



# News Release

For immediate release

## Government of Canada Helps Saskatchewan Forage Industry Fight Off Pests

**Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, April 19, 2012** – The Government of Canada is helping the forage industry minimize and eliminate the damaging impact of parasites, diseases, and invasive plant species on Saskatchewan agriculture. The Honourable Lynne Yelich, Minister of State (Western Economic Diversification) and Member of Parliament (Blackstrap), on behalf of Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz, announced today an investment of up to \$290,000 for two projects in Saskatchewan that will help fight forage pests.

“Our government is committed to investing in research-based innovations that will help Canadian producers stay ahead of the curve and maximize business opportunities,” said Minister Yelich. “These investments will help Saskatchewan producers control invasive plant species and open up new forage markets, all while continuing to supply top-quality feed to our livestock producers.”

These projects will identify threats and provide information to minimize their impact on the industry and economy. They will provide solutions for these potential problems, enhance current markets, and provide new opportunities for those directly tied to the forage industry and those whose crops benefit from pollination by bees.

The investment is divided between two projects. The Saskatchewan Alfalfa Seed Producers Development Commission is receiving up to \$196,775 to investigate technologies for the control of parasites and disease that affect the alfalfa leafcutter bee (ALB). The ALB is the primary pollinator for alfalfa seed production, and it is also used as a pollinator for other crops. Parasites and disease pose a threat to ALB populations, which are required for the pollination of these crops.

“This project will identify and evaluate potential control methods for parasites and disease in order to maintain healthy ALB populations and maximize alfalfa seed production in Western Canada, while taking advantage of expanding markets for this valuable pollinator,” said Wayne Goerzen, Executive Director of the Saskatchewan Alfalfa Seed Producers Development Commission.

The Saskatchewan Forage Council is receiving up to \$93,566 to develop strategies for managing invasive plant species found within forage areas. These invasive plant species threaten local resources and economic stability, as well as water quality and natural biodiversity. These factors can cause the loss of productive land, a loss of forage product markets, and a significant cost to producers to treat affected areas.

“This project will increase Saskatchewan producers’ awareness of invasive plant species, their effects on the environment and forage production, and available control measures to open up new and enhance current markets for forage resources,” said Janice Bruynooghe, Executive Director of the Saskatchewan Forage Council.



These projects are being funded by the Canadian Agricultural Adaptation Program (CAAP), a five-year (2009–14), \$163-million initiative that aims to help the Canadian agricultural sector adapt and remain competitive. Eligible CAAP projects could be in the areas of traceability, environment, climate change, capacity development, pests and diseases, and more. In Saskatchewan, CAAP is delivered by the Agriculture Council of Saskatchewan (ACS).

For more information on CAAP, please visit [www.agr.gc.ca/caap](http://www.agr.gc.ca/caap).

To learn more about ACS, please visit [www.agcouncil.ca](http://www.agcouncil.ca).

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