

2015/2016

Classroom Agriculture Program  
*Grow With Agriculture*

Final Report

Submitted by: Don George

General Manager

October 4, 2016

## **Our Vision**

To assist Alberta students understand agriculture and its impacts.

## **Our Mission**

To provide students with quality, comprehensive agriculture learning experiences that lead to a greater understanding of and support for the agriculture industry in Alberta.

## **Executive Directors**

Simone Demers-Collins, Chair AB Canola Producers Commission

Luree Williamson, Vice-Chair, Agriculture For Life

Margo Redelback, Finance Chair, Eastern Irrigation District

## **Board Directors**

Jean Symborski, Egg Farmers of Alberta

Kathy Naum, Alberta Veterinary Medical Association

Lauren Comin, Alberta Wheat Commission

Luree Williamson, Agriculture for Life

Margo Redelback, Eastern Irrigation District

Rachel Peterson, Alberta Pulse Growers Commission

Simone Demers-Collins, Alberta Canola Producers Commission

Teresa Falk, Alberta Barley Commission

Vera Ward, Alberta Chicken Producers

Vacant, Alberta Institute of Agrologists

Karen Gurba, Alberta Pork

Kelsie Gilks, Alberta Milk

Ron McMullin, Alberta Irrigation Projects

Beth Castle, Alberta Beef

## **Associates**

Don George, General Manager

Conny Kappler, Coordinator Zone 1 – Medicine Hat

Amberley Stanford, Coordinator Zone 2 - Crowsnest

Rose-Anna Balez, Coordinator Zone 3 - Calgary

Doris Krause, Coordinator Zone 3a - City of Calgary

Lacey Ryan, Coordinator Zone 4 - Flagstaff County

Carol Holt, Coordinator Zone 5 - Central

Gladys Wachowich, Coordinator Zone 6 - Edmonton

Holly Davies, Coordinator Zone 6a – City of Edmonton

Wendy Soroka, Coordinator Zone 7 – Yellowhead County

Myrna Fox, Coordinator Zone 8 – Wood Buffalo

Kaitlin McLachlan, Coordinator Zone 9 – Big Lakes

## **Members**

Alberta Barley Commission

Alberta Beef Producers

Alberta Canola Producers Commission

Alberta Chicken Producers

Alberta Institute of Agrologists

Alberta Irrigation Projects Association

Alberta Milk

Alberta Pork

Alberta Pulse Growers Commission

Alberta Veterinary Medical Association

Alberta Wheat Commission

Eastern Irrigation District

Egg Farmers of Alberta

## Partners

Agriculture for Life

Agrium

### Message from the General Manager

It has been an exciting year! Being nominated and then winning the 2015 Friends of Education award presented by the Alberta teachers association was certainly a highlight. I thought that the award itself – an engraved old fashion school bell was really appropriate. I would like to thank the Red Deer Catholic Regional school district for nominating us.

It has also been a year of change. We said goodbye to: Hannah Konschuh - Alberta Wheat Commission; Midge Landals Alberta - Veterinary Medical Association; Catherine Kelly - Egg Farmers of Alberta; Linda Whitworth - Alberta Barley Commission and Carlene Godwin, Alberta Institute of Agrologists. And we welcomed: Lauren Comin; Kathy Naum; Jean Symborski; and Lauren Reid.

This year we had 21,518 grade 4 students registered for CAP. That total is up slightly from last year's 21,024. We did have 1,558 registered students who DID NOT receive a presentation. That is certainly a concern. As the zone coordinators are the ones in direct contact with the volunteers I asked them what the problem was. They all seem to think it was just an odd year with some teachers being too busy and some volunteers unable to follow through for whatever reason. It is something that I will keep an eye on next year.

It is the volunteers that really make CAP function. We had 253 volunteers including 38 volunteers who were new to CAP. In the past some volunteers (myself included) have asked that the comments from the teachers be sent to them. The volunteers were able to receive all of the teacher evaluations that came in. I think this is vital as it gives the volunteer a little boost as almost all of the evaluations are glowing, and if there was a problem it helps them be better. All of the volunteers were again thanked with a letter and a \$10.00 gift card from Tim Hortons. I heard back from several of them thanking me for the letter and card.

Don George - CAP General Manager

**Classroom Agricultural Program Society  
Report of Board of Directors, 2015-2016  
Submitted by Simone Demers-Collins, Chair**

Thanks to the solid foundation established by the previous board of directors, this past year was a smooth one for those of us committed to the continuation of the Classroom Agriculture Program (CAP). As usual, the members met on three separate occasions – in early September for the annual meeting and the election of officers, in January with the zone coordinators where plans for the upcoming year were completed, and in June where a review of the past year was done.

To summarize the breadth of the program, please note the following numbers – a total of 933 classrooms in 552 schools registered and of this total, 888 classrooms in 512 schools had a presentation. 20,143 students had the opportunity to learn more about agriculture from one of the 279 individual volunteers. Note **Classes, students, schools who registered but did not receive a presentation.**

**2014/2015 CAP Program Summary**

<b>Zone</b>	<b># of Classes*</b>	<b># of Students*</b>	<b># of Schools*</b>	<b># of Volunteers**</b>
1	55 (3)	1128 (56)	38 (2)	24
2	62 (0)	1339 (0)	37 (0)	78 (62 student)
3	58 (6)	1400 (135)	29 (5)	17
3a	275 (10)	6607 (250)	113 (7)	33 (17 new)
4	22 (0)	414 (0)	17 (0)	7
5	69 (0)	1458 (0)	45 (0)	28
6	109 (0)	2468 (0)	71 (0)	18
6a	113 (12)	2841 (248)	83 (8)	32
7	51 (1)	1037 (17)	36 (1)	19
8	71 (7)	1508 (168)	46 (7)	15

9	48 (12)	1032 (215)	37 (10)	8
Total	933 (45)	21,232 (1089)	552 (40)	279

According to registration statistics as of September 30, 2013 as outlined by Alberta Education, there were 47,169 grade four students in Alberta at 1,604 schools in the province this year. This includes public, separate, Francophone, charter and private schools. (Source: <http://education.alberta.ca/departement/stats/students/studentpopulation/>).

Given the numbers, CAP reached approximately 45% of the grade 4 students in 34% of the Alberta classrooms in 2014-15. In 2015-16, using the same statistics, 42% of the grade 4 students in 29% of the schools had the opportunity to learn about agriculture in their classrooms. Keeping in mind that the program has never done a blitz looking for volunteers who could do their presentation in another language other than English, some of the schools – especially the Francophone, and perhaps even the immersion schools – might be underserved to this point in time.

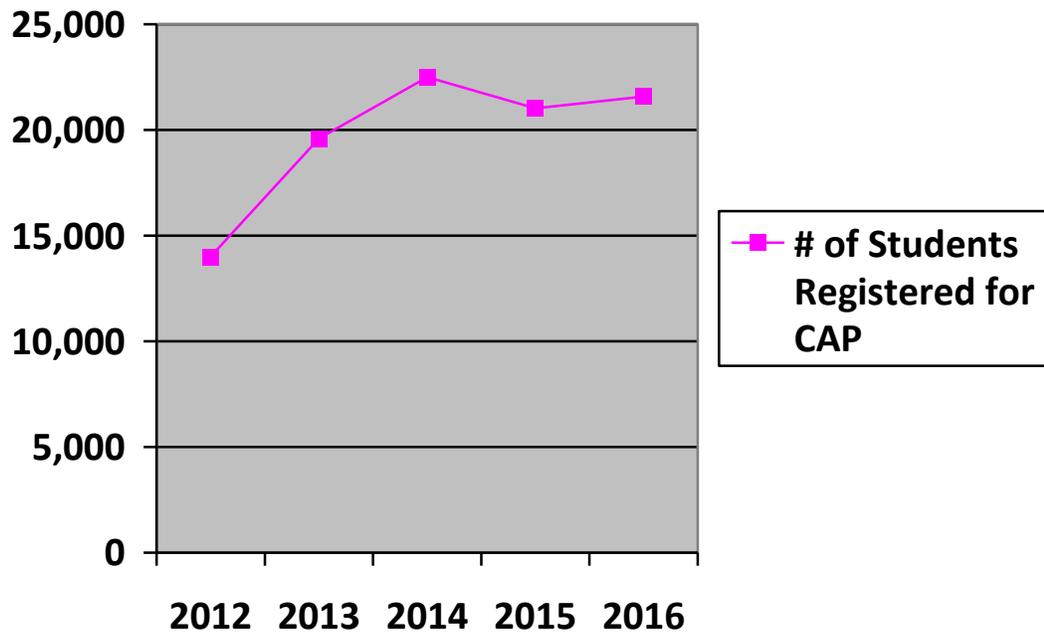
#### 2015/2016 CAP Program Summary

Zone	# of Classes*	# of Students*	# of Schools*	# of Volunteers**	Comments
1	49 (2)	1005 (50)	38 (2)	23	Volunteers had trouble connecting with teachers
2	60 (7)	1309 (171)	34 (4)	58	Trouble connecting with teachers some didn't seem to know CAP
3	89 (12)	2158 (256)	37 (7)	18	
3a	246 (13)	5904 (229)	110 (4)	26	1 class – no volunteer 12 classes – declined program
4	22 (0)	445 (0)	21 (0)	9	
5	64 (1)	1422 (18)	37 (1)	26	The one school registered on May 26
6	99 (1)	2339 (15)	58 (1)	19	
6a	118 (7)	2895 (133)	76 (6)	28	Not enough volunteers
7	88 (13)	1909 (304)	46 (6)	17	Some volunteers could not fulfil their commitment
8	50 (4)	1007 (92)	31 (4)	17	Fort McMurray
9	56 (13)	1183 (290)	38 (13)	12	Had some volunteers drop out at the last minute
Total	941 (73)	21576 (1558)	526 (48)	253	

When asked to evaluate where the greatest improvement could be made in school-classroom registrations, it was noted that the following percentages of Grade 4 students received the program in 2015-16:

- Lethbridge Public & Separate – 59.3%
- Medicine Hat Public & Separate – 48.7%
- Red Deer Public & Separate – 35.3%
- Edmonton Public & Separate – 29.7
- Calgary Public & Separate – 45.2%

The following gives some indication of the registration numbers for the past five (5) years.



## Year in Review

- CAP won the ***Friends of Education Award***, presented by the Alberta School Boards Association
- In 2015/2016 student registrations had a modest increase of 344
- In 2015 volunteer registrations dropped from 279 to 253

To ensure that as many classrooms as possible receive the program the board established the **VOLUNTEER ENTICEMENT MODEL**. Initially, the policy was as follows:

*Whereas CAP (Classroom Agriculture Program) is a not-for-profit organization with its primary objective as the promotion of agriculture and the agricultural Industry through the education of Alberta upper elementary students within the classroom setting.*

*And whereas to facilitate education of these students, CAP relies on a dedicated group of individuals throughout the province who volunteer their time to prepare for, travel to and do classroom presentations. And whereas CAP recognizes that its volunteers have other commitments and responsibilities, the CAP board of directors is truly appreciative of a volunteer who commits to completing between one (1) and eight (8) presentations during any school year.*

*And whereas in most areas of Alberta CAP has enough registered volunteers to ensure that all of the classrooms requesting a presentation will receive one. However, the CAP board recognizes that in some areas of the Province the number of volunteers available may be such that CAP may have to request that a volunteer perform more than eight (8) presentations, or travel a significant distance, in order to ensure that all registered classrooms receive a presentation.*

*Therefore upon recognizing these limitations to serving those schools which have requested presentations, the CAP General Manager and the Zone Coordinator(s) may consult together to identify and solicit further assistance of a volunteer who is willing to make additional presentations or to travel to a remote area. To entice the volunteer to go beyond the normal level of "volunteerism" the Volunteer Enticement Model may be optioned as outlined below.*

1. *Volunteer Enticement requires prior approval by the CAP General Manager.*
2. *Upon approval, the General Manager will notify the Zone Coordinator and the volunteer in writing, via post or email. The General Manager will also provide the approved volunteer with the VOLUNTEER ENTICEMENT PAY FORM, hereafter called the claim form.*
3. *Volunteers will be compensated \$30.00 per presentation completed in excess of the first*

- eight (8).*
4. *The volunteer recruited by the General Manager and/or the Zone Coordinator to travel to the remote location will, if seeking compensation, be paid mileage, meals as per the Government of Canada travel rates plus reasonable accommodation costs. The CAP General Manager will supply a claim form to the volunteer. The claim form will explain and set out the travel rates. Upon completion of the presentation(s) the volunteer may fill out the travel claim form and submit it to the General Manager for approval and payment.*
  5. *The CAP General Manager or the Zone Coordinator will contact the teacher to ensure that the presentations have taken place before payment will be issued.*

At the June meeting after reviewing the policy and noting how difficult and time-consuming it was for the CAP General Manager or Zone Coordinators to contact the teachers to confirm that the presentation(s) had in fact been completed, the policy was modified so volunteers committing to doing more than the eight presentations would be provided with a standard invoicing form which the teacher(s) would sign on the day the presentation was completed. Payment could then be made accordingly.

#### **Changes to the School Registration Forms**

This year, it appears that CAP volunteers seemed to have trouble contacting teachers. No obvious reason for this concern seems to exist. As a result, the application forms for the program will now ask the teachers, how they prefer to receive information on the program and their pending presentation. This will also allow CAP administration to have a better understanding of how to best advertise the program in the future.

#### **Update on Zone Coordinators**

Thanks to ongoing contact and support from the CAP General Manager, all Zone Coordinators returned for the 2015-16 school year. In fact, as one coordinator indicated, "It seemed this year that we had more ongoing contact with other coordinators over time – this was great and much credit to Don who truly treats us as a team! I like the new ideas Don shares and encourages – he is a super leader!"

Zone 1 – Medicine Hat – Conny Kappler  
Zone 2 – CrowsNest – Amberley Stanford  
Zone 3 – Calgary – Rose-Anna Balez will be returning  
Zone 3a – City of Calgary – Doris Krause will be returning  
Zone 4 – Flagstaff County – Lacey Gould will be returning  
Zone 5 – Central – Carol Holt will be returning  
Zone 6 – Edmonton – Gladys Wachowich will be returning  
Zone 6a – City of Edmonton – Holly Davies will be returning  
Zone 7 – Yellowhead County – Wendy Soroka will be returning  
Zone 8 – Wood buffalo – Myrna Fox will be returning  
Zone 9 – Big Lakes – Kaitlin McLachlan will NOT be returning

**The following zone coordinator comments are of note:**

- CAP registration form should include question whether school requires volunteer to have police clearance or to have volunteers sign waiver forms
- Many zone coordinators are recruiting volunteers from post-secondary institutions with agriculture programs
- Some of the volunteers want to do displays at events like Amazing Agriculture or Stampede Aggie Days to advertise CAP. As a result, the board will be presenting a policy on representing CAP and speaking on behalf of CAP at the September meeting
- Increase need to be in touch with teachers as a gentle reminder so that they are expecting the program and not surprised when a volunteer reaches out to set up a time for the presentation
- Schools in Edmonton region need to be sorted by town, rather than by name of the school. General Manager is to confirm whether all zone coordinators would prefer their packages sorted in this fashion
- Increasing computer skills for some of the zone coordinators might be a goal, but may be difficult to implement as it appears that zone coordinators are split 50% with little or no computer skills and the remaining being highly proficient
- Volunteers appreciate the \$10 Tim card. As one thank you note stated: "Thanks for the Tim's card. I enjoy doing the program. I taught Grade 4 so I am enjoying this in my retirement."

#### **Comments from the Teachers:**

- It is a great (and free) resource for students :)
- Good connection to curriculum and rural Alberta.
- Having people come in to speak about what they do is more impactful than a teacher droning on and on. It was effective.
- Fits our curriculum and is a valuable natural resource.
- Very informative. Students were provided with a lot of great information.
- It connects well with the grade 4 Social Studies program.
- It has opened their eyes to the opportunities, importance, and scale of agriculture.
- I appreciate the fact that fewer and fewer family's farm and this is an excellent opportunity for non-farm family students to get information.
- I am so appreciative of this program. Teaching about agriculture works better when we have guest speakers, field trips, and visuals.
- Some of the information and materials is quite dated. We have had the same presentation for a few years now. I would love to see something new.
- The presenters weren't really sure of what to present. Over the years I have had some awesome presenters. Just not this time.
- I love how this presentation shows students just how comprehensive agriculture is. It opens their eyes to all of the different sides of agriculture which I feel is really important.

#### **And a little This & That:**

- First performance review of CAP General Manager was completed and recorded
- First time that CAP General Manager is encouraged to participate in further education to enhance job performance

- CAP exploring options for a data storage service so all documents may be stored in one place, and not in a members' office, and finally
- A review of the CAP booklet – cover, artwork, and individual pages will be undertaken in the next program year.