



## **APAS sees Government Budget investment in agriculture and rural telecommunications as a step in the right direction**

April 6, 2021 (Regina, SK) – The Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan (APAS) is pleased the Government of Saskatchewan is investing in agricultural programming and in improving rural telecommunications.

APAS recognizes the Government's increased spending in the Agriculture budget. The six per cent increase amounts to \$386.9 million for the agriculture industry. The Government's priorities for Agri-stability, irrigation development and research funding maintenance are positive impacts for the agriculture industry.

In Sasktel's investment plan for 2021 \$85.8 million is dedicated to Fibre to the x (FTTx) program, with \$18.2 million going to the Rural Fibre Initiative. APAS sees this investment as a step forward in improving fast and more reliable internet access to rural areas. Last week, APAS released its findings from its Rural Connectivity Task Force. The final report outlines [43 recommendations](#) to improve rural internet and cellular service in Saskatchewan.

"COVID really has been a shock to the economy, and agriculture is well poised to lead the recovery, and we will," APAS President Todd Lewis said. "In a year, hopefully, we will be in a better financial position."

On Tuesday, the Finance Minister spoke about Saskatchewan's economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. APAS wants to acknowledge all the producers who are playing their part in the province's economic sustainability. In 2020, Saskatchewan's [agriculture exports increased](#) by 31 per cent from 2019, which amounts to \$16.9 billion.

"I think if we get enough rainfall and this spring, no reason not to expect another record year of export," Lewis said. "We've shipped record amounts of grain this year is the second-largest crop in history, and if the weather cooperates, we'll certainly see that continue."

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For more information or to schedule an interview, please contact:

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**Background:** APAS is Saskatchewan's general farm organization – formed to provide farmers and ranchers with a democratically elected, grassroots, non-partisan, producer-run organization based on rural municipal boundaries. As the united voice of thousands of agricultural producers and ranchers in Saskatchewan, we strive to represent the views of a wide variety of agricultural stakeholders in order to form comprehensive policies that can benefit all sectors of society. APAS is a member of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture.