

Open the barn doors and let them in

By [Barb Glen](#), Published: August 13, 2020



Modern farm equipment was on display during Alberta's Open Farm Days last August at the Farming Smarter research site near Lethbridge. Visitors could climb on the equipment and learn about various farming operations from farmers and research personnel on site. | Barb Glen photo

About 80 farms in Alberta plan to open their doors to visitors Aug. 15-16 as part of the annual Open Farm Days event in the province that has been held since 2013.

It will be a bit different from previous years due to space and crowd size limitations imposed by the pandemic and visitors must plan ahead and pre-book their visits online.

Farm tours, grain elevator tours, mini-markets, pasture golf, craft breweries and opportunities to see and touch farm animals are all possibilities for visitors, depending on region and distance they want to travel. There are honey and hops, cherries and dairies among the options. In many cases visitors can buy Alberta-grown and raised produce and products.

"Albertans want to buy and eat local and Open Farm Days connects them with local farmers," said Alberta Agriculture Minister Devin Dreeshen in a news release.

Fewer farms are participating this year compared to past years when numbers topped 100. That's due in part to COVID-19 worries or requirements. However, in all cases enhanced cleaning protocols are to be undertaken and hand sanitizers and hand-washing facilities will be available to visitors, according to organizers.

Tim Carson, chief executive officer of the Alberta Association of Agricultural Societies, said Open Farm Days is "the perfect excuse to travel throughout Alberta's rural communities and experience the beautiful landscape and unique local culture that is Alberta."

Admission to farms is free but some activities may carry a cost and often payment is by cash only. Those planning to buy produce are advised to bring a cooler.

The list of participating farms and booking details can be found at albertafarmdays.ca.