



SUPPORTING THE ADVANCEMENT
OF WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE:
NEEDS ASSESSMENT

CANADIAN AGRICULTURAL HUMAN RESOURCE COUNCIL

FEBRUARY 4, 2016

Table of Contents

1.0	Introduction	2
2.0	Research Approach	2
3.0	Assessment of Current Situation	3
4.0	Barriers.....	11
5.0	Priority Options.....	17
6.0	Summary	20
	Appendix I – Advisory Group Members.....	21

1.0 Introduction

The objectives of the Supporting the Advancement of Women in Agriculture (SAWA) project are to examine and address critical barriers to advancement facing women in the industry, as well as develop and implement a strategic program to support improved access to leadership opportunities. Ultimately, the intended goal is to strengthen business success for women working in agriculture.

This report focuses on assessing the specific needs required to help address the issues contributing to the critical barriers. The research presented here will identify the most critical barriers to advancement of women in the industry along with support recommendations for next steps to address these barriers.

2.0 Research Approach

There were multiple methods of research conducted to ensure a complete assessment of the situation. These methods included:

- Secondary research:
 - Environmental scan of existing research
 - Gathering existing data from organizations (i.e. program enrollment, Board of Directors membership)
- Primary research:
 - Survey (Target responses: 400, Actual responses: 532)
 - Focus groups (Conducted in 4 regions of Canada with a total of 47 participants)
 - Interviews (28 completed to date)

The preliminary research established an understanding of the current situation, what is already being done and where gaps may exist. These findings informed the next state of research which focused on stakeholder consultation through using the primary research techniques listed above. Results from both stages of research were reviewed and validated with the project Advisory Group.

Research is also being conducted that focuses on the gender perspective of social networks. The methodology for this work includes both secondary and primary research. The results of this research will inform the development of tools in the next phase of this project.

The focus of the research included:

- Management and leadership programs
- Enrollment in 4-H
- Participation rates on Boards (survey data, primary data collection)
- Participation rates on agribusiness executive teams (survey data, primary data collection)
- Female graduates of agricultural leadership and management programs
- Female graduates of 4-H programs
- Female graduates of agricultural university and college programs

- Perceptions of barriers and opportunities
- Current occupations of women and aspirations for advancement and barriers
- Training, mentorship and networking experiences of women in agriculture
- Knowledge of options and barriers

In addition to these formal research methods, stakeholders were invited to engage in the project through the *Supporting the Advancement of Women in Agriculture* LinkedIn group. This group currently has 120 members from the industry. A blog has also been shared with stakeholders as a way to provide updates on the project and engage them in discussions.

This research informs the needs assessment. The results will be recommendations for the next steps in tool development to start to contribute to breaking down the critical barriers women face in advancing their careers in agriculture.

3.0 Assessment of Current Situation

3.1 Overview

The Agriculture and Agri-food industry employed 2.1 million Canadians in 2012 and contributed eight per cent to the national GDP. The overall ratio of women among all agriculture and agri-food employee groups is unknown, however among the on-farm primary producers, approximately thirty per cent of workers are women. Labour Market Intelligence gathered by the Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council (CAHRC) prior to this project indicated that the percentage of women in leadership roles in the primary industry did not reflect the proportion of women working in the primary industry. The ratio of women working in the industry to those in leadership roles was much greater compared to the similar ratio for men. A greater proportion of men are moving on to leadership roles than women in this industry.

There are two specific areas with senior positions in the agriculture industry; one is through employment (e.g. farm ownership or CEO, corporate executive management positions) and the other is community involvement (e.g. Board of Directors of industry associations).

Historical research shows that in the area of primary production women initially came into senior roles by default. When the husband and farm owner passed away the wife would then assume the role of the owner. Over time, women were accepted as the owner regardless of whether the spouse had passed away. The challenge has been having the contribution women make to the farm operations recognized as a formal role on the farm. It is widely accepted that there is a disconnect between the role women play in day-to-day farm operations and the recognition of this work. Women often manage the financial and administrative aspects of the farm as well but for some reason this is not recognized as playing a formal role in managing the business.

It is interesting to note that there is evidence of women organizing themselves to work together to have their voices heard in the agricultural industry. Several studies reviewed as part of this preliminary research cited examples such as the Women's Institute, and more recently the Canadian Farm Women's Network (with government funding and provincial branches), as ways in which farm women come together to voice their thoughts around agricultural policy and political actions as well as to support each other in their roles as active members of the agricultural industry.

In relation to the female entrepreneurs in the agriculture industry, labour market research conducted by the Conference Board of Canada on behalf of CAHRC indicates that very few farms are solely owned by women. The farms that are female-owned tend to be smaller than average in size. The owners are less likely to be very young or very old, but more in the 35-50 years of age range. Ownership of these farms also tends to experience higher than average turnover rates.

3.2 Gender Demographics of Leaders and Key Decision Makers Overview

Primary and secondary research found that there has been an increase in women moving into leadership roles over the past few decades. However, the research also indicates that there is more to be done in this area. Interviews with female senior managers or Board Directors found that in many cases they are still the only females on their senior leadership team or Board. The survey paints a more positive picture with 34.8% reporting that the key decision maker in their organization was female. However, when asked about the gender of the Board Chair, 21% responded the Chair was female. It should be noted that these higher numbers from the survey may be influenced by the fact that 87% of survey respondents were women and of these women 76.9% self-identified as a supervisor, manager or owner/operator in one or more organization.

3.3 Gender Demographics of Board of Directors for Agricultural Associations

Agricultural associations represent regional, provincial and national interests of producers and industry. They are often operated by a small contingent of staff and supported by an active Board of Directors that represents the association's specific area of interest.

Studies show that women are frequently very involved in social and community groups with activities related to church, school and community or social causes, and frequently hold senior roles or leadership roles in the groups¹. They are not, however, well represented in senior positions in associations related to the farm. Preliminary data collection for this project shows that this same trend seems to be continuing. Of 65 national and provincial associations reviewed to date, only eight have a woman as their Board Chair or President, and another eight have a woman in the "second in command" role of

¹ Doherty, Maryanne, Norah C. Keating, Brenda Munro. *The Whole Economy: Resource Allocation of Alberta Farm Women and Men*, Canadian Home Economics Journal, 1987, p135-139.; Smith, Pamela. *Beyond "Add Women and Stir": Farm Women and Canadian Rural Sociology*. 1991.

Vice-President or Vice-Chair. Representation of women on the Board's executive committees is slightly better with 18 of the 65 organizations having at least one woman on their Board.

The results of the *Supporting the Advancement of Women in Agriculture* research supports these findings. Stakeholder consultations through the survey, interviews and focus groups indicate female representation on Boards of Directors is low. There is speculation the causes include:

- low turnover rates for board members, therefore not allowing opportunities for women to put their names forward;
- Board members 'replacing themselves', looking into their own network to recruit new members and by doing so working within a candidate pool of other men, not women;
- lack of role models for women to see themselves on Boards and therefore put their names forward for positions.

Survey respondents, interviewees and focus group participants all touched upon possible solutions to address these issues. All agreed that setting quotas for women on Boards was not the answer. Alternatively, it was felt that a greater impact would be achieved through building awareness by expanding the recruitment pool for Board members and having diversity policies in place to help ensure the awareness becomes engrained in the Board process. Additionally, it will be necessary to build awareness among women of the opportunities available and instill the confidence to apply for the seat.

It is interesting to note that this data reflects a similar trend with senior management on staff for the associations. Although it appears that overall there are more women than men working in all positions, the leadership roles are still predominantly held by men.

3.4 Gender Demographics of Large Agricultural Businesses' Executive Teams

Data collection shows that large agricultural businesses, many of which operate on a global scale, tend to be led by men and the executive teams are predominately men. Anecdotally there are reports that in these cases there is greater representation of women in the Canadian operations. More work will be done to expand the data size as well as to analyze, when possible, the differences between global and Canadian operations.

It should be noted that there are examples of corporations recognizing the need to help break down barriers and increase the number of women in the C-Suite. They are supporting women in leadership training and developing in-house leadership programs specific to women. Examples of this include *Agrium's Agrium Women's Leadership Group (AWLG)* and *Syngenta's Leadership at Its Best* diversity program which offers mentoring, networking and skill development for women in the company to grow into leadership roles. Other organizations, such as John Deere and Monsanto have more informal networks in place. Monsanto, for example, has incorporated the practice of hiring managers ensuring for each position more female candidates are included in the hiring process as a way of doing business.

Participants in the survey, focus groups and interviews that work in larger corporate environments shared information about other formal and informal networks set up in their organizations to help bring women together. These networks provided mentoring, role models and support from a woman-to-woman approach. Some of these networks also provide more formal career pathing and training opportunities.

Data from Statistics Canada’s 2011 National Household Survey supports the claim that men dominate the leadership roles in the agriculture industry. In fact, horticulture is the only sector of agriculture that has more than 25% of managers that are female. It is interesting to note that when this data is looked at for on-farm employment, 82% of business, finance and administrative occupations (including professionals such as accountants, business services such as HR managers and administrative supervisors) are women. Conversely, 75% of production and operations are men.

Table 1. Agriculture Management Occupations by Sector and Gender

(Note: Managers include business owners and paid on-farm managers.)

Occupation	Female		Male		Total	
082 Managers in agriculture, horticulture and aquaculture	43,510	25.0%	130,410	75.0%	173,915	100.0%
0821 Managers in agriculture	41,590	24.8%	126,430	75.2%	168,020	100.0%
0822 Managers in horticulture	1,775	37.6%	2,950	62.4%	4,725	100.0%
0823 Managers in aquaculture	140	12.0%	1,030	88.0%	1,170	100.0%

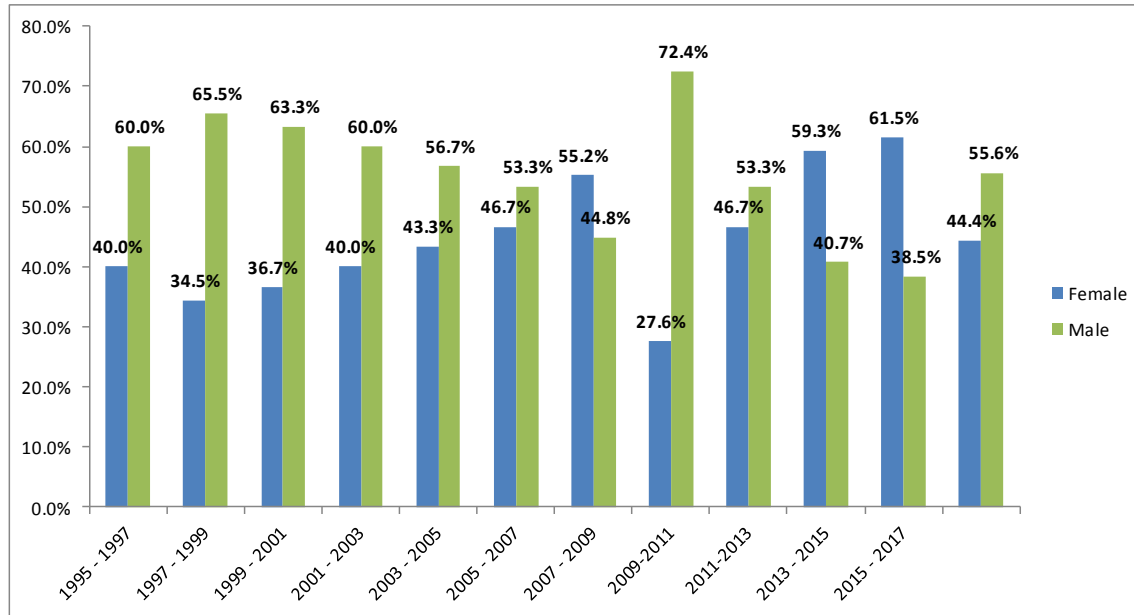
Source: Statistics Canada. National Household Survey 2011.

3.5 Gender Demographics of Agricultural Leadership and Management Program Graduates

There are a number of leadership programs offered both through more formal training of a university setting and shorter courses offered through seminars and conferences. This includes programs directed specifically at leadership in the agricultural industry. Examples of these include the *Atlantic Agricultural Leadership Program* (government and industry partnership), *Advancement of Agricultural Leadership program (AALP)* offered by the Rural Ontario Institute and the *Associate Diploma in Agri-food Leadership* offered by the University of Guelph. Large corporations have also put in place some of their own in-house programs to develop their talent.

An example of gender representation in the open leadership programs can be seen by looking at data provided by the Rural Ontario Institute for the past ten years of enrollment in *AALP*. The chart below indicates an increase in female participation over time.

Chart 1. Participation by Gender in AALP 1997 – 2017



Source: Rural Institute of Ontario

In Canada there are programs targeted to women as well as some specific to women and agricultural leadership. Some of the programs are grass-roots activities that are regional or industry-based, while others are broader based. The most common way to bring women together to focus on leadership development is in conference formats, such as the *Advancing Women in Agriculture*.

Outside of Canada there are more formal programs in place that provide longer term, focused leadership development for women in agriculture. Examples of these programs include the American Agri-Women Leadership Academy in the USA and the Agri-Women’s Development Trust’s (AWDT) Escalator Programme in New Zealand.

Of the survey respondents, 32.5% indicated that they had participated in a leadership or management program. Looking at this by gender, 34.6% of female respondents had participated in leadership or management programs. Similarly, 32.9% of male respondents had participated in such programs. Examples of programs listed by respondents included agriculture specific programs such as 4-H and Junior Farmer leadership programs, the Advanced Agriculture Leadership Program (AALP), commodity specific programs and agriculture leadership conferences. Other examples included corporate leadership programs, general leadership development courses and certificates and conferences.

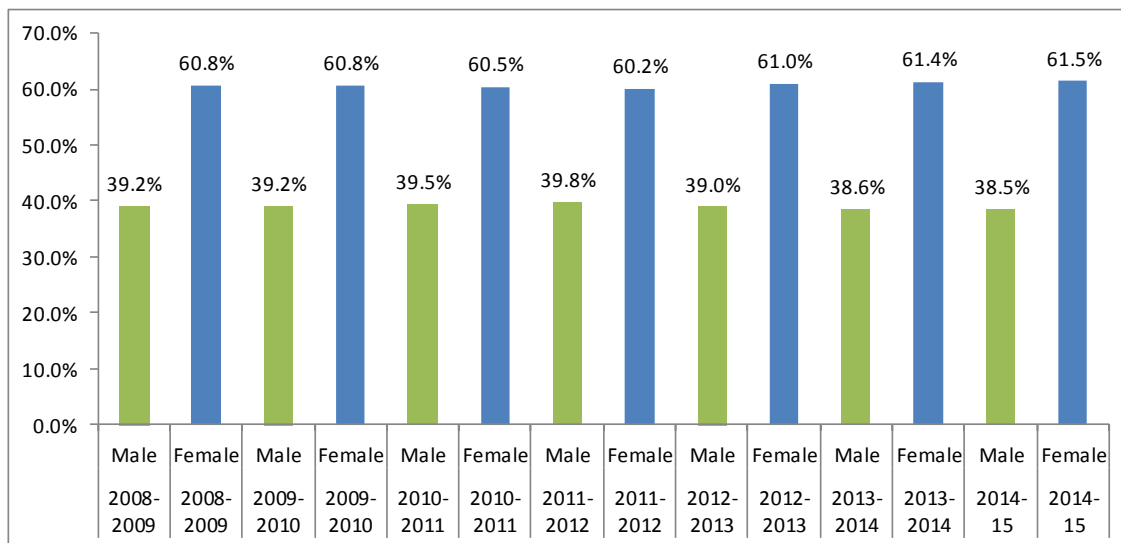
The impact that any of these programs are having at breaking down barriers for women could not be easily established as part of the preliminary research. However, it is clear from stakeholder consultations that programs that also include a networking and mentoring component have had an impact on women continuing into leadership roles.

3.6 Gender Demographics of 4H Programs

The 4-H program operates in 10 provinces and one territory in Canada. It is a youth organization focused on developing community-based leadership with a focus on sustainable agriculture and food security. 4-H was often listed as one of the programs in which survey respondents had obtained a start to their leadership training and development.

In 2014-2015, 4-H Canada reported having 24,542 youth as members across the country. Of this total, 15,104 were girls.² This gender representation has been consistent in the program over the past several years.

Chart 2. Gender Demographics of 4H Programs in Canada: 2008 – 2015



Source: 4-H Canada Annual Reports 2008 to 2015.

3.7 Gender Demographics of Agricultural University and College Program Graduates

Preliminary research for this project included reviewing several data points that support the trend that women are pursuing post-secondary education. Women accounted for 60% of university graduates according to the 2006 Canadian Census³. There are also reports that suggest there are more women than men focusing their studies on areas related to agri-business (life sciences, natural sciences)⁴.

² <http://www.4-h-canada.ca/about-4-h/4-h-canada>

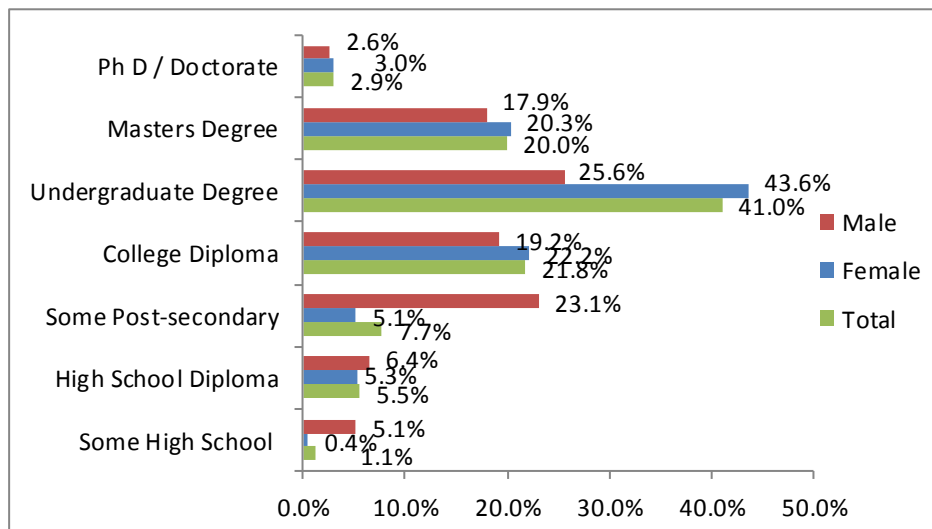
³ <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/81-004-x/2008001/article/10561-eng.htm>

⁴ http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/_doc/Reports-Rapports/Women_Science_Engineering_e.pdf

More recent data from Statistic Canada’s 2011 National Household Survey (NHS) found that “Young women aged 25 to 34 represented 39.1% of university STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) degrees in that age group, higher than the share of 22.6% in the older age group of 55 to 64. In non-STEM fields, younger women’s share of university degrees was 65.7% compared with 53.6% in the older age group.”⁵ This data seems to be in line with information gathered through focus groups, surveys and interviews for this project.

Of the survey respondents, 66.9% of female respondents held a university degree (undergraduate, Masters or Ph.D/Doctorate). In comparison, 46.2% of male respondents held the same level of education. When asked whether or not they held a professional certification, 31.5% of female respondents said yes. This is almost 4% greater than the proportion of male respondents (27.6%). Female respondents represented 88% of all survey respondents that held a professional certification.

Chart 3. Education Levels of Survey Respondents



Source: SAWA Survey.

3.8 Current Occupation and Position of Former University and College Program Graduates

With more women pursuing post-secondary education it would stand to reason that their occupations should show an increase in level, responsibility and income. Several pieces of research reviewed as part of this preliminary research indicate that although there may be some progress for women attaining more senior roles, the levels of education are not yet reflected in the occupational accomplishments of

⁵ Statistics Canada. Education in Canada: Attainment, Field of Study and Location of Study: National Household Survey 2011, p14.

women. Women’s participation in the labour force has increased remarkably since the 1960s but participation rates do not reflect the proportion of senior management positions held.⁶

Of the female respondents to the SAWA survey, holding an undergraduate degree was the most prevalent ‘Highest Level of Education’ obtained for all occupational levels. Conversely, males in this survey reported “Other Levels of Education”, which could include some high school, some post-secondary or other types of training, as the most prevalent education level for all levels of occupations. Thirty-four per cent of women respondents who work as managers or owners indicated they held professional certifications. This is compared to 49.5% of male respondents working at the same occupation levels.

Table 2. Level of Education and Occupation – Female Survey Respondents

Highest Level of Education	Level of Occupation					
	Entry-level	Experienced	Specialized	Supervisor	Manager	Owner
High School	0.0%	5.5%	3.8%	0.0%	2.5%	3.6%
College Diploma	9.3%	16.0%	15.2%	30.6%	23.1%	42.9%
Undergraduate Degree	42.6%	48.5%	36.2%	30.6%	44.6%	42.9%
Masters Degree	24.1%	15.3%	32.4%	26.5%	16.5%	10.6%
Ph. D/Doctorate	0.0%	2.5%	3.8%	2.1%	4.1%	0.0%
Other	24.1%	12.2%	8.6%	10.2%	9.2%	0.0%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: SAWA Survey.

Table 3. Level of Education and Occupation – Male Survey Respondents

Highest Level of Education	Level of Occupation					
	Entry-level	Experienced	Specialized	Supervisor	Manager	Owner
High School	11.1%	9.1%	8.3%	8.3%	3.6%	3.8%
College Diploma	22.2%	9.1%	0.0%	25.0%	21.4%	11.5%
Undergraduate Degree	0.0%	22.7%	16.7%	8.3%	25.0%	26.9%
Masters Degree	11.1%	18.2%	33.3%	16.7%	17.8%	23.2%
Ph. D/Doctorate	0.0%	4.5%	0.0%	0.0%	3.6%	3.8%
Other	55.6%	36.4%	41.7%	41.7%	28.6%	30.8%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: SAWA Survey.

⁶ McQuillan, K. *All the Workers We Need: Debunking Canada’s Labour Shortage Fallacy*, May 2013.

4.0 Barriers

4.1 Perceptions of barriers and opportunities

With respect to women moving up the corporate side of agriculture, there was no secondary research found that addressed barriers faced by women working specifically in agri-business. It may be assumed that they face similar barriers to women moving towards leadership roles in any corporate environment. These barriers identified in secondary research included:

- preconceived perception of capability by co-workers/senior management
- confidence to pursue more senior roles and career development
- few women role models at senior level
- lack of mentoring opportunities
- breaking into the “old boys club”
- balancing career and family responsibilities
- facing double standards
- being denied the opportunity to advance⁷

It was also widely reported that women living in rural settings faced additional barriers such as:

- remoteness of location
- access to training
- managing the traditional tasks of child-rearing and supporting her husband and male farm workers
- pursuing off-farm income to help support the family

The survey asked if respondents felt there were barriers to women advancing in agriculture. Thirty-eight per cent of all respondent said they believed barriers exist for women. Of the female respondents 40.9% indicated that they believed there were barriers to women advancing in agriculture. Conversely, 12.1% of male respondents believed barriers exist. It is interesting to note that respondents on both ends of the age groups (15-24 years of age and 50 year of age and over) were not as likely to believe there were barriers in place. It may be that this is a reflection of their own current situation with regards to their own stage of career and life (i.e. little or no demand from balancing work-life-family).

⁷ <http://www.management-issues.com/opinion/6439/women-in-leadership-beware-the-barriers/>

Chart 4. Do Barriers Exist? Responses by Gender

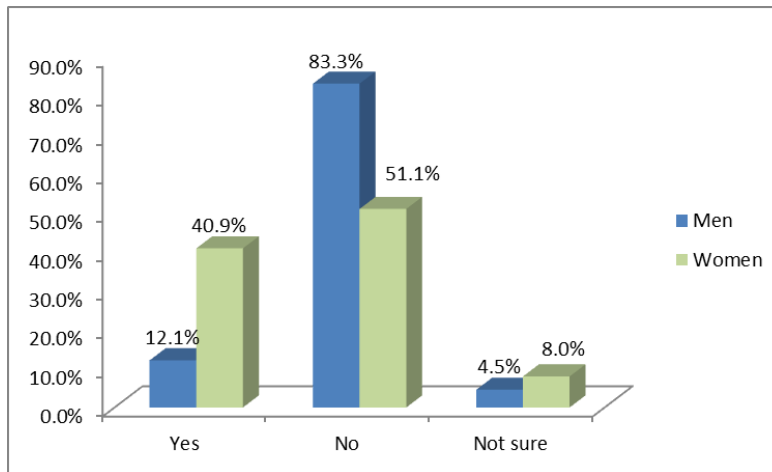
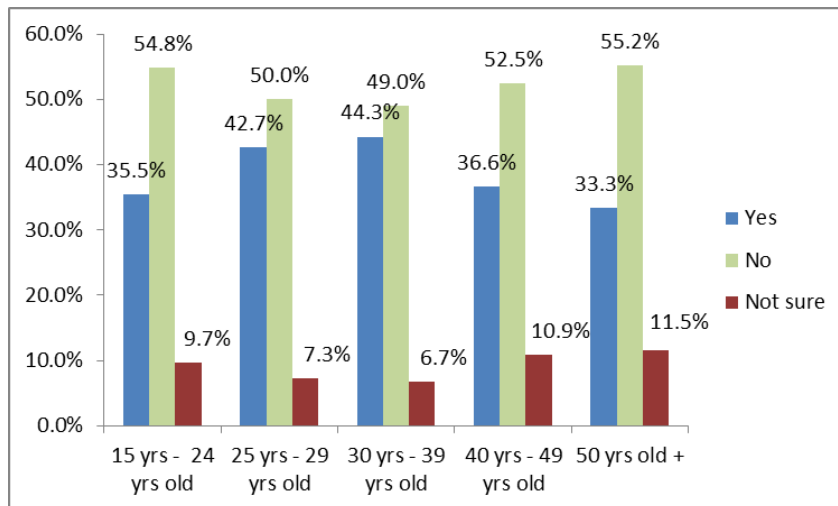
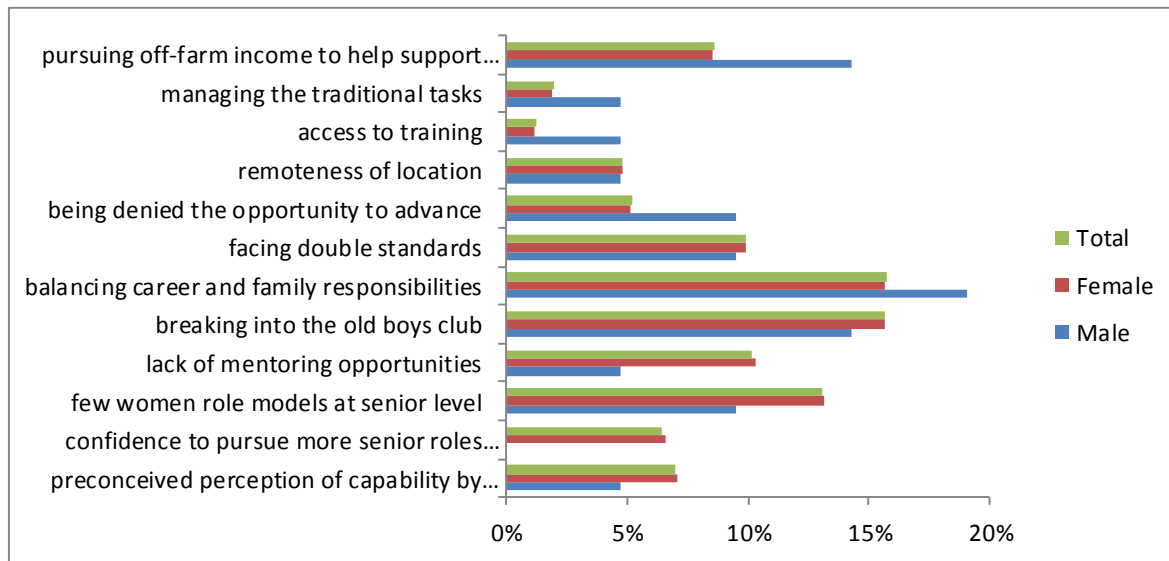


Chart 5. Do Barriers Exist? Responses by Age



When asked about the prevalence of the barriers listed above, all survey respondents felt that balancing career and family responsibilities (15.8%), breaking into the 'old boys club' (15.7%) and a lack of role models (13.1%) were the most prevalent barriers based on the list provided to them. This was very similar to responses given by just females.

Chart 6. Most Prevalent Barriers for Women Advancing in Agriculture



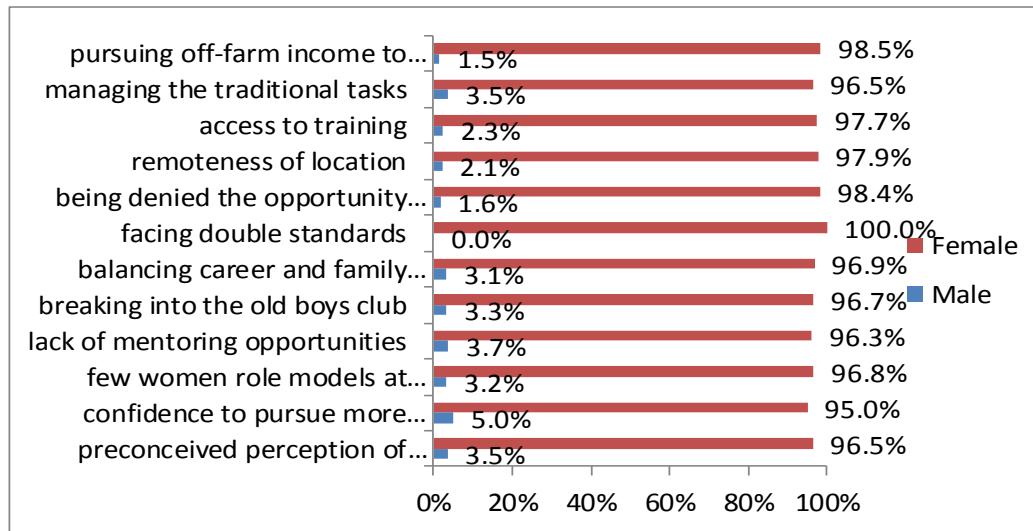
Source: SAWA Survey.

Women who participated in focus groups and interviews shared similar views as the survey participants regarding the list of barriers provided to them. Interviewees however focused more on the issues of women lacking the confidence to “go for” opportunities and the “old boys club” was second on their list of most prevalent barriers.

Insights and similar responses were also provided by those participants (survey, focus group and interview) that did not feel there were any barriers in place. These responses focused on the idea that opportunities are open to women as equally as they are to men. It is the choice of the woman to pursue the opportunity or not. When men were asked the same question they indicated they were not aware of any barriers but all that had answered no initially did indicate that because they were not aware did not mean they did not exist. As respondents were probed further on this issue there was consensus that some women lacked the confidence to go for these opportunities. The view was regarded as women holding themselves back, rather than from systemic or man-made barriers. There was also the view that some women did not have the knowledge or awareness that they possessed the skill set to pursue and be considered for leadership roles. This could stem from a lack of confidence and or a lack of mentors and female role models.

Respondents of the survey were also asked to indicate **all** barriers on the list which they had either witnessed or experienced. For this answer respondents were majority female with 1,150 entries from females and 35 from male survey respondents. There is a stark difference in responses to this question between men and women. Five percent of male respondents reported having witnessed or experienced was lacking confidence compared to 95% of female respondents. As well, all the barriers listed were witnessed or experienced by more than 95% or more of female respondents. There are some barriers on the list of which no men reported experiencing or witnessing.

Chart 7. Barriers Witnessed or Experienced



When asked if there was a need for action, 70% of survey respondents indicated that there needs to be more leadership tools and programs developed specifically for women in agriculture. All focus group participants and interviewees indicated that there is this need as well. When a gender-based analysis is applied to this data there is a clear difference between the views of male and female respondents. Almost 47% of women felt that more needed to be done to ensure women move into leadership roles, whereas only 8.3% of men indicated there was a need. Just over 63% of men did not feel there was any issue with opportunities for women. Twenty per cent of women had the same response.

Chart 8. Need for Leadership Tools and Programs

Need for Tools	Female	Male	Total
There is a need for leadership tools and programs that are developed specifically for women in agriculture if things are going to change for women in this industry.	27.2%	18.3%	26.2%
There are already enough tools and programs in place that are effectively reducing barriers to women in agriculture.	6.0%	10.0%	6.5%
There are some things in place already, but more needs ot be done to ensure women are moving into leadership roles in agriculture.	46.9%	8.3%	42.5%
I do not see any issue with opportunities for women to move into leadership roles in agriculture.	19.9%	63.3%	24.9%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

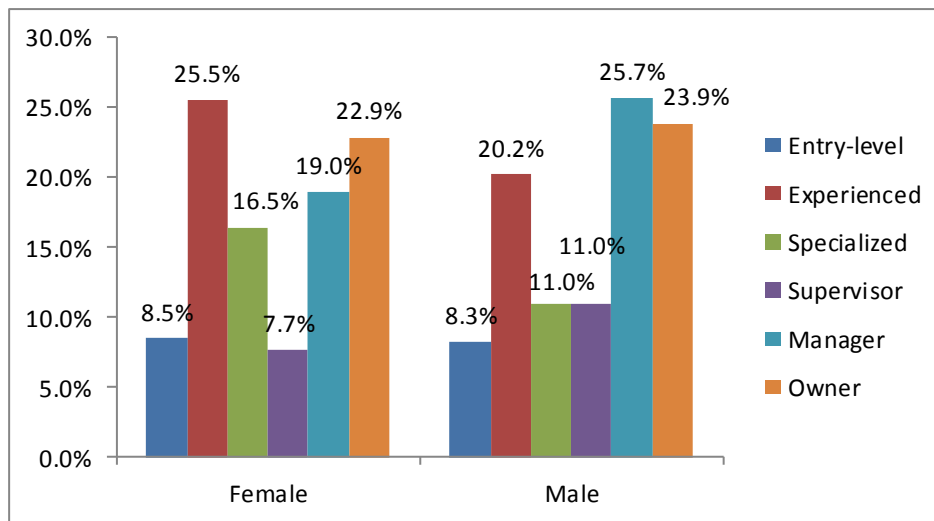
Source: SAWA Survey.

There was a clear message from all sources of stakeholder consultation that tools and programs be developed in a way that does not have a negative connotation for women. Some felt very strongly that there be no “women only” tools or programs developed because this made women look weak and it encouraged exclusionary practices. Many other women felt that although it was important to be cognisant of how tools and programs were developed, it was still necessary to have them delivered to women to ensure the success of breaking down barriers.

4.2 Current occupations of women and aspirations for advancement and barriers

Women are currently working in most occupations in the agriculture industry. Seventy-three per cent of female survey respondents indicated they aspire to advance their careers. Of these respondents, all indicated they have taken action(s) to achieve this aspiration. In comparison, 66.7% of male survey respondents indicated they did not aspire for advancement. This may be because 49.6% of male respondents reported working at the manager or owner level compared to 41.9% of female respondents working at the same levels.

Chart 9. Occupational Levels of Respondents by Gender

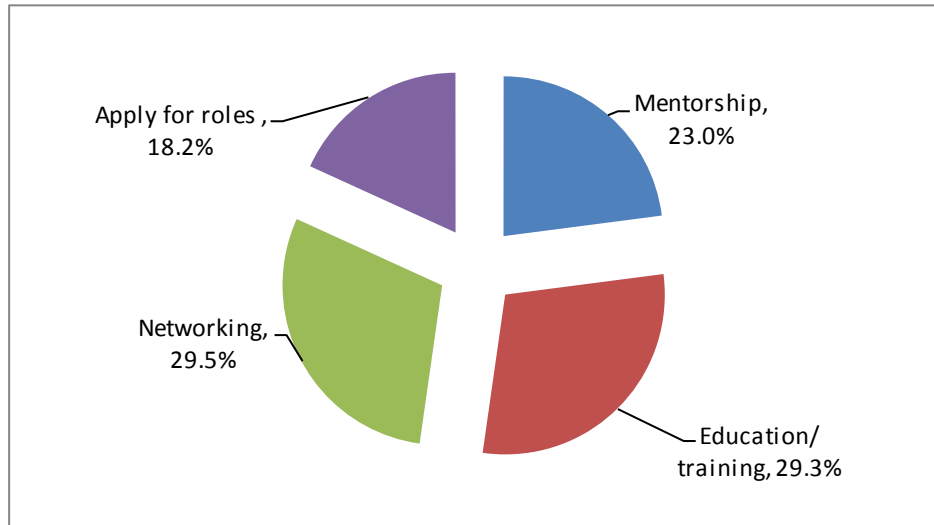


4.3 Training, mentorship and networking experiences of women in agriculture

In many cases the women who responded to the survey with an indication that they were pursuing aspirations indicated that they took more than one action to do so. Pursuing networking opportunities was the most prevalent action taken by those women, followed closely by pursuing education and training.

Focus group participants and interviewees have also indicated the importance of networking opportunities for women in agriculture. This networking was described as being done through social media (Facebook pages, LinkedIn groups). However, all participants in the research were adamant that for networking opportunities to have the most impact there must be a face-to-face component to it.

Chart 10. Actions Taken To Move Career Forward – Female Respondents



Source: SAWA Survey.

4.4 Knowledge of options and barriers

Secondary research brought forward options that could be considered as well as highlighted ideas that could be best practices. This included flexible work hours, leadership programs focused on female only participants and encouraging networking and mentoring for women to pursue leadership roles. These options were also brought forward from all primary research participants.

One thing that was acknowledged in the secondary research, the interviews and focus groups was that despite the majority not believing there are barriers to women advancing in agriculture, one or more interventions are needed. This is because there are more women than men graduating with agriculture-related degrees and 30% of the primary agriculture workforce is women but there are still fewer women in leadership roles.

Participants in all primary research channels were presented with three options for the Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council (CAHRC) to take as part of this project. These included developing the following tools:

- **Supporting Women in Agricultural Leadership Site** - an online resource designed to capture and disseminate all related information for the women in agriculture community, including links to available leadership position opportunities and leadership training options.
- **Supporting Women in Agricultural Leadership Network** – the site will include a networking component to facilitate information exchange and professional development.
- **Supporting Women in Agricultural Leadership Suite** - a series of instructive reference materials to support increased advancement opportunities for women. This suite will include guides, checklists, templates and supporting webinars for Boards and training institutions to improve the accessibility of opportunities for women. Examples include:
 - Is Your Board Representative - A Best Practice Guide to Ensuring Women Aren't Excluded
 - Is Your Training Program Representative - A Best Practice Guide to Ensuring Women Aren't Excluded
- **Pilot Test** – pre and post-test assessment with an agricultural association and training organization to support improvement.

All participants agreed that these three options with the pilot test should be pursued. A fourth idea to develop an *Employer of Choice for Women in Ag* award came forward from the focus group activity and was validated by the Advisory Group. The award would recognize agriculture employers in Canada that were breaking down barriers to women advancing to leadership roles. The Advisory Group suggested that this option could be further scoped out as part of the next steps in this project.

5.0 Priority Options

5.1 Effectiveness of existing policies and decision-making processes

Many larger corporations have put policies in place to help ensure more women move into leadership roles within their organizations. These policies can include a focus on diversity stating that a percentage of candidates for each job have to be women. They can also be in the form of more flexible work hours, job-sharing and tele-commuting policies to enable more women to manage work-life balance while advancing their careers. All participants in the stakeholder consultations indicated such policies do have an impact.

There was a great deal of discussion in the focus groups and interviews about women's role in an organization as she goes through child bearing years. Many women, regardless of their situation with or without young children at home, reported the difficulty for women with young children to both move forward with their career and effectively manage their role as a parent. Those that had successfully managed to do this reported that role models, mentors and support at home made this possible. These women also reported working in organizations that had policies in place that encouraged and supported work-life balance for all employees.

Other deterrents to women pursuing leadership roles included the fact that women continue to be paid less for the same work as men. Women need to work harder than men to be recognized as capable for

the position but are not always paid the same as men for the same job. In organizations where there was an awareness of these bias, policies to ensure equal pay for equal work seemed to be effective.

5.2 Innovative Technology Enabled Practices

One hundred per cent of women participants cited the opportunity to network as a key component to building success for women in leadership roles. The use of technology to engage with others was important. Examples such as the *Agriculture Women's Network*, which has grown from a small Facebook page to over 500 members in the past year, was mentioned as an effective way to connect women on-line. There are other on-line networks such as the *Lean-In Circles*, LinkedIn professional networks and corporate on-line networks. It was interesting to note that all women felt that technology was a good way to engage, however all of these networking opportunities must have some component that includes face-to-face time with others from the network.

5.3 Priorities

Participants in the survey, interviews and focus groups agreed that there is a need for a concerted effort to help remove barriers to women advancing in agriculture. It was agreed that this effort can be done within organizations but there needs to be an industry-wide effort to address the issues across the board. It was largely felt that having a concerted effort would ensure resources were focused and duplication of efforts would be minimized.

When asked to prioritize actions the consensus was to focus on the following:

1. Self-Directed Career Development:

- Coaching & Mentorship opportunities
- Networking opportunities
- Sharing profiles of women to celebrate role models

2. Creating an Inclusion Environment

- Retain women by encouraging an inclusive environment
 - Communicate in ways that both women and men understand.
 - Values may not be aligned with the employer
 - Have the conversation (i.e. supportive maternity leave, travel expectations, male networking styles)
 - Relate issues to the cost to the business. This may be the way for men to understand the issues.
 - Create a safe space / enabling environment for learning in leadership

3. Career Awareness

- Build career awareness amongst women, including awareness of career path opportunities

It was felt that these three areas of focus could be developed within the options to develop tools in the *Supporting Women in Agricultural Leadership Site*, *Supporting Women in Agricultural Leadership Network* and *Supporting Women in Agricultural Leadership Suite* were supported. The three main tool areas would all include content focused on the areas of priority brought forward from the research. Bringing together existing resources into one place and therefore making it accessible to more people through awareness would help ensure there is no duplication of efforts. It would also expedite the ability to move into action quickly.

Table 4. Priorities

Tool	Tactics	Content
<p><i>Supporting Women in Agricultural Leadership Network</i></p>	<p>The SAWA leadership site will include a networking component to facilitate information exchange and professional development.</p> <p>Information about networking events where women can connect face-to-face will also be included here.</p> <p>Virtual networking events will be conducted through this network using social media channels such as LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter.</p> <p>Offering virtual mentorship opportunities will also be scoped out as part of this process.</p>	<p>Self-Directed Career Development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coaching & Mentorship opportunities • Networking opportunities • Sharing profiles of women to celebrate role models <p>Creating an Inclusion Environment</p>
<p><i>Supporting Women in Agricultural Leadership Suite</i></p>	<p>A series of instructive reference materials to support increased advancement opportunities for women. This suite will include guides, checklists, templates and supporting webinars for Boards and training institutions to improve the accessibility of opportunities for women. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is Your Board Representative - A Best Practice Guide to Ensuring Women Aren't Excluded • Is Your Training Program Representative - A Best Practice Guide to Ensuring Women Aren't Excluded 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retain women by encouraging an inclusive environment • Communicate in ways that both women and men understand. • Values may not be aligned with the employer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Have the conversation (i.e. supportive maternity leave, travel expectations, male networking styles)

Tool	Tactics	Content
<p><i>Supporting Women in Agricultural Leadership Site</i></p>	<p>An online resource designed to capture and disseminate all related information for the women in agriculture community, including links to available leadership position opportunities and leadership training options.</p> <p>This site will house the tools and of the SAWA Suite.</p> <p>This site will also house information about the leadership network and links to the social media channels for this network.</p> <p>A communication plan will be developed to ensure to build awareness of this site. The goal will be to ensure housing the content and networking activity tools from the leadership network and suite will help ensure this site pulls people in and remains fresh and active.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relate issues to the cost to the business. This may be the way for men to understand the issues. • Create a safe space / enabling environment for learning in leadership <p>Career Awareness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build career awareness amongst women, including awareness of career path opportunities

6.0 Summary

The needs assessment has provided some very strong insight into the current situation facing women advancing in leadership in agriculture. Building on what is already being done was a common theme throughout the research process. Due to the growing awareness of women’s absence in leadership roles there is support throughout the industry to work together to address these issues. There was strong support for collaboration as the best approach to bring solutions into place.

The research also pointed to gaps in what is being done in the industry as a whole. Support to address these gaps through developing the tools described in this document would benefit the entire industry.

Appendix I – Advisory Group Members

Name	Organization	Position/Title
Terry Banack	Gumbo Hills Farm	Producer
Heather Broughton	Agriculture & Food Council of Alberta, AgriFood Management Excellence	Community Animator, Success for Women in Agriculture
Jen Christie	John Deere Canada ULC	Dealer Development Manager
Chantelle Donahue	Cargill Limited	Vice President of Corporate Affairs
Dr. Annemieke Ferenhorst	Universtiy of Manitoba	NSERC Chair for Women in Science and Engineering – Prairie Region. Professor, Department of Soil Science, Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences
Susan Fitzgerald	Fitzgerald& Co	Executive Director
Dr. Laura Halfyard	Canadian Aquaculture Indsutry Association	General Manager, Sunrise and Connaigre Fish Farms Inc., Vice-President Newfoundland Aquaculture Industry Association
Rebecca Hannam	Rural Ontario Institute / Advanced Agricultural Leadership Program	Manager, Communications and Fund Development
Trish Jordan	Monsanto	Director Public & Industry Affairs
Brenda Lammens	AgriFood Management Institute	Past Chair
Genvieve Lemonde	AGRIcarrieres	Directrice générale
Iris Meck	Iris Meck Communications	Owner
Debra Pretty - Straathof	Ontario Federation of Agriculture and World Farmers Organization (WFO) Standing Committee on Women in Agriculture	Director, OFA
Liz Robertson	Canadian Association of Farm Advisors	Executive Director
Kim Shukla	Canadian Hemp Trade Alliance	CEO
Dr. Nancy Tout	Syngenta Canada Inc.	Head of Regulatory and Biological Assessment