

On Common Ground: Messages from the Agri-Environmental Partnership of Alberta

The Agri-Environmental Partnership of Alberta (AEPA) 2012 Update

In this first year of implementing our new 2012-15 strategic plan, the Agri-Environmental Partnership of Alberta (AEPA) has achieved solid progress on our three updated strategic priorities.

Strategic Priority 1: To engage in land-use, water, and agri-environmental policy development processes.

AEPA updated and refined key messages on land-use planning, ensuring they are current, concise and relevant. AEPA also developed key messages and information sheets on water allocation and wetland management. Documents were printed, distributed, and posted on the AEPA website.

AEPA also provided input on the South Saskatchewan Regional Plan (SSRP) Regional Advisory Council's advice. Representatives participated in the consultation sessions and in a stakeholder discussion session regarding SSRP surface water and air quality management frameworks.

Strategic Priority 2: To provide policy input on innovations and business models that will help the agriculture industry achieve AEPA-desired outcomes.

The Board received updates on Growing Forward 2, a federal-provincial-territorial agricultural policy framework, and representatives provided agriculture's perspectives at two consultation sessions.

As well, AEPA jointly sponsored an environmental footprinting forum. This workshop included presentations ranging from sustainability in product chains, to local scale examples of producers and processors who are finding value in sustainability.

Strategic Priority 3: To engage and build understanding with members and industry partners to enable the agriculture industry to be a credible partner in agri-environmental policy development.

AEPA hosted a Fall Forum that provided participants with an update on land-use and water policy issues, and an opportunity to engage with speakers on these issues. AEPA also held the 'Workshop for Agricultural Representatives on Water Partnerships'. The workshop looked at how to develop a stronger communications network with the representatives of the agricultural sector on multi-stakeholder partnerships, including Watershed Planning and Advisory Councils.

AEPA also implemented its new three-year communications plan. The new plan enables the AEPA to communicate more effectively in ways that are focused, cost-effective, flexible and adaptable.

Looking Forward

AEPA aims to keep current and engaged in developing Land-use Framework and water policy processes in 2013. This will include participating in the provincial conversation on water, providing feedback into the SSRP draft plan, and hosting the AEPA Ecosystem Services Forum.

Critical to the continuing work of AEPA has been the involvement and participation of the AEPA member organizations. These groups have been actively involved both at the Board and project team levels.

For more information on AEPA, visit our website: www.agpartners.ca.