



**Agricultural Research and Extension Council of Alberta
Connections**

4th Newsletter to Board Members of ARECA Associations
September, 2015

This week, we had an excellent meeting with the new Minister of Agriculture and Forestry (AF), Oneil Carlier. Chair Ian Murray (FFGA) and two ARECA Board members, Herman Wyering (GWFA) and Tom McMillan (GRO) and Janette McDonald (ARECA ED) attended.

Our primary goal was to talk about how we can enhance our partnership with AF. We talked about our nine member associations and the work we have done on Soil Health in 2015. We showed the Minister the long list of events planned and hosted by our associations this summer; on topics from pasture management, to stockmanship to crop field days, to soil health.

We talked about the province's carbon strategy and how our members can be a part of designing successful policy on maintaining and rewarding carbon sequestration in perennial pastures and grasslands.

We highlighted our delivery of the Alberta Environmental Farm Plan (AEFP). ARECA has delivered the EFP since 2013 and we talked with Carlier and AF Environmental Stewardship staff about our plans to strengthen the program in the future.

We talked about the Agricultural Opportunities Fund (AOF) and its fundamental importance to the operation of our organizations. We were very clear that without maintenance of the AOF funding, delivery of good applied research and extension through ARAs and Forage Associations would be impossible.

Ian invited the Minister to speak at our Western Canada Conference on Soil Health in December. We hope he plans to attend. Ian has also invited the Minister of Environment and Parks.



Visit with the Minister of Agriculture and Forestry: L-R): Tom McMillan (GRO), Herman Wyering (GWFA), Minister Oneil Carlier, Agriculture and Forestry; Ian Murray (FFGA).

Registration for the 2015 Western Canadian Conference on Soil Health is now open!

[Click here](#) to register or visit <http://albertasoilhealth.ca/> for more information.