

forage VIEWS



July 2017



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IMPORTANT DATES

- August 15-17:** Canadian Beef Industry Conference
- August 26:** Lac Ste. Anne County ALUS Field Day
- August 30:** Industrial Hemp Field Day
- December 5-7:** Western Canada Conference on Soil Health & Grazing

Get to Know Your Board Members

Welcome to a new feature where each newsletter we will work to highlight and provide some insight into the individuals serving on the 2017 Board of Directors.

First to be featured is our current acting Board President, Grant Taillieu. Grant is in his final year of serving as a member of the Board.

Grant, along with his wife Hali and their 2 daughters live and work on the Tomahawk Cattle Ranch east of Tomahawk, where Grant and his family have been for 16 years. During that time, Grant earned a Bachelors Degree in

Economics from the University of Lethbridge. Along with the work he does for the Tomahawk Cattle Ranch, Grant also runs his own herd of commercial cattle.

Grant had the following to say about his time serving on the board to date: "I have thoroughly enjoyed all of my time on the board. Being able to work alongside some creative and interesting people has taught me more than I could ever hope to contribute. I would strongly encourage everyone to get more involved and see what WCFA has to offer."



WCFA Board of Directors

President: Grant Taillieu

Vice President: Grant Chittick

Treasurer: Dale Engstrom

Secretary: Stacey Meunier

Larry Kidd

Eric Vanderwell

Brian Dickson

Shayne Horn

Greg Malyk,

Frank Maddock

Brett Byers

Staff

General Manager

Melissa Freeman

Forage & Livestock Program Manager

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Agriculture
Opportunity Fund

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by funding from our major sponsor,
the Agriculture Opportunities Fund
(AOF), Alberta Agriculture and
Forestry



Grant (pictured on the right) during our Jim Gerrish Grazing School on June 30

Tomahawk Cattle Ranch,
under the direction of Gerry
(Grant's father) and Grant,
was the recipient of the
2013 Alberta Beef Producer's
Environmental Stewardship
Award.

Be sure to look for Grant's
talk on how he uses feed
analysis on his operation at
the upcoming Canadian Beef
Industry Conference being
held at Stampede Park in
Calgary August 15-17, 2017.

TWO GREAT CONFERENCES IN ONE

WESTERN CANADA CONFERENCE ON SOIL HEALTH & GRAZING



SAVE THE DATE!

December 5 - 7, 2017



4440 Gateway Boulevard

PROFIT ABOVE,

WEALTH BELOW

For more information
check out our website:
www.absoilgrazing.com

Helping Make Energy Efficiency Achievable

By Kale Scarff, and Vern Steinborn

The Government of Alberta, through Growing Forward 2 (GF2) a federal, provincial, territorial initiative, offers two incentive-based programs aimed at helping Alberta farmers and ranchers reduce energy consumption and associated costs.

The GF2 On-Farm Energy Management Program (OFEMP) and the GF2 On-Farm Solar Photovoltaic (OFSPV) Program offer farmers and ranchers the opportunity to become energy efficient by sharing the cost to purchase energy efficient or renewable technologies. These initiatives are intended to make energy efficient technology as affordable as current technology, making the environmentally friendly choice also the economically sensible choice.

There are many technologies and practices farmers and ranchers can implement on their operations to reduce their energy footprint and protect (and possibly even increase) profit margins. Carbon emission reduction and energy sustainability can both be practiced while also running an economically sustainable farm.

Eligible projects of OFEMP include:

- Construction projects that install high-efficiency equipment from the program's Funding List;
- Retrofit projects that improve operation energy usage per unit of production; and
- Installation of sub-metres to monitor on-farm electricity and/or natural gas usage.

Eligible OFSPV systems must be:

- Grid-tied, not off-grid;
- Approved under Alberta's Micro-Generation Legislation;
- Positioned to optimize sunshine and minimize shading;
- Have manufacturer-warranties on: Solar modules, Racking, Inverters and/or Micro-inverters; and
- Producing power that is used in the production of a primary commodity.

The Government has partnered with three grassroots organizations staffed with Energy Outreach Officers whose role is to promote the OFEMP and the OFSPV Program to Alberta communities. Energy Outreach Officers are available to attend community events, talk about energy efficient technologies, answer questions about the OFEMP and OFSPV Program, and explain the benefits of these programs. The Outreach Officers are also more than happy to meet one-on-one with you to help you find potential energy efficiency solutions for your operation.

If you would like more information on these programs and how you can access funding, you can visit www.growingforward.alberta.ca and subscribe for updates, or contact your regional Energy Outreach Officer.

Regional Contact Information:

Energy Outreach Officer
– Kale Scarff
Phone: 780.307.7849
Email: groextension@telus.net



Shining Bank Lake Community Stewardship Initiative Moving Forward

The Stewardship Alliance for Conservation Agriculture (SACA), a partnership between WCFA, Yellowhead and Woodlands Counties, has secured funding with the Land Stewardship Centre of Canada to begin a Community Stewardship Initiative on Shining Bank Lake. This project was brought forth by Yellowhead County amid concerns surrounding the health of the lake, riparian area surrounding the lake and the land adjacent to the lake.

This initiative aims to bring awareness of riparian health, biodiversity, wildlife habitat, water quality, and shoreline health to landowners, producers and recreational users on or near Shining Bank Lake.

The current objectives of the project include:

1. Increase awareness, understanding and engagement at the community level in regards to environmental concerns, ecosystem & aquatic health and the important functions of these features, along with how and what types of Best Management Practices could be implemented to help maintain or improve lake health overall.
2. Benchmarking of water quality, soil health, erosion, and shoreline health to assess the current health



status of the lake, identify any areas of concern, and to track any changes over time.

3. Conduct Riparian Health Assessments/Inventories on areas surrounding the lake to assess the current condition of the Riparian areas and identify any areas that may benefit from management changes, or other improvement initiatives.

This project is in the early stages of implementation, but we will be planning some informational sessions and educational events very soon. We are also looking for

feedback and anyone willing to work with us on this project. Community involvement is a critical part of this project, as it is your lake and we want to make sure we are working on the things that are most important to you.

For more information or to offer your input on the project please contact:

Jessica Watson

Conservation Agriculture & Extension Program Manager
780.727.4424
conservationag@westcentralforage.com

What's the WCFA Team Been Up To?



June was a hectic month for all of us at WCFA, and July has been much the same! So what's been keeping us busy?

Research Trials

Our Wildwood Research site was seeded on June 5, with the Corn variety trial going in a few days prior. We were hoping to get our Brazeau County Research Site seeded in a similar timeframe, but unfortunately, as we all know too well, the weather had other ideas. We battled the rain for a couple of weeks, made a couple failed attempts to seed when it was just a bit wet to do so, and finally on June 19 were able to get our Brazeau County Research Site seeded. With seeding complete, it was time to dive into site maintenance, and our Summer Technicians have been kept busy ever since weeding and mowing at our four sites. In between it all we've been keeping up

with data collection, harvest of certain trials, and we are gearing up to spread sludge & fertilizer at our Woodlands County site.

Extension Events

Western Beef Development Summer Field Day

June 19-21 had Jess, Anna and two of our wonderful WCFA members make the drive out to Saskatoon to attend the Western Beef Development Centre's 19th Annual Summer Field Day at the Termuende Research Ranch (near Lanigan, Sk). The first stop of the trip was made at the Rayner Dairy Research Facility at the University of Saskatchewan. We were able to tour the barn from the catwalk above and gain insight into some of the research done at the facility. The barn milks with a parlor system (and we arrived just as milking was finishing for that shift), as well as using a

robotic system. The following morning we headed out to the WBDC Field Day. The morning consisted of a few presentations in the barn, covering 20 years at the Termuende Ranch, Managing for Efficiency, and looking at the move the WBDC is making to the Livestock and Forage Centre of Excellence. Following lunch we then loaded the busses to take in some in-field presentations on topics covering everything from parasites in pasture animals, antimicrobial resistance, stage of maturity at harvest for swath grazing crops, mycotoxins, sire parentage verification, and a genomic testing program. The learning opportunities were abundant, and we may have even snuck in a little fun along the way as well.

Jim Gerrish Grazing School

We wrapped up the month of June with our one day grazing school with the renowned Jim Gerrish in Cherhill. Jim covered a number of grazing topics during the classroom session in the morning before venturing out in the field to cover some of them in more depth (with grass at our feet). The weather was perfect, and Jim put on an excellent workshop, where we hope everyone was able to learn something new, or simply gain



a new perspective on things. And remember..."I shall not be afraid to waste grass".

Pond Days

Throughout June our Summer Technicians and Jess assisted with the delivery of four Pond Days to local Gr. 4/5 students. Pond Days is a program hosted yearly in partnership with local municipalities to introduce the students to a variety of topics related to ecosystem and riparian health.

The first of the four days was delivered in partnership with Yellowhead County at Chip Lake. Anna, our Summer Field Tech., was given the task of teaching the students all about soil health and erosion as she manned the soils station. The end of the same week would have Anna and Rachael, Summer Field Techs, out at Chickakoo Lake to look after the plant ID station, and take the kids on a nature walk. This day was delivered in partnership with Parkland County.

The following week had Jess and Rachael venture out to Shuman Lake in Woodlands County to deliver the soil health and water quality stations to the students from Ft. Assiniboine. The final Pond Day for 2017 was delivered in partnership with Parkland County and was hosted by one of our board members, Eric Vanderwell.

Classroom Agriculture Program

The end of May took Jess and Anna out to Drayton to deliver a CAP presentation to a class of Gr. 4/5 students. They were a curious bunch, and our staff had a great time interacting with the students and giving them further insight in to the wonderful world of Agriculture. Rachael closed out our CAP presentations for the year, delivering the final of the three we did this year at the Wildwood school.

Biological Control Program

In late June we were invited out Dale Engstrom's to tour his weevil release sites.

Dale had made releases of the weevils in 2010 and 2013 and during scouting of the sites we were able to find good numbers of larvae present in the stems of the thistle plants. We would like to thank Dale for inviting us out and allowing us to view the larvae and larval damage first hand.

After a few delays to the original timeline of mid June, we were finally able to set a date for delivery of the Stem Gall Flies. The first pick-up and delivery of the flies was made on July 4th, with the second (and final) delivery for the year being completed on July 13th. We are wishing all of you that received flies

much success with them, and we would very much appreciate any updates you're willing to share. We would like to thank everyone for their patience throughout the delivery process, it is a large undertaking to have all the flies delivered in a timely manner and we certainly could not do it without all your patience and understanding.

To say we've been keeping busy would be an understatement, but we're enjoying ourselves along the way. We're looking forward to showing off our hard work to you all later this summer during our Field Days!



Industrial Hemp Field Day

AUG 30, 2017

FEATURING:

- ♦ Tours of Hemp Trials {WCFA Research Site; U of A Breton Plots}
- ♦ Tour of BioComposites Group Facility {Fibre Plant}
- ♦ Tour of a Local Producer Operation
- ♦ Guest Speakers {Alberta Ag & Forestry, Hemp Producer Panel & More!}

Cost: \$30/person

(lunch & refreshments provided)

**Registration: 8 AM- Brazeau
County Office**

{Buses will depart by 8:30}

*It is expected that buses will return to
the County office by 4:30 pm.*

Pre-Registration is required.

**Registration can be completed by calling WCFA @ 780.727.4447 or online
through Eventbrite**

