed by Canada's Economic Strategy Tables was modifying this policy in order to help advance and refresh the *Canada Brand* initiative domestically. AAFC is seeking feedback on the revisions as proposed by an industry workshop on February 15, 2019. The questionnaire takes about 30 minutes to complete and will be available until

April 18, 2019. The questionnaire is available at:

<https://form.simplesurvey.com/f/1/labellingguidelines>.

Follow AFA on social for latest updates!

Wondering what we're up to in between newsletters? A great place to get information and updates on our current and ongoing activities is on AFA's [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) channels, or the [AFA blog](#). Join in the conversation there!