

# Frequently Asked Questions

## What is the Canadian Young Farmers' Forum?

The CYFF was established in 1997 to facilitate the exchange of information and to foster collaboration between young and beginning farmers across the country. Today, the Forum provides a multi-faceted development opportunity for young farmers (aged 18 -40) that serves to inform participants, consolidate young farmer opinion, and offer leadership training and advice.

## How does the Canadian Young Farmers' Forum work?

Young and beginning farmers from across Canada gather together once each year for the Annual Meeting & Conference of the Canadian Young Farmers' Forum. Three delegates from each province, as well as the North West Territories and the Yukon are eligible to attend the meeting. Delegate selection processes are different in every area, but those who attend the Forum must be under the age of forty.

## Are there affiliated organizations at the Provincial level?

Presently there are several provincial affiliates of the Canadian Young Farmers' Forum. Many provinces have young farmer organizational structures in place, and others are working towards the establishment of their own provincial young farmer group. It is a primary objective of the Canadian Young Farmers' Forum to facilitate the development of provincial/territorial young farmer structures across the country, with each province/territory.

## Why are provincial affiliates important?

As the Canadian Young Farmers' Forum gains recognition as the national voice of young farmers, provincial structures will be critical to flow of information, both up - from the grass-roots to consolidate a national young farmer perspective, and down - from the national level to the provincial and local decision-makers.

## Training & Education

Training and Education are important to young farmers as they develop their farm businesses, and the agriculture industry as a whole. Formal education, as well as extension training and service are essential to keep young farmers efficient, effective and forward-thinking. Incentive programs for education would help to ensure a progressive agriculture industry through the efforts of young farmers.

## Farm Transfers & Succession Planning

The largest transfer of wealth in our history will take place over the next several decades. Support is needed to facilitate this transfer between generations in a way that benefits the agriculture industry and the rural economy.

## Young Farmer Voice

Support is needed for young farmer organizations as they fulfill an important role of identifying challenges and developing solutions that work for young and beginning farmers. This kind of perspective is important not only for new policy direction specific to young farmers, but on all areas of agriculture policy that impact the future of a young farmer's livelihood.

## Agriculture Awareness

Public support of the agriculture industry is essential to the long-term viability of Canadian food producers. Young farmers recognize the important role that agriculture awareness plays in their future success.

## Long-term Viability & Stability of the Agriculture Industry

A comprehensive agriculture policy is needed to articulate Canada's vision for the future of the industry. Issues like food security, financial stability, domestic production and commitment to the future of agriculture in Canada need to be addressed.



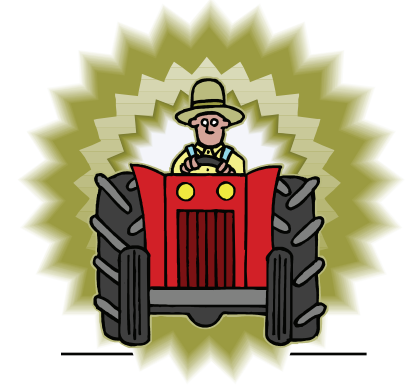
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# Canadian Young Farmers' Forum CYFF



**Canadian Young Farmers' Forum**  
**La Table pancanadienne de la relève agricole**



**THE MISSION** - to promote the exchange of ideas and to foster collaboration between the young and future farmers of Canada.

**THE PURPOSE** - to provide a multi-faceted educational and development opportunity for young and beginning farmers from across Canada. More specifically, to:

- identify the problems encountered by young people looking to become established in agriculture, and to exchange ideas about solutions applied in Canada and around the world;
- promote the exchange of ideas on issues of training and capacity building, and to identify program needs and preferred delivery methods;
- enable young people throughout Canada to become familiar with the realities of the agriculture industry in every province;
- prepare young and beginning farmers for a more active role in Canada's agricultural organizations;
- consolidate the opinion of young and beginning farmers across Canada on agriculture and rural issues; and
- facilitate the development of and provide support to provincial young farmer structures in every province and territory in the Country.



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## Frequently Asked Questions Continued:

### Are there International activities available?

The Canadian Young Farmers' Forum establishes links with similar organizations around the world and informs delegates about International activities targeting young people in agriculture and encourages them to participate. In February 2000, more than 25 Canadian young farmers from all across the country traveled to the World Congress of Young Farmers in Orlando, Florida. This four day event provided participants with the opportunity to attend workshops, lectures and farm tours as well as network with their peers from over 40 countries. The Canadian delegation was funded in part by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. Again, in 2004 CYFF sent a delegation the World Congress, this time held in Paris (France). This event helped the participants to have a better view of what is going on in agriculture worldwide.

### How did the Canadian Young Farmers' Forum get started?

The Federation de la Releve Agricole du Quebec (FRAQ) proposed the concept of a national round table to young farmer groups, agricultural cooperatives commodity groups and general farm organizations across Canada during three missions funded by the Farm Credit Corporation in 1996. The idea was enthusiastically received, and with funding from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, the first Annual Meeting and Conference was held in Thunder Bay, Ontario in 1997 with organizational development at the top of the agenda. Since then, every year we hold an annual meeting.

### Why is the Canadian Young Farmers' Forum important?

There are unique circumstances, concerns and challenges facing young and beginning farmers that may not be reflected in the policies of organizations that are presently working the represent the agriculture industry. Policies are being set that will determine the future of the industry - often without input from the young farmers who will have to live with the consequences of that policy in their farm operations.

### Why don't existing farm organizations always work for young farmers?

Few farm organizations have formal structures in place to ensure young and beginning farmer input on policy direction. This kind of "customized" mechanism is important because the time commitment is often too great for young and beginning farmers to participate in the traditional structures of agriculture organizations.

### Why is time commitment such an important factor?

Young farmers may be simultaneously establishing a new farm business, completing post-secondary education, raising a young family and maintaining an off-farm job to help finance their farm operation.

### How can young farmers have a voice?

An efficient, effective, recognized and respected mechanism is needed to identify young farmer concerns, develop solutions to the challenges facing young farmers and prepare young and beginning farmers to take an active role in shaping the agriculture industry. The Canadian Young Farmers' Forum fills that gap, and gives young farmers across the country a voice.

### What do young farmers get out of their involvement with the Canadian Young Farmers' Forum?

Participants in the Forum gain a better understanding of the agriculture industry as described by their colleagues from across the Country. Speakers and workshops increase participants' knowledge of the agriculture industry's issues, policies and problems. The development of both national and provincial structures will enhance participants' leadership skills, preparing them to take a more active role in agriculture and rural organizations. In addition, since young and beginning farmers are often isolated from their peers, the face-to-face meeting of the Forum, as well as the on-line communication helps to establish an important support network of peers facing the same challenges in pursuit of similar goals.

### How does the agriculture industry benefit?

Increased opportunities for dialogue, networking and action planning among participants, organizations, and industry stakeholders will lead to more effective programs and policies across the country. The industry will also benefit from the creation of a pool of skilled future leaders with an awareness of issues in Canadian agriculture and a proven commitment to developing collaborative, creative solutions.

### How is the Forum funded?

A multi-year agreement with the Farm Credit Canada provides part funding for the Forum's Annual Meeting & Conference. In addition, Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada has returned as a primary funding partner with development resources that will ensure the foundation for the organization and its provincial affiliates is secure. Additional funding will have to be secured in order to maintain the Canadian Young Farmers' Forum.

### What does the future hold for the Canadian Young Farmers' Forum?

Organizational development, communications and long-term funding are the key priorities for the Canadian Young Farmers' Forum moving into the new millennium. A regular newsletter and web site will be launched in 2005.

