



**Alberta
Barley**



March 31, 2016

Honourable Shannon Phillips
Minister of Environment and Parks
208 Legislature Building
10800 – 97 Ave
Edmonton AB T5K 2B6

Re: Climate Change Policy Impacts on Agriculture

Dear Minister Phillips,

Primary agricultural producers are the backbone of the rural economy in Alberta, representing a significant economic multiplier to small business communities across the province. The four major Alberta crop commissions (Alberta Barley Commission, Alberta Canola Producers Commission, Alberta Pulse Growers Commission, and Alberta Wheat Commission) encourage the Government of Alberta to have a clear understanding of how climate change policies will impact farmers and the agriculture industry in Alberta. We would like to meet with you to share industry knowledge that is relevant to agriculture and climate change policy development.

The crop commissions recognize and thank the government for exempting farm fuel from the carbon levy; however, additional costs related to upstream emissions affecting inputs, such as: fertilizer, pesticides, diesel, and steel for equipment and bins, are all passed on to the producer. Our producers are price takers; consequently, they cannot pass costs onto their buyers because the market determines commodity prices. Farmers grow food in a high-risk, capital-intensive, energy-intensive, and trade-exposed industry with very slim margins; even slight increases in costs due to regulation and taxing of inputs could significantly impact the economic sustainability of Alberta farms.

Climate change policies that impact farms' business environment and costing structure are extremely concerning to our members. Alberta needs to remain globally competitive because the majority of the commodities produced on Alberta's farms are destined for export. We are unaware of any costing exercises undertaken by the Government of Alberta that analyze the impact that the forthcoming climate related policies will have on our membership.

Alberta's barley, canola, pulse and wheat producers are among the most environmentally sustainable in the world. The advancements and investments that Alberta producers have made in the last two decades, in the absence of any related regulations, clearly demonstrate the sector's commitment to reduce emission intensity while producing more food. Some practices that Alberta producers have voluntarily implemented are: removing summer fallow from rotations, adopting conservation tillage to improve soil health and sequester carbon, improving nutrient stewardship (4-R's: Right source, Right rate, Right time, Right place), investing in precision agriculture technologies that include: GPS guidance,

variable-rate application of crop inputs, satellite imagery, drones, and data management to make more informed decisions that maximize efficiencies and lower emissions.

Adoption of these beneficial management practices shows the industry's commitment to continual improvement. It takes considerable time and resources to influence the adoption of practice changes on farms through extension. The crop commissions would like to build on the collaborative relationships that we have with the Government of Alberta to explore opportunities to access the large final emitters fund for initiatives that reduce agriculture's emissions of greenhouse gases.

We would like to request a meeting with you as soon as possible to discuss the impact of forthcoming climate policies. We will follow up with you shortly, by phone. The crop commissions look to collaborate with the Government of Alberta to address the issues of food security, extend best new practices, seek economic diversification and ensure that we have a vibrant agriculture industry moving forward.

Thank you for your time in consideration of our request.

Sincerely,



Mike Ammeter
Chairman, Alberta Barley



Allison Ammeter
Chairman, Alberta Pulse Growers



Greg Sears
Chairman, Alberta Canola Producers Commission



Kevin Auch
Chairman, Alberta Wheat Commission

Cc: Honourable Deron Bilous, Minister of Economic Development and Trade
Honourable Oneil Carlier, Minister of Agriculture and Forestry
Andre Corbould, Deputy Minister, Environment and Parks
Jason Krips, Deputy Minister, Economic Development and Trade
Bev Yee, Deputy Minister, Agriculture and Forestry