



Creating opportunities in South-Central Alberta



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Featured

Southern Alberta features heavily in Invest Alberta Magazine

By Peter Casurella | SouthGrow Regional Initiative

Best Of Both Worlds

Combining outdoor experiences with the comforts of home is becoming an increasingly popular pastime.

[Read about Glamping in Southern Alberta Here.](#)



By Theresa Tyler

Serving up Alternative Opportunity
Plant protein popularity is on the rise, and Alberta's agricultural sector has already sewn the seeds for capitalizing on its success.

[Read about Plant Proteins in Southern Alberta Here.](#)

By Kelly Stark



Solar Power: A New Dawn
A combination of long sunny days and extensive research is putting Alberta at the forefront of a solar power industry with a bright future.

[Read about Solar Power in Southern Alberta Here.](#)

By Michael Ganley



Electric Avenues
An electric vehicle road trip is now realisty in Alberta thanks to a growing network of fast-charging stations.

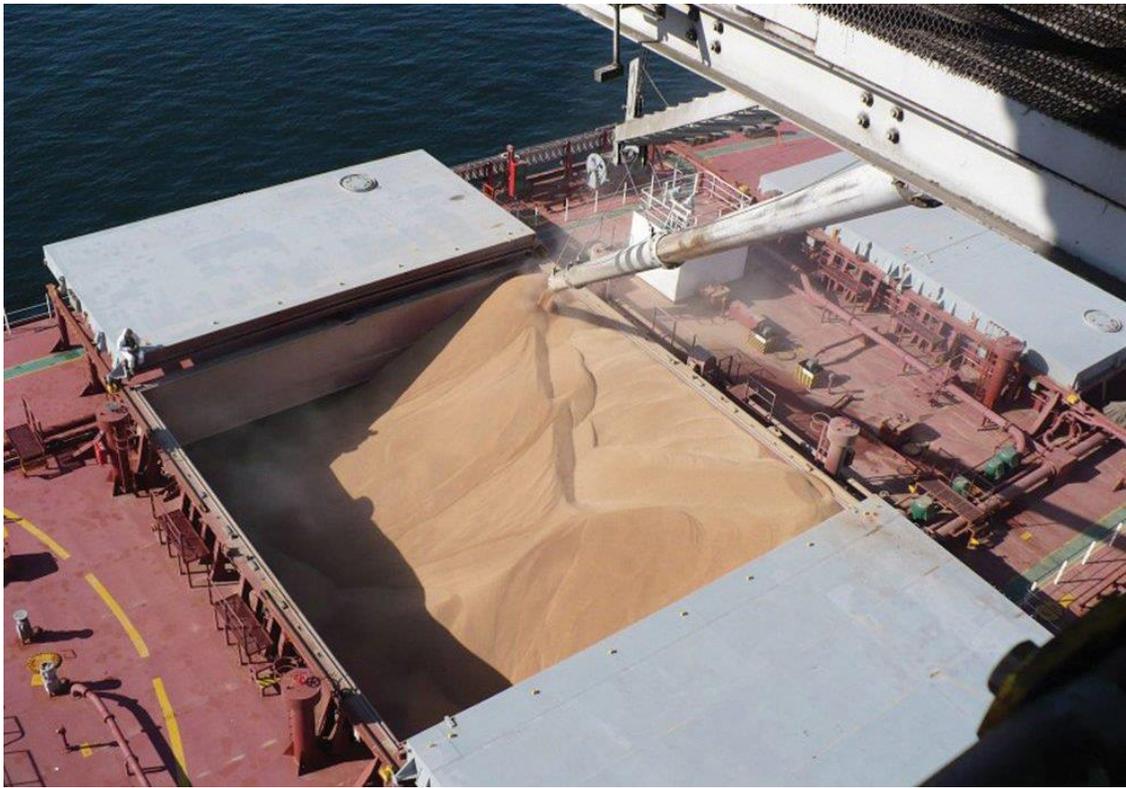
[Read about Charging Stations in Southern Alberta Here.](#)

By Dawn Smith



Buckle up — grain markets are in for a bumpy ride

By Jennifer Blair | Alberta Farmer Express | Dec 18, 2019



Trade wars around the globe have created a turbulent marketplace for Canadian farmers — and the wild ride isn't likely to end any time soon.

"Over the past two years, the markets really stand apart from what I've seen in the 30 years that I've been following the grain markets," said Mike Jubinville, senior market analyst with [MarketsFarm](#) (a division of Glacier FarmMedia, owner of this paper).

"Weather, of course, is always a market driver, but the influence of politics or political interference into commercial grain-marketing activities worldwide has been a greater issue than I can remember in the years that I've been in this business."

Of course, Jubinville hadn't seen an American president like Donald Trump before either.

"Trump's trade policies are like fishing with dynamite — just blow everything up and pick up the pieces at the end," he said at a recent Alberta Canola Powering Your Profits event.

Even worse, Trump's disruptive trade tactics are prompting other countries to shift toward protectionist policies.

"The rules of trade internationally are being disrupted," said Jubinville. "Globalization has stopped, and we're taking a step backwards now. And this has really ruptured a lot of global supply chains."

Canadian farmers have seen it affect numerous markets, including India (high tariffs on pulses), Italy (country-of-origin labelling on durum), and China (a near ban on canola seed). But protectionism has a wider effect, he said.

"This rupture in the marketplace has been one that inspires uncertainty in the marketplace. Uncertainty inspires fear, fear inspires selling, and it's probably kept the pressure on prices beyond anything to do with supply and demand."

The typical grain cycle sees prices jump up and then plummet before settling into a period of sideways consolidation. Between 2014 and 2018, grain was trading in that sideways range, and Jubinville was hopeful the market was going to swing up again once a “bullish catalyst” arrived.

It didn't happen.

“Right about this time, Trump's trade war with China started,” he said. “So we broke out of that sideways range and probably established a new consolidation range at a lower level. This is where we find ourselves today.”

Impending recession?

While the global economy is doing well — employment is up and stock markets are reaching record highs — other economic performance measures tell a different story.

“We're already starting to see some of the canaries in the coal mines giving off signals that economic growth is starting to slow,” he said. “Manufacturing is down. Consumer spending is starting to slow. Debt is on the rise. Trade wars are getting worse. There's a slowdown in corporate profits... So in terms of a global recession, it's not a question of 'if.' It's a question of 'when.'”

Recessions are notoriously tricky to predict, but Jubinville pointed to the aging bull market (now more than a decade old) and the upside-down interest rates on bonds. Long-term rates are normally higher but today they're not — a situation called an inverted yield curve.

“Whenever interest rates have gone to an inversion even for a short period of time, it has predicted the last seven recessions,” he said, adding, “we're a year to 18 months away from a recession.”

Market prospects

Demand for Canadian canola seed has been hit hard by the Chinese ban, which could result in crop carry-out increasing to 4.5 million tonnes (up from 3.5 million tonnes).

But demand for vegetable oils continues to grow, Jubinville noted.

“While we're not selling seed directly to China, it still needs the oil, so we're back-dooring our way into the Chinese market,” he said.

Domestic demand from crushers is also strong.

“Canola crush margins here in Western Canada have been higher (than now), but they're certainly still quite profitable,” he said. “I expect the overall crush pace... is going to be record large.”

But with a large carry-over and good yield potential for this year's crop, there's not likely to be a shortage, and any price spike will likely be short lived.

“The best chance for canola to start to resume an uptrend is if the bullish vegetable oil scenario reinvigorates itself and continues to move,” he said.

When all is said and done, Jubinville expects the top end of the market to reach around \$10.50 a bushel.

“The trading relationship with China has cost us a dollar a bushel,” he said. “If not for that, we would probably be trading \$11.50 like we were prior to this whole thing. We've knocked a dollar a bushel off this market, and I don't think we're getting it back.

“There's potential to make money on canola, but the margins admittedly are pressured.”

It's a similar story with wheat, which battled tough growing conditions across the Prairies this year.

"I admit I was reluctant to be a forward contractor of wheat this year," said Jubinville. "I'm only 20 per cent sold on wheat right now. I'm not comfortable in that position, but it was a matter of waiting to see what kind of wheat we had before I was prepared to make significant commitments on it."

Prices did rally in September and October, but ultimately, "wheat is not a bullish market," and the price rise was fleeting.

"This early fall rush has filled the commercial pipeline with all the market-ready wheat that the trade needs for right now," he said. "So I think we'll experience a bit of a lull past Christmastime, and we'll see what opportunities manifest themselves after that."

"From my position today, though, I don't feel like chasing this thing lower."

A tough market

Barley, on the other hand, is facing a different, "made-in-Western-Canada problem" — strong production and high prices, particularly on the feed side, but no way to get the grain where it needs to go.

"We have an issue of transportation logistics in trying to get that inventory from the surplus areas to where it's really needed," said Jubinville. "Barley has found a sweet spot here from a price perspective. It's just a matter of can we get it moving in the system."

"There's only so much we can force through at any one time. That's giving pricing a bit of momentum."

The barley market will stay "feistier" than initially expected, and the premium market will be Western Canada.

"I'm 70 per cent sold on barley to date taking advantage of what we're seeing in the market right now. I'm pretty aggressive on it."

He's less convinced about peas, though.

"The issue on peas comes back to geopolitics, with India being the largest producer, consumer, and importer of pulses in the world up until two years ago," he said.

"Until that policy changes, they're not going to be a buyer. And if they're not a buyer, other markets aren't going to go into any aggressive anticipatory buying. They'll just pick little bits off here and there as they need it."

The price has moved a little, but Jubinville doesn't expect it will climb much higher.

"I still think upwards of \$7 a bushel is probably the top end of the market for the moment."

Alberta producers should watch markets closely and act quickly when short-term rallies occur.

"They're going to come in the form of one- or two-month spurts," he said. "It's going to be a challenging environment this year, and I'm not going to sugar-coat it. It's a tough market out there."

[Read the Full Article](#)

Is regenerative the next 'sustainable?'

By Jeremy Simes | The Western Producer | News



Published: Dec. 26, 2019

KELOWNA, B.C. — During a first-of-its kind conference in Kelowna earlier this year, producers, soil health experts and advocates gathered to discuss the future of farming.

The First Canadian Summit on Climate Action in Food Systems focused on regenerative agriculture, looking at how farmers can be part of the solution in helping mitigate climate change. The goal of the event was to hear different voices in the industry and accept that people are at different stages in improving their soils, but one presentation made the case that sustainability isn't enough.

Finian Makepeace, co-founder of Kiss the Ground, which advocates for regenerative agriculture and healthy soil, argued that the practice, in which farmers improve soil carbon levels, is the way to go. "We all need this to go forward in a big way," he told the October conference. "Regeneration can mitigate those climate change impacts." But is regenerative achievable for everyone, and what levels of regeneration are deemed acceptable? These are tough questions to answer as more farmers continue to hear about the regenerative movement.

All types of producers are going to need to come to the table, said the organizers, so they can understand how each other's systems work. A respectful debate is necessary.

There can sometimes be a divide between producers on the issue, especially between those who farm conventionally and those who don't. "We wanted to create a safe conversation where everyone can come

to the table,” said Tamara McLellan, co-host of the conference. “We have people here talking about how they still spray herbicide and it’s an approach that works for them. Great, at least we are having a conversation about it.” However, conference organizers said many producers should change as more consumers demand food that is thought to benefit the climate.

Brenda Tjaden, founder of Sustainable Grain and an agricultural economist, said there are some bad actors out there, suggesting tight-to-no rotations aren’t acceptable. “We all snicker about throwing soybeans on the same piece of land for eight years and laugh about hardly rotating canola, but I don’t think these conversations are funny,” said Tjaden, who co-founded FarmLink Marketing Solutions before leaving the company.

“There is amazing farming going on out there and deplorable farming going on out there,” she said.

She said lots of farmers feel they have no choice but to use chemical sprays, given the crops they grow, but pointed to other solutions that show herbicides aren’t the be-all and end-all.

She sees regenerative practices, even if it’s only through intercropping, green manures or no-till, as a way forward where chemicals are used less often and returns improve. “We really believe in all types of farming systems and everyone has a seat at the table when we talk about solutions, but it has to be really based on transparency,” she said.

“Let’s let the consumer decide.”

During the conference, numerous producers, who operate large and small operations, shared what they do to improve soil. Some use chemicals while others have 15 crops in rotation, but they all made the case that regenerative practices are possible to implement despite the initial hurdles.

“We started our regenerative model out of necessity and financial necessity after years of excessive moisture on our farm, which was causing us not to be profitable,” said Brooks White, who farms near Pierson, Man., with Borderland Agriculture. “We needed to find a way to make our soil more resilient and implement different practices,” he said.

Gillian Flies, who owns The New Farm in southern Ontario and is president of Canadian Organic Growers, said she is optimistic that small regenerative practices can have big economic benefits because they could help stem wet and dry spells. “Those folks who aren’t in it to save the environment will join the program because they are able to see economic benefit,” she said.

White said lots of different kinds of farmers adopt regenerative for their own purposes, but everyone is striving for the same goal. For him, regenerative practices ultimately helped his balance sheet, and he believes other producers will follow suit for the economic incentives. “For change to happen on large-scale farms, it has to be economically viable,” he said. “It has to be on our two feet and, ultimately, I think that’s what is driving people to move that way because of the economic incentive.”

Shane Paterson, director of trade and transportation at Paterson GlobalFoods, said farmers are already doing a good job, and he believes economics will drive change.

He said collaboration is key for when environmentally conscience markets emerge. “When change is pushed upon (us) with no incentive and no understanding, that is what breaks the system, in my mind,” he said. “It has to be collaborative.”

During the conference, presenters offered ways to help producers inch toward regenerative practices. They include increasing plant diversity, no- to minimal-till, cover crops, green manure, intercropping, re-integrating livestock, adding shelter belts and being more precise with spraying and treatments to reduce use.

Access the article [here](#)

Contact jeremy.simes@producer.com

Some good economic news heading into 2020*

By TB Financial's Economics & Research Team | ATB Economics | Research



Published: Dec 19, 2019

There is no denying 2019 has been a tough year for the Alberta economy. When Statistics Canada releases its final numbers next year, it may even be the case that we experienced a recession.

Our [latest economic outlook](#) forecasts 0.9 per cent growth next year. This is not a particularly fast pace, but it is an improvement over this year's performance. Even better, growth is forecast to rise to 2.1 per cent in 2021.

A wide range of factors will determine Alberta's economic fortunes over the next two years, the main one being the degree to which our oil patch can expand. On this front, there has been some good news: the United States' portion of the Enbridge Line 3 project seems to be moving forward; completion of the Canadian portion of the Line 3 project, along with efficiency improvements, added capacity to the pipeline system; and construction on the Trans Mountain Pipeline is finally underway.

At the same time, the threat of another global oil glut is being held in check—at least for now—by the willingness of the OPEC+ countries to limit their production. All of this bodes well for our oil patch, even though the possibilities of more pipeline delays and global oversupply remain real.

On the trade front, the rocky relationship between the world's two largest economies that has tied a heavy weight to the ankle of the global economy seems to be on the path toward a reconciliation. With that said, there are still several issues to address, and the threat of tariffs and other protectionist practices continues.

Canada has experienced some reprieve on this front, as China lifted its ban on Canadian meat to help counter a shortage of pork caused by the African Swine Flu. The ban on Canadian canola, however, continues.

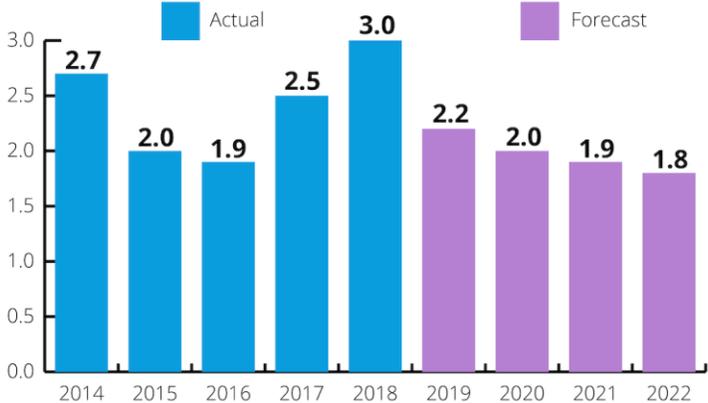
What's more, the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) on free trade seems to finally be on its way to ratification. The deal may not be perfect, but it does help ensure relatively free access to the U.S. market in a time of increasing protectionist sentiment.

Finally, fears that the global economy is on the brink of recession—fed by inverted bond yield curves, Brexit, trade wars, German economic weakness and other bad signs—have largely receded. There is still potential for slower growth globally and in the U.S., but a meltdown seems unlikely in the short-term

U.S. economic growth forecast

Annual per cent change in real GDP

Graph by ATB Economics



Source: U.S. Federal Reserve forecast as of Dec. 11, 2019

Things You Need To Know





CONNECTION
SILICON VALLEY

Connection Silicon Valley

Connecting companies into Silicon Valley

Connection Silicon Valley*

Calling Alberta Startups

For the 2nd year, New West Networks are inviting Alberta Startups to join them for an introduction to Silicon Valley. Their Silicon Valley immersion program is set for February 9th to 12th and is exclusive to Alberta-based startups - all industries and stages of growth are welcome.

The content, workshops, speakers and discussions will focus on how to effectively connect into Silicon Valley - be it for future capital, customers, strategic partners, board members, advisors or mentors.

Ideal startup profile:

- You would like to build a network in Silicon Valley
- You are looking to raise venture capital in the future
- You are looking to expand into the US and the Bay Area is one of your target export regions
- You recognize that building a network takes time but pays dividends in the future, and you are willing to invest the time and effort now to do so

More details can be found on their [website](#).

In order to take advantage of the new Alberta Export Expansion Program apply for funding ASAP [here](#).

NOTE: Export Program Funding Applications must be submitted no less than 6 weeks before the start of the first activity

Stories to Follow



Government

[Implications enormous as WTO hits gridlock*](#)

Western Producer | Dec. 19, 2019 | News

May 18, 2015, was a significant day for Canada's beef and pork producers. On that date, the appellate body of the World Trade Organization issued a final ruling in favour of Canada.

The WTO judges said America's country of origin labelling rules on red meat discriminated against imports from Canada and Mexico ...

[Feds delay transport rule enforcement*](#)

Western Producer | Dec. 19, 2019 | News

Canada's cattle and dairy sectors will have two years to familiarize themselves with the federal livestock transportation regulations that come into effect Feb. 20. Federal Agriculture Minister Marie-Claude Bibeau told cattle producers Dec. 11 that they'll have a transition period before the Canadian Food Inspection Agency institutes hard enforcement that would include fines and penalties for non-compliance...

[Implications of U.S.-China trade deal difficult to determine: analyst*](#)

Western Producer | Dec. 19, 2019 | News

Ask a grain market analyst what impact the United States-China trade pact will have on grain and oilseed prices and you're likely to get the same answer Dave Reimann provided. "I don't know," said the Cargill analyst. That is because precious little is known about the two-year deal ...

[Feds, provinces plan minor tweaks to AgriStability*](#)

Alberta Farmer Express | Dec. 18, 2019 | Crops

Ottawa -- Minor changes are coming to AgriStability following Tuesday's meeting between federal Agriculture Minister Marie-Claude Bibeau and her provincial counterparts. Major changes, however, will have to wait. A full ...

Economy & Markets

[Prairie growers focus on year-round products*](#)

Western Producer | Dec. 26, 2019 | Markets

Small-scale producers selling locally grown produce are starting to compete side-by-side with California vegetables on store shelves throughout the cold prairie winters. The Prairies are famous for shipping massive amounts of food and food ingredients around the world, but many prairie residents are used to importing fresh fruits and vegetables to get through winter ...

[Fababeans may catch the fractionation wave*](#)

Western Producer | Dec. 19, 2019 | Crops

Fababeans have had difficulty gaining traction in Western Canada but could soon accelerate, says a promoter of the crop.

There are signs that the pulse fractionation business could be the much-needed sparkplug. Until now, demand has been limited for Canadian fababeans in the human consumption market and as an ingredient in hog rations ...

[Don't be fooled by moisture content when buying feed](#)

Alberta Farmer Express | Dec. 18, 2019 | News*

Knowing the moisture content of feeds is key when comparing prices. "The summer of 2019 was extremely challenging for anyone trying to put up dry forage," said farm business management ...

Communities

[Growing for a sustainable future*](#)

Western Producer | Dec. 26, 2019 | Markets

What does sustainability mean to your farming operation?

Is it a core value that influences your production and management decisions? Or do you see it as a concept dreamed up in a far-off corporate board room — an idea that will ultimately place more restrictions and conditions on how you produce food? ...

[A sustainable farm with a mission*](#)

The Western Producer | Dec. 26, 2019 | News

COPETOWN, Ont. — When Ben Loewith walks through the dairy barns on his family farm, he is filled with contentment from a job well done.

Keeping a modern dairy sustainable means protecting the environment, contending with urban encroachment, finding competent labour and raising healthy, productive cows ...

[Sask. farm lights up for the holidays*](#)

The Western Producer | Dec. 19, 2019 | Farms Living

ELFROS, SASK. — For 26 years, Gary Folster, wife Heather and son Quenton have brought Christmas merriment to hundreds of people visiting their Christmas light display at their home in Elfros.

Visitors from all across Western Canada and even England have signed their guest book and made donations in their gift box for the Wadena Food Bank...

Science, Technology, & Innovation

[Are we ready for electric tractors?*](#)

The Western Producer | Dec. 26, 2019 | Crops

Car and truck manufacturers are falling off the fossil fuel bandwagon in droves and jumping on the electric train.

Now add tractors to that list. Every month, another e-tractor announcement comes across our desks ...

Events





Banff Pork Seminar*

January 7-9, 2020

Fairmont Banff Springs — 405 Spray Ave., Banff

“Offering a view to the future in its plenary sessions and practical ‘take home’ information in its breakout sessions, the Banff Pork Seminar now attracts more than 650 delegates from all across Canada, the U.S., Europe and Asia. Our attendees represent all aspects of pork production and every large pork organization and business is well represented at our seminar. As such, it is now the premier pork educational seminar in North America.” For more info or to register

[visit the event website](#)



Alberta Federation of Agriculture sustainability conference and AGM*

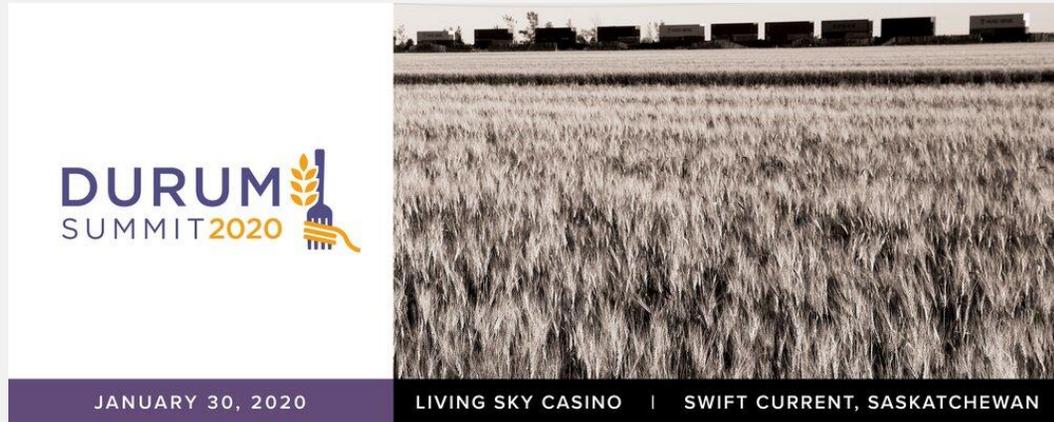
January 21-22, 2019

Holiday Inn and Suites Edmonton Airport — 1100 Fourth St., Nisku

“The Alberta Federation of Agriculture and its Board of Directors would like to invite you to our 2020 Sustainability Conference and Annual General Meeting, January 21-22, 2020 in Nisku, AB at the Holiday Inn & Suites Edmonton Airport & Conference Centre. Our new event format kicks off Monday evening with fellowship and networking at the president’s reception, followed by a full day of conference based on our theme of sustainability in agriculture. The event will wrap with a half-

day focused on AGM business.”

For more info or to register visit [the AFA website](#).



Durum Summit 2020*

Jan 30, 2020

Living Sky Casino — 1401 N. Service Rd. E., Swift Current, Sask.

Canada contributes a major share to the global trade of durum wheat. The quality of Canadian durum is highly prized by domestic and international buyers. Durum production is being challenged by the devastating effects of fusarium head blight and insects such as midge. Crop rotations have changed to include more pulses and canola. Consumers are concerned about pesticide residues. Integration of the latest cropping technologies offers opportunities to reduce the environmental footprint and increase sustainability.

The Durum Summit will provide updates on matching genetics to demand, responding to environmental pressures, and growing a more profitable crop.

For more info or to register visit the [event website](#).

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.

NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Export program refresh helps cut red tape

The newly streamlined Alberta Export Expansion Program reduces red tape for local businesses looking to expand around the world.

Enhancing economic tools for municipalities

Municipal Affairs Minister Kaycee Madu has tabled legislation to empower municipalities to offer property tax incentives to business owners for machinery and equipment.

GRANTS AND FUNDING:

Alberta Export Expansion Program (AEEP) (NEW - ATTACHED)

The Alberta Export Expansion Program (AEEP) supports Alberta small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), municipalities, Indigenous communities, industry associations, and economic development organizations that are promoting Alberta exports through international business travel or bringing international buyers to Alberta.

CanExport Innovation - You must apply **at least 8 weeks prior** to your planned travel.

Canadian innovators who aim to commercialize technology can access up to \$75,000 in funding to establish new R&D collaborations with foreign partners to co-develop, validate or adapt their technologies for commercialization. Companies that were not successful with a CanExport SME Application in the past should check out this program which has different eligibility

criteria: https://www.tradecommissioner.gc.ca/trade_commissioners-delegues_commerciaux/funding-financement/canexport/innovation/index.aspx?lang=eng

TRADE DEVELOPMENT/MISSION OPPORTUNITIES:

Alberta Agriculture and Forestry Market News

What's new in agriculture's international markets

TECHWEST CANADA & Alberta Trade and Investment Attraction Mission (Feb 23-28, 2020)

The Government of Alberta is focused on attracting investment to the province, building international partnerships, showcasing our talents around the globe, and helping Alberta companies to access international markets. To that end, Alberta Economic Development, Trade and Tourism's Trade and Investment Attraction team collaborates with TECH WEST CANADA on a trade missions aimed at facilitating export development and investment attraction from targeted international markets. Join the Western Canadian delegation in Barcelona for February 23-27, 2020 to participate in MWC 2020. **Deadline to register: Dec 20, 2019**

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRADE AND TOURISM BUSINESS RESOURCES:

Export.alberta.ca

Find new market opportunities for your product using the interactive export data tool. Find information on Alberta exports, world imports, tariffs, and more.

Economic development indicators

Alberta economic dashboards, commentaries and highlights, and overviews of major projects.

Economic development supports

Alberta international offices, market access, industry information and other supports and resources.

Regional Economic Development Services (REDS)

Through the Regional Economic Development Services (REDS) unit, Economic Development and Trade (EDT) helps facilitate economic development by providing targeted services, knowledge and expertise across the province. For assistance navigating the Government of Alberta economic development supports and to learn more about the REDS unit and available supports, please contact Linda Erickson, Southwest Region at 403-393-2614 or linda.erickson@gov.ab.ca

OTHER BUSINESS RESOURCES:

Alberta Innovates

Alberta Innovates manages a number of high-demand technology entrepreneurial investment programs with a growing number of subscribers. Due to the competitive nature of these programs, Alberta Innovates searches to invest in high-potential, high-growth companies that will provide economic and social benefits for Alberta.

Tourism Research & Statistics

Understand the value of Alberta's tourism industry and consumer vacation trends with the latest tourism statistics and research reports. The [Alberta Tourism Market Monitor](#) is available online.

Co-operative Business Supports

- Alberta Community & Co-operative Association helps to strengthen Alberta communities by providing leadership development and fostering co-operative values <http://acca.coop>
- Co-operatives First is a business development agency that supports business, economic and community development in rural and Indigenous communities across western Canada. www.cooperativesfirst.com

Questions? Suggestions? Have something you would like us to

share? Contact the SouthGrow team!

info@southgrow.com | (403) 394-0615

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