

### **Resolution 6-21: Agriculture Research Association Check Off Option**

Each of Alberta's 20 agricultural marketing boards and commissions (MBCs) is created and governed by a set of regulations under the *Marketing of Agricultural Products Act*. These regulations set out specific purposes and powers for each MBC, and clearly establish the requirement that service charges collected under each regulation are to be used to finance the respective MBC's activities. The formation of any MBC under the *Marketing of Agricultural Products Act* requires producers of a specific commodity to take collective action to establish the organization for the express purpose of representing producers of that commodity. This includes demonstration of producer support to establish a service charge to fund the organization.

MBCs may choose to direct service charges toward research projects through Applied Research Associations (ARAs) or Agriculture Research and Development Organizations (ARDOs). Producers may present this option for consideration by the MBC Board, who would likely seek support from the majority of producers.

Twelve of Alberta's 20 MBCs operate with a refundable service charge model. Producers in these sectors can request a refund of their service charge contributions and could potentially provide this funding to ARAs or Agriculture Research and Development Organizations if they feel this is a more appropriate use of their funds.

Recently, Results Driven Agriculture Research (RDAR) approved funding to the ARAs of \$2 million per year for 2 years (2021-22 and 2022-23). Funding is to be delivered to a single organization to administer. RDAR is open to providing this funding, including a potential increase, but will require a written plan demonstrating increased efficiency, results measurement, and a province-wide approach to activities. In addition, RDAR will assist the ARAs reach these goals by providing an additional grant in the range of \$50,000 to \$75,000 to hire a consultant to help the ARAs work through the planning process and writing of the detailed plan.

AF encourages the ASB Provincial Committee to work with RDAR and the MBCs in defining specific opportunities for partnerships, which may also include funding or contracting research and extension projects.