
LAC STE. ANNE COUNTY URGES FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO RECONSIDER CLOSURE OF LACOMBE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

Sangudo, Alberta — Friday, February 6, 2026

Lac Ste. Anne County is calling on the federal government to reconsider the planned closure of the Lacombe Research and Development Centre, citing serious concerns about the regional and long-term impacts on research, innovation, and producer support across rural Alberta and the broader Canadian agricultural sector.

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada recently confirmed plans to shut down the Lacombe Centre a historic agricultural research station, as part of broader efforts to reduce the size of the federal public service, affecting research facilities and several satellite research farms. Notices to affected employees—more than 1,000 across all sites—were issued in late January as part of the workforce reduction initiative.

“For more than a century, this research station has been a cornerstone of agricultural advancement in Western Canada,” said Lac Ste. Anne County Reeve, Jurgen Preugschas. “Once this facility’s specialized land, long-term trials, and institutional knowledge are lost, they cannot be replaced.”

The closure is expected to have significant ramifications for advancing agricultural innovation and scientific knowledge, eroding Canada’s research capacity at a time when producers face increasing climate, economic, and market pressures.

Loss of Long-Term Research Capacity

Agricultural research sites like Lacombe generate decades of continuous data crucial to food security, climate resilience, and innovation. The interruption of these programs undermines decades of scientific progress. Of particular concern is the diminishing availability of independent, publicly funded research. For decades, the Lacombe Centre has delivered science-based information free from commercial influence, supporting informed decision-making on meat production, crop and livestock management, emerging technologies, and long-term sustainability.

The County is concerned that as federal, arm’s length research capacity declines, producers across rural Alberta will have fewer trusted sources of unbiased information—a gap that cannot be readily filled by private industry or short-term project funding.

Call for Federal Reconsideration

Lac Ste. Anne County is urging the Government of Canada to:

- Pause the closure decision immediately to allow for a full assessment of regional and sector-wide impacts;
- Engage in meaningful consultation with local governments, producer groups, and agricultural stakeholders, and;
- Explore alternative approaches that preserve Canada’s long-term agricultural research capacity.

“The value of this institution extends far beyond its physical footprint,” added Reeve Preugschas. “It is essential to safeguarding Canadian agricultural competitiveness and innovation.”

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Media Contact:
Jurgen Preugschas | Reeve
Lac Ste. Anne County
TEL 780.204.2500
jpreugschas@LSAC.ca