forage VIEWS

WEST-CENTRAL FORAGE ASSOCIATION

March 2017

In This Issue

ALPINE K-20-S boosts dairy feed

ALPINE has been working with alfalfa growers across Canada the last three years to come up with a crop nutrition program to increase yields and feed quality. Utilizing the Phazed Nutrition Program concept that ALPINE has developed for other crops, a sound program has emerged with ALPINE K20-S® as an integral component of the alfalfa program. ALPINE K20-S® contains K-tech technology which enables plants to absorb potassium quicker. With the heavy demands from alfalfa plants for potassium, it's no surprise to see plants respond to ALPINE K20-S®

Increased feed value

Harvey Hollman of 4DJ Farms in Penhold, Alberta is a cattleman who grows alfalfa for dairy producers. Since changing from dry fertilizer applications to ALPINE liquid products, Harvey has seen increases in production and quality of hay produced. But most importantly, his customers have reported higher total digestible nutrients (TDN), and protein in the range of 5-10% in the alfalfa purchased from 4DJ Farms. Many of his customers also report higher butterfat content. Similar work done in Ontario has also shown similar results along with increases in milk production.

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Agriculture Opportunity Fund

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ALPINE K-20-S boosts dairy feed continued

The Program

Harvey believes in feeding the plants a balanced crop nutrition program based on soil and tissue testing. He likes to feed his crops just as an Olympian athlete is nourished to obtain the highest results possible. In doing so he also follows the 4 R's of crop nutrition: using the right product at the right rate at the right time in the right amount. For Harvey, this translates to 4L of ALPINE K20-S® , 4L ALPINE ® and 8L of UAN per acre supplemented by any micronutrients as determined by soil and tissue tests. This is applied when there is 4 inches of new growth in the spring and, likewise, after every cutting during the season.

In Ontario, growers have also been using 4L per acre of ALPINE K20-S® supplemented with their normal practice of a dry blend top dress or manure application. ALPINE K20-S® also supplies sulphur to the crop which is a nutrient that has become an important factor in Ontario due to the reduction in free sulphur the growers received from atmospheric emissions generated by industrial coal burning. A recent study by the University of Guelph has shown that additional sulphur is now commonly required on alfalfa stands.

Plant responses

The alfalfa crop is responding well after the application due to the fast uptake of the nutrients applied. Harvey attributes a lot of this to the ALPINE K-Tech® technology contained in ALPINE K20-S® . The acetate component allows faster uptake of potassium into the plant and helps increase the foliar uptake of other applied nutrients in the process. Since changing to the ALPINE products, the leaves on the plants resemble those of clover being larger with darker, richer, green color. Another benefit to the program Harvey has seen is a reduction in winter kill in his stands.

WCFA Annual General Meeting

March 29th 2017

Ft: Mini-Ag Tradeshow

$25 Registration Fee

Schedule of Events on March 29th

4:00pm Registrations
4:30 Year End Updates
5:30 Supper
6:30 General Meeting
7:30pm Entertainment

Carrot Creek Hall

53411 Range Road 133A
Yellowhead County, AB T0E 0G0
RSVP deadline March 24th.

Id rather be behind a desk
...said no rancher EVER!
Unknown

RSVP please (780)727-4447 or info@westcentralforage.com

Have a game plan before calving season gets underway

The risk factors that can sicken young calves are numerous but some can be mitigated, says veterinarian

Ensuring a calf gets enough colostrum and has dry bedding can lessen the chance it will become sick.

The upcoming calving season will be a time of risk for disease on cow-calf operations. Pathogens that cause disease in young calves are present in all herds, so careful management is necessary to prevent them from getting sick.

“Cow-calf producers most often deal with scours, septicemia, respiratory disease, and joint or navel ill,” said Dr. Claire Windeyer, a veterinarian and professor and researcher at the University of Calgary.

“Septicemia often looks like a severe case of scours, except there is no diarrhea associated with it. In other cases, septicemia may present itself as calves found dead because the disease advances so quickly.”

Risks for disease can be thought of in terms of a triad including the pathogen (the bug), the host (the calf), and the environment.

“Pathogen risk factors include the certain bacteria or viruses in a producer’s herd. The pathogens that cause calf disease are usually already present on farm, so producers should focus on the other two parts of the triad. The host risk factors include things like: Did the calf get enough colostrum? Was it a difficult birth? Was the calf born into a snowbank?

“All those things can put calves at higher risk for disease. In terms of environmental factors,

Have a game plan before calving season gets underway
continued

those include things like winter storms, or milder winters where there is a lot of mud."

In terms of preventing diseases in young calves, the biggest difference between the herds that manage their calf health well and other herds is the planning put into the calving season, said Windeyer. The effort to wean healthy, heavy calves starts long before the calving season and before calves get sick, she added.

"Start to plan at the breeding season the year before by selecting the right cows for your herd, and checking the body condition score of your cows," said Windeyer. "Going into the calving season, producers should be thinking about what their goals are — and from there, what their protocols and approach will be."

Windeyer recommends having a clear 'game plan' and making sure all the equipment and plans are in place before the calving season.

"Having a plan allows producers to make sure they are able to mitigate all three parts of the risk factor triad. This includes things like making sure cows are vaccinated, good colostrum management, and providing bedding to keep calves warm and dry."

By Beef Cattle Research Council Release
Published: January 5, 2017

Wild Boar At Large

An invasive pest in Alberta

Why are we concerned about wild boar in Alberta?

Wild boar are farmed in Alberta as livestock. However, when they are not being raised as livestock on a farm, they are considered to be “at large” and are an invasive pest that can:

- damage property, agricultural crops, pastures and the environment, including through rooting (digging);
- endanger people and animals;
- harass livestock and consume their feed, prey on young livestock and wildlife;
- spread diseases that could be transmitted to wildlife, livestock, pets and people;
- alter the ecosystem, including through wallowing (rolling around), that can contaminate water supplies, promote erosion, and destroy fish habitat;
- compete with wildlife and destroy other sensitive natural habitats; and
- consume the eggs of ground-nesting birds.

Are wild boar native to Alberta?

Wild boar are not native to Alberta. They came to the province in the 1980s and ’90s as livestock. Over the years, some animals escaped, and have established several feral/wild populations.

How do they survive in the winter?

Wild boar are very adaptable. The wild boar in Alberta are typically the Eurasian type and have long dark hair and a wooly underfur that protects them from extreme cold. They build nests where they shelter during cold weather and are able to travel in deep snow to access food sources.

In what kind of habitat are they found?

Wild boar prefer habitats that provide forest cover for hiding and resting, as well as access to food. During the summer months they can be found close to water sources where they can wallow to stay cool.

What do they eat?

Wild boar will eat just about any organic matter. They are omnivores, which means they will eat plants, insects, and other animals. They have a “cartilaginous disc” on their snouts, which helps them to dig and root extensively in search of insects and roots. They can use their very sharp tusks for rooting, as well as protection.

310-FARM (3276)
agriculture.alberta.ca
January 2017

Alberta Government

Wild boar at large: An invasive pest in Alberta

What are the regulations for wild boar in Alberta?

In 2014, Agriculture and Forestry's Wild Boar Containment Standards were enacted for farmed wild boar. These enhanced fencing requirements were put in place to help prevent them from escaping and becoming pests at-large. When wild boar are in captivity, they are considered livestock as long as the farmer meets the fencing standards.

Wild boar at-large are a pest under provincial law, through the Pest and Nuisance Control Regulation. Under the *Agricultural Pests Act*, Albertans are required to control or destroy them and prevent them from becoming established on their land.

What should I do if I have wild boar on my land?

If Albertans have wild boar at-large on their land, they should call 310-FARM (3276). Provincial government staff will collect the information and work with the landowner and the municipality to help find a solution.

What are signs of wild boar at-large to watch for?

Signs of boar activity include:

- Tracks in the snow or mud, or trails of groups ("sounders") of boar
- Signs of boar digging or rolling around (rooting and wallowing)
- Signs of boar eating your livestock feed
- Boar droppings

Can I hunt wild boar?

People who want to help remove pests from property are allowed to do so, and there is no licence, season, or limits for wild boar at-large. Be aware that general laws around firearms and trespassing apply and must be followed. Contact your local police or Fish and Wildlife Office for more information.

Did you know?
Non-professional hunting of wild boar at-large can actually make it harder for organized control efforts. Boar are very smart! Hunting can make them learn quickly to avoid humans, and this can make the problems worse.

To report wild boar at-large or for more information, please call **310-FARM (3276)** toll-free in Alberta.

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EMAIL INFO@CANAMAIZE.COM

Corn 101

Feb 22, 2017

The WCFA office was full to the brim for Corn 101, with over 55 people snuggled into the boardroom for the day.

We were very blessed to have an outstanding group of presenters for this workshop, covering everything from the economics of extensive grazing (focusing on corn), managing winter grazing systems, to the agronomics of growing corn (including 5 keys to producing a top corn crop) and fertilizer for production (with a specific focus on liquid fertilizer and it's advantages).

Our outstanding group of exceptionally knowledgeable presenters consisted of:

- Dr. Bart Lardner with the Western Beef Development Centre in Lanigan, SK. Dr. Lardner is also a professor with the department of Animal and Poultry Science at the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon, SK.
- Patrick Fabian, Provincial Sales Manager for Thunder Seed.
- Bruce Avison with Har-De Agri Services in Calmar.
- Andrew Tetz, Alberta Sales Agronomist for Nachurs Alpine.
- Leo Lutz, Western Sales Manager for Bruce Phos.

We cannot thank all the presenters enough for travelling to be with us, they certainly made the day a huge success!

We would also like to extend a thank-you to everyone that attended, we were blown away by the attendance, and we certainly could not hold successful events such as this one without you!

Missed this event? Check out #wcfacorn101 for highlights! Our Facebook page also has more photos and videos from the event!

This event was brought to you in part by Brazeau County.

L-R: Dr. Lardner, Leo Lutz, Bruce Avison, Andrew Tetz, Patrick Fabian, Jessica Watson, Nanne Bouius

Welcome Home
Brazeau County

Cows eat what they like, not what they need

Cows will eat until full, given voluntary free-choice access to feed. Cows do not balance their nutrients or nutritional needs, only their intakes. In fact, cows can only balance four things:

- *the air they breathe*
- *the water they drink*
- *the amount of feed they consume each day*
- *And salt*

Salt and Minerals

Nearly all winter feeding programs for cows require the use of additional salt and minerals. Trace Mineralized Fortified Salt (TM Fortified Salt) has gained widespread acceptance. It contains similar levels of iodine and cobalt as found in blue salt. In addition, it contains a number of important and necessary trace minerals (copper, zinc, manganese and sometimes selenium). *On a free-choice basis, feed supplements and minerals are consumed in a "hit and miss" fashion.* Some cows will eat the required amount, some cows will consume excessive amounts and others will ignore the supplement or mineral. It is better to mix the feed supplement or mineral into a small amount of grain or pellets (three to four lb. per head per day).

Ensure that each cow receives her share. The other option is to feed fortified pellets containing a balance of minerals, vitamins and supplements.

Having the feeds analyzed will give a much more accurate account of the amount and type of minerals and supplements that your cows will require.

If you are uncertain about the quality of your feeds ask WCFA staff about feed testing, feed result interpretation and ration balancing services we provide to our members.

For inquiries and information please contact

WCFA Forage & Livestock Program Manager, Fito Zamudio Baca
email: forage@westcentralforage.com or (780) 727-4447

Scientists hope wetland carbon storage experiment is everyone's cup of tea

Australian scientists have launched a project to bury tens of thousands of teabags in wetlands around the world. They are hoping others will sacrifice a few cups of tea and join in to discover how efficient different wetlands are at capturing and storing carbon dioxide.

"We need to find out the best wetland environments for carbon sequestration so we know where we should invest our energy."

That's where scientists have come up against barriers in the past. There are hundreds of thousands of wetlands around the world. A standardised technique for monitoring the carbon is needed for accurate comparison, and monitoring devices can cost thousands of dollars to install.

Macreadie, leader of the project, had been reading scientific research about teabags being buried and used to measure the rate at which carbon was being released from soil into the atmosphere.

Fast decay of the tea inside the bag meant more carbon was being released into the atmosphere, while slower decay meant the soil was holding the carbon.

"People think of innovation as involving fancy new technology, but sometimes the best ideas are the most simple ones."

"We're using green tea and red tea because they're made of different components, with green tea degrading more quickly and so we expect it not to last as long, while the red tea is made of tougher components and will break down more slowly." 40-80 teabags are buried per site.

The bags will be monitored over a three-year period and will be dug up and measured at intervals of three months, six months and each year after that.

Once researchers can establish which wetlands are most effective at carbon sequestration, work can begin on protecting those types of wetlands, restoring them and ensuring they are not disrupted.

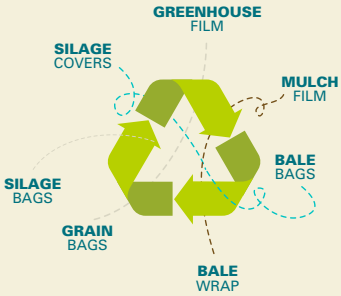
Article originally published on Feb 22, 2017 on www.theguardian.com. Content has been edited slightly for length.

VERSION 3

AG PLASTIC FACTS

Types of Agricultural Plastics
There are **two** main types of agricultural plastics commonly used in agriculture, *not including* pesticide and other rigid plastic containers.

1 POLYETHYLENE (PE) RESINS



2 POLYPROPYLENE RESINS

CORDAGE TWINE

WHAT CAN **YOU** DO **INSTEAD?**

WHAT SHOULD **YOU** DO WITH THESE PLASTICS?

Don't burn them! Why?

Although agricultural plastics burn easily, open burning usually does not reach high enough temperatures to prevent the release of toxic chemicals.

It's bad for you, your family, and your community.

- Burning plastics releases toxic and potentially cancer causing chemicals into the air.
- These toxic compounds can accumulate in the soil, plants and animals and contaminate food and feed crops, eventually making their way up to the food chain and into the food we eat.
- The smoke and ash can also irritate eyes and lungs, which is especially bad for people with asthma or heart disease.
- Disposal of agricultural plastics on farm either by burning or burying produces hazardous consequences to human and animal health, water and land resources and the environment.

It's pollution. Toxins released into the air during burning can fall on our soils and in our water.

It's dangerous. Burning garbage or brush can lead to wildfires, property damage and sometimes loss of life.

IT'S ILLEGAL!
Burning of plastics is prohibited debris under the **Substance Release Regulation (AR 124/93)** and therefore cannot be burned.

Many municipal landfills and transfer stations will only accept agricultural plastics if rolled and compacted to their requirements.

It is recommended that producers contact their local municipality for further info on requirements.

What else can you recycle?
Plastic, paper, cardboard and metal materials, used oil, tires, and beverage containers.

GET READY TO RECYCLE:

You must sort and separate agricultural plastics by resin type for recycling:

- Used agricultural plastics must be as clean as possible for recycling, <10% contamination.
- Remove as much forage, soil, stones and other contaminants as possible before rolling or folding films and bags into bundles.
- Locate silage bags, bales and grain bags on higher ground or a concrete pad to reduce mud and manure contamination.
- Separate different products and types, keep cleaner film for example separate from dirtier.
- Bag twine to prevent tangling and in units < 1 cubic meter for ease of handling.
- Do not mix twine with any other materials.
- Twine must be dry.
- Films and wraps can be bagged or baled into 1000-1200 lb bales.
- Label each bag or bale with a permanent marker, type of material, date and contact phone number before delivering to the landfill or collection facility.
- Compaction is necessary for economical transport.

Call the **Recycle Info Line** at **1-800-463-6326** for local information.

WWW.RECYCLINGHOTLINE.CA

Funded in part by Alberta Agriculture and Forestry.

ALBERTA CANOLA · ALBERTA PULSE GROWERS · Alberta Barley · Alberta Wheat Commission

Yellowhead County

Woodlands County

West-Central Forage Association

Alberta's Carbon Levy and Farmers: Sorting the Facts from the Myths

Article adapted from: Government of Alberta Alberta's Carbon Levy and Farmers Fact Sheet

FACT:

The carbon levy is charged directly on the cost of heating and transportation fuels and only on these fuels. Marked fuels are exempt from the levy, which is an exemption not provided to any other industry. The following table illustrates the levy rates:

Type of Fuel	January 1, 2017 $20/tonne C02e	January 1, 2018 $30/tonne C02e
Marked farm fuels	Exempt	Exempt
Unmarked Diesel	5.35 ¢/L	8.03 ¢/L
Unmarked Gasoline	4.49 ¢/L	6.73 ¢/L
Natural Gas	1.011 $/GJ	1.517 $/GJ
Propane	3.08 ¢/L	4.62 ¢/L
Coal	Coal $44.37 /tonne	$66.56 /tonne

MYTH:

Custom freight will become unaffordable due to the increase in fuel costs. This is false. While fuel costs will increase with the carbon levy, fuel is not the only cost associated with freight. Like any other business, trucking companies have more than one cost that are included in what they charge for their service. They pay for the driver's wages, equipment, insurance, maintenance, and other associated costs in addition to fuel. As a result, the added carbon levy for diesel of 5-8¢/L represents about 1-2 percent of the freight bill. To provide an example, a trucking bill of $500 should only increase by $5-10 as a result of the carbon levy.

MYTH:

Fertilizer prices will rise considerably as so much natural gas is used in the production of nitrogen fertilizers. This is false. Following the same logic as the electricity example above, fertilizer producers have been paying under the SGER since 2007. Their cost will increase marginally as the carbon price increases in 2017 and 2018. Fertilizer manufactures, like farmers, are price takers competing in an international market and are limited in their ability to pass on increased operational costs. As seen in the chart below fertilizer prices have fluctuated significantly since 2005, however, the SGER coming into effect is not the only contributing factor in fertilizer rates.

So what will the carbon levy cost your farm?

The most obvious costs will be heating fuel and grain drying. To estimate your increased costs look at your last few years' heating fuel bills and multiply the total GJ per year consumed by the factor in the carbon levy table above to estimate your annual cost. If you are using natural gas or propane for other uses like irrigation drives or grain drying, be sure to include those as well. Keep in mind that administrative, distribution, and transmission charges are not subject to the Carbon Levy, the levy is only charged on the actual GJ of natural gas consumed. For example, a farm using 200GJ per year of natural gas will pay an extra $202.20 due to the carbon levy.