

Partner Profile: Association of Municipal Districts and Counties

Submitted by AAMDC

Established in 1909, the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties (AAMDC) is an independent association of elected rural councils who represent the interests of rural Albertans and are committed to meeting the diverse and changing needs of its membership. Rural Alberta is an economic driver comprised of varied and vibrant communities. The AAMDC provides a unified voice for these communities by representing the interests of all 69 municipal districts and counties in the province.

Through advocacy, communication, education, and the provision of aggregated business services, the AAMDC assists rural municipalities in achieving strong and effective local government. Governed by a Board of Directors, comprised of elected municipal official from across Alberta, the AAMDC strives to serve as an advocate for rural perspectives and priorities on key policy issues at the provincial and federal level.

Municipalities must play a key role in the front-line environmental management of Alberta's air, land, water and biodiversity in order to provide healthy communities for citizens. Environmental stewardship requires effective communication between municipalities, First Nations, the provincial and federal governments, industry, citizens and other stakeholders. The AAMDC communicates our member's interests in these important environmental conversations to develop policy and create a dialogue on issues of municipal importance.

The AAMDC advocates on key agri-environmental issues identified by our members through a formal resolution process to appropriate government ministries and stakeholders. Positions currently being advocated on include:

- Producers in industries such as agriculture perform an invaluable role in Alberta's economy, but are vulnerable to extreme market fluctuations and natural disasters. Assistance for producers should be designed to support the industry and address concerns such as crop damage due to hail, pest infestations, drought and market fluctuations.
- Agricultural production has evolved with the availability of new technologies and educational opportunities for producers. Incorporating technological and educational advancements in order to remain competitive is essential to the viability of the industry.
- The sterilization of large tracts of agricultural lands and competing demands for land-use in a growing province can have significant impacts on the agriculture industry. The Land-use Framework acknowledges the impacts of urban sprawl and seeks to address the fragmentation and conversion of agricultural lands. This should be a consideration in land-use planning decisions being made across Alberta.

- Recycle programs need to be developed to allow the agriculture industry to efficiently promote positive environmental practices when utilizing agriculture plastics.
- The AAMDC values the importance of protecting the agricultural industry from potentially damaging infestations of pests, such as fusarium graminearum that could have significant economic impacts for producers. The *Agricultural Pests Act* is a valued piece of legislation that identifies threats and enables producers, inspectors and local authorities to deal with native and introduced pests and nuisances which affect agricultural production.
- Protecting the environment, including Alberta's rivers, lakes, wetlands and groundwater is an important priority for municipalities. To promote sound environmental stewardship, it is necessary to have coordinated legislation and jurisdiction to protect water bodies and the environmentally sensitive areas adjacent to them.

More information on the AAMDC is available at www.aamdc.com