



February 24, 2026

To: All Chief Administrative Officers
Alberta Municipal Districts and Counties

Re: **Concerns over the closure of the Lacombe Research and Development Centre**

I am writing today on behalf of Lacombe County Council regarding the federal government's announced decision to close the Lacombe Research and Development Centre (LRDC). At our most recent Council meeting, the following resolution was passed:

That Lacombe County request that Alberta's Municipal Districts and Counties advocate to the Government of Canada (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada) to reverse its decision to close the Lacombe Research and Development Centre.

We are therefore reaching out to request letters of support urging the federal government to reverse this closure.

WHY THIS MATTERS PROVINCIALY

- **Economic Harm:** Loss of more than 100 stable, professional jobs in a small labour market, including the erosion of a major employment anchor for the region.
- **Student Pipeline Loss:** Reduction in hands-on student placements, mentorship, and early-career opportunities that are essential for Canada's agri-food workforce.
- **Research Disruption:** Termination or relocation of long-term scientific trials that cannot be replicated without irreparable loss of data and infrastructure value.
- **Ecosystem Damage:** Undermining the research cluster that connects academia, industry, and public-sector innovation in Central Alberta.
- **National Capacity Risks:** A weakening of Canada's independent agricultural research base at a time of heightened global uncertainty.

ABOUT THE LACOMBE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

For 119 years, the Lacombe Research and Development Centre has been a cornerstone of Canadian agricultural innovation and public-interest research. The Centre currently delivers high-value applied research, including active projects in integrated crop protection, climate-smart agriculture, livestock and crop genetics, production efficiency, and is **Canada's only federally operated meat sciences program**. Its long-term trials and decades of continuous data cannot be transferred or replicated elsewhere without irreparably damaging national research capacity.

The Centre is not only scientifically significant, but also a critical contributor to the identity, sustainability, and economic stability of the City of Lacombe, Lacombe County, and surrounding municipalities.

The proposed closure also comes at a time of global instability, trade pressures, and increasing climate-related agricultural challenges - circumstances that demand more, not less, investment in independent, public-interest agricultural research. Canada relies on robust, science-based information to ensure food security, strengthen competitiveness, and support producers in making informed decisions. The elimination of this centre weakens that capacity at a moment when it is most needed.

REQUEST FOR SUPPORT

We request that your municipality send a letter urging the federal government to reverse its decision to close the Lacombe Research and Development Centre.

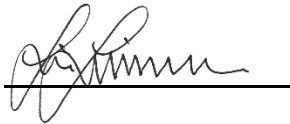
If you are supportive of our request, please forward your letters to:

The Honourable Heath MacDonald
Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
1341 Baseline Road
Tower 7, Floor 8
Ottawa, ON K1A 0C5

Please also forward a copy of your letter to your respective MPs and MLAs.

Thank you for supporting this urgent matter affecting Alberta's agricultural future.

Sincerely,



Tim Timmons, CLGM
County Manager, Lacombe County