



**Alberta
Emerald
Foundation**

Emerald Youth Grants

Study Guides

YYC Growers and Distributors



30th Annual Emerald Award Recipient

Business



Table of Contents

 Overview

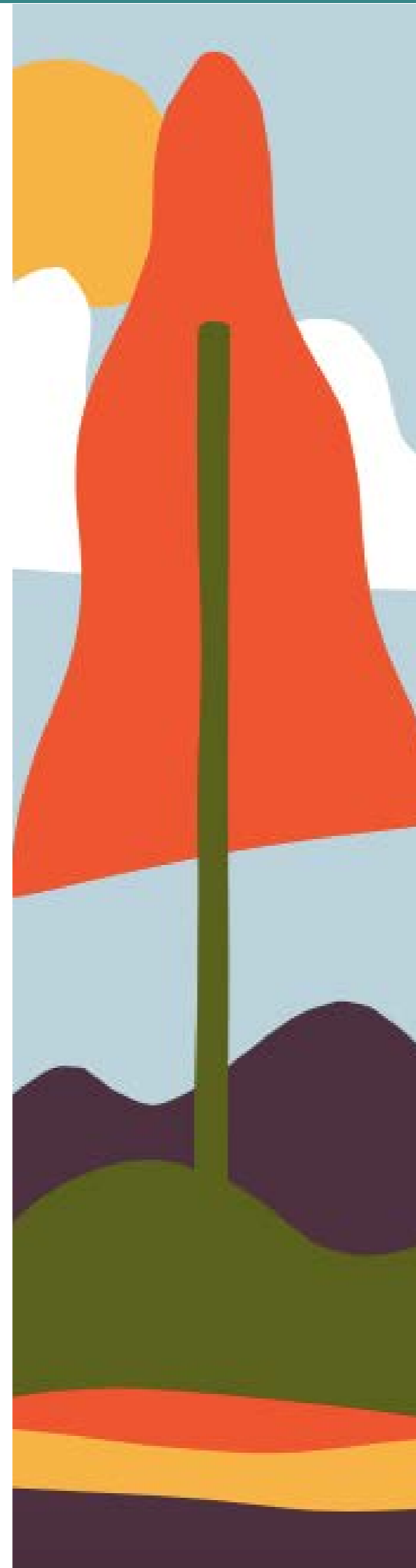
 Key Terms

 Conversation Questions

 Continuing Work

 Resources

 Notes



About the Alberta Emerald Foundation



We're Alberta's environmental good-news storytellers!

The Alberta Emerald Foundation (AEF) is nonprofit organization that showcases and inspires our province's environmental achievements through the annual Emerald Awards. Through our Sharing Stories Communications Strategy, the incredible work of Emerald recipients is highlighted and celebrated year-round. What began as the Emerald Awards in 1992 has evolved into an ongoing conversation.

The AEF empowers the next generation by providing grants to youth-led and youth-targeted environmental initiatives in our province. The Emerald Educational Engagement Grants Program funds up to 30 groups a year for their dream environmental project inspired by the Emerald Documentary Series, What On EARTH Can We Do? Podcast, and Emerald Speakers Series. After finding inspiration from this content featuring Emerald recipients, submit your pitch to us online. If it's accepted, you will receive \$750, thanks to our sponsor Syncrude Canada Ltd., to make your project a reality.

We encourage you to use this study guide as a resource to help you along in your project's journey. For more information, please visit

www.emerald.foundation.ca

Overview

What they're all about

YYC Growers is a social enterprise working to distribute wealth in the area of food production and distribution. They are dedicated to **pioneering** new ways of working and organizing to create healthy, local food systems. YYC Growers as a farmer-owned **cooperative** provides Calgarians with a weekly subscription to a box of locally grown vegetables, either for pick-up at a nearby location or delivered right to their door. They were founded on the assumption that what is good for the earth will be good for us. They envision a vibrant, resonant, more transparent food system.

YYC Growers' Harvest Box is a **Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)**-style program that is unique to Calgary. They draw from 15 farm owners, who grow in and around Calgary, producing a diverse medley of vegetables and other crops.



The YYC cooperative prides itself in being not just **sustainable** but even more importantly, regenerative. **Regenerative farming** is a dynamic state-of-being. A regenerative farmer is guided by this question, “Is my soil better this season than last?” The key impacts of asking this question are that the soil’s produce is more nutritious and flavourful, and Mother Earth gets taken care of. The **agro-ecological position** taken by the **cooperative** means that land is valued as the foundation to a vital **ecosystem**. Farmers become **stewards** and builders of this **ecosystem**, helping to create conditions to grow good food.

Key Terms

Know your lingo



Agro-ecological: applying the concepts of ecology, this way of sustainable farming considers all of the plants, animals, and other components of the farm as part of the “ecosystem” and seeks to create and maintain balance.

Cooperative: a group of farmers, businesses, or individuals all working together.

Community Supported Agriculture: systems that directly connect the farmer to the consumers within the food system through a subscription service where the consumer receives boxes of fresh foods from farmers. These systems help to strengthen a sense of community.

Ecosystem: all of the living and non-living things in an area. This includes all of the plants, animals, and other living things that make up *communities* of life in an area.

Pioneering: trying out a new way of doing things, or inventing a new system for doing things in a way that has not been done by others.



Regenerative farming: a system of farming that places a heavy importance on soil health and “rejuvenation”, while considering water management and the use of fertilizers. The goal of regenerative farming is to create a healthier farm ecosystem for the future, without depleting or destroying any resources to get there.

Sustainable: meeting our needs and using natural resources in a way that we could keep doing for a long time. This can be done through reducing the amount of resources that we use.

Steward: to use resources responsibly and protect the natural environment, through conservation and sustainability that helps to create and maintain healthy ecosystems.

Conversation Questions

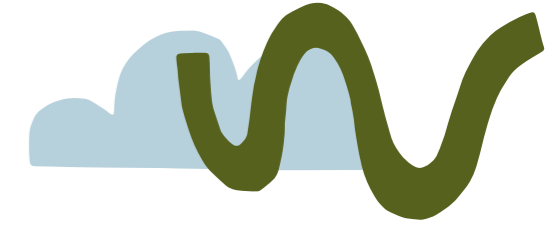
Let's talk about it

- What problem does YYC Growers address? How do they address this problem?
- What types of food do you think grows or is produced in Alberta?
- What vegetable do you and your family eat most often? Do you think that is grown in Alberta?
- Why is regenerative agriculture important?
- If you could design your own Harvest Box, what would you put in it?
- How can growing your own food help the environment?
- Do you think there are things that farmers can do to help the environment more?



Continuing Work

Inspiration for your Emerald Youth Grant



- Volunteer at a community garden in your neighborhood. If you don't have one, see if there is space within your community to start one and get a group together and start gardening.
- Ask your school to set up a vegetable garden so you can watch the food grow from seeds, then have a feast when they're ready to harvest.
- Plan a field trip to a local farm where you can get a tour and see how food is produced in Alberta.
- Attend Alberta Open Farm Days, a collaborative, province-wide, two-day event that gives Albertans an opportunity to experience the farm and understand where their food comes from. It is a backstage pass to meet the farmer, experience Ag-tourism in Alberta and taste local foods direct from the producer. Find out more about the event [here](#).
- Start a vermi-compost (worm!) bin in your classroom or in your home, so that your vegetable scraps can be used as food for the worms to turn into soil. Learn how [here](#)!



Resources

Click to discover

[YYC Growers and Distrubtors Website](#)

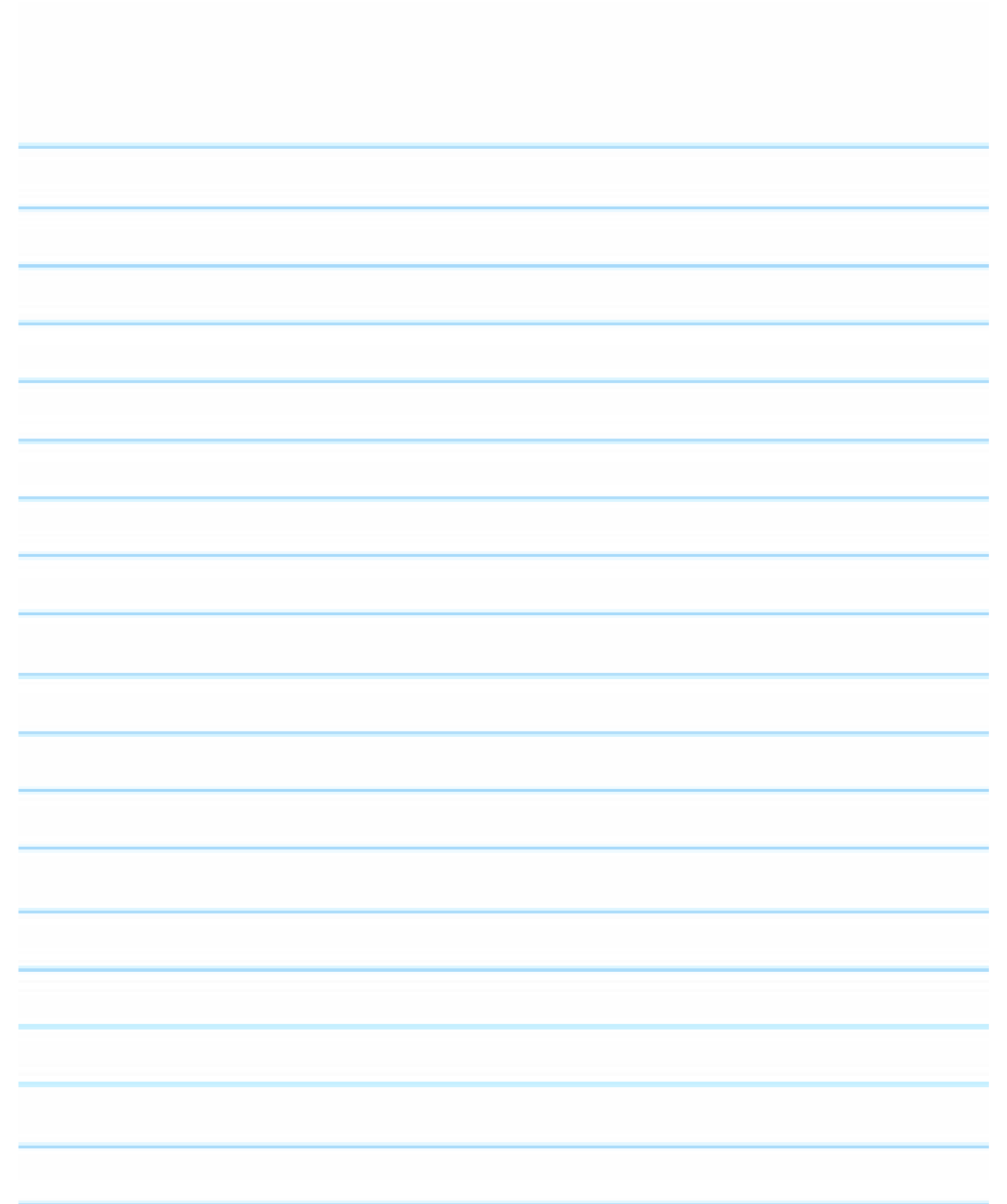
[List of CSAs in Alberta](#)

[Alberta Open Farm Days](#)

[Britannica Kids](#) (used for Key Terms)

[36 environmental project ideas that you could get funding for!](#)

Notes





Emerald Youth Grants

The AEF would like to thank Syncrude Canada Ltd. for their sponsorship of the Emerald Youth Grants Program. As well, we'd like to thank Hoopla Media for their work on the Emerald Documentary Series.

This study guide was created and written by AEF Summer Student, Katherine Rogers.

[Click to apply for an Emerald Youth Grant!](#)

