

New Name for Alberta Irrigation Projects Association

Submitted by Margo Jarvis Redelback

The Alberta Irrigation Projects Association (AIPA) on March 7th formally announced the change of their name to Alberta Irrigation Districts Association (AIDA). The AIDA represents the 13 Alberta irrigation districts that convey water through nearly 7,600 kilometres of canals and pipelines, and 42 storage reservoirs to supply water to more than 1.4 million acres of irrigated farmland in southern Alberta. Additionally, irrigation district infrastructure provides water security for rural municipalities, domestic water users, industry, business, wetlands and water-based recreation in an area that often experiences low annual precipitation.

Irrigation districts and their predecessor organizations have been conveying water through irrigation infrastructure to southern Alberta farmers and residents for over 100 years. During the early years of irrigation development in Alberta, when initial construction of irrigation infrastructure was occurring many of the organizations were known as irrigation projects. During that time, the desire by these organizations to provide educational and advocacy services for the irrigation sector brought about the creation of the Alberta Irrigation Projects Association. However, irrigation districts, established under the Alberta Irrigation Districts Act, have been known as Irrigation Districts for some time now.

“The new name more accurately reflects the membership of the Association which is the 13 irrigation districts in Alberta”, says Richard Phillips, Chair of the organization. “The name change will bring better understanding of who the Association represents to those outside of Alberta’s irrigation sector.”

For over 70 years, the Alberta Irrigation Districts Association has supported the needs of irrigation districts and the irrigation sector by supporting research and the development of new irrigation technology, providing advocacy, education and outreach services and assisting in irrigation sector professional development. Through these activities, the AIDA strives to ensure irrigation in Alberta is vibrant, sustainable and valued.

For more information, please contact:

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Farm Energy Agri-Processing (FEAP) and Canadian Agriculture Partnership (CAP)

Submitted by Alberta Agriculture and Forestry

The Farm Energy and Agri-Processors (FEAP) Program continues to share costs with producers who are upgrading components of their grain dryers to high-efficiency models. Katherine Rogers, energy extension coordinator with Alberta Agriculture and Forestry, clarifies what is eligible for funding through this program. The program includes sharing costs for components of a new dryer or when retrofitting components of an existing dryer.

“For retro-fit grain dryer components,” says Rogers, “Eligibility is determined on a case-by-case basis. You must include detailed quotes, specifications, and if possible, calculations showing the energy savings of the upgrade.”

Eligible retrofits may include:

- Hopper covers.
- Automatic moisture controllers.
- New high-efficiency burners.
- Variable speed drives (VSD) for electric motors.
- PTO to electric motor conversion.
- Insulated plenums.
- Exhaust air recirculation systems or secondary heat exchangers.
- Gravity-fill roofs that replace powered leveling augers.

As for new grain dryer components, Rogers explains what funding may cover. “Upgrade options on new dryers are considered if they are an optional upgrade from the standard new dryer configuration. Only cost of the options is eligible, not the cost of the standard dryer. The application must include detailed quotes or invoices, specifications or calculations demonstrating energy savings.”

Eligible new components may include upgrade options such as:

- Heat exchangers.
- Preheat systems utilizing exhaust air.
- Optional high-efficiency burners.
- Variable speed drives (VSD) for electric motors.
- Optional automated moisture controllers.
- Gravity-fill roofs used in place of powered leveling augers.

Rogers adds that components considered “business as usual,” are not covered, including bins, conveyors, legs and aeration fans.

The program is retroactive to April 1, 2016, so any upgrades or new construction projects done since that date may be eligible for funding. Go to www.agriculture.alberta.ca/feap to see the full funding list, application form and other eligibility requirements.

Outreach officers are available to answer questions about the program and can provide assistance with the application process:

- Northern Alberta - Amber Kenyon, 780-307-7849.
- Southern Alberta - Vern Steinborn, 403-894-0050.
- Eastern Alberta - Rongrong Xiang, 780-853-0222.

For further information, call the Alberta Ag-Info Centre at 310-FARM (3276). Or contact [Katherine Rogers](#) at 780-422-2086

Exciting changes to the Canadian Agricultural Partnership (CAP) [Environmental Stewardship & Climate Change \(ES&CC\) Producer Program](#)

The following changes have been made to the CAP ES&CC Producer Program:

The target audience has been expanded to include **Commercial Manure Applicators**.

- They are now eligible to apply for specific manure application equipment and other items related to improved land application of manure under Category E of the [Funding List](#).
- Pre-requisite for funding is attendance and participation in a Commercial Manure Applicator Workshop designed and delivered by AF. Future workshops will be identified on the website.
- Eligible expenses will be covered retroactively to January 1, 2019 under Category E.

Changes have been made to the **Innovative Category (Category D)**:

- A [new application form](#) has been created for Category D.
- Category D will now consider eligible expenses retroactively to April 1, 2018.
- Innovation has been clarified by adding a definition in the [Funding List](#).

Revision to **in-kind contribution rule**:

- In-kind contribution caps for Activity Code 101 (Riparian Fencing) and 304 (Shelterbelt Establishment) were modified from 25% to 50% of eligible expenditures. The reasoning for this decision was that 25% in-kind cap did not adequately cover labour costs for establishment of these projects. These changes have taken effect as of the date that the new Terms and Conditions are posted on the website (Feb 13, 2019). Any application received after this date qualify for the new rate; applications received prior to this date are still subject to the old rate.

Revision to application submission methods to include email as well as by mail.

Inclusion of a standard precedence clause stating that approval of any project through the Technical Review Panel shall not set a precedent for approval of similar projects.

Please visit the [webpage](#) to review these changes in detail.

As a reminder, the remaining **2019 intake dates** for ES&CC Producer & Group Program are as follows:

Producer

Intake deadline	Review Committee Meeting
May 15, 2019	May 29, 2019
July 24, 2019	August 14, 2019
October 2, 2019	October 23, 2019
November 20, 2019	December 11, 2019

Group

Intake deadline	Review Committee Meeting
August 1, 2019	August 29, 2019
January 30, 2020	February 20, 2020

If you have any questions regarding these changes, please contact Denika Piggott at denika.piggott@gov.ab.ca.

The Crop Sector Working Group

Submitted by Fiona Briody

The Crop Sector Working Group is an inclusive partnership of crop sector commissions and associations who have come together to consider and discuss environmental issues relating to the crop sector.

Vision

The Alberta Crop Sector will produce safe, high quality food, fuel and fibre ingredients competitively in an environmentally sustainable manner.

Mission

The mission of Crop Sector Working Group is to build a forum for discussion of common areas of environmental policy and to develop specific key messages on behalf of the crop sector to be delivered to specific target audiences.

Objectives in the Business Plan of the CSWG support the following goals:

1. Healthy agricultural landscapes that maintain or increase both their agricultural productivity and ecological integrity.
2. Maintain a safe and secure water supply for agricultural production.
3. Agriculture producer use of technology and nutrients is optimal by adding value, saving costs and minimizing negative impacts on air, land and water.
4. Farming systems are energy efficient, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and maximize profitability and productivity.
5. Albertans recognize agriculture producers as environmental stewards.

The CSWG is currently made up of:

- AB Canola Producers Commission
- AB Wheat Commission
- AB Barley Commission
- AB Pulse Growers
- AB Potato Growers
- AB Sugar Beet Growers
- AB Seed Growers
- Alfalfa Seed Commission Alberta
- AB Beekeepers Commission

Member organizations generally provide the expertise and time commitment of management and one producer member to the CSWG. The CSWG generally meets every 2 months, and has conference calls as needed.

For more information please contact: Fiona Briody, Fiona.cswg@gmail.com