

For Immediate Release

Annual Canadian Agriculture Literacy Week Returns

Winnipeg, Manitoba, February 29, 2016 – Agriculture in the Classroom - Canada (AIRC-Canada), representing seven provincial Agriculture in the Classroom organizations will participate in the fifth annual Canadian Agriculture Literacy Week (CALW) in schools across the nation from February 28th to March 5th 2016.

Canadian Agriculture Literacy Week is a hands-on program that encourages children to learn about and celebrate agriculture in various ways, including reading books about farming, watching videos and meeting with farmers and other agricultural representatives. An important element to the success of Canadian Agriculture Literacy Week is the connection between students and local farmers and/or agriculture industry representatives.

This year, Agriculture in the Classroom-Canada organizations will deliver Canadian Agriculture Literacy Week programming to over 20,000 students in over 500 classrooms across Canada.

“We are thrilled to participate in the fifth annual Canadian Agriculture Literacy Week,” said Sara Shymko, AIRC-Canada Director. “In Canada, most families are two or three generations away from the farm. CALW provides an opportunity to help all young Canadians understand the importance and value of agriculture. As consumers, our personal connection with agriculture can affect our food product selection. Knowledge of local farm communities positively impacts public support for a viable agricultural sector in our country.”

The Canadian Agriculture Literacy Week initiative is made possible through generous core funding from Farm Credit Canada.

“As the agriculture industry grows, so does the need for additional talented, energetic and well-educated young people,” said Michael Hoffort, FCC president and CEO. “Given that one in eight jobs in Canada are tied to the agri-food industry, there are a lot of opportunities for young people. Ag Literacy Week can stimulate some ag passion at an early age.”

In Manitoba, a new educational partnership with Manitoba Pulse & Soybean Growers (MPSG) will heighten awareness of the province's \$600-million/year pulse and soybean industry. “Education is key during the 2016 *International Year of Pulses*,” says MPSG executive director Francois Labelle, “and our collaboration with AIRC-Manitoba is a wonderful way to deliver the message that pulses are good for people and good for the planet.”

Manitoba pulse farmers will take part in classroom activities in several communities, joined by the MPSG Kid Bean mascot and community engagement team. Winnipeg city councilor Marty Morantz will be at the Winnipeg launch on Monday, February 29th at Ecole Tuxedo Park School at 1:30 p.m. while Altona area pulse farmer, Kyle Friesen, will be at Parkland Elementary School in Winkler at 9:30 a.m.

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Agriculture in the Classroom Canada is a non-profit organization made up of provincial AITC organizations working together to enhance the knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of agriculture. AITC- Canada achieves this goal through national initiatives, sharing of information and educational resources, development of educational programs aimed at enhancing agricultural classroom literacy, and coordination of professional development opportunities.

Follow AITC Canada and Canadian Agriculture Literacy Week [@AITCCanada](#) [#CALW16](#)

Contact AITC-Canada at aitc-canada.ca for a list of participating provinces and to find out more.

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