

**THE
SIMPSON
CENTRE.**



THOUGHT
FOR
FOOD.

2024/2025
Annual Report

Join the discussion
at simpsoncentre.ca

CONNECTING
AGRICULTURE+
PEOPLE+
POLICY.



UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY
FACULTY OF VETERINARY MEDICINE

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RUBEN ECHEVERRIA,
SENIOR RESEARCH FELLOW AT THE INTERNATIONAL
FOOD POLICY RESEARCH INSTITUTE

“

ONE OF THE FORGOTTEN
LINKS IN ALL THESE FOOD
SYSTEMS, CONNECTIONS
BETWEEN AGRICULTURE,
NUTRITION, AND HEALTH,
IS THAT **YOU NEED
KNOWLEDGE. YOU NEED
TO DO SOME RESEARCH,
AND THEN YOU NEED TO
INNOVATE.**” 🌀

MESSAGE FROM A PRAGMATIC SCHOLAR.



*Dr. Guillaume Lhermie,
Director of the Simpson
Centre, and Professor of
Animal Health Economics
and Policy, Head of Cattle
Health Research Group at
the University of Calgary's
Faculty of Veterinary
Medicine*

As we celebrate our fifth year, we continue to explore the dynamics of change—what drives it, what hinders it, how it is understood, and why it is adopted. Our commitment remains steadfast: to advance evidence-based agricultural and food policy through research and dialogue that evolve with the sector.

We embrace a holistic approach to the challenges and opportunities facing Canada's agrifood landscape, recognizing that lasting change depends on cross-sector, multi-stakeholder collaboration. Through innovative and inclusive partnerships, we strive to build a more sustainable and resilient future.

We also continue to champion the transformative potential of digital technologies. From precision tools in the field to analytics across supply chains, we investigate how innovation can drive efficiency, productivity, and inclusive growth—from farm to fork.

Our research spans key areas including animal health and welfare, trade policy, emissions reduction, digital transformation, and agro-ecological transition. These efforts are made possible by the dedication of our partners, stakeholders, and team members, whose support has brought us to this important milestone.

As we look ahead, we do so with renewed energy and optimism—ready to help shape a more sustainable, forward-looking future for Canada's agrifood sector.

Thank you for your continued support and partnership.

Alors que nous célébrons notre cinquième anniversaire, nous continuons d'explorer les dynamiques du changement — ce qui le stimule, le freine, comment il est compris et pourquoi il est adopté.

Notre engagement demeure: faire progresser des politiques agricoles et alimentaires fondées sur des données probantes, par une recherche et un dialogue évolutifs.

Nous adoptons une approche holistique face aux défis et opportunités du paysage agroalimentaire canadien, en reconnaissant que le changement durable repose sur une collaboration intersectorielle. Par des partenariats innovants et inclusifs, nous œuvrons à bâtir un avenir plus durable et résilient.

Nous continuons de promouvoir le potentiel transformateur des technologies numériques. Des outils de précision aux analyses de données, nous explorons comment l'innovation accroît efficacité, productivité et croissance inclusive — de la ferme à la table.

Nos recherches couvrent la santé animale, les politiques commerciales, la réduction des émissions, la transformation numérique et la transition agroécologique. Ces efforts sont possibles grâce à nos partenaires, collaborateurs et membres d'équipe, dont le soutien nous a permis d'atteindre cette étape importante.

Alors que nous regardons vers l'avenir, nous le faisons avec une énergie renouvelée et un optimisme affirmé, prêts à contribuer à un secteur agroalimentaire canadien durable et novateur.

Merci pour votre soutien et votre partenariat continu.

MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN.

We are delighted to welcome the Simpson Centre to the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine. This transition represents a natural evolution that strengthens both teams and advances our shared commitment to addressing complex challenges at the intersection of animal health, human health, and sustainable food systems.

The Centre's focus on evidence-based agricultural and food policy aligns seamlessly with our faculty's One Health approach, recognizing that animal health, human health, and environmental health are interconnected. The Centre's innovative research and initiatives combined with the faculty's research and teaching endeavours, will enhance our capacity to tackle pressing issues from farm to fork.

As we face growing global challenges around food security, agriculture, and climate change, a transdisciplinary approach to agri-food research and education is more vital than ever. Our commitment to multi stakeholder collaboration and knowledge mobilization will strengthen our ability to generate initiatives that result in far-reaching impact.

We are looking forward to maximising the opportunities this partnership will create—for our students, our researchers, the communities we serve and society at large. Together, we are well-positioned to advance sustainable and resilient solutions for the agri-food sector in Canada and beyond while maintaining our commitment to the highest standards of animal health and welfare.

Welcome to the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine.

Dr. Renate Weller

Dean, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine



ALL ABOUT THE SIMPSON CENTRE.

The Simpson Centre for Food and Agricultural Policy is a research policy institute affiliated with the University of Calgary's Faculty of Veterinary Medicine. Created in 2020, the Centre has a dual mandate to mobilize research about Canadian agriculture and agri-food to inform 21st-century policymaking and public education.

In 2024-25, we saw substantial growth in research outputs, outreach, and impact. The Simpson Centre hosted 19 events, both online and in-person, engaging participants from government, industry, research, and the public. We published 27 reports and papers. Our work attracted significant media attention, with 460 mentions and a combined desktop and mobile reach of 197.8 million.

OUR VISION.

A trusted source for evidence-based policy to strengthen the sustainability of Canadian agriculture.

OUR MISSION.

To mobilize Agri-food stakeholders to translate academic research to help inform public opinion and drive public policy. Research for better policymaking and decision-making to realize a more sustainable agricultural industry.

OUR KEY IMPACTS.

AG & ECONOMICS. 💰

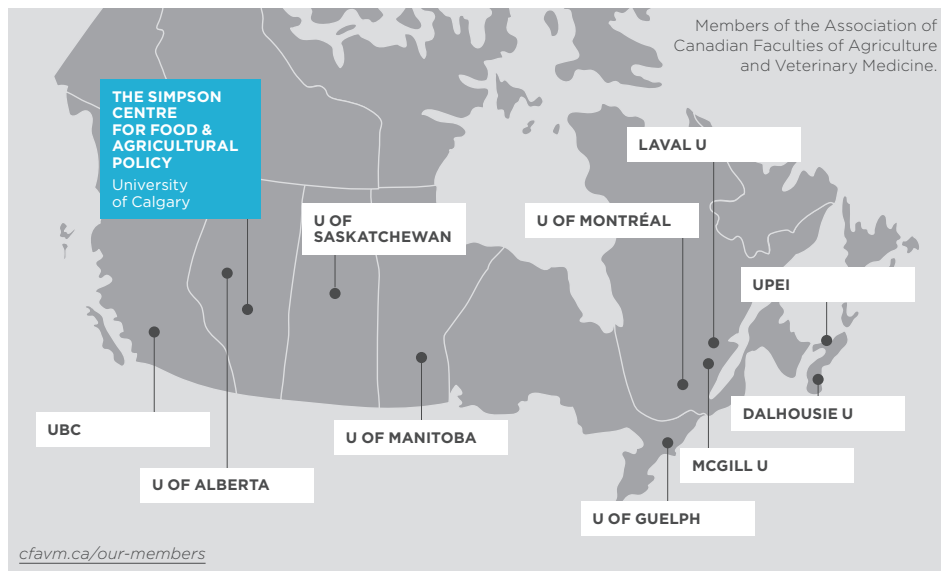
- + Trade policy
- + Supply chains

AG & SOCIETY. 🌐

- + Environment & climate change
- + Public health & welfare

AG LITERACY. 📖

- + Learning for active food citizenship
- + Controversies in agriculture



OUR MODEL FOR DELIVERING IMPACTS.

The Simpson Centre enables a different kind of policymaking for Canadian food & agriculture. Our innovative approach introduces new kinds of policy processes that are adapted to the twenty-first century. That means embracing the Digital Information Age, the complex issues of national and global food security, agriculture's impacts on environment and population health, and the rising uncertainty created by fast-changing regulations and exchange rates, as well as disruptions in supply chains. To get policy work done in the twenty-first century, it requires a different set of tools.

Reliable data and research are made accessible through the Simpson Centre to support a “common ground” for moderating discussions with stakeholders that have very different perspectives on an issue. Our voice is neutral. We do not take sides in the debates. We're more interested in why the debates around agriculture are happening in the first place.

Our model for delivering impacts is to mobilize research, both academic and non-academic. We are a connector between academia, private industry, government, and citizens. By including all participants in the food supply chain, from scientists to producers, input and service providers, processors, transporters, retailers, marketers and consumers, we can build connections to accomplish adaptive policymaking and respond to the increasingly complex goals of a sustainable agriculture & food system.



2024
TO 2025
HISTORICAL
TIMELINE.





AG & ECONOMICS.

Our key research areas for mobilizing impacts addresses the 'Why,' 'What,' and 'How' of the Simpson Centre's activities. The first of our three key pillars is "Agriculture and Economics."

1. farms.com/news/canadian-farmers-stepped-up-for-their-country-now-it-s-time-to-support-them-158024.aspx
2. agriculture.canada.ca/en/sector/overview. Agriculture includes crops and animal production, fisheries and aquaculture. Agri-food includes agriculture, as well as food and beverage processing.
3. cafta.org/agri-food-exports/
4. agriculture.canada.ca/en/sector/overview

FOOD SECURITY,
SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTIVITY,
HEALTH AND NUTRITION
ARE PARAMOUNT.



THE WHY. AREAS OF IMPACT.

- + Increase Canadian and global food security. Meet the future demand for food.
- + Strengthen farms and communities to improve livelihoods.

AGRICULTURE IS ONE OF THE MAIN PILLARS OF THE CANADIAN ECONOMY.

Canada's agriculture industry is projected to contribute more than \$50 billion to our nation's GDP by 2030, making it a larger sector than the country's automobile assembly and aeronautic industries combined.¹

As the fifth-largest exporter of agri-food and seafood in the world, Canada supplies the world with a diverse array of products, including soy, wheat, pulses, manufactured food products and live animals and animal products.²

Over the last 10 years in Canada, agriculture and agri-food exports have grown by 103%.³ The world's population will increase by 2 billion people between 2019 and 2050, and Canada is uniquely positioned to help alleviate the global threat to food security.

Meanwhile, the agricultural industry in Canada faces serious labour shortages. The sector needs a workforce with the right skills to succeed in an automated, digitalized future. Farmers' income has decreased in relation to national average income, and the price of farmland continues to rise. Farms cover 62.2 million hectares or 6.3% of Canada's land area; concentrated across the Prairies, Quebec and Southern Ontario.⁴ Should the amount of arable land used for agriculture go up or down? How can we strengthen the livelihoods of farmers and attract more people into the industry?

The average farm size has doubled over the last 50 years due to increased consolidation and technological advances. Do we want to adapt our policies to encourage the growth of mid-sized farms? Is urban farming growing in importance? What is the growth capacity of vertical farming? Do we want to increase the availability and competitiveness of Canadian agri-food products on the domestic market?

THE WHAT. RESEARCH INITIATIVES.

ALBERTA DIGITALIZATION AGRICULTURE.

The program aims to identify challenges and opportunities for the digitalization of Canada’s agriculture. Better understanding and management of data in agriculture and agricultural technology (AgTech) can lead to increased productivity and sustainability, as well as more cost savings across the sector. 2023-2026.



With generous funding from the Government of Alberta, the program’s goals include fostering data management best practices, developing policy recommendations, and enhancing transparency in the agri-food space.

Over the course of three years, the Simpson Centre is conducting extensive research and request the feedback of participants in the agriculture value chain to inform three key areas:

- Currently commercialized agtech and farming data will be reviewed in Canada and internationally to create a comprehensive assessment for the industry.
- Talking and listening to key industry players through interviews, roundtables, and collaborative “policy Labs” to understand requirements, challenges, and suggestions.
- Communicating the knowledge we gather in reports, webinars, policy briefs, press releases and online media for the benefit of all stakeholders.

INVESTMENTS IN AGRI-FOOD RESEARCH.

This project aims to map the landscape of agri-food research funding programs. Our primary objective is to assess the alignment of funding initiatives with the key focus areas in the Sustainable Agriculture Strategy (SAS) and the Guelph Statement. 2023-2024.

The Simpson Centre aims to quantify the tangible benefits, both commercial and public, stemming from both public and private investments in agri-food research, as well as conduct a jurisdictional scan of Canadian funding. This includes a comparative analysis with select OECD nations to gauge Canada’s standing in terms of

competitiveness and innovation in the agri-food sector.

The Simpson Centre researchers have:

- Identified major funding institutions and agri-food research projects from 2013 to the present.
- Identified the priorities of public and private funding institutions in Canada’s agri-food sector.
- Evaluated alignment of research with governments’ priorities as defined by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.
- Assess academic and non-academic literature to map the competitive advantages in select OECD agri-food sectors and their associated (if any) innovation ecosystems.

FOUR
WEBINARS

FIVE
ROUNDTABLES

TWO
POLICY LABS

EIGHT
PUBLICATIONS

FOUR
REPORTS

**THE HOW. RESEARCH
DISSEMINATION.**

WEBINARS.

Food Cost Dynamics: Insights Into Red Meats, Grains and Oilseeds
Webinar // April 2024

Food Cost Dynamics: Insights into Fruits and Wheat
Webinar // May 2024

Croptech Connect: Agtech Innovations for Canada
Webinar // July 2024

Navigating the Digital Revolution in Agriculture: Technology Adoption, Data Governance, and the Future of Farming in Canada
Webinar // March 2025

ROUNDTABLES.

Working with Agricultural Data: Current Practices
Roundtable // April 2024

Data Literacy for Cow-Calf Producers – Session 1
Roundtable // Apr 2024

2024 Agribusiness Study Workshop
Roundtable // May 2024

Data Literacy for Cow-Calf Producers – Session 2
Roundtable // November 2024

National Freshwater Science Agenda (NFSA) – Agriculture’s Water Priorities
Roundtable // March 2025

POLICY LABS.

Water Sustainability in Alberta’s Agriculture through Digitalization – Session 1
Policy Lab // November 2024

Water Sustainability in Alberta’s Agriculture Through Digitalization – Session 2
Policy Lab // March 2025

PUBLICATIONS.

“A New Tool to Assess the Economic Impact of Q Fever on Dairy Cattle Farms”
Didier Raboisson, Guillaume Lhermie, and Raphael Guatteo// April 2024

“Canada, Germany, and the Sustainability of the Global Food System – Determinants, Challenges, and Recommendations”
Guillaume Lhermie // June 2024

“Policies Affecting the Efficiency of Beef Production in Alberta: A Supply Chain Analysis”
Derek Brewin // June 2024

“Dairy Farmer Income, Working Time, and Antimicrobial Use under Different Dry Cow Therapy Protocols”
Thomas Le Page, Ahmed Ferchiou, Simon Dufour, Fidèle Kabera, Jocelyn Dubuc, Guillaume Lhermie, Didier Raboisson, and Jean-Philippe Roy // June 2024

“Enhancing Canada’s Beef Exports and Competitiveness in the Global Market”
Pascal L. Ghazalian// August 2024

“Enhancing Agricultural Research and Development for Sustainable Growth in Canada”
Sabrina Gulab and Guillaume Lhermie // February 2025

“Enhancing Agricultural Research and Development for Sustainable Growth in Canada”
Sabrina Gulab and Guillaume Lhermie // February 2025

“Canadian Agriculture and Food Research Effectiveness and Competitiveness: A Time-Series Analysis of Public & Private Funding Envelopes”
Sabrina Gulab and Guillaume Lhermie // March 2025

REPORTS.

“Water Wealth in Agriculture: Roundtable Proceedings”
Luka Houde and Guillaume Lhermie // July 2023

“Water Update 2024”
Hanan Ishaque, Joshua Bourassa and Guillaume Lhermie // July 2024

“Digital Transformation in Canadian Crop Production: A Scoping Review of Emerging Technologies, Trends, and Policy Gaps”
Hanan Ishaque, V. Margarita Sanguinetti, Francine Nelson, Heather Ganshorn, Guillaume Lhermie // October 2024

“Policy Trends: Labour Shortage in Alberta Agriculture”
Mukesh Khanal// February 2025



AG &
SOCIETY.

Research programs in “Agriculture and Society” look at agriculture’s impacts on people and the environment.

AGRICULTURE IMPACTS
AND IS IMPACTED BY LAND
USE, TRANSPORTATION, HEALTH,
AND WASTE MANAGEMENT.



THE WHY. AREAS OF IMPACT.

- + Conserve and enhance water, soil, and habitat. Promote the sustainable management of natural resources.
- + Improve human nutrition and public health.
- + Increase the resilience of the food system.

All people deserve to have access to nutritious and affordable food. The accessibility of our food depends on primary agriculture, as well as several processes, products, and technologies. The more we encourage diversity in the food system, the more redundancy and fallback options we create, the more robust our food supply will be.

There are significant challenges that agriculture faces, as governments, farmers, researchers, industry professionals and consumers seek to negotiate a dynamic balance between human welfare, productivity, profitability, and environmental sustainability.

Avoiding the degradation of natural resources: fertile soil, clean water, and natural pollinators are shared priorities for producers and all Canadians in achieving the long-term sustainability of Canadian agriculture. How do our growing choices impact the environment and population health? Can we develop a common framework for evaluating farm management practices for soils, plants, animals, humans and ecosystems?

THE WHAT. RESEARCH INITIATIVES.

VIRTUAL VETERINARY SERVICES: TELEMEDICINE FOR CATTLE PRODUCERS.

Funded by Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), this project explores the adoption and valuation of telemedicine veterinary services among cattle producers, focusing on how combining virtual consultations with in-field care can improve animal health management and reduce costs. The research employs discrete choice experiments to assess producer preferences and willingness to pay for different service packages. The findings aim to guide the development of more accessible and effective veterinary care models, enhance animal welfare, and support evidence-based policy and industry strategies. 2024-2026.

The goals of the virtual veterinary services project are to:

- Understand cattle producers' needs and preferences for telemedicine and hybrid veterinary services.
- Quantify willingness to pay for various service attributes and delivery models
- Identify barriers and opportunities for telemedicine adoption in rural livestock production
- Inform stakeholders and policy-makers about innovative veterinary care solutions

GLOBAL BURDEN OF ANIMAL DISEASES.

International Research program, with multiple collaborations e.g., University of Guelph, Murdoch University, Washington State University, Kansas State University, the World Organization for Animal Health and University of Edinburgh. 2022-2026.

With a key focus on contextualising losses and spending due to infectious diseases within the overall public and private sector resource allocation to cattle health activities, we will estimate the 'Animal Health Loss Envelope' across farms, before partitioning and attributing key diseases within this envelope. This study will be an important contributor to the international initiative, as one case study providing important economic context for public- and private-sector spending associated with animal health issues. Significantly, the project will build expertise in animal health economics in Canada, an area in which there is currently a significant deficit of expertise.

The goals of the Global Burden of Animal Diseases program are to:

- Characterize metrics of biomass within the cattle sector over time, by province, and between types of enterprise.
- Estimate the Animal Health Loss Envelope distribution in beef and dairy cattle operations.
- Attribute the Animal Health Loss Envelope in the cattle sector to major endemic diseases.

A FEATURE-BASED PRICING ANALYSIS OF ANTIBIOTIC VETERINARY MEDICINES.

This study aims to analyze the prices of veterinary antibiotic medicines in France at the veterinarian level using a quasi-hedonic model. 2023-2024.

Research examines how prices are influenced by different product characteristics. Importantly, the study explores price changes following the enactment of the Law on the Future of Agriculture, Food and Forestry (LAAAF) on October 13, 2014, which mandated the end of rebates on antibiotics starting January 1, 2015. This analysis will aid in predicting the veterinary antibiotic market and provide policy implications to support the long-term availability of antibiotics, price adjustment consultations, and a consensus-finding mechanism on prices in the future.

The goals of the study are to:

- Analyze the price determinants of antibiotic veterinary medicine.
- Investigate the price changes after the implementation of LAAAF.



TRUE COST ACCOUNTING FOR SUSTAINABLE BEEF PRODUCTION.

Funded by the Simpson Chair and JK Jim Farm, this project explores the application of True Cost Accounting (TCA) to cow-calf operations in Western Canada. By integrating environmental, social, and human well-being indicators, the research aims to uncover the hidden costs and benefits of beef production that are not reflected in traditional market prices. The TCA methodology was adapted specifically for cow-calf systems, and a pilot study was conducted on a ranch in Alberta. 2023-2025.

The goals of the TCA project are to:

- Adapt and pilot a sustainability accounting framework tailored to cow-calf operations.
- Quantify and monetize environmental, human, and social externalities.
- Demonstrate the feasibility and value of integrating TCA into agricultural sustainability assessments.
- Provide a foundation for future research to support informed decision-making by policymakers, producers, and stakeholders on the sustainability impacts of beef production.

THE HOW. RESEARCH DISSEMINATION.

REPORTS.

“Rapport D'évaluation des Coûts des Maladies Réglementées et de L'impact de la Loi Santé Animale”

Guillaume Lhermie, Didier Raboisson, Lucie Guinaliu Buttarelli, Lisa Vors, and Mehdi Berrada // June 2024

PUBLICATIONS.

“Grazing Management Plan Adoption and Objective Prioritization in U.S. Cow-Calf and Stocker Operations”

Minfeng Tang, Cassandra Kniebel Aherin, Dustin L. Pendell, Myriah D. Johnson, Ashley McDonald, and Phillip A. Lancaster // May 2024

“Herd-Level Prevalence of Bovine Leukemia Virus, Salmonella Dublin And Neospora Caninum in Alberta, Canada, Dairy Herds Using ELISA on Bulk Tank Milk Samples”

Waseem Shaukat, Ellen de Jong, Kayley D. McCubbin, Marit M. Biesheuvel, Frank J. U. M. van der Meer, Jeroen De Buck, Guillaume Lhermie, David C. Hall, Kristen N. Kalbfleisch, John P. Kastelic, Karin Orsel, and Herman W. Barkema // May 2024

“Analysis of Convergence Between a Unified One Health Policy Framework and Imbalanced Research Portfolio”

Lisa Vors, Didier Raboisson, and Guillaume Lhermie // July 2024

***“1-10-100: Unifying Goals
to Mobilize Global Action on
Antimicrobial Resistance”***

Susan Rogers Van Katwyk, Mathieu J.
P. Poirier, Sujith J. Chandy, Kim Faure,
Caitlin Fisher, Guillaume Lhermie,
Arshnee Moodley, Satyajit Sarkar, Masika
Sophie, Kayla Strong, Isaac Weldon, and
Steven J. Hoffman // August 2024

***“Navigating Climate Change:
Alberta’s Carbon Program for
Sustainable Agriculture”***

Hanan Ishaque, Joshua Bourassa and
Guillaume Lhermie // September 2024

***“Keeping Antibiotics Effective –
Combating Antimicrobial Resistance
in U.S. Agriculture”***

Gerald Midgley, Amber Elkins, Guy
H. Loneragan, Megan Babowicz,
Mayukh Dass, Yrjo T. Grohn, Ellen
Jordan, Guillaume Lhermie, Lucas Lunt,
William A. McIntosh, Juan M. Piñeiro,
Jason Sawyer, and H. Morgan Scott //
September 2024

***“An Expert Consensus Study Regarding
Management Practices to Prevent
Infectious Mortality in Preweaned Beef
Calves in Western Canada”***

Virginia Margarita Sanguinetti, Cindy
Adams, John Campbell, Sylvia L.
Checkley, and Claire Windeyer //
September 2024

ONE
REPORT

ELEVEN
PUBLICATIONS

***“Association Between National Action
and Trends in Antibiotic Resistance:
An Analysis of 73 Countries from
2000 to 2023”***

Peter Søgaard Jørgensen, Luong
Nguyen Thanh, Ege Pehlivanoglu,
Franziska Klein, Didier Wernli, Dusan
Jasovsky, Athena Aktipis, Robert R.
Dunn, Yrjo Gröhn, Guillaume Lhermie,
H. Morgan Scott, and Eili Y. Klein //
September 2024

***“Determinants of Access to Animal
Health Care in France: Evidence From
a Spatial Econometric Framework”***

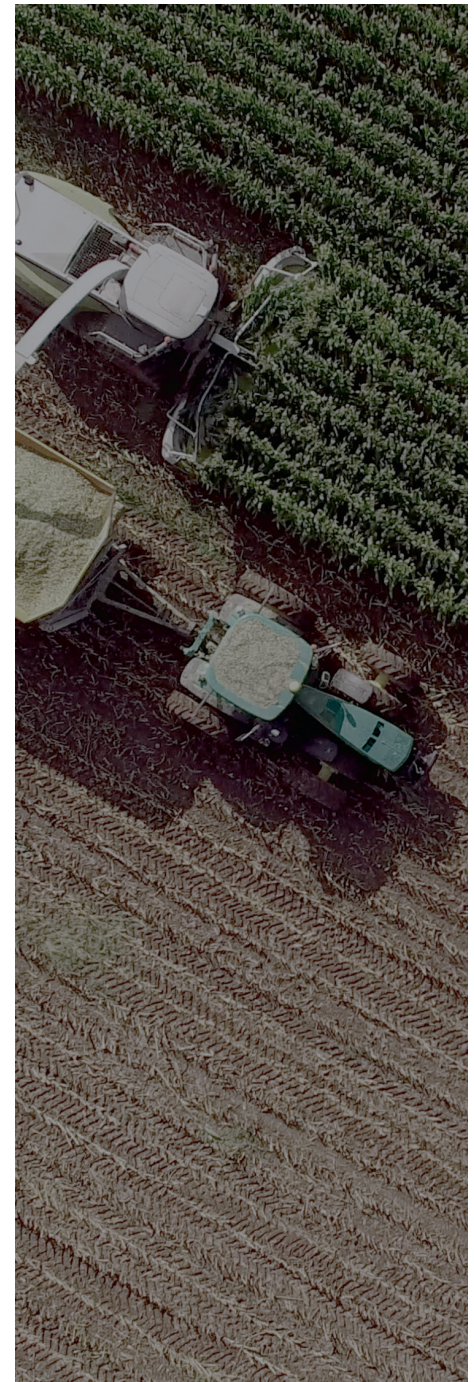
Mehdi Berrada, Didier Raboisson,
Guillaume Lhermie // December 2024

***“A Systematic Review of Disease
Control Strategies in Beef Herds,
Part 1: Preweaned Calf Mortality”***

V. Margarita Sanguinetti, Kayla Strong,
Samuel P. Agbese, Cindy Adams, John
Campbell, Sylvia L. Checkley, Ellen de
Jong, Heather Ganshorn, and M. Claire
Windeyer // March 2025

***“A Systematic Review of Disease
Control Strategies in Beef Cow-
Calf Herds, Part 2: Preweaned Calf
Morbidity and Mortality Associated
with Neonatal Calf Diarrhea and Bovine
Respiratory Disease”***

V. Margarita Sanguinetti, Kayla Strong,
Samuel P. Agbese, Cindy Adams, John
Campbell, Sylvia L. Checkley, Heather
Ganshorn, and M. Claire Windeyer //
March 2025





AG LITERACY.

Ag Literacy supports the mobilization of research to increase our understanding of decisions made on the farm, best management practices, technology and agri-food processing. The public needs practical knowledge of agricultural processes and concepts to formulate opinions, make decisions, and participate in civic and economic affairs.

*CANADIANS FIND
ANSWERING QUESTIONS
ABOUT FOOD AND
AGRICULTURE DIFFICULT.*



THE WHY. AREAS OF IMPACT.

- + Make high-quality research accessible to diverse audiences to improve information and discussions in the public domain.
- + Educate people on topics that they don't want to know about. "Not knowing" enough about a topic often leads to not knowing what questions to ask. Do I want to know where my food comes from? Will I share what I know?
- + Include different stakeholders with contrasting perspectives in policymaking for agriculture and the food system.

Most Canadians today experience food as a product that is bought off the shelf. They purchase food as a rather mundane activity that acquires significance only in exceptional circumstances. Food scandals widely publicized in the media, such as food-borne illnesses caused by contaminants and residues, overestimate relatively small actual risks.

Meanwhile, the relatively large risks posed by food security, the availability and affordability of food products, as well as the sustainability of the agricultural industry are generally underestimated by consumers. The Simpson Centre seeks to reconnect people with how their food is made.

Through consumer food choices, we can collectively influence how food is cultivated, processed and distributed. By improving agricultural literacy, we can enable citizens and politicians to recognize the primary agriculture in their food products; evaluate options for food shortages and/or affordability; appreciate a diversity of farm management practices, processing and manufacturing; identify actors in the food supply chain; understand the effects of agriculture on the environment; learn about direct and indirect economic impacts of agriculture; and advocate for better policies for the agricultural and agri-food sector.

THE WHAT. RESEARCH INITIATIVES.

AG LITERACY FOR HEALTHIER PEOPLE AND PLANET.

This special project with generous funding from BMO aims to draw on multiple sources and perspectives to demystify information about our food system. Discussions around agriculture tend to be mired by controversy, misconception and stereotypes that prevent informed consumer choices and frustrate policy development. 2023-2028.

The Simpson Centre, in collaboration with 13 Canadian and U.S. universities, will conduct research and outreach to develop a pragmatic knowledge engagement program. This program aims to foster open and transparent communication with stakeholders.

Over five years, we will deliver:

- Investigation of food-related misinformation on social media platforms.
- Citizen assemblies, including educational packages, videography and outreach.
- A targeted communications campaign to actively engage the public with program deliverables.

REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE.

This project aims to understand and define regenerative agriculture (RA) practices in Alberta from production to policy. Oct 2023-Sep 2024.

Agriculture in Canada tends to rely on inputs and production practices that degrade soil and wider ecosystems. Policies incentivize farmers to increase yield and revenue while unintentionally neglecting longer term risk mitigation. However, interest is growing in regenerative agriculture, which seeks to improve soil quality, reduce reliance on synthetic inputs, nurture on-farm relationships, reduce off-farm impacts, bolster climate resilience, and enhance crop quality.

At issue is a clear definition of regenerative farming, which is currently an unofficial and voluntary designation with little policy support from governments to promote uptake and viability.

The Simpson Centre aims to address the following questions:

- What do producers and agri-food professionals mean by 'regenerative farming'?
- What regenerative agriculture (RA) practices are currently being used?
- What business models are RA farmers using?
- What are the barriers and constraints to expansion of RA farming practices?
- Where are the gaps and opportunities for enabling policy design and implementation?



THREE
WEBINARS

THREE
ROUNDTABLES

ONE
PANEL DISCUSSION

ONE
KEYNOTE

ONE
PUBLICATION

TWO
REPORTS

**UNLOCKING REGENERATIVE
AGRICULTURE: INSIGHTS FROM
PRODUCERS, FINANCE, AND
POLICY STAKEHOLDERS.**

This project investigates the alignment between current financial products and the needs of farmers transitioning to regenerative agriculture (RA). 2024–2025.

RA is gaining traction as a sustainable alternative to conventional farming, aiming to restore soil health, biodiversity, and water cycles. However, the financial sector has been slow to adapt, often lacking products that support the initial economic challenges farmers face during the transition period, such as reduced revenues in the first 3–7 years.

The project adopts a transdisciplinary approach, integrating expertise from agriculture, finance, and policy to holistically assess the systemic barriers and opportunities in supporting RA.

By engaging stakeholders across sectors — including producers, financial institutions, policymakers, and consumer groups — the research aims to identify gaps in current financial offerings and propose innovative, ESG-aligned financial solutions that can facilitate a sustainable agricultural transition.

The project seeks to answer the following questions:

- How appropriate are the range of financial products available on the market to support farmers in transitioning their operations to regenerative agriculture?
- What are the specific financial needs of producers during the transition to RA?
- To what extent do financial institutions incorporate ESG outcomes in their decision-making processes?
- What role can policy play in incentivizing or supporting ESG-aligned financial products for agriculture?
- How do financial needs and product suitability vary across different types of agricultural operations (e.g. ranching, cropland, horticulture)?



THE HOW. RESEARCH DISSEMINATION.

WEBINARS.

Behind the Label: Inside Organic Food Production

Webinar // September 2024

Behind The Label: Unpacking Sustainable Beef, Crops, And The ESG Lens

Webinar // November 2024

Behind The Label: Unveiling Agricultural Myths and Realities

Webinar // January 2025

ROUNDTABLES.

Regenerative Agriculture (RA) Study Findings and Knowledge Mobilization

Roundtable // October 2024

Exploring Payment Options for Ecosystem Services

Roundtable // November 2024

Land Stewardship Model Channeling Investments for Regenerative Agriculture (RA) Advancements

Roundtable // November 2024

PANEL DISCUSSION.

Agricultural Literacy: Healthier People and Planet

Panel Discussion // July 2024

KEYNOTE.

Problems With Solutions: How Research Evidence Contributes to Public Decisions

Keynote // October 2024

PUBLICATION.

"The Futures for Regenerative Agriculture: Insights from the Organic Movement and the Tussle with Industrial Agriculture"

Tatenda Mambo and Guillaume Lhermie
// December 2024

REPORTS.

"Policy Trends: Scaling Regenerative Agriculture (RA) in Alberta"

Tatenda Mambo, Ohi Ahmed,
Roshanne Sihota, and Anaïs Dardier
// January 2025

"Poultry Focus Group Report: Challenges Facing the Sector"

Tatenda Mambo, Guillaume Lhermie,
and Anaïs Dardier // March 2025

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS.

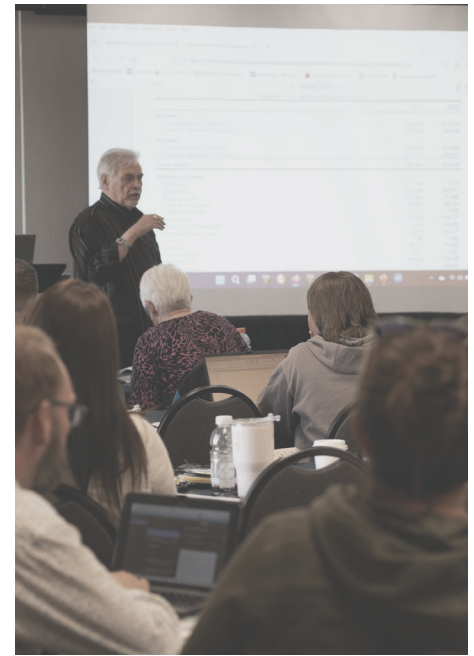
WORKING WITH AGRICULTURAL DATA.

APRIL 4, 2024

This full-day hybrid workshop brought together participants from across Canada to explore the role of digital tools and data in agricultural decision-making. Through TED-style presentations and interactive “Show & Tell” sessions, experts from industry, government, and research shared insights on how producers are using data to improve financial and production outcomes. Participants engaged with real-world datasets, gaining hands-on experience in querying and interpreting data to identify meaningful patterns. The event highlighted both the opportunities and current limitations of agri-tech adoption, and emphasized the growing importance of data literacy in the transition to digital agriculture.

DATA LITERACY FOR COW-CALF PRODUCERS.

The Data Literacy Program for Cow-Calf Producers has been designed specifically to help cow-calf producers realize the benefits of incorporating better data management into their farm operations using digital data. The practical benefits include reduced administrative burden (fewer hours spent on record management), optimized performance, and increased profitability. We know that once agriculture data is digitized, replacing paper-based systems, the enhanced ease of access and reuse of information, along with improved strategic decision-making year-on-year, translate into a significant return on investment.



The program includes two workshops and a six-month mentoring program, all part of the Government of Alberta sponsored Alberta Digitalization Agriculture Program.

- Workshop #1: June 13, 2024
Focuses on foundational skills and goal setting for data collection.
- Workshop #2: November 28, 2024
You choose which data you want to focus on for your ranch!

**POLICY LAB ON WATER
SUSTAINABILITY IN
ALBERTA’S AGRICULTURE
THROUGH DIGITALIZATION.**

As part of the Alberta Digitalization (“ABDIAG”) program, the Simpson Centre launched a three-part Policy Lab to explore how digital tools can improve water sustainability in Alberta’s agriculture. This initiative brings together producers, researchers, government officials, industry experts, irrigation districts, and Indigenous communities to co-develop a roadmap for efficient and sustainable water use.

WHERE WE ARE IN THE JOURNEY:

This Policy Lab is a multi-phase initiative designed to foster collaboration and generate impactful solutions:

- Session 1: November 27, 2024
Defined the problem, identifying key challenges in water sustainability within Alberta’s agricultural landscape.
- Session 2: March 4, 2025
Focused on producers’ needs and explored the use of digital tools—such as sensors, satellite imagery, and data analytics—to support better water management.
- Session 3: (Coming in late 2025)
The final session will bring together all contributions to create a comprehensive roadmap for implementing innovative policies and practices for water sustainability in Alberta’s agriculture.

**REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE (RA)
STUDY FINDINGS AND KNOWLEDGE
MOBILIZATION.**

OCTOBER 23, 2024

This virtual roundtable gathered stakeholders to discuss the state of Regenerative Agriculture (RA) in Alberta, with presentations highlighting on-the-ground experiences and research findings. Breakout sessions focused on RA successes, barriers, and policy gaps, leading to a closing discussion on future actions.

Key questions discussed included:

- What successes can help scale RA in Alberta?
- What barriers exist, and how can they be overcome?
- What policy changes are needed to support wider adoption?

**EXPLORING PAYMENT OPTIONS FOR
ECOSYSTEM SERVICES.**

NOVEMBER 6, 2024

The roundtable brought together stakeholders to explore how best to incentivize farmers to adopt best management practices through ecosystem service compensation programs. Following presentations on current programs and research findings, participants engaged in a SWOT analysis and discussed ways to improve program design, alignment, and impact.

Key questions discussed included:

- How can alignment between organizations and funding programs be improved?
- Should programs shift from a practice-based to an outcome-based approach?

- What mechanisms can strengthen collaboration across government, industry, and NGOs?
- How do economic and policy uncertainties affect farmer participation?
- What opportunities exist to better manage resources and support long-term sustainability?

**LAND STEWARDSHIP MODEL
CHANNELING INVESTMENTS FOR
REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE
(RA) ADVANCEMENTS.**

NOVEMBER 26, 2024

An online roundtable on advancing sustainable agriculture through partnerships between farmers and conservation groups, with a focus on land stewardship and co-ownership models. Presentations outlined current approaches, highlighted pilot projects in Alberta, and explored collaborative opportunities for driving regenerative agriculture forward.

Key questions discussed included:

- How can co-ownership improve governance and resource management?
- What are the financial and operational challenges of these models?
- How can diverse stakeholder interests be balanced?
- What incentives and policy supports are needed for adoption?
- How might new models impact farmland ownership and investment?



WEBSITE

10,908 visits: up 40.8%
7,307 users: up 48%

**SOCIAL MEDIA
(LINKEDIN)**

38,708 impressions
53.3% Audience Growth Rate

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENTS:

2 interviews
1 presentation
7 keynote speeches

Dr. Guillaume Lhermie's insights on government financial support for helping farmers withstand extreme weather were featured in over 100 media reports, reaching a combined desktop and mobile audience of 50.9 million.

MEDIA HITS:

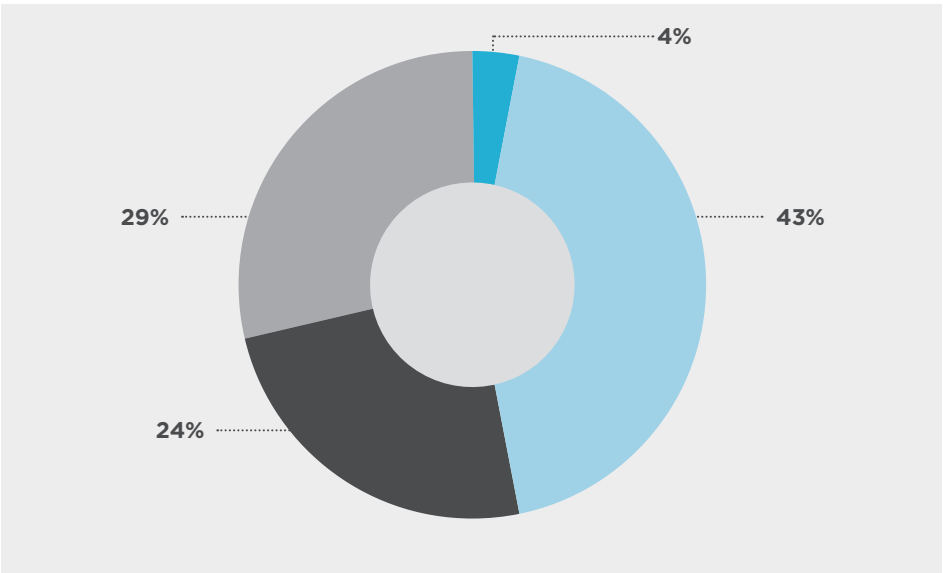
460 media mentions, up 330% from previous period
197.8 million desktop and mobile reach, up 237% from previous period
Advertising value equivalency (AVE) \$51.9K

MEDIA COVERAGE.

MEDIA HITS.

BY REGION:

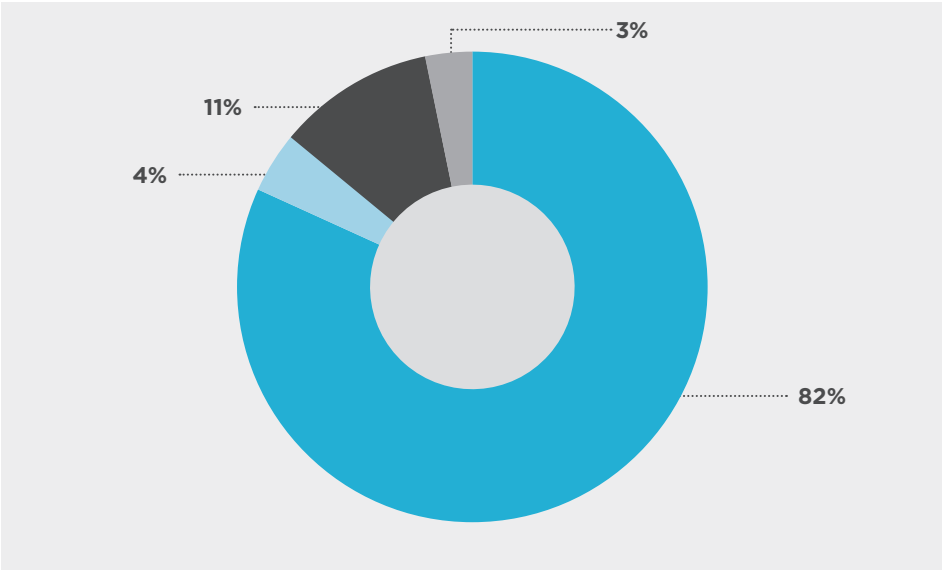
- International
- National
- Provincial
- Local (Municipal)



MEDIA HITS.

BY TYPE OF PLATFORM:

- Digital
- Print
- Radio
- Television



*Does not include social media platforms.

OUR EVENTS.

NINETEEN EVENTS

SEVEN WEBINARS

EIGHT ROUNDTABLES

ONE PANEL DISCUSSION

ONE KEYNOTE

TWO POLICY LABS

***Food Cost Dynamics: Insights Into
Red Meats, Grains and Oilseeds***

Webinar // April 2024

***Working with Agricultural Data:
Current Practices***

Roundtable // April 2024

***Data Literacy for Cow-Calf
Producers – Session 1***

Roundtable // April 2024

***Food Cost Dynamics: Insights
Into Fruits and Wheat***

Webinar // May 2024

2024 Agribusiness Study Workshop

Roundtable // May 2024

***Croptech Connect: Agtech
Innovations for Canada***

Webinar // July 2024

***Agricultural Literacy: Healthier
People and Planet***

Panel Discussion // July 2024

***Behind the Label: Inside Organic
Food Production***

Webinar // September 2024

***Problems With Solutions: How
Research Evidence Contributes
to Public Decisions***

Keynote // October 2024

***Regenerative Agriculture (RA) Study
Findings and Knowledge Mobilization***

Roundtable // October 2024

***Exploring Payment Options
for Ecosystem Services***

Roundtable // November 2024

***Land Stewardship Model Channeling
Investments for Regenerative
Agriculture (RA) Advancements***

Roundtable // November 2024

***Behind The Label: Unpacking
Sustainable Beef, Crops, And
The ESG Lens***

Webinar // November 2024

***Data Literacy for Cow-Calf
Producers – Session 2***

Roundtable // November 2024

***Water Sustainability in Alberta's
Agriculture through
Digitalization – Session 1***

Policy Lab // November 2024

***Behind The Label: Unveiling
Agricultural Myths and Realities***

Webinar // January 2025

***Navigating the Digital Revolution in
Agriculture: Technology Adoption, Data
Governance, and the Future of Farming
in Canada***

Webinar // March 2025

***National Freshwater Science Agenda
(NFSA) – Agriculture's Water Priorities***

Roundtable // March 2025

***Water Sustainability in Alberta's
Agriculture Through Digitalization –
Session 2***

Policy Lab // March 2025



OUR EXPERTS.

Elevating the voice of experts and credible scientific research is key to achieving our impacts.

We continue to expand our network of scientific experts each year. Our affiliation with the University of Calgary enables us to collaborate with talented professionals across multiple faculties. With gratitude and pride, we recognize the organizations that have contributed to our research and outreach programs.

OUR WORKING PARTNERS.

We wish to thank our working partners for disseminating our content and participating in our events.

The Simpson Centre has a special role to play in the ecosystem for agriculture & agri-food to mobilize research for policymaking and decision-making in a framework to advance sustainable agriculture and to make research accessible, engaging, and useful to our diverse audiences.

We look forward to strengthening our working relationships and growing our network in years to come. Please contact us if you would like to amplify our voice and contribute to our conversations.

OUR FUNDING PARTNERS.

Partnership is a critical aspect to achieving the Simpson Centre's goals.

We are networked with leading organizations in Canadian agriculture. We place great value on our partners, and the Simpson Centre's work is richer because of them. The Faculty of Veterinary Medicine gratefully acknowledges the support of our funding partners. Here, we feature current funders of the Simpson Centre's research.

Please contact us if you would like to join our network of supporters.

CONTACT US.

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OUR ADVISORY COUNCIL.

We are fortunate to have an Advisory Council that helps steer the Simpson Centre on its course to organizational growth and delivering on its stated mission. The Simpson Centre is guided by leaders with broad and deep experience in Canadian agriculture.

GUILLAUME LHERMIE

Director, the Simpson Centre for Food and Agricultural Policy

ALISON JACKSON

Managing Partner, Calgary at Ernst and Young – Tax, and Agribusiness

JOHN SIMPSON

Founder, Chairman of the Board, CEO of the CANA Group of Companies

DON SMITH

Executive Vice-President & Chief Operating Officer, United Farmers of Alberta Co-operative Limited

ARVIND GUPTA

Professor, Department of Computer Science, University of Toronto

DOUG HORNER

Chairman, Canada Asia Synergy Group

G. KEE JIM

Managing Director, Feedlot Health & GK Jim Group of Companies

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Founder and CEO, Peters & Associates, Corp.

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UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY
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