



August 25, 2026

Honourable Tara Sawyer
Minister of Agriculture & Irrigation
131 Legislature Building
Edmonton, AB
Via email: AGRIC.Minister@gov.ab.ca

Request for Support of Water Policy Changes

Dear Honourable Ms. Sawyer,

On behalf of Team Alberta Crops (TAC), we would like to share with you the policy input (included) that TAC and its member organizations have advanced through the Phase II Water Availability Engagement process undertaken by Alberta Environment and Protected Areas in 2025 and in subsequent discussions with government. These changes are important to crop producers across Alberta. They would support responsible water management while strengthening the long-term viability of our sector.

Team Alberta Crops represents Alberta's crop and beekeeping sectors through seven producer organizations whose members steward more than 20 million cultivated acres across the province. Producers continue to face increasing pressures related to excess moisture, variable weather conditions, and rising production costs. In this context, modernizing Alberta's approach to agricultural water management remains one of the most important policy priorities for our sector.

TAC has consistently advocated for practical changes that would enable farmers to undertake low impact agricultural activities within ephemeral, temporary, and seasonal wetlands on private agricultural land without the requirement for Water Act approvals or wetland replacement obligations.

In our Phase II Water Engagement submission to government, we articulated producers' concerns with the current regulatory framework. We also provided recommendations to reduce barriers to responsible water management while maintaining Alberta's commitment to environmental stewardship. Specifically, TAC recommended revising the treatment of ephemeral, temporary, and seasonal wetlands on private agricultural land to allow farmers to undertake low impact agricultural activities without unnecessary approvals or wetland replacement requirements.

Since that submission, TAC and its member organizations have worked with Minister Grant Hunter and officials within the Ministry of Environment and Protected Areas to advance these discussions. We appreciate the willingness of the Minister and department staff to engage with producers and better understand the practical realities facing farmers across Alberta.

Our position remains the same. We feel farmers, as stewards of the land, should be able to conduct low impact activities such as seeding, cultivation, spraying, harvesting, and routine water management within ephemeral, temporary, and seasonal wetlands on private agricultural land without being subject to unnecessary regulatory approvals and replacement requirements. We are not seeking changes to the treatment of semi-permanent or





permanent wetlands. Rather, we are seeking a balanced, risk-based approach that recognizes both the stewardship role of farmers and the economic realities of agricultural production. This approach would allow government resources to be focused on protecting wetlands with the highest ecological value. It would also reduce regulatory burden for routine activities that have minimal environmental impact.

As Alberta's farmers continue to provide food, fuel, and economic growth for the province, they require practical tools to manage water on working agricultural landscapes. We believe the recommendations put forward by TAC would support agricultural productivity, improve water management outcomes, reduce regulatory uncertainty, and strengthen producer confidence. These outcomes can be achieved while maintaining strong environmental protections.

We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you and your staff to discuss these recommendations in greater detail and answer any questions you may have regarding the concerns and priorities of Alberta's farmers.

Thank you for your continued leadership and commitment to Alberta's agriculture sector. We look forward to continuing to work collaboratively with you on policies that support both agricultural productivity and responsible stewardship of our shared natural resources.

Sincerely,
(Original signed by)

Alison Davie, Chair, Potato Growers of Alberta

Andre Harpe, Chair, Alberta Canola

Curtis Miedema, Chair, Alberta Beekeepers
Commission

Darren Klemen, Chair, Alberta Sugar Beet
Growers

Sarah Weigum, Chair, Alberta-BC Seed
Growers

Scott Jespersen, Chair, Alberta Grains

Will Muller, Chair, Alberta Pulse Growers

CC: Darby Crouch, darby.crouch@gov.ab.ca

Team Alberta Crops is a collaboration between seven of Alberta's producer groups: Alberta Beekeepers Commission, Alberta Canola, Alberta Grains, Alberta Pulse Growers, Alberta-British Columbia Seed Growers, Alberta Sugar Beet Growers and the Potato Growers of Alberta.

We work together to advance grass-roots policy and advocate on behalf of Alberta's crop and beekeeping sectors.

