

Provincial Agricultural Service Board Committee

Report Card on Government and Non-Government Responses to the
2007 Provincial ASB Resolutions

January 2008

Agricultural Service Boards,

The Provincial ASB Committee is pleased to provide ASB members and staff with the “Report Card on Government and Non-Government Responses to the 2007 Provincial ASB Resolutions.” This document includes all resolutions passed at the 2007 Provincial ASB Conference, the associated responses and a tentative grade for each response as assigned by the Committee. Response grades can be either accepted, accepted in principle, incomplete or unsatisfactory. The grade assigned relates to the quality of the response to the resolution. This report also summarizes actions undertaken by the Provincial ASB Committee and updates associated with resolution issues.

Please note that the grades assigned by the Committee are intended to provide direction on future activities or follow up with respondents. If you would like to comment on the assigned grade or follow up activities please contact your regional ASB representative.

Northeast Region	Patrick Gordeyko (County of Two Hills)
Central Region	Bill Reister (Flagstaff County)
Northwest Region	Clifford Goerz (Parkland County)
South Region	Brian Brewin (MD of Taber)
Peace Region	Mary-Ann Eckstrom (County of Grande Prairie)

We look forward to sharing the results of our combined efforts and appreciate the input of ASBs from across the province.

Patrick Gordeyko
Chair, Provincial ASB Committee
January 2008

DEFINITION OF TERMS

The Provincial Agricultural Service Board (ASB) Committee has chosen four indicators with which to grade resolution responses offered by government and non-government organizations.

Accept the response: A response that has been accepted is one that addresses the resolution as presented or meets the expectations of the Provincial ASB Committee.

Accept in principle: A response that has been accepted in principle is one that addresses the resolution in part or contains information, which indicates further action is being considered.

Incomplete: A response that is graded as incomplete is one that has not provided enough information or does not completely address the resolution. Follow up is required to solicit the information required for the Provincial ASB Committee to make an informed decision on how to proceed.

Unsatisfactory: A response that is graded as unsatisfactory is one that does not address the resolution as presented or does not meet the expectations of the Provincial ASB Committee.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Reaction by the Provincial Agricultural Service Board (ASB) Committee to Government and Non-Government Organizations response to resolutions passed at the 2007 Provincial ASB Conference.

Resolution No.	Title	Status	Page No.
1-07	Oil and Gas Ground Disturbance Activities	DEFEATED	–
2-07	Funding for Agricultural Research Associations and Forage Associations	Accept in Principle	1
3-07	Canada Seeds Act Review	Incomplete	3
4-07	Cattle Identification-Credit to Herd of Origin	Accept in Principle Incomplete	5
5-07	Cattle Identification Tag	DEFEATED	–
6-07	Tax Code amendments to facilitate sale of farm assets	Unsatisfactory	8
7-07	Deer Population Control	Accept in Principle	10
8-07	Roadside Mowing is a Weed Control Method	Accept in Principle	12
9-07	PFRA staffing	Unsatisfactory	13
10-07	Clubroot	Accept the Response	14
11-07	ALPAC Foreign Ownership of Land Exemption	DEFEATED	–
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Funding for Agricultural Research Associations and Forage Associations

WHEREAS the Agricultural Research Associations and Forage Associations have become a major source of valuable information for agricultural producers and extension personnel throughout the province; and

WHEREAS these associations have seen a reduction in funding due to changes in the allocation of funds from the Agricultural Opportunity Fund; and

WHEREAS many of the Agricultural Research and Forage Associations are unable to sustain their research and demonstration programs with current levels of funding provided by the province; and

WHEREAS the provincial government has committed to the Rural Development Strategy for Alberta and encouraged Agricultural Research and Forage Associations to enhance their role in agricultural extension.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Alberta's Agricultural Service Boards request that Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development establish a consistent level of core funding to Agricultural Research and Forage Associations.

RESPONSE:

Alberta Agriculture and Food

The Agriculture Opportunity Fund (AOF) was created in 2002 to provide program funding to all not-for-profit societies that are delivering programs that increase profitability at the farm level and enhance agri-business opportunities. AOF is program-based and as such does not provide core funding. Applied Research Associations (ARAs) and Forage Associations (FAs) are encouraged to continue to create partnerships within the community and to deliver programs that will benefit their clients and that are consistent with the goals of AOF. For the 2006/07 funding year, AOF provided 3 year funding to ARAs and FAs who deliver the programs as described in their application.

Alberta Agriculture and Food (AF) continues to support provincial coordination and collaboration of ARAs and FAs by funding the Agriculture Research and Extension Council of Alberta (ARECA). AF provided \$1.5 million to ARECA in September 2006 to distribute to their members for improvements to the capital infrastructure of each association.

In addition, program funding flows to ARAs and FAs through the Alberta Environmentally Sustainable Agriculture Program (AESAP). In September 2006, \$700,000 was made available to ARECA to manage through an application process for additional environmentally sustainable agriculture programs.

PROVINCIAL ASB COMMITTEE RESPONSE:

The Committee accepts in principle the Government of Alberta's response to this resolution with the understanding that the issue is still being considered.

The Committee also reviewed the issue of insufficient core funding for ARAs and FAs at the July 16, 2007 meeting with Minister Groeneveld. Discussion took place regarding the difficulties that these organizations are experiencing with staff retention, continuity and stability, and the importance of being able to remain relevant to producers.

More detailed discussion took place on the Agricultural Opportunity Fund (AOF) from AF. Funding from this program is primarily allocated based on quality of programming and focused on rural profitability at the farm level and enhancing agri-business opportunities. There is also the potential for program based funding to leverage more federal funds. Currently the organizations are in the 2nd year of a 3 year program. The shift to a 3 year program was in response to the request of providing more stable funding and to reduce the time spent on administrative activities related to funding applications and proposals.

Alberta Agriculture and Food has shown additional support by arranging a secondment opportunity for Grant Lastiwka to work with ARECA with the expectation that he would assist ARAs in addressing issues and identifying their role.

Agricultural Research and Extension Council of Alberta (ARECA) was scheduled to meet with Minister's Groeneveld, Horner and Goudreau in August 2007 to discuss concerns and explore alternatives. Results from this meeting are still being discussed.

The Committee will follow the progress of government on this issue and continue to bring forward the concerns of ASBs to Alberta Agriculture and Food and Minister Groeneveld.

Canada *Seeds Act* Review

WHEREAS the weed seed content of wildflower seed mixes is regulated by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) under the *Canada Seeds Act*.

WHEREAS provincially noxious weeds such as Ox-eye Daisy and Scentless Chamomile are still considered acceptable in wildflower mixes under the current CFIA regulations.

WHEREAS bird seed does not fall under the *Seeds Act* and is unregulated as far as weed seed content is concerned.

WHEREAS the Seed Program is scheduled to be evaluated in the near future, which may identify limitations, issues, concerns, problems, etc. that may lead to a *Seeds Act* review.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Alberta's Agricultural Service Boards request that Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development work with CFIA to include Bird Seed under CFIA legislation and initiate a review of the *Canada Seeds Act* to restrict the sale of Wildflower Mix and Bird Seed that contains prohibited noxious and all classes of primary and secondary noxious weeds as designated under the *Canada Seeds Act*.

RESPONSE:

Canadian Food Inspection Agency

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) appreciates the interest of the Alberta Provincial Agricultural Service Board in the Seed Program.

As you may be aware, wildflower mixes are regulated under the *Seeds Act*. Bird seed is not regulated under this act because it is not intended for planting; however, it is subject to regulation under the *Plant Protection Act*.

The Seed Program Modernization Initiative – currently underway – has identified noxious weed seed issues as a matter of concern. In addition, as part of our Invasive Alien Species Program, under the *Plant Protection Act*, we have initiated studies of both bird seed and wildflower mixes as pathways for the introduction of invasive plants or weeds. Both have been identified as a means by which seeds of unwanted plants may unintentionally be distributed. A CFIA review of the *Seeds Regulations* (with a specific focus on weed seed issues), as well as the *Weed Seeds Order*, is foreseen over the next year.

The CFIA plans to work closely with the provinces and with other stakeholders to develop practical and effective policies and programs in order to reduce the harm posed by noxious weed seeds, whether found in seeds (*Seeds Act*) or in other products (*Plant Protection Act*).

Over the coming year, as part of an overall national framework for dealing with invasive plants, we will be seeking input and advice from our partners in other federal departments and provincial ministries on appropriate means of addressing the issues you have raised.

Alberta Agriculture and Food

Suggestions for improvements to the Canada *Seeds Act* and Seeds Regulations are currently being solicited as part of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency's (CFIA) consultation on the "Proposal to Facilitate the Modernization of the Seed Regulatory Framework." Due to a high level of interest, the consultation process has been extended to March 31, 2007. Alberta Agriculture and Food is supportive of your proposed changes but final determination of any changes to this Act and regulations remains with CFIA.

PROVINCIAL ASB COMMITTEE RESPONSE:

The Committee appreciates the response of Alberta Agriculture and Food on this issue as they are not the lead agency; however the Committee finds the response by the federal government and the activities of the provincial government to be incomplete. Therefore the overall status of this resolution will be incomplete.

Although CFIA acknowledges the issue and indicates stakeholder consultation will occur, it is unclear as to how ASBs can become formally involved or represented in this process.

The Committee also reviewed the issue of the lack of regulation for wildflower seed mixes and birdseed under the Canada *Seeds Act* at the July 16, 2007 meeting with Minister Groeneveld.

Discussion took place regarding the activities of CFIA and Alberta Agriculture and Food (AF):

- CFIA hosted a public workshop in January 2007 to engage stakeholders in the review of the "Proposal to Facilitate the Modernization of the Seed Regulatory Framework."
- Framework includes the *Seeds Act* and Seeds Regulations, which set out the detailed requirements for how seed must be handled, sampled, tested and labeled in importing, exporting and marketing seed in Canada.
- Meeting was attended by AF representative Dave Dyson, but final determination of any changes to the Canada *Seeds Act* and regulations remains with CFIA.
- There is a compilation of feedback available on the CFIA website for all those that participated.
- CFIA was expected to deliver a three-to-five year Seed Program Action Plan in the summer of 2007.

Alberta Agriculture and Food has demonstrated support by carrying the issue forward to CFIA at the meeting indicated above. However, a representative to replace Mr. Dyson has not been identified.

The Committee will continue to pursue this issue.

Cattle Identification-Credit to Herd of Origin

WHEREAS with the move to mandatory cattle identification, there is a database that links each carcass to the Herd of Origin. Herds of Origin must absorb the costs of supplying this identification.

WHEREAS packing plants must read these tags at the time of slaughter and assign a rail number to that carcass. Federal inspectors grade all carcasses to the rail number.

WHEREAS when carcasses are sold on the grid, premiums are paid for carcasses reaching certain standards. These premiums are paid to feedlots that usually are not the Herd of Origin. The trickle down of these funds is minimal at best.

WHEREAS packers want more carcasses to reach these high standards to sell into premium markets.

WHEREAS Herd of Origin producers could make changes to their herd to grade better (better marbling sires etc.) Feedlots could pay premiums for calves that historically grade better. Packers pay premiums to feedlots for better grades.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Alberta's Agricultural Service Boards request that the mandatory cattle identification system, now under development, includes the provision for final grade information transfer back to the Herd of Origin. Providing a management tool that would improve herd quality and command a better price for our beef.

RESPONSE:

Alberta Agriculture and Food

The Canadian beef industry established the Canadian Cattle Identification Agency (CCIA) and initiated a traceback system designed for the containment and eradication of disease.

The cattle identification program started January 1, 2001, when all cattle leaving the herd of origin were required to be tagged with an approved CCIA tag. This is mandatory, through federal legislation enforced by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency.

Age verification is a big step forward for our cattle industry; producers have recognized its importance and have begun providing information on their cattle to CCIA. CCIA indicates that more than 3.7 million birth dates from across Canada have been registered since the program began in 2001.

There is no doubt that the demand for traceability is growing in both international and domestic markets. Our industry is moving toward traceability targets so that it can maintain and improve market access. This includes targeting age verification for all young cattle slaughtered in Alberta plants. All calves born from 2006 onward should be age verified and recorded with CCIA.

Labour, tag costs and responsibility for identifying livestock falls to the herd of origin producer. This investment of time and money is crucial to the creation and maintenance of a system and

certainly benefits those further along the chain. Significant investment in infrastructure has also been and will continue to be made by packing plants and feedlots to ensure a functioning traceability system.

However, many cow calf producers have expressed dissatisfaction over bearing the cost of tagging, and investing time to register birth dates while not seeing any tangible benefit. While premiums have been paid by packers back to feedlots, little has found its way to the cow calf sector.

We believe that in addition to market access, a functioning traceability system will provide other benefits to the industry. We continue to have discussions with industry to enable information to come back to producers on such things as weight, grade and age of animals at slaughter as well as other production information. This information is valuable to producers in their breeding, feeding and management programs.

Typically, packing plants provide carcass information on a lot basis back to producers who are part of specific branded product programs. To this point, plants have not been willing to provide carcass information back to herd of origin and have stated that carcass information alone does not provide a complete picture in the absence of production related information after the animal leaves the herd of origin.

As a traceability system evolves, Alberta Agriculture and Food will continue to work with industry and the Federal Government toward a system that meets crisis management needs and provides benefit to all players in the chain whether that be from expanded markets, enhanced competitiveness or two way, broader more complete use of valuable information by all industry. In addition, we will continue to work with packers to address your requests for carcass information. I would encourage you to work with the Alberta Beef Producers and the Cattle Industry Council to address carcass information requests by the cow/calf sector

PROVINCIAL ASB COMMITTEE RESPONSE:

The Committee accepts in principle the Government of Alberta's response to this resolution. The response is considered adequate with the understanding that further action is required.

The Committee also reviewed the concern regarding benefits associated with cattle identification not being transferred back to producers at the July 16, 2007 meeting with Minister Groeneveld.

Discussion took place regarding the benefits to producers and the agricultural industry if this management tool was available. Currently packing plants choose to share the carcass information back to producers who are part of a branded program. However, the aim is to have information systems in place to not only support crisis management, but will develop into a system where the value of information is recognized, and the flow of that information occurs up and down the production chain. AF will continue to work with industry to address your requests for carcass information.

Further discussion took place regarding AFs commitment to working with the federal government as stated in their response. Since the meeting with Minister Groeneveld a document was released by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada titled "Identification and Analysis of the Current and Potential Benefits of a National Livestock Traceability System in Canada – February 2007" http://www.agr.gc.ca/pol/pub/nltsc-sntac/pdf/nltsc-sntac_e.pdf

AF also encourages ASBs to work with Alberta Beef Producers and the Cattle Industry Council to address carcass information requests by the cow/calf sector.

The Committee will continue to pursue this issue by following the progress of government and bringing forward the concerns of ASBs to Alberta Agriculture and Food and Minister Groeneveld.

Tax Code Amendments to Facilitate Sale of Farm Assets

WHEREAS census data indicates Canadian Farmers are aging.

WHEREAS young farmers are unable due to lack of equity to finance the entire purchase price of farm assets.

WHEREAS established farmers are unable to finance purchase of qualified agricultural inventory over a period of time.

WHEREAS established farmers are unable to take advantage of Capital Gains Reserve for farm property to arms length individuals.

WHEREAS tax code amendments are required that would facilitate seller financing options.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Alberta's Agricultural Service Boards request the Department of Finance Canada to amend pertinent tax codes to enhance the application of the Capital Gains Reserve for farm property transactions to arms length individuals,

AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that Alberta's Agricultural Service Boards request that the tax code regarding capital gains reserve be enhanced to extend the application of capital gains reserve from 10 years to 20 years,

AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that Alberta's Agricultural Service Boards request that the tax code regarding the sale of qualified agricultural inventory be permitted to include the ability of a seller financing the sale of their inventory over a period of time to qualified purchasers.

RESPONSE:

Canada Revenue Agency

On behalf of Mr. Michel Dorais, Commissioner of the Canada Revenue Agency, I would like to thank you for your letter received on March 7, 2007.

Please be assured that your views have been carefully considered. As the issue you raise falls within the responsibilities of the Honourable James M. Flaherty, Minister of Finance, I have forwarded a copy of your correspondence to his office for consideration.

PROVINCIAL ASB COMMITTEE RESPONSE:

The Committee finds the federal government's response to this resolution to be unsatisfactory.

Although the federal government acknowledges their responsibilities associated with the issue presented in the resolution, they provide no information to address the issue.

Although this issue is outside the authority of Minister Groeneveld, the Committee brought it to his attention at the July 16, 2007 meeting. Discussion took place regarding the following:

- Concern that the current tax codes limit the sale of farm assets for both young and established farmers particularly related to the capital gains reserve time period and that inventory qualify for the capital gains reserve.
- Tax code amendments are addressed in the Federal Income Tax Act and therefore fall under the jurisdiction of the Federal government.
- Currently there is a provision that allows for a capital gains reserve that allows a taxpayer to receive and report the capital gains on a sale of capital property over 5 years. If the proceeds received exceed 20% in any one year, the reserve is still limited to 20% in that year.
- Currently for dispositions to non-arms length (related persons) the reserve time period is 10 years not the 20 years requested in the resolution.
- Capital gains exemption has been increased from \$500,000 to \$750,000.
- Currently inventory, such as cattle and grain, does not qualify for the capital gains reserve and likely would not be feasible for all classes of inventory. Finance Canada would not support the ability to write off inventory purchases and then claim a 10 or 20 year reserve on the sale of this inventory.

Recommendations from the ASBs were considered to have merit and perhaps the best approach would be to focus on incentives rather than tax breaks. Further discussion took place regarding the need for the establishment of a working group of knowledge experts to explore possibilities. It is possible that the Provincial ASB Committee would be asked to participate.

The Committee will continue to pursue this issue and also follow up with Alberta Agriculture and Food on their commitment to establish a working group.

Deer Population Control

WHEREAS wildlife ungulate population, specifically deer are at extremely high numbers in many areas, particularly on private land this is partly due to hunting regulations, wildlife management practices, climate and societal pressures; and

WHEREAS this increase in deer population is resulting in significant damage to cereal crops, hayfields, pastures, annual forages and stockpiled stored grain from consumption, tramping and spoilage; and

WHEREAS contamination of grains from deer feces is a costly problem for producers, since grain is rejected at the elevators; and

WHEREAS increasingly common economic practices such as swath grazing and stockpiling forages are also seeing damages; and

WHEREAS the current Draw System in Alberta is not capable of handling zones with extremely high numbers.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Alberta's Agricultural Service Boards request that Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development and Alberta Sustainable Resources Development (ASRD) restructure the Alberta Hunting Draw System to address the extremely high deer numbers in some Wildlife Management Units (WMU's). This could be done by making X amount (determined by ASRD) of antlerless tags available to eligible hunters after the Draw System has been completed for people wanting extra tags, unsuccessful draws and non draw applications.

RESPONSE:

Sustainable Resource Development

Sustainable Resource Development establishes hunting season dates and harvest quotas based on a number of criteria. In areas where the number of hunters need to be managed and when harvest numbers need to be controlled, hunting licenses are issued through the special hunting draw system.

In 2006, over 25,000 special licenses for antlerless mule deer and antlerless white-tailed deer were made available through the draw process. To achieve harvest levels, many of these licenses were issued with up to four tags instead of the usual one tag, and in some areas, season dates were extended by three weeks. In any of the areas where the licenses available exceeded the number of draw applicants, the surplus licenses were made available through an undersubscribed process. This process allows anyone eligible for the special license to obtain it on a first-come first-served basis, whether they had applied through the draw or not.

If deer populations are excessively high in an area or where additional harvest is desired, licenses are also made available as a quota license. The purchase of a quota license is not restricted by the number of other licenses held by the hunter for that hunting season, does not affect a draw applicant's priority level and is available at a reduced cost of \$9.

Earlier this year, a unique situation occurred in Wildlife Management Unit 526, near Fairview. Severe ungulate depredation was being experienced by producers in the area. In an attempt to reduce the number of deer causing depredation, 150 quota licenses with four tags per license were made available to hunters from February 4, 2007 to March 4, 2007.

In conclusion, wildlife managers will use several options that are available for issuing additional hunting licenses in areas where the ungulate population is determined to be too high.

Alberta Agriculture and Food

Concerns regarding the current Alberta Hunting Draw System have been well presented and Alberta Agriculture and Food is supportive of exploring the proposed changes that have been suggested. However, final determination of any changes to this program remains with Sustainable Resource Development.

PROVINCIAL ASB COMMITTEE RESPONSE:

The Committee accepts in principle the Government of Alberta's response to this resolution. The response is considered adequate with the understanding that further action is required.

Although this issue is outside the authority of Minister Groeneveld, the Committee brought it to his attention at the July 16, 2007 meeting. Discussion took place regarding the following:

- Concern regarding excessive deer populations resulting in significant damage to cereal crops, hayfields, pastures, annual forages and stockpiled stored grain from consumption, tramping and spoilage.
- The Alberta Hunting Draw System is the responsibility of the Fish and Wildlife Division of Alberta Sustainable Resource Development.
- Committee acknowledges efforts are being made by the government in addressing the issue of excessive deer populations, but the impacts are limited.
- Committee will likely be asking for your support to create an opportunity for them to meet with Minister Morton to discuss alternative measures to address the issue of excessively high deer populations.

Roadside Mowing is a Weed Control Method

WHEREAS mowing is a mechanical form of weed control.

WHEREAS the public is concerned with the use of chemicals for weed control.

WHEREAS mowing can be the only form of weed control allowed in sensitive areas such as near creek, water bodies, sensitive crops and areas of public requested no-spray zones.

WHEREAS a mowing program can reduce the need for chemical weed control and extend the period of time between chemical applications.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Alberta's Agricultural Service Boards request that Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development recognize roadside mowing as an acceptable weed control method and as such, provide funding through the ASB Grant at the same level as the other Core Activities.

RESPONSE:

Alberta Agriculture and Food

Input from stakeholders during the review of the ASB grant program helped justify the increase in grant dollars in 2005. During that review process the majority of ASBs ranked roadside mowing as a priority within their municipality, however, when asked to prioritize programs and services relative to cost-sharing expectations with the province, roadside mowing dropped significantly in ranking. In addition, there is considerable debate as to the primary objective of roadside mowing and the overall effectiveness of weed control. A roadside mowing program serves many purposes such as enhancing or improving aesthetics, visibility, safety, snow removal, grading, etc. Also, several municipalities deliver this program through their Public Works department and would not benefit from cost-sharing, or if cost-shared the roadside mowing program could potentially consume a significant portion of the ASB grant. For these reasons, along with trying to make the biggest impact with a limited budget, such as supporting programs and services that are mutually beneficial to the province, municipalities and the producers, roadside mowing was not considered an eligible item.

Another recommendation from the 2005 report was to review the ASB Grant Program every five years, which would mean the next review would take place in 2010. Therefore this is the timeline we will consider with respect to potentially cost-sharing a roadside mowing program. However, in order to assess the situation we would appreciate your support in providing us with the financial information for individual ASB roadside mowing programs for the 2008 and 2009 program years. With this information we will be better positioned to assess the liability and impact of funding the roadside mowing program would have on the ASB Grant program and if acceptable consider an arrangement in 2010.

PROVINCIAL ASB COMMITTEE RESPONSE:

The Committee accepts in principle the Government of Alberta's response to this resolution with the understanding that the issue is still being considered.

PFRA Staffing

WHEREAS PFRA staff have provided Agricultural Service Boards and the farming community with expert information and help in many areas from water to trees to permanent cover.

WHEREAS PFRA staff have become well respected in their communities, which reflects well on government participation.

WHEREAS the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration has provided grass roots programs that have been an asset to the farming community in good sound direction.

WHEREAS it has become obvious that it is the government's intent to reduce staff in rural offices.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Alberta's Agricultural Service Boards request that the federal government reconsider their direction and re-staff these PFRA offices to an appropriate number that will allow programs to be carried out efficiently before their connection to the community is lost.

RESPONSE:

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

Response received from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada was verbal and shared with the Provincial ASB Committee.

Alberta Agriculture and Food

The Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration (PFRA) is involved in numerous initiatives within Alberta providing expertise and programs at the local level. Their value in rural Alberta has been clearly demonstrated over the years and we appreciate your concern. However, as in any organization, budgets and staffing are the responsibility of that organization. We will try to create opportunities to bring forward your message in the appropriate federal and provincial discussions.

PROVINCIAL ASB COMMITTEE RESPONSE:

The Committee appreciates the response of Alberta Agriculture and Food on this issue as they are not the lead agency; however the Committee finds the response by the federal government to be incomplete as the response as presented does not meet the expectations of the Committee. Therefore the overall status of this resolution is incomplete.

In the verbal response provided by the federal government, they acknowledged the importance of PMRA staff, and expressed that there are no planned reductions of staff in field offices at this time. Staffing will continue to be done on a strategic basis with the intent to achieve results that benefit producers.

The Committee will continue to pursue this issue.

Clubroot

WHEREAS Clubroot is a disease that affects Canola and other (cruciferous) crops in the cabbage family.

WHEREAS Clubroot is a soil borne disease that spreads by equipment, vehicle and human movement.

WHEREAS Clubroot was discovered in the Edmonton area in 2003 in 4 fields, in 2005 there are 41 fields in 4 different municipalities. In 2006 there were 71 fields infested with Clubroot in 5 municipalities.

WHEREAS there is no current products registered for use on Canola for Clubroot control.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Alberta's Agricultural Service Boards request that the Minister of Alberta Agriculture Food and Rural Development declare Clubroot as a pest and include it in the Agricultural Pests Act.

RESPONSE:

Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development

Alberta Agriculture and Food (AF) is also concerned about this disease and its potential adverse effects on the canola industry.

Since the initial discovery of clubroot in the fall of 2003, AF has been involved in surveying of canola fields and market gardens for this disease and has been increasing awareness through factsheets, posters, presentations at producer and industry meetings, articles in farm magazines, and interviews on AF's radio program, *Call of the Land*. AF is working in partnership with Dr. Stephen Strelkov, a plant pathologist at the University of Alberta, on research identifying and managing this disease in canola.

AF will soon have clubroot added as a declared pest under the *Agricultural Pests Act* (APA). This will allow pest inspectors such as the municipal Agricultural Fieldmen, the ability to inspect canola fields for the presence of clubroot and issue notices to landowners to prevent the establishment of or to prevent the spread of the pest.

PROVINCIAL ASB COMMITTEE RESPONSE:

The Committee accepts the response from the Government of Alberta.

Alberta Agriculture and Food (AF) declared clubroot a pest under the *Agriculture Pests Act* in 2007. Generally stakeholder consultation is required prior to declaring a particular organism as a pest. However the resolution passed at the Provincial ASB Conference in April 2007 partially contributed to fast-tracking the designation as this was considered to be equivalent to the majority of the stakeholder consultation that would have been necessary.

AF also formed a Clubroot Management Committee which is comprised of key stakeholders representing provincial and municipal government, producer organizations, market garden organizations, agricultural industry representatives and government and university researchers.

Alberta Clubroot Management Plan is complete and was released to the general public in June 2007. The overall objective of the plan is to minimize the spread and build-up of clubroot in canola, mustard and market garden fields in Alberta. The plan outlines the responsibilities of all stakeholders.

A member of the Provincial ASB Committee is on the Clubroot Management Committee.

AF is currently working to support the development of consistent policies for the control and management of clubroot.

UPDATE ON 2006 RESOLUTIONS

Resolution 5-06 Canadian Radio Frequency Identification Reader Program

The program is set to expire in February 2008. At this time we have been unable to take advantage of the federally funded program. However, there still may be opportunities within Alberta Agriculture and Food to explore. The Committee will continue to pursue this initiative as it was also well received by Minister Groeneveld.

Resolution 9-06 Public Lands Funding for Weed and Invasive Control

Funding for weed control on Public Lands has not increased. However, awareness of the concerns of ASBs has increased. The Public Lands lead for the weed control program, Brad Webb, has participated in a regional workshop hosted by Clearwater County as well as participated in the 2007 Inservice Training for the Association of Alberta Agriculture Fieldmen. Mr. Webb is also working in cooperation with the ASB Program in Alberta Agriculture and Food to identify priority areas concerning weed control on Public Lands across Alberta. The Committee will continue to follow the progress of government on this issue.