



# Forage and Livestock eNews

*Updates and information from across the industry*

March 23, 2017 - Vol 9, Issue 5

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## Greetings!

The SFC's January 2017 [Forage Market Price Discovery Report](#) is now posted on our website! Check out the report on our [website](#) for a review of the past year's growing season and a comprehensive look at forage pricing and trends as well as pricing for forage seed and alternative feeds.

If you're looking for an event to attend this summer, don't miss the Soil Health Workshop with Nicole Masters. Nicole is an agro-ecologist, educator and systems thinker with over 18 years of extensive, practical and theoretical experience in regenerative farming practices. Workshops will take place June 27 in Mervin, SK and June 29 in Swift Current, SK. Will the [Mervin poster](#) or [Swift Current poster](#) for more information.

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**

## The Saskatchewan Forage Council continues to provide value for its stakeholders

*By: Tara Mulhern Davidson, SFC Communications*

Since its inception in 1988, the Saskatchewan Forage Council (SFC) has remained true to its original Statement of Purpose and Objectives which is a "commitment to the growth and development of all aspects of Saskatchewan's forage and grassland industry." While the province's forage industry has changed and diversified over the past twenty-nine years, the Saskatchewan Forage Council continues to advocate for stakeholders through research, extension, and market information.

Today, the SFC is involved in a number of provincial and federal organizations and initiatives, including the Canadian Forage and Grassland Association, the Saskatchewan Forage Seed Development Commission (SFSDC), the Prairie Conservation Action Plan, the Saskatchewan Advisory Council on Forage Crops, and the Saskatchewan Beef and Forage Symposium, to name just a few. Also important is the supporting role and input that the SFC has and continues to provide to initiatives such as agricultural policy framework consultations, the Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation's forage insurance programming, the Livestock and Forage Centre of Excellence, and the Livestock Greenhouse Gas Emissions Forum among others.

Forage research is a priority area for the SFC. There are currently three projects underway including evaluating forage variety demonstration trials (such as seed yield and biomass yield of grasses and legumes); creating an integrated approach to leafy spurge management; and assessing the effects of rolling barley, oats and alfalfa after plant emergence. In 2016-17, the SFC completed five projects through the Agricultural Demonstration of Practices and Technologies (ADOPT) program. A final report for each of the projects can be downloaded by clicking this [link](#). The projects included:

- Evaluating AC Yellowhead alfalfa persistence and performance in Saskatchewan;
- Examining the use of AC Yellowhead in a one-cut and two-cut system over a period of two years;



- Assessment of various scarification methods for cicer milkvetch seed;
- Use of Grazing Response Index (GRI) as a forage management tool on tame pastures;
- Controlling absinth and common tansy in perennial pastures using various herbicide wipe applicators.

Sharing and extending forage-related information is of special importance, and the SFC recently updated their image with a fresh [website](#) design as well as updated social media content on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), and the [SFC YouTube](#) channel. SFC's monthly Forage and Livestock e-News, as well as the seasonal monthly Hay and Pasture Report have become useful resources for producers, extension staff, and other forage stakeholders both in and out of the province. The SFC also provides two comprehensive Forage Market Reports in September and January each year. The January 2017 Forage Market Report has been recently published and can be viewed along with other SFC publications on the [Resources](#) page.

In November, 2012, the Saskatchewan Forage Network (SFN) was created to facilitate a collaborative approach to research, technology transfer, and industry development for forage and livestock industry stakeholders. Through the combined contributions of industry organizations participating in the SFN, financial support has been provided to post-secondary graduate students conducting forage-focused research projects. The SFN has provided direct input to re-alignment of research-focused resources including creation of the Ministry of Agriculture-funded Strategic Research Program Forage Breeding Chair, a post held by Dr. Bill Biligetu at the University of Saskatchewan, as well as the development of the Livestock and Forage Centre of Excellence.

The SFC is pleased to host several workshops and events throughout the year, including the annual "Forages in the Field" workshop, a plant identification school aimed at environmental professionals in the reclamation sector. In 2016, SFC partnered with the Saskatchewan Forage Seed Development Commission to host their annual general meeting and tour near Saskatoon, SK, putting the spotlight on research, variety trials, and innovative practices. This year the SFC will partner with the Ministry of Agriculture to host a Diverse Cover Crop Field Day at Mervin, SK on August 16. Another popular event the SFC partners with other organizations to present is the Sask Pasture Tour (SPT) which provides a venue for research and innovative forage management practices. This year the SPT tour will be held near Foam Lake, SK on Aug 3, 2017 and will include a tour of the Foam Lake Pasture as well as local producers with diverse cover crops, innovative winter site management practices, invasive weed management strategies, and more.

The needs of forage stakeholders in Saskatchewan continue to shift and emerge, and the Saskatchewan Forage Council is adapting as well, remaining steadfast in their commitment to this valuable sector.

*Photo credit: Tara Mulhern Davidson*

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**Saskatchewan Stock Growers Association AGM & Convention**

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**June 11 - 13, 2017**

**Mosaic Place, Moose Jaw, SK**



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[www.skstockgrowers.com](http://www.skstockgrowers.com)

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## Risk Management and Insurance Survey

Alberta Beef Producers (ABP) and Saskatchewan Cattlemen's Association (SCA) are conducting a risk management and insurance survey for forage producers to provide important information that may be used to design more effective insurance and risk management tools for forage producers. Your feedback is greatly appreciated, and the survey should take about 10 minutes to complete. A final report with the survey findings will be made available to ABP and SCA by April 2018.

Complete the survey here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/foragesatellite>

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## CFGA Set to Become Climate Change Leader

The CFGA is set to launch itself into a climate change leadership role within Canadian agriculture.

Member of Parliament Matt DeCoursey (Fredericton) announced an investment of \$656,000 this week for a project with the CFGA to demonstrate to farmers the carbon sequestration (sink) potential of their farmlands.

The CFGA is in the preliminary stages of the program which will develop and test a carbon reduction protocol for high performance forage management systems in Canada.

CFGA Chairman Ray Robertson says this is an exciting time for Canadian agriculture.

"Producers know forages are valuable at capturing carbon," says Robertson. "However, until now, there was no way to quantify the full value of the ecological goods and services provided by the grasslands sector. Nor was there a way to quantify the economic value of the contributions made by individual landowners who increase soil carbon storage with their adoption of beneficial management practices and the use of new, high performance forage genetics. This project will

change that."

CFG General Manager Cedric MacLeod says the first phase is to develop an approved greenhouse gas quantification protocol for the Canadian forage sector.

"The protocol will be flexible enough to incorporate all climate zones in Canada where forages can be reasonably produced," MacLeod says. "This will expand and compliment the existing work by Canadian researchers related to best management practices, forage and soil sequestration potential, both at the university research level and through Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada."

The second phase is to field test the approved protocol with forage producers across Canada. MacLeod says the test phase will gauge sector-wide opportunities for enhancing carbon sequestration and the potential to create carbon offset credits for Canadian grassland managers. Outstanding gaps will be identified, as well as challenges in protocol implementation and record management.

Funding for the program comes from the federal Agricultural Greenhouse Gas Program.

[Read more](#)

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## Looking for Dugouts for Research Project

Dr. Kerri Findlay, Assistant Professor in the Department of Biology at the University of Regina has received ADF funding to look at how dugouts in Saskatchewan might be acting as carbon sinks/offsets for agriculture greenhouse gas emissions. She is looking for 100 dugouts across Saskatchewan. Ideally these dugouts will be located close to a road for easy access and would have basic information on them available. Samples would be taken and information gathered on the dugouts this summer. If you are interested in participating, see further information and Dr. Findlay's contact information below:

We are interested in determining whether agricultural dugouts can be used to achieve carbon-neutral farming. Based on previous research, we believe that dugouts should bury large quantities of carbon, and have minimal greenhouse gas emission rates, but these ideas have never been tested on working farms and in field conditions. We also want to examine how standard management practices (e.g. bluestone addition, dredging, dugout shape) affect these rates. The results of this work will be used to provide Best Management Practices publications to maximize greenhouse gas uptake by dugouts and results will be communicated through a website (to be developed in summer 2017). If you are interested in participating or for more information on this project, you can contact Kerri Finlay by email at [kerri.finlay@uregina.ca](mailto:kerri.finlay@uregina.ca) or by phone at 306 585 4236.

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## Union Forage



## 2017 Forage Seed Research Plans

by: *Roy McVicar, Executive Director*

Saskatchewan Forage Seed Development Commission (SFSDC)

**GRAEME FINN**

**ROGER MEYERS**

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SFSDC is increasing forage seed research with the goal to improve economic returns for levy payers.

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The Weed Management Program at the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon has once again been contracted by SFSDC to carry out research on forage seed crops. This year, herbicides will be applied to seedling sweet clover, sainfoin, tall fescue and hybrid brome grass. An established stand of hybrid brome grass will be treated with plant growth regulators to see if the positive results found in Manitoba can be duplicated in Saskatchewan. Test herbicides will also be applied to the established hybrid brome grass for potential minor use registrations.

Dr. Bill Biligetu, forage crop breeder at the U of S, is continuing his sainfoin variety selection project this year with partial funding from SFSDC. The project is developing new sainfoin lines with improved forage characteristics and stand persistence under Saskatchewan conditions.



Dr. Sean Prager, the new entomologist at the U of S, is beginning the process to obtain public funding for a number of research projects that look into pollinators and insect pest problems in red clover seed crops. SFSDC is very excited to support the efforts of these two new scientists at the U of S.

The Northeast Agriculture Research Foundation (NARF) is located at the Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada Research Farm south of Melfort, SK. SFSDC is funding a number of projects at NARF in 2017 including:

- 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) applied at different growth stages on established red, alsike and sweet clovers;
- An expanded trial for the control of lesser clover leaf weevil in established red clover; and
- Red and alsike clovers along with slender wheatgrass will be planted in 2017 to provide space for research on established crops in 2018.

The 2017 projects at NARF funded by Saskatchewan Agriculture's ADOPT program are:

- valuating the Placement of Companion Crops in Forage Seed Production ; where forage seed crop establishment, yields and economics will be compared under alternative planting methods with-or-without a companion crop;
- Evaluating the use of Direct Seeding and Pre-Seeding Cultivation in Forage Seed Crop Establishment; the second year of a two-year project where red clover was underseeded with faba bean in 2016 with-or-without pre-seed cultivation combined with-or-without the application of pre-seed herbicides; and
- Demonstrating the Effects of Red and Alsike Clover Seed Crops in Rotations ; where clovers will be planted with canola as a companion crop in 2017 to determine its effect on seed production in 2018.

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, NuFarm Canada, Syngenta Canada and AG-Vision Seeds for their support of the forage seed industry.

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.

A number of these projects will be viewed at our summer field tour. Look on the SFSDC website for the tour date and time.

*Image: Alternate Row Planting: NARF ,Melfort SK July 2016*

*Image Source: Saskatchewan Forage Seed Development Commission*

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## Apply to Attend the Global Youth Institute

The Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture will select and send two Saskatchewan students and their teacher/mentor to represent the province at the 23rd annual Global Youth Institute from October 19-21, 2017, in Des Moines, Iowa. Each year, more than 200 exceptional high school students from across the world are selected to participate in the three-day Global Youth Institute hosted by the World Food Prize Foundation.

To learn more about eligibility and how to apply, visit the [Saskatchewan Agriculture website](#).

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*By: Shannon VanRaes, Manitoba Cooperator, April 11, 2017*

New research aims to debunk the idea that young people want to leave the family farm and move to the city.

Annette Desmarais of the University of Manitoba is one of nine researchers involved in the study, which will look at barriers young farmers face in multiple countries, including Canada, India, China and Indonesia. Titled, *Becoming a young farmer: young people's pathways into farming in five countries*, it will take five years to complete.

"The reason that we decided to do this research is that there is this really strong message out there at a global level and at many international development institutions... that people don't want to continue to farm, that the youth who have lived in rural areas and who come from rural areas are actually completely intent on moving out and moving into cities," said the Canada Research Council Chair. "But what we have found, however, in the research that we've all been doing already, is that individually that wasn't the case."

She added that many governments and government organizations also make the argument that young people leave farming for an urban life because they don't want to farm, but Desmarais said she believes many youth who leave the farm do so because they feel the barriers to farming are too high.

To read the full article in the Manitoba Cooperator, [click here](#).

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## Forages to the rescue of saline and erodible soils

*By: Nadia Mori*

*Regional Forage Specialist, Watrous, Saskatchewan Agriculture Regional Services Branch  
AgriView, March 2017*

Protecting soil health and increasing crop production can go hand in hand. Perennial forages are not just a good source of livestock feed, they are also an invaluable tool in stabilizing saline soils and soils at risk of erosion.

Perennial forages can reduce soil salinity. It's not magic, just science. Salinity is caused by excessive evaporation of water containing dissolved salts. When the water evaporates at the soil surface, the salt crystals are left behind and can increase soil salinity over time. Salt-tolerant forages help lower the water table and reduce the amount of salt crystals deposited on the soil surface. Alfalfa in particular is a thirsty forage legume, and its taproot can access moisture deep in the soil. So long as salt concentrations are low enough that seedlings can get established, alfalfa is a great legume to include in forage mixtures for saline areas.

Perennial forages are overall great soil builders. The extensive root systems of forage grasses can access nutrients deep in the soil layers beyond the reach of annual crops. As roots die and are replaced, they leave behind fine soil channels which increase soil aeration and water infiltration, essentially giving the soil a sponge-like absorptive quality. The year-round vegetative cover provided by forages holds the soil in place, captures snow and slows spring runoff. Any soil at risk of erosion can benefit from perennial forage cover.

Read the full article in the [March 2017 AgriView](#).

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

Completed: January 10, 2017

*"Tame forages are often managed effectively with more than one grazing period in a growing season. For this reason, the adapted tame scoring method in the GRI demonstration allowed for multiple grazing periods by selecting only the longest period and scoring that for frequency. For the purposes of this demonstration, it was determined that the seven day regrowth period used for the native GRI would be maintained for tame forages. The possibility of using a shorter regrowth period for tame forages is one topic which could be explored if further research is carried out on applying the GRI method to tame forages. "*

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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### **Weed Workshop**

**May 25, 2017**

**Scott, SK**

This week ID & management workshop will take place May 25 at the Scott Research Farm. A day of hands-on weed ID, update on herbicide resistant & noxious weeds, and a sneak-peek on herbicide efficacy and layering trials.

For pre-registration or more information contact Terri Sittler @ 306-247-2001 or [terri.sittler@warc.ca](mailto:terri.sittler@warc.ca)

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### **Back to the Field: Mud and Ticks in the Sticks**

**May 30-31, 2017**

**Fort Qu'Appelle Area, SK**

The Prairie Parkland Chapter of the Society For Range Management is offering a spring workshop to help you get Back To The Field. This workshop is an opportunity for professionals involved in land management to brush up on plant identification and ecological health assessment techniques. Space is limited and registration closed May 23, 2017.

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

For more information or to register contact Rachel Turnquist at 306.694.3721 or [srm.prairieparkland@gmail.com](mailto:srm.prairieparkland@gmail.com)

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### **Open Gate Tour**

**June 10, 2017**

**Fife Lake SK**

Tour to take place at Terry & Arliss Loucks Ranch (planned grazing and benefits of Holistic Management) with Blain Hjertaas (Carbon sequestration in planned grazing), Haley McMillan (Holistic Management, Planned Grazing, Healthy soil). Price \$50/person, \$25 spousal registration, kids 14 and under free. Registration begins at 9am and lunch is included.

For more information please call Ralph Corcoran at 306.434.9772 or email [rlcorcoran@sasktel.net](mailto:rlcorcoran@sasktel.net)

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### **Swift Current Research and Development Centre Grazing and Forage Field Day**

**June 27, 2017**

### **Swift Current, SK**

The Grazing and Forage Field Day at the Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) Swift Current Research and Development Centre will showcase the latest forage and grazing research projects supported by government and industry. Join us for plot / pasture tours and oral presentations focused on new and long-term forage and grazing research that is relevant to Southern Saskatchewan. Admission is \$10 and includes beverages, snacks and lunch.

For more information [click here](#). To register contact Trevor Lennox at 306.778.8294 or email [trevor.lennox@gov.sk.ca](mailto:trevor.lennox@gov.sk.ca)

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### **SSGA 104th AGM and Convention**

**June 11-13, 2017**

**Moose Jaw, SK**

The Saskatchewan Stock Growers Association AGM & Convention include a bus tour and reception on Sunday, followed by speakers on Monday and the AGM and industry presentations on Tuesday. Event will be held at Mosaic Place in Moose Jaw.

To find out more about the event including accommodations, sponsorship options, speakers and more, visit the [SSGA website](#). To register, [click here](#).

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### **WBDC Summer Field Day**

**June 20, 2017**

**Lanigan, SK**

Western Beef's 19th Summer Field Day is scheduled for Tuesday, June 20th at the Termuende Ranch east of Lanigan, SK. The theme for this year's Field Day is "Moving Research Into a New Corral". Registration and coffee starts at 9:30 AM in the Coverall building with presentations starting at 10 AM. Invited speaker, Chip Hines will share his perspectives on managing for efficiency in the cowherd. Chip is a retired Colorado rancher who has authored three books including "Cow Country Essays and a Little Slantwise Logic". Following Chip, Dr. Bart Lardner will share the Top 10 research findings from Western Beef's 20 Years at Termuende. Learn about the "new corral" from our last speaker of the morning, Dorothy Murrell, Project Manager for the Livestock and Forage Centre of Excellence.

View the agenda [here](#).

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### **Soil Health Workshops**

**June 27 and 29, 2017**

**Mervin and Swift Current, SK**

Plan to attend a workshop at Mervin on June 27 or AAFC Swift Current Research and Development Centre on June 29: a practical overview of soil health with Nicole Masters of Integrity Soils. Nicole is an agro-ecologist, educator and systems thinker with over 18 years of extensive, practical and theoretical experience in regenerative farming practices.

To register contact the Agriculture Knowledge Centre at 1-866-457-2377. Registration deadline June 22, 2017. View the: [Mervin Poster](#), [Swift Current Poster](#).

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### **International Bison Conference**

**July 4-8, 2017**

**Big Sky, MT**

The International Bison Conference (IBC) is held every five years and is a celebration of the American bison. The event draws nearly 500 attendees from around the world! The 2017 IBC will be an exceptional event in part due to its location, Big Sky Montana. Big Sky is just one hour outside of Yellowstone National Park, and just 30 minutes from Ted Turner's famed Flying D bison ranch, both of which we'll tour as part of the conference. Please mark your calendars for this special event that is not to be missed!

To learn more visit the [website](#) or view the [agenda](#).

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### **Bus Trip and Private Tour of Brown's Ranch-second date added!**

**July 11-13, 2017**

**Bismarck, ND**

The SSCA has organized a second bus trip to Brown's Ranch in Bismarck, North Dakota due to

continued interest. The price includes chartered bus travel from Saskatoon (or points along the highway south by request), bus transportation from the hotel to Brown's Ranch, a private 8-hour tour by either Gabe or his son Paul with lunch included, accommodation for two nights in Bismarck (single or double occupancy as requested), and two breakfasts at the hotel. Seats reserved on a first registered basis - full payment due by June 15, 2017

To learn more view the [poster](#) or contact Gerry Burgess (SSCA Office Manager) by email at [info@ssca.ca](mailto:info@ssca.ca) or by phone 306.371.4213.

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### Saskatchewan Pasture Tour

August 3, 2017

Foam Lake area, SK

Save the date for the Saskatchewan Pasture Tour! Scheduled for August 3, 2017, this annual event is a great opportunity to get out and connect with forage and livestock producers and to see innovative ways to manage forages. View the [poster 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

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



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