



Forage and Livestock eNews

Updates and information from across the industry

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Articles In This Issue

Saskatchewan Pasture Tour
Harvesting Overly Mature Hay
SFSDC Research Update
Beef Industry Conference a Success!
Beat the Weeds
SK PCAP Speaker Series
Dung Beetles on the Prairies
Net Wrapping Offers Trio of Key Benefits
SFC Featured Project
Upcoming Events
Become a Saskatchewan Forage Council Member

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

Quick Links

[Saskatchewan Forage Council](#)
[Forage Industry News](#)
[Upcoming Events](#)

Greetings!

September is here and with it another short Saskatchewan summer is ending. There is still plenty of time to fill in your

[Hay Harvest Challenge](#) record book and submit your entry form to win some great prizes! Now is the ideal time to plan for winter rations by feed testing your forages.



This month's edition of the eNews includes some excellent articles from Saskatchewan Agriculture Forage Specialist to assist with forage management.

If you missed the Saskatchewan Pasture Tour, check out the article to learn about the innovative producers the tour visited-keep this educational Saskatchewan event in mind for next summer!

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

Saskatchewan Pasture Tour Recap

By Leanna Rousell, Saskatchewan Forage Council Executive Director

Another successful Saskatchewan Pasture Tour was August 4th in the central part of the province. The event is hosted by members from: Ducks Unlimited Canada, Agriculture and Agri-food Canada, University of Saskatchewan, Water Security Agency, Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture, Eagle Creek Watershed and the Saskatchewan Forage Council. Despite the inch and a quarter of rain the day before we were able to get out in the field and tour two operations. There were 47 attendees for the event with the majority being producers from around the province.

The first stop was at Leanna and Scott Tetreault's near Kinley where we looked at sod seeding alfalfa into an old grass stand (no herbicides used to burn off stand). Tetreault's rotational graze two groups of cattle on thirty five paddocks with a solar powered pasture pipeline. A stop at the solar panels provided opportunity to discuss other watering systems as well. The last stop on their operation was at a diverse cover crop which included six species: oats, triticale, hairy vetch, phacelia, plantain and sugar beets. This blend was designed to be grazed twice, once mid-summer and once in October.



For the second operation we travelled to Val and Rod Petrie's near Tessier where they rotational graze their cow/calf pairs and yearlings. We toured a marginal pasture they are rejuvenating with bale grazing in the winter. Petrie's diverse cover cop was slated for late fall grazing and includes nine species: millet, triticale, chickling vetch, clover, plantain, phacelia, forage collards, sesame and safflower. At one of their wintering sites the Petrie's had participated in an ADOPT project where they broadcast cicer milkvetch at three different rates followed by bale grazing to incorporate the seed. With above average rainfall that year it had an excellent establishment. The current regrowth from early spring grazing looked good. We also visited a location where they had fed a winter ration that included oat hulls.

Our last stop for the day was on a piece of native prairie near Harris where we discussed care and management of native pastures. We got our hands dirty assessing litter cover; we identified some native plants and reviewed the range health assessment guide.

The event was also complemented by talks about the Farm Stewardship Program and invasive plant management. The day provided an excellent opportunity for producers to share experiences, ask questions and network with each other.

We would like to thank Elmy's Friendly Acres/Cover Crops Canada for donating seed for the diverse cover crops. A big thank you also goes out to our sponsors for the event: Central Plains Co-

op, Sirpico Industries, Brett Young, Northstar Seed, Anderson Pump House, Ducks Unlimited Canada and Crop Production Services.

Image: Pasture Tour participants in the field

Image Credit: Leanna Rousell

[Top of Page](#)

Harvesting Overly Mature Hay

By: Trevor Lennox, Saskatchewan Agriculture Regional Forage Specialist, Swift Current, SK

Most producers never would have imagined that rain so plentiful in June and July would delay their hay cutting. So, what does this late hay cutting mean from a forage quality standpoint, and ultimately what does it mean to the animal consuming the forage?

The most important factor affecting hay quality is the stage of maturity at cutting. Young, vegetative forage is higher in protein and energy than older, flowering material. As forages mature, fibre increases while protein and digestibility decreases.

Late harvesting causes the crude protein value of the feed to drop. For example, instead of having a 14 to 16 per cent protein feed, you are faced with a protein value of around seven to 10 per cent. As feed matures, there are secondary compounds, such as lignin, that continue to increase within plant cell walls, which makes the feed less digestible.

So, what is the issue with lower protein values and poorer digestibility? One of the challenges with poorer feed is that it slows the passage rate through the digestive tract of a ruminant. When the passage rate slows, you are limiting the potential for the ruminant animal to thrive as they physically cannot pass through enough food and their performance can suffer. A feed test can determine the protein and energy of a particular forage, allowing a producer to know what type of supplement may be required to provide a balanced ration.

Forage producers within Saskatchewan are encouraged to take part in the 2016 'Saskatchewan Forage Harvest Challenge', where they are 'challenged' to test their feed to gain a better understanding of the quality of the feed produced on their operation in order to ensure a ration is developed that meets the needs of their livestock.

Feed testing forages can help manage the winter feeding period. It can also prevent overfeeding, and more importantly, under feeding of nutrients. As part of the Hay Harvest Challenge, a free forage handbook can be picked up at any Ministry of Agriculture office or Saskatchewan Peavey Mart location. Producers can then use the handbook to record information in regards to their haying operations. Contest rules are within the handbook for submitting an entry form, with winners being determined through a random draw. Prizes consist of one \$1000 prize of in-store merchandise from a Saskatchewan Peavey Mart location, as well as eight \$250 forage analysis vouchers from Central Testing Laboratory.

For further information on harvesting hay, or the Saskatchewan Hay harvest challenge contact Trevor Lennox at 306-778-8294, or trevor.lennox@gov.sk.ca.

To read this, and other forage-related articles on the Saskatchewan Agriculture website, [click here](#).

[Top of Page](#)

Forage Seed Research Update 2016

By: Ray McVicar

The SFSDC forage seed research program is wrapping up for another year. We expanded our projects this year with work done at both the Northeast Agriculture Research Foundation (NARF) near Melfort and the University of Saskatchewan (U of S) near Saskatoon.

The Minor Use herbicide screening program at NARF tested a number of treatments on established red, alsike and sweet clovers as well as a treatment on seedling sweet clover. The Weed Management Program at U of S tested herbicides on established sweet clover, sainfoin, cicer milkvetch, slender wheatgrass, hybrid brome grass and timothy. NARF and U of S also tested Plant Growth Regulators (PGRs) on established red, alsike and sweet clovers.



Image: Red Clover underseeded in alternate rows with faba beans at NARF July 2016. Source: SFSDC

Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture's Agricultural Demonstration of Practices and Technologies (ADOPT) program provided funding for 3 projects at NARF in 2016. These are:

- Evaluating the Placement of Companion Crops in Forage Seed Production;
- Evaluating the use of Direct Seeding and Pre-Seeding Cultivation in Forage Seed Crop Establishment; and
- Management Options to Control Lesser Clover Leaf Weevil in Red Clover

The projects were planted and treatments were applied according to plan and the results look encouraging. Preliminary results from these projects will be available at the Forage Seed Grower Information Session in December, in the SFSDC Newsletter and on the SFSDC website.



Thank you to DLF Pickseed Canada, BASF Canada, Bayer CropScience, BrettYoung, Dow Agrosiences, DuPont Canada, Syngenta Canada and Saskatchewan Agriculture for their continuing support of the forage seed industry.

For more information about SFSDC or current or past research projects, please check out the SFSDC website at: www.skforageseedcc.com and look under **research**.

Image: Minor use plots on established hybrid brome grass at U of S July 2016. Source: SFSDC

[Top of Page](#)

Inaugural Canadian Beef Industry Conference a Success!

By Tara Mulhern Davidson, PAg

Beef industry stakeholders from across Canada and beyond converged in Calgary from August 9-11, 2016 for the first ever Canadian Beef Industry Conference. A sold-out crowd of more than 650 producers and industry participants took in the event which included keynote speakers such as

entrepreneur Arlene Dickinson, as well as panel discussions about beef demand, productivity, connectivity, and how to build public confidence in Canadian beef production.

Also included in the agenda was "Bov-Innovation," a series of production-oriented sessions focusing on innovative practices or technologies that producers can incorporate into their own farms. Dr. Jill Clapperton of Rhizoterra delivered a presentation on forage cover crops and soil health during one session. Tim Hoven, an area producer who is incorporating cover crops into his farming practices, also provided a producer perspective to the session. Hoven runs an organic farm near Eckville, Alberta and says he believes forages are the future of the beef industry. "For the long-term success of the beef industry, we need to look at ways to mimic Mother Nature," he said. Hoven has been studying cover crops for years and this is the first time that he is using them on the organic cow-calf and cereal farm that he operates with his wife Lorianne and their children. "Cover crops are a really good fit into our overall operation," he explained. "They will save labour, money, and make our farm more profitable," he adds.

Hoven credits the conference for including the session on cover crops, saying the topic may be outside-the-box for some beef producers but it can inspire big change. "Sometimes we get so caught up in our own operation, because we live there," he said. "It's important to learn about small changes that can be made that can go on to improve our bottom line and our lives."

Another highlight of the Canadian Beef Industry Conference was the presentation of the 2016 Environmental Stewardship Award (TESA) which was given to Anderson Ranch Inc., operated by Miles and Sheri Anderson of Fir Mountain, SK. This national award recognizes producers who exemplify environmental stewardship values, focusing on the water, air, wildlife and land resources that make up their farms and ranches. The Anderson family has carefully managed their southern Saskatchewan ranch for generations, and have been very active in prairie grassland conservation discussions for decades. Miles Anderson was the former Chair of the Saskatchewan Prairie Conservation Action Plan, and more recently has gained attention for his grazing management strategies that promote the survival of greater sage-grouse, an endangered species in Canada.



The Canadian Beef Industry Award for Outstanding Research and Innovation was also presented during the conference. The 2016 recipient was Dr. Tim McAllister, a research scientist with the Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada Lethbridge Research and Development Centre. With a wide-

ranging research portfolio that includes silage science, greenhouse gas emissions, antimicrobial resistance, prion science, and much more, McAllister has made significant contributions to the sustainability and competitiveness of the Canadian beef industry. McAllister is particularly well known for his collaborative approach to research and science, and is also an engaging and effective communicator. He actively shares his findings with many diverse audiences each year, ranging from producer groups to international scientific forums.

The Canadian Beef Industry Conference was a collaboration between the Beef Cattle Research Council, Canada Beef, the Canadian Beef Breeds Council, and the Canadian Cattlemen's Association. The inaugural event proved to be very successful and plans are underway for the next conference which is set to take place in Calgary, AB in 2017.

Image: More than 650 beef industry stakeholders participated in the Canadian Beef Industry Conference in Calgary in August

Image Credit: Canadian Beef Industry Conference

[Top of Page](#)

Beat the Weeds

By: Rachel Turnquist, Saskatchewan Agriculture Regional Forage Specialist, Moose Jaw, SK

Spending time outdoors in a Saskatchewan summer can be exciting. Canola and alfalfa are in bloom. And, along side them, invasive plants are blooming too. Invasives pose a threat to native and tame rangelands, to wildlife habitat and to recreational areas. They spread aggressively taking away valuable nutrients and displacing the vegetation in their path. There are many articles and presentations shared every year to create awareness of their threatening nature. Prevention is more cost effective than battling acres and acres of infestation. So, don't wait, beat the weeds.

Invasive plants impact all of us either directly or indirectly. If you live in an urban or rural area, if you are a gardener, livestock manager, restaurant employee, hunter, retiree, teacher, annual crop grower, acreage owner, student, trades person, cabin dweller, snowmobile/ATV rider, roadway grass mower, nurse, parent etc. They impact everyone. The humbling truth is that we all have the ability to add to the spread, but an empowering truth is that we all have the ability to reduce it! This means going beyond forfeiting responsibility and casting blame, this is acknowledging there is a problem that needs to be addressed.

5 reasons to care:

1. Being a good neighbour. Saskatchewan is an agricultural province. We or our neighbours grow food that feeds the world. When invasive plants are introduced into agriculture they create not only a labour and monetary expense, but also personal stress, livestock stress and potential reduction in food quality and quantity.

2. Invasive plant species are a threat to our natural ecosystems, to native and tame rangelands. As an example, the invasive plant leafy spurge is so aggressive that it can displace all of the vegetation in a pasture. This reduces the biodiversity in our environment.

3. Not every invasive plant can be easily controlled by herbicide. Many pasture acres with invasive plants on them are growing in sensitive areas such as sandy soils, riparian areas with challenging topography. Herbicides cannot always be applied in these areas and alternative, innovative and often more labour intensive options are required.

4. The next generation. Every parent wants the best for their children. Let us strive to have less invasive plants for our children to have to combat.

5. We can all spread invasive plants. It can be as simple as not knowing what is an invasive plant, growing it in garden, or driving down a road transporting an invasive plant seed in the tire tread. We don't spread them on purpose. But we can all spread them.

To read the full article on the Saskatchewan Agriculture website, [click here](#).

[Top of Page](#)

Saskatchewan Prairie Conservation Action Plan Native Speaker Series

Catch up on past presentation from Sask PCAP's Native Speaker Series and stay tuned for upcoming presentations as well! These free webinars can be watched live and offer new information each month about issues affecting native prairie in Saskatchewan.

On September 21, Tom Harrison from South of the Divide Conservation Action Program will present *Multiple Approaches to Habitat Conservation: Finding the Right Fit To Encourage Producers to Manage for Species at Risk Habitat*. To register for this webinar, [click here](#).

Recent past presentations include:

Developing Management Targets for Grassland Songbirds by Phil Rose; *A Game Management Plan for Saskatchewan* by Darrell Crabbe; *Species at Risk Farm Program* by Tracey Hansen and many more. To view the list of past presentations and to stay up-to-date with upcoming speaker series, visit the [SK PCAP website](#).

[Top of Page](#)

Dung Beetles on the Prairies

With recent interest in soil and ecosystem health, more and more people are talking about dung beetles and the work they do in prairie habitats.

A recent blog post by the Chris Helzer of The Prairie Ecologist discussed the different types of dung beetles and the important role they play in productive soils:

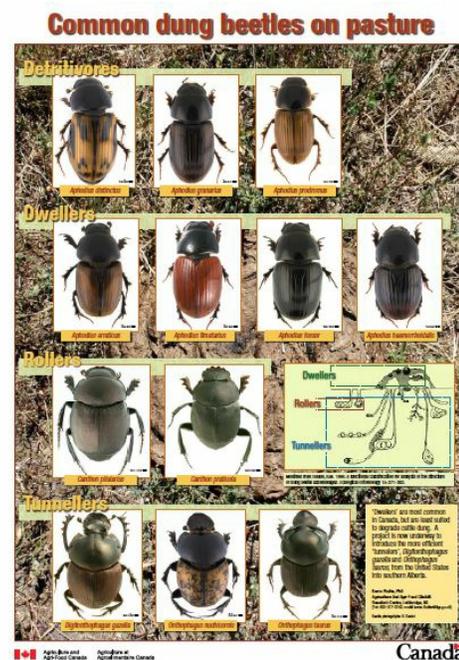
"Strong populations of dung beetles can also break down manure piles before parasites on cattle and bison can lay their eggs in them - helping to control those parasite populations. Ironically, chemical treatments used to reduce parasite loads in livestock can be hard on dung beetle populations because the pesticides remain in the manure. Even more ironically, some people are now advocating the introduction of dung beetles from other continents to bolster declining populations of beetles in U.S. pastures."

To read the full blog post at The Prairie Ecologist, [click here](#).

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (Dr. Kevin Floate, Lethbridge Research Centre) publications will be of interest to Canadian producers wondering which dung beetles live in their region and what role they play in the ecosystem (available at foragebeef.ca):

Read [Calling on More Troops - New Beetles Help Degrade Dung on the Canadian Prairies](#)

View pictures of [Common Dung Beetles on Pastures](#).



Common Dung Beetles on Pasture publication from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

Net Wrapping Offers a Trio of Key Benefits

New Holland Agriculture



There are three solid reasons to use net wrap to secure bales vs. using plastic or sisal twine.

1. Net wrapping is faster than twine wrapping, which leads to greater productivity.
2. Harvest losses from hay dropping out of the baler are lower when using net wrap because of the shorter time needed for wrapping.
3. Net-wrapped bales stored outside on a well-drained area shed more water and have less spoilage than bales secured with twine.

[Top of Page](#)

Saskatchewan Forage Council Featured Project...

[Demonstration of Forage Peas in Mixture with Cereals for Greenfeed Production](#)

Completed: January 31, 2016

"Some mixtures produced higher yields on average than the monoculture cereal and pea crops, while others resulted in similar or slightly lower yields. For example: Haymaker oats alone yielded 4.85 metric tonnes/acre at Melfort; mixtures ranged from 3.14 tonnes/acre (in combination with 40-10 peas at 30%/100% rate) to 5.44 tonnes/acre (in combination with Horizon peas at 30%/100% rate). This indicates that selection of forage variety may be important to the ultimate success of the greenfeed crop in term of yield."

This project was supported by the Agricultural Demonstration of Practices and Technologies (ADOPT) initiative under the Canada-Saskatchewan Growing Forward bi-lateral agreement. Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture Forage Specialists partnered on this project to oversee the demonstration sites. The SFC would like to thank Denis Lueke of One Oak Farms (Humboldt, SK) and Scott and Shawn Fraser (Pambrun, SK) for donating seed for the project. Thank you to the research farms for their excellent work at the demonstration sites: Wheatland Conservation Area (Swift Current, Northeast Agriculture Research Foundation (Melfort, SK), East Central Research Foundation (Yorkton, SK), and Western Applied Research Corporation (Scott, SK).



To view the Saskatchewan Forage Council's ongoing and completed projects, [click here](#).

[Top of Page](#)

Upcoming Events

SK PCAP Native Prairie Speaker Series

September 21, 2016

via Webinar

This talk will be presented as a free webinar at 12PM on September 21. Presented by Tom Harrison of South of the Divide Conservation Action Program, this month's topic is *Multiple Approaches to Habitat Conservation: Finding the Right Fit to Encourage Producers to Manage Species at Risk Habitat*.

See the poster [here](#). To register for the webinar, [click here](#).

To view past and upcoming webinars from Saskatchewan Prairie Conservation Action Plan, [click here](#)

Saskatchewan Trade and Export Partnership

October 18 & 19, 2016

Regina, SK

This year marks the 20th anniversary of operations for the Saskatchewan Trade and Export Partnership (STEP) as an export and market development organization. The 20th anniversary year will culminate in the AGM and Trade Conference October 18th and 19th in Regina, which will include an opening reception highlighting efforts of current and former staff, Board of Directors, and the founding members of STEP.

Visit the [STEP website](#) to learn more.

Getting Started in Sheep "The Basics Workshop"

Nov 4 & 5, 2016

Saskatoon, SK

This two-day course covers the basics in the sheep industry. It is designed for those looking to get into sheep and those who are already in the business at a beginner level. Cost is \$150 plus GST per person or \$225 plus GST for a couple.

To view the course outline, [click here](#).

Canadian Forage & Grassland Association Conference

Nov 15-17, 2016

Winnipeg, MN

Register now for the 7th Annual CFGA Conference hosted by the Manitoba Forage and Grassland Association at the Fairmont Hotel in Winnipeg. The theme of this year's conference is Grass and Green in 2016 to recognize the important role of Canadian forage and grassland managers in providing significant environmental and economic benefits to Canadians from coast to coast.

To register or to learn more, visit the CFGA [website](#).

Canadian Western Agribition

Nov 21-26, 2016

Regina, SK

Canadian Western Agribition, located in Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada, is the best beef show on the continent and the largest livestock show in Canada. The show is anchored by beef cattle and features horses, bison, sheep, goats, and an extensive agribusiness trade show. Canadian Western Agribition is a blend of agriculture, First Nations, and festive entertainment, featuring live music, shopping, and food.

For more information, visit the [Agribition website](#).

Foraging into the Future IX

December 7 & 8, 2016

Swift Current, SK

The theme for Foraging into the Future IX is Building Blocks of Success. Topics will include: What is Soil Health, Cocktail Cover Crops, Water Development Projects, Forage Rejuvenation and much more. This event will take place at the Credit Union IPlex in Swift Current.

For more information, contact the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture at 306.778.8285 or email susan.gering@gov.sk.ca

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

[Top of Page](#)

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](#).

[Top of Page](#)



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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: 306.329.3116

The Saskatchewan Forage Council Gratefully Acknowledges funding for our 'Facilitating Forage Initiatives in Saskatchewan' project through the Saskatchewan Cattlemen's Association Saskatchewan Beef Industry Development Fund:



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