



Forage and Livestock eNews

Updates and information from across the industry

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Articles In This Issue

- Forage Market Price
- Discovery
- Forage Pea/Cereal Greenfeed
- SFSDC Forage Seed Workshop
- Saskatchewan Forage Network
- Cattle Producers Implement New Grazing Options
- Funding for Forage and Livestock Producers
- By-Product Feeds for Sheep
- The Value of Saskatchewan's Forage Industry
- Upcoming Events
- Become a Saskatchewan Forage Council Member

Greetings!

Welcome to November's Forage and Livestock eNews! With fall wrapping up and winter on the way, this is an excellent time to review the Saskatchewan Forage Council's Forage Market Price Discovery Report. This report is the results of communications with sources throughout the forage industry around the province and in adjoining jurisdictions. The report provides a snapshot of current forage prices, a look at price trends and availability, along with a recap of the past year's growing season. Check out the links in the article below or on the SFC website.

This month's edition of the eNews also features an update on an SFC ADOPT project, a look at cattle producers



implementing new grazing options, by-product feeds for sheep and more. Don't miss the speaker line-up for the upcoming SFSDC Forage Seed Growers workshop, coming up on December 2, 2015.

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[Saskatchewan Forage Council](#)

[Forage Industry News](#)

[Upcoming Events](#)

Please feel free to forward the eNews on to others you think may be interested in forage and livestock industry updates -signing up is as easy as clicking the 'Join Our Mailing List!' on the left. We always appreciate your feedback, event listings or article suggestions.

Your *Forage and Livestock eNews* Editor,
Laura Hoimyr

Forage Market Price Discovery in Saskatchewan

Saskatchewan Forage Council

The September 2015 Saskatchewan Forage Market Price Discovery Report is a compilation of data and information collected from a diverse group of forage industry stakeholders in Saskatchewan as well as neighbouring provinces and states during August and September of 2015. This report presents a general overview of growing conditions for forage crops across Saskatchewan in 2015, as well as prices for different forage types and market trends as of this fall.



Saskatchewan experienced cool and extremely dry conditions this past spring, which resulted in well below average forage yields across most of the province. Many producers had some on-farm hay inventory remaining after the previous winter feeding period however 2015 yields from first cuts of hay were much lower than expected, prompting concern about feed supplies early on. Some producers were unable to harvest any forages due to the low yields, and some areas saw a lot of hay fields being grazed rather than hayed, as pasture conditions were also tight in the spring. Prices reached record-setting highs, and peaked around mid-July, coinciding with producer concerns over hay shortages and drought. The hay that was harvested was reported to be in good quality, as there was very little rain that fell across the province during haying operations.

Saskatchewan forage prices basically doubled those of previous years, proving this to be a very challenging season for producers looking to source feed. Alfalfa/grass mixed hay is worth \$177.35/tonne in 2015, compared with \$86/tonne in 2014. First cut and second cut alfalfa average prices are \$197/tonne and \$232/tonne respectively in 2015, which is almost double their 2014 values of \$98/tonne and \$118/tonne for the same

forage crops. Grass hay is valued at \$163/tonne in 2015, compared with \$94/tonne a year ago. Greenfeed also increased greatly in 2015, currently priced at \$141/tonne compared with \$83/tonne in 2014. Straw remained fairly stable, however, increasing \$3/tonne from \$44/tonne in 2014 up to \$47/tonne in 2015. Many producers and cattle feeders indicated that they will be adjusting their rations to include more straw in order to offset the high cost of other forage sources.

To view the full report (pdf format) [click here](#).

To view a two-page synopsis (pdf format) [click here](#).

[Top of Page](#)

Forage Pea/Cereal Mixtures for Greenfeed Production

Saskatchewan Forage Council ADOPT Project

Laura Hoimyr, SFC Project Coordinator

The Saskatchewan Forage Council in partnership with Saskatchewan Agriculture Forage Specialists are wrapping up a project which demonstrated the yield and forage value of pea/cereal mixtures in comparison to monocultures of oats, barley and peas across the soil zones in Saskatchewan. Four research farms were selected as sites for this demonstration project. Sites were located at Swift Current, SK (Wheatland Conservation Group); Melfort, SK (Northeast Agriculture Research Foundation); Yorkton, SK (East Central Research Foundation) and Scott, SK (Western Applied Research Corp). Saskatchewan Agriculture Regional Forage Specialists supervised and assisted at each of these four sites.

The four sites each demonstrated two varieties of forage peas, barley and oats in monoculture as well as combinations of forage peas and these same cereals at two different seeding rates. Seedling establishment, yield and forage nutritional quality at appropriate greenfeed harvest stage were measured for each treatment and results will be included in the final report in 2016.



Information from this demonstration will enable producers to see how these crops might perform in their own geographic area. This project will also be of value for producers wondering when to harvest pea/cereal mixtures for greenfeed in order to optimize forage production and nutritional value.

Watch the Saskatchewan Forage Council website for the final project report coming in early 2016.

This project was supported by the Agricultural Demonstration of Practices and Technologies (ADOPT) initiative under the Canada-Saskatchewan Growing Forward 2 bilateral agreement.

Image: Maverick Barley at 50% seeding rate in combination with Horizon Peas at 50% seeding rate. Melfort Research Farm, August 11, 2015. Photo courtesy of Northeast Agriculture Research Foundation, Melfort SK.

[Top of Page](#)

SFSDC Forge Seed Grower Workshop

Saskatchewan Forage Seed Development Commission (SFSDC) Event Update

Ray McVicar, Executive Director

SFSDC is pleased to announce our speaker line-up for the upcoming Forage Seed Grower Workshop and Annual General Meeting on December 2, 2015 in Nipawin Saskatchewan.

- Shane Lacusta, Brett-Young Seeds, will provide the forage seed market update
- Stu Brandt, Manager, Northeast Agriculture Research Foundation, Melfort SK will review the 2015 forage seed weed control, fungicide and copper fertility projects.
- Dr. Bill Biligetu, University of Saskatchewan, will provide an update on the Forage Crop Plant Breeding and Variety Testing program at the U of S.
- Al Foster, Regional Forage Specialist, Saskatchewan Agriculture, will review the Alternate Row/Companion Crop forage establishment project.
- During the SFSDC Annual General Meeting, growers will have the opportunity for comments into the Commission's future plans as well as review the SFSDC financial statements and activities.

Wednesday December 2, 2015 1:00 PM to 4:30 PM

Twin Lakes Room, Evergreen Centre

Nipawin, Saskatchewan

Admission is free and refreshments will be available.



For more information about the SFSDC or the AGM, please visit the website at www.skforageseeddc.com or contact the SFSDC at (306) 789-1958 or email at sfsdc05@gmail.com.

Image: Stu Brandt addresses group at 2015 NARF Field Day. July 2015. Source: SFSDC

[Top of Page](#)

Saskatchewan Forage Network Graduate Student Awards

Saskatchewan Forage Network 2015 Update

Saskatchewan's forage and livestock industry groups have come together through the Saskatchewan Forage Network to jointly provide awards in support of graduate students pursuing research focused on the priorities of the province's forage and livestock industry.

During year one (2014/15), funding for graduate student support has been provided through the following three projects:

Comparison of barley forage with highest and lowest digestible fibre (NDF) in high production dairy cattle

PhD candidate Basim Refat is working under the direction of Dr. Peiqiang Yu with the SK Forage Network providing \$10,000 per year for three years (total contribution = \$30,000).

Objectives/anticipated industry benefits - to increase knowledge of the nutritional relevance of forage barley, develop alternative feeding strategies based on NDF digestibility, apply this information to production of high quality feeding programs, and link this information to forage barley breeding programs.

Development of new sainfoin lines with smaller seed size to reduce establishment costs

MSc candidate Surendra Bhattarai is working under the direction of Dr. Bill Biligetu with the SK Forage Network providing \$10,000 per year for two years (total contribution = \$20,000).

Objectives/anticipated industry benefits - as a non-bloating perennial legume sainfoin has many desirable forage traits. This project will establish a genetic base for future sainfoin breeding programs, explore smaller seed size without sacrificing forage yield, quality and persistence, and determine relationships between seed size and forage characteristics to understand the impact of reducing seed size on forage yield and other agronomic traits.

Development of crested wheatgrass lines with improved forage nutritive value

An MSc candidate will be working under the direction of Dr. Bill Biligetu with the SK Forage Network providing \$10,000 per year for two years (total contribution = \$20,000).

Objectives/anticipated industry benefits - to develop later maturing crested wheatgrass lines with acceptable forage/seed yields and forage quality to extend use later in the growing season; to evaluate lines for forage nutritive value at mature growth stage and select populations with higher nutritive value; and evaluate new accessions and cultivars of hexaploid crested wheatgrass under Saskatchewan growth conditions.

To view the full pdf article, including progress reports, [click here](#).

[Top of Page](#)

Cattle Producers Implement New Grazing Options

Reprinted with permission from Manitoba Cooperator July 14, 2015

By: Jennifer Paige

Ryan Boyd would rather be searching for newborn calves in waist-high grass than snowdrifts. The western Manitoba grain and cattle farmer has joined the ranks of producers changing things up on the cattle side of their operations in search of lower operating costs and better environmental stewardship.

He's found that producing forage-finished cattle requires a strong focus on grazing and production management, forage quality, animal genetics and animal health. But it does pay off.

"There is certainly money to be made if you are able to graze successfully. Our machinery and overhead costs are way down and I find the entire process more enjoyable," said Boyd, a third-

generation farmer. "I calf in the spring and to come out on the quad and see calves on grass that is almost as tall as they are, that's a bit nicer than when it's 40 below and having to pull them into a calving barn because the snowbanks are so high."

Boyd runs 2,000 acres of grain and a 350-head, cow-calf operation. This will be his third year playing with diverse annual forage mixtures to see what fits best into his grazing system. But he has been rotational grazing for more than 10 years and using holistic management techniques for seven.

"After two years of playing with this system, it is clear to me that there is something to this and now we are just looking at fine tuning to see how we can get the most out of it," said Boyd.

Back to the farm

Boyd grew up on the family farm and went to the University of Manitoba where he acquired a degree in agronomy. In 2006 he returned home where he began to implement a rotational grazing system.

"You can read about these guys doing things all over the world and how great it is, but until you see some results on your own farm, it's just a nice story. Once you see things working on your operation, it definitely fuels you to keep going," said Boyd.

Most producers attempting this use perennial pasture mixtures that contain a minimum of 30 per cent legumes, usually alfalfa, along with grass species that are high quality and boast superior regrowth, such as meadow brome, orchardgrass and tall fescue. Many times high-energy annuals are used to supplement lower-quality perennials.

"Don't underestimate the power of diversity. You don't have to get too carried away but there is certainly something to having a few different species growing together. This year we've got two different mixes. One mix is predominantly a cool season and the plan is to hay it for greenfeed and then it will grow back for grazing," said Boyd. "The other mix is a summer annual blend and it will just be left standing for a late fall-winter grazing."

Some producers choose to move cattle intensively, sometimes daily, as short grazing sessions and long recovery periods give plants time to develop abundant root mass and aid to building soil nutrients. Rest and recovery systems are also essential in managing regrowth to ensure first-rate forage.

To read the full article, [click here](#).

[Top of Page](#)

Funding Options for Forage and Livestock Producers

Saskatchewan Agriculture

Sarah Sommerfeld, PAg, Regional Forage Specialist

As the 2015 field season comes to a close, producers turn their attention to planning for the 2016 growing season. Plans may include development of a new water source, improving grazing management or seeding down forages on soils prone to erosion or salinity. For these types of on-farm projects, producers can access cost-shared funding through the Growing Forward 2 framework of agriculture programs.

The Farm and Ranch Water Infrastructure Program (FRWIP) provides cost-shared funding to help develop secure water sources. These water sources can be dugouts, large or small diameter wells, community wells and shallow or deep buried pipelines. The On-Farm component of FRWIP provides cost-shared funding to develop sustainable non-potable water supplies for agricultural use. For individual producers, the On-Farm component of FRWIP will cover 50 per cent of the eligible costs up to a maximum of \$60,000 for developing long term sustainable water sources.

The Farm Stewardship Program (FSP) provides eligible producers with financial assistance to implement beneficial management practices (BMPs). Under the FSP, 23 BMPs exist under seven categories. When applying to the FSP, two types of program applications exist - pre-approval or rebate. Pre-approval applications require that projects must receive prior approval before any work is completed. Rebate applications do not require pre-approval, and the program application can be submitted once the project is complete.

For producers wanting to improve the grazing management on native rangeland or riparian areas, two BMPs exist. The Native Rangeland Grazing Management BMP and Riparian Area Grazing Management and Fencing BMP are pre-approval applications. Producers must submit a pre-approval application prior to starting the project. The FSP will cover 50 per cent of the eligible costs up to a maximum of \$10,000 for implementing either of these BMPs.



Producers looking to convert highly erodible and/or saline land from annual grain production to permanent cover can apply for the Protecting High Risk Erodible and Saline Soils BMP. This BMP works as a rebate application and does not require pre-approval prior to producers completing the project. Cost-shared funding is available to cover 50 per cent of the eligible costs up to a maximum of \$10,000.

Accessing funding under the Growing Forward 2 programs requires that all producers meet basic eligibility requirements. Each type of project also has specific guidelines relating to producer eligibility and eligible and ineligible project costs. For further information on Growing

Forward 2 programs or for technical assistance regarding a specific on-farm project, contact your local Regional Forage Specialist, the Agriculture Knowledge Centre at 1-866-457-2377 or Financial Programs Branch at 1-877-869-4008.

Image: Shallow buried pasture pipeline can be funded under the Farm and Ranch Water Infrastructure Program (FRWIP)

[Top of Page](#)

By-Product Feeds for Sheep

Reprinted with permission from Alberta Agriculture and Forestry Agri-News, September 14, 2015

By: Susan Hosford, Sheep Industry Specialist

Dry conditions, short supplies of forage, expensive supplements and tight profit margins have many sheep producers looking for alternate feed sources.

"Canola or grain screenings, potato waste, grass seed cleanings or beet pulp are just a few of the by-products that can be used to feed sheep," says Susan Hosford, sheep industry specialist, Alberta Agriculture and Forestry (AF), Camrose. "By-product feeds become available when a traditional feed ingredient is processed into another product, such as the alfalfa fines from an alfalfa cubing plant. By-products such as brewer's grain or bakery waste can



sometimes be sourced from local food or beverage manufacturing. By-product screenings are produced when grains, legumes, or forage seeds are cleaned."

Hosford says it is vitally important to know the availability, supply and price of a by-product before incorporating it into a flock feeding program.

"Dry conditions increase competition for feed which makes local availability and price major considerations. Many by-products are available only through contracts and are delivered at times specified by the seller. Some are only available at certain times of the year."

In order to utilize these feeds, Hosford says producers will need to know:

- their long-term feed requirements, how many days of feed for how many sheep
- their ability to handle and store (sometimes large amounts of) these feeds
- how they will store different feeds (i.e. to avoid mould) to maintain quality
- how they will feed their sheep for maximum feed quality and minimum waste
- the proximity of their farm in relation to the location of the by-product feed source so they can accurately determine accessibility and cost
- how much to order to minimize switching feeds in rations and reduce trucking costs

"Before purchasing or feeding any by-product, try to have feeds sampled and tested to determine the nutrient content," says Hosford. "This is critically important for every new batch whether the by-product is used regularly or is a new feed ingredient. The nutrient and moisture content of by-product feeds vary dramatically with different loads depending on the supplier, the product itself, processing methods, harvesting methods, the season, the weather and, of course, how it was stored."

AF has a listing of feed and water testing laboratories, videos on sampling feeds, and frequently asked questions on testing feed on their [webpage](#). The [SheepBytes](#) ration balancer software has a feed library that includes some by-product feeds.

"Use the software to develop rations for each group of sheep in your flock," adds Hosford. "Be sure you're feeding the right nutrients, in the right amount to the right sheep - you can't afford not to."

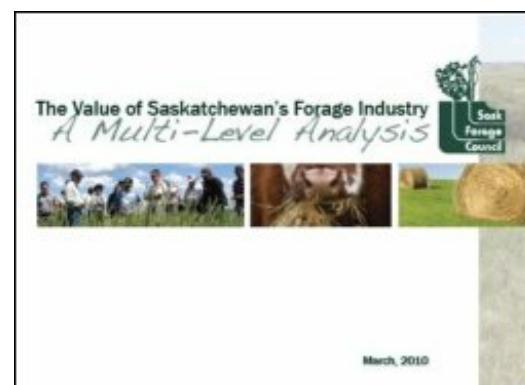
For more information, contact the Ag-Info Centre at 310-FARM (3276).

[Top of Page](#)

The Value of Saskatchewan's Forage Industry

"When both crop insurance payments and government stabilization programs are considered, the total savings for maintaining forages in Saskatchewan at the current acreage represents a value of \$401.6 million annually."

To view the *Saskatchewan Forage Industry Analysis Report*, [click here](#).



[Top of Page](#)

Upcoming Events

Agricultural Excellence Conference

November 25-27, 2015

Regina, SK

The Agricultural Excellence Conference is a one-of-a-kind event in Canada. It focuses on bringing diverse industry experts and stakeholders together from across disciplines, regions and

commodity sectors to share and explore beneficial farm management practices, advice and insights with leading farm business thinkers.

To view the event poster, [click here](#).

2015 Western Canadian Conference on Soil Health

December 8-10, 2015

Edmonton, AB

Plan to attend this conference sponsored by ARECA and featuring keynote speakers Dr. Yamily Zaval, Dr. Harold van Es, Gabe Brown, Dr. Jill Clapperton, Dr. Allen Williams, and many more.

To view event details or to register, [click here](#).

Saskatchewan Beef Industry Conference

January 20-22, 2016

Saskatoon, SK

Saskatchewan's Premier Beef Event! The Beef Industry Conference will be held at the Saskatoon Inn from January 20-22. For more information or to register, [click here](#).

Restoration Training Workshop

February 16, 2016

Saskatoon, SK

The PCESC 2016 Planning Committee is very excited to announce that a Restoration Training Workshop will take place immediately preceding the 11th Prairie Conservation and Endangered Species Conference on Tuesday, February 16 at the Saskatoon Inn in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. The full day Restoration Training Workshop, titled "Natural Processes for the Restoration of Drastically Disturbed Sites" will be lead by David Polster, R.P. Bio.

For more information or to register , visit the [PCESC website](#).

Prairie Conservation and Endangered Species Conference

February 16-18, 2016

Saskatoon, SK

The 11th Prairie Conservation and Endangered Species Conference will be held February 16, 17 & 18, 2016 in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. The theme is Prairie: It's a Happening Place! This year's event organizers are the Saskatchewan Prairie Conservation Action Plan.

For more information, visit the website at www.pcesc.ca.

International Rangeland Congress 2016

July 17-22, 2016

Saskatoon, SK

The future management of grazing lands in a high-tech world. Plan to join us! This all encompassing Congress will cover the Ecology, Management and Policy issues of all types of grazing lands around the world.

Event Registration is now open! [Click here](#) to register online today.

For more information, go to www.irc2016canada.ca.

Saskatchewan Forage Council Membership

Be Sure Your Voice in the Forage Industry Counts!

- Incorporated under *The Co-operatives Act*, a membership fee for the SFC is a one-time cost of \$25.00;
- The SFC has worked in the province on behalf of **ALL** forage industry stakeholders (and that's a very extensive and diverse group) for more than 20 years;
- If you are involved with production, management, protection, harvesting, storage, utilization or marketing of forage products, the SFC wants your involvement and input;
- The SFC is committed to placing a focus and awareness on the importance of forages in our province.

The SFC at a glance...

With a mandate to enhance the province's forage and grassland industry, the Saskatchewan Forage Council (SFC) strives to partner with all sectors of the industry - producers, industry organizations and companies, government and university.

Formed in 1988, our objectives are focused on the development and dissemination of information related to the production and utilization of all forage resources, prioritization of forage research and collaboration with governments to develop and implement effective policies and programs as they relate to forage production and marketing.



To learn more about becoming a member [Click Here](#).



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We welcome questions about article submission or to find out more about sponsorship,
please contact the Saskatchewan Forage Council at:

Email: office@saskforage.ca

Phone: 306.969.2666

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Saskatchewan Cattlemen's Association Saskatchewan Beef Industry**

Development Fund:



**The Saskatchewan Forage Council
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