



AGRICULTURE

HISTORY

Prince Albert Grand Council operates an agriculture development program in the district. There is one agrologist on staff to help plan and implement agricultural projects. This agriculture program has been servicing the needs of First Nations for over 35 years.

GOVERNANCE AND MANDATE

The Agriculture Program has a District Board that deals with agricultural issues and funding applications. There is a Board representative from each First Nation that contributes into the program along with a representative from the Women's Commission.

The Program's mandate includes the following objectives:

1. To promote the interest of First Nations and their membership in the agricultural industry.
2. To assist with technical information.
3. To develop viable farm business units.
4. To provide training in the different agricultural areas.
5. To assist in financial management and funding requirements.
6. To be proactive in developing new agricultural opportunities.

HIGHLIGHTS

The Prince Albert Grand Council Agriculture Program has a contribution program to assist farmers from participating First Nation Bands. The following Bands contributed over \$125,000 toward agricultural development this year: Wahpeton, Sturgeon Lake, Shoal Lake, Red Earth and Cumberland House and La Ronge. Over 100 projects were funded for our clients. We continue to work with Saskatchewan Indian Equity Foundation that provides loans to our farmers for livestock and equipment. Over the past couple of years, we have been receiving food trucks from Ontario with fruits, vegetables and canned goods. We distribute that food to our communities.

WAHPETON

Wahpeton has a small buffalo herd that they use for some economic development and for cultural/ceremonial purposes. PAGC assists with some purchases for livestock supplies and roundup costs.

Gardening is also popular on the reserve and we have workshops to assist them in their agricultural endeavors. One individual raises bees for honey. There is also a goat project for meat and milk. PAGC funds these small scale and gardening projects.

STURGEON LAKE

One of the major projects at Sturgeon Lake is their Buffalo Ranch. They run about 300 head. The calves are generally sold in the early winter. Some animals are also harvested for community use. The project employs 10 to 15 band members seasonally and 2 people on a regular basis. It provides training and hands on experience for individuals who want to work in the livestock field. We did a pasture and corral expansion recently.

There are also a number of cattle farming operations on the reserve. They also have their own haying equipment and hay lands, so they generally produce their own feed.

A couple of people also have small scale poultry and swine operations and sell at the farm gate.

These farmers use some of the contributions they get from PAGC to lever loans from financial institutions or Sask. Indian Equity Foundation.

Gardening is also getting more popular on the reserve. There is one large market garden that sells their produce and numerous other individual gardens. PAGC assists with training and purchases to help establish these gardens.

There has been some renewed interest in hunting, trapping and fishing and PAGC will assist with operating and small capital purchases.

SHOAL LAKE

Outfitting operations are active on Shoal Lake. They have American hunters come up and hunt deer, bear, moose, etc. PAGC helps with those projects, supporting infrastructure and capital costs.

There has also been an increase in gardening projects. There are individual gardens and a community garden. PAGC helped with tractor and tiller purchases and other garden development costs. PAGC also assists with training.

Trapping is popular at Shoal Lake and PAGC assists with associated purchases.

There are some individuals that have wild rice operations and they get assistance for equipment and wild rice patch development.

RED EARTH

Red Earth is starting to develop more gardens again. One individual works up the gardens with horses and plows. PAGC assists with garden developments and other associated costs along with training. This year they started a community garden.

There are also band members who have wild rice operations and PAGC helps them out with capital and operating costs.

There is also getting to be a renewed interest in traditional activities such as hunting, fishing and trapping. PAGC assists with trap and other purchases.

CUMBERLAND HOUSE

Cumberland House has some livestock operations and lots of pasture lands. The farmers put up their own hay.

Gardening is getting more popular. It always has had a lot of gardens, but there are more and larger ones now. PAGC assists with gardening and equipment supplies. This year a greenhouse was built at Little Red River. It did very well in its first year with a crop of tomatoes and green peppers.

Outfitting is common at Cumberland House and there are a few who have operations there. They cater mostly to Americans who come up to hunt deer, moose and bear. PAGC help these operators with capital and operating costs.

Also, trapping is popular and PAGC assists with training and trap purchases.

There are also a few wild rice operators in the community.

LA RONGE

La Ronge Band has a large community garden located at Little Red River. Over 10 acres of potatoes are grown and distributed to the different communities in the north.

There are numerous gardens in all of the communities, with garden workshops being well received.

Wild rice operators harvest rice from the numerous lakes in the area.

Trapping and fishing continue to be very popular.

MONTREAL LAKE

Montreal Lake has a number of gardens and PAGC assists with training and garden supplies.

