



Producer Research and Evaluation Project

Through Results-Driven Agriculture Research

The Producer Research and Evaluation Project (PREP) — offered through Results Driven Agriculture Research (RDAR) — provides producers with an opportunity to participate in on-farm research and evaluate the feasibility of innovative production practices.

Producers can receive up to \$20,000 per on-farm research project. This funding supports the collection of meaningful data to help producers make informed management decisions.

Most projects involve collaboration with third party service providers who assist with trial design, implementation and data analysis.

Full program details, along with examples of active and completed PREP projects, can be found on the RDAR PREP webpage at rdar.ca

Bat-friendly farming: why bats matter in Alberta

Bats play an important role in keeping Alberta's farms and natural areas healthy. These tiny nighttime hunters eat huge numbers of insects — including many that damage crops or bother livestock — providing a natural form of pest control. In fact, a colony of 100 Little Brown Myotis bats can eat up to 96 kilograms of insects in just four months.

Alberta's bats need our help

Two of Alberta's bat species — the Little Brown Myotis and the Northern Myotis — are listed as endangered due to a devastating disease called white nose syndrome.

Protecting bats isn't just good for wildlife, it benefits communities, farms and ecosystems across the province.

How you can support bats

The good news is that helping bats is easier than you may think. Simple actions like protecting natural habitats, keeping old trees, or installing a bat house can make a big difference. By creating bat-friendly spaces, you help support local biodiversity while reducing the need for chemical pest control.

Learn more

The Alberta Community Bat Program

offers tips, resources and practical steps for supporting bats on farms and rural properties.

Download the Bat Friendly Farming brochure at www.albertabats.ca/farms.



Producer grant funding overview

On Farm Climate Action Fund (OFCAF)

Producers can access \$100,000 from all OFCAF funding sources over the life of the program, which ends on March 31, 2028.

1. Results Driven Agricultural Research (RDAR)

- ▶ The Results Driven Agricultural Research (RDAR) program provides an **85/15 cost share** — meaning OFCAF covers 85 per cent of eligible project establishment costs. Beneficial management practices funded relate to improved nitrogen management, increased adoption of cover cropping and expanded rotational grazing.

New for 2026

- ▶ Virtual fencing systems will be funded under expanded rotational grazing. Formal supplier quote required with application.
- ▶ New drone purchase and spreader attachment to broadcast cover crop seed as part of cover cropping BMP. Must be in combination with an 80 acre minimum cover crop project.
- ▶ Approved projects must be implemented in the same year they are applied for.
- ▶ Intake for the RDAR OFCAF program opens April 10, 2026, and will remain open until all available funding has been allocated.

Pro tips

- ▶ The RDAR website has resources to help prepare your application before opening day. Plan ahead and submit your application within the first few days of opening to receive more timely feedback. Applications are reviewed in the order they are received. In 2025, there were more than 1,200 applications to review.
- ▶ Any purchases made before April 1, 2026, are not eligible for reimbursement. Invoices must be dated between April 1, 2026, and Nov. 30, 2026.
- ▶ Pre-approval by RDAR in writing is required to be eligible for program funding. If you proceed with your project before approval, you are doing so at your own risk.

Learn more and start planning at rdar.ca/funding-opportunities/ofcaf

2. Canadian Forage and Grasslands Association (CFGAs)

- ▶ The Canadian Forage and Grasslands Association (CFGAs) program provides a **70/30 cost share** — meaning OFCAF covers 70 per cent of eligible costs related to project establishment.
- ▶ The 2026 intake ran from Feb. 1 to March 15.

- ▶ Applications for developing a rotational grazing plan with a mentor will be accepted all year. Get ready for the next project intake period!
- ▶ Program focus is rotational grazing practices and pasture improvement. Virtual fencing systems are also funded!

Learn more at www.canadianfga.ca/en/pasture-grazing/farm-climate-action-fund/

3. Canada Organic Trade Association (COTA) and EcoCert Canada

- ▶ COTA has partnered with EcoCert to deliver the On-Farm Climate Action Fund to help organic farmers implement specific beneficial management practices.

Learn more at www.canada-organic.ca/en/what-we-do/market-access/farm-climate-action-fund.

Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership

The Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership (S-CAP) supports farmers and ranchers with cost-shared grant programs. Stay informed by subscribing to S-CAP program updates, and learn more about available programs, applicant eligibility and whether applications are being accepted at alberta.ca/sustainable-cap-programs.

- ▶ The On-Farm Efficiency Program (OFEP) will open in spring 2026. It was fully allocated very quickly in 2025, so pre-plan and be ready to apply as soon as possible after the program opens to applications. Learn more at alberta.ca/on-farm-efficiency-program.
- ▶ The Water Program provides support for new water source construction like wells and dugouts plus other water-related projects. Learn more at alberta.ca/water-program or contact an Alberta Agriculture water specialist toll-free at **310-FARM (3276)**.

Don't forget! The County's Sustainable Agriculture Coordinator can assist local producers with applications. Reach out to Kim at kim@leduc-county.com or **780-387-6182** for help.



ALUS project examples — easy wins for your land

ALUS Wetaskiwin-Leduc works alongside farmers and ranchers to recognize and support the value of nature on agricultural landscapes. The program began with the formation of its first Partnership Advisory Committee (PAC) and three pioneering projects ten years ago, marking the start of a community-led approach to on-farm stewardship.

ALUS supports producers in delivering ecosystem services on marginal agricultural land—services such as cleaner water, flood and drought mitigation, wildlife habitat and stronger landscape resilience.

While these benefits may sound ambitious, many common, practical on-the-ground projects can deliver impressive environmental results. While producers are focused on growing food, it's easy to overlook the natural benefits they're already generating.

ALUS project ideas

Here are some effective, easy-to-implement ALUS projects that support healthy landscapes and productive operations:

- ▶ **Riparian fencing** to manage livestock and protect natural waterbodies.
- ▶ **Off-side watering systems** to reduce livestock pressure on wetlands, creeks and streams.
- ▶ **Grassed waterways** by establishing perennial forage in water runs, saline areas or recharge zones to reduce erosion and enhance productivity.
- ▶ **Artificial nesting structures** for birds and bats, often part of broader habitat or wetland enhancement projects.
- ▶ **Intensive grazing management** to improve pasture health, build soil and reduce weed pressure.

These actions contribute to cleaner water, improved habitat and more resilient agricultural systems.



Bring your vision to life

Whether your goal is to enhance a wetland, improve wildlife habitat, protect a waterway or build greater resilience into your farm or ranch, ALUS is here to help turn your vision into a meaningful on-the-ground project.

If you're interested in exploring how the ALUS Wetaskiwin-Leduc program can support your land stewardship goals, get in touch with the Sustainable Agriculture Coordinator:

- ▶ 780-387-6182
- ▶ kbarkwell@county10.ca or kimb@leduc county.com



Join
ALUS

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THE ALUS ADVANTAGE
COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP DELIVERS LOCAL SOLUTIONS

SUSTAINING AGRICULTURE, WILDLIFE, AND NATURAL SPACES FOR COMMUNITIES AND FUTURE GENERATIONS

ALUS helps cost-share the establishment of beneficial management projects and practices, providing an annual payment for the management and maintenance of the project.

Environmental Farm Plan workshop

Did you know that a current Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) is required for some producer funding programs and sustainable sourcing platforms? Join the Sustainable Agriculture Program for a free in-person session and work on your farm's EFP with the support of trained technicians.

- ▶ **Date:** Thursday, Apr. 16, 2026
- ▶ **Time:** 1:30 to 4:30 p.m.
- ▶ **Location:** County of Wetaskiwin administrative office, 243019A Highway 13
- ▶ **Register:** Pre-registration is required, either online at county.wetaskiwin.ab.ca/EFP-Workshop or call Kim at **780-387-6182**

Space is limited; pre-register early!



Kim's corner — practice change is tricky

My garden practices would be described as conventional prior to my first garden cover crop in 2022. After that, I planted subterranean clover between the rows and used a cover crop seed mix on the area once left as summer fallow. Instead of tilling for weed control, the cover crop and clover were mowed periodically. This worked very well...until last season.

Those who are passionate about soil health will tell you that the type of plant anchoring the soil doesn't matter — it's the living root that makes the difference. That makes good sense; however, when the predominant living root belongs to redroot pigweed, it's a hard philosophy to adhere to!

Sadly, controlling the pigweed required a return to tillage. This practice change approach is tricky!

Fast forward to late September 2025 and a No Till Gardening Workshop hosted by Leduc County's Local Food and Sustainable Agriculture Coordinators. Instructor and Master Gardener Kim Ross of Rosssdale Farms led us through concepts and the steps to convert a conventional garden to a no till system. Why are we gardening like the 1940s when farmers across the province are following no till and reduced till practices?

It was such a good workshop that I was inspired to convert some of my garden space to a no till system. My good-natured husband assisted, and we spent the better part of a Saturday in October on the project. Summer fallow will be seeded to a cover crop again this spring, and if all goes well, the garden plot size will be reduced in the fall by seeding a tame grass blend with some native grass seed added.

Curious about no-till gardening? Explore the *Gardening at USask* website at: gardening.usask.ca/gardening-advice/notillgardening.php



Stay connected

Leduc County

Sign up for Ag Matters, Leduc County's monthly agricultural e-newsletter. Subscribe at www.leduc-county.com/agriculture.

County of Wetaskiwin

Receive email/text message updates directly to your phone from the County of Wetaskiwin about agricultural services such as mowing, spraying, the ALUS program, weeds and pest control. To sign up, visit www.county.wetaskiwin.ab.ca/notify, enter your email address, scroll down to News Flashes and select the letter(email) or phone(text) icon next to Agricultural to subscribe. For assistance, contact **780-361-6220**.

Looking for more?

If you have any questions or wish to bring a matter to the attention of your Agricultural Service Board, please contact:

- ▶ County of Wetaskiwin No. 10 Agricultural Services: 780-361-6226 or visit www.county.wetaskiwin.ab.ca
- ▶ Leduc County Agricultural Services: 780-955-4593 or visit www.leduc-county.com

