



Forage and Livestock eNews

Updates and information from across the industry

November 22, 2016 - Vol 8, Issue 11

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Greetings!

We hope you will enjoy the November issue of the Forage and Livestock eNews. Saskatchewan is the focus of some excellent new and ongoing research, a number of upcoming forage-related events and you'll find news of the good work being done in our province in this edition.

The Saskatchewan Forage Council and partners have been busy wrapping up a number of Agricultural Demonstration of Practices and Technologies (ADOPT) projects relating to forages. Upcoming editions of the eNews will share the results of our projects on scarifying cicer milkvetch seed, controlling absinth and common tansy in perennial pastures, demonstration of AC Yellowhead alfalfa and the Grazing Response Index (GRI).

Please feel free to forward the eNews on to others you think may be interested in forage and livestock industry updates -signing up is as easy as clicking the 'Join Our Mailing List!' on the left.

We always appreciate your feedback, event listings or article suggestions.



Your *Forage and Livestock eNews*
Editor,
Laura Hoimyr

Evaluating Stockpiled Forages for Extended Grazing in Western Canada

By Christine Rawluk, National Centre for Livestock and the Environment, University of Manitoba and

Lynne Pinder, Extension Coordinator for BCRC Forage Evaluation Project, Manitoba Beef Producers

Favoured for lower cost and labour requirements, pasturing cows year-round in extended grazing systems is now a common practice for overwintering cattle on the Prairies.

A national survey of cattle producers in 2012 showed the practice of year-round grazing has doubled in western Canada, compared to practices reported in a 2005 survey. "However, what year-round grazing looks like varies from farm to farm," says Kim Ominski, beef-forage systems professor at the University of Manitoba who worked on the survey. "Bale grazing is still one of the most common practices, although grazing swathed cereals or stockpiled forages are also used."

Currently, research is ongoing to optimize these systems under the range of soil and climatic conditions where extended grazing is most commonly practiced.

"There is growing interest in stockpiling forages to extend grazing, but further research is required to address knowledge gaps including persistence of quality, regrowth potential and capacity to remain upright with snow accumulation for perennial and annual forages," says Emma McGeough, assistant professor in sustainable grasslands systems at the University of Manitoba. As the objective is low-cost pasture-based feeding, forage species that can maintain nutritional value in the late fall and early winter are highly desirable.

"Few publications have examined forage quality retention, animal nutrient status, and associated impacts on animal productivity and grazing behaviour in stockpile grazing systems," says McGeough.

A forage quality evaluation study, which began in the spring of 2014, includes an examination of cow health and reproductive performance, as well as an economic analysis of net returns for extended grazing systems.

This study, funded by the Beef Cattle Research Council (BCRC) and Manitoba Beef Producers, is a joint Manitoba-Saskatchewan initiative involving collaboration between the University of

Manitoba, Western Beef Development Centre, University of Saskatchewan, Manitoba Agriculture and the Manitoba Beef and Forage Initiative. Additionally, an industry-led steering committee, with cross-province representation from the forage-beef industry serves to identify producer needs and an effective technology transfer strategy.



Step 1: Evaluating annual and perennial forages for their potential in stockpile grazing systems

Phase 1 assessed the potential of a range of annual and perennial forages under a range of climate and soil conditions. Small plot stands were established at two sites in Saskatchewan and at three sites in Manitoba.

Members of the forage seed industry were involved in the decision-making regarding the crops and varieties to grow. "We chose to focus our evaluation on annual and perennial forage species and varieties that have good potential for stockpile grazing, and that are accessible and affordable," says McGeough.

Annual crops include oats, barley, corn, soybeans, fall and annual rye and foxtail millet. Perennials include varieties of orchardgrass, bromegrass, tall fescue, and alfalfa and cicer milkvetch legumes in pure or mixed stands with improved characteristics for extended grazing on the prairies.

Two management systems are being explored -- an early stockpiling of regrowth after a single cut in early summer, or late stockpiling following a second cut.

Step 2: Testing select forage stockpile grazing systems

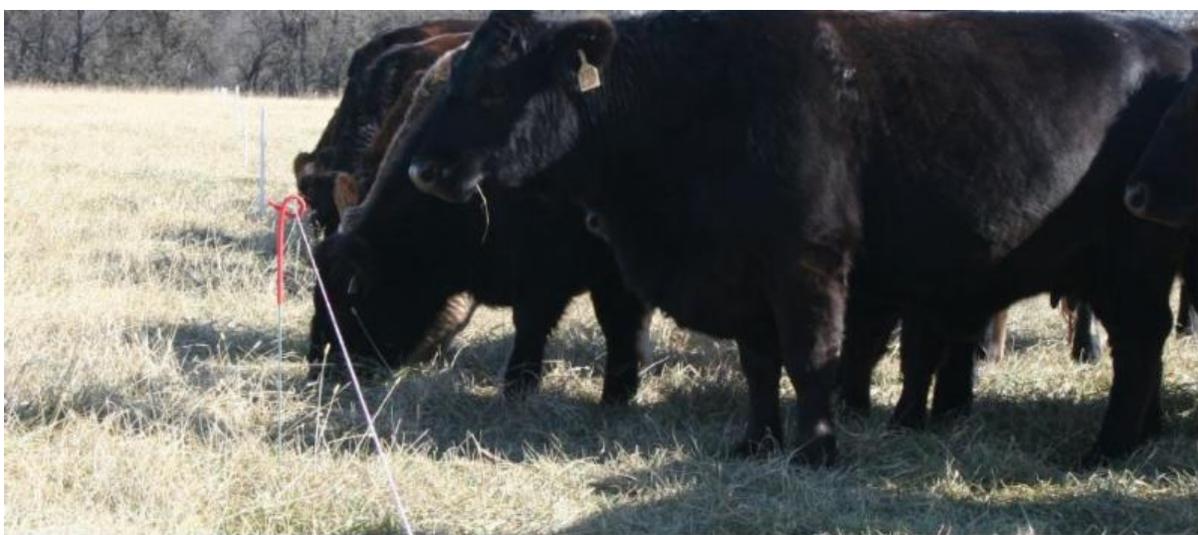
Phase 2 of this project involves the grazing of beef cows and will assess three perennial and one annual forage for fall/winter grazing of commercial beef cows at the Manitoba Beef and Forage Initiative Johnson Farm, near Brandon, MB. "We are interested in the performance of the entire system," says Ominski. "Therefore, we will monitor stand physical and nutritional quality, cow performance in terms of energetics, nutrition and behaviour, as well as an economic evaluation of each system."

Derek Brewin, economics professor at the University of Manitoba and Kathy Larson, beef economist with Western Beef Development Centre, will estimate the net return to investment for each of the overwintering systems. A comparison of net returns, the variation in the returns and the risk of the different management strategies will be assessed.

Training students in cattle-forage systems

"This study also places a strong emphasis on hands-on student training in agronomy, livestock production and agricultural economics," adds McGeough. "We are attracting top students who are making a commitment to a career in agriculture." A minimum of three graduate students will be working on this project, along with a number of undergraduate students at the various research sites.

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Saskatchewan PCAP Native Prairie Speaker Series

Be sure to check out the Saskatchewan Prairie Conservation Action Plan (SK PCAP) Native Prairie Speaker Series. Upcoming dates are November 29, November 30 and December 14!

Join Saskatchewan PCAP on November 29, 2016 at 12PM for **Chasing Tigers: Population assessment of the imperiled Gibson's Big Sand Tiger Beetle (*Cicindela formosa gibsoni*) in the Elbow Sand Hills**. This webinar will be presented by Aaron Bell of Troutreach, Saskatchewan. To register, visit the following link: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/7674733377033695745>

The November 30, 2016 Saskatchewan PCAP Native Prairie Speaker Series event is in Val Marie, Sk.

Join Saskatchewan PCAP on November 30, 2016 at 12PM for **Save the Last Dance: A science-based program for the recovery of Greater sage-grouse in Grasslands National Park**. This presentation will be made by Stefano Liccioli, Laura Gardener, Nathan Young and Nils Lokken. Event will be held at 7:30pm at the Prairie Wind and Silver Sage Centre in Val Marie. For more information, visit the [PCAP website](#).

Join SK PCAP and Alan Smith, Saskatchewan Coordinator, Nature Saskatchewan for the speaking event **International Piping Plover Census**. Event will take place at the Avonlea Public Library at 7PM on December 14. The event is free is everyone is welcome.
For more information, visit www.pcap-sk.org/communications.

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SFSDC Forage Seed Information Session Speakers

By: Ray McVicar, Saskatchewan Forage Seed Development Commission (SFSDC), Executive Director

SFSDC is pleased to announce our speaker line-up for the upcoming Forage Seed Grower Information Session and Annual General Meeting on Thursday December 1, 2016 in Nipawin Saskatchewan. The meeting will be at the Evergreen Centre in the Twin Lakes Room.

- Eric Johnson, Weed Management Program University of Saskatchewan, will discuss his herbicide tolerance and plant growth regulator research on forage seed crops at Saskatoon.
- Scott Hartley, Provincial Insect Specialist, Saskatchewan Agriculture, will provide an update on insect pests in forage seed crops.
- Clayton Myhre, DLF Pickseed, Nipawin SK, will update the forage seed market situation.
- Stu Brandt and Stephanie Ginter with the Northeast Agriculture Research Foundation, Melfort SK, will review their 2016 alternate row planting, companion crop, weed control, insecticide and plant growth regulator research on forage seed crops.
- Terry Kowalchuk, Provincial Forage Crop Specialist, Saskatchewan Agriculture, will describe the progress in developing the forage crop Variety Testing System for Saskatchewan.
- The SFSDC Annual General Meeting will give growers the opportunity to review the SFSDC activities and financial statements as well as provide input into the Commission's future programs.



Admission is free and refreshments will be available.

For more information about the SFSDC or the Information Session, please visit our website at www.skforageseeddc.com or contact the SFSDC at (306) 789-1958 or email at sfsc05@gmail.com.

*Image: Eric Johnson discusses weed control at NARF Field Day near Melfort SK. July 2016.
Image Credit: SFSDC*

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SSGA Releases Video Celebrating Award Winning Ranch

Saskatchewan Stock Growers Association news release October 25, 2016

Today as part of Agriculture Awareness month the Saskatchewan Stock Growers Association (SSGA) released a short video highlighting Miles and Sherri Anderson's efforts to protect the Greater Sage Grouse and 19 other species at risk that share their ranch near Fir Mountain.

The Andersons were the national recipients of the 2016 The Environmental Stewardship Award (TESA).

The video shows Miles on horseback amid the gorgeous natural prairie landscapes and the big blue sky of the ranch. He explains how he takes a global approach to protecting and enhancing habitat for the many birds, mammals, insects and plants on his land.

Beef producers depend on a healthy ecosystem to provide grass for their cattle. In turn, grazing cattle allow the natural grasses and other plants to renew themselves, providing vital habitat for endangered species like the Greater Sage Grouse and the Loggerhead Shrike.

"We're the original conservationists, people don't realize that," Miles says. "It's just the nature of what we do."

And it goes beyond protecting species at risk. Healthy grasslands are an enormous carbon sink - Canadian beef production is responsible for keeping 1.5 billion tonnes of carbon out of the atmosphere.

SSGA President Shane Jahnke thinks the video will resonate with ranchers and consumers alike. "Miles and Sherri earned the TESA award because their efforts are exceptional, but also because their attitude is typical," he said.

"Ranchers care for the land because we depend on it. Canada's beef industry chose the Andersons for this award because Miles and Sherri reflect the way producers really operate, and we want the world to know that."

"Consumers can take satisfaction from knowing our beef industry holds itself to amazingly high standards for sustainability. This video shows how the Andersons set an excellent example for producers across Canada. All of Saskatchewan can be very proud," he said.

SSGA is a province-wide member driven advocacy organization representing independent self-reliant cattle producers' interests for 103 years. The SSGA advocates through education, communication, and research for an economically and environmentally sustainable cattle industry where cattlemen are free to do business--within a free and open market place, free from industry limiting laws and regulation.

Visit the [SSGA website](#) to view the video.

For more information contact:

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General Manager

SK Stock Growers Association

(306) 541-5023 | ssga@sasktel.net

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Livestock and Forage Centre of Excellence

What if we could bring together every link of the livestock production chain? That's exactly what this centre allows us to do.

Building on a strong network of partnerships, the centre will improve livestock production across Canada and around the globe. The Livestock and Forage Centre of Excellence (LFCE) is a unique complex of both science and field laboratories that will model all aspects of raising livestock on the Canadian Prairies. This centre will boost our ability to connect discovery with translational and applied research.



The LFCE will encompass everything from forage development, grazing management and environmental sustainability to the science of reproduction and nutrition, cow-calf management and feedlot cattle health, growth and productivity.

Partners

Representatives from the University of Saskatchewan, the Saskatchewan Government, and the forage and livestock sectors have worked together to develop the LFCE over the past few years. This is an historic partnership that combines the talents and interests of the U of S, the agriculture industry and the provincial government into a centre of excellence.

To view the Livestock and Forage Centre of Excellence fact sheet (pdf) [click here](#).

To learn more, visit the University of Saskatchewan [website](#).

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Ross Ranch Species at Risk video

After 100 years of land stewardship on Ross Ranch, John Ross works with Cows 'n Fish (Alberta Conservation Association) and the MULTISAR program to come up with innovative ways to protect the species at risk on his land and improve ranching practices at the same time! It's a heart-warming win-win story, produced by Environment and Climate Change Canada.

To watch the video, [click here](#).

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International Rangeland Congress Executive Summary Now Posted

The tenth annual International Rangeland Congress (IRC) took place July 17-22, 2016 in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. The conference proceedings and an executive summary are now available on the IRC website.

Summary of Plenary and Keynote Presentations and Contributed Papers and Posters by S. Ray Smith, University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky, USA, María E. Fernández-Giménez, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO, USA and Donald Burnside, Australian Rangeland Society, Perth, Australia

Plenary Sessions 1-3

The first three sessions of the Xth International Rangeland Congress set the stage for the sessions to follow. They progressed from the foundational topics in Session 1 "State of Global and Canadian Rangeland and Pasture Resources", to the emerging value of rangeland with Session 2 "Ecological Goods and Services of Rangelands and Pasturelands", and progressed to the key role of people in association with rangeland in Session 3 "The People of the Grasslands." The following summary will highlight key aspects from each of these sessions, most importantly the Keynote presentations and Plenary papers. I encourage you to review the congress proceedings to obtain the full scope of these sessions and the entire Xth IRC Congress.

To read the Executive Summary, [click here](#).

To view the conference proceedings, [click here](#).

To stay informed about the next Rangeland Congress, set for Nairobi, Kenya in 2020, sign up for the email distribution list [here](#).

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Storing Net Wrapped Bales

In areas that receive average rainfall, net-wrapped bales stored outside on a well-drained area shed more water and have less spoilage than bales secured with twine. When placed on a well-drained area, university research has shown that net-wrapped bales had average storage losses of 7% during outdoor storage compared to twine-wrapped bales, which had 11% storage losses. Because net-wrapped bales shed water so well, producers want to do everything they can to help that water move away from the bale. Placing the bales on a well-drained surface with a slight slope is very important to reduce spoilage caused by water wicking into the bottom of net-wrapped bales.



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Saskatchewan Forage Council Featured Project...

[Demonstrating the Use of Yellowhead Alfalfa in One-Cut and Two-Cut Harvest System](#)

Completed: December 31, 2015

"Quality of the AC Yellowhead alfalfa was superior to that of the purple-flowered varieties on September 20th, after a late summer cut. This is likely due to slower regrowth (as seen in yield) and the plants being at a less matures stage at this date. These differences in yield and quality of the AC Yellowhead from the purple-flowered alfalfa varieties may be a reflection of the growing conditions in 2015 or of alfalfa type."

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 completed projects, [click here](#).

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Upcoming Events

Recruitment and Retention Workshop

Nov 22, 2016

Olds, AB

This practical, hands-on workshop is hosted by the Alberta Cattle Feeders Association. Learn how to create effective job descriptions, find and retain employees, conduct interviews and more. Workshop takes place at the Sheraton Cavalier in Olds, Alberta. Event cost is \$75 and includes full day workshop, lunch and materials. To register or learn more, [click here](#).

AgEx

November 22-24, 2016

Calgary, AB

Plan & Prosper: Set the Course for Farm Success at the Agricultural Excellence Conference November 22-24 at the Sheraton Cavalier in Calgary. Farm Management Canada will host this conference, focused on bringing diverse industry experts and stakeholders together from across disciplines, regions and commodities to share and explore beneficial farm practices, advice and insight with leading farm business thinkers.

For more information visit www.fmc-gac.com or follow #AgExCon16 on Twitter

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](#).

2016 Saskatchewan Dairy Conference

Nov 29-30, 2016

Saskatoon, SK

The Saskatchewan Dairy Conference will be held at the Saskatoon Inn on November 29-30, 2016. To register, visit the SaskMilk website, [activities and events page](#).

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](#).

Western Beef Development Centre Winter Field Day

December 13, 2016

Lanigan, SK

Western Beef invites you to attend their Winter Field Day being held on Tuesday, December 13th at the Termuende Research Ranch east of Lanigan, SK. Winter Field Days are typically held every second year and offer an opportunity to see winter research trials in action. Arrive between 12:30 and 1 pm to grab a coffee and a seat, as presentations start promptly at 1:00 PM in the Calving Barn (metal building with green roof). The day will wrap up around 4 pm.

To view the field day agenda, [click here](#). For questions, please contact Kathy Larson at klarson.wbdc@pami.ca

Saskatchewan Beef Industry Conference

January 24-26, 2017

Regina, SK

Connect with Beef Industry Decision Makers, Stakeholders and Fellow Cattlemen at Saskatchewan's Premier Beef Event.

For more information or to register: 306-731-7610 or shannon.mcarton@sasktel.net.

Watch the [website](#) for more details.

Native Prairie Restoration and Reclamation Workshop

February 8 & 9, 2016

Regina, SK

Save the date for the 2017 Native Prairie Restoration and Reclamation Workshop, scheduled for February 8 & 9, 2017 in Regina, SK. The theme is Reclaiming Spaces-Restoring Species.

Stay up-to-date with information on the workshop on the [SK PCAP website](#).

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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: 306.329.3116

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Saskatchewan Beef Industry Development Fund:**



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