



Levy Central

The Agriculture Council of Saskatchewan Inc. (ACS) operates levy collection services for ten Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Alberta commodity organizations through the Levy Central program. Levy Central was previously administered by the Saskatchewan Canola Development Commission (SCDC).

A levy is collected on each of ten crops, paying for research, market development and education activities through the commodity organizations. Currently, 136 unique buyers from multiple commodities submit reports and payments to Levy Central.

The ten commodity organizations that collect levies through Levy Central include:

- * Saskatchewan Canola Development Commission
- * Saskatchewan Flax Development Commission
- * Saskatchewan Mustard Development Commission
- * Canaryseed Development Commission of Saskatchewan
- * Saskatchewan Oat Development Commission
- * Manitoba Oat Growers Association
- * Saskatchewan Winter Cereals Development Commission
- * Winter Cereals Manitoba Inc.
- * Alberta Winter Wheat Producers Commission
- * Alberta Barley Commission

ACS is seeking to expand Levy Central resulting in increased cost efficiencies for its clients. To aid in its expansion efforts, ACS has established a new Levy Central Advisory Group, made up of members from the ten commodity organizations and three directors from the ACS Board. This Advisory Board provides the opportunity for client input directly to the Board of Directors of ACS.

The benefits of using levy collection services through Levy Central include:

- An Automated Levy Tracking System (ALTS4Web database). This is a powerful program that was designed specifically to track producer and buyer levy data. Further development of ALTS4Web is cost shared by Levy Central clients;
- A server dedicated to the Levy Central program. Client confidentiality is of utmost importance to ACS. Access to client data is restricted internally. The knowledgeable Levy Central staff has 25 combined years of experience working with levy collection and the ALTS4Web database;
- The ability for buyers of multiple commodities to deal with one organization (ACS – Levy Central) and remit reports and payments to one address. Working relationships are quickly established between Levy Central staff and buyers which result in less reporting errors and less delinquency of reports and payments;
- The option for clients to access their organizations' data remotely through the Internet;
- And the ability to tailor the database to a client's needs and the ability to understand and follow client-specific regulations;

Levy Central Services include:

- All levy report and payment information is checked for accuracy and entered into ALTS4WEB;
- Staff following up with delinquent levy reports and payments, which involves regular communication with buyers. Staff at ACS have no legal authority to challenge reluctant buyers;
- A daily back-up of clients' data;
- A weekly deposit of levy cheques. Documentation of deposit is forwarded to each client;
- Staff photocopying, collating and mailing annual Buyer Registration packages for clients whose regulations dictate this must be done;
- Staff printing producer statements of account for each client to assist with refund processing;
- Providing clients with the following reports:
 - Election voters' list;
 - Year-end levy reconciliation summary and supporting documentation;
 - Newsletter mailing lists;
 - Check-off levy reports by buyer and month;
 - Producer statements of account;
 - A list of registered producers;
 - Other reports as requested.

About ACS

The Agriculture Council of Saskatchewan Inc. (ACS) is a unique, member-based industry organization. Our members represent Saskatchewan's agriculture and agri-food sector, from primary production and value-added processing to research and market development. Guided by our member organizations which elect the ACS Board of Directors, ACS has become a leader in identifying issues and providing collaborative solutions.

ACS is designed to position Saskatchewan's agriculture and agri-food industry at the forefront of innovation to provide solutions to industry issues and capture market opportunities. ACS is currently delivering AAFC's Canadian Agricultural Adaptation Program (CAAP), a five-year (2009-2014), \$163 million national program with the objective of facilitating the agriculture, agri-food, and agri-based products sector's ability to seize opportunities, to respond to new and emerging issues, and to pathfind and pilot solutions to new and ongoing issues in order to help it adapt and remain competitive. Other programs ACS delivers with funding provided by AAFC include the Foodservice and Grocery Retail Value Chain Initiative, the Saskatchewan Agriculture and Agri-Food Concept Evaluation Program, and the Agriculture Mentorship Initiative.

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