



TEAMALBERTA

ADVANCING ALBERTA'S CROP SECTOR TO 2025 AND BEYOND

Farmers seeking Class 1 driver's licences can apply for one-year exemption from new MELT program

Team Alberta is pleased that Transportation Minister Brian Mason has heard farmers' concerns and will be allowing agricultural workers to apply for a one-year exemption from the Mandatory Entry Level Training (MELT) as part of the new Class 1 driver's licence regulations. The new rules are set to come into effect on March 1, 2019.

Understanding that the March 1 timing of the new rules could have significantly impacted many farmers' ability to hire properly trained and licensed drivers prior to seeding the 2019 crop, the Government of Alberta has proposed the extension to address these concerns in the short-term.

Team Alberta agrees that proper training is important to improve the safety of our roads. However, the unintended consequences of the March 1 timing for the MELT program are concerning to farmers who are dependent on seasonal labour for seeding this year's crop. MELT requires over 100 hours of training, and the current capacity to administer the program will take time to ramp up to meet the surge in demand across the province.

"This is extremely good news for farmers," says, Kevin Serfas, Alberta Canola Vice-Chair. "By accommodating the agriculture industry's unique needs, we've avoided significant challenges that would have hurt our ability to seed this year's crop. We appreciate the Ministry's support on this issue."

"Safety has always been the number one priority on my farm," says Dave Bishop, Alberta Barley Chair. "We appreciate that Department of Transportation recognizes that we can have safer roads without compromising farmers' ability to get our crop in."

"In many instances, farmers were finding it impossible to access current services to obtain a Class 1 licence under the current rules," says, Gary Stanford, Alberta Wheat Commission Chair. "This gives us some breathing room when the new regulations come into effect and time to discuss the implications of this policy on the agriculture industry."

Following this news, Team Alberta and other members of the agricultural industry will be having a technical meeting with the Deputy Minister of Transportation to develop the industry's path forward with the Class 1 Licence. Team Alberta looks forward to communicating additional details to farmers as they become available. [Further information from the Government of Alberta can be found here.](#)

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Team Alberta is a collaborative initiative led by four of the province's crop commissions. Our commissions are producer elected, directed and funded organizations established to represent the interests of our producers across the province.



“We appreciate the government working with us to ensure we can avoid skilled labour shortages while keeping our roads safe,” says Don Shepert, Alberta Pulse Growers Chair. “We will keep farmers updated as this file progresses.”

Team Alberta is a collaboration between four of Alberta’s crop commissions: Alberta Barley, Alberta Canola, Alberta Pulse Growers and the Alberta Wheat Commission, that advocates for the growth, competitiveness and sustainability of Alberta’s crop sector. Collectively, Team Alberta represents approximately 20,000 grower members.

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