



# 2018

## Annual Report



# ABOUT AFAC

For over 25 years, Alberta Farm Animal Care (AFAC) has been a collective, trusted voice on matters of livestock welfare. AFAC was founded in 1993 by Alberta livestock organizations and is now the only provincial animal care organization in Canada. As the public's interest and concern for farm animal care is increasing, there is an opportunity for organizations like AFAC to provide leadership as a progressive animal care organization.

AFAC depends primarily on funding from members and partners, and leverages this funding into additional extension and project grants from the Government of Alberta's Agriculture and Forestry department.

AFAC has two areas of focus: it creates resources and training opportunities for producers to support them in providing the best care for their animals; and it works to build understanding and trust through outreach opportunities with the public. Additionally, AFAC assists in and conducting animal welfare research that focuses on improving livestock welfare in Alberta.

In 2018, the AFAC team developed a new strategic plan that will be rolled out in 2019 and outlines organizational priorities for the next three years that will support members, stakeholders, and industry partners. The strategic plan outlines the work to be done, the partnerships to be developed and vision for the organization going forward.

The final plan is the result of work done throughout 2018 that began with an in-depth, organization-wide planning session and included member engagement, expert consultations and workshops. While the core work remains the same, how AFAC achieves the two-pronged goal of producer extension and public outreach has evolved. To demonstrate the organization's commitment to building a culture of partnership and collaboration, the vision and mission have been updated:

## **Vision**

Alberta Farm Animal Care works to ensure farm animals in Alberta are respected, well-cared for and experience a high state of welfare through collaboration with and support of our members.

## **Mission**

To promote best practices in care and handling, by working collaboratively towards continual improvement in responsible livestock care. Engaging the public to build trust through transparency.

AFAC is continuing the work it began in 1993, but that work continues to evolve and change with the livestock industry, consumer focus and funding availability. The new Strategic Plan will enable AFAC to move forward and offer value to its members and stakeholders.



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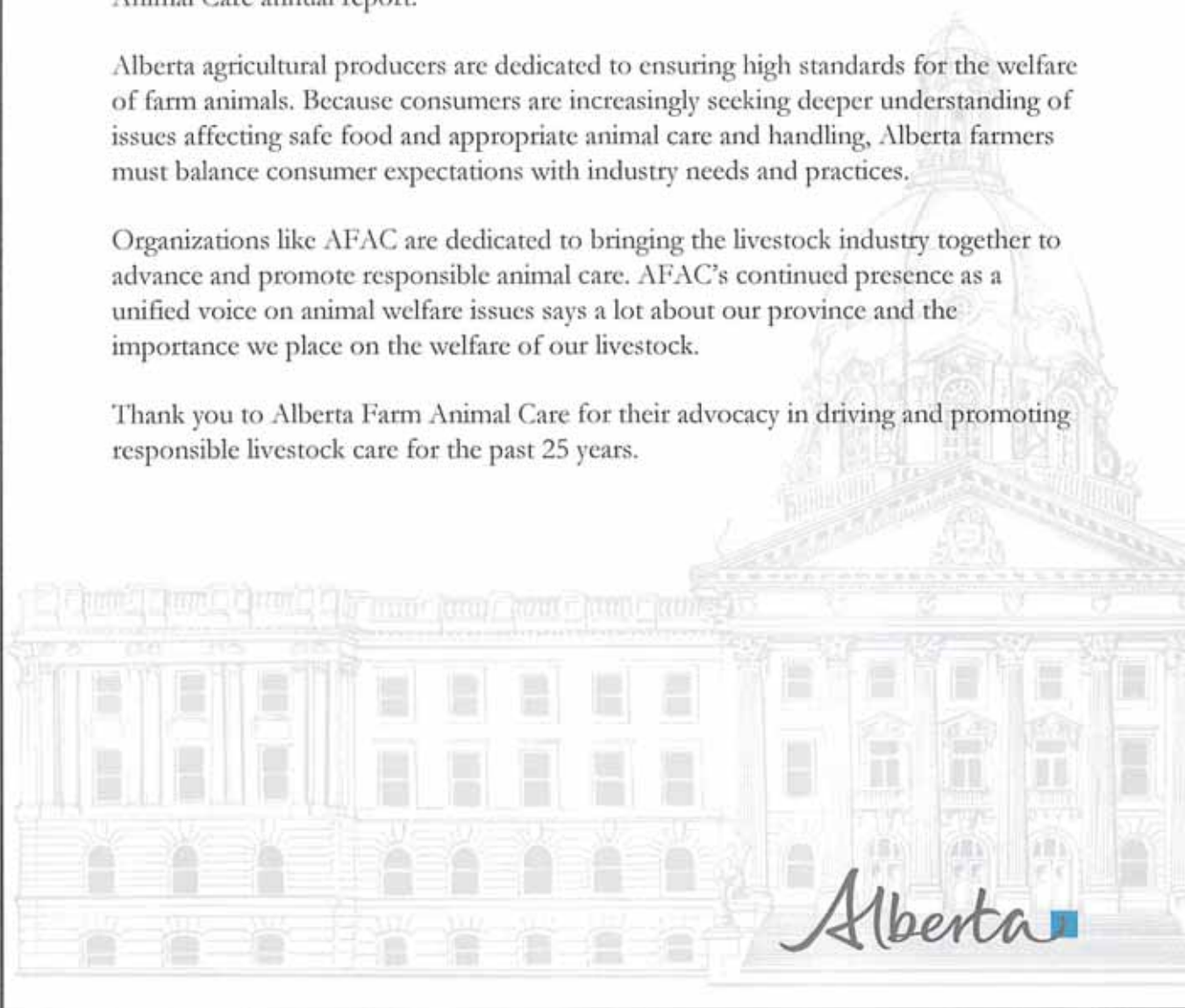
# A MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNMENT OF ALBERTA

The Government of Alberta is pleased to provide greetings for the 2018 Alberta Farm Animal Care annual report.

Alberta agricultural producers are dedicated to ensuring high standards for the welfare of farm animals. Because consumers are increasingly seeking deeper understanding of issues affecting safe food and appropriate animal care and handling, Alberta farmers must balance consumer expectations with industry needs and practices.

Organizations like AFAC are dedicated to bringing the livestock industry together to advance and promote responsible animal care. AFAC's continued presence as a unified voice on animal welfare issues says a lot about our province and the importance we place on the welfare of our livestock.

Thank you to Alberta Farm Animal Care for their advocacy in driving and promoting responsible livestock care for the past 25 years.





# CHAIR'S REPORT

Thanks to the support and participation of our members, we can say that 2018 was an exciting year for AFAC. Alberta Farm Animal Care is a livestock organization. Our vision is to make sure all farm animals in Alberta are respected, well cared for and experience a high state of welfare.

Let me introduce myself. My name is Cora Scheele; hatching egg producer in central Alberta. I'm pleased to be the elected chair of AFAC. I'm looking forward to continuing this role with the organization into the future.

AFAC stands up for advancing responsible animal care through joint efforts with our government and the diverse livestock organizations in Alberta. Within Alberta we show leadership by bringing producers, industry stakeholders and public together to foster understanding of animal care and welfare.

Our newest livestock organization is the Alberta Beekeepers organization. We welcome them to be part of AFAC. We hope to welcome more members, not only commodity groups, but also individual members, counties, livestock service providers, ag societies, animal health companies etc. We will continue to ensure AFAC provides value to our members. Creating a solid membership base ensures we can continue the work we are doing, to support the livestock sector and enables us to take on new initiatives and projects as identified by our members and partners.

I would like to mention to you that we had our strategic planning session for 2019 -2021. That will help us on our way to build a solid foundation for the organization. We had the Strategic Plan as topic in one of our council meetings, and enjoyed the conversation and input from members.

I'm pleased to mention some of AFAC's successes and accomplishments:

- \* The Alert Line: 1 800 506 2273. We have dedicated staff, who are answering calls 24/7. We had a huge increase in calls this year. Calls regarding concerns about cattle, horses, goat, sheep, swine. Calls about animals at large, and information calls. We helped to dispatch the Livestock Emergency Trailers to liner roll overs. Some calls were forwarded to the SPCA. We are pleased with the communication and collaboration with the SPCA.
- \* Livestock Emergency Trailers; 18 well equipped trailers in the province, to assist in emergencies. Trailers are stationed at fire departments, and other places in the counties and municipal districts.
- \* Connections of staff with 4-H groups, primary and post-secondary schools across Alberta. Speaking in classes and connecting with youth.
- \* Attendance at big events, like Aggie Days, Calgary Stampede etc.
- \* Resource development: heat and cold stress brochures for cattle and equine, decision tree for ALERT calls, etc.
- \* Industry training and extension: Urban Hen project, Cattle Benchmarking Project, Livestock Welfare Engagement Project with an online survey and focus groups
- \* Social media; Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and videos on YouTube. Show your support and share it with other viewers in social media. \* The website, up-to-date and very informative. Check it out [www.afac.ab.ca](http://www.afac.ab.ca)

I would like to thank the board of directors, our executive director Annemarie Pedersen, our dedicated staff and contractors for all their efforts. Furthermore we are thankful for the support and grants from Alberta Agriculture and Forestry. And of course a big thank you to our members.

Let's keep the conversation going regarding farm animal welfare, and I'm confident that AFAC is moving forward in a positive direction. Wishing everyone all the best and success. And we hope to see you at our AFAC Advisory Council meetings.

Regards, Cora Scheele



# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

I'm not sure if it was just me, but 2018 went by in a flash! My first year as executive director was filled with learning, planning, and new people, events and opportunities. I was in good hands with the AFAC team in place and they have supported me in developing a strong understanding of the organization, its partners and day-to-day activities. Together we have balanced the budget, successfully completed projects and started others, broadened the scope of work and partnerships, and have interesting prospects on the horizon for 2019.

As well, the entire AFAC team- board and staff- worked together to develop the new three-year strategic plan for 2019-2021. The Fall Advisory Council meeting provided members the opportunity to weigh in on the draft plan and we will launch the final Strategic Plan at the upcoming Livestock Care Conference. The critical areas in the new plan include:

- \* a higher level of partnership and collaboration with new and existing industry partners and stakeholders;
- \* a commitment to building on and delivering a strong brand promise and value proposition to our members;
- \* streamlining the organization (financially and operationally) and planning for the future.

A common theme in all of my meetings with members in the past year was the value and importance of the ALERT Line and the emergency trailers. The ALERT Line doubled the calls received this year over 2017. These calls were concerns about feed, water, body condition scores, livestock at large and animals in distress, as well as purely informational inquiries. As well, the Line continues to serve as a means of dispatching the emergency trailers located throughout the province. We are looking at ways to grow the ALERT Line, from personnel compliment to the scope of service in 2019.

Completed projects continue to provide value. We receive ongoing requests from municipalities to host Small Flock (Urban Hen) workshops and the program informed the "livestock as emotional support animal" bylaw for the City of Calgary. Projects such as the Cattle Benchmarking Project and Livestock Welfare Engagement Project provide resources and extension opportunities that we will continue to develop in 2019.

The two streams of work being done by AFAC staff – livestock industry extension and consumer outreach – make Alberta Farm Animal Care unique in Canada. The new Strategic Plan gives equal weight to both efforts and focuses on the growing imperative for the livestock sector to commit to continuous improvement and an open dialogue. AFAC commits to supporting the industry by providing information, resources and training where applicable, and by sharing the good work being done within the sector, including context around the issues, to our external stakeholders.

I look forward to working with our exceptional team, the board, members, and stakeholders in 2019 to ensure AFAC is an organization that remains relevant and continues to provide value in the future.

Annemarie Pedersen



A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Annemarie". The signature is stylized and fluid.

# FINANCIAL OFFICER'S REPORT

"Here we are from where we were."

The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines a budget as a "plan for the coordination of resources and expenditures" or "the amount of money that is available for, required for, or assigned to a particular purpose." The first definition is fairly straight forward, and we do this every year for the operations side of the organization, more often when applications for project initiatives are written. The second definition involves following the plan referenced in the first version and that is where the challenges can arise. When developing a budget, foresight is never perfect. Circumstances can arise that make sticking to the budget, while maintaining the same level of output, a test.

This past year, the Alberta Farm Animal Care (AFAC) Association came a long way in addressing fiscal challenges that are familiar to most not-for-profit organizations. At the time this annual report is released to AFAC members and supporters, we will have completed the first quarter of 2019, and moving at a pace that will likely never get any slower. As part of this journey, the Board and staff met in June to brainstorm the goals for the organization for the next three-year period. We came away from that day with a lot of information used to draft a plan for AFAC's movement forward that was presented to the membership at Council at the end of November. I look forward to seeing projects and activities evolve from these discussions that will build and enhance Alberta's farm animal welfare profile.



We also came away from the strategic session with a plan to streamline operational aspects that are expected to improve the organization's effectiveness. The most significant decision is to transition to a virtual office when AFAC's lease obligation is complete. In an age when we are increasingly able to do our jobs away from a central location, the savings on a physical location will enable AFAC to allocate those funds to activities that will put more valuable resources in the hands of livestock producers as well their customers and the general public.

AFAC closed out 2018 with 89 members in good standing. Additionally, the Board, staff, contractors and volunteers carried out project activities with funding support from Alberta Agriculture and Forestry, the Government of Alberta-Government of Canada's Growing Forward 2 program and; Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's AgriMarketing program. We are very grateful for the support of our members and for that of the departments of the provincial and federal governments that have supported initiatives AFAC has championed in its vision that "all farm animals are respected, well cared for, and experience a high level of welfare."

Thank you! And may your 2019 be a year that you can be proud to look back on.

Sharron Johannesen

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sharron". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

# INSIGHTS

Two of Alberta Farm Animal Care's Strategic Plan goals are to support continual improvement in responsible, humane animal care, and to become a trusted, credible source for information on farm animal care and welfare. One channel to deliver on these goals is through the Insights e-publication.

Each Insights issue is a collection of three to four articles highlighting new animal care and welfare research or information on a current issue. The ultimate goal of the insights e-publication is to connect producers with research, changes and issues facing their industry. Armed with this knowledge producers can more effectively evaluate their operation's practices for ways to improve the care of their animals.



In 2018, three editions were released. In February, the publication included articles on handling bison, insights into the ways dairy farmers make management decisions, and selective dry cow therapy and antimicrobial resistance. The June edition included articles on feedlot lamb and ewe flock lameness, antimicrobial resistance and regulatory changes, and the use and perceptions of on-farm emergency slaughter for dairy cows in British Columbia. October's issue included articles on creating a goat-focused feeding system, understanding the barriers that prevent mitigation of lameness on Alberta dairy farms, and animal welfare issues in transportation.

Researchers and graduate students are welcome to contribute articles at any time. Anyone with a research project that could be highlighted in the INSIGHTS publication can contact the AFAC office.

The INSIGHTS Newsletter can be found online at [www.afac.ab.ca/resources/insights/](http://www.afac.ab.ca/resources/insights/).

## ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETINGS

Alberta Farm Animal Care developed the Advisory Council format over the last few years, to provide members an opportunity to meet and discuss current issues in the livestock sector, and to provide direction and feedback to the AFAC staff and board. The Council met both of these goals this year.

The first Council meeting brought together producers, veterinarians, government representatives and others to discuss the upcoming antimicrobial use changes, possible challenges and solutions. As an exception, non-members were invited to attend this session, due to the significance of the topic, and there was a good group dynamic and conversation throughout the day.

The second council meeting covered two topics. The first, a review and discussion of the 2019-2021 Strategic Plan, provided valuable insights from AFAC members on the organization's direction for the next three years. The second showcased members Alberta Beef Producers, Alberta Pork and Alberta Hatching Egg and their current and upcoming animal welfare strategies. A very informative and worthwhile day.

The Advisory Council Meetings are for AFAC members only, will generally take place in the spring and fall, and will address current issues in animal welfare that have broad relevance and interest to the sector. Topic suggestions can be submitted to Annemarie Pedersen at [annemarie@afac.ab.ca](mailto:annemarie@afac.ab.ca)







Photo credit: Lori Anne Nimboung (sheep), Alberta Pork (pigs), Egg Farmers of Alberta (chickens), Laura Manson Photography (bees)



# 2018 LIVESTOCK CARE CONFERENCE

## 25TH ANNIVERSARY

The 2018 Livestock Care Conference came with many notable memories. These include AFAC's 25th Anniversary celebration, 49 sponsored students in attendance and so many great speakers! And, as usual, a snowstorm to top it all off.

This year's workshop was a Humane Euthanasia demonstration that sold out completely and included hands-on demonstrations for the participants. A big thank you to Olds College's Brad McLeod and Tom Inglis from Poultry Health Services for making this event a huge success. In order to properly celebrate 25 years of existence, Joanne Lemke and Susan Church helped to kick off the event with some "Reflections and Ruminations" of their experience with Alberta Farm Animal Care right from the beginning. The annual event took place in Olds, Alberta and had an attendance of almost 200 people.



The Meet the Experts session, a mentorship event that allows sponsored post-secondary students to literally come and "meet the experts", was a huge success this year. With more students than ever, the energy in the room was amazing and could be heard throughout the hotel.

March 15th was conference day, and included a diverse audience and many informative presentations covering animal welfare in various livestock species. Keynote speaker, Temple Grandin, brought her always enlightening experience and opinions on the livestock industry and left everyone with something to think about.

With experts like Egan Brockhoff and Jennifer Brown, the swine industry was well represented and resulted in a thoughtful discussion about pig production and where it is headed in the future. Levi Hofer and Clover Bench partnered up for a presentation that highlighted some of the latest research on laying hens and the practicality behind the use of the research on farm. The cattle side of the industry was covered by Karen Schwartzkopf- Genswein, Jeffrey Rushen and Melissa Moggy, as they shared their research on the progress in beef and dairy transportation. Giving everybody "A Little Something to Ruminant On", Paula Menzies shared her perspective on small ruminants and some of the issues that industry is facing.

Lastly, AFAC's Annemarie Pedersen and Kristen Hall provided a few important tips for telling the producer story. As the afternoon winded down and it continued to blizzard outside, the AFAC staff knew that the 2018 Livestock Care Conference was a success, and planning had started for 2019.



# AWARDS OF DISTINCTION

The Alberta Farm Animal Care Awards of Distinction are a proud tradition started in 2001 to recognize individuals or groups for their exceptional contributions to livestock welfare. Every year, a call for nominations is heard throughout Alberta and an individual or group is chosen as a winner in one of three categories to represent Alberta's diligence and growth in animal welfare in the livestock sector. In 2018 there were winners in two of the categories.

## The Award of Distinction for Communication

The award honours those that take an active role in effectively sharing the message about livestock issues, and informing the public and agri-food industry about farm animal care in a factual and honest way, to build trust and credibility.

The East Olds Dairy Farmer Group was presented with this award for their commitment to sharing the story of agriculture with the public. The East Olds Dairy Farmer Group has hosted a "Breakfast on the Dairy Farm" every year for the last six years, have had over 3400 people attend the events, and it continues to grow.



## The Award of Distinction for Industry Leadership

The award honours those who integrate animal welfare into their core business strategy, setting their own bar higher for expectations regarding animal welfare.

Lakeland College was presented with this award for helping to provide the foundation for students going into the industry and setting a high standard for animal welfare. Throughout their courses, students are challenged to think 'outside the box' in developing best practices for their own operations at home or within their future careers.

Congratulations to the award recipients and nominees for representing the livestock industry with leadership and communications excellence in relation to animal welfare.



# MARKETING AND MEMBERSHIP MANAGERS REPORT

It's hard to believe another year has passed at Alberta Farm Animal Care, and I say that only because it feels like it just got started. There was definitely no lack of things to do in 2018 and I was lucky to spend a good chunk of my time travelling around this beautiful province talking to lots of people about all the different things AFAC does.

Things were a little bit different this year as I was lucky to play a small role in one of our big projects this year for the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project that Melissa Moggy was leading on behalf of AFAC. With five different sessions all linked to the fall post-secondary presentations, it made the trips a little bit longer, but also allowed for some eye-opening discussions about livestock welfare in Alberta.

The unique thing about Alberta Farm Animal Care is that we have a staff that has such a diverse set of skills so when it comes to doing impactful work, that is easy to do! Two newly created videos come to mind when I think of this. In order to raise awareness about the Emergency Livestock Handling Equipment Trailers, Kristen Lepp and I made a fun, catchy video to highlight all of the different towns across the province in which the trailers are located. We also had a fun time over the summer travelling around touching base with some former students who were sponsored to attend previous Livestock Care Conferences and we were able to get some great footage of the impact the sponsorship made on their lives.



Speaking of the Livestock Care Conference - the 2018 Livestock Care Conference was a big success and you can read about that later in this Report. It will definitely be hard to top in 2019, but that isn't going to stop us from trying!

It is always so rewarding to see hard work pay off, and the ALERT Line has been a good indicator of the increased awareness of our organization. By October 15 we had received more than double the calls received in 2017, and we have chalked this up to the fact that more people are aware of the call line and how it works. We are anticipating the number of calls to continue growing in the future as well.

As you read through the 2018 annual report, I am sure that you will be as excited as I am about the growth of the organization and all of our programs. We have seen increases in ALERT Line calls, Emergency Livestock Handling Equipment Trailers (welcome Spruce Meadows Fire Department) and membership! A big welcome to our 14 new members that came on in 2018 and a big thank you to those that have continued your support for AFAC and livestock welfare within Alberta.

As with all of my presentations, in 2019 I challenge you to "Pay it Forward" and tell five of your friends about AFAC and/or the programs that we offer. Let's keep the positive momentum going!

Kristen Hall

Kristen  
H.





# Communications Coordinators Report

This last year has felt like a whirlwind of change and excitement with so many things happening for AFAC! The beginning of the year brought in our new Executive Director and brought back the other Kristen which made for a busy and full office again. The Livestock Care Conference kicked off the spring well with record attendance and ground-breaking speakers.

Spring and summer had us all over the province with stampedes, fairs, Aggie Days, and Amazing Ag. All of this couldn't be done without our amazing volunteers that help represent AFAC at these events! We are lucky to be a part of the Serving Communities Internship Program that pairs post-secondary students in Alberta with non-profits for a mutually-beneficial relationship that provides us with volunteers and rewards students with \$1000 at the end of their internship.

In the fall we started on a website revamp and we're excited to have our new site launched and ready for use at [www.afac.ab.ca](http://www.afac.ab.ca). We also stepped up our social media game by attending a few workshops throughout the year that helped us to build our pages and up our following. We started promoting the 2019 Livestock Care Conference which included interviewing and filming past sponsored students about their experiences at the conference and what they got out of it.

I was then lucky enough to be able to attend the Canadian Farm Writers Federation Conference in Winnipeg with a bursary from the Alberta Farm Writers' Association which was definitely the highlight of my fall (besides getting married of course)! It was a fantastic experience and I'm excited to continue being a part of the AFWA in the future. I attended a few more events throughout the fall and winter and I think we all took a quick break over Christmas to recharge and we are ready to see what the new year brings for not only us but for our members, partners, and the innovative and passionate industry we work for!

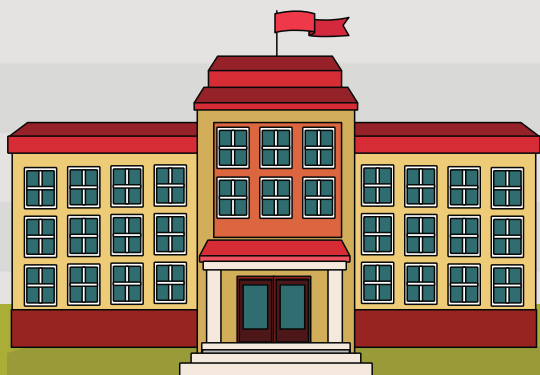
Kristen Lepp

Kristen L



# PUBLIC EVENTS

AFAC works hard to increase public awareness of animal agriculture practices and continual improvement in animal care and welfare. In 2018, the team attended several public meetings, events, and spoke to hundreds of students.



In 2018 we spoke to:

- 12 Grade 4 classrooms
- 7 Grade 7 classrooms
- 200+ High School students

We also spoke to students at Calgary Aggie Days, Lethbridge Aggie Days and City Slickers in Stony Plain

Alberta Farm Animal Care also attended multiple public events, including:

- Calgary Stampede
- Westerner Days
- Vermilion Fair
- K-Days
- Two Open Farm Day events
- Ag For Life Teachers Symposium
- Calgary Stampede Outreach Planning Session
- Social School Workshop and Conference



## TELLING OUR STORY

Great strides were made in 2018 as work continued on not only telling the AFAC story, but on supporting the livestock industry in telling their stories as well. New infographics were produced, as well as videos, and resources for the public while older collateral was updated. The kid's workbook was updated with new pages, games, and information and The Barn Door was revamped to appeal to older youth and adults. New cards were created for the 4-H Leaders Conference, and the ALERT Line and Emergency Trailers handout was updated along with the Common Myths infographic. All of these resources will be available online as well as at the booth and can be requested from the office for use in schools, events, or conferences. New fact sheets were created for producers on different illnesses and injuries and on cold stress/heat stress brochure for cattle (another one for horses was issued in early 2019).

A video was created to promote the Emergency Livestock Handling Equipment Trailers and a couple of videos to promote the Student Sponsorship program at the Livestock Care Conference.

AFAC's social media presence is growing and worked toward engaging with the public online across multiple platforms. The website received a make-over to give it a cleaner, more organized look that is optimized for mobile use.

We love collaborating with our members, partners, and supporters on new materials so please give us a call if there are any resources that we can develop to help tell your story!



January 2018 - 1260 followers  
January 2019 - 1640 followers



January 2018 - 1693 likes  
January 2019 - 1916 likes



January 2018 - 1260 followers  
January 2019 - 1640 followers



January 2018 - 259 followers  
January 2019 - 496 followers



Brand new website was created  
and launched in 2018



We created THREE new videos for  
both the public and industry use





## POST-SECONDARY SPEAKING

Alberta Farm Animal Care was able to speak, in-person, to 484 post-secondary students in 2018; students enrolled agriculture programs. These are students that will now enter the industry with an awareness of the support available from organizations like AFAC.

As always, the point of these presentations is to raise awareness about AFAC, animal welfare and all of the resources that are available to students entering the industry. The goal of these presentations is to ensure students know that AFAC is available to assist them. As well, this is the first opportunity to promote the Livestock Care Conference and the sponsorship and mentorship opportunities available to students. These presentations paid off, with a record 49 students attending the conference last year.

What made this year unique?

1) The number of students interested in agriculture. In the five years that AFAC has run this program, class enrollment is hitting all-time highs.

**AFAC spoke to EVERY post-secondary institution that has an agriculture related program. In order of presentation date starting in September 2018:**

a. Grande Prairie Regional College: Fairview Campus

e. University of Calgary: Faculty of Veterinary Medicine

b. Lethbridge College

f. Lakeland College

c. Olds College

g. Northern Alberta Institute of Technology

d. University of Alberta

A big thank you to all of the instructors that help to make this annual experience possible! It is always so rewarding to interact with the students and faculty. We hope that this isn't a one-time interaction with the students, but something that will create lifelong relationships.





## INDUSTRY EVENTS

In 2018, AFAC attended several industry meetings and events. These were opportunities to connect with members and provide up-to-date information on AFAC's activities, as well as to share animal care information with the Alberta livestock industry and increase the public's awareness of AFAC. AFAC representatives also attended pertinent industry events in Canada.

### AFAC PARTICIPATED IN OR SPOKE AT 30 EVENTS IN 2018

- Canadian Angus Association
- Western Poultry Conference
- Western Canadian Dairy Seminar
- Foothills Forage Winter Feeding Event
- Women in Ag Event
- Agriculture Service Boards hosted by Alberta Association of Agriculture Fieldmen
- Feeders Association of Alberta Conference
- National Beef Technology Transfer Meeting
- Alberta SPCA Meeting
- Canadian Agricultural Partnership Consultation Meeting
- Farm Safety Workshop
- Vulcan County Agriculture Service Board Meeting
- Humane Societies Conference
- Livestock Identification Services Annual General Meeting
- Vulcan County Ag Appreciation Lunch
- Alberta Farm Writers Conference
- Symposium on Beef Cattle Welfare and UCVm Beef Conference
- Alberta Milk's Animal Health and Environment Advisory Committee (AHEAC) Meeting
- Canadian Centre for Food Integrity Webinars
- Business Information Exchange Systems (BIXS) Meeting
- National Farm Animal Care Council Meetings
- Chinook Contract Research CAAP Field Day
- Canadian Farm Writers Federation Conference
- Alberta Livestock Expo
- Swine Technology Workshop
- CanWest Veterinary Conference
- Alberta Lamb Producers AGM
- Alberta Pork AGM
- Alberta Milk AGM
- Alberta Beef Producers AGM

Livestock industry stakeholders and AFAC members are encouraged to contact AFAC about relevant events and meetings in 2019.

## URBAN HEN

2018 saw Alberta Farm Animal Care continue to share the resources created from our Urban Chicken/Small Flock project across Alberta! We worked closely with the city of Airdrie as they coordinated a urban hen pilot project in 2018. We also worked with the Okotoks library to deliver an information session on Backyard Chickens 101 that was broadcast live to several libraries across Alberta.

Feedback from the communities we've worked with has been very positive, saying that the resources are informative and helpful in providing residents with the knowledge to keep urban hens/small flocks. Attendees report that when they leave the workshops they have an excellent understanding of what is required to keep chickens, and find the workshops to be very educational and engaging.

We are excited to continue to share these resources in 2019, with three workshops coming up soon in Parkland County, Leduc County, and Lacombe County! Some of these workshops are already full, and there is discussion of holding further workshops later this year. We continue to share these resources through other avenues as well including organizations and businesses, social media, vet clinics, etc.

We look forward to continuing to bring these valuable resources to chicken keepers across the province, and are always looking for opportunities to help share it!

Cassandra Kirkpatrick



# ALERT LINE

2018 proved to be the busiest year in the history of the ALERT Line with a total of **161 Calls**. This is up from 64 calls in 2017. We think this is primarily due to an increased awareness of the ALERT Line, and not necessarily an increase in the number of incidents. In 2018 AFAC worked closely with other related organizations to ensure the correct information was available to callers about who to call for which situation. The total number of animals assisted in 2018 is estimated at **17,765**.

## CASES

Of the **161** calls, **121** of the calls were cases. The most common concerns were regarding livestock at large, no access to feed/water and livestock with poor Body Condition Scores (BCS).

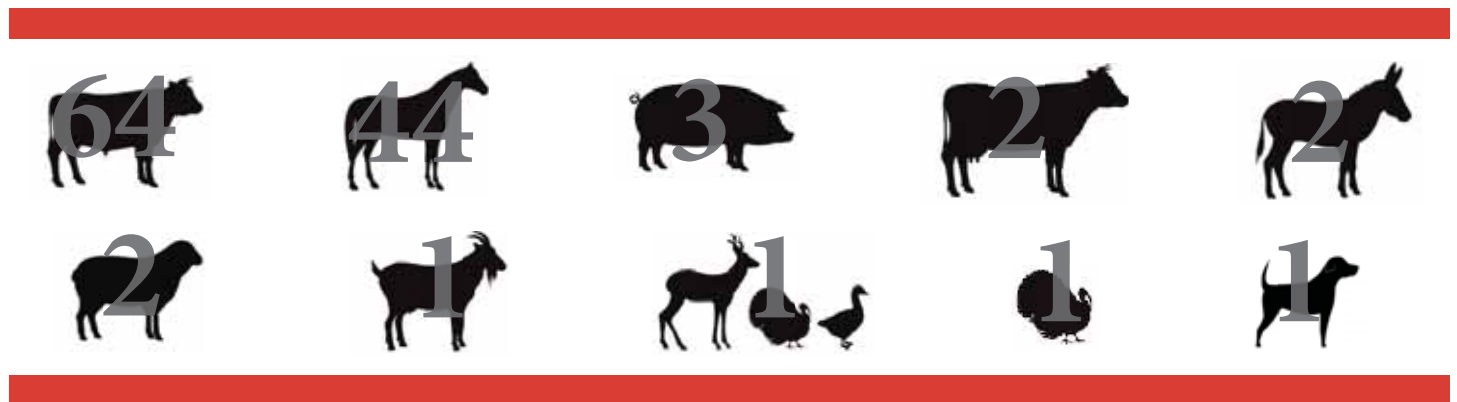
Of the cases, **21 of the calls were passed to the Alberta SPCA**. This could be due to the severity of the case or a lack of ALERT Line volunteers in the area.

Of these, **15 of the cases were unfounded**, meaning a volunteer went out and had no concerns.

**Nine calls are pending/being monitored** for improvement, and the rest have all been resolved. This means that the owners have improved the situations of the animals and/or they were directed to the proper person to help with the situation.



Below is the number of cases, broken down by each different livestock species:



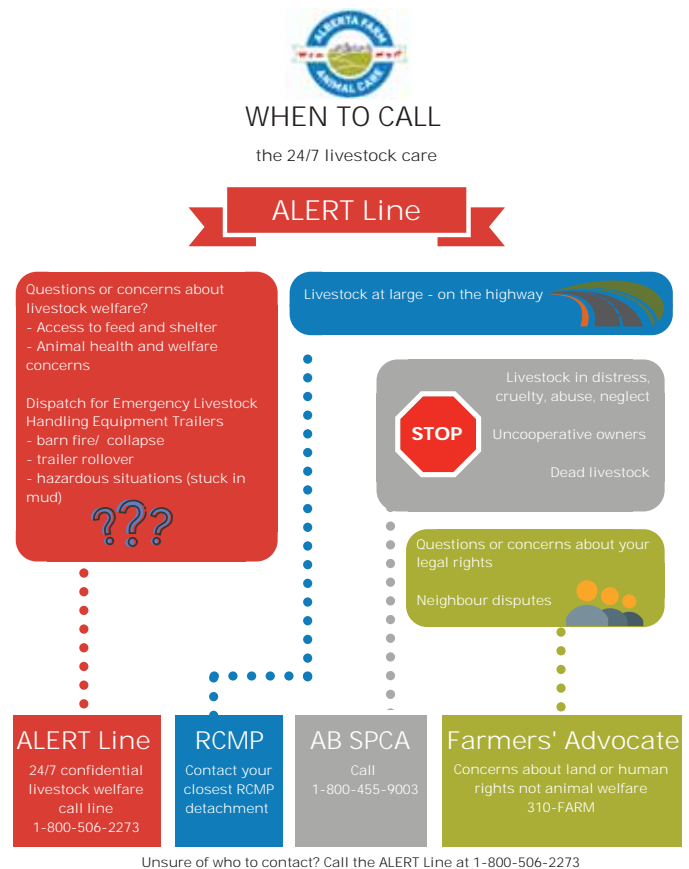
## INFO CALLS

The ALERT Line also received **26** information calls and they were most commonly about legal concerns and neighbour disputes. AFAC works closely with the Farmers Advocate on these calls.

## TRAILER CALLS

The remaining **14** calls were in relation to an Emergency Livestock Handling Equipment Trailer which is great to see that people know that the ALERT Line has the ability to help dispatch these trailers. Most of these concerns were in regards to liner rollovers and liner breakdowns.

A big thank you to all the ALERT Line Volunteers and the RCMP Livestock Investigators who go above and beyond to make this program successful. Anyone interested in volunteering can contact an AFAC staff member for more information.



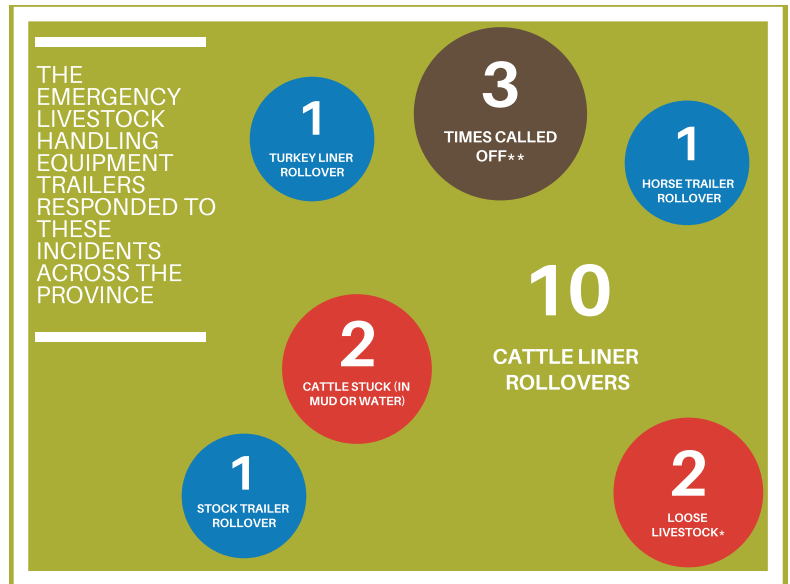
# EMERGENCY LIVESTOCK HANDLING EQUIPMENT TRAILERS

2018 was another great year for the Emergency Livestock Handling Equipment Trailers. Awareness of the program continues to grow and this is noted in a few different ways, but especially in the increased number of calls to the Alberta Farm Animal Care ALERT Line. Currently, the 24/7 Call line is averaging about 1 trailer call a month.

The Alberta Equestrian Federation spent a lot of time fundraising for a trailer that would reside at the Spruce Meadows Fire Hall in Foothills County. This came to fruition this year and has now been added to our "trailer cards". Make sure to contact the AFAC Office if you need a current card.

The trailers were present at the following events in 2018:

Local Parades  
Strathcona County Ag Show  
Lamont County Open House  
Cottonwood Gordon Hall Event  
UFA Farm Days in Red Deer  
Fire prevention week in the County of Newell  
Heritage Days  
Law Day Exhibit in Wetaskiwin  
Vermilion 4-H Beef Event  
Vermilion Fair  
Fire Hall Open House in Hanna



*\*There is a misconception that the trailers are created to help with livestock at large, and this is not the case. If you see livestock at large, please call your local RCMP detachment. That being said, there has been the odd incident where the RCMP has asked for additional assistance and the trailers have stepped up and provided assistance or advice.*

*\*\*The trailers are sometimes called to respond to an incident, but are then called off. This year some of the examples were related to the incident being too far away, caller realizing the liner was empty and did not need animals removed and concerns with mutual aid agreements.*

There is a special trailer with the Alberta SPCA which is used specifically for livestock seizures.

In 2018, the following animals were seized:

- 51 Horses
- 1 Donkey

If you are interested in finding out more information about the Emergency Livestock Handling Equipment Trailers, please head to the AFAC website ([afac.ab.ca/programs-and-events/trailers/](http://afac.ab.ca/programs-and-events/trailers/)) or call the office (403-652-5111). There is still a need for more trailers within the province, and we continue to hear of interest in other provinces within Canada. If you are ever involved in a livestock emergency, don't forget to follow the steps below:

- 1) CALL 911- In the rare event that 911 cannot connect you to the Emergency Livestock Handling Equipment Trailers, please contact the
- 2) 24/7 ALERT Line at 1-800-506-2273



# EXTENSION COORDINATORS REPORT

It's been another busy year in the world of extension! In the beginning, our extension focused on the Cattle Benchmarking Project, and what we could communicate to producers from that project. We created four fact sheets explaining how emaciation, heavy lactation, lameness, and penis injuries can impact whether an animal is fit for transport. We worked closely with industry stakeholders to ensure that these fact sheets would be well received by producers across Alberta. We are proud to announce that the fact sheets were published on our new website. We were also proud to announce an "Emergency Preparedness" page on the AFAC website.

In addition to those materials, produced infographics on heat and cold stress in beef cattle. These were very well received and prompted a lot of media attention to the importance of monitoring your livestock during extreme temperatures.

Our team was able to attend several industry meetings and events to stay connected to members, their current issues, and how AFAC can assist their industry sectors. As always, we worked hard to increase the public's awareness of animal agriculture practices and the industry's continual improvement in animal care and welfare. Our fantastic team at AFAC spread across the province and spoke to students of all ages and at industry meetings and events.

With the release of the Canadian Agricultural Partnership in Alberta, we have been busy collaborating with industry stakeholders and members to create the best project proposals that we can to meet industry and public demands and concerns and to fill a gap in knowledge technology transfer. If your organization would like to collaborate with AFAC in a project, or just to brainstorm ideas, please contact us!

We have a lot of great things ready to be released in 2019 for our extension program! Keep your eyes peeled!

Dr. Melissa Moggy





# CATTLE BENCHMARKING PROJECT

The goal of AFAC's compromised cattle benchmarking project was to observe cattle arriving at auction markets and abattoirs throughout Alberta and catalogue the incidence and type of compromised conditions observed upon arrival at these locations. A total of 20 sites enrolled to voluntarily support this project by allowing the research team to observe cattle arriving at their facility.

This year the information collected at all the sites was used to calculate the prevalence of compromised and unfit cattle arriving at each type of site as well as to identify factors that may be associated with the arrival of compromised or unfit cattle. This information, including recommendations, was summarized in a stakeholder report. Based on conditions observed, four fact sheets were created describing how emaciation, heavy lactation, lameness, and penis injuries can impact whether an animal is fit for transport. Currently, scientific papers are being written to share this information through publications.

The majority of cattle arriving at auction markets and abattoirs were fit for transport. A higher proportion of compromised cattle arrived at provincial abattoirs. This is appropriate, as provincial abattoirs are the correct destination for compromised cattle. Overall, the results are quite positive, and the majority of cattle arriving at auctions and abattoirs are fit to withstand transport.

The project was supported by, Alberta Beef Producers, Alberta Milk and Alberta Cattle Feeders Association in consultation with a large expert panel. AFAC is proud to have been able to bring these groups together, as well as secure additional funding through the Assurance Systems stream of the AgriMarketing program under Growing Forward 2, a federal-provincial-territorial initiative.

## LWEP

The Livestock Welfare Engagement Project (LWEP) brought together input from stakeholders across the livestock industry in Alberta, to provide an accurate understanding of the livestock welfare landscape in the province from the industry's perspective. The project was conducted primarily throughout 2018.

**Preliminary Engagement Consultation Session.** This session was held during AFAC's Livestock Care Conference and was a chance to gather initial input and direction for the project.

Overall participants emphasized Alberta's livestock industry's progress in awareness, improvement in practices, communication, and leadership in animal welfare. The participants felt that the industry has advanced in livestock welfare and is well-positioned to maintain a leadership role moving forward.

**Online Project Survey.** The survey opened in July to anyone who was involved in animal agriculture in Alberta and closed at the end of October. The survey was designed to incorporate the four major components of Alberta's livestock industry:

1. Organizations (e.g. livestock commodity groups or animal health organizations)
2. Abattoir & Auction Markets
3. Individuals (e.g. producers or veterinarians)
4. Students

The survey supplied a significant amount of information to the project. Generally, there was a strong consensus on the growing importance of welfare to Alberta's livestock industry, that welfare is critical to competitiveness and market acceptance, and that Alberta's industry is highly engaged and proactive on livestock welfare. Communication, education, and extension were stand-out priorities for the future.

**Regional Focus Groups.** The next phase of the project centred on conducting Regional Focus Groups across Alberta between September and October. The focus groups provided the opportunity to expand on the survey and to ask questions not covered there.

There was a predominant view that animal welfare in Alberta's livestock industry has substantially advanced and has become a top focus. Participants also gave a great deal of insights on policies and standards of care, research, communications, education, extension, and assurance programs.

**Summary Report.** The report was submitted on December 31st to Alberta Agriculture and Forestry (AAF). The report will provide a resource of Alberta's livestock industry's ongoing understanding, activity, and progress in livestock welfare. The LWEP was requested and funded by AAF



# AFAC Members

In 2018 AFAC introduced a Proud Supporter brand mark. Members can show their commitment to animal welfare and support of AFAC by using this logo on their website and materials. Current Proud Supporters include commodity associations, industry organizations and primary producers who sell direct-to-consumers.

Contact AFAC staff for more information.



## COMMODITY MEMBERS

Alberta Beef Producers  
Alberta Goat Association  
Alberta Hatching Egg Producers  
Alberta Lamb Producers  
Alberta Milk  
Alberta Pork

## GOLD LEVEL MEMBERS

Alberta Cattle Feeders' Association  
Alberta Veterinary Medical Association  
Cargill Foods  
M.D of Greenview  
Solvat (Ab Veterinary Laboratories)

## SILVER LEVEL MEMBERS

Calgary Stampede  
CAN/AB Livestock Research Trust  
Grande Prairie Regional College – Fairview Campus  
Horse Racing Alberta  
Lakeland College  
Olds College  
Sofina  
United Farmers of Alberta  
University of Alberta ALES  
University of Calgary: Faculty of Veterinary Medicine  
University of Alberta  
Western Stock Growers Association



## BRONZE LEVEL MEMBERS

Alberta Auction Markets Association  
Alberta Beekeepers Commission  
Alberta Elk  
Alberta Equestrian Federation  
Alberta Hatchery Association  
Bison Producers of Alberta  
Bouvry Exports  
Clear Hills County  
Clearwater County  
County of Newell  
County of Two Hills  
County of Vermilion River  
Cypress County  
Edmonton Northlands  
Egg Farmers of Alberta  
Exhibition Park Lethbridge  
Farm Animal Care Associates  
Feeder Association of Alberta

Feedlot Health Management Services  
Flagstaff County  
Gateway Livestock  
Leduc County  
MD of Bonnyville  
MD of Ranchland  
MD of Taber  
Olymel  
Red Deer County  
Rocky View County  
Starland County  
Strathcona County  
Sturgeon County  
Sunterra Meats/Sunterra Farms  
Vulcan County  
Walbern Agri Systems (1991) Ltd.  
Western Hog Exchange  
Wheatland County

## PRODUCER MEMBERS

ARCO Poultry	Shipwheel Cattle Feeders
Chinook Ranches	Stephanie Czub
Deerview Meats	Stettler Veterinary Clinic Ltd.
Diamond 7 Ranch	Stockyards Veterinary Services Ltd.
Double J Ranches	Strangmuir Farms
Durward Land & Cattle	STS Farms Ltd.
Highland Feeders Ltd	Sundgaard Poultry
Plateau Cattle Co.	TK Ranch
Richter Farm	Triple Lyonsess Farms
River Ranch (BC)	Winters Turkeys
Riverrun Farms	

## SUPPORTER MEMBERS

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Kristen Lepp  
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Penny Steffen  
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Thank you to the AFAC  
members, supporters,  
partners, Board, contractors,  
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