



# **APAS 2021 Federal Election Proposals**

## **Building capacity in rural Canada**

People in rural Saskatchewan are looking for federal leadership and support to help build their capacity to adapt to change and take advantage of opportunities. Investment is particularly needed to improve rural connectivity, supply-chain resiliency, and the maintenance and expansion of rural infrastructure.

- Take immediate action to address the digital divide that exists between rural and urban Canada by:
  - Establishing a timeline for reviewing connectivity targets and reaching service and price parity in rural areas.
  - Directing the CRTC to re-establish the High-Cost Serving Area fund to ensure funding for ongoing maintenance of internet infrastructure.
  - Making strategic investments in shovel-ready projects to build out the telecommunications system as soon as possible.
- Help improve the resiliency of agricultural supply chains by supporting investments in on-farm, value-added, and domestic food processing systems, especially for livestock and meat supply chains.
- Recognize the unique infrastructure needs in rural areas and ensure adequate funding to maintain and expand transportation systems to accommodate the increased volumes of goods moving between provinces and to export destinations.

## **Investing in agricultural policy programs**

The 2021 election is an important opportunity for federal decision-makers to bolster support for agricultural programs and fiscal policies that will support the next generation of producers and help the agricultural sector lead Canada's economic recovery.

- Increase funding levels for the 2023-2028 Agricultural Policy Framework Strategic Initiative Programs in research, environmental sustainability, and market development.
- Invest in Business Risk Management program renewal to ensure adequate funds are available to overhaul the AgriStability program and develop more tools to help producers manage increased trade and weather risk, especially related to drought.
- Closely collaborate with the agricultural sector to better support farm transition to the next generation through additional taxation and program options for young producers, new entrants, and retiring farmers.



## **Improving market transparency and trade access**

Saskatchewan's agricultural exports continue to grow and increase their contribution to Canada's trade balance. The federal government can play a key role in supporting export growth through infrastructure investments, trade relations, and addressing information gaps to ensure producers can take advantage of opportunities and make informed decisions in an increasingly competitive marketplace.

- Invest in trade corridor infrastructure to meet increasing export demand, modernize port governance at the Port of Vancouver, and enforce service standards for railway shipping performance.
- Implement a Canadian export sales reporting program based on the USDA Export Sales Reports.
- Conduct a railway costing review to improve transparency in freight rates for agricultural rail shipments.

## **Fighting climate change through recognition and resilience**

Saskatchewan's cropland and prairie grasslands are critical assets in the global effort to fight climate change. Environmental policies present both challenges and opportunities for primary producers. Carbon taxes hurt the primary agricultural sector because producers are price takers in global markets and are unable to pass along added costs within the marketplace. Canada also faces significant opportunities to capture more carbon in agricultural soils while helping the sector adapt to climate change risks.

- Introduce a carbon pricing exemption on all fuel directly and indirectly used to produce and transport raw agricultural commodities, including fuel used for on-farm heating and rail transportation.
- Support carbon offset systems that recognize agricultural activities and landscape features that capture and store carbon, plus assist in the development of tools and technology to verify and measure soil sequestration.
- Help the agricultural sector adapt to climate change through investments in water management, on-farm infrastructure, and the research and development of new crop varieties and other production technologies.