

“New research shows that investment in education and skills training is three times as important to economic growth, over the long run, as investment in physical capital, such as machinery and equipment.”

- Education Matters, February 2005, #6, Statistics Canada. www.statcan.ca

The agricultural sector is evolving rapidly to keep pace with technology and the changing global marketplace. Producers are continually adapting, and their operations are becoming more complex. They are acquiring knowledge, developing new skills, and incorporating strategic planning and management activities on an ongoing basis.

Farm managers are life long learners; learning new skills, enhancing existing skills, and contributing to the competitiveness of Canada’s agricultural sector.

To support farm families in these efforts, the governments of Canada and Saskatchewan offer the Canadian Agricultural Skills Service (CASS). This program has been implemented to provide funding to farmers, beginning farmers and their spouses to develop a learning plan, and undertake education and training that will help them gain valuable skills and knowledge.

CASS offers:

Assessment: Participants will work with qualified counsellors to identify existing strengths and skills, and develop realistic and achievable goals. During this process, you may discover skills, learning options and opportunities that you were previously unaware of.

Development of an Individual Learning Plan:

The counsellor will help you create your personal Learning Plan by selecting learning activities that best suit your needs and goals, and will determine the time and costs involved in carrying out the plan.

Funding: Financial support is provided for formal training (i.e. non-degree college programs of less than 24 months) and informal learning (i.e. workshops and short courses). Eligible costs include tuition, textbooks and related expenses such as travel and dependent care.

Follow up: The CASS Case Manager will provide individualized assistance to you as you implement your Learning Plans. Through on-going communication with the Case Manager, CASS participants will receive encouragement and assistance with problems that may arise.

Maximum benefit levels:

The following figures are based on three-year average net family income (or one-year for beginning farmers).

Average net family income benefit available	Maximum
Less than \$35,000	\$16,000
\$35,001 to \$40,000	\$12,000
\$40,001 to \$45,000	\$8,000



CASS supports training to enhance or develop the skills and knowledge essential to achieving your plans for:

- improving your practices in farm production, and/or farm business management;
- gaining employment; or
- creating or expanding a business venture.

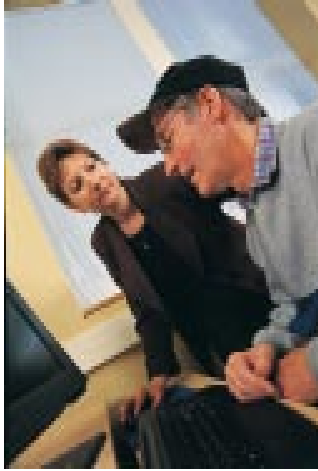
Getting Started:

1. Contact a Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food (SAF) Renewal Specialist or call 1-888-887-7977.
2. The SAF Renewal Specialist will verify your eligibility, determine your level of financial benefit, and process your application. You will need to provide your CRA T451E (Notice of Assessment) or CRA T1 General (Income Tax and Benefit Return) from the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) for each of the last three years (one year in the case of a beginning farmer).

If you are a beginning farmer or a member of a corporate farm, you will need to provide some additional documents and information. Call the toll free number to learn what is required.

3. Eligible applicants will be referred for skills assessment and development of an Individual Learning Plan.
4. With an approved Individual Learning Plan, you can proceed with your training activities.
5. Once your training is complete, you can use your new skills and knowledge to improve your income, improve your farm practices, create a new agricultural enterprise, start a new business and/or obtain employment.

Who can apply?



You and your spouse may be eligible for CASS assistance if:

- you are an established producer, with annual gross farm sales of at least \$10,000 per year, and a net family income of less than \$45,000 (three-year average);
- you are a beginning farmer who has owned/operated a farm for less than six years, or intends to establish a farm that has, or will have, annual gross farm sales of at least \$10,000;
- you have been out of high school for at least two years;
- you are not currently receiving Employment Insurance benefits.

Canadian Agricultural Skills Service

For more information:

Call toll free: 1-888-887-7977

E-mail: cass@agr.gov.sk.ca

Visit the website: www.agr.gov.sk.ca/docs/about_us/apf/cass_factsheet2005.asp

Contact the SAF Renewal Specialist in your area:

East Central
Yorkton 306-786-1507

North East
Prince Albert 306-953-2774

North West
North Battleford 306-446-7479

South East
Weyburn 306-848-2393

West Central
Saskatoon 306-933-6150

South West
Regina 306-787-4051

CASS Program Coordinator
Saskatoon 306-933-6016
306-933-6593

Aussi disponible en français.

Canadian Agricultural Skills Service (CASS) Program

Helping farm families increase their income by:

- *improving farm practices*
- *building new enterprises*
- *preparing for off-farm employment*



Canadian Agricultural Skills Service (CASS)

CASS is one of the Renewal Programs of the Agricultural Policy Framework. It is a joint initiative of Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food, and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

CASS is designed to help farmers and their spouses increase their family income by:

- improving farm practices;
- building new agricultural enterprises;
- creating new business ventures; or
- obtaining employment income.

Eligible participants will complete a skills assessment, develop an Individual Learning Plan, and receive financial support for education and training activities that will help them gain the skills and knowledge necessary to achieve their goals.

