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Policy Title **AGRICULTURE SERVICE BOARD POLICY**	Date: **Nov. 10, 2016**	Resolution No. **RC16-**

1. Definitions

1.1 *"ACA"* means the Alberta Conservation Association.
1.2 *"Act"* means the Agriculture Service Board Act, RSA 2000 c.A-10
1.3 *"AESA"* means Alberta Environmentally Sustainable Agriculture.
1.4 "*A.S.B.*" means the Agricultural Service Board
1.5 "*BMP*" means Best Management Practices.
1.6 "*Board*" means the Agricultural Service Board.
1.7 "*Council*" means the Council of Birch Hills County.
1.8 "DOA" is the Director of Agriculture, who is appointed by Council as the Agriculture Fieldman annually at the organizational meeting. One may be referred to as the other.
1.9 "*DFO*" means Department of Fisheries and Oceans (Federal).
1.10 "*EFP*" means Environmental Farm Plans.
1.11 *"PFRA"* means the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 The Agricultural Service Board (A.S.B.) is established under the Agricultural Service Board Bylaw to also:
  2.1.1 Assist in the control of livestock disease under the *Livestock Diseases Act.*
  2.1.2 Promote, enhance and protect viable and sustainable Agriculture with a view to improving the economic viability of the agricultural producer.

2.2 The A.S.B. is to ensure Provincial Statutes (Weed Control Act, Soil Conservation Act, Agricultural Pests Act, and Agricultural Service Board Act) are administered to the benefit of all Municipal residents.

2.3 The A.S.B. has the responsibility and authority to carry out the programs approved by Council in the annual operating and capital budgets.

2.4 The A.S.B. shall prepare and annually review the document, "A.S.B. Programs and Operational Practices" describing all of the programs provided by the A.S.B.

  2.4.1 The program description is to include operating practices used to carry out the respective program.
  2.4.2 The A.S.B. has the authority to adjust the "A.S.B. Programs and Operational Practices" as necessary.
  2.4.3 The "A.S.B. Programs and Operational Practices" will be part of the procedures under Appendix A.

2.5 A.S.B. members will advise the Board on the level of success of A.S.B. programs and policies in their area.

2.6 The A.S.B. will advise Council with respect to proper land utilization in general terms with the view to improving the economic welfare of County farmers.

2.7 All A.S.B. programs and procedures are subject to county policies and bylaws.

2.8 All matters relating to administration are subject to County policy.

3. Agricultural Service Board Meetings

3.2 Other meetings as necessary will be at the call of the Chair at the discretion of the DOA.

3.3 A.S.B. minutes will be received as information at the following ASB meeting and forwarded to the Provincial A.S.B. coordinator.

4. Special Agricultural Committees

4.1 Special Agricultural Committees are considered to be Ad Hoc Committees of the A.S.B..

4.2 Committee membership, structure, term, and appointments are to be determined by the A.S.B. at the time of creation of the Board, and reviewed annually until the need for the respective committee is no longer required.

4.3 Remuneration for committee members other than A.S.B. members, if required, will be no greater than the maximum according to County policy.

5. Non-Compliance

5.1 Failure to comply with these terms may result in:

5.1.1 The potential for legal challenges and/or penalties to or from Birch Hills County, its elected officials and/or staff.

5.1.2 Disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Appendix A
Agricultural Service Board
Programs and Operational Practices

(A) 1.0 Plant Industry

(A) 1.1 Roadside Weed Control

1.1.1 The major objective is to control prohibited noxious and noxious weeds on County roadsides.

1.1.2 Roadsides to be sprayed or mowed will be determined by policy and the Agricultural Fieldman.

1.1.3 The method of noxious weed control will be determined by policy and the Agricultural Fieldman.

1.1.4 Any farmer or resident who does not wish his/her adjacent road allowance sprayed, shall be responsible to notify the County in writing prior to (May 01) of any year, and for weed control on that particular road allowance, and shall enter into an agreement with the County acknowledging this responsibility.

(A) 1.2 Roadside Seeding

1.2.1 The major objective is to prevent soil erosion on newly constructed roads, ensure weeds are not introduced to Birch Hills County, and to reclaim other areas disturbed by County operations.

1.2.1.1 The Agricultural Department will seed newly constructed roadsides.

1.2.1.2 Seeding will be done when it is feasible following the completion of construction.

1.2.1.3 A certificate of contents will be obtained before seed is purchased to ensure that the seed mix does not include noxious weeds.

1.2.1.4 Seeding rates will be determined by the Agricultural Fieldman.

1.2.1.5 Seeding of private land will be as per the condition contained in the agreement between the County and the respective land owner.

(A) 1.3 Brush Control

1.3.1 The major objective is to keep road allowances clear of brush to enhance public safety by providing better vision and reduce the impact of snow drifting on County roads.

1.3.1.1 Brush control will be carried out by use of brushers, chemicals or mowing as determined by policy and the Agricultural Fieldman.

1.3.1.2 Roadsides where brush control will be carried out will be determined by policy and the Agricultural Fieldman.

(A) 1.4 Roadside Mowing

1.4.1 The major objective is to prevent snow build-up on hard top roads, weed control, and to improve vision and safety of the traveling public.

1.4.1.1 All maintained Road Allowances will be mowed at least annually, time permitting and at the Agricultural Fieldman's discretion.

(A) 1.5 Weed Inspections

1.5.1 The major objective is to identify and prevent the spread of prohibited and noxious weeds.

1.5.1.1 Weed inspections will be conducted by the Agricultural Fieldman and/or staff.

1.5.1.2 Weed notices shall only be issued after the initial request to the landowner has failed.

1.5.1.3 Weed notices not complied with shall be brought to the attention of Chief Administrative Officer who, in consultation with the Agricultural Fieldman, will determine what further action is to be taken.

1.5.1.4 All notices are subject to appeal by the landowner.

1.5.1.5 Action shall be taken on all noxious weeds within the County according to the Weed Control Act. This action shall culminate with the implementation of control measures.

(A) 1.6 Seed Cleaning Plants

1.6.1 Seed Cleaning Plants supported by Birch Hills County will report to the Council through the A.S.B.

1.6.2 The A.S.B. will appoint one of its members to represent the County on each Seed Cleaning Plant Board.

1.6.3 The major objective is to ensure that seed cleaning plants in the County maintain the highest possible standards.

(A) 1.7 Horticulture and Tree Planting

1.7.1 The major objective is to assist with the establishment of field and farm shelter belts.

1.7.1.1 The County may provide a list of nurseries to purchase trees from.

1.7.1.2 On request, the Agricultural Fieldman may provide assistance in determining which insect or what types of diseases are affecting trees.

(A) 2.0 Environment

(A) 2.1 Watershed Programs

2.1.1 The major objective is to preserve and enhance the quality of the water and the watershed areas in Birch Hills County.

(A) 2.2 Programs Offered

2.2.1 AESA is a long term provincially funded program designed to facilitate the continued development and adoption of management practices and technologies that make agricultural production and processing more environmentally responsible.

2.2.2 EFP promote and supply technical support to the producers enrolled in EFP's.

2.2.3 ACA & DFO offers funding assistance to producers throughout the County in implementing BMP's that will help preserve water quality.

(A) 2.3 Container Site

2.3.1 The major objective is to meet the requirements of Alberta Environment in providing for safe disposal of agricultural chemical containers.

2.3.1.1 Safe disposal of agricultural chemical containers will be in accordance with Alberta Environment regulations.

(A) 2.4 Soil Conservation

2.4.1 The major objective is to promote good soil conservation practices.

2.4.1.1 The A.S.B. will recommend on effective local conservation practices to landowners.

2.4.1.2 Top soil should be preserved and utilized for agricultural practices.

(A) 3.0 Vertebrate Pests

(A) 3.1 Coyotes

3.1.1 The major objective is to reduce losses to agriculture caused by predators.

3.1.1.1 All control work will be coordinated by the Agricultural Fieldman.

3.1.1.2 Control work will include training of landowners in the use of toxicants and issuance of such when deemed necessary. The toxicants will only be issued when predation has been confirmed and then only in accordance with Alberta Agriculture's Standards and Restrictions for Coyote Predator Control.

3.1.1.3 Landowners will be encouraged to take all possible precautions to prevent the loss of livestock to predators. In the event of a continuation of losses, assistance from Alberta Sustainable Resource Development, Fish and Wildlife Division will be requested.

(A) 3.2 Rats (Norway)

3.2.1 The major objective is to keep Alberta rat free.

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3.2.1.1 Reports of Rat sightings will be investigated by the Agriculture Department and Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development.

REEVE

C.A.O

Original Date Adopted by Council / Motion Number:	Nov. 10, 2016 / RC16-
Amended:	

Resources:
- Agricultural Service Board Act RSA 2000 c.A-10
- Saddle Hills County ASB Bylaw 2016