

SPRING 2020



FORAGE VIEWS

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WCFA Memberships Due!

WCFA STAFF

It's time again for all our members to renew their annual memberships!

An annual membership with WCFA is \$30 per farm unit and covers the period from January 1 to December 31, 2020.

A few of the benefits to membership with WCFA include:

- Discounted rates for feed testing (20%) and soil testing!
- Access to the rental equipment line-up!
- Discounted registration fees for many workshops and seminars!
- 'Forage Views' newsletter emailed directly to your inbox!

Please join our organization for another successful year by renewing your membership today! **Membership forms can be found at www.westcentralforage.com.**

Note: in order to vote at our upcoming AGM you will need to be an active member.



Board of Directors Positions

WCFA STAFF

WCFA is always on the lookout for members who would make good directors, as each year there is a mandatory turnover of part of the Board.

Are you interested in contributing to the success of the organization and impacting our community at large? Consider becoming a member of the WCFA Board of Directors.

Directors are elected by the membership to a three year term at the Annual General Meeting (a great reason to make sure you're registered to attend on March 28th!)

If you would like more informatoin about becoming a director please contact our office at 780-727-4447.

Note: WCFA Board Members must be a current member in good standing.

Board of Directors

President

Grant Chittick

Vice President

Brian Dickson

Treasurer

Greg Malyk

Secretary

Therese Tompkins

Directors

Larry Kidd

Duane Movald

Frank Maddock

Rod Nikkel

Brett Byers

Shayne Horn

Aren Skogstad

Board Contact

board@westcentralforage.com

Staff

General Manager

Rachael Nay

Agronomy Technician

Vacant

Conservation/Extension

Jessica Watson

Contact Us

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Entwistle, AB

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Evansburg, AB
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www.westcentralforage.com



West-Central Forage Association



@westcentralforage



@WestCentralFor

Municipal Partners

Yellowhead County
Woodlands County
Lac Ste. Anne County
Parkland County
Brazeau County
Leduc County



Looking Ahead: 2020 Proposed Projects

JESSICA STAMBULIC

2020 Regional Silage Trial

The 2020 Regional Silage Trial will be conducted in partnership with nine other Alberta applied research associations (ARAs) and forage associations (FAs).

This trial began back in 2009 and has included new crops and varieties each year. Research over the past 10 years has shown that inclusion of pulses in a silage mixture can increase protein content by an average of 2-5%.

This year's trial will introduce potential alternative crops such as chicory, plantain, fava beans, forage beets and forage kale into the mix! Intercropping of winter and spring cereals will be investigated in the interest of extending fall grazing.

Understanding the regional adaptability of these new varieties in a mixture will be key in guiding Alberta producers to make the most economic decisions for their operations.

Continued on page 4

Looking Ahead: 2020 Proposed Projects

Continued from page 3

JESSICA STAMBULIC

WCFA Soil Revitalization Project (2020-2023)

Have you been wondering how to improve your soil but have concerns about production costs or management changes?

This three year project will investigate various incremental changes that producers can implement on their operations to improve soil health while still remaining economically profitable.

WCFA will be dedicating 10 acres of the Wildwood Plot Site for the project. Since the opening of the CARA Soil Health Lab in 2018, testing soil health measures is more accessible to producers and will be incorporated into this project.

Methods such as reduced tillage, crop selection for soil improvement, incorporation of soil health monitoring, and other achievable management changes will be demonstrated.

2020 CHTA Hemp Variety Trial

WCFA looks forward to participating in the third year of the Canadian Hemp Trade Alliance (CHTA) Hemp Variety Trial. This trial is conducted on a national scale, and provides valuable information on regional adaptability of grain and dual-purpose industrial hemp varieties.



What Have We Been Up To?

WCFA STAFF

It has been an extremely busy last few months for the WCFA team! We have spent a lot of time on the road attending various events, hosting a number of our own events and have spent office time serving our members!

Here is short summary of a few of the things that have been keeping us busy! For a more detailed account of our activities in 2019, be sure to attend our upcoming AGM on Saturday, March 28th at 9:00 AM.

Fall Seminar Series

We hosted four very successful seminars at our office in October and November, 2019. Topics included:

- Supplementing Low Quality Forages
- Profit-Based Choices for Your Operation
- Maintaining a Healthy Herd
- Forage Planning to Extend Grazing

Feed Quality Concerns Seminar

In mid-November we partnered with Leduc County to bring a nutrition based workshop to a number of producers in Leduc County.

Prairie's North Farm Forum

Staff attended the Prairie's North Farm Forum hosted by the counties of Woodlands, Lac Ste. Anne and Barrhead.

Rural Women's Conference

Jessica S. attended the local Rural Women's Conference at the Park Court Hall in November.





What Have We Been Up To?

Continued from page 4

WCFA STAFF

Beaver's in Our Landscape

Jessica W. attend the Beaver's in Our Landscape workshop hosted by Lac Ste. Anne County.

EFP Technician Training

Jessica W. and Rachael attended the annual training for EFP technicians in Calgary in early November.

Chittick Family Female Sale

Staff attended Board President, Grant Chittick's female sale in November, where Jessica S. got her first taste of this kind of sale!

2019 Western Canada Conference on Soil Health and Grazing

Staff, as part of the planning committee for this conference, attended the full three days of the Soil and Grazing Conference held in Edmonton in December.

Farmer-Led Research Engagement

Staff attended the Farmer-Led Research Engagement session held in Barrhead in late January. Rachael and Jessica S. attended the industry stakeholder engagement session as well. We should be hearing soon about how the province plans to structure this following these sessions very soon.

Third Annual Ladies' Ranching Retreat

The third edition of our Ladies' Ranching Retreat was held on January 31, 2020 in Stony Plain. We had an incredible group of over 40 women turn out for the event!



Project Highlight Sire-Progeny Links in Multi-Sire Commercial Herds

JESSICA WATSON

In April of 2019 WCFA began a multi-year project to evaluate the use of DNA technology in commercial operations with multi-sire herds.

The project will demonstrate the use of the Q-link technology from Quantum Genetix on-farm, and will evaluate the potential benefit of introducing the use of this technology to commercial producers.

Q-link provides information to producers on which bull sired which calves through genetic testing.

We are just wrapping the first year of data collection and will begin analysis once we have received all of the parentage results.

We have five local producers partnering with us on the project, as well as participation from herds associated with Olds College and Lakeland College. BIXs has also partnered with us on this project.

All of the participating herds collected DNA samples on the bulls that would be participating in the project.

Participating bulls were required to pass a breeding soundness evaluation and test negative for venereal diseases.

Many of our cooperator herds elected to begin collecting DNA data on calves this year as many of the participating bulls were used in last year's breeding season.

Producers were asked to collect DNA samples from 100 calves through collection of ear tissue samples (samples pictured above left). All samples were submitted to Quantum Genetix for lab analysis to determine parentage.

Additional production data, such as weaning weights will also be collected as part of the economic analysis for the project.

We will be sure to continue to provide updates on this project as it progresses. This first year provided us with many learning opportunities and we are excited to see how this project evolves over the next few years.

UPCOMING EVENTS

SPRING 2020

Strategies to Manage Weeds in Hayland & Pastures

March 18, 2020
Glen Park Hall
(Leduc County)
10:00 AM

'Business over Breakfast' WCFA Annual General Meeting

March 28, 2020
WCFA Office, Entwistle
9:00 AM

**For more information or to
register for our upcoming
events please visit
www.westcentralforage.com
or contact our office at
(780) 727-4447.**



CANADA THISTLE STEM-GALL FLY

**We are now accepting orders for
Canada thistle stem-gall flies to be
delivered June 2020 (approximately).**

Cost: \$150/release
100 insects per release

Order deadline is April 15, 2020

To order please contact Jessica Watson
780-621-8670
conservationag@westcentralforage.com

***New* Pick-up locations for 2020**
Lethbridge
High River
Airdrie
Red Deer
Leduc
Sherwood Park
Mayerthorpe



AGM & UPDATE



BUSINESS OVER BREAKFAST

SATURDAY, MARCH 28, 2020

9:00 AM

WCFA Office

(5009-45 Avenue, Entwistle, AB)

REGISTRATION REQUIRED BY

MARCH 20, 2020

780-727-4447

www.wcfaagm2020.eventbrite.ca



**\$10 FOR MEMBERS
\$40 FOR NON-MEMBERS
(INCLUDES MEMBERSHIP)**

Staff Member Farewell

WCFA STAFF

The WCFA office will be a little quieter for the next while. Jessica Stambulic, our Agronomy Technician, has accepted another job opportunity and will be finished her time with WCFA on Friday, March 13.

We would like to thank Jessica for her dedication to WCFA and our research projects over her time with us. We will miss her energy around the office, but we think the rodent control crew (Keith, Kenny and Jules) will miss her the most. We must say, however, that her departure should create a little less confusion for those of you calling in to the office, as we will once again be down to a single Jessica at the office.

All jokes aside, Jess S. will be missed, and we wish her all the best in her new role.



WANTED SOIL SAMPLE SITES

**We are looking for
sites to sample as
part of the Alberta
Soil Health
Benchmark Project.**

If you are interested in participating or would like more information about this project please contact:
Jessica Watson
780-621-8670

WE'RE HIRING!

SUMMER FIELD TECHNICIANS

WCFA requires two ambitious and motivated individuals to assist with our applied research, demonstration programs and extension.

Apply to:

Rachael Nay, Manager
manager@westcentralforage.com

For the full job description visit
www.westcentralforage.com/about/careers

VERBEEK HEREFORDS

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Strategies to manage weeds in hayland and pastures

Presented by WCFA and Leduc County

Sponsored by Corteva Agriscience

Wednesday, March 18 | 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Glen Park Hall (49004 Range Road 274, Leduc County)



This **FREE** workshop will give attendees an overview of available municipal programs and weed control products, as well as information on:

- **Establishing productive pastures and hay fields**
- **Managing weeds on pastures and hayland**

ALUS Canada will be on site to speak to their programs and answer questions.

Register by March 16 by calling **780-955-4593** or email **ag@leduc-county.com**.