



*For Immediate Release*

## Media Release

### ***The Real Dirt on Farming in the Classroom*** **New resource brings agriculture lessons into Canadian schools**

February 23, 2021 – (Guelph) A successful partnership between Farm & Food Care (FFC) and Agriculture in the Classroom Canada (AITC-C) has led to the completion of a national classroom resource designed to give students and teachers across Canada the opportunity to dig deeper into the latest edition of *The Real Dirt on Farming (RDOF)*.

*The Real Dirt on Farming in the Classroom* was produced by AITC-C, working in collaboration with FFC. With the help of AITC-C's provincial agriculture in the classroom organizations, it will be distributed digitally, along with the RDOF booklet, to classrooms across Canada. It was released today in celebration of Canada's Agriculture Day.

Lesson plans in the 36-page document enable students to engage with the RDOF while examining its key topics – animal welfare, crops and plants, sustainability, agriculture policy, current issues in our food system and more.

*The Real Dirt on Farming in the Classroom* accompanies the fifth edition of the RDOF booklet which was released in November, 2020. To date, 4.5 million copies of the prior editions have been distributed across Canada to libraries, doctors' offices, Registered Dietitians, political leaders, educators, and through inserts in national publications.

Bonnie den Haan, Chair of Farm & Food Care Ontario, said that the partnership between AITC-C and Farm & Food Care builds on the strengths of both organizations. "Working with AITC-C to create this curriculum-based document will extend the reach of our flagship publication even further. We're excited to see this partnership taking *The Real Dirt on Farming* into classrooms from coast to coast."

"We are pleased to bring *The Real Dirt on Farming in the Classroom* into the hands of Canadian educators," said Johanne Ross, Executive Director of AITC-C. "We want students to be curious and excited about learning about Canada's agriculture and food story. Through this resource, we are providing teachers with a link to bring this story to life in the classroom."

The publication as well as the educator guide is currently available online on a newly-developed website at [www.RealDirtOnFarming.ca](http://www.RealDirtOnFarming.ca) and [www.aitc-canada.ca](http://www.aitc-canada.ca). Hard copies of the classroom resource will be available later in the year.

In total, more than 25 companies and agribusinesses across Canada supported *The Real Dirt on Farming* project. Farm Credit Canada was one of the champion level partners, putting its \$20,000 contribution entirely into the development of the classroom resource. Marty Seymour, Director of Industry Relations for Farm Credit Canada, said, “The gap between the industry and students can sometimes feel pretty wide. Packing up content in this format is the most effective way for our industry to reach the next generation who will be the decision makers of the future.”

The project was also funded, in part, through the AgriCompetitiveness program of the Canadian Agricultural Partnership, a federal, provincial, territorial initiative.

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### **About Farm & Food Care**

With offices in Saskatchewan, Ontario and Prince Edward Island, Farm & Food Care cultivates appreciation for food and farming by connecting farm gates to our dinner plates. Farm & Food Care brings farmers, agricultural professionals, related businesses and other groups together with a mandate to provide credible information on food and farming in Canada. If you have a question, we'd be pleased to answer it. For more information, visit [www.FarmFoodCare.org](http://www.FarmFoodCare.org) or [www.RealDirtonFarming.ca](http://www.RealDirtonFarming.ca)

### **About Agriculture in the Classroom Canada**

Agriculture in the Classroom Canada (AITC-C) is a Canadian charitable organization with a vision to bring agriculture to every classroom, inspiring every student. Alongside ten provincial member organizations, AITC-C provides accurate, balanced and current, curriculum-linked resources for students at all grade levels. We are proud to work with our network of partners, stakeholders and volunteers to provide educational experiences that will foster a passion for lifelong learning through collaboration, creativity, critical thinking and communication by sharing Canada's remarkable agriculture and food story. To learn more visit [aitc-canada.ca](http://aitc-canada.ca).

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