

TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Agriculture in the Parkland

May 1-3, 2025 | Red Deer - Altario



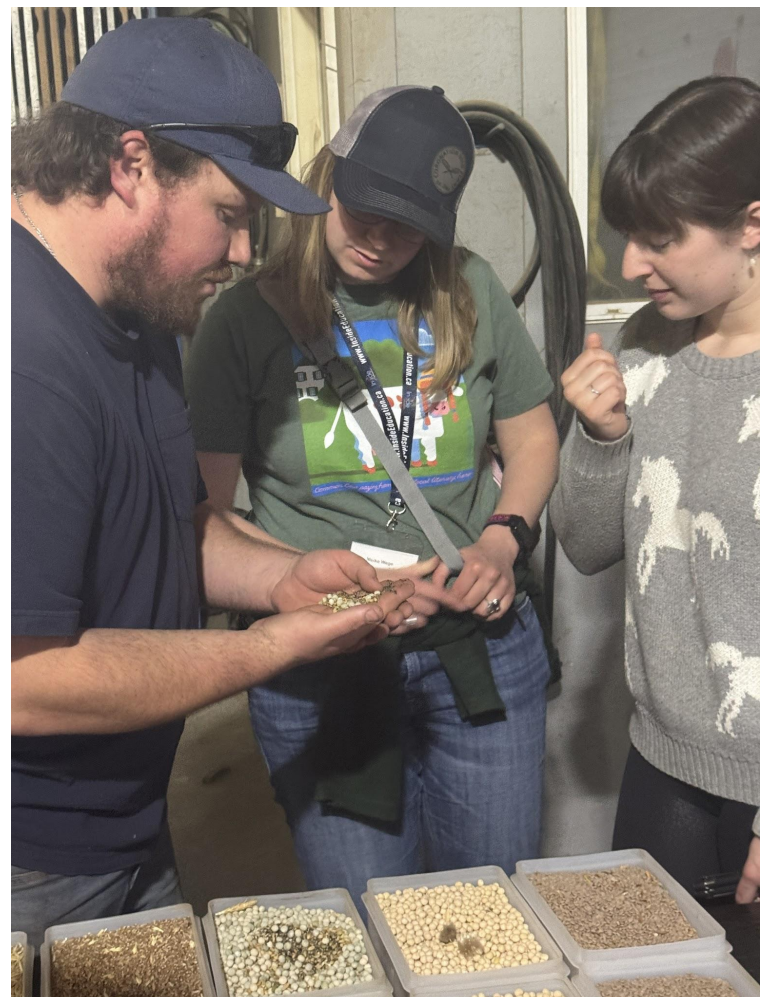
Introduction

Inside Education's Agriculture in the Parkland teacher professional development event was a 3-day exploration of agriculture and sustainability in the parkland region of Alberta where participants had the opportunity to hear from a wide range of experts, including producers and key members of the agriculture industry, academics and researchers, and the leadership team at an Alberta school with a growing agriculture academy program.

This program was developed with the goal of guiding participants through a thoughtful exploration of agriculture in the east-central part of the province and answering their biggest questions, whether that was the cost of farm machinery, how seeds are prepared for fields or shipping, what roles do different species of bees play, or how to go about starting their own agriculture CTS/CTF courses at their respective schools.

As with all Inside Education programs, the overarching goal is to support teachers to better understand the science, technology, and issues surrounding environmental and natural resource topics.

We are thrilled to share the outcomes and impacts of this professional development program through this summary report.



The Agriculture in the Parkland program took place in locations on the traditional territories of the First Nations of Treaties 6 and 7, as well as the Red Deer and Medicine Hat districts of the Metis Nation of Alberta. Inside Education respectfully acknowledges the Indigenous Peoples who have lived on and cared for this land since time immemorial.

The Program

Through this dynamic program 13 educators:

- **CONNECTED** with the people, places, and perspectives that give insight into Alberta's agriculture sector.
- **EXPLORED** technology that aids in everyday operations in agriculture from tractors to seed cleaning.
- **PARTICIPATED** in a unique professional development opportunity that modeled a hands-on, experiential and inquiry-based approach to learning.
- **CREATED** lasting networks with like-minded educators from across the province, leading to partnerships between schools on future projects.
- **ENHANCED** their lessons with current, accurate and meaningful content and activities that will engage future generations of environmental stewards.



PROGRAM AT A GLANCE

Thursday, May 1

Fertilizer Production and Use in Alberta-
Nutrien

Alberta's Native Bees workshop- *Red Deer Polytechnic/Alberta Native Bee Council*

Tour: Farms as a Community Space and Resource, connecting students to the food on their plate - *The Jungle Farm*

Friday, May 2

Water Availability in Alberta: Measuring Snow Water Equivalent workshop- *Inside Education*

Tour: Farm Machinery: What does that thing do? - *Rocky Mountain Equipment*

Tour: Seed Cleaning: Getting seeds ready for field and transport - *Coronation Seed Cleaning Co-Op*

Riparian Health and Grazing Land workshop- *Chinook Applied Research Assoc., Hadwin Cattle Co., Janna Wowk*

Saturday, May 3

Tour: Agriculture Education in Action - *Altario Agriculture Academy*

Caring for Our Watersheds workshop and debrief - *Battle River Watershed Alliance*

Partners, Expert Guests, and Tour Hosts

We extend deep thanks to our program partners for their support of the 2025 Agriculture in the Parkland Program.

Inside Education is proud to work with partners committed to excellence in natural resource education.



A SPECIAL THANKS TO THE FANTASTIC EXPERT SPEAKERS AND TOUR HOSTS, THEIR COMMITMENT TO ADVANCING AGRICULTURE AND SUSTAINABILITY EDUCATION IS GREATLY APPRECIATED.

Charity Briere | Red Deer Polytechnic / Alberta Native Bee Council

Susanne Bruneau | Battle River Watershed Alliance

Lance Goudie | Altario Agriculture Academy

Erica Hadwin | Hadwin Cattle Company

Glen Hartel | Coronation Seed Cleaning Plant

Stephen Hicks | Nutrien

Vince Miller | Rocky Mountain Equipment- Red Deer

Leona Staples | The Jungle Farm

Karin Roen | Chinook Applied Research Association

Kevin van Lagen | Altario Agriculture Academy

Dianne Westerlund | Chinook Applied Research Association

Janna Wowk | Independent riparian specialist



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The Participants

The 2025 Agriculture in the Parkland Program was attended by 13 highly engaged educators with varying level of experience incorporating agriculture topics into their classroom. Most of the participating teachers work with junior and senior high school age students, but was also attended by a division 1 teacher, a principal and a B.Ed. student.

One of the goals of the program was to create a network of educators that are working together to incorporate agriculture education lessons, curricula, and CTS/CTF classes within the Alberta school system. Based on bus ride conversations, follow up email threads, and survey feedback this goal was achieved.

Brooklyn Figursky | Lacombe Outreach School, Lacombe
Tracey Gilmour | Tomahawk School, Tomahawk
Leanne Huppertz | R.F. Staples School, Westlock
Monika Madik | Rundle Academy, Calgary
Jennifer McFadden | Red Deer Polytechnic, Red Deer
Scott McMillan | W.P. Wagner High School, Edmonton
Darcy McQuillan | St. Joseph High School, Red Deer
Lindsey Oh | Ecole J.E. Lapointe School, Beaumont
Meghan Roberts | John Wilson Elementary School, Innisfail
Sam Sirianni | Rundle Academy, Calgary
Jess Tabilin | Mihtatakaw Sipi School, Driftpile Cree Nation
Meike Wege | Brooks Composite High School, Brooks
Kim Wiggins | Bluffton School, Bluffton

“This was a fantastic opportunity! This was just the push I needed to plan the outline for the agriculture option I've been wanting to offer at my school.”

-Lindsay Oh, Ecole J.E. Lapointe School





"There were parts of agriculture (seed cleaning, tractor purchasing) I learned on this PD that I barely thought about before and yet they are an integral part of agriculture in our province."

-Scott McMillan, WP Wagner High School



"This is an excellent opportunity to get ideas of how to incorporate (agriculture) into classes, at different levels. It lets you network with people who have possibly already attempted something you are considering and can offer advice."

-Mieke Wege, Brooks Composite High School



A 55% score increase between the pre and post-program surveys indicated that teachers felt more equipped in personal knowledge, learning materials, and networks to bring meaningful agriculture education to their classrooms.

"Aha!" Moments



Program Impact and Feedback

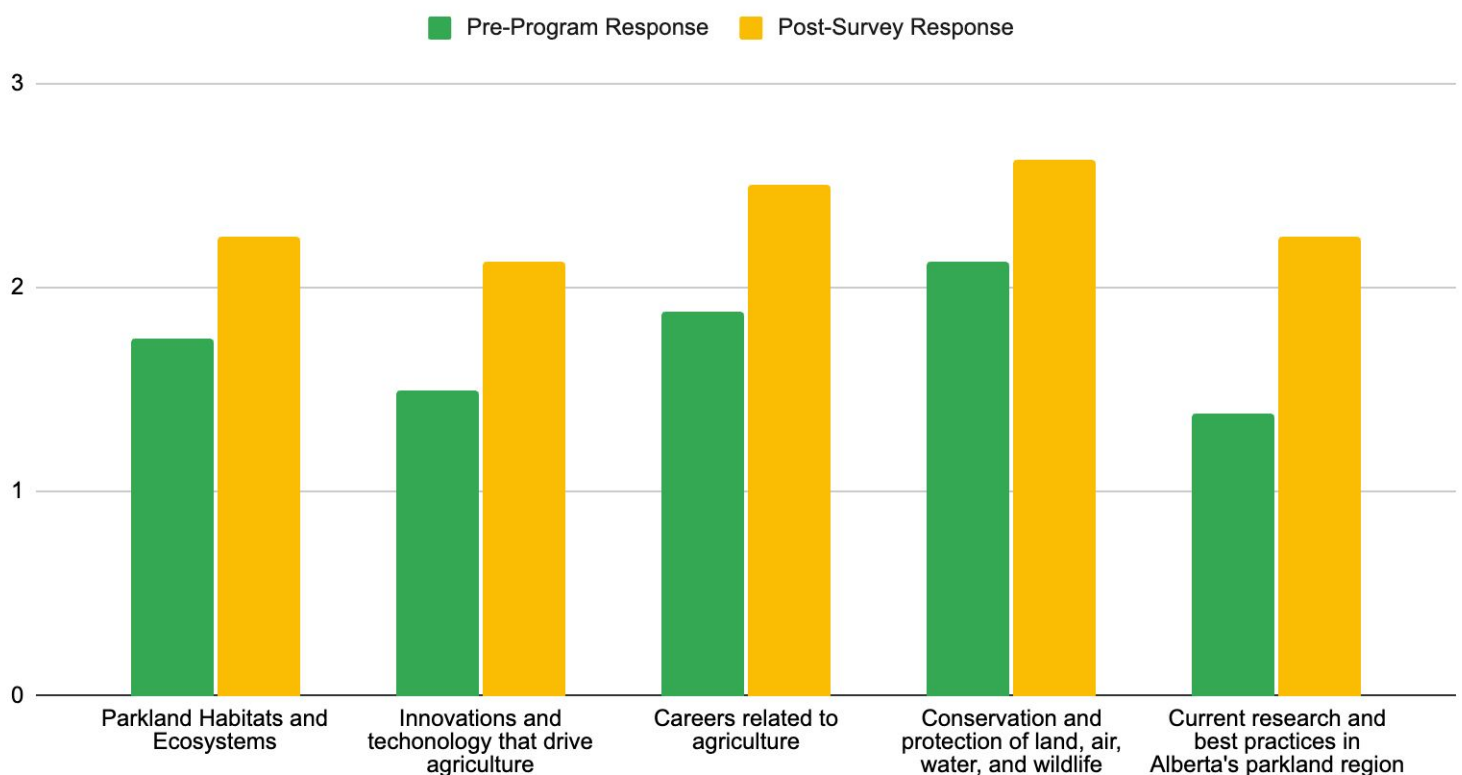
Inside Education is pleased with the many successes of the Agriculture in the Parkland program and the feedback for the event. It's estimated that **over 3,000 Alberta students will be impacted** by their teacher's commitment to professional development as a result of this event.

Between the pre-program and post-program surveys, participants indicated up to a **63% increase in knowledge** in topics including careers and innovations in agriculture, and research and best practices in the parkland ecoregion.

100% of respondents indicated that they felt the program was enjoyable, educational, balanced and a high-value PD opportunity and would recommend an Inside Education PD program to a colleague.

Participants rated their level of understanding of the major following themes

Ratings from "Don't know much about this", "Understand the basics", "Strong understanding" (scored from 1-3)



Summary and Futures

Inside Education is thrilled to have received overwhelmingly positive feedback from the participants on this PD event.

Inside Education is excited to continue the momentum of these agriculture-focused programs with classroom programs for Grades 3, 5, 6, 7, and senior high. We also look forward to hosting more Regional Agriculture Days for junior and senior high classes, Cultivate: Agriculture Youth Leadership Summit to be held in Edmonton from November 6-9th, and our week-long Summer Institute PD program in July 2026. We are currently working on a number of complementary programs for agriculture education at all grade levels including:

- Updated teacher's guide for the Running Water poster learning resource
- The coordination of Agriculture in the Classroom Canada's Little Green Thumbs program, and the Nutrients for Life Learning Garden grant in Alberta

We expect that demand for agriculture programs and resources will grow as teachers share their knowledge, ideas, and experience with their colleagues from across Alberta. We are committed to developing high-quality learning opportunities to support agriculture and environmental education in Alberta. Inside Education recognizes that agriculture is an important area of study for today's students; the key to creating a generation of informed stewards and decision makers.

For More Information Contact:

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