

PRESS  
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Quebecers will go to Alberta on Monday to see the natural gas industry first-hand.

Montreal July 12, 2012 – On an initiative by the Oil and Gas Services Association of Quebec ([OGSAQ](#)), a group of twelve Quebecers will fly to Calgary on Monday to begin a dialogue with Alberta farmers. This three-day mission will allow participants to see first-hand the relationship that has developed between agriculture and the Albertan natural gas industry, and to familiarize themselves with Alberta's regulatory environment.

“Alberta has adopted a development and management model for the natural gas industry that Quebec could look to. Not only does the industry uphold some of the safest practices in the region, but Albertan regulations have allowed for the development of a sustainable and prosperous economy that serves local communities and agricultural enterprises.” said Mario Levesque, president of the OGSAQ.

Participants will travel first to Brooks, a city of over 13,000 people located 180km south-west of Calgary. Joined by the Petroleum Services Association of Canada ([PSAC](#)) they will visit a large farming enterprise that functions in an area where the natural gas industry is active. The next day, they will go to Grand Prairie, a city of more than 55,000 people located north-west of Edmonton. Since the late 1970s, this city has been at the heart of natural gas development, and especially at the heart of the service industry. Once there, the participants will meet with farm owners who have had drilling and fracing of wells on their land, and with business representatives who lead hydraulic fracturing operations.

“We hope to, among other things, demystify hydraulic fracturing technology which has been commercialized since the 50s. It’s true that at that time it was not done on horizontal wells and much smaller volumes of water were used, but it remains that this technology which is used every day in Alberta is safe. The most recent [independent study](#) on hydraulic fracturing confirms this.” said Mr. Levesque.

In addition to meeting representatives of the agricultural world, participants will interact directly with representatives of three major public organizations who ensure the maintenance of harmonious relations between citizens, communities, and the industry. These are:

[The Farmers Advocate Office](#) under the Alberta Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. The agency is mandated to represent farmer’s interests and to support them in their interactions with industry,

[Alberta Surface Rights Board](#), a quasi-judicial body that is mandated to foster communication between parties and to settle disputes concerning negotiation of land rights, and finally, the important

[Energy Resources Conservation Board \(ERCB\)](#), the government agency that has upheld their

mandate since 1938 to regulate the province's oil and gas industry in a safe, responsible and efficient way.

Mario Levesque concluded by saying: "We hope this trip will result in a better understanding of gas industry practices. It will certainly help everyone to understand each other's situations better. I am convinced that the relationship of respect developed between the Albertan farmers and the gas industry can reassure the people of Quebec. Moreover, isn't social acceptance the basis on which Alberta industry is able to produce the shale gas it sells us and that we benefit from every day in Quebec?"

- 30 -

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