

Provincial Agricultural Service Board Committee

Report Card on Government and Non-Government Responses to the
2008 Provincial ASB Resolutions

January 2009

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 2008 Provincial ASB Resolutions. This document includes all resolutions passed at the 2008 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)
Peace Region	Mary Ann Eckstrom (County of Grande Prairie)
South Region	Brian Brewin (MD of Taber)

This year has been an exciting year for the Provincial ASB Committee. In addition to meeting with Minister Groeneveld in the summer to discuss the 2008 resolutions, we also met with the Minister in the fall to further discuss these resolutions as well as emerging issues. We hope that we can continue with this bi-annual meeting as well as meet with the executive of AAMD&C to cooperatively work together on issues of mutual concern.

In addition to our Ministerial meetings, the Provincial ASB Committee as well as the AAAF executive has been working cooperatively with the provincial government to develop a plan to strengthen the government's relationships with rural Albertans. This issue has been raised many times over the years and I am quite excited about the future of this initiative. We will keep all municipalities informed as we go through this very important process.

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 2009

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 2008 Provincial ASB Conference.

Resolution No.	Title	Status	Page No.
1-08	Alberta Rat Control Program	Incomplete	5-6
2-08	Monitor Canadian Food Inspection Agency	Accept in Principle	7-8
3-08	Specified Risk Materials (SRM) & deadstock handling & disposal	DEFEATED	9
4-08	Emergency registration of 2% strychnine	Accept the Response	10-11
5-08	Permanent registration of strychnine use for control of Richardson Ground Squirrel	Unsatisfactory	12-13
6-08	Alberta Agriculture & Food specialist availability at producer meetings	Incomplete	14-15
7-08	West Nile Virus mosquito surveillance and targeted larval control	Accept in Principle	16-17
8-08	Natural Resources Conservation Board (NRCB) approval process	Accept in Principle	18-19
9-08	Farmers Hail Insurance coverage	Accept the Response	21-22
10-08	Clubroot education and awareness	Accept in Principle	22-23
11-08	Improvement in quality of fencing provided by Alberta Sustainable Resource Development	Unsatisfactory	24-25
12-08	Wildlife damage compensation program for silage	Unsatisfactory	26-27
13-08	Wildlife damage compensation for swath grazing	Unsatisfactory	28-29
14-08	Provincial support for specialized extension	Unsatisfactory	30-31
15-08	Weed control on Alberta Infrastructure & Transportation Roadways	Accept in Principle	32-33
16-08	Export timothy minor use herbicide registration	Accept in Principal	34
Emergent resolution	Alberta Weed Control Act	Incomplete	35-36

RESOLUTION # 1
ALBERTA RAT CONTROL PROGRAM

WHEREAS Alberta has been considered a Rat-free province due to the effectiveness of the Provincial Rat Control Program and the partnering border municipalities which has proven to be a major Alberta advantage nationally as well as globally;

WHEREAS The Alberta Rat Control Program and its' partner municipalities have lost and will continue to lose the most valuable component of this program, which is the expertise of its long serving and experienced staff;

WHEREAS Alberta Agriculture and Food must continue to retain and develop staff with the expertise and ability to conduct the rat control inspections and train new and existing municipal staff in rat inspection and control methods;

WHEREAS Alberta has had isolated rat infestations within the last year and Alberta's Rat-Free status could be called into question if checks are not being completed in an efficient and timely manner by qualified and properly trained inspectors;

WHEREAS The Province needs to maintain all of its Alberta advantages and must ensure the continuation of an effective Rat Control Program thus retaining its Rat-Free status.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

THAT ALBERTA'S AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARDS REQUEST

that Alberta Agriculture and Food continue to show leadership and direction through developing a suitable program structure that includes appointing a Provincial Rat Control Inspector/Coordinator that has the expertise and authority to implement training sessions and respond to rat calls and infestations throughout the Province.

AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED

THAT ALBERTA'S AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARDS REQUEST

that Alberta Agriculture and Food continue to adequately fund the Alberta Rat Control Program and the municipalities that perform rat control inspections and control work throughout the Province and take a lead role in developing and funding new awareness materials such as pamphlets, videos, training material and the upgrading of existing displays as well as ensuring two-way communication between all partners and the inclusion of existing rat control expertise in the Alberta Rat Control Program's policy and programming decisions.

RESPONSE:

Alberta Agriculture and Food

The resolution calls for Agriculture and Food (AF) to continue showing leadership through training, etc. Attached is part of a letter to Vermilion River Agricultural Service Board, dated August 29, 2007, from the Premier.

“You can be confident that the Government of Alberta has no intention of reducing or withdrawing any funding currently provided to municipalities participating in the Rat Control Program.

As you indicate in your letter, communication and training are very important to the success of this program. Recognizing this, we have recently embarked on a new awareness and training initiative which will consist of videos, brochures and posters. This material will be used to educate people at existing and potential locations that rats may appear in the province. As well, a training video of new and current Pest Control Officers will be offered.”

Provincial ASB Committee

The Committee finds this response Incomplete.

The committee is satisfied with the promotion and education that the Ministry is providing but maintains having a “rat specialist” in the province provides what the municipalities are looking for; continued research and immediate attention to rat issues. This issue was raised at the summer meeting with Minister Groeneveld.

The Committee worries that rat reportings will not be handled in a timely manner because the position of rat specialist was rolled in with other jobs and responsibilities, whereas John Bourne (former rat specialist) was strictly allocated to working on rat issues and conducting appropriate research.

Although the Ministry assured the Committee that good leadership will remain, the Committee maintains that it is essential that the Ministry designate a single Provincial Rat Coordinator with technical expertise to lead, train, advise, respond quickly, and work alongside current and future Municipal Rat Control Officers as well as have allocated funding designated for research. The committee feels very strongly that this initiative will take a “low profile” if no provincial specialist is designated.

An update on this resolution will be presented in the 2010 Report Card.

RESOLUTION #2
MONITOR CANADIAN FOOD INSPECTION AGENCY

WHEREAS Canadian Food Inspection Agency is dedicated to safeguarding food, animals and plants, which enhance the health and well-being of Canada's people, environment and economy and;

WHEREAS Food safety is the CFIA's top priority. The CFIA develops and delivers programs and services designed to protect Canadians from preventable food safety hazards and to ensure that food safety emergencies are effectively managed and;

WHEREAS the protection of Canada's animal resource base is integral to maintaining food safety, public health and national and international confidence in Canadian Agriculture products and;

WHEREAS Canada's plant resource base is critical to the well being of all Canadian's and the CFIA plays an important role in protecting Canada's plant resource base from pests, diseases and invasive species and;

WHEREAS Alberta's agriculture producers work hand in hand with CFIA recommendations and changes to regulations and;

WHEREAS not all Agriculture Producers and Municipal Employees monitor the releases made by the CFIA and;

WHEREAS Regulatory changes may affect the daily operations of the agriculture producers

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

THAT ALBERTA'S AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARDS REQUEST

that Alberta Agriculture and Food monitor notices issued by CFIA and distribute them to all municipal agriculture staff for notification of any regulatory changes to rules or regulations.

RESPONSE:

Alberta Agriculture and Food

All notices issued by CFIA are posted on their website. Should there be any significant issues specifically affecting Alberta's agriculture producers, these could be analysed and communicated by Alberta Agriculture and Food to municipal agriculture staff at that time. We are unsure what else would be necessary and would be concerned about the time/resources necessary to communicate all information.

Canadian Food Inspection Agency

While the resolution passed at the Alberta Agricultural Service Board conference specifically called for follow-up action by Alberta Agriculture and Food, I am pleased to inform you that the CFIA has several mechanisms in place to notify Canadians about regulatory and policy changes that could be used by departmental staff when sharing information, as requested in the resolution.

The CFIA has a biweekly "What's New" listserv to summarize content – including regulatory changes – that has been added to the CFIA website. The email notification service is open to the general public and provides an excellent summary of content that may be of interest to Alberta Agricultural Service Board clients. This subscription service and several other specialized email notification lists can be joined through the CFIA website at www.inspection.gc.ca/english/tools/listserv/listasube.shtml?cfia-new-acia-nouveau.

Also, the CFIA manages a "What's New" Really Simple Syndication (RSS) feed that provides immediate notification of additions to the CFIA website. The public can subscribe to several RSS feeds on the CFIA website at <http://active.inspection.gc.ca/eng/util/rsse.asp>.

These on-line tools will provide Alberta Agriculture and Food staff with the information required for distribution, as requested in the resolution passed at the Alberta Agricultural Service Board conference.

Provincial ASB Committee

The Committee Accepts in Principle this response.

The Committee continues to express concern over the inability to have the information that may be critical to their municipalities in a more timely and friendly manner. Municipalities would like to see a stronger link with CFIA and the Ministry so that they are notified when issues arise that affect their ratepayers.

The Committee understands that there are protocols and privacy issues, but maintains that educating municipalities on the protocols so that they better understand the regulatory system would be good for both all. The federal and provincial governments need to liaise more often with the municipality and fieldmen so that they can work cooperatively when an issue arises. Bottom line - the municipality does not want to be told by "the papers" when there is an issue in their municipality.

**RESOLUTION #3
SPECIFIED RISK MATERIALS (SRM) & DEADSTOCK HANDLING &
DISPOSAL**

WHEREAS as of July 12, 2007, “enhanced animal health protection” requirements were introduced by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) designed “to help eliminate Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) from Canada”; and

WHEREAS the resulting protocols and regulations represent greatly increased costs in time, resources, and administrative record keeping for producers, veterinarians, and processors forced to handle and dispose of deadstock & SRM’s; and

WHEREAS many facilities that formerly accepted deadstock & SRM decided that the new protocols and regulations were too costly and complicated, and stopped accepting deadstock & SRM, forcing producers, veterinarians, & processors to absorb all the increased handling and disposal costs; and

WHEREAS Alberta Beef Producers (ABP) & the Canadian Cattlemen’s Association (CCA) appear concerned about these costs of SRM segregation and disposal that must be borne by the industry; and

WHEREAS these costs of disposal will very likely lead to increased disposal of deadstock and SRM’s on private or public land, leading to increased and undesirable predator/scavenger activity on these lands

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

THAT ALBERTA’S AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARDS REQUEST

that CFIA discontinue their current policies for disposal of deadstock cattle and their associated SRM in light of the exclusively costly burdens on the cattle industry, and the likely encouragement of improper deadstock and SRM disposal resulting from these increased costs.

DEFEATED AT 2008 AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARD PROVINCIAL
CONFERENCE

RESOLUTION #4
EMERGENCY REGISTRATION OF 2% STRYCHNINE

- WHEREAS** Richardson Ground Squirrels damage thousands of acres of cropland annually;
- WHEREAS** in an integrated pest management plan there is a need for options of control dependant on different circumstances (time of year, area of land infected, infestation levels, pest being controlled, etc.);
- WHEREAS** there is no effective product available for large scale control of Richardson Ground Squirrel.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

THAT ALBERTA'S AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARDS REQUEST

that the Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) make 2% liquid Strychnine available to farmers/ranchers for a minimum of the 2008 season either by means of distribution of concentrates to farmers directly or by distribution, from the local Ag Service Boards, of a mixed product on an as needed basis.

RESPONSE:

Pest Management Regulatory Agency

Health Canada is working with stakeholders, including grower groups, provincial extension specialists, researchers, and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) to find a solution to the ground squirrel infestation in Western Canada. It is apparent that, in heavily infested areas, there is no single pesticide available to control this problem and that an integrated pest management solution is needed. This would include research on alternative products and practices. In the spring of 2007, Health Canada, in cooperation with Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food, hired a researcher to conduct field trials to examine the relative efficacy of a number of products including 2% strychnine, ready to use strychnine, Phostoxin, and Rozol. Results of the research indicate that those products are not likely to be effective in extremely infested areas. However, recognizing that there are limited options in the short term, Health Canada has granted emergency registration recently, at the request of the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan, for 2% Liquid Strychnine Concentrate. This is for use only in extremely infested areas and is under strict supervised use conditions to mitigate the significant human and environmental health risks this product can pose if used improperly.

Health Canada considers the emergency registration of two percent liquid strychnine and its associated conditions of registration to be the best interim approach for addressing the localized high populations of Richardson's ground squirrels while further research is being conducted to find a more long-term sustainable solution.

Provincial ASB Committee

The Committee Accepts the Response.

The Committee is pleased to see that emergency registration has been approved for the 2008 season but is now looking ahead for emergency registration for 2009. This issue was raised at the summer and fall meetings with Minister Groeneveld.

Although the Committee has accepted this response, they feel very strongly that this issues needs to be resolved. They also question the basis behind strychnine being deregistered due to misuse as the ASBs have done a great job with supplying producers with this much needed poison.

The committee is also concerned about the population explosion of Richardson Ground Squirrel due to the lack of permanent registration of strychnine. Municipalities are not satisfied with having to apply for emergency registration of strychnine every year - as an emergency registration - and are now looking for permanent registration of 2% strychnine based on research and cooperation with PMRA, the Alberta government and the municipality.

RESOLUTION #5
PERMANENT REGISTRATION OF STRYCHNINE USE FOR CONTROL OF
RICHARDSON GROUND SQUIRREL

WHEREAS Richardson Ground Squirrels have once again become a major pest problem across much of the Canadian prairies;

WHEREAS Current methods of control have been inadequate or useless;

WHEREAS Farmers and ranchers are limited in their options for control

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

THAT ALBERTA'S AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARDS REQUEST

that Alberta Agriculture and Food urge the Federal Government to permanently re-instate the use of Liquid Strychnine for the control of Richardson Ground Squirrel

RESPONSE:

Alberta Agriculture and Food

The resolution calls for AF to urge the Federal Government to re-instate Liquid Strychnine for control of Richardson Ground Squirrels. Attached is part of a letter dated December 4, 2007 from the Minister to Wheatland County.

“Thank you for your November 16, 2007 letter regarding the permanent registration of 2 percent liquid strychnine concentrate.

Health Canada is responsible for the registration and regulation of pesticides in Canada through the Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA). Currently, the PMRA only allows a one-year term for the registration of 2 percent liquid strychnine to control pests. I have forwarded a copy of your letter to the Honourable Tony Clement, Minister of Health Canada, for his consideration.”

Pest Management Regulatory Agency

Health Canada is working with stakeholders, including grower groups, provincial extension specialists, researchers, and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) to find a solution to the ground squirrel infestation in Western Canada. It is apparent that, in heavily infested areas, there is no single pesticide available to control this problem and that an integrated pest management solution is needed. This would include research on alternative products and practices. In the spring of 2007, Health Canada, in cooperation with Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food, hired a researcher to conduct field trials to examine the relative efficacy of a number of products including 2% strychnine, ready to use strychnine, Phostoxin, and Rozol. Results of the research indicate that those products are not likely to be effective in extremely infested areas. However, recognizing that there are limited options in the short term, Health Canada has granted emergency registration recently, at the request of the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan, for 2% Liquid Strychnine Concentrate. This is for use only in extremely infested areas and is under strict supervised use conditions to mitigate the significant human and environmental health risks this product can pose if used improperly.

Health Canada considers the emergency registration of two percent liquid strychnine and its associated conditions of registration to be the best interim approach for addressing the localized high populations of Richardson's ground squirrels while further research is being conducted to find a more long-term sustainable solution.

Provincial ASB Committee

The Committee finds this response Unsatisfactory.

This topic as well as the basis behind strychnine being deregistered due to misuse was questioned. The ASBs have done a great job with supplying producers with this much needed poison.

The Committee cannot accept the response and feels very strongly that this issue needs to be resolved. In the future they hope that other products may become more readily available and take some of the demand off of strychnine. Since 1993, the year strychnine was deregulated, 10 resolutions regarding this issue have been brought forward.

The Committee is also concerned about the population explosion of Richardson Ground Squirrel due to the lack of permanent registration of strychnine. Municipalities are not satisfied with having to apply for emergency registration of strychnine every year - as an emergency registration - and are now looking to a permanent registration of 2% strychnine based on research and cooperation with PMRA, the Alberta government and the municipality.

An update on this resolution will be presented in the 2010 Report Card.

RESOLUTION #6
ALBERTA AGRICULTURE & FOOD SPECIALIST AVAILABILITY AT
PRODUCER MEETINGS

- WHEREAS** Alberta Agriculture & Food’s (AF) 2007 Business Plan states under the section of “Significant Opportunities and Challenges” that “competing land use interests, water, and environmental considerations are all issues that will require ongoing focus of the Ministry...in allowing the industry to prosper while maintaining the province's natural advantage and preserving Alberta's environment”, and;
- WHEREAS** a strategic government priority within the 2007 AF Business Plan pledges the Ministry to support rural Alberta by “providing technical assistance and educational information to the agriculture community” and;
- WHEREAS** Strategy 3.2 of the 2007 AF Business Plan states that the Ministry will “transfer integrated technology and knowledge to assist the industry in becoming more environmentally sustainable” and;
- WHEREAS** despite these very clear directives from the AF Business Plan, Alberta Ag-Info Centre technical experts have been advised by their managers not to accept invitations to share their experience and expertise at producer focused training workshops, but rather to only attend “where the target audience is other technical and professional staff that serve the industry” and;
- WHEREAS** this policy clearly serves to isolate grassroots producers from interacting directly with, and benefiting from, the experience and expertise of AF technical advisory staff they help pay for through provincial taxation.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

THAT ALBERTA’S AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARDS REQUEST

that Alberta Agriculture & Food immediately remove current restrictions, and allow Ag-Info Centre technical advisory staff the freedom and resources to fully and directly participate in grassroots producer gatherings they are invited to, in an effort to promote educational, productive, and cooperative dialogue between grassroots producers, other industry stakeholders, and Alberta Agriculture and Food, in keeping with the directions outlined in the Ministry’s 2007 Business Plan.

RESPONSE:

Alberta Agriculture and Food

By way of background, in 2002 Alberta Agriculture and Food (AF) changed its delivery model and established the Alberta Ag-Info Centre in Stettler to provide information directly to the agriculture industry. Information is provided from specialists at this centre or by referral to industry contacts.

Due to the Centre's limited resources, criteria have been established to determine the kind of events that it is most appropriate to have specialists attend. The criteria are as follows:

1. The session involves a significant geographic area and responds to a provincial concern.
2. The session provided the opportunity for significant leverage. For example, the audience is comprised of technical and professional staff that will provide one-on-one interaction with the end user of the information.

AF continues to explore effective solutions for delivering information and technology for the agriculture industry. Current advancements in video conferencing and web seminars are making direct contact with industry more widely available. AF would also like to work more closely with the agriculture community in the early stages of an event to ensure the availability of appropriate staff.

With improved communication technology and collaboration at the local or regional level, AF will assist you to find specialists for events based on the criteria outlined above.

Other specialists within the Department will resource requests for attendance that cannot be honoured by the centre. To ensure this process will work effectively, the Agricultural Service Boards community will need to ensure sufficient notice is provided to the Ag Info Centre to allow for appropriate arrangements to be made.

Provincial ASB Committee

The Committee finds this response Incomplete.

The Committee addressed this issue during both meetings with Minister Groeneveld this year by stating that not only does the rural community feel that the Ministry has "walked away" but that there is inconsistency (disconnect) within the Ministry as to the service that they provide. The ASBs felt trapped as the Ministry downloaded a lot of work on them, and didn't provide them with resources.

The Committee also spoke of the "win-win" situation that could occur and that the Ministry is losing opportunities to cooperatively work together on rural issues. "If we work cooperatively, attendance will grow at meetings and money will be better spent".

The Committee is very pleased that they, along with representative from the AAAF and ARD, are cooperatively working together to formulate an extension strategy. There is still a lot of work that needs to be done but this is a great start!

An update on this resolution will be presented in the 2010 Report Card.

RESOLUTION #7
WEST NILE VIRUS MOSQUITO SURVEILLANCE AND TARGETED LARVAL CONTROL

WHEREAS West Nile virus is a mosquito-borne disease that can cause West Nile Non-Neurological Syndrome (formally known as West Nile fever) or occasionally the more serious West Nile Neurological Syndrome and;

WHEREAS West Nile virus is transmitted to humans primarily through the bite of infected mosquitoes. One in five people who are infected become ill. Severe illness associated with the virus is rare, but risk increases with age and;

WHEREAS in 2005 and 2006 the Government of Alberta committed funding to the support and control of mosquito larvae in those areas of the province where the risk of West Nile virus infection was considered to be the highest and;

WHEREAS in the Southern part of the province as much of the standing water created by the spring rainfalls dries up, then irrigation creates standing water once again and;

WHEREAS in 2007 the government of Alberta discontinued funding selected municipalities in high and medium risk areas for targeted vector control programs for the *Culex tarsalis* and;

WHEREAS significant numbers of human population have been infected with West Nile Disease in 2007.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

THAT ALBERTA'S AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARDS REQUEST

that the Government of Alberta reinstate the West Nile Virus Targeted Mosquito Larval Control Program and once again provide funding for municipalities to be ready and able to implement control strategies.

RESPONSE:

Alberta Health and Wellness

We know that larviciding decreases mosquito numbers, however there is still no conclusive scientific evidence that larviciding is effective in decreasing the risk of West Nile virus in humans.

The choice to continue larviciding is a municipal decision. Municipalities that received funding in the past have the training and equipment required to larvicide if they deem it a priority.

Alberta Health and Wellness is collaborating with Alberta Environment, Alberta Agriculture and Food, and Alberta Sustainable Resource Development to plan the provincial response to West Nile virus.

In addition to supporting human and adult mosquito surveillance programs, government funding focuses on an enhanced education campaign, particularly in high risk areas, to encourage the public to use the personal protective measures we know are the most effective defence against West Nile virus.

Alberta Environment

Alberta Environment's annual mosquito surveillance program has confirmed the activity of West Nile virus is closely linked to the activity of one mosquito species, *Culex tarsalis*. The peak activity of this species is typically between mid July and mid August, with the amplification and spread of the virus dependent on cumulative temperatures leading up to and during this period. Alberta Environment agreed to continue the surveillance program for the 2008 season to provide health professionals with information for public messaging around the greatest risk period and areas of risk.

Funding from Alberta Health and Wellness was provided during 2004-2006 to municipalities in an effort to build their capacity for mosquito control programs. The most effective means of control continues to be taking personal protective measures, including water management on private property. Municipal larviciding programs can reduce *Culex tarsalis* populations in their designated control areas, but it is not feasible to prevent *Culex tarsalis* development on private property or migration into communities from outside control area boundaries.

The allocation of funds towards education, surveillance and control remains the decision of Alberta Health and Wellness, as West Nile Virus is a public health issue. Municipalities, particularly those in higher risk areas, have been supplied with training and equipment to undertake control programs. Alberta Environment staff will continue to provide guidance to those municipalities that wish to update their knowledge of the mosquito-virus relationship, and to assess the feasibility of undertaking control of *Culex tarsalis* in their communities for the 2008 season.

Provincial ASB Committee

The Committee Accepts in Principle the response.

Although both responses discuss surveillance, and education, they fail to address the issue of reinstate funding to municipalities for the West Nile Virus Targeted Mosquito Larval Control Program.

RESOLUTION #8
NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION BOARD (NRCB) APPROVAL
PROCESS

- WHEREAS** In recent meetings with the (NRCB) to discuss Confined Feeding Operations (CFO) applications, concerns have arisen over matters such as water supply and management of dead livestock. The responses from the NRCB over these municipal concerns are that these issues are the responsibility of other government agencies such as Alberta Agriculture and Food and Alberta Environment. In one instance the municipalities concerns were not directly addressed and the application was approved;
- WHEREAS** There is currently no opportunity to meet with all of the government agencies at one time including the NRCB to discuss these concerns;
- WHEREAS** Many confined feeding operation issues that are dealt with through the review process are fragmented through many government departments which complicate the approval process;
- WHEREAS** It may be correct that other government agencies approve aspects of a confined feeding operation (water, disposal of dead animals, etc), it is the NRCB's responsibility to ensure that all requirements of a development are in place before granting approval.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

THAT ALBERTA'S AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARDS REQUEST

that the NRCB review and decide upon applications for confined feeding operations from a complete, holistic perspective, and not fragment the decision making process amongst multiple government agencies.

RESPONSE:

Natural Resources Conservation Board (NRCB)

The current approval process of the Natural Resources Conservation Board (NRCB) is governed by and fulfills the requirements of the *Agricultural Operation Practices Act* (AOPA). The NRCB does not have legal jurisdiction to issue licenses or permits outside of AOPA.

Applicants are advised of their responsibility to have all appropriate licences and permits in place prior to commencing construction. AOPA does not mandate that licences from other regulators be in place before any AOPA permits are issued.

The issue of multi-regulatory requirements has been raised during discussions of the Policy Advisory Group (PAG). PAG is a multi-stakeholder advisory group to both the NRCB and Alberta Agriculture and Food for policy issues related to the delivery of AOPA. Members have indicated that they would like all regulatory requirements streamlined and synchronized.

These discussions will continue with PAG members, and this issue could be brought forward for discussion during the next review of AOPA.

Provincial ASB Committee

The Committee Accepts in Principal the response.

The main concern is the grandfathering of CFO's and clarification is needed on who administers the Alberta Operation Practices Act (AOPA). The Committee did further research:

Currently:

- The appropriate disposal of dead livestock is the jurisdiction of Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development. Water licensing is the jurisdiction of Alberta Environment.
- The NRCB does not have legal jurisdiction under the *Agricultural Operation Practices Act* (AOPA) to issue licenses or permits outside AOPA. AOPA does not mandate that licenses from other regulators must be in place before an AOPA permit is issued.
- The NRCB works closely with both Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development and Alberta Environment when responding to complaints about the disposal of dead livestock, or concerns about water licensing.
- Applicants are advised of their responsibility to have all appropriate licences and permits in place before they begin construction.

Background:

- Regulation of Alberta's confined feeding operations was a municipal responsibility prior to January 1, 2002.
- From January 1, 2002 until November 2005 the Natural Resources Conservation Board provided a one-window service for operators to obtain their water licence and their NRCB permit. The NRCB did not issue the water licence but facilitated the process for the operator with Alberta Environment. The NRCB did not issue an AOPA permit until Alberta Environment indicated that it would issue a water licence for the operation. The one-window approach linking the issuance of the water licence and AOPA permit was changed in late 2005 in response to industry concerns that NRCB permits were delayed as a result of backlogs in Alberta Environment. While operators may still request this service, most prefer to deal directly with Alberta Environment
- The issue of multiple regulatory requirements has been raised by the Policy Advisory Group (PAG). PAG is a multi-stakeholder advisory group to the NRCB and Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development for policy issues related to the deliver of AOPA and for the legislation. Members have indicated that they would like all regulatory requirements to be streamlined and synchronized.

Although the Committee accepts in principal the response they would like to recommend that a review of AOPA happen in a timely manner so that these and other issues can more directly be addressed.

The Committee further recommends that ARD work cooperatively with other Ministries, such as Environment to ensure more synergistic approach.

RESOLUTION #9
FARMERS HAIL INSURANCE COVERAGE

WHEREAS The Alberta Hail Insurance policy requires that an insured file written Notice of Loss with the hail insurance company within three days of any storm that has caused loss or damage and;

WHEREAS The weather in the northwest region of the Province is very unpredictable whereby one area will be detrimentally affected while another within close proximity will not be affected and;

WHEREAS Some storms might pass through during the night leaving the insured unaware of the possibility that hail damage has occurred in their crop until several days later when they happen to routinely check their fields. There is a great possibility that more than three days will have passed since the storm has caused the damage and;

WHEREAS Some flexibility needs to be granted to individuals who insure lands that are not in close proximity to their residence because the nature of the storm patterns that could affect one part and not another.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

THAT ALBERTA'S AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARDS REQUEST

that Alberta Agriculture and Food revamp the Farmers' Hail Insurance coverage relating to the time line of the notification of loss policy from 3 days to 2 weeks.

RESPONSE:**Agriculture Financial Services Corporation (AFSC)**

AFSC accepts the Agricultural Service Board (ASB) Resolution that insurance policy holders have adequate time to inspect fields, determine the extent of hail damage and report their loss to an AFSC office.

The Hail Insurance policy states:

1. The policy holder must provide AFSC notice within 3 working days after the occurrence.
2. AFSC, in its sole discretion, may accept late filed claims.
3. The policy holder is expected to inspect damaged fields, identify hail damaged areas and take the adjuster directly to the damaged area to assess the damage.

These requirements are consistent with AFSC policy governing Hail Endorsement coverage provided by Production Insurance and hail coverage provided by private hail insurance companies.

In situations where a policy holder was not aware of the occurrence of the hailstorm, weather conditions did not allow access to the damaged fields, wide distribution of landbase, health reasons, etc., AFSC has established a corporate procedure for acceptance of late filed claims. Acceptance of late filed claims are subject to:

1. Agreement to pay a \$50.00 late filing fee.
2. The stage of the crop at the time of damage and number of days since the storm date.
3. The appropriate staff authority.

Prior to the 2007 hail season, AFSC prepared and issued a communication release informing clients of their responsibilities in reviewing hail damage, reporting insurable losses and accompanying adjusters during the completion of hail damage assessments. During the 2007 hail season, AFSC accepted 3,308 straight hail claims and 6,262 hail endorsement claims of which less than 2-3% were late filed.

It is critical that we gather claim requests within 3 days, rather than 14 days, as the information is used to determine expected workload, to establish priorities, and to schedule movement of adjusting staff.

Considering AFSC policy is consistent with industry standards, that we allow exceptions to policy in reasonable situations, and the importance of knowing earlier rather than later, AFSC is not prepared to extend the traditional filing time of 3 days or 72 hours to 14 days or 336 hours.

Provincial ASB Committee

The Committee Accepts the Response.

Although some producers may have difficulty in meeting the deadlines, the Committee understands the rationale for their policy as AFSC has made provisions for those producers who miss the deadline. Although there is a penalty, the Committee accepts the \$50 fee as not being too onerous.

**RESOLUTION #10
CLUBROOT EDUCATION & AWARENESS**

- WHEREAS** Clubroot was declared a Pest under the Agricultural Pests Act, Pest and Nuisance Control Regulation in 2007 and;
- WHEREAS** Clubroot poses an extremely serious threat to Alberta's Canola Industry, and therefore to Alberta's Producers and;
- WHEREAS** Clubroot is most likely to spread with the movement of soil and;
- WHEREAS** To date, Clubroot has been found primarily in Canola fields surrounding Edmonton, which is a major hub for the oilfield and construction industries in Alberta and;
- WHEREAS** Oilfield and construction equipment transport soil if they are not properly cleaned. Preventing the transportation of soil via these industries will help prevent the spread of Clubroot and;
- WHEREAS** Enforcing the cleaning of equipment after it has arrived on site will not prevent the spread of Clubroot, equipment needs to be cleaned prior to leaving an infested area and;
- WHEREAS** Oilfield and construction companies throughout the Province need to know the potential negative impact they can have on Alberta's Producers. This message needs to come from a Provincial body, not as a fragmented message from individual Municipalities.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

THAT ALBERTA'S AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARDS REQUEST

that Alberta Agriculture and Food undertake a substantial and immediate education and awareness program with Alberta's oil and gas exploration, reclamation and production companies, as well as the construction industry companies of Alberta to make them aware

- of the severe negative impact Clubroot can have on Alberta's agriculture industry,
- how the equipment used in oil & gas exploration, reclamation and production as well as construction equipment can spread the disease, and
- how those industries can implement Best Management Practices that will prevent the spread of Clubroot.

RESPONSE:

Alberta Agriculture and Food

Alberta Agriculture and Food (AF) recognizes the threat that this disease represents to the canola industry in Alberta and western Canada. Over the past few years, canola has been the first or second most valuable crop in Alberta and western Canada, and supports a considerable crushing and refining industry. Future prospects for canola oil in food or biodiesel remain strong, and any threat to sustainable production is treated seriously. In response to the continuing spread of clubroot and the threat to our canola industry, this disease was included as a designated pest under the *Alberta Agricultural Pest Act* in April of 2007. Significant research funds have been awarded to various researchers to find economic control measures and to breed for resistance.

Since the detection of clubroot disease in canola in 2003, AF staff have made considerable effort to increase awareness in the agriculture and oil/gas sectors. Awareness has reached high levels in the crop sector. Although awareness in the oil and gas sector has lagged behind the crop sector, recent activities show that interest has sparked:

- Oil and gas publications such as “Pipeline News” have carried articles on clubroot disease and the implications for that sector.
- Murray Hartman, AF’s Oilseed Specialist, spoke to 750 participants at the spring conference of the Canadian Land Reclamation Association on February 29, 2008 about clubroot disease, the value of the canola industry, and equipment cleaning requirements to reduce disease spread.
- Consultants in oilfield land reclamation have begun to attend clubroot information meetings organized by counties for crop producers. Some consultants are beginning to discuss their cleaning protocols with Agricultural Fieldmen.
- AF staff have fielded many inquiries from oil/gas companies about clubroot and appropriate equipment cleaning protocols. Large companies such as Encana are developing protocols and best management practices to guide all their staff and contractors.
- More representatives from the oil/gas sector are being added to the Alberta Clubroot Management Committee.
- Many individual landowners have brought clubroot concerns and awareness to the forefront during lease negotiations with oil and gas companies.

AF will continue to increase awareness in both the agricultural and oil/gas sectors. We anticipate that service organizations such as the Canadian Land Reclamation Association and the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers will work with us to encourage adoption of appropriate measures to reduce the spread of this devastating disease.

Provincial ASB Committee

The Committee Accepts in Principle this response.

When the Committee met with Minister Groeneveld they stressed that research, continued education, monitoring and awareness is crucial. They advised that things are working reasonably well with the oil and gas companies. The Committee is also encouraged to see the development of Provincial Policy Guidelines for municipalities.

Enforcement of the Agricultural Pests Act continues to raise questions regarding provincial support for municipalities taking action in cases of Notices not complied with. Most municipalities are still requesting, in some form or another, that limitations be put on lands where clubroot has been identified. The municipalities expect the Ministries support if legal actions ensue. Further clarification may be required to outline options and latitude.

The Committee also stated that although Fusarium is not in the limelight right now, and that the Fusarium Committee is in limbo, we mustn’t lose sight of this issue.

RESOLUTION #11
IMPROVEMENT IN QUALITY OF FENCING PROVIDED BY ALBERTA
SUSTAINABLE RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

WHEREAS Wild ungulates cause significant damage and losses to stacked hay and silage each year;

WHEREAS Alberta Sustainable Resource Development is committed to providing adequate fencing materials for producers to use when fencing stockyards to prevent wild ungulate damage;

WHEREAS This fencing is often found to be of poor quality, which allows wild ungulates to stretch and distort the fence enough to crawl or push through;

WHEREAS Material and labour costs are prohibitively high.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

THAT ALBERTA'S AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARDS REQUEST

that Alberta Sustainable Resource Development increase the quality and quantity of fencing provided to farmers and to also provide them with fence posts.

RESPONSE:

Alberta Sustainable Resource Development

Producers who experience ungulate damage to feed supplies may receive assistance from Sustainable Resource Development (SRD) through the Ungulate Damage Prevention Program. Materials such as scaring devices, repellents, intercept feed, stack wrap fence and, for chronic problem areas, permanent big game fence may be provided to producers. In 2006/07 over \$1,100,000 was dedicated to assisting producers experiencing ungulate damage and to-date in 2008 an additional \$400,000 has been dedicated for ungulate fencing.

The type of permanent big game fence that SRD provides has been in use for several years and in many cases is the same fencing used by big game farmers to keep their stock in and wild ungulates out. Although there may be the rare occasion where the fence is breached, there have been very few incidents reported to SRD regarding the quality of the fence provided. SRD staff will monitor and verify complaints regarding fence quality and if necessary a change will be recommended on future orders.

The compensation and prevention programs have recently undergone an external review. While we are only considering the recommendations of the consultant in-house at this stage, the provision of posts is an item addressed in those recommendations.

The Agriculture Financial Services Corporation (AFSC) administers the wildlife damage compensation programs in the province. Recommendations for enhancements to the program to include compensation for damage to silage and crops cut for swath grazing should be directed to AFSC for comment

Provincial ASB Committee

The Committee finds this response Unsatisfactory.

This issue was raised at both the summer and fall meetings with the Minister. There is an urgency to find resolution to this issue, whether it be the quality of fencing, the dollars allocated to address this issue, or other solutions as the wildlife population continues to increase. For producers who are in these regions, the shortage of hay can certainly increase the severity of the problem wildlife, especially when forages for cattle are in demand.

The Committee understands that SRD has a commissioned report due out in the New Year that will address this issue, as well as other issues. The Committee feels comfortable in waiting for this report to be released and may take the opportunity to discuss the findings of this report with either or both Ministers Groeneveld and Morton. An update on this resolution will be presented in the 2010 Report Card.

**RESOLUTION #12
WILDLIFE DAMAGE COMPENSATION PROGRAM FOR SILAGE**

- WHEREAS** Wild ungulate (deer, moose and elk) populations are increasing rapidly due to provincial Wildlife Management policies and societal pressures;
- WHEREAS** The increased numbers of ungulates are responsible for silage losses;
- WHEREAS** Cattle eat approximately 3% of their body weight per day. This value is about ½ for wildlife to show what is actually consumed by wildlife;
- WHEREAS** Consumption is only part of the damage caused by wildlife and;
- WHEREAS** Agriculture Financial Service Corporation compensates farmers for ungulate damage to commercially grown cereal, oilseed and special crops and stacked hay but not silage.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

THAT ALBERTA'S AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARDS REQUEST

that Agriculture Financial Service Corporation and Sustainable Resource Development, Fish and Wildlife Division include damage from wild ungulates to silage in the Waterfowl and Wildlife Damage Compensation Program that the departments now offer.

RESPONSE:

Agriculture Financial Services Corporation (AFSC)

AFSC accepts ASB Resolution that wildlife ungulate (deer, moose and elk) populations are increasing, that the practice of storing silage in an open pit is common practice, and that crops stored in these pits are subject to damage by wildlife.

On an annual basis, AFSC district offices receive several requests for wildlife damage compensation in these situations. These requests have been denied, as program regulations exclude damage to feed, other than stacked feed sources.

During the past year we cooperated with Sustainable Resource Development (SRD) in the completion of an external review of these compensation programs. This review identified the need to provide fencing materials to prevent feeding and to establish procedures to fairly and efficiently identify loss and damage caused by wildlife to crops stored in pits. AFSC will continue to work with the review committee to understand producer issues and develop effective solutions.

Alberta Sustainable Resource Development

Producers who experience ungulate damage to feed supplies may receive assistance from Sustainable Resource Development (SRD) through the Ungulate Damage Prevention Program. Materials such as scaring devices, repellents, intercept feed, stack wrap fence and, for chronic problem areas, permanent big game fence may be provided to producers. In 2006/07 over \$1,100,000 was dedicated to assisting producers experiencing ungulate damage and to-date in 2008 an additional \$400,000 has been dedicated for ungulate fencing.

The type of permanent big game fence that SRD provides has been in use for several years and in many cases is the same fencing used by big game farmers to keep their stock in and wild ungulates out. Although there may be the rare occasion where the fence is breached, there have been very few incidents reported to SRD regarding the quality of the fence provided. SRD staff will monitor and verify complaints regarding fence quality and if necessary a change will be recommended on future orders.

The compensation and prevention programs have recently undergone an external review. While we are only considering the recommendations of the consultant in-house at this stage, the provision of posts is an item addressed in those recommendations.

The Agriculture Financial Services Corporation (AFSC) administers the wildlife damage compensation programs in the province. Recommendations for enhancements to the program to include compensation for damage to silage and crops cut for swath grazing should be directed to AFSC for comment.

Provincial ASB Committee

The Committee finds this response Unsatisfactory.

This issue was raised at both the summer and fall meeting with Minister Groeneveld. Silage provides the opportunity for many producers, especially in the Peace region, to make high quality winter feed for their livestock. As the margin of profitability for cattle farmers today is already extremely narrow, damage to stored feed causes unnecessary additional financial difficulties. Addition of silage and silage pits to AFSC and SRD's Wildlife Compensation Program would alleviate that stress.

Although the Committee understands that it can be difficult to ascertain who ate, trampled and scattered the silage from the pit, there is an urgency to find an answer that works both for the government as well as producers. The Committee offered their assistance and expertise if required.

The Committee's understands that SRD has a commissioned report due out in the New Year that should address this issue, as well as other issues. The Committee feels comfortable in waiting for this report to be released and may take the opportunity to discuss the findings of this report with Ministers Groeneveld and/or Morton and/or AFSC.

An update on this resolution will be presented in the 2010 Report Card.

RESOLUTION #13
WILDLIFE DAMAGE COMPENSATION FOR SWATH GRAZING

WHEREAS Swath Grazing of annual cereals is a management practice that can be used to extend the grazing season and to reduce feed, labor and manure handling costs for Alberta Cattle Producers and;

WHEREAS Annual crops left for swath grazing are prone to wildlife damage, ungulates and waterfowl feed, trample and defecate on the swaths affecting the quality of the feed for livestock and;

WHEREAS The Wildlife Damage Compensation Program compensates producers for “spot loss” damage to eligible unharvested crops that is caused by ungulates, waterfowl, upland game birds and bears and;

WHEREAS Crops that are cut or swathed for grazing are not eligible under the Wildlife Damage Compensation Program.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

THAT ALBERTA’S AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARDS REQUEST

that Alberta Sustainable Resource Development, Fish and Wildlife Division and Agricultural Financial Services Corporation (AFSC) include crops cut for Swath Grazing as an eligible crop under the Wildlife Damage Compensation Program.

RESPONSE:

Agriculture Financial Services Corporation (AFSC)

AFSC accepts ASB Resolution that wildlife ungulates (deer, moose and elk) populations are increasing, that the practice of swath grazing for livestock is becoming more popular and that these crops may be subject to significant overwinter damage by wildlife.

On an annual basis, AFSC district offices have experienced an increase in the number of requests for wildlife damage compensation in these situations. These requests have been denied, as program regulations exclude damage to crops on grazing land.

Crops intended for swath grazing are excluded, as it is generally not possible for the producer to take preventative measures to limit wildlife damage. Furthermore, it is difficult for AFSC to ascertain whether cattle or wildlife ate the damaged swaths.

During the past year we cooperated with Sustainable Resource Development (SRD) in the completion of an external review of these compensation programs. AFSC will continue to work with the review committee to understand producer issues and develop effective solutions.

Alberta Sustainable Resource Development

Producers who experience ungulate damage to feed supplies may receive assistance from Sustainable Resource Development (SRD) through the Ungulate Damage Prevention Program. Materials such as scaring devices, repellents, intercept feed, stack wrap fence and, for chronic problem areas, permanent big game fence may be provided to producers. In 2006/07 over \$1,100,000 was dedicated to assisting producers experiencing ungulate damage and to-date in 2008 an additional \$400,000 has been dedicated for ungulate fencing.

The type of permanent big game fence that SRD provides has been in use for several years and in many cases is the same fencing used by big game farmers to keep their stock in and wild ungulates out. Although there may be the rare occasion where the fence is breached, there have been very few incidents reported to SRD regarding the quality of the fence provided. SRD staff will monitor and verify complaints regarding fence quality and if necessary a change will be recommended on future orders.

The compensation and prevention programs have recently undergone an external review. While we are only considering the recommendations of the consultant in-house at this stage, the provision of posts is an item addressed in those recommendations.

The Agriculture Financial Services Corporation (AFSC) administers the wildlife damage compensation programs in the province. Recommendations for enhancements to the program to include compensation for damage to silage and crops cut for swath grazing should be directed to AFSC for comment.

Provincial ASB Committee

The Committee finds this response Unsatisfactory

This issue was raised at both the summer and fall meeting with Minister Groeneveld.

Swath Grazing has become a very popular management tool to extend the grazing season and increase the profitability of cattle production. However, due to the extended period of time from swathing to grazing, the forage is vulnerable to wildlife damage.

Although the Committee understands that it can be difficult to ascertain who ate, trampled and scattered the swaths, there is an urgency to find an answer that works for both the government as well as producers. The Committee offered their assistance and expertise if required with the goal of making crops cut for swath grazing an eligible crop.

The Committee's understands that SRD has a commissioned report due out in the New Year that should address this issue, as well as other issues. The Committee feels comfortable in waiting for this report to be released and may take the opportunity to discuss the findings of this report with Ministers Groeneveld and/or Morton and/or AFSC.

An update on this resolution will be presented in the 2010 Report Card.

RESOLUTION #14
PROVINCIAL SUPPORT FOR SPECIALIZED EXTENSION

WHEREAS With the continued urbanization of the rural landscape into subdivisions and acreages and;

WHEREAS with these developments come increased specialized landscaping and horticultural plantings and;

WHEREAS with these specialized plantings, market gardens and berry orchards comes a myriad of diseases, insects and fungal agents and;

WHEREAS Agricultural Fieldmen are now the only local resource for plant disease identification, diagnosis, and treatment for all local landowners

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

THAT ALBERTA'S AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARDS REQUEST

that Alberta Agriculture and Food provide sufficient funding to support the provision of a provincial extension horticulturist to assist rural landowners and local extension service providers with concerns about disease, insects, and fungal agents in landscaping and horticultural plantings.

RESPONSE:

Alberta Agriculture & Food

Alberta Ag Info Centre has staff in place to support horticultural crop farming operations of all shapes and sizes, including market gardens, berry operations, and operations that focus on producing or marketing products for a customer/consumer. Specialized staff can assist with all production and pest management questions. Staff can and will support the industries and personnel that provide services and product to the rural landowner. AF has not had the resources or mandate to provide support or services directly to the home or private horticulture client for many years.

Private horticulture clients and rural landowners can be directed to the industries that supply the products that they require (such as garden centres, nurseries, greenhouses) or can contract a private horticulturalist.

Provincial ASB Committee

The Committee finds this response Unsatisfactory.

This was discussed with the Minister at the summer meeting.

Municipalities treat all their clients the same, regardless of whether they are ratepayers with a few trees, to commercial operations. Urbanization of the rural landscape by acreages and rural subdivisions is an issue faced by all municipalities across Alberta. Many horticulture issues are being brought to the fieldmen and some ASBs have even hired their own staff to handle the volume of calls coming in. One municipality, for example, in the peak season, handles as many as 40-60 horticulture calls per week.

The Committee understands that staffing may be an issue, but horticulture is a specialized field with a wide variety of disease, insects, and fungal agents all of which are unique to it. The Committee recommends the Ministry hire one provincial horticulture specialist that would provide professional assistance in research and diagnosis to all producers and rural landowners. The local fieldmen can still remain the local contact

An update on this resolution will be presented in the 2010 Report Card.

RESOLUTION #15
WEED CONTROL ON ALBERTA INFRASTRUCTURE & TRANSPORTATION
ROADWAYS

WHEREAS Agricultural Service Boards in the Province of Alberta have a long history of weed control expertise on roadsides;

WHEREAS Municipal Agricultural Fieldmen are very knowledgeable on weed identification and their specific control;

WHEREAS Until the mid nineties, Agricultural Service Boards implemented weed control on provincial secondary highways across the province;

WHEREAS Since the weed control programs on these same roads were transferred to provincial control, these roadsides have become heavily infested, negatively impacting agriculture land across the province.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

THAT ALBERTA'S AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARDS REQUEST

that Alberta Infrastructure & Transportation allow and pay any interested Agricultural Service Board throughout Alberta to provide weed control on provincial highways.

RESPONSE:

Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation

Weed Control within all highway right-of-ways is a priority for government. The department has contractual obligations to have weed control work done by the highway maintenance contractors. Staff from Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation (INFTRA) and Alberta Agriculture and Food work closely with Agricultural Fieldmen and highway maintenance contractors to determine the weed spraying and mowing requirements along each roadway within their jurisdiction. Also, Agricultural Fieldmen identify problematic locations that need special attention and ensure they are addressed.

In 2006, a resolution was passed at the provincial Agricultural Service Boards conference regarding responsibilities under the *Weed Control Act* (WCA). Subsequently, INFTRA responded to the resolution stating the need for continued communication and cooperation with municipalities, their weed experts and Agricultural Fieldmen.

The partnerships your department maintains between municipalities, government departments, and corporate landowners remain the best way to ensure compliance with the WCA.

Agricultural Fieldmen can also undertake weed control using their own forces if mutually agreed that this would expedite the work. In these cases, the department pays the municipality directly for this work. On a province-wide basis, this process has proven to be successful. In urgent situations, where weed control continues to be an issue, the Agricultural Service Board retains the option, under Section 27 of the WCA, for the Agricultural Fieldman to order weed control work directly from the highway maintenance contractor and charge the cost of the weed control to the owner of the land, even if the owner is a government body.

I encourage all Agricultural Fieldmen to work closely with INFTRA's district staff to ensure these roadways receive appropriate attention.

Provincial ASB Committee

The Committee Accepts in Principle this response.

The Committee, at their summer meeting with the Minister, thanked him for his help and support. They advised that over the past year there has been a great improvement in weed control on the highways and that some municipalities have found success in direct billing already.

The Committee also stressed that this is an issue that must be kept in the forefront as municipalities are having differing degrees of success in implementing an effective weed control program. Related to this, the Committee urged the Minister to discuss the lack of an effective weed control program with the railways. It was generally agreed that municipalities should encourage SRD, and any other Ministries that deal with weeds, to attend weed workshops.

RESOLUTION #16
EXPORT TIMOTHY MINOR USE HERBICIDE REGISTRATION

- WHEREAS** Herbicide regulation, in Canada, is controlled by the Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) under the Legislation of the *Pest Control Products Act* and;
- WHEREAS** Export timothy growers need an effective herbicide to control dandelion, Canada thistle, and other hard to kill weeds and;
- WHEREAS** Many of the federally approved herbicide options available to export timothy growers are listed on the Japanese “Toxic Item” list because of herbicide residue limits and;
- WHEREAS** Provincial timothy producers are suffering quality losses of \$20-\$100/MT because of dandelion and other weed contaminant issues.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

THAT ALBERTA’S AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARD REQUEST

that the PMRA expedite the Minor Use Label Registration of Frontline (Florasulam + MCPA Ester) for forage and seed production to assist timothy producers in ensuring quality timothy forage is exported, with minimal weed contaminants, and reduce the spread of broadleaf weeds locally.

RESPONSE:

Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA)

The minor use registration of Frontline XL Herbicide for use on timothy is a project through AAFC’s Minor Use Program that was initiated in 2007. No application has been submitted to Health Canada for this use, therefore, no guidance can be provided regarding the ability of Health Canada to expedite the review. I have, however, taken the liberty to express your interest in this product with our federal colleagues at the Pest Management Centre of AAFC.

Provincial ASB Committee

The Committee Accept in Principle this response.

A Minor Use application for use of Frontline XL on timothy has been submitted to PMRA by the manufacturer. The current status of the registration is that PMRA is requesting more data to fulfill the registration requirements. Data from the 2009 crop year will have to be reviewed before a decision regarding Minor Use Registration will be made.

The Committee requests that PMRA consider this resolution when the data for the Frontline XL Minor Use registration is submitted and expedite this registration.

**EMERGENT RESOLUTION
ALBERTA WEED CONTROL ACT**

WHEREAS The preferred method in dealing with non-compliance from a Notice To Remedy Weed Problem is typically to control/eradicate the weeds and send the landowner an invoice for the work or failing this add the costs to the property taxes;

WHEREAS The current Weed Control Act, section 38 outlines an option for dealing with contraventions to the Act without the inherent risks of going onto the land to control/eradicate the weeds;

WHEREAS Section 38 has never been an effective option due to the cumbersome process of hiring legal aid and presenting the case to a judge for his or her ruling;

WHEREAS The need for Section 38 is particularity suitable when it is impractical to go onto the land to do the work;

WHEREAS It is becoming increasingly difficult to deal with weed control enforcement on lands due to the presence of livestock at large, exotic and easily stressed livestock (bison, elk, ostrich/emu), organic farms, large tracts of hard to access rangeland;

WHEREAS The Weed Control Act is in its final stages of review;

WHEREAS The Province may not review this Act for a considerable period of time

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

THAT ALBERTA'S AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARDS REQUEST

that Alberta Agriculture and Food make the necessary amendments to Section 38 of the Alberta Weed Control Act that improves the effectiveness of this much needed option for Act violations without the inherit risk of going onto the land to control or eradicate the weed problem.

EMERGENT RESOLUTION - Background

The Emergent nature of this Resolution stems from the fact that a new amended Weed Control Act is resting with Alberta Agriculture and Food's legal review team without additional input being sought from Municipalities. The opportunity for Act review may not come again for several years. The urgent need for an additional amendment as outlined in this Resolution stems from a Weed Control Act Enforcement Meeting held at Clearwater County earlier in the fall with participation from several other municipalities. Unfortunately the important content of this meeting missed the subsequent Regional Conferences. With the support from the Provinces Agricultural Service Boards this amendment would be requested in addition to the other amendments currently being reviewed.

More specifically the need for amendment pertains specifically to Section 38, detailing one of the enforcement options in addition to the “going onto the land and controlling/eradicating the weed problem”. This section has been used on occasion only to be tossed out of court on the slightest technicality. The main problem with the process under this section is that the municipality has to incur expensive court costs such as preparing the case, gathering exhibits and hiring a lawyer in situations when it is very obvious that the law has been broken. This option should not need a judge’s ruling as it leaves too much room for interpretation. What would be a superior method is for the “Notice To Remedy Weed Problem” to be viewed as a binding “ticket” that could only be appealed before the Court of Queens Bench along the same lines as the weight and speed violations Municipal Special Constables are involved with.

It is anticipated that there would be clearly defined criteria respecting the land use, size of infestation and impact on neighboring lands and it should be clear that this is only an option where the weed problem is connected with an element of liability or access to the land simply not practical under the circumstances. We would also welcome the idea of the Act specifying that fines collected under this option must be used to administer a weed control program for the general good of the municipality.

An amended section 38 will be a more user friendly approach to enforcement necessary in cases where land access is not an option and will be a much needed tool to be considered when education and awareness have failed.

RESPONSE:

Alberta Agriculture and Food

The ticketing option as outlined in the background of this resolution does not require for Section 38 of the *Weed Control Act* to be amended. Ticketing for offences occurs pursuant to the *Provincial Offences Procedure Act*.

It would be advisable for the Provincial Agricultural Service Board Committee to investigate the *Provincial Offences Procedure Act* and the Procedures Regulation in order to understand the implications of having the *Weed Control Act* included. The Committee could then make a recommendation to the provincial Agricultural Service Boards on whether or not the *Weed Control Act* should be included in the Procedures Regulation of the *Provincial Offences Procedure Act*.

If the provincial Agricultural Service Boards decide to request ticketing as an option necessary to effectively deal with non-compliance issues of the *Weed Control Act*, they could make a formal request to Alberta Agriculture and Food to initiate the process of including the *Weed Control Act* in the Procedures Regulation of the *Provincial Offences Procedure Act*. Further stakeholder consultation may also be necessary prior to initiating this process.

Provincial ASB Committee

The Committee finds this response Incomplete.

The Committee feels that the municipalities have to go through a lot of work to prove non-compliance and would like the process to be streamlined or made more manageable.

The Provincial ASB Committee & AAAF Regulations Committee will continue to work with the Pest Management Branch for further clarification and to try and address this issue within the new Weed Control Act Regulations.

UPDATE ON 2006-2007 RESOLUTIONS

Resolution 5-06 Canadian Radio Frequency Identification Reader Program

Resolution 4-07 Cattle Identification-Credit to Herd of Origin

The original program expired and the ASBs were not able to take advantage of this federally funded program. These resolutions as well as other livestock issues were discussed at both meetings with Minister Groeneveld this year.

This fall, ARD announced a reader program to provide financial assistance to the Agricultural Service Boards to enable them to purchase a hand held RFID tag reader and associated software. This initiative has been well received.

One of the main components of The Meat and Livestock Strategy will be the development of the Alberta Livestock Information System (ALIS) that will enable information to flow both ways along the value chain.

The Committee will continue to monitor these issues and have appointed Brian Brewin (South region rep) to represent the ASBs if requested.

Resolution 6-07 Tax Code Amendments to facilitate sale of farm assets

The Provincial Committee has discussed this issue as well as beginning farmer issues at every meeting with Minister Groeneveld. Many municipalities continue to question how to keep young farmers on the farm.

ARD has discussed developing a technical team to look into this and the Committee has appointed Brian Brewin (South region rep) to represent the ASBs. Although this issue is a federal issue, the Committee feels that the province may be able to look at provincial responses first. Unfortunately, ARD experts in taxation, such as Merle Good, have been unavailable this year.

The Committee will continue to work with ARD and AAMDC to see if progress can be made on these resolutions.