

RDAR 2021 Review – Putting research into practice to bring practical outcomes to Alberta producers.

By Dr. David Chalack, RDAR Board Chair

In 2021, together with our producer, public, and private partners, RDAR will continue to drive results that make our world more sustainable economically, socially, and environmentally.

With the new year comes a time of reflection on the events that shaped RDAR throughout these past 12 months. While hard to narrow down, we would like to share some of our pillars of achievement for that stuck out as our most influential moments of 2021 for RDAR.

We connect researchers with funding opportunities as they work to solve real-world industry needs.

In 2021, RDAR hosted three funding competitions to connect researchers to access funding opportunities. The RDAR Fast Call: for drought and heat stress funding, The Agriculture Funding Consortium 2021/22 Call for proposals and the RDAR Accelerating Agricultural Innovations Call.

This past year unpredictable weather events contributed to the industry's volatility. The impact of severe drought then floods created lasting effects for the producers who work so hard to keep us all fed. To be agile to meet the producers' needs quickly, RDAR launched a Drought and Extreme Heat Funding opportunity. This *Fast Call* is RDAR's responsive approach and commitment to review and provide funding for the developing solutions for the urgent and emergent issues facing Alberta's farmers and ranchers. In 2021 this call funded seven projects totalling \$539,229.

This past year, RDAR continued to coordinate the intake of Agriculture Funding Consortium (AFC) grant applications. The AFC's 17 members from Western Canada collaborate to select, review, and approve agriculture project funding and stimulate private and public sector participation for research and innovation projects that support sustainability, diversification, and long-term growth for agriculture and the food industry. As of December 2021, RDAR will have approved 41 projects valued at more than \$9 million in partnership with other AFC members.

To continue to drive tangible outcomes and benefits for producers in the barn and on the field, RDAR launched its Accelerating Agricultural Innovations Call for Proposals. Through this call, RDAR funds research and knowledge transfer and translation projects to accelerate agricultural innovations in Alberta's livestock, crop, and value-added industries. In 2021 amounted investment in 47 projects totalling \$9.3 million.

RDAR powers industry development and accelerates the adoption of producer-led, results-driven agriculture research.

In 2021, RDAR funded over \$30 million in new agricultural research investments, and we continue to manage a diverse portfolio of more than 400 active research programs totalling more than \$50 million in investments. Bringing our mandate to life, RDAR directs strategic, leveraged investments in producer-led, results-driven agriculture research to power the competitiveness and sustainability of Alberta's agriculture industry.

Looking forward

On January 18th, RDAR hosted its first AGM in Edmonton and launched our first Strategic Framework. This Framework will chart RDAR's course for the next five years and describe investment strategies, objectives, and performance measures.

In 2022, we look forward to continued collaboration and communication with all of our producers, and our many industry partners to achieve RDAR's vision - Alberta's agriculture and food sectors achieve their full potential through producer-led, strategic investments in research and innovation.

To stay connected to RDAR and the latest agriculture researching funding updates, visit www.rdar.ca and follow us on Twitter @RDARAlberta and LinkedIn: Results Driven Agriculture Research.