



Forage and Livestock eNews

Updates and information from across the industry

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Articles In This Issue

CFGA Conference
Environmental News and Issues
Feed Testing
AGGP Update
Sask Programs Information
SFSDC 2017 Forage Field Tour
Operation Pollinator
Native forages offer resilience
Farm Stress Line
Spain and Portugal Ag Tour
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!

Have you had a chance to check out the Saskatchewan Forage Council website lately? It's a great resource for forage industry news, events, research and links. Visit www.saskforage.ca for all this and more. Our home page also has links to resources from the 2017 Saskatchewan Pasture Tour. If you have events you'd like us to share or links you think might be useful for other forage and livestock producers, let us know and we'll add them to the site!

This month's eNews features articles on feed testing, native forages, environmental goods and services, forage organization updates and more.

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

Early registration deadline is September 29th! Don't miss your chance to attend this excellent conference at a reduced cost!

[Register here](#)

[Top of Page](#)

Environmental News and Issues

Every day we hear news and opinion about the impacts we are having on our environment. Saskatchewan producers and researchers are finding there are many ways of looking at environmental issues. Read on for more about Saskatchewan's TESA (The Environmental Stewardship Award) winners and to take a deeper look at environmental goods and services.

Soil Health and Plant Diversity are the Keys to Sustainability for TESA Winners
by Jeff Gaye, Beef Business, September 2017

For the Hoimyr family and their Box H Land & Livestock operation, sustainability runs deeper than a single innovation or major project. It's a details-oriented, whole-of-operation approach whose goal is to keep their land healthy and productive for future generations.

Box H Land & Livestock is situated near Gladmar on the southwest boundary of the Missouri Coteau landscape. The ranch is primarily a livestock operation made up of native mixed grass prairie, tame forages and annual cropland planted to forages. Each spring they calve 300 Red Angus cross cows on pasture. The operation is run by Mark and Laura Hoimyr with their children Anna and Jeremy. Mark's parents, who live just down the road, are also involved.

[Read the full article](#) in Beef Business magazine, page 26-27.

Environmental goods and services offer more questions than answers
Research on the Record with Reynold Bergen, July 4, 2017 Canadian Cattlemen Magazine

The beef industry takes pride in how forage, grazing and beef production benefit the environment. These environmental goods and services (EG&S) include carbon sequestration, plant and wildlife habitat, reduced soil erosion, watershed recharging, scenery, etc. While consumers pay for beef, the EG&S are free.

For instance, many ducks need grasslands and wetlands to nest and raise their young. Grasslands and wetlands also act like a sponge that absorbs excess moisture in wet years. A lot of grassland has been cultivated and/or wetlands drained to grow crops. This may have contributed to overland flooding and crop losses in recent wet years. If producers had been paid to preserve these grasslands and wetlands in recognition of the EG&S they provide (i.e. wildlife habitat and flood mitigation), would there have been fewer flood compensation payments?

[Read the full article](#)

[Top of Page](#)

Time to think about feed testing

As winter approaches, it's time again to build rations and think about testing your forages. The two articles below will give you some guidelines and remind you of the importance of feed testing.

Measure and Manage - Feed Test Your Winter Feed Supply **By Sarah Sommerfeld, PAg, Regional Forage Specialist**

The dry growing conditions experienced across much of the province this season has caused many producers to consider alternative forage options for livestock winter feed. Producers may be looking at annual forages or salvaged grain crops as options to fill the feed deficit. The importance of knowing the nutrient content of these alternative forage options should not be overlooked.

Feed testing your forages can help to manage the winter feeding period. The protein and energy requirements of the cow herd increase through pregnancy and lactation (See table 1). Feed test information can be used to design a balanced ration that meets cow requirements, based on the stage of production. Feed testing can identify any feeding concerns that may be an issue, such as lower protein or energy than expected. It can also be used to quantify problematic factors with alternative feeds, such as high sulphur content or high nitrate levels. High sulphur content can be an issue in salvaged canola crops and some weeds such as kochia and lambs quarters. High sulphur levels in the diet can lead to trace mineral deficiencies and reduced animal growth and production. Sulphur toxicity can also lead to polioencephalomalacia (PEM), a neurological disorder leading to animal death.

[Read more](#)

Keep Your Cows and Your Wallet in Good Condition by Testing Your Forages **By: Alicia Sopatyk, PAg, Regional Livestock Specialist, Tisdale**

Testing forages for nutrient quality provides a better indication on the nutrients available to your livestock. Knowledge of how the forage was put up and visual assessment are helpful, but they do not yield values for the nutritional quality. Do you want more control over your winter feeding situation? Feeding to meet livestock needs rather than under- or over-feeding increases your awareness and control over winter feeding.

Given that forages are the dominant portion of the livestock diet, testing forages to get a handle on nutritional quality is a good place to start. However, with so many test package options available, it can be difficult to know which one is right for your situation. Crude Protein (CP) and energy, measured in Total Digestible Nutrients (TDN) are extremely important parameters to measure. Neutral Detergent Fiber (NDF) is a predictor of intake and is a major contributor to feed quality. There are testing parameters that come standard with most forage panels, including per cent Dry Matter (DM), and minerals like Calcium and Phosphorus. If you're ever unsure of which test is most suitable for your type of feed, contact your local Regional Livestock Specialist.

[Read more](#)



[Top of Page](#)

AGGP Update

Canadian Forage & Grassland Association (CFGGA) July 2017, Newsletter

Work is well underway for the Agricultural Greenhouse Gases Program (AGGP). Since beginning the project in February, the CFGGA has reviewed existing quantification protocols and greenhouse gas mitigation research from across Canada and around the world.

"This literature review will provide an understanding of what is currently out there," says AGGP project lead Josh Lamont. "Our goal is not to duplicate existing quantification protocols but fill and improve on the gaps that presently exist."

The CFGGA is also working with producer groups and experts to identify Beneficial Management Practices (BMP) for forage and rangeland producers that improve the ability to sequester carbon in the soils. These BMP's will be developed into a manual that will outline the methodology in the quantification protocol and showcase how producers can use the BMP's to implement carbon projects.

[Read more](#)

[Top of Page](#)

Saskatchewan Programs Information

Some important program information that will be of interest to Saskatchewan Producers:

The **Farm Ranch Water Infrastructure Program** is in its final year! Apply for water development and protection funding by September 30, 2017. More information [here](#).

Farm Stewardship Program. Apply for your Beneficial Management Practices rebate by January 31,

2018. More information [here](#).

Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation (SCIC) Dry Conditions Advisory for growers dealing with dry conditions, the SCIC has information on options. Read more [here](#).

CleanFarms Saskatchewan obsolete pesticide/livestock medication disposal program There will be a FREE cleanfarms obsolete pesticide and livestock/equine medication collection program from October 23-27 at 20 ag-retail locations in the southern half of the province. Find a location and learn more [here](#).

[Top of Page](#)

Saskatchewan Forage Seed Development Commission (SFSDC) - 2017 Forage Field Tour & BBQ

By: Ray McVicar, executive director

The 2017 forage field tour and BBQ was held on July 27th at the Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) Research Farm near Melfort, SK. The tour was hosted by SFSDC, the Northeast Agriculture Research Foundation (NARF), AAFC Melfort, and Saskatchewan Agriculture. There were over 40 people in attendance. Hot and sunny conditions prevailed for the afternoon field tour and BBQ. Attendees were shown a number of research projects and lots of discussion took place around the plots.

Al Foster, Saskatchewan Agriculture, led the group through the Cicer Milkvetch mixtures project and the Hay and Pasture Forage Crop Demonstration project including many forage species. Victoria Nameth, Saskatchewan Agriculture, described the lesser clover leaf weevil control project in red clover and brought samples of weevil adults and larvae for the attendees to check out.

Jessica Pratchler, Research Manager NARF, provided an update on the herbicide screening program and the plant growth regulator work on forage seed crops. Stu Brandt, NARF, conducted the group through the alternate row planting project and the pre-tillage vs zero tillage project where red clover was underseeded to faba bean in 2016 and various herbicide treatments were compared to tillage.



Field Tour Group, July 2017, Melfort SK

Source: SFSDC

This year's tour featured one of the sites of the Saskatchewan Forage Variety Demonstration Trials that included varieties of: hybrid, meadow and smooth brome grass; crested wheatgrass; Festulolium; tall fescue; Timothy; alfalfa; cicer milkvetch and sainfoin. Terry Kowalchuk, Saskatchewan Agriculture, described the program that was started in 2017. The first seed yields will be harvested in 2018.

The BBQ wrapped up the day when the AAFC staff out did themselves preparing a terrific meal. Thank you to Saskatchewan Agriculture for their financial support for a number of research projects and the field tour through the Agricultural Demonstration of Practices and Technologies (ADOPT) initiative under the Canada-Saskatchewan Growing Forward bi-lateral agreement.

Thank you to all of our speakers and to the NARF and the AAFC crews for their effort with the forage seed research program and for hosting the field tour and the BBQ.

[Top of Page](#)

Operation Pollinator

Operation Pollinator is a Syngenta program focused on research and partnerships to promote the health and well-being of bees and other pollinators. Launched in Western Canada's farming community in 2017, participating producers agree to seed plots of up to two acres of usually underutilized or lower productivity land to long-term habitat for wild pollinators.

In return for committing this land to the project, farmers receive high-quality pollinator-friendly wildflower seed for their plots, agronomic advice and some financial support from the program to help offset establishment costs.

A number of producers signed up and planted their seed mix this spring, but more cooperators from Saskatchewan are needed. Please contact the Saskatchewan Soil Conservation Association (SSCA) Office Manager, Gerry Burgess, at 306-371-4231 or info@ssca.ca for information and to register.

[Top of Page](#)

Native forages offer resilience against Mother Nature

By: Jennifer Blair, Canadian Cattlemen magazine, August 2, 2017

Native forages are making a comeback with cattle feeders who are looking for a way to work with - not against - Mother Nature.

"Native species complement tame forages," said federal research scientist Alan Iwaasa.

"When used with tame species, native species have merit and can be used quite effectively if you have the land base in our grazing systems in Western Canada."

Native species make for "a more sustainable and resilient forage," but are sometimes taken for granted, Iwaasa said during a Beef Cattle Research Council webinar.

"The remaining western grasslands for Canada is estimated to be only 11.4 million hectares, compared to around 61.5 million hectares we used to have (in 1995)," he said, adding Alberta's total grassland area is now about 5.6 million hectares.

"A large majority of the grasslands has been lost."

That loss is partly due to increased cropping, but also because of a rise in tame forages. Cattle feeders often think they can get better daily gain for less money with tame forages, but that's not always the case, Iwaasa said.

"The relative merits of native versus tame forage species for use on rangelands and on pastures have really been a controversial topic," he said. "Sometimes, there is a lot of extreme emotion in these areas. I just want to find the best forage that will work for that particular producer."

Read the full article [here](#).

[Top of Page](#)



If you're experiencing symptoms of stress, the Farm Stress Line is available 24/7 at **1-800-667-4442**

 

Spain and Portugal Ag Tour

Due to popular demand, Foothills Forage will be presenting a third tour to Spain & Portugal!

We are excited to be hosting a third trip to Spain & Portugal for the same agenda and price. This tour will be February 11-25, 2018 and will feature everything from castles, historic sites, and shows to research stations, crops, vegetable farms, and cattle ranches.

See <https://www.foothillsforage.com/spainportugal> for more information

[Top of Page](#)

Saskatchewan Forage Council Featured Project...

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

Completed: January 10, 2017

"The GRI method allows for a simple way to focus on one or more aspects of grazing management that may be negatively impacting pastures. For example, if a negative score is generated based on the frequency value, this can be improved by using temporary fencing to ensure that cattle are moved more frequently and the plants do not have time to regrow before being grazed a second or third time."

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](#).

[Top of Page](#)

Upcoming Events

Integrated Approach to Leafy Spurge Management September 27, 2017

Craik, SK

Attend this event at the Craik Legion Hall for information on leafy spurge management including an integrated approach ADOPT project, SARM programming, multi-species grazing, beetles and more. The day wraps up with a field tour. Cost is \$10 and includes lunch.

To register, contact the Agriculture Knowledge Centre at 1.866.457.2377. View the poster [here](#).

Native Prairie Speaker Series

September 27, 2017

via Webinar

The September 27th Native Prairie Speaker Series from Saskatchewan Prairie Conservation Action Plan (SK PCAP) is Greater sage-grouse recovery efforts in Montana, presented by Heather Nenner, Sage Grouse Initiative. This free webinar is at noon.

View the poster [here](#).

BCRC Webinar - Refining corn grazing recommendations

October 12, 2017

via Webinar

Speaker: Bart Lardner, PhD, Senior Research Scientist at the Western Beef Development Centre. Thinking about turning your cattle out on corn? Want to be sure you are up to date with the latest corn grazing recommendations? Join us to learn more about this extended grazing practice with advice on maintaining good profitability and animal performance.

[Click here](#) to register.

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

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

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. To register online, [click here](#).

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.

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](#).

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 or view the [agenda 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

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