



## **APAS sees provincial Budget's investments in agriculture and rural telecommunications as steps in the right direction**

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

APAS recognizes the provincial government's increased agricultural spending in the Budget. The six per cent increase amounts to \$386.9 million for the agriculture industry. The government's priorities for AgriStability, irrigation development, and research funding maintenance are positive impacts for the agricultural industry.

In SaskTel's investment plan for 2021, \$85.8 million is dedicated to the "Fibre to the x" (FTTx) program, with \$18.2 million going to the Rural Fibre Initiative. APAS sees this investment as a step towards getting faster and more reliable internet 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 has really been a shock to the economy, and agriculture is well poised to lead the recovery, and we will," said APAS President Todd Lewis. "In a year, we'll hopefully 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 ensuring 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 this spring, there's no reason not to expect another record year of exports," Lewis said. "We've shipped record amounts of grain this year in 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.