



ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT  
NEWSLETTER

Creating Opportunities in South-Central Alberta

October 24, 2018



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## Featured



# Alberta is ready for the energy evolution

**A look back at the 2018 Alberta Climate Summit**

Blog | Oct. 2, 2018 | By [Nina Lothian](#) | Editorial on Alberta Youth Changemakers Program by Keenan Geib



*Photo: Roberta Franchuk, Pembina Institute*

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Last week we were proud to hold our 4th annual Alberta Climate Summit in Calgary. It was a full day with lots of media attention and a packed room of nearly 500 climate thought leaders, who gathered to take in new perspectives and make new connections.

The diversity in the room – with representatives from government, industry, community organizations, Indigenous communities, and other environmental groups — clearly demonstrates a momentum and interest in the energy evolution in Alberta.

The day's topics ranged from global to local. We heard from Morgan Bazilian from the Colorado School of Mines' Payne Institute on examples of oil and gas transitions in other jurisdictions. We were also very lucky to have Mr. Li Junfeng join us from China to tell us about climate action and policies on the other side of the world.

There was also great discussion at the local level. One of the highlights was the Indigenous energy panel. Melissa Quesnelle from Indigenous Clean Energy Social Enterprise moderated a conversation with Troy Jerome, Ernie Daniels, and Vicki Wetchie about the economic development opportunities around clean energy development led by Indigenous communities. The panel included an interesting conversation about what equity really means and ideas for working with Indigenous groups on joint ventures.

Back by popular demand, we also held the second annual [Youth Energy Changemakers pitch](#). Not only did we hear four enterprising ideas from this year's Changemakers, we also heard back from last year's cohort, including Disa Crow Chief and Cory Beaver — they're hard at work planning the first Indigenous Student Energy Summit!

[Read more.](#)

**Editor's note:** The SouthGrow team is exceptionally excited about the Pembina Institute's Youth Energy Changemakers Program. We share the view that engaging our youth with climate and energy issues is a vital step in ensuring the future prosperity of our communities. We have linked program-related documents below for those wishing to learn more. Please share them with your communities so that we may highlight the passionate youth working to make our communities a better place to live.

[Presentation Slides - 2018 Alberta Youth Changemakers Pitches - Full Document](#)

# Weekly Economic Update

Brought to you by  
 Economic Development  
and Trade

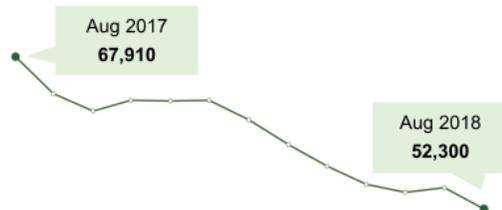
For the week of Oct. 15, 2018

[Full PDF Download](#)

## Indicators Updated this Week

### Employment Insurance

**23.0%** 52,300



In August 2018 there were 52,300 people receiving regular Employment Insurance (EI) benefits in Alberta, a decrease of 15,610 people (-23.0%) compared with August 2017. Nationally, Employment Insurance beneficiaries decreased 11.8% year-over-year.

### Consumer Price Index

**+3.0%** 141.1



On a year-over-year basis, Albertans paid 3.0% more in September 2018 for the goods and services that comprise the Consumer Price Index (CPI) than in the same month a year ago, which was slightly higher than the national average rise in CPI of 2.2%. Energy prices increased the most in Alberta (+21.7%). Recreation and education had the smallest increase, rising by 1.0%.

### Manufacturing Sales

**+12.4%** \$6.6B



In August 2018, the value of Alberta's manufacturing sales increased 12.4% compared with August 2017, to \$6.59 billion. Nationally, manufacturing shipments increased 6.0% over the same period to \$56.96 billion. In Alberta, every industry saw growth, with petroleum and coal products increasing by 31.8%.

## Retail Trade

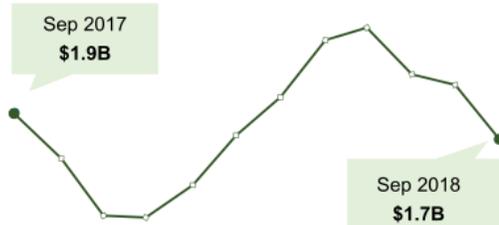
**+3.2%** \$6.9B



Alberta's retail trade value increased by 3.2% in August 2018 compared to August 2017, to \$6.88 billion. Nationally, retail sales increased by 3.6% over the same time frame. In Alberta, gasoline stations (+22.7%) and building material sales (+4.5%) saw the largest increases. Sporting goods, hobby, book & music (-5.2%) had the largest decrease.

## MLS Sales

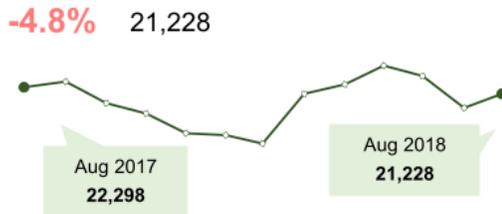
**-9.4%** \$1.7B



The dollar volume of homes sold in Alberta through the Multiple Listing Service (MLS) decreased 9.4% to \$1.68 billion in September 2018 compared to the same time period a year earlier. Nationally, total sales values were down 8.7%, with British Columbia posting the largest decrease (-33.9%). Quebec saw the largest year over year increase in sales volume, increasing 13.6% to \$1.93 billion.

In Alberta, Grande Prairie (+28.8%) and Fort McMurray (+27.3%) were the only municipalities to see a year-over-year increase, while Lethbridge had the largest drop year-over-year in the province (-22.3%).

## Motor Vehicle Sales



The number of new motor vehicles sold in Alberta decreased by 4.8% between August 2017 and August 2018 to 21,228, while the number of motor vehicles sold in Canada decreased by 1.1% over the same period.

Sales of passenger vehicles decreased 27.3% year-over-year, while sales of trucks (including minivans, SUVs, light and heavy trucks, vans, and buses) increased by 0.5%. In August 2018 trucks comprised 85.4% of all vehicle sales.

## Natural Gas Prices



The price of natural gas in August 2018 was CDN\$0.94 per gigajoule, down 45.3% from August 2017.

## News Highlights

- [Alberta unveils third tax credit aimed at spurring investment in local economy](#)
- [As Canadian oil discount reaches record highs, national energy regulator sets out plan for Trans Mountain](#)
- [MEG rejects takeover bid by oilsands rival Husky Energy](#)
- [Bargain price oil: How long will it last?](#)
- [Varcoe: New leaders take over crucial energy sector jobs in Alberta](#)
- [Canadian cannabis entrepreneurs dream big in the face of uncertainty](#)
- [How Edmonton, the busiest big city in the bud business, handled move to legal weed sales](#)
- [Alberta farmers race to bring in \\$3B of unharvested crops: situation 'dire'](#)
- [Cleanup of wind and solar sites won't land at Alberta farmers' feet](#)
- [Cenovus to move more oil by rail in Q4 2018](#)

## Major Projects

- [As Trans Mountain stalls, TransCanada begins preliminary work on Keystone XL](#)
- [Construction moving ahead on \\$41.2M Sylvan Lake wastewater line to Red Deer](#)

- [Building the Reynolds-Alberta Museum \\$39.5M expansion with local hands](#)
- [\\$22M Charis Village Seniors Housing Project now underway in Lacombe](#)
- [Elk Island Catholic Schools opens new school in Fort Saskatchewan](#)
- [Aga Khan oversees official launch of \\$25M Alberta garden](#)
- [Pot growth plant in Lamont draws](#)

## Key Economic Indicators

Period	Indicator	Lastest Update	Change	Last Update
2017	GDP <i>yr/yr</i>	\$304.7B	+4.9%	May 2018
Q3 2018	Population <i>yr/yr</i>	4.3M	+1.5%	Sep 2018
Sep 2018	Unemployment <i>yr/yr</i>	7.0%	-0.8%	Oct 2018
Oct 15 - 19, 2018	WTI Oil Price <i>wk/wk</i>	\$68.99	-3.3%	Oct 19, 2018 <small>Midday</small>
Aug 2018	Retail Trade <i>yr/yr</i>	\$6.9B	+3.2%	Sep 2018

## Looking Ahead

Period	Indicator	Lastest Update	Change	Last Update
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## Things You Need To Know



### Guidance available on elimination of the federal one-third tax exemption for municipal elected officials

In the 2017 federal budget, the federal government eliminated the one-third tax exemption for provincial and municipal elected officials. The change comes into effect on January 1, 2019.

The [Federation of Canadian Municipalities \(FCM\)](#) and [AUMA](#) have developed guidance documents to help municipalities manage this change.

Based on resolutions adopted by members, [AUMA](#), FCM and other municipal associations across Canada have urged the federal government to reverse its decision to eliminate the exemption. FCM took the lead in coordinating advocacy initiatives and held discussions with and sent letters to the federal Minister of Finance and ministry staff outlining the negative cost implications of the change for municipal officials and municipalities across Canada. Despite these concerns, the Minister of Finance indicated that no reversal of the decision is forthcoming.

FCM's [Change in "one-third" federal tax exemption for elected officials: A guide for Canadian municipalities](#) outlines advocacy efforts and provides options for municipalities to consider in responding to this change. These options include:

1. Full compensation increase - adjust pre-tax compensation levels in 2019 to maintain the same after-tax compensation of 2018
2. Partial compensating increase – adjustment pre-tax compensation levels in 2019 to partially make up for losses in compensation
3. Expand expense policies – develop more comprehensive reimbursement plans for expenses incurred
4. No action – as a result of this, elected officials' after tax income would be reduced.

[AUMA prepared a brief financial analysis](#) that provides sample calculations demonstrating the loss of post-tax income municipal elected officials will experience and the potential cost to municipalities of increasing pre-tax compensation to make up for this loss. [Learn more.](#)



## Exhibition Park & Lethbridge Rotary East Ag. Scholarship

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Exhibition Park & Lethbridge Rotary East have teamed up to present, at the 2019 Ag Expo, a \$10,000 Agricultural Scholarship. The scholarship is to further recognize the importance of agriculture in our community by supporting a top student in their pursuit of an agricultural career. The criteria is as follows:

- This scholarship will be presented to a student who has completed at least 3 years of college or university at a recognized institution.
- The student must have demonstrated high academic achievement and leadership qualities in an agriculture related field.
- The application must include:
  1. a covering letter which demonstrates their academic achievements, community contributions, leadership abilities and aspirations in an agriculture related field;
  2. three letters of reference from their post-secondary institution and community leader(s) confirming the applicant's volunteer / leadership qualities; and

3. an overview of their field of study to be supported by the scholarship.

The Scholarship Dinner and Presentation will be on Thursday, February 28 (During Ag Expo 2019) Heritage Hall, Lethbridge Exhibition Park starting at 5 pm with a Reception, followed by dinner, the scholarship presentation and guest speaker, **Steve Koeckhoven, Market Research Manager, Nutrien.**

For Ag Expo Exhibitors! If you are interested, Sponsorship Opportunities are available. [Learn more.](#)



## Science Forum: Milk River Watershed Council Canada

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The MRWCC is inviting proposals for presentations on Research and Monitoring studies done in the area, surrounding areas and/or other studies that would impact the watershed ecosystem. The Science Forum is scheduled for **November 8, 2018** in Milk River. This forum provides a stage for researchers to share their findings with engaged community members and stakeholders.

Deadline for proposal submission is **October 26, 2018.**

For more information or to submit your proposal please email [mary@mrwcc.ca](mailto:mary@mrwcc.ca)

Please feel free to circulate to interested parties. [Call for Proposals](#)

# Stories to Follow

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## Government

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[FCM numbers highlight cannabis policing funding gap between Alberta cities and municipalities in ON, QB](#)

Global News | Oct. 19 | News

Numbers from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities offer more insight after claims made by Alberta

Finance Minister Joe Ceci that his government is providing funding for cannabis policing equal to what is being given out in Ontario and Quebec. Last week, Ceci announced Alberta cities would share \$11m ...

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#### [AGLC has plan to continue Alberta cannabis delivery in event of Canada Post strike](#)

Global News | Oct. 21 | News

The union representing Canada Post workers said Edmonton would be among the first four cities impacted by rotating strikes on Monday morning. Canada Post is the major delivery service used for legal cannabis orders across the country. However, if the strike happens, Albertans will still have a way to get ...

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#### [Harris takes the helm as MD of Taber reeve](#)

Vauxhall Advance | Oct. 18 | Blog

After several years of having the same reeve, the Municipal District of Taber has a new man at the helm. With Brian Brewin deciding to not let his name stand for M.D. of Taber reeve, Merrill Harris, who was born and raised in the Taber area, is the new reeve after serving as deputy reeve over the last year ...

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## Economy & Economic Development

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#### [Near-record number unemployed without E.I. benefits](#)

The Owl - ATB Financial's Economics & Research Team | Oct. 24 | Research & Analysis

Albertans are still feeling the remnants of the recession. For most employees who find themselves without work, Canada's system of employment insurance (EI) provides some financial benefits. But those benefits have a timeline. The blue line in the graph below shows the number of people in Alberta who are ...

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#### [Hay losses will be especially costly this year](#)

Alberta Agriculture & Forestry | Oct. 23 | Research & Analysis

Hay goes on a diet in winter, but how much weight it loses depends on how it was stored. "Over the course of a winter, bales weather and lose both weight and quality," said provincial beef and forage specialist Barry Yaremci. "This poses the key question of what kind of value losses occur when storing ...

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#### [Albertan's summer spending near record levels](#)

The Owl - ATB Financial's Economics & Research Team | Oct. 19 | Research & Analysis

Spending at shopping malls and gas stations stayed near record levels in August, continuing to hover around the \$7 billion mark. Retail sales were virtually unchanged between July and August and spending was only 1.2 per cent off the record high achieved in May of this year. Total sales were 2.5 per cent ...

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#### [Klassen: Feeder cattle market volatility continues](#)

Manitoba Co-operator | Oct. 23, 2018 | Research & Analysis

Compared to last week, Western Canadian yearlings sold \$4 to \$6 lower while calves were extremely variable dropping \$4 to as much as \$10 in some cases. Many auction barns held feature sales last week and larger supplies weighed on the market. Weakness in the deferred live cattle futures also ...

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## Communities

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#### [Mayor: airport passenger growth "positive" but more work ahead](#)

Lethbridge News Now | Oct. 22 | News

Mayor Chris Spearman is pleased with a year-over-year surge in passenger numbers from Lethbridge Airport. But there's more work to be done. With WestJet now flying between Lethbridge and Calgary, in addition to Air Canada, the airport has seen a year-over-year increase in passenger flights of 105 per ...

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#### [How Indigenous initiatives are helping youth heal from the effects of intergenerational trauma](#)

The Calgary Journal | Oct. 23 | News

Many Indigenous youths are unaware of the intergenerational trauma caused by residential schools. Because of this, experts say they are often left uneducated on the topic while struggling to cope with its effects. However, through youth initiatives both inside and outside of Southern Alberta Indigenous ...

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#### [Alberta cattle producers voting in plebiscite](#)

Macleod Gazette | Oct. 23 2018 | News

Alberta Beef Producers is staging plebiscite on whether a check-off should continue to be refundable or become non-refundable. Producers can vote until Nov. 13 at one of the 27 Alberta Beef Producers fall meetings, by mail, or in person at the 46 AFSC offices in Alberta. Zone 2 meetings are Monday, Oct. 29 ...

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#### [Cleanfarms collecting unwanted agricultural pesticides and livestock medications in Southern Alberta](#)

Lethbridge News Now | Oct. 21 | News

The Cleanfarms organization will be collecting leftover or unwanted pesticides and livestock medications at no charge across southern Alberta this week. Materials will be accepted at 20 locations around the region for safe disposal. Cleanfarms is a non-profit organization that runs the collection program in each ...

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## Science, Technology, & Innovation

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#### [Availability of nitrogen to plants declining as climate warms](#)

Weather Farm | Oct. 23 | News

Researchers have found that global changes, including warming temperatures and increased levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, are causing a decrease in the availability of a key nutrient for plants. This could affect the ability of forests to absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and reduce the

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#### [City studying Styrofoam recycling](#)

St. Albert Gazette | Oct. 19 | News

St. Albert will learn this January how it can bring Styrofoam recycling to the masses. City council supported a motion from Coun. Sheena Hughes Oct. 15 to have staffers bring back options by the end of January on ways to accept expanded polystyrene (the generic name for Styrofoam) at the city's ...

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#### [Soot-filled rivers mark the need for a national wildfire strategy](#)

The Conversation | Oct. 24 | Research & Analysis

During the record-breaking 2018 fire season, the typically clear waters of Cameron Falls in Waterton Lakes National Park in southern Alberta flowed black. But it had nothing to do with the extensive fires that torched much of British Columbia and a small part of Waterton. The carbon came from the remnants of ...

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#### [Some close calls, but invasive mussels kept at bay this year](#)

Alberta Express | Oct. 23 | News

The massive effort to keep quagga and zebra mussels out of Alberta's waterways once again paid

dividends. "This year, inspectors surveyed 31,000 boats and found 11 carrying invasive mussels," said Janine Higgins, an official with the Community Engagement Branch of Alberta Environment and Parks ...

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# Events



## Nov. 8 | Milk River WCC Science Forum

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Host: [Milk River Watershed Council Canada](#)

Time: 9:30 AM - 3:00 PM

Location: [Milk River Civic Centre](#)

The MRWCC would like to invite you to attend their Science Forum on November 8, 2018 at the Milk River Civic Centre from 9:30am to 3:00pm. Please join us and discover some of the eye catching scientific research and monitoring projects taking place in the Milk River watershed, surrounding areas and other studies whose objectives impact the watershed ecosystem. Come and witness researchers and others experts share their findings with engaged community members and stakeholders. Lunch will be provided and there will be a registration fee to cover lunch: \$10/individual and free for students.

To register please call: 403-647-3808 or email: [mary@mrwcc.ca](mailto:mary@mrwcc.ca). Registration deadline is November 5, 2018.

[Learn More & Register](#)

## Nov. 20-22 | RMA Fall 2018 Convention

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Host: [Rural Municipalities of Alberta](#)

Time: TBA

Location: [Shaw Conference Centre - Edmonton](#)

RMA is looking forward to welcoming our elected officials and administrators at this year's fall convention, which will take place November 20-22, 2018 at the Shaw Conference Centre in Edmonton. New in 2018, the convention will take place on the Assembly Level and shuttles will transport you from the hotels directly to the doors on this level. We look forward to a strong agenda including our AGM, plenaries, the Ministerial Forum, and a number of diverse workshops.

**Accommodations:** Our partner hotels are now accepting bookings for November, so please take a moment to ensure all your rooms booked. It is important to note that Grey Cup 2018 is being hosted in Edmonton during the same timeframe, and therefore we advise that you book your rooms as soon as possible. Click [here](#) for more information on our hotels.

**Keynote Speaker:** This year we are pleased to have sought-after inspirational speaker, **Amanda Lindhout** join us to deliver a life-changing, transformational keynote experience. Amanda will share her story of when she was working as a journalist in Somalia and abducted by a group of masked men along a dusty road. Amanda spent 460 days as a hostage, surviving on strategy, fortitude and hope in the face of unimaginable adversity.

[Learn More & Register](#)

## Feb. 27 - Mar. 1 | 2019 South Country AG Expo

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Host: [Exhibition Park](#) & [Farm Credit Canada](#)

Time: 9 AM - 5 PM

Location: [Exhibition Park - Lethbridge](#)

2019 [South Country Co-Op](#) Ag Expo is Western Canada's Premiere Ag Show presented by [Farm Credit Canada](#). The 3-day show also features the North American Seed Fair presented By [FortisAlberta](#). Visitors to the show can expect to find exhibitors whose product can directly affect, and improve, agricultural production.

### **\$7 Admission | \$5 Parking**

This includes farm equipment, livestock supplies, chemicals, seeds, irrigation, producers and marketers of crops and livestock, and much more. In addition, guests can meet with exhibitors who offer new technology, brokerage services, communications, banking, and other "Tools of the Trade" exhibitors.

Over 350 indoor exhibitors from across North America will attend this annual event. Ag Expo averages over 20,000 consumers over the three-day show. Outside displays on Machinery Row will utilize over 150,000 square feet of space.

The North American Seed Fair showcases over 53 classes of Pedigreed Seed, Open Classes, and Junior Classes. Displayed on the Seed Floor of the South Pavilion, the

North American Seed Fair is one of the oldest Seed Fairs in Western Canada.

[Learn More & Register](#)

## Employment Opportunities

[AUMA | Association of Urban Municipalities of Alberta](#)

[RMA | Rural Municipalities of Alberta](#)

[Government of Alberta](#)

## Resources

*At SouthGrow's main office, we are working hard to further improve our implementation of technology and data to improve our organization and service. Here's what we are using, as well as some other tools we think would help the businesses within our communities.*

[Community \(Local\) Economic Development - Government of Alberta](#)

Tools and resources to help support local economic development. ... Alberta's communities need qualified workers and professionals to drive their local ...

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[Fundingportal - Government Grants, Tax Credits ... - The Funding Portal](#)

Canada's bilingual one-window gateway to improve access to 7000+ sources of government funding and private financing for business, hospitals, universities, ...

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[Community Toolkit for Economic Recovery and Resiliency](#)

Community Toolkit for Economic Recovery and Resiliency (2017 Canadian Version) In June 2014, the International Economic Development Council (IEDC) ...

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[xarvio Digital Farming Solutions](#)

xarvio™ Digital Farming Solutions makes you feel more confident, reduces your risks and gives you more security in all your plannings and decisions.

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[Farmers Edge - Grow.More.Precisely.](#)

Empowering growers and ag professionals with data-driven solutions Farmers Edge is the best option for making data-driven decisions on the farm. We help ...

**Questions? Suggestions? Have something you would like us to share?** *Contact the SouthGrow team!*

[info@southgrow.com](mailto:info@southgrow.com) | (403) 394-0615

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