



AFAC PUTS A PAUSE ON LIVESTOCK CARE CONFERENCE TO FOCUS ON POST-PANDEMIC STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT

CALGARY, ALBERTA: In a unanimous decision from its board of directors, [Alberta Farm Animal Care \(AFAC\)](#) will be putting a pause on their annual Livestock Care Conference for 2023. The move comes on the heels of three consecutive years of delivering the event in a fully virtual format during the pandemic. Traditionally held at the Pomeroy Inn & Suites in Olds, the next Livestock Care Conference was initially scheduled to return to its two-day, in-person format this coming February.



Executive Director, Annemarie Pedersen, says conference and event delivery continues to evolve in the wake of pandemic and attendance (both virtually and in-person) seems to be inconsistent across many sectors. “Communities throughout Alberta are only just coming out of a challenging three years and, while there is definitely a desire to reconnect through in-person events, there’s bound to be an adjustment period.”

Pedersen goes on to note that recent inflation rates are leading to more conservative spending, which is likely to impact people’s decision making when it comes to travel, accommodation and other costs associated with attending multi-day conferences. While there does appear to be some digital fatigue, this may explain while many still value the option to engage virtually.

“There an emerging expectation for events to shift into a hybrid format, combining in-person and virtual programming, which has its own costs and logistical considerations,” says Pedersen. “As a member-led organization, we believe the best path forward at this time is to reconnect with our stakeholders, take stock of the current needs of Alberta’s livestock sector, and explore strategies for delivering resources, programming and events that provide the best value for service to our membership. While we are still determining what shape or form the Livestock Care Conference will take in the future, we are one hundred percent committed to its triumphant return, in whatever new and improved capacity that might be.”

AFAC’s annual Livestock Care Conference has been serving Alberta’s agriculture community for over 20 years. The event brings together stakeholders from the livestock and poultry industries – from farmers to researchers – for two days of inspiration, learning and connection in support of the advancement of animal welfare and a thriving agricultural sector. In addition to industry leading keynote speakers, panel discussions and workshops, a big highlight of the Conference is the “Meet the Experts” student mentorship program. The program is an opportunity for post-secondary agriculture students to network with leaders in the livestock and poultry industries and receive valuable mentorship at a key juncture in their career path.

“While the Livestock Care Conference is on pause, our student mentorship program will move forward in 2023,” assures Pedersen. “We’ll be reaching out to our students and our mentors for input on how to best deliver this pivotal programming and we look forward to some creative and engaging ideas for 2023.”

More information about Meet the Experts will be available in the coming months. Those interested in keeping up-to-date with Alberta Farm Animal Care’s programs and events are encouraged to visit www.afac.ab.ca and subscribe to their eNewsletter.

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*Founded in 1993 by Alberta livestock producers, **Alberta Farm Animal Care (AFAC)** has become the collective voice of the industry on matters pertaining to livestock welfare. Through collaboration and with the support from our members, AFAC promotes best practices in the care and handling for a thriving agricultural sector. Together, we work towards continual improvement in responsible livestock management by engaging the public and building trust through transparency. To learn more about becoming an AFAC member or supporter, [click here](#).*

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