

MANDATORY AGRICULTURE EDUCATION IN THE CLASSROOM

- WHEREAS:** Agricultural production in Alberta has historically been and continues to be a major economic force and employer of workers;
- WHEREAS:** Generations ago, most Albertans grew up on the family farm and had an intimate knowledge about how livestock, crops, and other agricultural commodities were raised;
- WHEREAS:** Most Albertans now live in urban non -farm environments and do not have the same level of knowledge about how livestock, crops, and other agricultural commodities are being raised;
- WHEREAS:** The general public has historically had a high regard for agriculture and farmers as they put food on their table in Alberta, Canada, and the rest of the world;
- WHEREAS:** Modern agriculture in Alberta is being severely tested by concerns about how livestock, crops, and agricultural produce is being raised, especially regarding environmental impacts, animal cruelty, and farm safety;
- WHEREAS:** Many of these concerns stem from a lack of knowledge about agriculture in the general community;
- WHEREAS:** Alberta Education is currently reviewing the teaching curriculum making it very timely to consider this resolution;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

THAT ALBERTA'S AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARDS REQUEST

that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta and Alberta Agriculture & Forestry work with other rural stakeholders, Alberta Education, and the Alberta Teachers' Association to request that mandatory agriculture education be implemented in the school curriculum in Alberta.

SPONSORED BY: Lac La Biche County

MOVED BY: _____

SECONDED BY: _____

CARRIED: _____

DEFEATED: _____

STATUS: _____

DEPARTMENT: _____

BACKGROUND

Lac La Biche County, like most Alberta rural municipalities, has a significant world – class agricultural sector that is a Canadian success story sometimes unknown to the community at large.

Grade 4 students in schools in Lac La Biche County, (public, Catholic, or Francophone) may be taught agriculture in the classroom so long as the school approves. The Classroom Agriculture Program (CAP) is a well-known and highly respected education program currently reaching over 20,000 Grade 4 Alberta students annually. Since its beginning, CAP has reached more than 570,000 Alberta youth.

CAP is about creating a broader understanding of the food we eat and where it comes from. Students start to understand the value and importance of agriculture in Alberta, the vast opportunities, and the people and producers that drive this industry. Volunteers deliver the program through storytelling, engaging props and fun activities. With the support of Agriculture for Life, the program's goal is to expand and reach 30,000 Alberta students annually over the next two years.

This initiative is endorsed by Alberta Education and Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development. "Agriculture is vital. We are getting further and further from the farm. It is imperative that people understand that their food comes from farms – not just the grocery store. That message can begin at school," states CAP General Manager Don George. Lac La Biche County Council believes this message needs to be delivered to all schools in Alberta.

The Provincial ASB Committee is currently working on Resolution 3-17: Incorporating Agriculture and Agri-Food Education in the Classroom. This shows that Classroom agricultural education is very important to the entire province and to the Provincial Agricultural Service Board. This resolution seeks to emphasise the urgent need to actively implement agriculture education throughout classrooms in the province. Further, Alberta Education is currently reviewing all grade school and high school curriculum so it's a perfect opportunity to have agriculture education incorporated as part of the overall curriculum.