

TEACHER PROFESSIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

# Agriculture Innovations

May 30 - June 1, 2019  
Olds & Central Alberta

An experiential learning event  
for educators to gain  
first-hand information about  
innovations in Alberta's  
agriculture sector.

**Inside Education** developed the 2019 Agriculture Innovations education program for teachers to explore what agriculture means for the province of Alberta, Albertans, and the classroom. The program was designed to provide an overview of agricultural practices in Alberta, as well as insight into recent improvements, research, and innovations in the industry. The program aimed to build awareness and understanding of agriculture and provide teachers with ideas and resources to enhance natural resources education in the classroom.

Building upon 34 years of experience designing experiential education programs using a multiple perspectives approach, Inside Education endeavoured to provide teachers with a comprehensive overview of agriculture in Alberta through speaker sessions, tours, workshops, and networking.

We are excited to share the outcomes and impacts from this unique teacher professional development program. The demand for this program in addition to overwhelmingly positive feedback from teacher participants indicates a strong desire for future agriculture education initiatives in Alberta.



# The Program

Through this dynamic program 28 educators:

- **CONNECTED** with the people, places, and perspectives that give insight into Alberta’s agriculture sector
- **DISCOVERED** how a variety of agricultural operations work
- **PARTICIPATED** in a unique professional development opportunity that modeled a hands-on, experiential and inquiry-based approach to learning
- **CONSIDERED** issues and innovations through discussions with agriculture experts representing multiple perspectives
- **CREATED** lasting networks with like-minded educators from across the province
- **ENHANCED** their lessons with current, accurate and meaningful agriculture content that will engage future generations of environmental stewards

Working with industry experts Inside Education developed a dynamic program that exposed teachers to on-the-ground operations and innovations representative of the agriculture sector in Alberta. From touring a small organic farm to a provincial government research centre we created a one-of-a-kind education event that inspired conversations, ideas and classroom connections.

## PROGRAM THEMES

Looking at Innovations in Agriculture through...

- **Technology/Infrastructure**
- **Ecology**
- **Adaptation**
- **Cooperation**
- **Community**

## PROGRAM AT A GLANCE

### Thursday, May 30

Introduction & Getting to know each other

An Overview of Alberta’s Agriculture

Sustainability, Innovation, and Climate:  
Speaker Panel

Eagle Creek Farms:  
Organic farm and passive solar greenhouse tour

### Friday, May 31

Zuidhof Feeders - Feedlot Tour

Gruger Family Fungi  
Indoor vertical mushroom farm tour

Crop Diversification Centre North:  
Alberta Plant Health Lab, Apiculture &  
Agroforestry Sessions

### Saturday, June 1

Lacombe Composite High School: Innovation  
through Education Initiatives

Education Workshop:  
From Farm to Classroom

# The Participants

The 2019 Agriculture Innovations PD Program attracted many high-quality applications from which Inside Education invited 28 highly engaged educators with varying level of experience and exposure to agriculture in Alberta. This group represented both formal and non-formal educators working with students from preschool through post-secondary.

One of the goals of the program was to introduce participants to current agricultural practices and provide teachers with information and valuable experiences. The survey results suggest that the opportunity to discuss classroom connections with colleagues from across the province was a highly valuable component of the program and this network will go a long way toward supporting program participants.

- Plum Asher** | Maria Montessori Education Centre, *Calgary*
- Leah Baker** | Glenrose Hospital School, *Edmonton*
- Lindsay Barrett** | G.H. Dawe Community School, *Red Deer*
- Alicia Berger** | Elizabeth Barrett Elementary School, *Cochrane*
- Anne-Marie Bokenfohr** | Richard F. Staples Secondary School, *Westlock*
- Taylor Burwash** | Richard F. Staples Secondary School, *Westlock*
- Matt Chomistek** | The Farm, *Airdrie*
- Christina Cleland** | Patricia Heights, *Edmonton*
- Shaun Donald** | E.S. Laird Middle School, *Lloydminster*
- Vianny Fenske** | Glenmeadows, *Calgary*
- Sanaa Gangji** | Bowmont Community Preschool, *Calgary*
- Tammy Gauvreau** | Lago Lindo, *Edmonton*
- Kirsty Hansen** | Carmangay Outreach School, *Carmangay*
- Candy Hildebrand** | St. Bonaventure, *Edmonton*
- Jen Just** | Archbishop Jordan Catholic High School, *Sherwood Park*
- Alison Katzko** | Edgemont Elementary School, *Calgary*
- Jacque Linton** | École John Wilson Elementary School, *Innisfail*
- Harmony Lloyd** | Fernie Secondary School, *Fernie, BC*
- Marshall Mah** | Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation School, *Glenevis*
- Roger Moore** | Norquest College & University of Alberta, *Edmonton*
- Barb Olson** | Calgary Board of Education, *Calgary*
- Roopa Patel** | James Fowler High School, *Calgary*
- Mandi Rietmann** | Byemoor School, *Byemoor*
- Jamie Roworth** | Altario School, *Altario*
- Jacinth Brissett** | Jack James High School, *Calgary*
- Mark Turner** | The Farm, *Airdrie*
- Robert Vien** | École Voyageur, *Cold Lake*
- Amy Watson** | École Charlie Killam School, *Camrose*



“Thank you so much for putting together this amazing educational experience. We had the opportunity to see first-hand so many different aspects of the agriculture and food industries and ask questions directly to industry experts. Every speaker and site visit brought us new information and points of view. This is the kind of experience you can draw from for many years.”

- Alicia Berger  
Elizabeth Barrett Elementary School  
Cochrane, AB





*“You are treated really well and you will learn things that you didn't know you didn't know. The programs are organized so well and the opportunity to learn from experts as well as colleagues is so powerful.”*

**- Christina Cleland, Edmonton**



*I will infuse the ideas and content within my English Language Arts classes. Who says students can't plant in Language Arts? Also, student research will be based on an agricultural and FNMI perspective. Some planning over the summer and I will create something amazing!*

**- Candi Hildebrand, Calgary**



*“As I rework my courses for the upcoming school year, I hope to integrate the information I learned. Particularly, I hope to incorporate more industry/business/innovation /real-world connections into the content I teach.”*

**- Amy Watson, Camrose**

## Classroom Connections

*“I will use this experience to bolster my instruction. My understanding of the breadth of agriculture in Alberta (like the vertical mushroom farm! So cool!) has increased dramatically and I will work to expose my students to the wide variety of opportunities for agricultural careers!”*

**- Matt Chomistek, Airdrie**

*“I hope to incorporate more environmental projects in my school with my Environment Club.”*

**- Tammy Gauvreau, Edmonton**

*“Integrate into hands on and field visits around our community and look at bring more ag into ans around the school so kids can see and do it at school.”*

**- Shaun Donald, Lloydminster**

## Partners, Expert Guests, and Tour Hosts



We extend deep thanks to our program partners for their laudable support of the 2019 Agriculture Innovations Program. Participants voiced their appreciation for making the program such an accessible opportunity and everyone expressed gratitude at being provided a full scholarship to attend the 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 ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES EDUCATION IS GREATLY APPRECIATED.**

*“Thanks to all who made this and other PDs possible for teachers and students. You are empowering us to create a mindset and scope of possibilities for future generations. There is indeed hope for the agri-focused mind.*

*Thanks a lot!”*

**-Jacinth Brissett,  
Jack James High School, Calgary**

**Dr. Frank Robinson** | *University of Alberta*  
**Christina Williams** | *Feedlot Health Management Services*  
**Christine Campbell** | *ALUS Canada*  
**Daniel Chappell** | *Olds College*  
**Derek Leahy** | *Rural Routes to Climate Solutions*  
**John Mills** | *Eagle Creek Farms*  
**Martin Zuidhof** | *Zuidhof Feeders*  
**Rachel Gruger** | *Gruger Family Fungi*  
**Krista Zuzak** | *Alberta Ag & Forestry*  
**Sam Muirhead** | *Alberta Ag & Forestry*  
**Luke Wonneck** | *Agroforestry and Woodlot Extension Society (AWES)*  
**Steve Schultz** | *Lacombe Composite High School*

# To the supporting partners of the Inside Education Agricultural Innovations PD...

*"I want to thank you for the opportunity to attend the Agricultural Innovations PD opportunity. It was an incredible experience, and it will have an incredible impact on my teaching. The students in my care will be much more knowledgeable about agriculture than they would have had I not attended this three day experience.*

*I come from a farming background. My dad and grandma had a dairy farm, and we calved out around 100 beef cows. I also worked on a feedlot and the farms that provided the feed for the animals. I thought I knew what agriculture in Alberta was like. Was I ever mistaken.*

*The Inside Education PD gave me the chance to see the incredible scope of practices and production there is in Alberta Agriculture. It was truly incredible to see innovations in traditional agri-businesses and brand new food production techniques. It truly opened my eyes to the vastness of the opportunities in this industry.*

*We were also presented with an incredibly balanced view of food production in Alberta. All sides were examined and the benefits and drawbacks of many approaches to food production were looked at and weighed fairly.*

*This was a truly great opportunity. Inside Education offers the best PD in the province as far as I am concerned, and both myself and the students I teach appreciate your support of their efforts."*

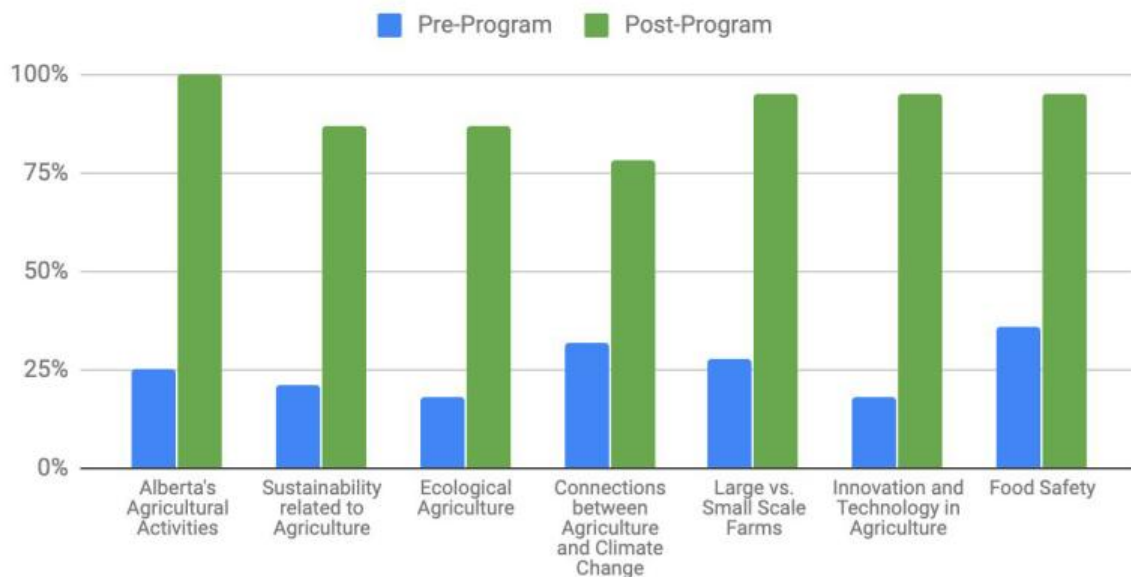
**Matt Chomistek**  
**The Farm, Airdrie**



# Program Impact and Feedback

Inside Education is proud of the many successes of the Agriculture Innovations Program. The follow-up survey results indicate that it was an exceptional learning experience that will translate into meaningful classroom impact. Inside Education estimates that over **2400 students per year will benefit from the experience of 28 teacher participants** as they incorporate this program into their lessons. We are pleased to share our program feedback below.

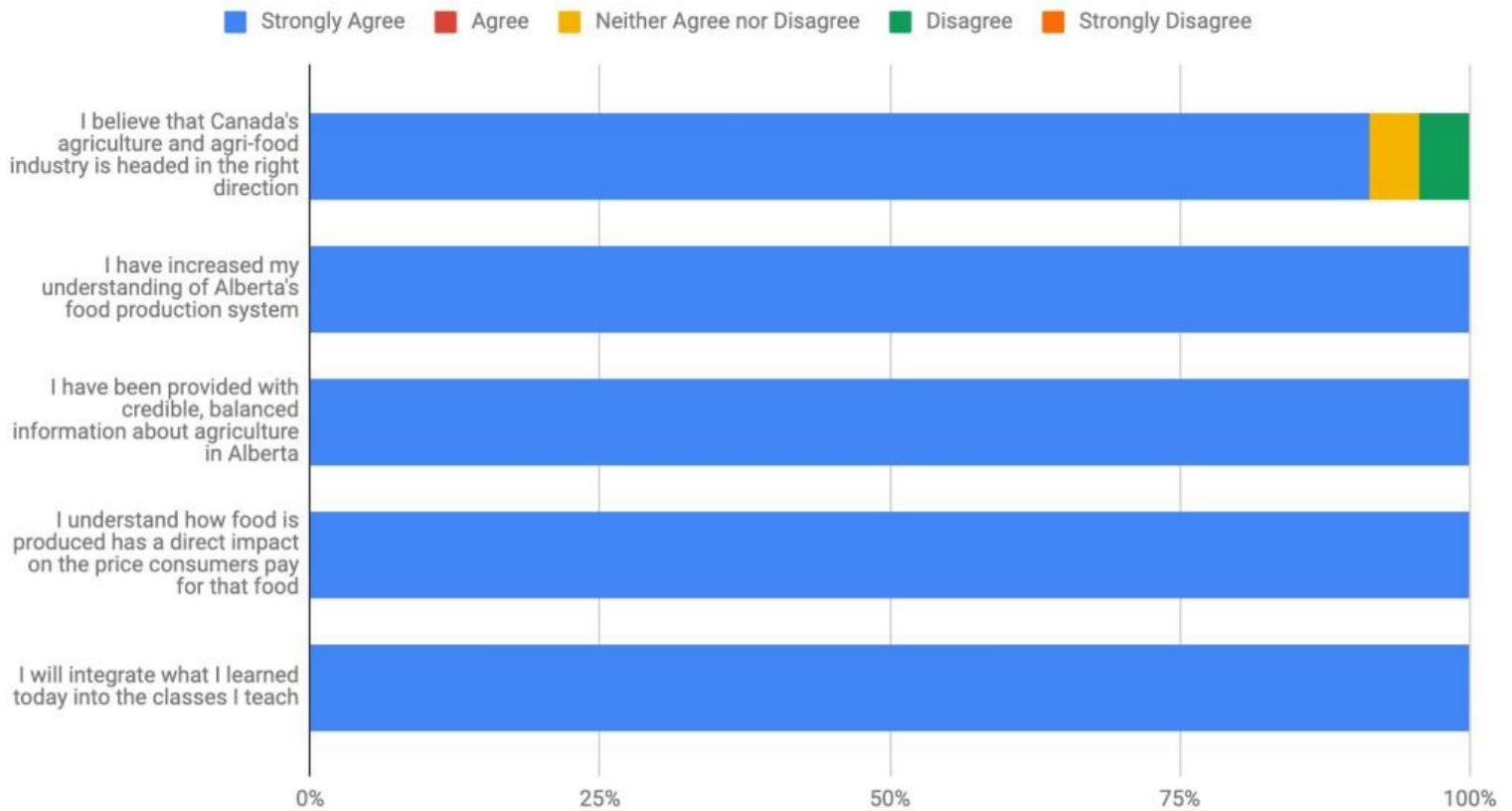
Participants who reported being confident to very confident in related topics pre- and post- PD program



Following the Agriculture Innovations program, an average of 91% of teacher participants reported being confident to very confident bringing various agriculture related topics into their classroom. The remainder of respondents reported “some to little confidence”, while no respondent selected “not at all confident.”



## Following the Agriculture Innovations PD Program...



*"This opportunity for gaining knowledge about agriculture in Alberta was AMAZING! Everything was well thought out and expertly linked to the topic."*

**- Barb Olsen**

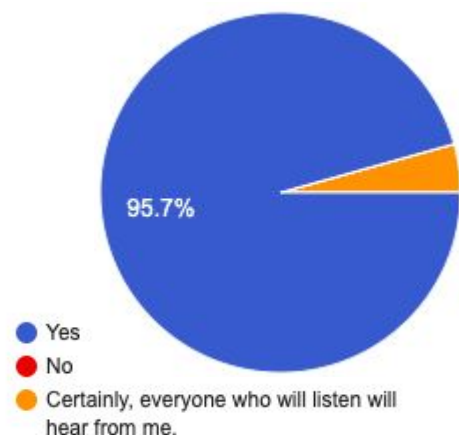
**Calgary Board of Education**

*"It's been the most powerful and outstanding PD day opportunity. I've left this PD totally empowered to make a difference in my new school...I'm really hopeful for the future of Albertans and Canadians."*

**- Vianny Fenske**

**Glenmeadow School, Calgary**

**Would you recommend an Inside Education Professional Development program to your colleagues?**



## Summary and Futures

Inside Education is thrilled by the outcomes of the 2019 Agriculture Innovations Teacher Professional Development Program. We received an overwhelmingly positive response from participants. We are currently working on embedding more agriculture content into our full suite of programs at Inside Education including Cultivate, our first-ever Agriculture themed provincial youth summit, slated for March 5-8 2020. We had a lot of interest in this PD program and will continue to offer opportunities for teachers and students. We recognize the anticipated challenges for our population and farmers and believe increasing agriculture literacy will be crucial in the goal of fostering a future generation of informed stewards and decision makers.

For more information, please contact:  
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