

# Alberta Open Farm Days



# What is Open Farm Days?

- Alberta Open Farm Days is a province-wide event inviting Albertans to learn about and experience rural life.
  - Saturday: a series of culinary events around the province
  - Sunday: a province wide open house of participating farms
- Visitors are treated to authentic and educational rural experiences.
  - A backstage pass for visitors to see farms firsthand and meet the farmers
  - An opportunity to learn where food come from and how it is produced

# Where It All Began

- Started in 2001 in New Brunswick by the Agricultural Alliance of New Brunswick
- Since 2001 several other provinces have joined in



# Our Goals

- Albertans understand how their food is made and where their food comes from.
- Albertans receive an experiential learning opportunity to connect with rural lifestyles.
- More farmers are introduced to the concept and business opportunities provided through Ag-tourism.
- Albertans are more aware of Ag-tourism operators throughout Alberta

# Benefits of the Program

✿ Builds connections

✿ Become ambassadors

✿ Terrific marketing opportunity

✿ Increases tourism opportunities



# Who Participates?

- Farmers
  - Grain
  - Beef / Bison
  - Dairy
  - Sheep
  - Mixed
  - U-Pick
  - Apiary
  - Winery
  - etc.....
- Chefs
- Ag-tourism Operations
- Ag Societies
- Farmers' Markets

# Who Attends?

- Families
- Farmers
- New residents
- People who are interested in agriculture



# The Farm Experience

- Guided and self-guided tours
- Wagon rides
- Visit with farm animals
- Wash and sort eggs
- Pick vegetables and berries
- Learn about plant varieties
- Listen to speakers
- Cooking demonstrations
- Tastings
- Beehive viewings
- Purchase farm fresh products





# The Culinary Experience



- Field Dinner
- Pig Roast
- Sampling
- Wine/Mead Tastings

# What Happened in 2019?

- 150 participating farms
- 31 culinary events and experiences
- Over 42,000 visits across the province
- \$262,000 in food and on-farm sales



# Growth

- Farm Participation

2018: 117

2019: 150



28%

- Culinary Participation

2018: 20

2019: 31



55%

- Visits

2018: 23,543

2019: 42,500



81%

- Food and On-farm Sales

2017: \$189,383

2018: \$262,427



39%

# Alberta Open Farm Days 2020

- August 15 and 16, 2020
- Open Houses and Culinary events both Saturday and Sunday
- Plan your route at [www.albertafarmdays.ca](http://www.albertafarmdays.ca)



# Success Stories!

“For us, the response was overwhelming-- people seemed very happy and stayed a long time--really seemed to be enjoying the experience.”

- Riqueza Riding Academy, Farm Participant



# Success Stories!

“Even local participants were able to see farms in the area that they did not know about previously, participants from outside of the area were very impressed with what we had to offer and this gave local participants a new view of our area and maybe even a greater appreciation of what we have to offer.”

- Winfield Ag Society, Culinary Event Host

# What did visitors enjoy most?

- “My granddaughter is visiting. She is from B.C. and not used to farm animals, how things are made, or where the products come from. I enjoyed watching her participate in the various activities.” –Big Country Agricultural Society Tour
- “Watching a calf being born!” –Primrose Farms
- “Discovering new sites and experiences around Alberta, learning Alberta’s history, and meeting interesting people” –Lacombe Blacksmith Shop Museum



# What did visitors enjoy most?

- Animals
- Tours
- Talking to the farmer
- Wagon Rides
- Shopping Local
- Education





# Tips for Success

- Recruit your neighbour
- Market Market Market
- Use the Host Login Page – Password: “OFD Host”
- Engage the five senses
- Have something to sell
- Review your activity description
- Have a welcome desk
- Recruit volunteers
- Parking
- Make sure you are available to tell your story

# For More Information:

Website:

[www.albertafarmdays.com](http://www.albertafarmdays.com)

Email:

[openfarmdays@gov.ab.ca](mailto:openfarmdays@gov.ab.ca)

Phone:

780-638-4302

**Instagram:**

@openfarmdays

**Twitter:**

@OpenFarmDays

#Abfarmdays

**Facebook:**

Alberta Open Farm Days

