



Forage and Livestock eNews

Updates and information from across the industry

January 27, 2014 - Vol 6, Issue 1

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Dear Coy,

The New Year has been busy off the start as usual. The Saskatchewan Beef Industry Conference was one of the early industry events in 2014 and hosted producers, industry, and government. Livestock and forage related issues were at the heart of the conference, with many industry agencies, organizations, and associations holding their meetings; the Saskatchewan Forage Council being one of them. The forage and livestock industry will continue to be busy over the coming weeks as meetings and conferences are held.

Winter weather has had some unusual swings in temperature as of late, which can make it difficult for producers and livestock to adjust. Producers are busy with their winter feeding strategies and, because of the early start, may be looking for the downhill side of winter.



This issue of the *eNews* focuses on some newly designed display material of the Saskatchewan Forage Seed Development Commission, a cicer milkvetch establishment ADOPT project, an overview of alfalfa and cold temperatures, announcements of livestock & forage research and livestock price insurance, a look at pasture calving and rumen nutrition, and an announcement about a recent milk business purchase by Saputo. There are also some important upcoming industry 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. Your feedback and content ideas are always appreciated.

Your *Forage and Livestock eNews* Editor,
Coy Schellenberg, PAg

Image Credit: Winter Feeding - Shannon Schellenberg, Beechy, SK

Sask Forage Seed Development Commission - New Display & Brochure

Saskatchewan Forage Seed Development Commission (SFSDC) - Display Banner and Brochure
By Ray McVicar, Executive Director

SFSDC has developed a new display banner and revised their information brochure. Working with the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture, the Commission received funding provided through Growing Forward 2, a federal-provincial-territorial initiative for these two projects.



The display banner will be used to promote the forage seed industry at trade shows, field days and grower meetings. It will also be used to raise awareness that SFSDC is using growers' levy funds to carry out research and promotion of forage seed. This is the first time SFSDC has had a display.

The brochure will provide fresh new material to be used in combination with the display banner at meetings and trade shows. It also provides an excellent explanation of the activities and importance of the Commission to growers and other members of the industry. The previous brochure was published in 2005.



For more information about SFSDC research projects and activities, check out the website at www.skforageseeddc.com.

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Cicer Milkvetch Establishment Options

The Saskatchewan Forage Council (SFC) and partners recently completed a cicer milkvetch establishment options project with the assistance of Agricultural Demonstration of Practices and Technologies (ADOPT).

Many livestock producers are interested in improving hay or pasture stands with the addition of a

legume. The use of non-bloating legumes such as cicer milkvetch are desirable for many livestock and forage producers due to pasture management options, productive capability and nutritional quality. Producers are interested in the most effective methods of establishing this sometimes difficult to establish legume. The objective of this ADOPT project completed in January 2014 was to demonstrate various establishment strategies for cicer milkvetch as part of a new forage stand and evaluate the relative effectiveness of these strategies.

This project demonstrated the establishment of cicer milkvetch in a forage mixture (cicer milkvetch, brome grass and alfalfa) using three (3) establishment methods at two (2) sites, including:

1. Spray out (herbicide) existing old forage stand and drill new forage mixture into sod;
2. Work up (tillage) existing old forage stand and drill in new forage mixture;
3. Seed new forage mixture into stubble of previously annual cropped area (stubble).

Establishment success was observed through plant counts and visual assessment comparing the percentage of cicer milkvetch seedlings as part of the total plant cover on each plot. Cicer milkvetch composed a minimum of 0% and a maximum of 9% of the total botanical cover in the first year of establishment. At one site, where two varieties of cicer milkvetch were sown, the Oxley II variety was the most successful on a plot sown in late May under the herbicide treatment. The tilled treatment was slightly more successful than the herbicide or stubble treatments at a second site, where AC Veldt was the only variety of cicer milkvetch sown. Shallow seeding depth, as well as competition appear to have been factors in establishment success in year one, however monitoring over multiple years will be required to gain a better understanding of the success of these three establishment options. Cicer milkvetch seed was not scarified prior to seeding in this demonstration, which likely impacted establishment success in the first year. Project results were communicated through producer workshops in the winter of 2013/2014 and in a web video: [Forage Variety Comparisons: Cicer Milkvetch](#) highlighting this cicer milkvetch project and posted to the Saskatchewan Forage Council's YouTube channel and the Saskatchewan Forage Council website. A copy of the final report for this project is available for [DOWNLOAD](#).

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 Saskatchewan Forage Council would like to thank; Northstar Seed Ltd for donating the cicer milkvetch seed for this project and Cavalier Agrow for donating the brome and alfalfa seed for the Medstead site. Co-operating producers were Ryan Sommerfeld of Medstead, SK and Blaine Thrun of Luseland, SK.

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Alfalfa and Cold Temperatures

Manitoba Forage & Grassland Association (MFGA) - News Release (January 16, 2014)

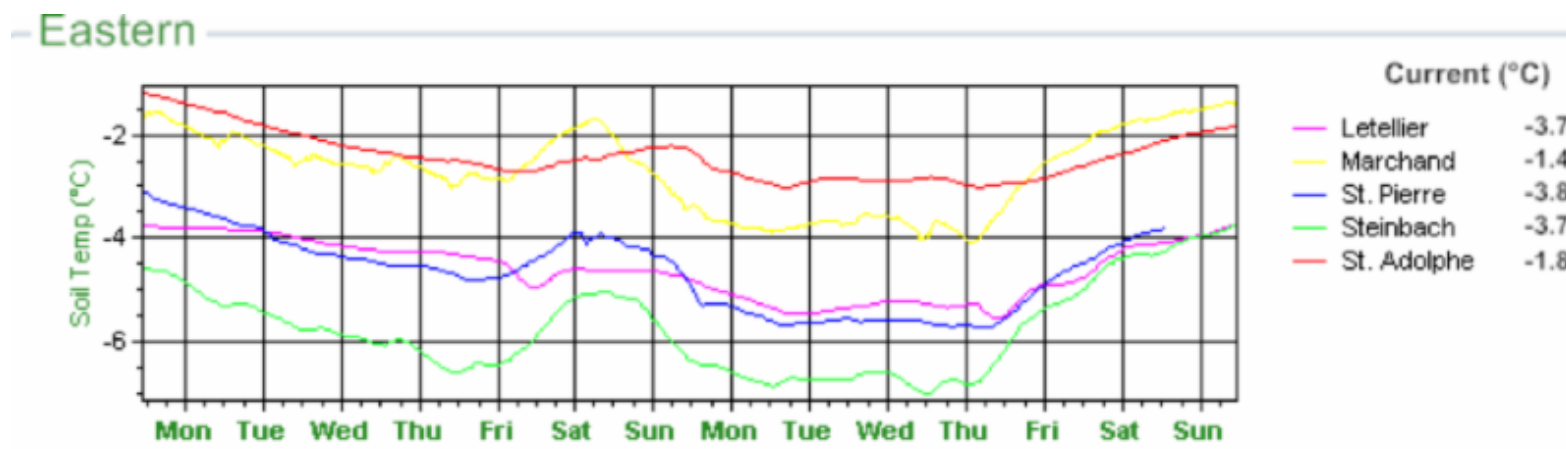
By John McGregor, Extension, MFGA

With record cold temperatures this past December, concern arises over the effect the low temperatures may have on alfalfa winter survival. This is a concern because the alfalfa plant will die if exposed to cold enough temperatures.

The reasons alfalfa survives the winter and its periodic cold spells are:

1. Alfalfa can survive soil temperatures as low as minus 12 C at the crown.
2. As little as 6 inches of loose snow will insulate against moderate cold temperatures.
3. The crown is insulated by soil as well; therefore the crucial temperature is the temperature at 2 to 4 inches below the soil surface.

The graph below shows the soil temperature of ground under grass cover with some snow cover over the past 2 weeks, generally in the single digits hovering in the -3 to -6 range for the Eastern area. **This is well above the temperature likely to cause injury to alfalfa.** This situation should indicate little to no injury or kill of alfalfa from the recent cold spell.



To view the complete and original *MFGA News Release*, [click here](#).

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Livestock and Forage Research & Livestock Price Insurance

Governments Invest More Than \$4 Million Into Livestock & Forage Research

Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture - News Release (January 22, 2014)

Today, Saskatchewan Agriculture Minister Lyle Stewart and Member of Parliament Kelly Block for Saskatoon-Rosetown-Biggar, on behalf of Federal Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz, announced nearly \$4.2 million in funding for 27 livestock and forage research projects.

"Saskatchewan producers know the importance of investing in agricultural research," said Block. "The livestock projects announced today will help producers innovate, which in turn will strengthen our economy here in Saskatchewan and across Canada."

"Our government is committed to supporting agriculture research," Stewart said. "The funding provided through the Agriculture Development Fund results in innovations that lead to increased productivity and profitability for our producers."

To read the complete *SK Ministry of Ag News Release*, [click here](#).

New Price Insurance Product for Western Livestock Producers

Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture - News Release (January 24, 2014)

An innovative, new livestock price insurance program will be available this spring to help cattle and hog producers in western provinces manage price risks faced by the industry. Federal Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz, Saskatchewan Agriculture Minister Lyle Stewart, Alberta Agriculture Minister Verlyn Olson and MLA Donna Barnett (Cariboo-Chilcotin) on behalf of British

Columbia Agriculture Minister Pat Primm unveiled the new price insurance program today at the Canadian Bull Congress in Camrose.

The four-year Western Livestock Price Insurance Program (WLPPI) pilot is a unique collaborative arrangement between the federal government and the western provinces to enhance risk management options available to the livestock industry. The pilot will help livestock producers protect themselves against unexpected price declines by allowing them to purchase insurance on an insured price selected by the producer from the available coverage levels. Premiums are fully funded by producers.

To read the complete *SK Ministry of Ag News Release*, [click here](#).

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Pasture Calving & Rumen Nutrition

The Advantages of Calving at Pasture

Canadian Cattlemen - Article (January 22, 2014) - By Angela Lovell

Most cattle producers cite reduced labour and input costs, milder weather, fewer birth problems and better calf health as the main reasons for choosing to calve at pasture in the spring.

Karmen and Jason McNabb calve 400 Hereford/Red Angus-cross cows beginning the third week of April on a 60-acre native pasture in the Cypress Hills of Saskatchewan. The McNabbs says their goal is to have 95 per cent live calves on the ground and most years they meet that goal. "The lower labour requirement and fewer facilities needed make it worthwhile," says Karmen. "We do not have hired help and are also seeding some land in the spring so it's important the cows can (calve) on their own."

To read the complete *Canadian Cattlemen Article*, [click here](#).

Feed the Rumen First!

Canadian Cattlemen - Article (January 23, 2014) - By John Mckinnon

Beef producers often have questions on the relative feed value of the different forages, grains and byproduct feeds they have access to. Many of these questions centre on energy and protein content, how much to feed and what type of supplement, if any is required. Understanding relative feed value and the need for specific supplements requires knowledge of feed quality (i.e. forage energy, protein and mineral content) as well as the animal's nutrient requirements for a given level of production. It is also important to have an understanding of how cattle digest and utilize the nutrients in the feed they consume. It is this latter topic that I would like to address in this column and follow up next month with a focus on feed quality and how modern systems of analysis can help to more accurately formulate diets for the cattle we feed.

To read the complete *Canadian Cattlemen Article*, [click here](#).

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Saputo to Buy Milk Business from Nova Scotia Co-operative

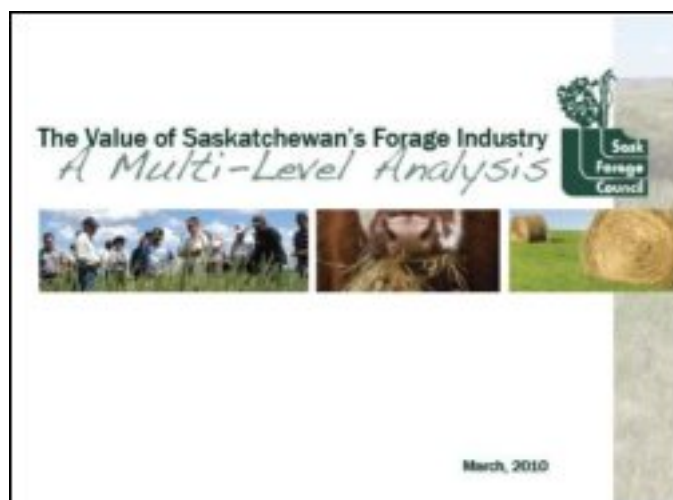
Dairy company Saputo has signed a \$61-million deal to buy the milk business of Nova Scotia's Scotsburn Co-operative Services. Scotsburn will keep its ice cream and frozen novelties business. The co-op operates two milk processing facilities located in Sydney, N.S., and Mount Pearl, N.L., employing about 400 people. The operations produce and sell milk, cream, sour cream, ice cream mix and cottage cheese, mainly under the Scotsburn brand. The business generates about \$160 million in annual sales and \$8 million in pre-tax operating profits. Saputo says the acquisition will increase its presence in Atlantic Canada. The deal, which is subject to approval from co-operative members and regulators, is expected to close around March.

To view the original *FCC Express Article*, [click here](#).

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The Value of Saskatchewan's Forage Industry

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



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News and Upcoming Events

The Cutting Edge in Forage Management

January 29 & 30, 2014

Yorkton & Saskatoon, SK

The Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture is hosting their Cutting Edge in Forage Management: Taking it to the Next Level event at two different locations. The first will be held in Yorkton at the Gallagher Centre on January 29, 2013. The second will be held in Saskatoon at the Travelodge Hotel on January 30, 2013. Registration is \$50/person and you can register by contacting the Saskatchewan Forage Council at 306.969.2666 or office@saskforage.ca.

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

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

For more information, contact the Ag Knowledge Centre at 1.866.457.2377.

Native Prairie Restoration/Reclamation Workshop

January 29-30, 2014

Regina, SK

The Saskatchewan Prairie Conservation Action Plan is hosting this workshop at the Hotel Saskatchewan Radisson Plaza in Regina.

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

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

For more information, contact the SK PCAP office at 306.352.0472.

Forage & Livestock Update

February 5, 2014

Spiritwood, SK

This event was originally scheduled for January 15, 2014, but was cancelled due to the weather. It has been rescheduled for February 5, 2014. This partnered event will host several interesting presentations focusing on forage and beef research, production info, the area Agri-Environmental Group Plan & Farm Stewardship, and a Saskatchewan Verified Beef Production workshop. It will be held at the Pioneer Centre, 410 Main Street in Spiritwood, SK from 1:00-5:00pm.

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

For more information and to register, contact Laura Hoimyr at 306.969.4616.

Western Canadian Hollistic Management Conference

February 10-11, 2014

Lloydminster, SK

This conference will be held at the Lloydminster Agriculture Exhibition.

To view the event flyer with agenda and registration details, [click here](#).

For more information, phone 780.727.4447.

Scentsless Chamomile Weed Series - WEBINAR

February 19, 2014

Online

The Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture is hosting a scentless chamomile weed series webinar that will focus on the biology and control options of this weed. The webinar will be held at 12pm.

Those that want to watch the webinar have to pre-register by going to:

<https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/612611690>

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

For more information, contact Linda Hunt at 306.953.2361.

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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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