

Executive Summary

Results Driven Agriculture Research (RDAR) supports producer-led research that helps Alberta's agriculture sector remain competitive, profitable, productive, and resilient. This Strategic Framework sets out how RDAR will focus its investments and partnerships from 2026 to 2030 so research results move more quickly into practical use on farms, ranches, and across the agri-food value chain.

Agriculture is changing quickly. Alberta producers and processors are responding to climate variability, water pressures, high input costs, labour shortages, supply chain disruptions, animal and crop disease risks, and shifting market expectations. At the same time, new technologies, improved production practices, value-added processing opportunities, and better knowledge-sharing tools are creating new ways to strengthen the sector. RDAR's role is to help focus research investment where it can make a measurable difference for producers, the public, and Alberta's economy.

RDAR's mandate is to target strategic investments in producer-led, results-driven agriculture research that powers the competitiveness, profitability, productivity, and sustainability of agriculture in Alberta. The organization's vision is that Alberta's agriculture sector achieves its full potential through the acceleration and adoption of results-driven research.

Strategic Direction

Over the next five years, RDAR will place greater emphasis on adoption. Alberta does not lack innovation; the challenge is ensuring that research outcomes are demonstrated, understood, adapted, and used by producers and industry. RDAR will support this shift by engaging producers early, selecting projects more deliberately, funding work with clear economic and practical value, and helping trusted organizations share research results with the people most likely to use them.

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The Framework is organized around four strategic priorities: improving profitability, productivity, and competitiveness; accelerating the adoption of resilient practices and science-based management approaches on farm; catalyzing and empowering people and organizations; and maintaining exemplary governance.

- **Profitability, productivity, and competitiveness:** RDAR will invest in outcome-driven projects that help producers reduce costs, manage risks, increase yields, improve animal and crop health, expand market opportunities, and support value-added growth in Alberta.
- **Adoption of resilient practices:** RDAR will support practical approaches that help producers protect land, water, livestock, and long-term productivity while maintaining profitability. This includes demonstrating practices under local conditions and sharing credible return-on-investment information.
- **People and organizations:** RDAR will continue to convene, connect, and strengthen the organizations, facilities, researchers, and extension networks that help move research into practice across Alberta's regions.
- **Exemplary governance:** RDAR will maintain disciplined investment decisions, transparent reporting, independent review, and strong stewardship of public funds.

How RDAR Delivers Impact

RDAR will move from broad calls for proposals toward more targeted and selective investments. This approach will help ensure that funded projects align with industry priorities, demonstrate clear value for producers, and have a realistic path to adoption. Project selection will place greater weight on economic benefit, producer relevance, partnerships, leverage from other funders, credible science, and evidence that research results can be used in real-world conditions.

RDAR will also advance sector-focused strategies where practical action can address clear opportunities or risks. Areas identified in the Framework include poultry supply chain and health, adoption of genomics in the beef industry, pollinator health, canola meal market development, and feed and forage resilience. These initiatives reflect RDAR's focus on solutions that can strengthen supply chains, improve competitiveness, reduce risk, and support growth across the agri-food sector.

A central part of the Framework is research extension: making research results easier to find, understand, and apply. RDAR will work with associations, researchers, professional advisers, veterinarians, Certified Crop Advisers, agrologists, post-secondary institutions, and other trusted partners to help translate research findings into practical guidance. This work is intended to shorten the time between research completion and on-farm use.

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Accountability and Public Value

RDAR is accountable to producers, members, and public funders. The Framework reinforces the need for transparent decision-making, responsible stewardship of public funds, and reporting that shows whether investments are

delivering results. RDAR will continue to track performance through measures such as adoption of practices and technologies, new crop varieties seeded, new products marketed, jobs created through projects, private investment attracted, member satisfaction, and the total value of the managed portfolio.

The Framework also recognizes a period of financial transition. Current federal-provincial agriculture funding agreements and the On-Farm Climate Action Fund are scheduled to conclude in March 2028. RDAR has already committed most available funds for the near term so projects can proceed, while continuing to prepare for future funding arrangements and maintaining focus on high-value investments.

Overall, this Strategic Framework positions RDAR to increase the public value of agricultural research by investing in priorities that matter to producers, supporting practices that improve resilience and productivity, strengthening Alberta's research and extension system, and maintaining the trust required to steward public funds responsibly.

