

# **Southern Alberta agriculture event showcases the latest in farming technology**

**By Chris Chacon**

From smartphones to medical devices and even televisions, we use and rely on technology every day. This need for technology is also used among several industries, including agriculture.

Southern Albertan farmers held an event Saturday, informing the general public just far how far the industry has come.

“A lot of farmers and agronomists are starting to use [drones] more and more, especially on the higher acre farms,” explained Adrian Moens, owner of AGM Seeds.

Drones are just one example of the advancements in technology taking off at Open Farm Day, an event held by an organization of southern Albertan farmers called Farming Smarter.

“Agriculture is constantly changing and adapting to new technologies, so we have drones in the sky to help scout fields, we have equipment that has [a] variable rate, which means we can change the amount of fertilizer or the seed or irrigation in the field,” said Jamie Puchinger, assistant manager of Farming Smarter.

“This is our fifth event and it’s basically to get people that aren’t involved daily in agriculture to a farm to see and experience what it’s like in agriculture today,” Puchinger added.

While technology is key for farming smarter, science also is a big factor.

“A lot of the research we do is about testing new ideas to continually evolve the way we farm, and [we are] working within a biological system, so whenever we think we have a problem solved, nature adapts... so a big part of what we’re doing to [try] to stay one step ahead of nature,” said Ken Coles, general manager of Farming Smarter.

Sharing the latest and greatest in the farming world, the event has grown each year, drawing in more and more crowds interested in this particular field.

“It’s great to know about the agriculture practices and how food is grown. I think [children] need to learn it and they enjoy it every year,” said Gurdip Virk, a third-year participant.

Open Farm Day is held at a farm east of Lethbridge. It is a free event and is held in August of each year.