



Forage and Livestock eNews

Updates and information from across the industry

Volume 11 Issue 8, August 20, 2019

Saskatchewan Pasture Tour 2019

**by: Shannon McArton, Executive Director
Saskatchewan Forage Council**

The annual Saskatchewan Pasture Tour took place at Hanley on August 8th with a large and engaged crowd of producers in attendance. This tour visits several sites within the selected area each year, facilitating interactive presentations and discussion right in the field.

The 2019 tour agenda included a discussion on alfalfa and sainfoin establishment and minimizing winter kill. Saskatchewan Crop Insurance's forage rainfall insurance plan was outlined, followed by a presentation on the importance of testing livestock water sources and provincial programming to access free testing. We looked at solar-powered watering systems, discussed options for silage production and feeding and benefits and logistics of rotational grazing. Afternoon presentations included a hands-on plant identification session; examining invasive species and discussing best management practices for range health. A visit to the Kroeger bison ranch, where they are working to re-establish a native prairie option in their grazing, was followed by a tour of an on-pasture cattle handling system that included a fencing presentation and further rotational grazing discussion. Cost of production and a look at some more of SCIC's forage industry insurance options, rounded out a value-packed afternoon agenda.

Supper speaker Bob Tosh, Family Business Advisor with MNP, discussed succession planning: its vital importance and potential pitfalls. The evening ended with a look at the benefits of participating in the Verified Beef Production Plus program by Chad Bruynooghe.



Our sincere thanks to:

Producer hosts Ivan Carpenter, Perry Dyck, Trish McPhee and Les Kroeger.

The Hanley 4H Club who kept us well fed all day.

And our event sponsors, who make the tour possible! Brett Young Seeds, Corteva Agriscience, Ducks Unlimited, Empire Welding, Ministry of Agriculture, Northstar Seeds, Nutrien Ag Solutions, Sundog Solar, Saskatchewan Cattlemen's Association and Thall's Service.

Beef Research Mentorship Program 2019-2020 Participants

by: Beef Cattle Research Council
August 8, 2019 Blog Post

The Beef Cattle Research Council (BCRC) is pleased to announce the participants in the 2019-20 Beef Researcher Mentorship program. Following an open application process, four researchers from across Canada have been selected. Each has been paired with notable leaders in the Canadian beef industry and given a travel budget for the coming year, which will provide valuable opportunities for greater engagement with Canada's beef industry.

Mentee: Dr. Aklilu Alemu
Mentors: Brenna Grant and the Fleming family

Mentee: Dr. Marianne Villettaz Robichaud
Mentors: Nathalie Côté and Giacomo Zoia

Mentee: Matthew Links
Mentors: Feedlot Health Management Services and Sean McGrath

Mentee: Dr. Peipei Zhang
Mentors: Scott Entz and Cathy Sharp

[Visit the BCRC blog to learn more about the mentees and their mentors](#)

What to consider when choosing alternate cattle feed sources

by: Piper Whelan, Canadian Cattlemen
August 2, 2019

With a [hay shortage looming](#) across much of the Prairies, many cattle producers

will need to look further afield for feed.

There are numerous options for alternate feeds, such as salvaging hail-damaged or stressed crops. [Nitrate toxicity](#) is a concern if the crop was highly fertilized with nitrogen, but Barry Yaremccio, beef and forage specialist with Alberta Agriculture's Ag-Info Centre, said it can be mixed with other feeds to balance the overall amount of nitrate and make it safe to feed.

Canola is an ideal crop to salvage. "At the full bloom to early pod stage, the plants are roughly equivalent to a high-quality, first-cut alfalfa grass hay," he explained. The energy content is similar at around 64 per cent, with protein levels ranging from 14 to 16 per cent.

Testing for nitrates and sulphur is necessary when feeding salvaged canola, especially if sulphur fertilizer was applied at high levels. "If you get about 0.4 per cent sulphur in the entire diet then you could have potential problems with polio."

Producers can also use byproduct feeds from unexpected sources, including screenings from sunflowers. Cull potatoes are another possible alternate feed. Potatoes have an energy content of 82 per cent total digestible nutrients (TDN), similar to barley grain, and a protein content of nine to 10 per cent. Given their high water content, Yaremccio advises ensiling potatoes in a silage bag on a slight incline to allow water to accumulate at the lower end of the bag. Cutting a small hole in the bag drains the excess moisture. The ensiling process softens the potatoes, so they won't pose a choking hazard.

[Read more](#)

Busy Summer Ahead for Grassland Carbon Research in Manitoba

Manitoba Forage & Grassland Association
July 16, 2019

Winnipeg, Mb (July 16, 2019)-Researchers will be digging down on six Manitoba fields this summer as part of a national project to look at the role of forages and grasslands in reducing Greenhouse Gases in Canada.

"High Performance Management Systems To Reduce Greenhouse Gases in Canada's Forages and Grasslands" is being led nationally by the Canadian Forage and Grassland Association (CFGA) after a successful application to Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Greenhouse Gas Program last year.

"Grasslands around the world warrant significant attention when discussing GHGs due to their sheer size, whether they are serving as a source, sink, or reservoir," said Cedric McLeod, CFGA executive director. "The Canadian Forage and Grasslands sector is the single largest land use component of Canadian agriculture, covering over 70-million acres of cropland, with 36-million acres devoted to native rangeland and the remaining 34-million acres dedicated to the production of annual and perennial tame forages. CFGA saw a real need to lead our project and paint a national picture as to how impactful these areas are in reducing greenhouse gases in Canada."

Feed Testing & Analysis for Beef Cattle



by: **Beef Cattle Research Council**

When you don't know the quality of feed on an operation, maintaining animal health and welfare can become significantly more difficult. Visual assessment of feedstuffs is not accurate enough to assess quality and may lead to cows being underfed and losing body condition, or wasting money on expensive supplements that aren't necessary.

Why feed test?

1. Avoid sneaky production problems, such as poor gains or reduced conception caused by mineral or nutrient deficiencies or excesses;
2. Prevent or identify potentially devastating problems due to toxicity from mycotoxins, nitrates, sulfates, or other minerals or nutrients;
3. Develop appropriate rations that meet the nutritional needs of their beef cattle;
4. Identify nutritional gaps that may require supplementation;
5. Economize feeding, and possibly make use of opportunities to include diverse ingredients;
6. Accurately price feed for buying or selling.

Obtaining Feed Samples

Obtain 20 cores for each sample you wish to submit using a forage probe. Photos courtesy of SK Ministry of Agriculture.

It's critical to collect a feed sample that is representative of the feed ingredients that you are testing. Any feed type that will be used to feed beef cattle can and should be analysed, including baled forages and straw, by-products, silage, baleage, grain, swath grazing, cover crops, and corn.

Feed quality will change as the feeding season progresses. Samples should be taken as close to feeding or selling as possible, while leaving enough time for the results to come back from the lab.

For baled products, use a forage probe to obtain a minimum of twenty cores for each sample you wish to submit. Sample square and round bales 12-15" deep and stacks or chopped hay 18" deep. Round bales should be sampled from the side (round end) and squares should be sampled at the end. Separate your forage inventory into lots with similar characteristics – same field, same maturity at cutting, same plant composition, etc. Hand grab samples will not be representative enough to give accurate results.

[Read more about feed testing and interpreting the test results on the BCRC website](#)

Featured Video

Jonathan Bouw of Edie Creek Angus near Anola, Manitoba discusses their approach to grazing and perennial pasture management.

[Watch the video on YouTube](#)

Upcoming Events

Spiritwood Forage Tour

August 28, 2019
Spiritwood, SK
[Read more](#)

CRSB AGM and Convention

September 18-19, 2019
Montreal, QC
[Learn more](#)

Getting started in sheep workshop

November 1-2, 2019
Saskatoon, SK
[View the workshop info](#)

MFGA AGM & Regenerative Ag Days

November 19-20, 2019
Brandon, MB
[Learn more here](#)

Western Canada Conference on Soil Health and Grazing

December 10-12, 2019
Edmonton, AB
[Visit the website to learn more](#)

Financial support for the Forage and Livestock eNews is provided in part by one of our partners, the **Saskatchewan Forage Seed Development Commission**.



Forage and Livestock eNews is published by the Saskatchewan Forage Council (SFC). Opinions and information are provided by the authors and publication does not imply endorsement by the SFC.

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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