

DISASTER RECOVERY PROGRAM HANDBOOK AGRICULTURAL OPERATIONS



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About this handbook

This handbook explains the disaster recovery programs offered by the Government of Alberta through the Alberta Emergency Management Agency. This handbook has been developed specifically for *agricultural operations*. If you belong to one of the other groups, please refer to the appropriate handbook.

Similar handbooks are available for:



small businesses
and
landlords



homeowners
and
tenants



not-for-profit
organizations,
institutions
and condo
associations

Other resources

This handbook only covers basic information. Funding decisions are based on the detailed information included in the *Alberta Disaster Assistance Guidelines*. For a copy of this document and application forms, visit the www.aema.alberta.ca website.



Is your agricultural operation eligible?

To be eligible for our disaster recovery programs, your agricultural operation must:



- Make money from the sale of agricultural goods;

- Be an agricultural operation with yearly gross revenues between \$6,000 and \$15,000,000, as reported for income tax purposes; and

- Be an owner operated enterprise in which owners act as the day-to-day managers.

For information about disaster recovery resources other than our programs, refer to the last page of this handbook.

Getting back to normal after a disaster

Disaster Recovery

Programs

Help People Like

You

Recovering after a disaster can be difficult. Whether you've experienced flooding, a tornado or some other disaster, the event has impacted your life. All you likely want now is to get your agricultural operation back to normal. To do that, you will need to clean, repair and replace your essential agricultural assets. The following story illustrates how our disaster recovery programs help people like you get back to normal after a disaster.

A Rancher's Story



The Larsen Ranch, located near Pincher Creek, has been in the family for generations. Two years ago, the river that runs through their property flooded. The flooding affected many people in the area. A disaster recovery program was set up and the Larsens applied as an agricultural operation.

Fortunately, their home was not damaged, but if it had been, they could have also applied to the program as homeowners. Since their business had insurance, their insurance company paid them to fix their tractor and baler. However, they were eligible for funding for items that are uninsurable. Our program helped them recover some of the costs of fixing a three-strand barbwire fence and replacing feed supplements lost during the flood.

What is a disaster recovery

Financial Help for Albertans

Our disaster recovery programs offer financial help to agricultural operations with assets that were damaged as the result of a disaster. The intent of our programs is to help return essential assets to their basic function. We are not able to provide financial assistance for assets that can be covered by another means, such as insurance. If the assets of your agricultural operation were recently damaged in a disaster, check our website at www.aema.alberta.ca to find out if a disaster recovery program has been put in place to help.

How a Disaster Recovery Program Is



When a disaster occurs, the local government applies for a program on behalf of its citizens. If the province approves the request, a disaster recovery program is set up. Each program helps people whose property within a specific geographical area was damaged during a specific period of time.

The province only approves requests for a disaster recovery program if:

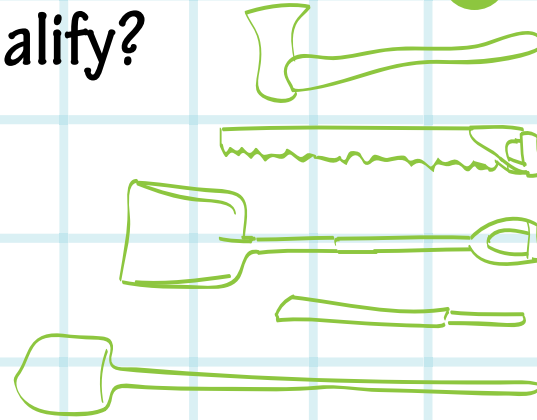
- The event is considered extraordinary;
- Insurance is not available to cover all damages and losses; and
- The event is widespread.

What types of damage and loss may qualify?

Recovering Essential Assets

Our disaster recovery programs offer funding to help you clean, repair and replace essential agricultural assets. To help you understand what this means, here are a few examples:

- A shed used to store farm tools and equipment may be considered essential. In contrast, a shed only used to store leisure items like skates and toboggans would not.
- While damaged hand tools may qualify for funding, a feed scale that was already broken when the flooding occurred will not.



Qualification Criteria

In order to be considered for funding from a disaster recovery program:

- The damages and losses must have been caused by the disaster;
- The damages and losses must have occurred during the dates and in the location defined by the program;
- The damages and losses must be uninsurable; and
- The assets must be essential to your agricultural operation.

Examples of items that typically qualify are provided later in this handbook under *Stage 4: Finish repairing or replacing damaged items*. For a detailed explanation, refer to the *Alberta Disaster Assistance Guidelines* on the www.aema.alberta.ca website.

What types of damage and loss do not qualify?

Non-Essential Items and Improvements Do Not Qualify

The Alberta Emergency Management Agency disaster recovery programs are not the same as insurance. Our programs offer funds to help you clean, repair and replace essential agricultural assets. The maximum we might cover is the value of the item before the disaster occurred. We do not necessarily cover damages and losses at their replacement value.

We help you return assets to their basic function. This means we do not help cover the cost of returning items to a standard above basic, nor do we cover the extra cost of making improvements. For example, if you had a 3-foot culvert and you replaced it with a 4-foot culvert, we may only cover what it would have cost to replace the 3-foot culvert.

Damages and Losses Covered by Other Resources Do Not Qualify



Our programs do not pay for damages and losses that could be covered by:

- Another government program;
- Legal action; or
- Insurance.

Sometimes insurance does not cover all of the causes of damages or losses. When this is the case, partial assistance may be available from our programs.

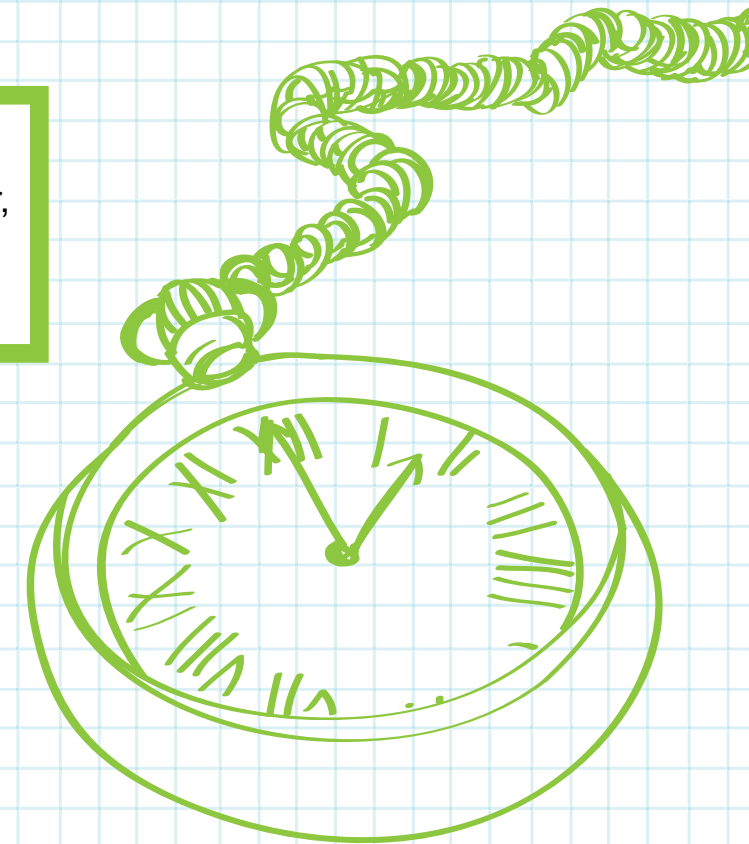
To help you understand what this means, here are a few examples of damages and losses that do not qualify:

- Farm machinery and mobile equipment
- Stored items that are not essential to the agricultural operation

Time Spent on Clean-Up



We may be able to help you with part of the cost of your time spent on clean-up. However, our program is **not** able to pay you back for lost production, income or wages.



Who manages the programs?

Alberta Emergency Management Agency

The Alberta Emergency Management Agency manages the disaster recovery programs. Part of Alberta Municipal Affairs, the Alberta Emergency Management Agency:

- Provides application forms and program information
- Evaluates applications
- Decides which damages and losses will be funded
- Issues payment if approved

We were given the authority to do this in the Alberta Regulation 51/94 of the Alberta Emergency Management Act. Our disaster recovery programs ensure that all Albertans share the costs of disasters.

Contact

You can contact us and submit applications by mail, phone, fax or email:

Disaster Recovery Programs

Alberta Emergency Management Agency

14515 – 122 Avenue NW

Edmonton, Alberta T5L 2W4

Phone: 1-888-671-1111 (toll-free) or 780-422-0300 (in the Edmonton area)

Fax: 780-427-1262

Email: drp.info@gov.ab.ca

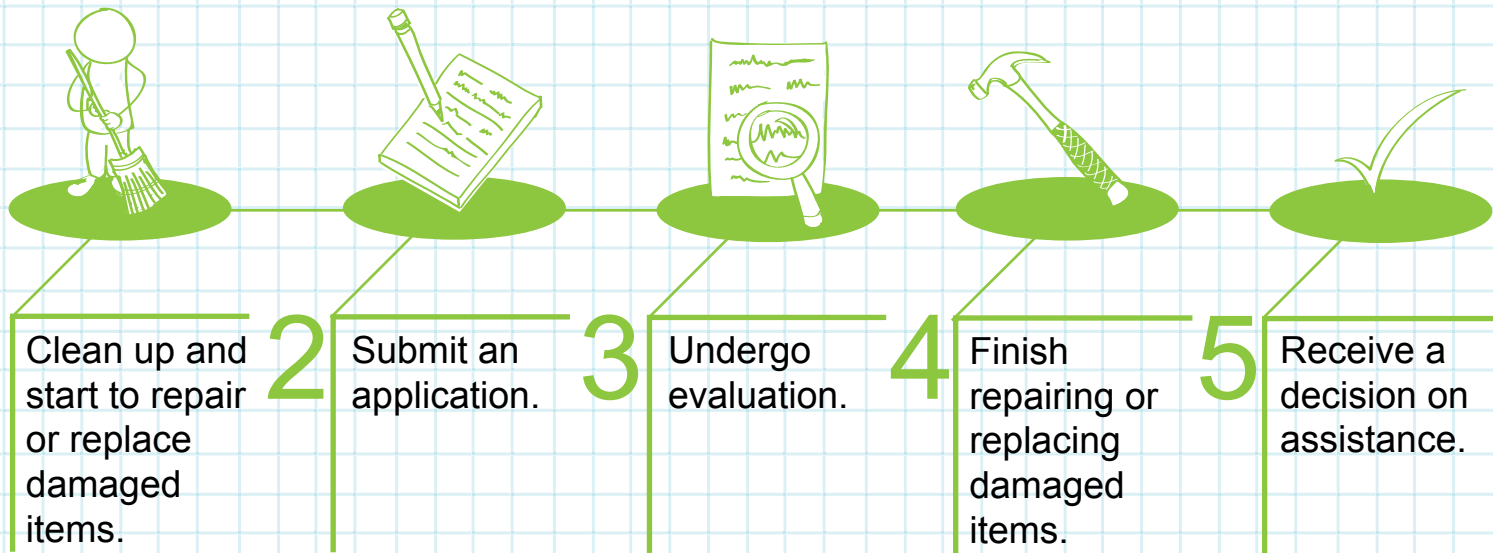
About Our Website

Visit our www.aema.alberta.ca website to:

- Find out if a disaster recovery program has been set up in your area.
- Obtain application forms.
- Learn more about the types of damages and losses that qualify.
- Read advice on what you can do to recover after a disaster.

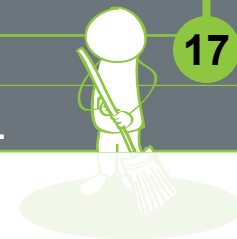
How can I request assistance?

As you seek help through a disaster recovery program, you will progress through the following stages:



Stage 1:

Clean up and start to repair or replace damaged items.



Ensure the Safety of Yourself and Others

If the people involved in your agricultural operation have evacuated, do not allow them to return until the authorities indicate it is safe to do so. You must also stay away until you are told it is safe to return. If you are in doubt about the safety of your buildings, seek advice from a professional.

Reduce Your Losses

After a disaster, you may be feeling overwhelmed. You may think you should wait until you know how much funding you will have. This is not a good idea! The best way you can reduce your losses is to start cleaning up and repairing or replacing damaged items right away.

It is up to you to protect your assets by making the best decisions you can, knowing that all of your costs may not qualify for assistance. If necessary, seek professional advice on what you should do to prevent further damage.

We are not able to provide the money in advance. You will need to pay for clean-up, repairs and replacement of damaged items. If we approve your application, you may receive funding at a later date for some of these expenses.

Not taking action to protect your assets can have far-reaching consequences. If you don't do everything that you can to prevent further damage, we may not cover additional damage that occurs.

Checklist of Actions

Immediately after the disaster:

- Contact your insurance company. Ask for a letter indicating your insurance coverage. (The required contents of this letter are explained under *Stage 2: Submit an application.*)
- Contact your local government and ask about the potential for a disaster recovery program in your area.
- Photograph all damaged and discarded property. Include both interior and exterior views.
- Keep copies of all receipts for clean-up, repairs and replacement of damaged items.
- Record all of the time spent on clean-up.

Stage 2: Submit an application.



Obtaining an Application

There are three ways you may apply:

- Visit a local registration centre, if one has been set up in your area.
- Fax or mail an application to our office. Application forms are available on our website at www.aema.alberta.ca. Refer to page 15 for contact information.
- Phone or email our office. We will mail an application to you.

Your local government will decide on the best way to share application information. They may set up a local registration centre or they may provide application forms at their local government office. Local radio stations, television stations and newspapers may also advertise information about the program.

If you are unsure of whether a program has been set up or how to apply, visit the www.aema.alberta.ca website. Up-to-date information about all disaster recovery programs is posted on this website. You should apply within 90 days of the program being set up. However, if you must apply late, please contact our office.

Application Package Contents

Your application package must include all of the following:

- Completed application form
- Proof of ownership or legal responsibility for repair of damaged assets (such as a land title or lease agreement)
- Current property assessment
- Letter from your insurance company (explained on page 23)
- Signed consent form (explained on page 25)

If we need more information, we will contact you. We are unable to return any of the paperwork you provide. Always keep a copy for your own records.

If your home was also damaged, you may need to complete both an Agricultural Operations application and a Homeowners/Tenants application.

Insurance Letter

The letter from your insurance company must be on official letterhead, signed by an authorized agent, and include the following:

- Names of the insured policy holders
- Name and phone number of the insurance broker or agent
- Date of loss
- Date on which the broker/agent was notified of the loss
- Address of the damaged property
(a legal land description is required in rural areas)
- The type of damage or loss
- The cause of the damage or loss
- Action taken by the insurance company, including payment

If no action was taken by the insurance company, the letter must state:

- That the damage or loss is not covered by your policy
- The reasons why there is no coverage

If you are unable to get the insurance letter before you complete your application, you may give it to the evaluator during the visit to your property.

Consent Form

It is very important that you include a completed and signed consent form in your application. This form gives us permission to share information about your application with:

- Your insurance company;
- Companies that did repair or clean-up work for you; and
- Other Government of Alberta ministries.

If we do not receive a completed consent form, we will not be able to handle these requests for you. You will have to provide the information to the other parties yourself and the process may take longer as a result.

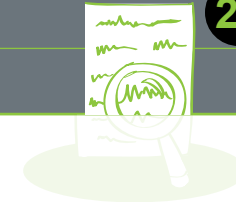
Application Review

Once we have your complete application package, we will begin to review it. We will prioritize your application based on the potential impact of the damages and losses.

Privacy Policy and Release of Information

The financial help provided through our disaster recovery programs is paid in the form of a grant. Therefore, the total amounts of financial assistance provided through the program may be disclosed as explained in the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. If asked, we may disclose your name and the total amount you received.

Stage 3: Undergo evaluation.



The Evaluation Process

The evaluation consists of the following steps:

1. We ask for copies of personal and corporate tax records to confirm that your agricultural operation is eligible.
2. Once we have confirmed that your agricultural operation is eligible, we assign an evaluator to you.

In some cases, specialist evaluators are required. For example, a specialist evaluator may be required if your building suffered structural damages. If necessary, you may have more than one visit from an evaluator.

3. The evaluator makes an appointment with you to visit the damaged property. This usually happens about one month after you submit your application and any required documentation.

4. The evaluator visits your agricultural operation to inspect the damages and losses.

If you did not include a letter from your insurance company in the application, you must provide it to the evaluator during the visit. The evaluator may also ask to see receipts, photos and other information. At any time during the evaluation, you may add to your list of damages.

5. The evaluator decides whether to recommend funding for each item of damage or loss.
6. The evaluator gives you a report that explains the recommendations.



The Evaluator's Report

The evaluator's report lists the damages and losses for which you are likely to receive payment. It also identifies damages and losses that do not qualify. Although this report gives you a sense of which items may qualify, it is not a final decision. Before a final decision can be made, you must complete all of the repairs, replace all damaged items and send us additional paperwork.

Refer to the next section of this handbook for details.

Required Actions and Paperwork

After we review the evaluator's report, we will send you a financial assistance summary. This summary lists the estimated funding available for each item and what you must do to receive it.

In order to be considered for financial assistance, you must:

- Complete all repairs and replace all damaged items.
More information is provided under *Stage 4: Finish repairing or replacing damaged items*.
- If we ask for this information, provide copies of quotes for work that will be completed by contractors before the work starts.
- Provide copies of receipts or paid invoices for all repairs and replaced items.
- Provide copies of all applicable regulatory approvals, such as permits and inspections.

4

Stage 4: Finish repairing or replacing damaged items.



Receiving Payment

Payment is based on the least amount of money needed to clean, repair or replace essential items. The maximum we might cover is the value of the item before the disaster occurred. We will not be able to cover additional costs if you choose to replace damaged property with items of greater quality or beyond what is reasonably required.

If we approve a quote, you can depend on receiving payment for that item. However, we will not issue payment until the work is complete, and we have received copies of the invoice and any required permits and inspections.

Quotes

If asked, you will need to send us a copy of quotes for work that will be completed by contractors before the work starts. If we do not get the quotes, you may receive less funding or no funding at all. If the costs are greater than \$5,000, we require quotes from at least two sources. Once we have reviewed the quotes, we will send a written approval that explains how much money the program can provide.

The following are just a few examples of the quotes you may need to provide:

- Road repairs
- Replacement of outbuildings or grain bins
- Structural repairs

Permits and Inspections

Some repairs must meet permit, inspection and other regulatory requirements. When this is the case, we require copies of the permits and inspections. The program can only assist with repairs and replacements that meet current building codes and other regulatory requirements.

The following are just a few examples of the permits and inspections you may need to provide:

- Approval from Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development for repairs involving water, such as water crossings, dams or dugouts
- Approval from the Natural Resources Conservation Board for repairs involving confined feeding operations
- A building permit and post-construction inspection report for structural repairs

Receipts and Photos

Do not forget to send us copies of receipts for all expenses related to clean-up, repairs and replacing items. You may also be asked to send photos of the completed repairs. If you don't, you may receive less financial assistance.

The following are just a few examples of the receipts you may need to provide:

- Replacement of steel gates
- Replacement of battery charger
- Clean-up services provided by contractors (must be itemized)

Typical Limitations

The following table provides examples of common items and the amount of funding that may be available. This information is intended only as a guideline. The evaluator determines whether your specific damages and losses should be recommended for funding. We then review those recommendations before making a final decision.

Examples of Typical Limitations for Agricultural Operations

Item	Amount	Conditions
clean-up (completed by applicant)	120% of the current provincial minimum hourly wage	applicant must provide an hourly log of the time spent
clean-up and repair (using applicant's equipment)	reimbursed based on scheduled rates	limited to eligible activities
crops	as evaluated	limited to crops harvested and stored in the usual method; does not include insurable crop losses
erosion of cultivated land	as evaluated; assistance limited to market value of the eroded land or repair costs, whichever is less	riverbank erosion is not eligible

farm roads, dug-outs, dams, crossings, spillways, bridges, dikes, berms and culverts	as evaluated	limited to areas used in the agricultural operation; permits required within waterways; engineer's report may be required within waterways; structures may need to have been licensed before the disaster in order to be eligible
fences (repair or replacement)	as evaluated	
hay harvested (bales or stacked)	as evaluated	limited to value per ton set by Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development at the time of the event adjusted to percentage loss
pumping costs	as evaluated	limited to reasonable pumping; must have been necessary for protecting buildings or other physical assets
re-seeding tame pasture and hay	as evaluated	foraging sources must have been killed
small tools	as evaluated	limited to tools used in agricultural operation
water wells (cleaning or replacement)	as evaluated	limited to wells used for agricultural purposes; testing may be required

Typical Exclusions

The following table provides examples of items that are typically excluded. The table is intended only as a guideline. The evaluator determines whether or not your damages and losses should be recommended for funding.

Examples of Typical Exclusions for Agricultural Operations

Item	Notes
cars	assistance not provided for insurable items
cereal crops, canola and special crops	assistance not provided for crops that can be insured by Alberta Financial Services Corporation; assistance only provided for stored crops and not for crops that are still in the ground
damages that are a normal risk of farming (loss of income, interest charges)	assistance not provided

farm machinery (bale/self-feeders, potable stock waterers, etc.)	assistance not provided for insurable items
gravel pits or piles of gravel, sand, dirt, etc.	assistance not provided
hay and pasture crops	assistance not provided for crops that can be insured by Alberta Financial Services Corporation; assistance only provided for stored crops and not for crops that are still in the ground
irrigation equipment (stationary pumps, etc.)	assistance not provided for insurable items; irrigation panels attached to a building or a fixed structure may be eligible
livestock	assistance typically not provided
lumber, building material	assistance not provided for materials to be stored and used later
portable feeders and mineral box/feeders	assistance not provided for insurable items

Item	Notes
river bank erosion, river diversion, riverbank stabilization	assistance may only be provided if the action protected a physical asset and used the least expensive method
shelterbelts (trees and landscaping around a farm)	assistance not provided
steel panels	assistance may be provided for steel panels that were part of a fixed structure and permanently attached
trailers and recreation vehicles (livestock trailers)	assistance not provided for insurable items
trees used for timber operations	assistance not provided
trucks	assistance not provided for insurable items
well pump and motor	assistance not provided for insurable items

Stage 5: Receive a decision on assistance.

The Final Decision-Making Process

Before items can be considered for payment, you must complete all of the necessary repairs and replace all damaged items. Then, once we have the evaluator's report and all your paperwork, we can begin making a final decision. We check that the evaluator's recommendations are consistent with our guidelines and meet our qualification criteria. If you would like to know more about the guidelines and qualification criteria we use, refer to the *Alberta Disaster Assistance Guidelines* posted on the www.aema.alberta.ca website.

On average, applicants receive payment within six weeks of completing their repairs and submitting their paperwork. If we decide not to fund any of the major items recommended for funding by the evaluator, we will explain why on a financial assistance summary.

Payment

Depending on the situation, you may receive payment in a single cheque or in several cheques. In some cases, you will have to take further actions in order to receive the balance of payment. When this happens, the required actions will be explained in a financial assistance summary. We will mail the cheques separately from financial assistance summaries.

Requesting a Review

You may ask to have the funding decision on your application be reviewed if you believe it was not in keeping with the *Disaster Assistance Guidelines*. A copy of the guidelines and the application for requesting a review are available on the www.aema.alberta.ca website.

Have you considered other resources that may be able to help?

Other resources may be available to you, such as those listed below: 

For information about	Contact
Loans, crop insurance, and financial assistance for lost income due to a disaster	Agricultural Financial Services Corporation Phone: 1-877-899-2372 (toll-free) www.afsc.ca
Loans	Farm Credit Canada Phone: 1-888-332-3301 (toll-free) www.fcc-fac.ca
Insurance	Insurance Bureau of Canada Regional Office: Alberta and The North Phone: 1-800-377-6378 (toll-free) or 780-423-2212 (Edmonton) www.abc.ca

You may also want to refer to the *Frequently Asked Questions* posted on our website at www.aema.alberta.ca.

