

**SECTION: Agricultural Services****03-03b****SUBJECT: Agricultural Pests****POLICY NAME: Rat Control in the Special Areas****POLICY DEPT(S): Agricultural Services, Property Administration, District Offices****EFFECTIVE DATE: December 10, 2024****LAST AMENDED: December 2024****BOARD MOTION: 22-41-24****REVIEW DATE: December 2025****PURPOSE:**

To protect the economic viability of agricultural production in the Special Areas by administering the Provincial Rat Control Program on behalf of Alberta Agriculture & Irrigation.

The Special Areas Board recognizes the environmental, economic and biological threats that rats pose to agricultural operations in the Special Areas and are committed to maintaining Alberta's rat-free status through partnerships and programming.

As per the *Agricultural Pests Act* (APA) and its *Pest and Nuisance Control Regulation*, Norway Rat and any other rat species or strain derived from the genus *Rattus*, is considered a pest in Alberta. APA Section 5(1) Duty of Individual states *an owner or occupant of land or property or the owner or person in control of livestock shall take active measures to (a) prevent the establishment of pests on or in the land, property or livestock, (b) control or destroy all pests on or in the land, property or livestock and (c) destroy any crop, vegetation or other matter that contributes or may contribute to the maintenance of spread of a pest on or in the land, property or livestock, unless otherwise authorized by the Minister.*

**POLICY STATEMENT:**

The Special Areas Board (SAB), through its Agricultural Services Department will implement program objectives that serve the purpose of this policy and include:

1. Preventative efforts involving education and awareness initiatives to be promoted by the Agricultural Service Boards and Agricultural Services Department.
2. Special Areas shall participate in the Rat Control Program, with the Province of Alberta.
  - i. At the discretion of the Agricultural Service Boards, Special Areas may appoint a designate to apply for Rat Control Funding Stream grant monies and administer the program on behalf of Special Area No. 2, 3 or 4.
3. Under this agreement, Special Areas (or designate) shall:
  - i. Employ and supervise a Pest Control inspector.
  - ii. Highly prioritize response times for reported rat sightings and have Agricultural Fieldman or designate investigate.
  - iii. Inspect all inspection sites for rats and signs of their activity within a control zone west from the Saskatchewan border.

- iv. Conduct routine inspections in Range 1 twice per year.
  - v. Conduct risk-based inspections outside of Range 1, in an 8 km radius of the areas rats were discovered in Range 1.
  - vi. Exterminate rat infestations when found, including those outside the control zone.
  - vii. Be willing to assist adjoining municipalities with rat infestation control efforts, when requested.
  - viii. Participate in a rabies vector inspection program.
  - ix. Assist in rabies vector control operations, in the event that rabies is found within the municipality.
  - x. Provide reports to the Province of Alberta as required.
4. Due to high risk of rat infestation, producers in Range 1 may be provided rat bait free of charge, at the discretion of the Agricultural Fieldman, from their appropriate District Office location, in accordance with the guidelines set by the Rat Control Program and product label requirements. Producers outside of Range 1 requesting free rat bait are subject to a rat inspection prior to issuance. The bait is *not* intended for mice control.

**SCOPE:****Applicable Legislation**

- *Special Areas Act* (RSA 2000, S-16)
- *Agricultural Service Board Act* (RSA 2000, A-10)
- *Agricultural Pests Act* (2008, W-5.1)

All attendant Regulations and SAB policies

**APPROVAL:**

To be reviewed on an annual basis by the Agricultural Service Boards and changes approved by the SAB/ Chair.



Jordon Christianson, Chair  
Special Areas Board