

# Gangwon – Alberta Relations



Government of Alberta ■  
International and Intergovernmental Relations



*This map is a generalized illustration only and is not intended to be used for reference purposes. The representation of political boundaries does not necessarily reflect the position of the Government of Alberta on international issues of recognition, sovereignty or jurisdiction.*

## PROFILE

**Capital:** Chuncheon

**Population:** 1.56 million (2010 est.)

**Language:** Korean

**Government:** Presidential Republic

**Head of State:** Governor LEE Kwang-jae (elected June 2010)

**Currency:** \$1 CDN = 1,134 South Korean Won (August 2010)

**Key Industry Sectors:** Tourism, livestock, agriculture, fishing, mining, manufacturing, bioengineering.

## DID YOU KNOW?

- Gangwon was divided during the Korean War (1950-53). One-third of the province's former territory is in North Korea.

- Korean provinces have gained more autonomy since 1995 although the scope of their responsibilities still is considerably less than that of Canadian provinces.
- Gangwon consists of about 81.6%, or 13,782 km squared of forest, only 8.4% of the land is for farming, and 10% is for other uses.
- Gangwon has sister province relationships with Mpumalanga in South Africa, Jilin in China, Totori Prefecture in Japan, Primorskiy Territory in Russia, and Colorado in the United States.
- Pyeongchang County in Gangwon is one of three locations vying for the 2018 Olympics.

## RELATIONSHIP OVERVIEW

- Alberta-Gangwon cooperation began in the 1970s with a joint beef ranching demonstration project.

- The 1974 Alberta-Gangwon twinning was the first of Alberta's sister province relationships. Most activities have involved education, culture and sport exchanges although the focus is now shifting towards economic interests.
- 2009 marked the 35th anniversary of Alberta-Gangwon sister province relations.
- Alberta and Gangwon have participated in staff exchanges. Alberta has posted three officials to Gangwon since 1998 and several Gangwon officials have worked in Alberta.
- In June 2004, the White Buffalo Drummers and Dancers Society, an Edmonton-based aboriginal group, traveled to Gangneung City to represent Alberta at the Gangneung International Folklore Festival.

- In April 2010, Alberta's International Region, consisting of the City of Leduc and Leduc County; the towns of Beaumont, Calmar and Devon; and the villages of New Sarepta, Thorsby and Warburg, signed a memorandum of co-operation with Yangyang County, in northeastern Gangwon province.

## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

- In May 2005, Alberta signed a letter of intent with the Gangwon Department of Industry and Economy to promote opportunities for joint research and development activity that will contribute to the development of science, technology and commercialization in both regions.
- Under the letter of intent, approximately \$1.3 million has been contributed to ten projects since 2005. Current areas of focus are water management, bio-energy, and healthcare diagnostic and delivery technologies.
- Along with the letter of intent, Alberta-Gangwon Technology Forums were held in 2005 (Gangwon) and 2006 (Alberta) resulting in joint research and development projects.

## TRADE AND INVESTMENT

- Trade between Alberta and Gangwon is limited and indirect, mainly involving agriculture and food products.
- Following the lead of the Korean government, Gangwon is streamlining its regulations in an effort to attract foreign investment capital.

## EDUCATION AND CULTURE

- Two Alberta high schools have twinnings with a junior high school in Gangwon.
- Alberta and Gangwon have awarded reciprocal scholarships to help students study in their respective sister province. This program discontinued in 2009.
- Since 1974, Alberta has participated in numerous sports exchanges with Gangwon including: alpine and nordic skiing, whitewater canoeing, wrestling, boxing, soccer, tennis, team handball, fencing and cycling.
- As a Centennial gift to Alberta and to mark the 30th Anniversary of Alberta-Gangwon sister province relations, Gangwon undertook the construction of a Korean-style pavilion on the grounds near Government House in Edmonton.
- In 2004, Premier Klein received an Honorary Doctorate of Philosophy in Political Science from Kangwon National University in Gangwon, Korea.
- In 2005, the University of Alberta's Faculty of Education presented Governor KIM Jin-Sun with an Honorary Professorship in recognition of his support for a long-running teacher education program.

## COMMUNITY

- Approximately 12,000 Albertans are of Korean descent.
- Active Korean community associations have been established in Calgary and Edmonton. In addition to providing assistance to newly arrived immigrants, these associations help to promote Korean culture and connect entrepreneurs.
- CKER-FM broadcasts across Alberta in many different languages, including Korean.

## RECENT VISITS

- April 2010: Yangyang County Deputy Mayor Lee Gye-dong led a delegation to Alberta's International Region to establish a new co-operative relationship between the regions.
- September 2009: Mr. Hung Jib Choi, Lieutenant Governor for Political Affairs for Gangwon, visited Edmonton.
- June 2008: Alberta's Minister of International and Intergovernmental Relations visited Gangwon during a mission to Korea.
- May 2008: Vice Mayor of Wonju City visited the City of Edmonton to strengthen the sister relationship between Edmonton and Wonju.
- November 2007: Dr. Kim Kwi-Gon of the International Urban Training Centre, based in Gangwon, led a delegation to Edmonton to study urban environmental development.
- July 2006: Alberta's Minister of Sustainable Resources Development visited Gangwon to advance relations between the Gangwon government and the Ministry on Forest Management.
- June 2006: A delegation from the Gangwon Department of Livestock visited Alberta to learn about livestock programs, policies, and facilities in Alberta.
- May 2006: A delegation from the Gangwon Institute of Health and Environment visited Alberta to discuss water management issues.
- October 2005: Governor Kim Jin-Sun led a delegation to Alberta to celebrate Alberta's Centennial and to mark the 30th Anniversary of Alberta-Gangwon sister province relations by dedicating a Korean-style pavilion to Alberta.

