



P.O. Box 249, 217 Railway Avenue North, Morrin, AB T0J 2B0  
Tel: 403-772-3793 | Fax: 403-772-3807  
[www.starlandcounty.com](http://www.starlandcounty.com)

March 4, 2025

Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation  
Members of Executive Council  
Executive Branch  
131 Legislature Building  
10800 - 97 Avenue  
Edmonton, AB  
T5K 2B6

Dear Honourable RJ Sigurdson,

The Starland County Agricultural Service Board is writing to express our concern with the current state of high-speed internet access throughout rural agricultural regions in Alberta, and the Broadband Initiative requirements in its current state. There are significant benefits that high-speed internet can bring to the farming community in Starland County as well as the immediate region. As we strive to enhance the productivity and sustainability of our local agriculture, it is crucial to embrace these innovations and move forward into the future.

Reliable internet connectivity is essential for modern farming operations, enabling precision agriculture, real-time data analysis, artificial intelligence technologies, and efficient resource management. Unfortunately, many rural areas in Canada, including parts of Starland County, still face challenges in accessing high-speed internet. Addressing this digital divide is critical for ensuring that our farmers can fully leverage technological advancements and remain competitive in the agricultural sector.

The Canadian government has recognized the importance of expanding high-speed internet access in rural and remote areas, with a goal of achieving universal access by 2030. By investing in broadband infrastructure, we can empower our local farmers with the tools they need to succeed in an increasingly digital world.

Since 2023, Starland County has been working with partners involved in progressing the Broadband Initiative and obtaining funding through this stream. Initially the county was within the established guidelines for funding and completed the required costing and buildout requirements to progress to the next stage for intake. The total amount that Starland County invested under this assumption was approximately \$55,000.00. However, it was concluded before the second intake that Starland County is considered serviced with the minimum requirements of 50/10 download and upload speeds required under the criteria. These values would not be adequate for maintaining connectivity for the data heavy operations progressing in other areas of the province and country comparatively. To maintain an even playing field for our agricultural businesses and being able to remain competitive in the market, Starland feels this initiative requires further review as agriculturally based municipalities such as ours were identified as a priority for intakes and funding.

In conclusion, embracing agricultural technology advancements and improving high-speed internet access are vital steps towards enhancing the productivity, sustainability, and resilience of agriculture in



P.O. Box 249, 217 Railway Avenue North, Morrin, AB T0J 2B0  
Tel: 403-772-3793 | Fax: 403-772-3807  
[www.starlandcounty.com](http://www.starlandcounty.com)

Starland County. We urge you to support initiatives that promote these advancements and help our farming community thrive.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Bob Sargent, Agricultural Service Board Chair  
Starland County

CC Honourable Nate Glubish, Minister of Technology and Innovation

CC Honourable Nate Horner, Minister of Finance

CC Honourable Damien Kurek, Member of Parliament Battle River-Crowfoot