

AGCOALITION

Alberta Farmers React to New OHS Agriculture Regulations

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Alberta's farmers illustrated their continued commitment to farm safety by working with the Government of Alberta (GOA) to provide grassroots feedback on the new Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) regulations proposed in the *Enhanced Protection for Farm and Ranch Workers Act*.

The AgCoalition represents 97 percent of farmers and ranchers throughout the province and is the voice of agriculture on the new regulations. Through its membership, the AgCoalition diligently reviewed each of the 142 Government recommendations to ensure they met the expectations of farmers and ranchers in Alberta.

"We feel that these new regulations generally respect the unique working environments of Alberta's farmers" says AgCoalition Chair Albert Kamps and a farmer from Lacombe. "We worked hard to ensure that the voices of thousands of hardworking farmers and ranchers were heard in this consultation."

The organization worked diligently with its membership to represent farmer interests and concerns. The work began with a careful study of the complex regulatory framework and turned it into workable guidelines and practices that are easily understandable at the farm and ranch level. This study included three Industry Leadership Advisory Committee sessions across Alberta. The feedback included explanations and descriptions of the unique requirements of agriculture. The AgCoalition then presented the farmer feedback to the Government of Alberta.

Many of the changes announced by the Government encourage farmers to conduct a hazard assessment of a specific task before beginning work on the farm.

"Hazard assessments are the important first step in safety on any agricultural operation. It is important that everyone working on a farm or ranch understands the hazards associated with the site before work begins and re-assessed if conditions warrant it," Kamps continues. "This approach is an effective way to manage the uniqueness of each farming operation."

Moving forward, the AgCoalition will work closely with the AgSafe Alberta Society (ASAS), a producer-led organization that is focused on farm safety awareness and education. The ASAS will share information about the new OHS regulations to farmers and ranchers across Alberta.

“We have been working to improve farm safety with the Government for many years” Kamps finished. “This is really just another chapter in the farm safety book that we are happy to participate in. We all just want everyone to come home safely at the end of the day.”

About the AgCoalition

The AgCoalition was formed based on a common industry goal to foster a culture of farm safety in Alberta. The AgCoalition recognizes the importance of grass roots participation and meaningful representation to support positive consultation and engagement with the Government of Alberta regarding farm safety and training. Find more information at agcoalition.ca.

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