

Ministry of Agriculture

Annual Report for 2019-20

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Letters of Transmittal



*The Honourable David Marit
Minister of Agriculture*

June 29, 2020

His Honour, the Honourable Russell Mirasty,
Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan

May it Please Your Honour:

I respectfully submit the Annual Report of the Ministry of Agriculture for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2020.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Marit". The signature is fluid and cursive.

David Marit
Minister of Agriculture



*Rick Burton
Deputy Minister of Agriculture*

June 29, 2020

The Honourable David Marit
Minister of Agriculture

Dear Minister:

I have the honour of submitting the Annual Report of the Ministry of Agriculture for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2020.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rick Burton". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Rick Burton
Deputy Minister of Agriculture

Ministry Overview

The Ministry of Agriculture's mandate is to help the industry manage risk and enable a globally competitive, thriving and sustainable agriculture and food sector by supporting farmers, ranchers and agri-businesses. Our mission is to enable a prosperous, market-driven agricultural industry through a supportive legislative framework, policies, programs and services. We fulfill this mission by providing a broad range of agriculture-related programs, insurance and economic development opportunities to grow the industry.

The Ministry of Agriculture's employees are committed to providing excellent service to the farmers, ranchers and agri-businesses of the province. Just like our clients, agriculture is our way of life and, together, we face the challenges, obstacles and opportunities associated with this thriving industry. Agriculture is reflected in the history of Saskatchewan and we are proud to continue that tradition through working partnerships with our clients. Ministry employees reflect professional values and a passion for their work, including innovation, teamwork, integrity, service excellence and leadership at all levels.

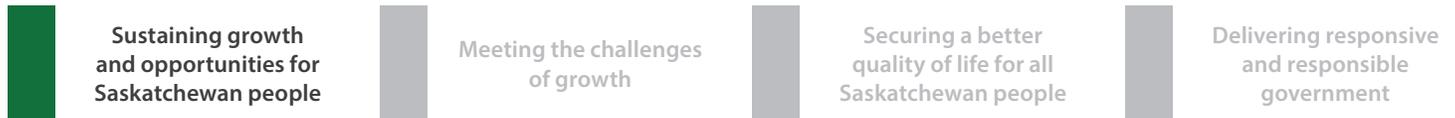
We have 10 Regional Offices, including the Agriculture Knowledge Centre, staffed with specialists who work directly with farmers and ranchers on everything from technology transfer, to crop and livestock management, to environmental planning. We partner with the federal government to provide a range of programs through the Canadian Agricultural Partnership agreement, providing producers and processors with the tools and resources they need to innovate and capitalize on emerging market opportunities.

We also work to increase the public's knowledge of the sustainable farming practices that help drive our economy. We proactively engage with industry and other governments to secure market access and increase the demand for Saskatchewan food products around the world. We maintain legislation and regulations to ensure public safety, while protecting the environment. We support agricultural research and ensure producers have access to the latest technology that helps them grow. We provide a range of business risk management (BRM) programs so farmers can responsibly manage the risks associated with a market-driven industry. We support the continued expansion of provincial irrigation infrastructure so farmers can capitalize on higher value crops. We manage thousands of acres of agricultural Crown land for the benefit of all Saskatchewan citizens. Finally, we work to grow value-added production in the province.

This report provides an update on how the ministry progressed on its public commitments noted within the [2019-20 Public Operational Plan](#).

Progress in 2019-20

Government Goals



Ministry of Agriculture Goal 1 - Growth in the Primary Agriculture Sector

Strategy

Enhance the business environment to attract investment and support growth.

Key Actions

Implement programming and services to ensure successful completion of irrigation asset transfer.

- Transferred government-owned irrigation assets to four irrigation districts, including land and implemented programming to assist in the long term viability of irrigation in the province.

Work with industry stakeholders, ministry partners, and other governments to identify and address barriers to growth in the primary sector.

- In partnership with stakeholders, identified and categorized new issues associated with COVID-19 including foreign labour and restrictions to market access.
- Identified challenges associated with establishing new livestock operations and initiated development of educational materials for developers and municipalities.

Work with industry to enhance opportunities for developing livestock operations in the province.

- Supported the construction of a new cattle feedlot near Outlook, Saskatchewan and the expansion of 19 existing livestock operations across the province.

Strategy

Advance research, innovation and knowledge transfer to improve productivity and sector competitiveness.

Key Actions

Strengthen partnerships to improve competitiveness and increase primary production.

- Collaborated with industry groups on pest surveys and the development of extension messaging to support producers
- Worked with 17 partners across the crop and livestock industry and received a total of \$2 million in co-funding for Agriculture Development Fund projects.
- Continued to invest in research at Prairie Swine Centre Inc., the Livestock Forage Centre of Excellence, Prairie Diagnostic Services and VIDO-InterVac to assist livestock producers.

Encourage adoption of new technology and practices.

- Delivered core funding to eight sites across Saskatchewan through the Agriculture-Applied Research Management (Agri-ARM) program to provide producers with unbiased, locally relevant information that supports knowledge-based decision making.
- Encourage producers to adopt the latest research and technology by providing extension services.

Ensure extension efforts are effective through monitoring and reporting.

- Organized or partnered on 121 events delivering technical, public trust and program information to 7,000 participants at field days, industry meetings, workshops and in schools.
- Livestreamed and recorded over 100 virtual events garnering over 51,000 views.
- Responded to over 15,000 inquiries at the Agriculture Knowledge Centre and regional offices through telephone, email, office visits and farm calls.
- Worked on 18 demonstrations and applied research projects including brush control methods, livestock water quality, and targeted high stock density grazing.
- Assessed nearly 300,000 acres of range land and received 159 well decommissioning applications.

Continue to implement the Strategic Research Initiative and Strategic Field Program.

- Completed a Strategic Field Program project assessing concentrations of sulphate in water consumed by beef cattle to address an information gap and further define the range of acceptable sulphate concentrations in beef cattle drinking water. As a result, producers and extension specialists now have confirmed guidelines to use when evaluating water quality.

Align research investments with Protein Industries Canada.

- Continued to work closely with Protein Industries Canada to explore opportunities and coordinate on areas of mutual interest.

Strategy

Influence federal trade policy to reflect Saskatchewan priorities.

Key Actions

Advocate for Saskatchewan trade interests in partnership with Intergovernmental Affairs and the Ministry of Trade and Export Development (TED).

- In coordination with TED and counterparts from the Governments of Alberta and Canada, a joint letter pressing for action on Country of Origin Labelling for pasta in Italy was created.
- Worked closely with TED, industry, the federal government and other provinces to support market access interests in China through the Canola Working Group and participated in a Government of Canada technical mission along with other provinces.
- Collaborated with TED to develop positions and trade advocacy messaging for agriculture components of Premier and Minister missions.

Improve engagement with provinces and industry by the federal government on all agricultural trade matters.

- Led efforts to develop a Federal-Provincial Agriculture Trade Policy Committee work plan to renew governance, collaborate on market access prioritization and coordinate trade policy engagement.
- Informed stakeholders of notifications from the Market Access Secretariat and checked in with industry associations to understand needs and align approaches.
- Co-chaired the Canada-U.S. Bilateral Committee for Staff, which examined the interface between federal and regional governments represented at the Tri-National Agricultural Accord.
- Engaged other provinces and the federal government to prepare for the Pacific Northwest Economic Region summit and the Legislative Agricultural Chairs Summit.

Strategy

Expand product and market development opportunities.

Key Actions

Partner with Saskatchewan Trade and Export Partnership (STEP) to increase exports.

- Supported STEP through Canadian Agricultural Partnership funding to build the export capacity of Saskatchewan's agri-food companies.
- Facilitated four trade missions to Japan, South Korea, China, Europe and the United States.
- Collaborated with British Columbia and Alberta on a capacity building mission to Seattle, Washington.
- Created an Export Guide to China and a Guide for Selling Food to U.S. Customers through Amazon.
- Delivered a seminar for exporters on How to Sell on Amazon.

Increase the ministry's market intelligence capacity to better support industry.

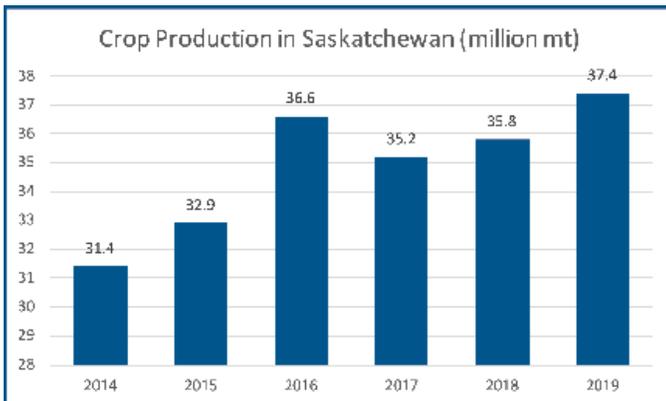
- Utilized Canadian Agricultural Partnership funding to invest in agri-food databases through a federal/provincial market intelligence consortium. The intent was to enhance the market intelligence capacity of the Saskatchewan agri-food industry.
- Prepared seven custom research reports for agriculture industry associations and STEP to incorporate into market intelligence reports distributed to almost 140 agri-food companies.

Participate in trade missions to promote Saskatchewan interests in key markets.

- Minister Marit led two trade missions, which included travel to Mexico, India, Bangladesh and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). In Mexico, the Minister met nine industry associations, seven agri-food companies and two State Agriculture Secretaries. In India, Bangladesh and the UAE the Minister met 12 companies, two Federal Bangladeshi Ministers, spoke at the Pulses Conclave in India, and hosted a business reception for 24 visiting Saskatchewan stakeholders.
- Planned missions in close coordination with STEP, Cereals Canada, Pulse Canada, Canola Council, Agribition, the University of Saskatchewan and Global Affairs. In total, ministry officials led or participated in seven separate trade missions, and supported agriculture programming for three missions organized by TED.

Performance Measure Results

Annual Crop Production



In 2019, Saskatchewan's estimated crop production was 37.4 million tonnes, which is the second-largest crop in the province's history, despite less than ideal growing or harvest conditions in many parts of the province. This speaks to the resilience of the production system and the advancements in crop technology that has allowed us to adapt to our variable climate. Over the last four years, production has averaged 36.3 million tonnes and we have met or exceeded our 2020 Growth Plan target yield of 36.6 million tonnes in three of the last seven years.

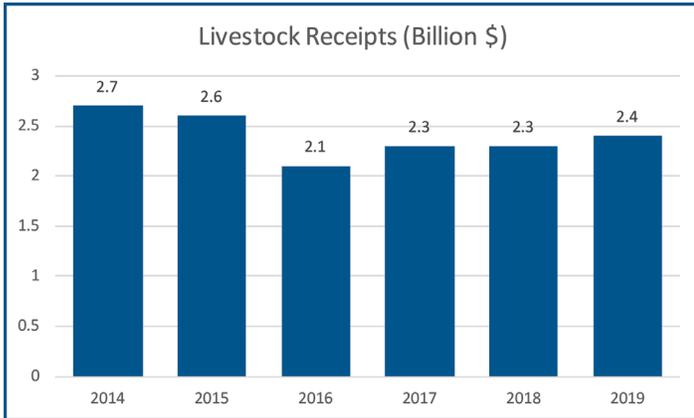
Research into improving crop genetics, agronomics and agricultural technologies has resulted in cropping systems well-adapted to Saskatchewan's variable climate. Despite the weather challenges in 2019, overall yields stayed strong. Farmers adopting sustainable

production practices, such as judicious pesticide use, 4R fertilizer practices, zero tillage and crop rotations helped protect both yields and the environment. In 2019, Saskatchewan summerfallow acres dropped below the one million mark for the first time.

The ministry will continue to work with producers and industry to achieve and sustain crop production at, or above, Saskatchewan's Growth Plan target. Our commitment to best practices in crop management will result in increased profitability and crop production in Saskatchewan.

Performance Measure Results

Annual Livestock Sector Revenue



The ministry aims to achieve significant growth in the livestock herd and expand livestock feeding, with a target to exceed \$2 billion in livestock cash receipts consistently by 2020. Annual revenue has risen dramatically from \$1.9 billion in 2013 to \$2.4 billion in 2019. High livestock prices are the primary reason for the stronger revenue over the past several years.

The growth in the global population, combined with expected increases in income levels in many countries, is anticipated to continue to increase demand for meat protein. Saskatchewan's 21 million acres of pasture and forage land are well-suited for livestock production, providing an excellent opportunity to meet this growing demand. The ministry will continue to encourage adoption of beneficial management practices to responsibly increase the herd size and profitability of Saskatchewan ranchers.

Performance Measure Results

Value of Agri-Food Exports

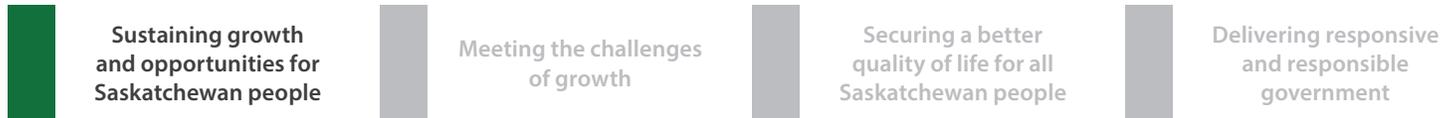
Under Saskatchewan's Growth Plan, the province established a target of \$15 billion in agri-food exports by 2020. In 2019, Saskatchewan agriculture and food exports totaled \$12.9 billion, representing 20 per cent of Canada's total agri-food exports of \$67 billion. Saskatchewan's top agri-food exports were canola seed, non-durum wheat, canola oil, durum and peas. The top agri-food export markets were China, U.S., Japan, Bangladesh and Mexico.

In 2019, Saskatchewan experienced significant fluctuations to exports, including canola seed exports dropping by 23 per cent. The main reason for the drop was trade tensions with China resulting in canola seed exports dropping 69 per cent over 2018. Some of the canola export declines were offset by increased demand from Europe to support its biofuel sector. Canola seed exports to the European Union increased over 250 per cent with revenues of \$367 million in 2019.

Saskatchewan's global pulse exports increased almost 15 per cent compared to 2018, despite India's pulse tariffs and fumigation requirements. Lentil exports increased over 300 per cent from 2018, valued at \$267 million. Pulse exports to Bangladesh increased almost 200 per cent in 2019 with revenues of \$187 million.

Saskatchewan's cereal exports grew 4.5 per cent in 2019. Oats, durum and barley exports increased 10, 10, and seven per cent respectively in 2019, while non-durum wheat exports continued to experience strong demand with levels similar to 2018, and exports valued at \$2.4 billion.

Government Goals



Ministry of Agriculture Goal 2 - Growth in the Value-Added Sector

Strategy

Improve the competitiveness of the industry to improve profitability, growth, investment and business attraction.

Key Actions

Work to influence industry in strategic infrastructure investments.

- Commissioned a value-added agriculture and agriculture manufacturing competitiveness study to recommend strategic improvements to benefit the sector.
- Undertook municipal outreach to promote the opportunities of value-added in the regions, while working with the private sector to encourage development of serviced industrial parks and other “shovel-ready” sites to better attract new business.
- Collaborated with Crown corporations to understand opportunities and challenges for serviced industrial sites.

Leverage partnerships with other ministries and organizations to address sector level constraints and impediments.

- Worked with the Ministry of Government Relations to amend the Statement of Provincial Interest Regulations, specifically refinements to the Agriculture and Value-Added Agribusinesses Statement of Interest.

Strategy

Improve efficiency of value-added processing.

Key Actions

Deliver effective programming and services including the Food Safety Program, Saskatchewan Lean Improvements in Manufacturing (SLIM) and Agriculture Development Fund.

- Expanded Food Safety for Processors programming under the Canadian Agricultural Partnership to include all food processors, as opposed to only focusing on meeting processing. This allowed program utilization to increase by almost 30 per cent.
- Managed 27 infrastructure projects through SLIM representing an estimated \$11.7 million in program funding that leverages over \$63 million in private infrastructure investments throughout the province.

Work with individual companies to help address processor challenges related to regulatory barriers and infrastructure constraints.

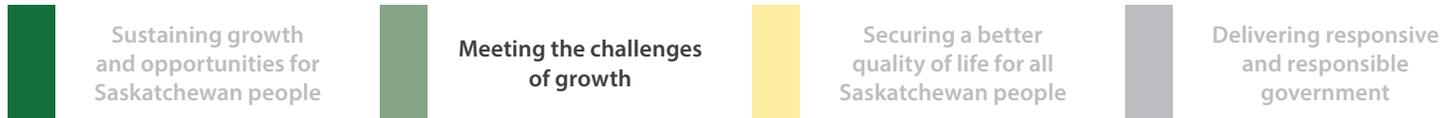
- Made over 200 client outreach connections with value-added businesses and industry associations.
- Supported client applications to Product to Market program and SLIM to develop new products and increase operational efficiencies and production capacity.

Performance Measure Results

Annual Value-Added Revenue

The value-added sector has been expanding steadily in recent years and Saskatchewan’s industry has experienced the fastest growth in Canada with a 50 per cent growth rate from 2012 to 2018. Value-added revenue is estimated to be \$5.3 billion for 2018-2019. The value-added sector has tremendous potential and will play a key role in Saskatchewan’s Growth Plan moving forward.

Government Goals



Ministry of Agriculture

Goal 3 - Improve the Agriculture Sector's Long-Term Resiliency and Competitiveness

Strategy

Develop and implement effective evidence-based assurance systems.

Key Actions

Work with stakeholders to improve monitoring and surveillance efforts, including anti-microbial resistance in livestock and improving crop and livestock disease surveillance.

- Worked with the College of Veterinary Medicine and the federal government to establish a realistic and achievable system to implement new federal anti-microbial regulations for the apiculture industry without undue hardship to provincial beekeepers.
- Increased surveillance efforts associated with porcine epidemic diarrhea to reduce the risk to Saskatchewan's pork sector.
- Maintained active surveillance for chronic wasting disease in game farm animals, the results of which identified no new cases on Saskatchewan game farms.
- Provided funding to support a major new research project at the Western College of Veterinary Medicine on antimicrobial resistance.

Implement a provincial clubroot management plan.

- Worked with the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities, and Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation to survey 1,734 canola fields in high clubroot risk areas.
- Partnered with SaskCanola to offer voluntary on-farm clubroot soil testing for 180 fields.
- Increased the awareness of clubroot and the farmer-driven approach to clubroot management by proactive communication with producers, agronomists and rural municipalities.
- Collaborated with rural municipalities as they move forward with the implementation of clubroot bylaws. As of March 31, 2020, 99 rural municipalities enacted a bylaw, which are illustrated in a publicly available map.

Implement crop surveys and collaborate to deliver a comprehensive study of plant pests.

- The Provincial Crop Protection Lab processed 178 plant disease samples, 216 herbicide resistant weed tests, seven weed identifications, eight insect identifications and 542 Dutch elm disease (DED) samples.
- Conducted clubroot survey testing and 915 fusarium head blight samples for species identification to ensure that producers and landowners are aware of risks and mitigation tools.
- In collaboration with public and private partners, the ministry designed and participated in a major clubroot survey in 2019. The survey was designed to better understand the distribution of clubroot across the province and included both high risk areas and areas of the province not surveyed in 2018. In total, 1,734 fields were surveyed and tested for clubroot in 2019. An additional 177 fields were tested for the presence of the clubroot pathogen through a voluntary soil testing program designed to increase on-farm testing.
- Organized 12 disease and 14 insect surveys that covered over 3,200 field sites to present pest related risks to producers.

Participate in the Federal Regulatory Modernization initiative to advance Saskatchewan's interests.

- Participated in the federal/provincial/territorial Agriculture Regulatory Assistant Deputy Minister's committee to represent Saskatchewan's priorities related to pest management, African swine fever, meat inspection, food safety and plant health.

Implement on-farm assurance systems through the Canadian Agricultural Partnership.

- Launched the Assurance Systems Program to implement animal welfare and biosecurity best practices.
- Developed and delivered new training for the apiculture, goat, bison, horse, greenhouse, specialty agriculture, and cervid sectors.
- Provided assurance training to more than 550 producers and supported an additional 312 producers in the implementation of on-farm improvements for biosecurity or animal welfare.

Strategy

Continue to improve on Ministry's programs and services.

Key Actions

Implement the agricultural components of Prairie Resilience: A Made in Saskatchewan Climate Change Strategy.

- Worked with the Ministry of Environment to develop a framework for a provincial offset system and completed a study identifying the necessary criteria for a transparent offset system.

Fund research to understand how management practices impact the environment.

- Funded research to quantify the greenhouse gas emissions of different manure management approaches in a beef cattle feedlot to understand the carbon footprint and nitrogen cycling of special and common crops and assess the impact of precision manure application on water quality.

Collaborate with the Federal, Provincial/Territorial Governments and National Program Advisory Committee to ensure the Business Risk Management review meets Saskatchewan's needs.

- Collaborated closely with federal, provincial and territorial partners on business risk management programming through the Business Risk Management Working Group and the Agriculture Ministers' meetings, leading to agreement to change the treatment of private insurance under AgriStability.
- Worked with Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation to extend the enrolment deadlines for Crop Insurance to better support producers during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Increase Indigenous participation in the agriculture sector.

- A Senior Indigenous Advisor was hired, who will work to increase Indigenous participation in the agriculture sector.
- Responded to agriculture-related questions and provided program information to Indigenous communities on a range of topics including horticulture, grain production, livestock production and range management.
- Developed agriculture extension events for Indigenous communities.

Improve public access to Ministry of Agriculture services.

- Implemented a new Client Relationship Management system for the adjudication of Canadian Agricultural Partnership programming.
- In partnership with the Ministries of Environment and Parks, Culture and Sport, completed the development of a new Client Relationship Management system for the administration of Saskatchewan Crown land.

Sell Crown land where there is no higher ecological, environmental, heritage or economic benefit to the public to producers who can continue to operate as stewards of the land and realize the benefits of ownership.

- Transferred over 26,000 acres of Crown land to private ownership through direct sales to lessees and auction sales to the public.

Transfer Crown land with no agricultural potential to other ministries and agencies.

- Identified 78,000 acres of Crown land with minimal agricultural potential to be transferred to the Ministry of Environment and designed a detailed process to accommodate the title transfer with Information Services Corporation.

Strengthen emergency preparedness through improved monitoring and prevention of animal diseases.

- Participated in national meetings to discuss preparation and response to African swine fever in the event it is discovered in North America.
- Continued to collaborate with industry partners on the development of Animal Health Canada, a government-industry partnership focused on animal disease mitigation and response in the country.

Performance Measure Results

Natural Land

Maintaining the total area of natural land (native prairie, pastures and hay) sequesters carbon, retains soil moisture and increases resiliency to offset flood and drought events. The ministry targets maintaining the total area of natural land at the 2016 level of 19.93 million acres. The most recent available data is from the 2016 census. New data will be available from the census in 2021.

Sequestration of Organic Matter

The release of greenhouse gas emissions can also be reduced through agricultural practices such as zero-tillage seeding that sequester the amount of organic matter in cultivated land. The target for this measure is the current five-year average of 5.6 million tonnes per year.

In 2018, 4.5 million tonnes of soil organic matter was accumulated in cultivated soils. Accumulations are decreasing due to a reported reduction in the area of tame forage between the 2011 and 2016 censuses. However, the amount of soil organic matter accumulated through reductions in summerfallow and improved tillage practices has been largely maintained.

Nutrient Stewardship

The 4Rs of nutrient stewardship are the “right source, right rate, right time and right place.” 4R Nutrient Stewardship Plans provide a framework to achieve cropping goals and improve environmental outcomes through the precise application of agricultural fertilizers. The target for total farmland managed using a 4R Nutrient Stewardship Plan is 25 per cent by 2025.

In 2019, approximately 0.3 per cent of agricultural land was 4R designated.

Economic Resiliency

A key economic resiliency measure is the volatility in net farm income over time, as it represents the ability of farmers to maintain production and profit regardless of the impacts of climate change. The ministry is targeting no greater than a 50 per cent decrease in realized net farm income from the previous five-year average.

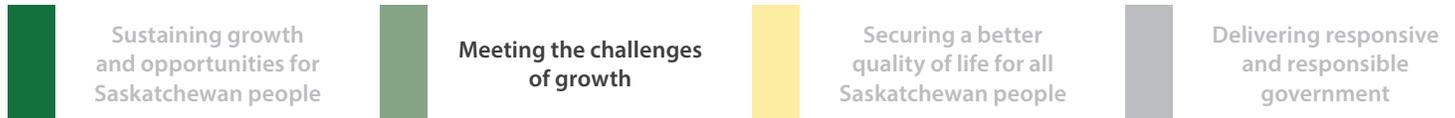
Realized net farm income was \$1.95 billion in 2018 which is 30 per cent less than the previous five-year average and falls within the target.

Crop Diversification

The diversification of crop species contributes to economic resiliency and positive environmental outcomes such as enhanced soil health and the management of pest and diseases. The target is for no one crop type (cereals, oilseeds, pulses/soybeans and summer fallow) to rise above 50 per cent of the cultivated area in Saskatchewan.

This target was met as no one crop type rose above 50 per cent of the cultivated area in 2019.

Government Goals



Ministry of Agriculture Goal 4 - Public Trust in the Agriculture Sector.

Strategy

Encourage and support industry to adopt best practices.

Key Actions

Work with Fertilizer Canada to advance uptake of 4R practices in Saskatchewan, including finalization of the terms of reference and action plan.

- Worked with Fertilizer Canada to advance 4R awareness and education of the 4R nutrient stewardship principles in Saskatchewan. This was done by demonstrating components of 4R principles in cooperation with the Agri-ARM sites in Saskatchewan through nine Ag Demonstration of Practices and Technology (ADOPT) projects (Agriculture Research Branch).
- Finalized a terms of reference through the provincial 4R Advisory Committee with representation from government, industry, and academia to build awareness about the 4R stewardship program, and conduct extension and training on 4R nutrient stewardship.
- Prepared extension materials including social media, Sask Ag Now article content and presentations on pulse crop fertility, phosphorus, nitrogen management, 4R practices and micronutrients.

Develop a targeted approach to environmental programming to address risks to recreational waterbodies.

- Developed and began implementation of the Proactive Stewardship Pilot project to support producers with operations close to recreational water bodies to utilize beneficial management practices to reduce environmental impact.
- Partnered with the Water Security Agency to monitor impacted water bodies and document change from the implementation of beneficial management practices.

Partner with the Ministry of Environment to monitor and respond to Chronic Wasting Disease.

- The new Animal Health Act and Regulations were proclaimed in October 2019, to modernize the regulatory framework and better position game farm producers to protect their animals from Chronic Wasting Disease.

Strategy

Protect food safety, animal health and the environment.

Key Actions

Align environmental farm plans to facilitate producer participation in market-driven sustainability initiatives.

- Developed the content for a new environmental farm plan that was successfully benchmarked against the content requirements for an international sustainable sourcing standard known as Sustainable Agriculture Initiative - Farm Sustainability Assessment.

Partner to develop policies and programming on critical habitat and species at risk.

- Developed an interim process and guidelines for authorizing improvements on agricultural Crown land with critical habitat for species at risk.
- The Ministries of Agriculture and Environment, with funding from Environment and Climate Change Canada, contracted leading researchers to conduct policy-oriented analysis on how to best support land managers in acting as stewards of critical habitat.
- Organized initial discussion meetings with affected lessees, to gather feedback to inform policies and programming.

Provide range management expertise for public and private lands.

- Conducted health assessments on 14 Crown land pastures totaling nearly 300,000 acres of range land to help producers increase productivity while maintaining the sustainability of both public and private range land.
- Completed 32 weed management plans to control the spread of invasive weeds on range lands.
- Carried out demonstration projects in five locations across the province to examine the effectiveness of different types of brush control on native prairie.

Modernize animal health regulations through the proclamation and implementation of a new Animal Health Act.

- Initiated several communication activities including social media posts, articles and infographics to increase the understanding of the requirements under the modernized Agricultural Health Act.

Assist the Water Security Agency in implementing the Agricultural Water Management Strategy.

- Provided the Water Security Agency with analysis and input on matters related to drainage and wetland mitigation policy.

Strategy

Partner to build awareness about modern agriculture.

Key Actions

Encourage industry engagement in building public trust and collaborative, strategic, industry-led agriculture awareness initiatives.

- Provided \$755,000 in total funding to Agriculture in the Classroom Saskatchewan, Farm and Food Care Saskatchewan and 4-H Saskatchewan to connect consumers with the food they eat and the producers who grow it.
- Approved seven projects through the Agriculture Awareness Initiative Program focused on building awareness of modern agriculture.
- Celebrated Canada's Agriculture Day by producing a video reaching over 40,000 people highlighting the contributions of the agriculture sector.
- Partnered with industry stakeholders to celebrate Agriculture Month in Saskatchewan by sharing online food stories to connect with consumers.
- Gathered more than 25 industry representatives to share stories and foster collaboration in building public trust.

Develop a communications plan to build confidence in the regulatory framework.

- Leveraged social media to increase the understanding of the requirements and benefits associated with the modernized Agricultural Operations Act.

Support the implementation of the Next Gen Mentorship Program, as well as other initiatives to develop industry leadership and build organizational capacity.

- Supported Canadian Western Agribition with the first intake of young leaders into the Next Gen Mentorship Program. As a result of this initiative, eight young Saskatchewan residents were matched with eight industry experts and given the opportunity to be submersed in leadership development opportunities for 18 months.
- Awarded the Agriculture Student Scholarship to four young people pursuing post-secondary education related to agriculture.
- Hosted three, two-day training sessions on governance delivered by the Institute on Governance. The courses offered the province's agriculture-related boards the opportunity to enhance their skills in a variety of areas including board oversight, recruitment and risk management.

Work with federal stakeholders to develop a consistent framework to measure public perception and the effectiveness of government public trust programming.

- Worked closely with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada as co-chairs of the federal, provincial and territorial Public Trust Working Group to better understand public trust challenges across Canada, assess the effectiveness of current efforts, engage with stakeholders, and develop future policy and program areas.

Performance Measure Results

Public understanding of agriculture as measured by the percentage of Saskatchewan residents with a positive perception of agriculture.

Since 2013, the ministry has participated in an annual poll to gain insights into the public perception of agriculture in Saskatchewan. In the 2019 poll, the target was met with 85 per cent of the 801 respondents choosing either “strongly agree” or “agree” when asked: “I have a positive perception of Saskatchewan agriculture.”

The 2019 survey also asked Saskatchewan residents for their opinion on nine additional questions, of which four were new: two on regulations, one on transparency and one on intensive livestock development. Seventy-six per cent strongly agreed/agreed that farmers and ranchers follow government regulations while 64 per cent of respondents agreed that government regulations protect the public. Sixty-nine per cent of respondents supported intensive livestock development in their communities and 59 per cent of respondents agreed that the agriculture sector transparently communicates about its practices. When residents were asked about food safety, 89 per cent supported that the food produced in Saskatchewan is safe.

The survey results show that Saskatchewan producers continue to have the support of the public and that the perception of agriculture remains mostly positive. Work still needs to be done to build awareness about production practices and Canada’s robust regulatory system. Another survey will take place in 2020.

2019-20 Financial Overview

2019-20 Financial Schedules

(in thousands of dollars)					
Ministry of Agriculture Schedule of Revenue and Expenditures	2018-19 Actual	2019-20 Estimates	2019-20 Actual	Variance over (under)	Notes
Revenue					
Land Revenue:					
Crown Land Sales	\$ 41,747	28,740	26,235	(2,505)	1
Rent and Penalty on Land Leases	43,597	47,370	45,711	(1,659)	2
Land Licenses and Permits	601	270	494	224	3
Interest	57	15	30	15	
Receipts from Federal Government	67,243	69,120	65,518	(3,602)	4
Privileges, Licenses and Permits	201	228	248	20	
Sales, Services and Service Fees	479	417	516	99	5
Interest Revenue	5	5	-	(5)	
Other Revenue	3,830	2,386	2,562	176	6
Refund of Previous Year Expenditures	7,919	250	6,207	5,957	7
Total Revenue	\$ 165,689	148,801	147,521	(1,280)	
Expenditure					
Central Management and Services	\$ 9,880	11,297	10,279	(1,018)	1
Industry Assistance	4,182	3,864	3,720	(144)	2
Land Management					
Land Management Services	\$ 6,709	4,932	7,027	2,095	3
Land Revenue Bad Debt Allowances	595	100	162	62	
Crown Land Sale Incentive Program	\$ 2,905	1,554	870	(684)	4
Subtotal	\$ 10,209	6,586	8,059	1,473	
Policy and Planning					
Policy and Planning	\$ 2,925	3,623	3,347	(276)	5
Trade and Value-added	1,416	1,725	1,542	(183)	6
Subtotal	\$ 4,341	5,348	4,889	(459)	
Research and Technology					
Project Coordination	\$ 1,801	1,143	1,711	568	7
Research Programming	30,032	30,800	32,425	1,625	7
Subtotal	\$ 31,833	31,943	34,136	2,193	

(in thousands of dollars)					
Ministry of Agriculture Schedule of Revenue and Expenditures	2018-19 Actual	2019-20 Estimates	2019-20 Actual	Variance over (under)	Notes
Regional Services					
Regional Services	\$ 31,308	32,181	24,311	(7,870)	8
Program Design and Delivery					
Program Design and Delivery	\$ 24,737	26,652	21,166	(5,486)	9
Business Risk Management					
Crop Insurance Program Delivery	\$ 29,017	29,800	29,800	-	
Crop Insurance Premiums	160,213	154,971	159,525	4,554	10
AgriStability Program Delivery	17,226	18,400	18,465	65	11
AgriStability	52,258	35,800	38,206	2,406	12
AgriInvest	36,387	32,900	35,081	2,181	13
Subtotal	\$ 295,101	271,871	281,077	9,206	
Budget Appropriation	\$ 411,591	389,742	387,637	(2,105)	
Supplementary Estimates/Special Warrant	-	8,200	-	8,200	
Total Revised Appropriation	\$ 411,591	397,942	387,637	(10,305)	
Capital Asset Acquisitions	\$ (2,424)	-	(3,057)	(3,057)	14
Amortization of Capital Assets	\$ 922	1,571	1,386	(185)	15
Other	\$ 12	-	323	323	
Total Revised Estimates and Expenses	\$ 410,101	399,513	386,289	(13,224)	
FTE Staff Complement (FTE – Full Time Equivalent)	349.6		341.4		1

Explanation of Major Variances:

Explanations of Variances which exceed \$50,000 between Estimates and Actuals

Revenue

1. Decrease in number of acres sold.
2. Decrease in Petroleum and Natural Gas Surface leases due to in year rate adjustments.
3. Increase in the sale of land that required licenses or permits.
4. Decreased revenue received from the federal government under Canadian Agricultural Partnership agreement due to Farm and Ranch Water Infrastructure revenue being transferred into the Saskatchewan Agricultural Stabilization Fund.
5. Increased land sale fees and other miscellaneous revenue.
6. Increase in miscellaneous land fees.
7. Refund of prior years' AgriStability payment accrual due to an improved Farm Income forecast.

Expenditure

1. FTE management, and savings in accommodations and other operating expenses.
2. Decreased payouts under Miscellaneous Grants.
3. Increased system development costs partially offset by FTE management, and savings in other operating expenses.
4. Lower than expected incentives due to finalization of land sales under the Crown Land Sale Incentive Programs.
5. Decreased due to FTE management and operational savings.
6. Decreased due to FTE management and operational savings.
7. Increased research program spending for the Saskatchewan Food Development Centre offset by FTE management and operational savings.
8. Decreased due to FTE management and operational savings and the reallocation of Canadian Agricultural Partnership spending to Research Programming.
9. Decreased due to reallocation of Canadian Agricultural Partnership spending to Saskatchewan Agricultural Stabilization Fund, FTE management and operational savings.
10. Increased Wildlife Damage Compensation Program claims offset by decreased crop insurance premiums due to a shift in crop mix towards crops with lower premium costs, and decreased unseeded acreage coverage.
11. Increased AgriStability program delivery costs paid to Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada for old AgriStability Program payments.
12. Increased provincial contributions required to fully fund the AgriStability 2019 program year costs from the original federal government's forecast. AgriStability program payments for the 2019 program year of \$38,205 net of producer deposits have been estimated using economic models which consider the number of program participants, estimated reference margins, estimated claim year margins based on projected forecast commodity prices, crop yields, inventory changes and forecast changes in eligible income and expenses on an aggregate basis for different sectors of the agricultural industry. Based on the above key assumptions and using a statistical model for projections, estimated provincial contributions for the current year would be in the range of \$28,333 to \$58,786. Estimated program payments for prior program years are based on potential payments for claims not yet processed by Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation.
13. Increased provincial contributions required to fully fund the AgriInvest 2019 program year costs from the original federal government's forecast. AgriInvest program payments for the 2019 program year of \$33,400 have been estimated using economic models which consider the number of program participants, estimated reference margins, estimated claim year margins based on projected forecast commodity prices, crop yields, inventory changes and forecast changes in eligible income and expenses on an aggregate basis for different sectors of the agricultural industry. Based on the above key assumptions and using a statistical model for projections, estimated provincial contributions for the current year would be in the range of \$32,110 to \$34,691. Estimated program payments for prior claim years are based on potential payments for claims not yet processed by the federal government have increased by \$1,681.

14. Primarily capital expenditures for system development.
15. Decreased amortization due to the transfer of irrigation assets to the irrigation districts and the timing of system development amortization.
16. Change in prepaid expenses as well as the write down of assets transferred from the Saskatchewan Pastures Program.

FTE Staff Complement

1. Ministry of Agriculture's 2019-20 FTE actual utilization was 341.4.

Additional financial information can be found in the Government of Saskatchewan Public Accounts located at <https://publications.saskatchewan.ca/#/categories/893>