



# Forage and Livestock eNews

Updates and information from across the industry

October 24, 2017 - Vol 9, Issue 10

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## Greetings!

Saskatchewan has some great events and speakers coming up this fall! This edition of the eNews will keep you in touch with what's happening in the world of forages and agriculture in October and November. October is Agriculture Month - read on to find out how you can get involved.

This month's eNews also features articles on timely topics such as sustainable beef, forage quality, and feed testing!

If you have topics you'd like to have us share in our monthly eNews or on our website, get in touch with us. We'd love to hear from you!

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 *Forage and Livestock eNews*  
Editor,  
**Laura Hoimyr**



**CFGA Conference November 14-16, 2017**

## Greetings from the CFGA Chair

As we wrap up what I hope has been a productive summer for each of you and look ahead to preparing our fields for winter, I hope everyone is also looking forward to attending the CFGA's 8th Annual CFGA Conference in Guelph Nov. 14 to 16.

The theme, "Next Generation Cropping Systems: Profit Above, Wealth Below," recognizes the important role forage and grasslands play in providing both economic - \$5.09 billion annually - and environmental - think carbon storage - benefits to Canadians from coast to coast. Don't miss this opportunity to learn about new forage practices; network with colleagues; and discover new research on forage and grasslands and how to improve environmental practices. For further information, please check the [conference web site](#).

As well as working hard on organizing the conference, the CFGA continues its work on a number of other projects, including the Agricultural Greenhouse Gases Program (AGGP) and forage market expansion through the AgriMarketing Program. The CFGA was also pleased with the July announcement about the Canadian Agricultural Partnership (CAP), a five-year, \$3 billion investment with the goal to strengthen the agriculture, agri-food and agri-based products sector.

These announcements prove national support and recognition of the forage and grassland sector as an environmentally progressive practice. It is an exciting time for CFGA!

**Ray Robertson, P.Ag.**

Chair, Canadian Forage & Grassland Association

**Attend the CFGA Conference to learn from and connect with others in  
your industry!  
[Register here](#)**

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**Gabe Brown to keynote Canadian Bison Convention: a great fit for all  
livestock producers**

**By: Laura Hoimyr, Saskatchewan Forage Council**

The Canadian Bison Association's 34th Annual Convention in Regina this November will bring together not just bison producers, but farmers and ranchers from all sectors. As farmers, landowners and livestock producers, we all share a common concern for the health of our land and the impact this has on our bison, cattle, sheep and ultimately on the consumers who purchase our food.

The Saskatchewan Bison Association and Saskatchewan Forage Council (SFC) have partnered to bring Gabe Brown to the Convention this year, with the help of the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture's Industry Organization Development Fund (IODF).

SFC president Tamara Carter explains why the Forage Council felt this event would be a good fit

for Saskatchewan producers: "SFC is excited to partner with the Saskatchewan Bison Association to bring keynote speaker, Gabe Brown to their 34th Annual Conference. With increased awareness and interest in the importance of soil health and sustainable farming and livestock systems, Gabe's keynote presentation is very relevant. Gabe has been fine tuning his holistic, integrated farming and livestock system using cover crops, companion crops, livestock and high value cash crops to transform his 5,000 acre ranch, regenerating soils with his approach. This a great opportunity for bison producers, as well as other livestock producers and farmers to hear his story and ask him questions about his successes and setbacks as he has implemented these changes in his operation."

Les Kroeger, president of the Saskatchewan Bison Association feels that this event will be an opportunity to return our focus to the importance of forage quality and management. "Forages have been neglected. Overall, we have to work on this, not just the bison industry but all livestock sectors," says Kroeger.

Gabe's keynote address is titled Healthy Land, Healthy Pastures, Healthy Profits. "This is an opportunity to get new information and to promote new ideas and methods to improve bison health through good forage management," says Kroeger. He hopes that producers will plan to attend this event, as it might make us look at things differently and challenge the way we think about managing the land.

The Convention takes place from November 19-21, with keynote by Gabe Brown on November 19th at the Delta Regina. View the conference agenda at: <http://www.saskforage.ca/images/pdfs/Events/CBA-Convention-Agenda-FINAL.pdf> and download the registration form [here](#). Register by October 31 for early-bird pricing! If you'd like to learn more about the event, visit the [Canadian Bison Association website](#).

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## Ducks Unlimited Fall 2017 Conservation Connection



**Ducks Unlimited Canada**  
Conserving Canada's Wetlands

The Saskatchewan Conservation Connection (a Ducks Unlimited Canada publication) is now available.

Click here to view the [pdf version](#) of the publication. This and many other useful links can be found on the [SFC's Resources page!](#)

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## Does your feed get a passing grade?

**By Tara Mulhern Davidson, PAg**

Using feed testing to prevent wrecks was a topic highlighted at the [Beef Cattle Research Council](#) (BCRC) Bov-Innovation workshop held during the Canadian Beef Industry Conference in Calgary. Dr. John McKinnon from the University of Saskatchewan shared his experiences with feed analysis, and explained how producers should use feed testing to optimize cattle performance and meet the nutritional requirements of their herd. "Visual assessment is not adequate to indicate quality, nutritive value or mycotoxins," explained McKinnon, adding that only a feed analysis can tell you what you really have.

Mycotoxins have been on the radar for forage and beef producers in recent years,

however regular feed analysis can help detect more subtle problems as well. Grant Taillieu, a rancher from Tomahawk, Alberta, also presented his perspective during the event, explaining why and how they use regular feed analysis on his operation. Annual forage testing helped Taillieu to identify and fix an insidious problem in the ranch herd, and boost conception through appropriate mineral supplementation.



*Use feed testing to be sure of forage quality  
Image credit: Tara Mulhern Davidson*

According to BCRC's feed testing fact sheet, forage analysis is a tool necessary for:

- Developing proper rations;
- Identifying gaps and supplementation needs;
- Economizing feeding;
- Preventing potential problems due to toxins, molds, nitrates, sulfates, or other minerals or nutrients;
- Identifying subtle production problems, and;
- Pricing feed or buying and selling

The fact sheet also explains how to obtain a forage sample, how to interpret lab analysis, and potential management strategies for dealing with problem feeds. [Read the entire fact sheet HERE.](#)

BCRC also assembled comprehensive nutrition and feed testing resources [which can be found here.](#)

To watch a Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture video outlining how to collect a forage sample, [click here.](#)

For a list of feed testing laboratories across Canada, [visit this Alberta Agriculture and Forestry link.](#)

Forage and beef producers should determine their goals for feed testing and consider working with a nutritionist, agronomist, extension specialist, or veterinary clinic to interpret the results. Taking steps to understand what is present, or lurking, in your feed may prevent costly problems in the short or long term.

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## Sustainable Beef: What Does it Mean for Producers?

**Rachel McLean, Foothills Forage  
September 8, 2017**

"The little green frog"

Many of us have seen it and recognize that it stands for Rainforest Alliance Certified. For many consumers, that frog represents trust in the product they are purchasing.



There are similar examples of certification programs in other sectors and commodities, such as the Marine Stewardship Council for seafood, the Roundtable for Sustainable Palm Oil, and Forest Stewardship Council certification in paper products. So why not

one for beef? I'm excited that the Canadian Roundtable for Sustainable Beef (CRSB) has been working on creating beef's "little green frog" and I hope it will help to build public trust and foster continual improvement for Canadian beef.

Established in 2014, the CRSB is a multi-stakeholder organization that has a vision for the Canadian beef industry to be recognized globally to be economically viable, environmentally sound and socially responsible.



So what does "sustainable" mean? Sustainable beef is defined as an economically viable, environmental sound and socially responsible product that prioritizes the Planet, People, Animals and Progress. Under the three pillars of sustainability: environmental, social and economic, the CRSB has adopted the same five principles of sustainability as the Global Roundtable for Sustainable Beef (GRSB), and is developing indicators under each principle to help define sustainability in beef production and processing as part of a larger verification framework. Underpinning all of the principles is economic viability, which is integral to the long-term success of the industry.

The work of the CRSB was kick-started when McDonald's, one of its founding members, initiated a Verified Sustainable Beef Pilot Project in Canada. They developed an initial series of indicators to define beef sustainability, and established verification procedures for sustainable beef operations.

When the pilot concluded in 2016, the torch was passed to the CRSB to continue developing a Verified Sustainable Beef Framework for the entire beef sector across Canada.

The framework will consist of four main components: sustainability indicators, verification protocols, chain of custody requirements, and sustainability claims. The indicators identify what will be measured to indicate sustainability in beef production and primary processing, and the verification protocols explain how compliance with those indicators will be confirmed across the supply chain.

[Read the full article here.](#)

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## October is Agriculture Month in Saskatchewan!

*It is a time to celebrate industry success stories, while helping others understand and appreciate modern agriculture.*



### Our Food Has a Story

The goal of the Our Food Has a Story campaign is to help people better understand how Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers raise their livestock and grow their crops and, in turn, build trust in modern agriculture. We do this through conversations and by communicating with passion and building on what we, as individuals, hold true - our shared values.

Everyone has a food story, whether you're a farmer, a chef or someone who just loves food! Your story is simply your perceived connection - direct or indirect - to the food you eat or grow.

Research conducted by the Center for Food Integrity indicates that producers have one of the most trusted voices when it comes to telling the stories of food and farming, so they must speak up!

Throughout Agriculture Month, share your stories about the moments in your life involving food - whether it is about how many bowls of oatmeal you can produce from an oat crop or your grandmother's secret recipe for her favorite Thanksgiving casserole.

[Learn more here.](#)

The [Agriculture Month Guidebook](#) is a pdf available to read or download, and has useful information to help you share your story.

### **Saskatchewan Prairie Conservation Action Plan (SK PCAP) conservation videos**

October is Agriculture Month in Saskatchewan and the Ministry of Agriculture is hosting an #OurFoodHasAStory contest! Native prairie is an important piece of our province's heritage and plays a role in our food story as well! [Click here for more information on the contest and to share your story!](#)

Explore the value that prairie has to Saskatchewan Agriculture in [SK PCAP's Conservation Conversations videos.](#)

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## **Canadian Roundtable for Sustainable Beef seeks final public input**

The Canadian Roundtable for Sustainable Beef (CRSB) works collaboratively through its multi-stakeholder membership to promote sustainability in the Canadian beef industry. As part of a Verified Sustainable Beef Framework the CRSB is developing, a series of sustainability indicators reflect what will be measured to evaluate sustainable practices across the beef value chain. The CRSB conducted an initial consultation on sustainability indicators for the beef processing sector this summer. Based on the responses during the initial consultation, these indicators have been refined, and CRSB is now seeking additional public input on the updated draft. Comments received came from a variety of diverse perspectives, and CRSB appreciates all who offered their valuable feedback.

A final 30-day public consultation was launched today, and runs from October 5 to November 4, 2017. Relevant materials can be found below on this page. All comments will be reviewed, and written responses to each comment will be summarized on the CRSB website following the consultation. Along with verification protocols, chain of custody guidelines and sustainability claims, the final production and processing indicators will form part of the CRSB's Verified Sustainable Beef Framework being launched in December of this year.

Visit the [public consultation page](#) to learn more, and to share your input.

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## **Forage Seed Research Update 2017**

**Saskatchewan Forage Seed Development Commission (SFSDC)**

**By: Ray McVicar, executive director**

The field work for the SFSDC forage seed research program is wrapping up for another year. The plots have been harvested and the final applications of fertilizer and herbicides as well as soil samples are being completed.

The work in 2017 was carried out by the Northeast Agriculture Research Foundation (NARF) at the Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada Research Station near Melfort and by the University of Saskatchewan (U of S) near Saskatoon.

Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture's Agricultural Demonstration of Practices and Technologies (ADOPT) program provided funding for 3 forage seed projects at NARF in 2017. These were:



*Stu Brandt describing forage seed research at NARF in July 2017. Source: SFSDC*

- 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
- Demonstrating the Effects of Red and Alsike Clover Seed Crops in Rotations.

Other projects funded by SFSDC at NARF in 2017 were:

- Minor use herbicide screening on seedling red clover and seedling slender wheatgrass as well as established red, alsike and sweet clovers;
- Plant Growth Regulators (PGRs) on established red, alsike, and sweet clovers; and
- Controlling lesser clover weevil in established red clover

The Saskatchewan Forage Variety Demonstration trials were planted in 2017 with one of the sites located at Melfort. SFSDC provided financial support to this program.

The Weed Management Program at the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon completed herbicide applications on seedling sweet clover, sainfoin, tall fescue and hybrid brome grass. Plant growth regulators and herbicides were also applied to established hybrid brome grass. These trials were carried out to develop data for potential minor use registrations.

Dr. Bill Biliget, forage crop breeder at the U of S, has wrapped up the 2017 field portion of his sainfoin variety selection project with partial funding from SFSDC. The goal is to develop sainfoin lines with improved characteristics under Saskatchewan conditions.

SFSDC relies on the support of industry partners who provide products for the research program. Thank you to DLF Pickseed Canada, BASF Canada, Bayer CropScience, BrettYoung, Dow Agrosiences, DuPont Canada, Engage Agro, FMC Corporation, NuFarm Canada, Syngenta Canada and AG-Vision Seeds for their support of the forage seed industry.

Results from these projects will be available at the Forage Seed Grower Information Session and AGM on January 11, 2018 in Saskatoon. Watch for more details available shortly.

For more information about current and past research projects, please check out the SFSDC website at: [www.skforageseeddc.com](http://www.skforageseeddc.com) and look under Research.

## Abnormal weather doesn't grow average forage

*This article written by Dr. Reynold Bergen, BCRC Science Director, originally appeared in the October 2017 issue of Canadian Cattlemen magazine and is reprinted on the BCRC Blog with permission of the publisher.*

Averages are useful statistics, but sometimes averages can be misleading. As the University of Saskatchewan's late Iain Christison said, "the average human has one breast and one testicle". Canada's rainfall may be close to average this year - but much of the country is experiencing severe drought, and most of the rest is soaked. Either way, low yields, unharvestable or spoiled forage mean that winter feed supplies will be below average in many places, and nutritional value likely won't be average, either.

For instance, drought-stricken pastures and forage crops have lower levels of carotene, which cattle need to produce vitamin A. A recent paper from Cheryl Waldner and Fabienne Uehlinger of the Western College of Veterinary Medicine (Can. J. Anim. Sci. 97:65-82) looked at 150 beef cow-calf herds in Alberta and Saskatchewan. Calves born the spring following a drought had a much higher risk of vitamin A deficiency, and calves with severe vitamin A deficiency were nearly three times more likely to die than those with higher levels.

Read the full article at <http://www.beefresearch.ca/blog/abnormal-weather-doesnt-grow-average-forage/>

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## Saskatchewan Forage Council Featured Project...

### [Use of the Grazing Response Index \(GRI\) on Saskatchewan Pastures to Facilitate Forage Management Decisions](#)

Completed: January 10, 2017

***"When determining how to alter grazing practices to improve a negative overall GRI score, look at the individual values that were negative to learn more about what adjustments are needed to improve grazing management. For example, if a score of -2 was assigned based on: Frequency score -1; Intensity score 0; Opportunity for regrowth score -1. This may indicate that by grazing livestock in large paddocks, with sufficient forage they are being allowed the opportunity to select the plants they prefer due to the length of time they are being held in the paddock"***

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 and Ducks Unlimited partnered on this project to oversee the demonstration sites.

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

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## Upcoming Events

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### Certificate in Regenerative Soil Systems

**November 1-3, 2017**

**Saskatoon, SK**

Take your operation to the next level in this dynamic soil class with Agroecologist Nicole Masters. Learn practical tools and concepts to profitably lift soil, plant and animal performance. Only 30 spaces available.

For more info or to register, call/email Daryl Chubb 1.403.836.2202 or [daryl@integritysoils.com](mailto:daryl@integritysoils.com)

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## **Getting Started in Sheep - The Basics**

**November 3-4, 2017**

**Saskatoon, SK**

This is a two-day course covering the basics of the sheep industry. It is designed for those who are looking at getting into sheep and those who are already in the business on the beginner level. The cost is \$150 plus GST per person or \$225 plus GST for a couple. This includes coffee breaks and a binder filled with information on sheep production.

To learn more, [click here](#). Register by phoning the Sheep Development Board at 306.933.5300 or [sheepdb@sasktel.net](mailto:sheepdb@sasktel.net)

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## **2017 Grain Millers Harvest Showdown**

**November 1-4, 2017**

**Yorkton, SK**

Showcase events such as the Commercial Grain & Forage Show, Pedigreed Seed Show, Commercial Cattle Shows & Sale, Horse Pulls, Exotic Animal Sale, Ag Education, Stock Dog Competition, Low Stress Livestock Handling Clinic, Ranch Rodeo, Yorkton New Holland Rodeo, and so much more!

For more information visit <http://yorktonexhibition.com/calendar-event/2015-harvest-showdown/>.

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## **AEGP-ALUS Producer Appreciation Nights**

**November 3 and 10, 2017**

**Watrous and Lumsden, SK**

Bins are full and it's time to celebrate the end of harvest! ALUS-WUQWATR welcomes you to join us at one of our upcoming producer appreciation nights this November. Let us do the cooking for one night; you've earned it! The evening will include supper, a social with a cash bar and a guest speaker. Tickets will be available for \$10 per person, payable at the door. So come on down, take the night off and unwind with us

To register for one of the events or for more information, contact Folly Baugh by email at [folly@wuqwatr.ca](mailto:folly@wuqwatr.ca) or 306.529.5125. To view the poster, [click here](#).

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## **Saskatchewan Advisory Council on Forages**

**November 6, 2017**

**Saskatoon, SK**

The Saskatchewan Advisory Council on Forage Crops (SACFC) is a long standing, voluntary committee made up of representatives from government, industry, producer groups, and researchers. Each year, this group of people come together to share information on forage research projects, current or newly developing forage industry issues and research needs. Plan to attend! This is your chance to get updates on current forage research and to give input on what your extension needs are.

For more information, please contact Sarah Sommerfeld at [sarah.sommerfeld@gov.sk.ca](mailto:sarah.sommerfeld@gov.sk.ca). To register contact Leanna Rousell at [office@saskforage.ca](mailto:office@saskforage.ca) by November 2. View the agenda [here](#).

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8th Annual CFGA Conference

**November 14-16, 2017**

**Guelph, ON**

The 8th Annual Canadian Forage & Grasslands Association Conference will be held in Guelph at the Delta Guelph Hotel & Conference Centre. This year's conference theme is Next Generation Forage Cropping Systems: Profit Above, Wealth Below. For more information visit the website <http://canadianfga.ca/conference/> or contact Elizabeth Muckle-Jeffs, Conference Coordinator:

North America Toll-Free: 1-800-868-8776, Local: 613-732-7068 or email

[conference@canadianfga.ca](mailto:conference@canadianfga.ca). To register online, [click here](#).

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## **BCRC Webinar - Are your bulls actually siring calves?**

**November 16, 2017**

**via Webinar**

Speaker: Stacey Domolewski, Science and Extension Coordinator at the Beef Cattle Research

Council. For producers that breed cows in large pastures with multiple bulls, it's often assumed that all of the bulls will sire roughly the same number of calves. Research shows a surprising variation in the number of calves sired by each bull. Learn more by joining this webinar on how DNA parentage testing may help determine sire value on your operation.

[Click here](#) to register.

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### **Canadian Bison Association's 34th Annual Convention**

**November 18-21, 2017**

**Regina, SK**

The 34th Annual Convention, to be held at the Delta Regina this year. The convention will feature excellent speakers, a tradeshow, opportunities to network and the Canadian National Bison Sale.

This event also includes a [children's program!](#)

[Click here](#) to view the schedule including keynote speaker Gabe Brown! Download the registration form [here](#).

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### **Sask Organics Transition and Production Workshops**

**November 23-24, 2017**

**Regina, SK**

SaskOrganics is pleased to be hosting a workshop about transitioning to Organic Agriculture at the Canadian Western Agribition on Thursday, November 23 2017. SaskOrganics will also be hosting a workshop about integrating livestock into your cover cropping and management plan at the Canadian Western Agribition on Friday, November 24 2017. Guest speakers will include Kevin Elmy and Joel Mowchenko. Agenda and details to follow, so stay tuned!

For sponsorship and general inquiries, please contact [admin@saskorganic.com](mailto:admin@saskorganic.com).

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### **Western Canada Conference on Soil Health and Grazing**

**December 5-7, 2017**

**Edmonton, AB**

Two great conferences in one! The Western Canada Conference on Soil Health and Grazing theme this December will be Profit Above, Wealth Below. Speakers includes soil health practitioner Gabe Brown, Richard Teague, Jim Gerrish, Dr. Allen Williams and more!

To learn more visit [www.absoilgrazing.com](http://www.absoilgrazing.com) or view the [agenda here](#).

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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](mailto:office@saskforage.ca)

Phone: 306.329.3116

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