

Email response from Minister LaGrange re:
[July 26 letter to Alberta's Education Minister Adriana LaGrange](#)

Ms. Karla Bergstrom
Manager, Government and Industry Affairs, Alberta Canola

Dear Ms. Bergstrom:

The Honourable Devin Dreeshen, Minister of Agriculture and Forestry, forwarded your July 26, 2021 email and accompanying letter requesting Alberta Education support the establishment of an agriculture and natural resources education advisory group and regarding agriculture content in Alberta's curriculum. As Minister of Education, I am pleased to respond.

From Kindergarten to Grade 9, Science and Social Studies courses are mandatory core subjects for most students in Alberta. The curriculum for these courses provides students with opportunities to learn about concepts related to agriculture in Alberta. These opportunities continue into the high school when choice in programming accommodates a wider range of needs and interests for students as they plan their futures.

The curriculum also provides opportunities for studying issues, including those related to resources and the environment, through various lenses in a well-balanced manner. Across grade levels, students explore multiple perspectives on using, distributing and managing resources, and they investigate the effects that economics and resources have on quality of life.

In addition, the optional Career and Technology Foundations (CTF) program supports flexible, learning through which students in Grades 5 to 9 explore interests and aspirations while making personal connections to career possibilities. A teacher or a school authority may decide to create a CTF challenge that could include agricultural education, particularly if there is student interest in a course.

High school electives include the Agriculture area of the Career and Technology Studies (CTS) curriculum, which offers more than 40 one-credit courses in which students learn about agricultural/horticultural production, the provision of related services and support for sustainable development and efficient use of natural resources. The CTS Apprenticeship curriculum includes 15 courses developed to align with the current Agricultural Equipment Technician Apprenticeship. As a whole, the set of courses covers the content of the first period of technical training for an agricultural equipment technician.

The Alberta Dual Credit Framework, which provides students with opportunities to personalize their high school experience and discover or build on their career interests, includes opportunities in the area of agriculture. Examples include Producing Horticulture Crops and Small Animal Restraint and Handling, both opportunities offered in partnership with Olds College.

Alberta Education's Green Certificate Program (GCP) is an apprenticeship-style training program that enables students to gain valuable experience, training and certification in the agriculture industry in Alberta. This program is offered jointly by the ministries of Education and Agriculture and Forestry, and provides students with opportunities to enter a variety of structured learning pathways related to agriculture as part of their senior high school program and to earn a credential leading to a career in

agribusiness. Although the focus of the program is skills development, students may increase their awareness of food origins and sustainability.

Alberta's government is currently renewing the K-12 provincial curriculum. Alberta's updated draft K-6 curriculum explicitly addresses the early origins of agriculture that includes the study of fertile prairie lands, grain growing and the roots of prairie grain elevators. Students will also learn how plants and animals commonly used in Alberta agriculture production relate to climate, research how agricultural production contributes to daily life in Alberta and investigate how conservation in agricultural practice protects and maintains the land.

Alberta Education is currently in a yearlong review process where parents, education partners and Albertans will be able to provide input on the draft curriculum. Feedback gathered over the next year will be critical as we work to refine the curriculum before province-wide implementation in September 2022.

Albertans can provide feedback through the online survey until spring 2022. There are also monthly virtual sessions online, including one in French every other month. In-person sessions are being planned for parents and the public to provide feedback on the draft in the fall. These sessions will be held in Fort McMurray, Grande Prairie, Edmonton, Red Deer, Calgary, Lethbridge and Medicine Hat. Links to join a session and share input through the public online survey are available at alberta.ca/curriculum-have-your-say.aspx.

Ministry staff working on curriculum would be happy to meet with stakeholders from Alberta's agricultural organizations to discuss opportunities to include agriculture in the curriculum. Jennifer Cassidy, Executive Director of Curriculum Coordination and Implementation, will contact you in the coming weeks to schedule a meeting. If you have additional questions, Jennifer can be reached at jennifer.cassidy@gov.ab.ca or at 587-783-0864 (toll-free by first dialing 310-0000).

Sincerely,

Adriana LaGrange
Minister of Education

cc: Honourable Devin Dreeshen
Minister of Agriculture and Forestry