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KEY MESSAGE:

Alberta's export engine needs frictionless market access. Cut trade barriers, smooth logistics, and stabilize financing to turn headwinds into growth.

vet.ucalgary.ca/simpsoncentre

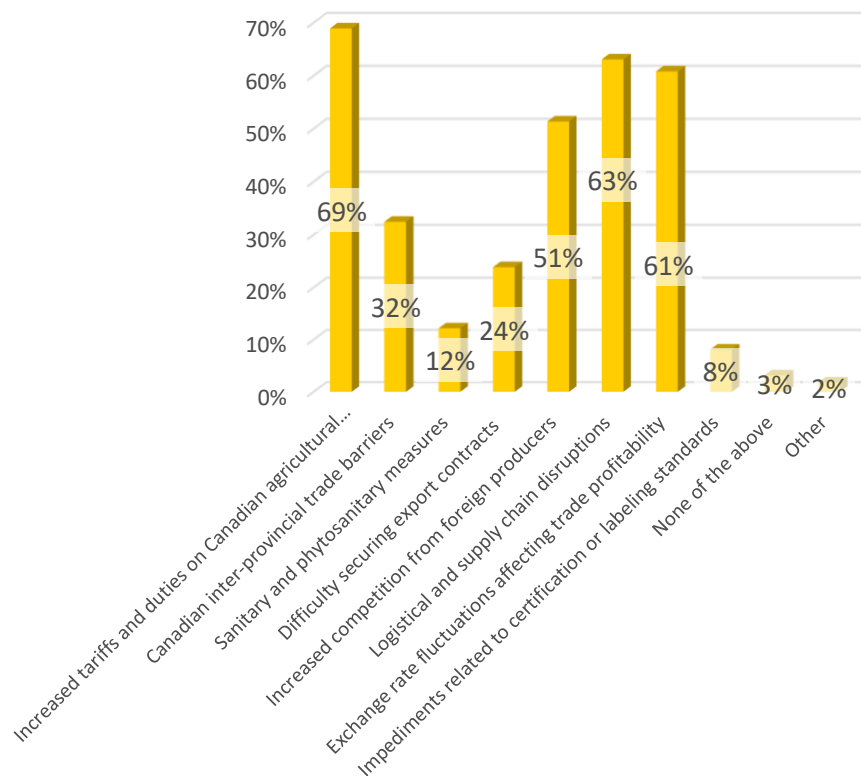
2025 AB FARMER SURVEY: TRADE CONDITIONS & PRIORITIES

Alberta's agriculture industry is export oriented. In 2023, the province exported about \$17.9 billion in agri-food: roughly \$8.2 billion in primary commodities and \$9.7 billion in value-added products. Alberta is described as a "top beef & wheat exporter."

Yet, producers consistently report that farmers' trade priorities are overlooked. To portray Alberta farmers' priorities, the Simpson Centre surveyed 222 Alberta farmers (within a national sample of 979) as part of the "Voices from the Field" project.

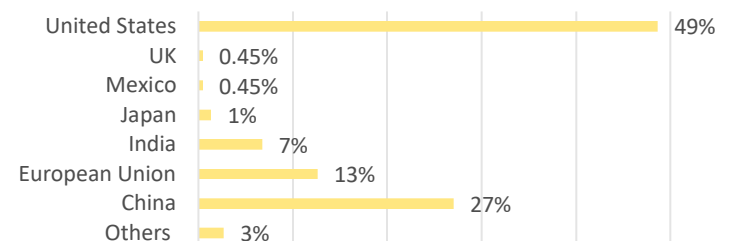
Given the new realities, Albertan farmers are facing turbulent trade conditions. Nearly seven in ten Alberta producers report higher tariffs or duties; about two-thirds face logistics disruptions and Foreign Exchange swings and over half feel competitive pressure from foreign suppliers. Domestic frictions through interprovincial barriers and contract challenges were reported by respondents as well. Please refer to Figure 1.

Figure 1: Trade challenges experienced by Alberta farmers (%)



When asked about policy preferences, "Trade and market access" turned out to be the top priority, selected by 90% of Alberta respondents. In terms of international markets of preference for enhanced trade: United States (49%) leads the pack followed by China (27%) and the European Union (13%), with moderate interest in India (7%) and limited attention to Japan, Mexico, and the UK. Please refer to Figure 2.

Figure 2: Trade partners most preferred by farmers (%) for diplomatic efforts



Despite daily frictions, Alberta producers view modern trade architecture favorably. About half report positive or highly positive effects from CUSMA or the CPTPP (49%), while only a quarter are negative and similar-sized segment share neutral views. Please refer to Figure 3 (Appendix).

For those expecting a negative impact from new global dynamics, roughly two-thirds of this subgroup foresee revenue losses of at least 26% (around half expect 26–50%; 17% expect >50% losses), underscoring the need for rapid cash-flow stabilization, smarter risk-management uptake, and targeted diversification support. Please refer to Figure 4 (Appendix).

Next Steps: Future research should examine financing as a trade-induced market shock absorber and as a supply-chain contingency. Further assessments need to happen on interprovincial frictions, labelling compliance costs, and transport reliability. Further consideration is needed to facilitate frictionless U.S. market access, trade pathways to China, and CETA-related EU barrier reduction and selective export diversification.

EDITORIAL PRACTICES STATEMENT

This manuscript is a rapid contribution to the policy conversation that has been open-reviewed by at least one University of Calgary faculty member prior to publication.

APPENDIX

Figure 3. Alberta farmer opinions regarding the impact of recent international trade agreements (e.g., CUSMA, CPTPP, etc.) on their agricultural operations

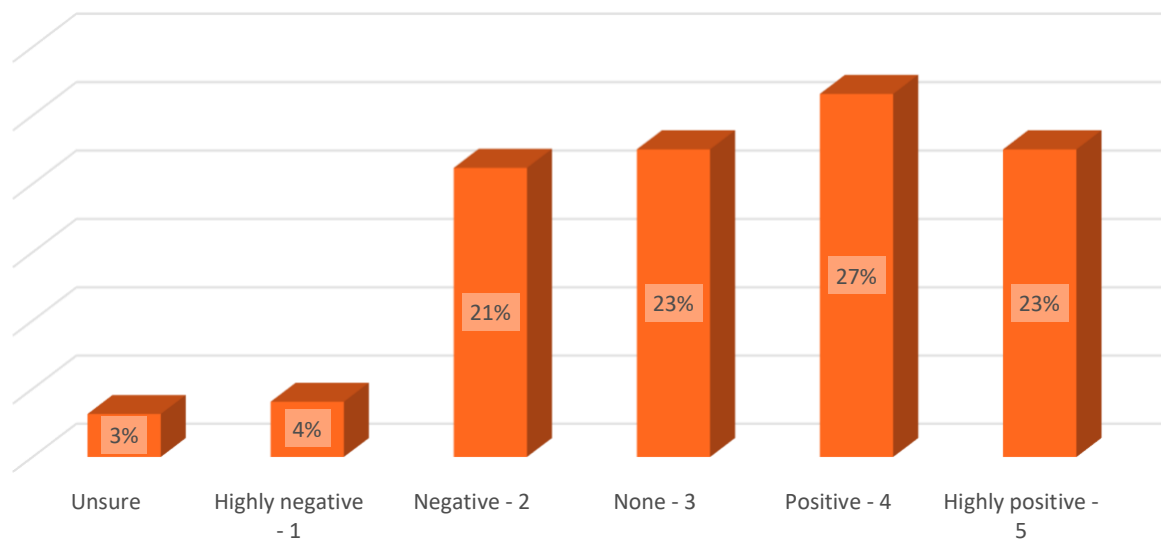


Figure 4. Extent of financial loss from negative trade impacts (only those who claimed they have been negatively impacted)

