



July 9, 2013

Experience the flavour of rural life during Open Farm Days

Farmers and ranchers across the province invite Albertans to experience rural life during Alberta's first [Open Farm Days](#), August 24 and 25.

Open Farm Days festivities will kick off on Saturday, August 24, when talented chefs will team up with local producers to create farm-to-table culinary events. Details of these special events will be available at www.albertafarmdays.com later this month.

On Sunday, August 25, more than 40 farms will open their gates free of charge to the public for a fun and educational look at rural life. Visitors will be treated to winery and honey tours, u-pick farms, horse-drawn hayrides, a corn maze, a chance to get up close with animals, and much more. Visitors will have the opportunity to buy crafts, fresh produce and products directly from the source, while learning about how farmers and ranchers contribute to our communities.

"Open Farm Days gives Albertans an opportunity to discover the province beyond the city limits," said Verlyn Olson, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development. "This event will highlight the tremendous work our farmers and ranchers are doing to grow the province's agriculture, agri-food and ag-tourism industries."

Alberta is home to 20 per cent of all farming operations in Canada and 10 per cent of all agriculture and food-related tourism businesses. Open Farm Days will showcase and foster Alberta's strong economic and cultural connections to the agriculture industry, while promoting and growing tourism across the province.

"Whether you're from around the corner or around the world, Alberta offers the authentic, hands-on experiences that visitors are looking for. Exploring Alberta's backyard during Open Farm Days is an ideal place to start," said Dr. Richard Starke, Minister of Tourism, Parks and Recreation. "Tourism in Alberta's rural communities contributes more than \$1.5 billion to our economy each year, and Open Farm Days is a positive step towards seeing that figure grow."

Alberta Open Farm Days is a collaborative pilot project presented by the Government of Alberta, Ag for Life, the Alberta Culinary Tourism Alliance, the Alberta Association of Agricultural Societies, Travel Alberta, and more than 40 farms and ranches across the province.

"Ag for Life believes that a strong agricultural community, a strong agricultural economy makes for a strong Alberta," said David Sprague, CEO of Agriculture for Life. "Open Farm Days is a great opportunity for our farmers and ranchers to tell their story and demonstrate how their contribution benefits everyone. We're delighted to be part of Open Farm Days in Alberta."

Visit www.albertafarmdays.com for the latest information on events, participating farms and more. Follow Open Farm Days on [twitter](#) and like Open Farm Days on [Facebook](#).

- 30 -

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