

# Rural Development Network

## FarmEd Pilot Project Information Session

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# What is FarmEd?

## **A project to:**

- Bridge the gap between agriculture and education
- Demonstrate the benefits of experiential learning
- Help schools in rural Alberta to create small-scale school farms or agriculture programs
- Help teachers feel supported and confident when integrating agriculture into the curriculum

# What Does FarmEd Entail?

- A “how-to toolkit”, written to help schools through the implementation of an agricultural program with adjacent resources and curriculum links
- 1-2 pilot school projects to test and build the toolkit (pending funding)
- The creation of a network of schools in Alberta with Agriculture programs, to work with one another and share knowledge & experiences
- Facilitation of professional development for teachers

# Focus of FarmEd

- Students in grades 7–12
- Rural schools in Alberta
- Best practice for **raising chickens** (layers & broilers), **bees**, and **growing produce** in a school setting
- Providing resources and templates for schools/teachers to mitigate common mis-steps and demystify the implementation process



# What does a pilot school farm look like?

- Whatever you'd like! As long as it fits your school
- Garden boxes, hydroponic towers, chicken coops, bee hives, compost/vermiculture
- Want to ensure there is room to grow and tailor the operation to be self-sustaining



# What does a pilot school farm look like?



Altario School Farm, October 2021

# What does it mean to be a pilot school?

- Your school will have access to resources and curriculum links in the toolkit
- RDN Agri-foods team will help you to:
  - Create a vision & implementation plan
  - Connect with producers, mentors, industry stakeholders, other schools
  - Build capacity for grant writing/fundraising/obtaining sponsorship
- Each pilot school will receive funding if secured by the RDN (applications pending)

# Some examples of resources

- Direct links to the curriculum for grades 7-12 with resources and activities
- Template for an Expression of Interest Survey to gauge community support
- Examples of different types of fundraising
- A budget template
- Best practice guidelines from industry experts



# What *else* does it mean to be a pilot school?

- We will be using the pilot experience to test and refine the toolkit from what we learn together
- RDN will evaluate the project through:
  - Facilitation of pre & post project student surveys
  - Facilitation of focus groups and/or interviews with students, teachers, staff, and community members involved with the pilot project

# Are you ready to be a pilot school?

- Anyone within the eligibility criteria is welcome to apply
- We will help you determine whether you are ready through
  - The application process
  - An interview with RDN & school stakeholders



All we ask is that you really want it! Let's integrate agriculture and experiential learning into your education delivery.

# Eligibility Criteria

## Eligibility Criteria Includes:

- Schools must be in Alberta
- Schools must be rurally located (outside of the seven major centres in Alberta: Edmonton, Calgary, Red Deer, Lethbridge, Fort McMurray, Medicine Hat, and Grand Prairie)



# Eligibility Criteria

## **Other criteria that will be considered includes:**

- School interest in agriculture and/or experiential learning
- Land access or space to set up an experiential learning area
- Grades taught in the school
- Stage of existing program implementation if applicable

# Timeline of the Project

January 2022 –  
January 2023

## **December 17, 2021**

Application due date

## **January 2022**

- Successful applicants (two) will be notified
- Begin the engagement & planning process

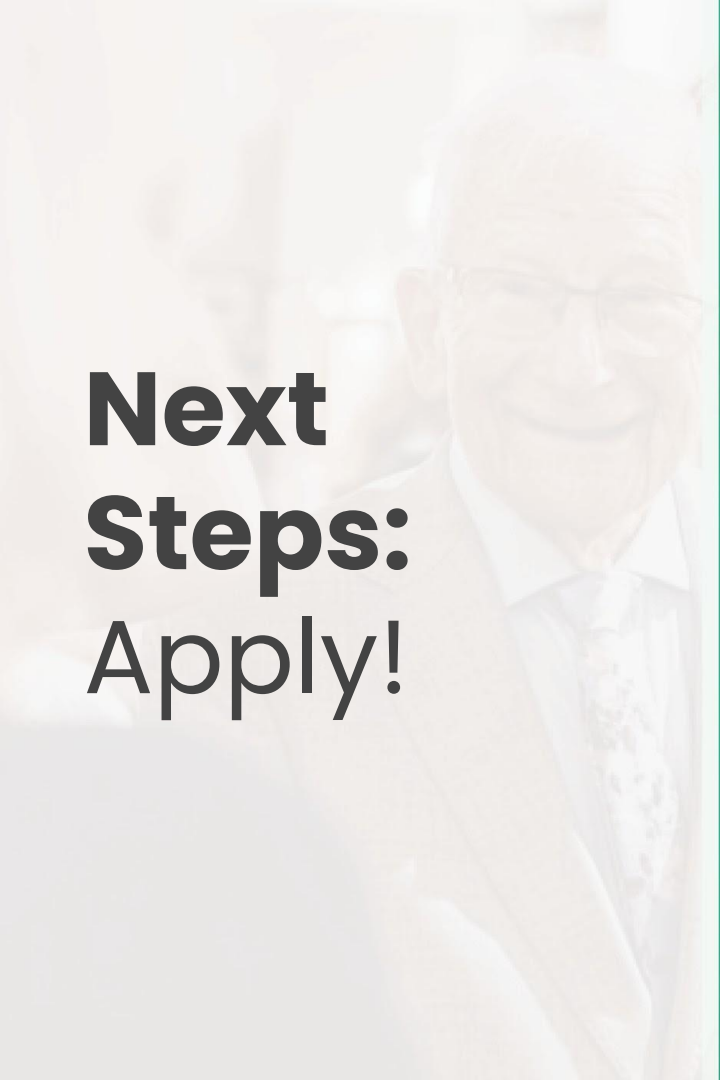
## **March 2022 – September 2022**

The fun part – Implementation!

## **January 2023**

The FarmEd Project wraps up & the toolkit is released.

*\*This does not mean your program ends, we want it to continue and grow!*



# Next Steps: Apply!

## How to Apply:

Apply on the RDN website

**[www.ruraldevelopment.ca](http://www.ruraldevelopment.ca)**

Or email me

**[connerp@ruraldevelopment.ca](mailto:connerp@ruraldevelopment.ca)**

**Open until midnight on  
December 22, 2021**

*\*takes approx 45mins to complete the  
application*



# Other Things Worth Looking Into

**Farm to School Cafeteria Grants  
&  
The School Food Map**

**[www.farmtocafeteriacanada.ca](http://www.farmtocafeteriacanada.ca)**

**Choosewell Healthy Community Grants**

**[www.communitieschoosewell.ca](http://www.communitieschoosewell.ca)**

# Q&A

Ask Away!

**We want to work with you to create successful programs that impact your students in the present and future**

**If you have any further questions contact me directly by email or phone**

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