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Research dollars receive boost

Earlier this year, Alberta Beef Producers (ABP), the **Alberta Barley Commission (ABC)** and the Alberta Crop Industry Development Fund (ACIDF) together invested \$6.25 million over five years to develop barley and triticale varieties better suited to the feed grain and silage needs of Alberta's cattle feeding industry. In funding this research from producer check-off dollars -- \$1.5 million from ABP and \$1.25 million from **ABC** -- growers and feeders of barley are joining forces to mutually improve the long-term competitiveness of both the grain and beef industries.

Alberta Beef Producer's investment followed a series of in-depth reports funded by and prepared for both ABP and the Canadian Cattlemen's Association that

highlighted declining and fragmented public funding for agricultural research, the need for additional industry research and development funding, and the importance of reforming regulations that currently inhibit technology commercialization and adoption.

ABP welcomes the Alberta government's recent decision to contribute an additional \$8 million in public funds to livestock feed initiatives through the Alberta Livestock and Meat Agency.

"Alberta's livestock industries need an abundant supply of high quality, competitively priced feed. Between 1980 and 2005, U.S. corn yields increased nearly three times faster than Canadian barley yields," said Chuck MacLean, ABP Chair. "This has contributed to a cost-of-gain disadvantage for Alberta's feeders, which has helped fuel lower prices paid for Alberta calves. This long-overdue investment will support ABP's efforts to re-invigorate feed breeding and development research in Alberta."

