

September 16, 2005



Province boosts commitment to livestock welfare

Edmonton... The Alberta government has strengthened its commitment to farm animal welfare with a 15 per cent increase in funding to two non-profit agencies.

A new three-year contract was signed with the Alberta SPCA for enforcement and livestock protection programs, with annual funding of more than \$860,000. A further three-year contract with Alberta Farm Animal Care (AFAC) will see that organization receive \$92,000 per year for livestock care, education and work with industry.

“Alberta has a high standard of animal care that is backed up by one of the strongest pieces of legislation in Canada,” said Doug Horner, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development. “We are fortunate in this province that these two organizations do such an exemplary job in addressing the humane treatment of animals and in enforcement and education programs in Alberta. They are respected across the country.”

James Arends, President of the Alberta SPCA Board of Directors said, “Without question, animals have benefited from our partnership with industry and the Government of Alberta. Our new three-year agreement with the government better positions the Alberta SPCA to effectively meet the growing demand for animal welfare enforcement services.”

The Alberta SPCA is funded to deliver livestock welfare protection services throughout Alberta and companion animal protection services outside the larger areas, not served by other local humane societies.

David Hyink, chairman of AFAC and a chicken producer, said, "Our partnership with the province and Alberta SPCA enables us to respond quickly to any livestock care concerns through our ALERT line. On behalf of the livestock industry, AFAC also takes the lead on extension and training to improve animal care and transportation in Alberta."

Alberta leads the nation in cattle and calf inventories, with 6.9 million head. At present the hog population is more than two million and the sheep population more than 248,000. There are also more than 37,000 domestic elk; 90,000 bison; 300,000 horses and 8,700 domestic deer in the province.

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