



Marketing Your Cash Hay

forage focus

Growing forage as a cash crop is an excellent way to get higher net returns from your land base. The other benefits include agronomic bonuses such as increased soil fertility, less weeds, and improved soil structure. Manitoba's excellent hay reputation has grown significantly over the past 10 years. Both the U.S. and international customers appreciate our quality hay and are willing to pay for it, despite the added transportation costs. Dairy producers in Wisconsin, North Dakota and South Dakota need quality hay, and have proven to be very good customers.

Manitoba timothy has also created a niche for itself in the Japanese marketplace, and there are now three timothy-processing plants in the province to accommodate Manitoba producers who want to export. The Manitoba Forage Council and the provincial government's promotion of hay and forage at the annual World Dairy Expo in Madison, Wisconsin has also resulted in new sales.

The drought conditions in the United States this summer indicates there is an excellent potential to capture some of the hay markets with Manitoba hay products. USDA Secretary Mike Johanns, just announced a \$780-million national drought aid package this week (September 1, 2006), while visiting the hard-hit drought area of South Dakota. It includes a \$50-million Livestock Assistance Grant Program.

Tips for Successful Marketing:

- Talk to hay brokers to find out the status of the U.S. market, and talk to timothy processors to find out about market potential in Japan and elsewhere. The MFC website has information on marketing and shipping, and a current directory of Manitoba hay producers and processors. Go to www.mbforagecouncil.mb.ca/foragehaymarketing
- If you're considering alfalfa, check into transportation costs to the lucrative U.S. dairy markets.
- If you're looking at an alfalfa/grass mix, the horse market is an option – either locally or out of province. Ask around and see what you can find out. A horse marketer directory is also posted on the MFC website. →

In this issue:

Executive Director Report	1	Coming Events	10
Board News	3	Forage Bits	13
MFC Reports	6	Affiliated Member Reports	15
Events - A Review	7	Board of Directors	16

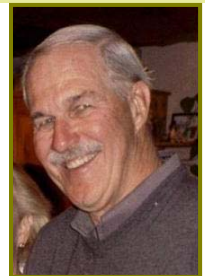
Marketing Cash Hay continued

- If you're considering timothy, which has done well in the Asian market because of its fibre content, see if there is a processing plant in your area. Or is it worth your while to ship to a distant facility? See what you can arrange in the way of selling terms.
- Investigate the local feeder cattle or beef cattle markets. Feeder cattle operators may buy high-quality timothy and other grasses, or alfalfa/grass mixes, while producers wintering beef cows may want your lower-quality hay. Local markets are a good way to save on transportation costs and to avoid the details of hauling arrangements.
- Consider cereal and timothy straw to sell as horse and dairy cattle bedding, and to ginseng producers.
- Line up buyers ahead of time, a practice highly recommended by those in the business. One option is to use existing hay marketers if you haven't got your own.
- Get your hay tested for quality by a reputable U.S. hay-testing lab. This provides assurance for the buyer and validates your price. Shipping samples can be difficult, but one option is to send a sample with your trucker and have him/her mail it to the Lab once they are over the U.S. border.
- Attend World Dairy Expo and work the Manitoba Forage Council Booth to meet potential buyers or obtain the list of interested buyers from the Council.
- Keep an eye on the current auction prices to know what your hay is worth. Several auctions are posted at www.mbforagecouncil.mb.ca

Be cautious with new and existing customers. The U.S. banking system is different than Canada's. Ask for full or partial payment prior to shipping and request a U.S. Cashier's cheque/bank draft (these must be purchased with cash). Cases have been heard where stop payments have been issued on U.S. Certified Cheques. Stop payments cannot be made on Bank drafts or Cashier's cheques.

A few lines from our Executive Director *Argentina Observations*

This past spring my wife Bev and I toured the Argentina countryside and gained some insight into their renowned fed beef industry. Over the three weeks, we traveled north (Iguazu), west: Mendoza and Bariloche, south: El Calafate and then east to Mar del Plata on the East Coast (the Pampas area where the majority of beef is produced). The Pampas region covers 185 million acres (comparable to the agricultural land base in MB, SK, and AB which is 179 million acres), and the Stipa species is the most common native grass species. The common seeded forages are alfalfa, orchard grass and tall fescues.



Fraser Stewart

Winter annuals are grown in areas where finishing animals off pasture is practiced. Soybean production on the pampas has increased by 400% since 1996; however, there has been no reduction in the cattle herd size. →

executive director

Argentina Observations continued

Beef production/Beef exports

Argentinean livestock producers keep 50-55 million head of cattle compared to 11 million head in MB, SK, AB and are the third largest beef exporter in the world. The European Union is their largest customer in terms of value of product, however, Russia, due to declining domestic production takes the largest volume of Argentinean beef. World demand of beef is strong as a result of global economic expansion and there is potential for Argentina to increase their level of exports depending on government policies.

Government Policy and Local Production Issues

Current government policy favours domestic consumption and uses beef as a method of controlling inflation. Their government's goal is to provide beef at a reasonable price for their countrymen. Current consumption of beef per person utilizes 75% of the total production. In 2006, export taxes on beef cuts rose from 5% to 15% and beef exports were banned for six months to reduce inflationary pressures and curb the 20% rise in food prices.

Foot and Mouth disease occurred in 2003 and 2006 and affected exports. After the 2003 outbreak there was an aggressive vaccination program and as a result, the 2006 outbreak was confined to a smaller isolated area. The country has limited inspection and food safety standards, and a very small number of slaughter plants have HACCP standards. Breed associations have pressed the government to adopt new initiatives including labeling and animal identification.



Pampas Region

Production Practices

Two beef production systems are used in Argentina; grass fed, or in recent years the use of feedlots for finishing. Traditionally beef were all forage fed using alfalfa and cool season grasses, but now, due to the availability of low cost corn; the feedlot industry has expanded significantly and uses corn silage and corn grain in their cattle rations. The use of feedlot finishing is increasing, however, the grass finished beef is still the most popular. The health benefits of grass fed animals are currently being documented in medical literature. It contains less saturated fat, higher CLA's, and more omega-3 fatty acids. The animals live under more natural conditions, have lower stress and are free from hormone implants - a concern for some consumers. →

Argentina Observations continued

Dr. Anibal Pordomingo, an Argentinean promoter of grass fed beef, does extensive research in the technology of grass fed production and is a popular speaker and writer at many extension functions in Argentina and more recently in North America. He is one of our keynote speakers at Manitoba Grazing School this November.

Our Observations about Argentinean Beef

- ◇ We had beef at almost all of our meals except breakfast.
- ◇ The tenderness and flavour of the beef was some of the best we have tasted.
- ◇ Comments about grass-fed beef being tough and of poor flavour are perhaps more directed to beef that has not been properly fed and processed.
- ◇ When touring the Pampas, we saw pastures that were extensively subdivided, and had very good quality grass.
- ◇ The cattle breeds were predominately British beef breeds; Angus, Hereford and some Charolais.
- ◇ Cooking of beef is an art. An Asado is the bar-b-que system of cooking the meat over a charcoal fire. The meat is cooked slowly in its own juices on grills that prevent flaming (fat drippings are drained off). The charcoal also gives great flavour to the meat.
- ◇ Most restaurants feature the grilling of the meat and very interesting selections of different cuts of beef and lamb are offered.



Snapshot of Forage Yields

Nevin Bachmeier farms near New Bothwell, MB. According to Nevin, "this year's yields are down but the quality of hay is much better than previous years. I'm still in the middle of my 2nd, 3rd or 4th cut depending on which field got the rain, so I really don't know my final yields." If he has a surplus, and the price is good, Nevin will once again be selling to his U.S. customers.

Don Green of Fisher Branch reports that despite the lower yields his hay quality is "absolutely excellent, the best hay crop I've ever had!" His season started out dry but the 5 inches of rain in May helped make the crop. Don figures his first cut yield was about 80% of his usual and the 2nd cut about 60%. He's just finishing harvesting now. On the silage front, his corn is looking pretty good and his barley silage yielded about 15-20 wet tons.

Darren Chapman from Virden says his 1st hay cut was about average but the quality is down, especially his alfalfa. "We had rains every 4 days for awhile there so we lost a lot of alfalfa - the straight grass turned out to be pretty good though." The quality of their 2nd cut of alfalfa was good but the yield was about 80% of usual. The Chapmans are still harvesting their 3rd cut but expect the yield to be down about 40% but are optimistic that the quality is good.

MFC Website UP!



Looking for current information on forages? Check out www.mbforagecouncil.mb.ca. The new site offers viewers the opportunity to see recent reports on the many research and communication projects the Council administers. Viewers can also easily download all conference proceedings from the Council's two main conferences: the Manitoba Forage Symposium and Manitoba Grazing School.

Other features include a search engine to retrieve information on Council projects. And, the home page highlights upcoming events and the quarterly Forage Focus newsletter.

Another important feature of the website is the pages dedicated to forage and hay marketing. This includes information on Provincial hay marketers and processors, hay transport information and hay auction marts. Be sure to check it out if you're looking to market or purchase forage or hay.

The Council is also striving to make life easier by offering on-line registration for Manitoba Grazing School this year. Go to our Conference and Events page and enter your information on-line. Credit cards accepted. Or alternatively, call Cheryl at (204) 622-2029 with your credit card in hand and we'll register for you! Registration commences October 1, 2006.

get your facts straight with
MAFRI'S new
Fact Sheets
available at:
[www.mbforagecouncil.mb.ca](http://www.mbforagecouncil.mb.ca/researchprojects)
/researchprojects

board news

Forage Finished Beef Value Chain Initiative Completed

MFC identified producing and marketing forage fed finished beef as a possible attractive option for a number of forage and beef producers in Manitoba. As a result, the Manitoba Forage Council (with support from MAFRI, Covering New Ground, and the Manitoba Rural Adaptation Council) contracted Kelwin Management Consulting to research the market to determine consumer demand/interest and determine possible marketing strategies (including processing) to implement the process. The report now published is intended for two audiences, government and industry, and the producers and marketers of forage finished beef projects. The report includes recommendations for industry development and value chain facilitation and promotion. There are specific examples of successful businesses selling forage finished beef for those producers/marketers interested in developing new value chains.



Kelwin completed a value chain assessment and determined that natural forage finished beef is in the early stage of market development. More production capacity exists if more customers can be assessed. Currently, the majority of sales occur directly from the producer to the consumer. The study concluded that a much larger number of

consumers would buy natural forage finished beef if it were available in more retail outlets. For sales to expand significantly the use of retail distribution channels must become widespread.

A key to success for those implementing such value chains is to focus on successfully communicating to the consumer two characteristics: the “good news story,” (local, farmer’s identity, environmentally friendly, natural, etc.), and the health benefits (CLA’s, omega-3’s, etc.). This must be done within the constraints of the labeling regulations. Based on the research with existing marketers of natural forage-finished beef, and observation of the growth in numbers of businesses producing and selling the product and the increasing volumes being sold, the report concludes that production of natural forage finished beef is feasible in Manitoba.

To read the details check the Research Projects page under www.mbforagecouncil.mb.ca

The Manitoba Forage Council is currently developing a Forage Fed Production Manual to assist those interested in this niche market. The guide will be available this winter.

Provincial Grazing Tour engages 150+ Producers

By Pam Iwanchysko, MAFRI

Once again the annual Provincial Grazing Tour was a tremendous success. 156 participants from across the province gathered to tour south western Manitoba and learn what's going on in forage research, grazing techniques and marketing.

The first stop along the way was at the Brandon Research Centre where a number of research trials were showcased. The research continues, but farmers were able to see the results so far. The following projects were demonstrated.

- 10 years of grass vs. alfalfa/grass pasture research,
- using annuals for finishing beef animals,
- a zero-till farm,
- using alfalfa in an annual crop rotation,
- using Alfasure in alfalfa grazing,
- the SW Bull Development Center/Batho Farms Ltd. – ration processing and purebred herd development.

Producers were also treated to an electric fencing workshop delivered by Hans Rindlisbacher, Wil Rex, and Grant House and a session on Marketing your Animals and Forecasting Prices by Rick Wright. A leafy spurge project aimed at determining the best methods of control was also viewed.

A highlight of the tour was the touring of two different livestock operations. Attendees were impressed with Glen and Doreen Hicks and Kelly Van Doorne's operational style. Both have changed their conventional operation of cow/calf and grain into easier management options. The Hicks have switched to grassing stockers and have gone into an intensive grazing operation. Van Doorne has adopted a holistic management operation. Both of these enterprises are now enjoying an easier lifestyle and a more profitable one!

Thanks to Jane Thornton, Forage and Pasture Specialist with MAFRI for organizing an excellent event and to the Manitoba Forage Council and event sponsors.



Electric fencing workshop

events review

2006 Summer Grazing Club Events

By Wayne Cowan, Coordinator

Farmers have the opportunity to learn from an impressive array of speakers at Grazing Clubs. Here's a sampling of the activities of several Manitoba Grazing Clubs.

June 2006: Grand Valley Tour

Speakers were:

Dan MacDonald, PFRA, gave a presentation on how riparian areas function and the management required to keep them healthy.

Jane Thornton, MAFRI, provided the grazing principles as it applies to riparian areas.

Marilena Kowalchuk, Managing the Water's Edge (MWE), gave a short course on using their riparian plants evaluation system to determine stream bank health.

Pasture Tour: The group was lead through a trial evaluation of a stream bank's health and then split into groups of four to do our own evaluations. We then met to compare results and took an average for a final score.

June 2006: South Interlake Club Demonstration Day

Speakers were:

Real Bernard, Kelln Solar, showed the winter watering system they developed and have provided to many ranchers across south Manitoba. He advised that the solar collector be set in a vertical position facing directly south to keep it clear of snow. Store batteries in an insulated container such as an old deep freezer or refrigerator.

Stewart Mannes showed how to build solar powered high tensile fencing and how to trouble shoot for power loss.

Ray Bittner, MAFRI, Ashern, demonstrated the pipeline burial implement and encouraged farmers to rent it from his office. He explained how

he set up his own rotational pasture system with 8 paddocks and 5 watering sites, at nominal cost.

Bob Gillis, PFRA discussed the Environmental Farm Plan program (EFP), Best Management Practices (BMP's), and encouraged ranchers to take the course and gain the technical and funding advantages available.

Argyle / Lizard Lake Clubs Tour of Holistic Management Pasture

Speakers were:

Don Guilford, Holistic Management (HM) practitioner, led the tour of his 1200-acre ranch and espoused the methods he has learned and applied through his HM training. We started at Don's winter grazing site and observed the Kelln watering system, the viewed his bale grazing and swath grazing areas. His vegetation growth has rebounded dramatically. His native grass pasture, converted to rotational grazing in 1985, showed great improvement over the beat up and sparse cover that he started with.

Jane Thornton, MAFRI, and Marilena Kowalchuk, MWE, led the group through Don's paddocks and identified the multitude of grass and forbe species present. Don moves the 200 cows and calves to new paddocks every 3 days to obtain the 60 day rest period that promotes forage growth. He moved from 40 to 60 days of rest three years ago and is very happy with the results. Don described how he manages the forage on this and his two tame pastures with heavy, but short stays in each paddock, good quality water provided from wells through buried pipe lines, and seed production on chosen paddocks each year. He calves in spring/summer and uses extended fall/winter grazing to reduce his costs.

→

Summer Grazing Clubs continued

Don also showed the erosion that has occurred along his riverbank. He has now imbedded trees in cuts to reduce the water pressure and encourage sediment trapping for plant growth. He will stop grazing near the damaged sites to encourage deep-rooted grass and tree growth. Don is presently seeking assistance for this project through the EFP program. The group agreed that a full watershed program is required to have an effective and lasting effect.

Tim Rollheiser, PFRA, explained the EFP program and the funding and technical assistance available.

Marilena Kowalchuk and Wes Pankratz, MWE, explained their program and encouraged the clubs to invite them to give their workshop later this summer.

Barb Kingdon, new Manager of the Tiger Hills Conservation District (CD), testified that she was impressed with this tour and that she will encourage the CD to support future activities of the Argyle club.

For information on how to join a Grazing Club or start your own, please call one of these Coordinators or go to www.mbforagecouncil.mb.ca or www.grazingclubs.ca

- Interlake – Tanis Sirski (204) 768-2781
- Central & SW - Michael Thiele (204) 759-3309
- Central & SW - Wayne Cowan (204) 261-3120
- North West - Arron Nerbas (204) 773-6800

Brandon Research Centre Tour

Brandon Research Centre Tour - September 21, 2006

Time: 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

An excellent tour featuring detailed explanations of the various trials can be yours for only \$20. Join your fellow producers for this day-long event and learn about the impact of riparian management on bio-diversity, how to establish a hardy shelterbelt, how much greenhouse gas is produced from a pasture and more. For a detailed break-down of the tour please go to www.mbforagecouncil.mb.ca

Cost: \$20 (includes lunch)

Register by September 8, 2006 by calling **Gina Ellchuk**

Phone: (204) 578-3608

Fax: (204) 728-3858

Email: gellchuk@agr.gc.ca

events review

**DAIRY
CENTRAL**



**It's Dairy Central at the
Alliant Energy Center, Madison WI, USA
Oct. 3 - 7, 2006**

Mooo...oove on down to World Dairy Expo in Madison, Wisconsin! Meet some hay buyers, see the finest dairy livestock in North America, and get to know our U.S. neighbours.

Join the over 65,000 dairy industry aficionados who travel from afar to participate in this world-class event. This is your chance to see a huge array of exhibits and the finest cattle show in North America.

Attendees can also experience the latest in equipment and technology such as animal health supplies, milking systems, feeding products, forage handling and manure equipment, plus embryos, semen and genetic research. Competitions also abound including seven breed shows and the selection of the World Dairy Expo's Supreme Champion.

There are also numerous educational seminars and virtual farm tours for everyone to take part in. Plus, what a great place to meet like-minded producers to share innovative ideas and opportunities for growth.

MFC has a number of representatives hosting their booth, contact Tanis Sirski (204) 768-2781 if you would like to join us. For more information contact: Pam Iwanchysko, MAFRI, Ph: (204) -648-3965, piwanchysk@gov.mb.ca, or Brad Havixbeck, Manitoba Trade, Ph: (204)-945-2397, bhavixbeck@gov.mb.ca . More details available on the WDE website: www.worlddairyexpo.com/gen.main.cfm

Manitoba Grazing School



MONEY GROWS ON ~~TREES~~ aaah....GRASS

Manitoba Grazing School November 29th - 30th, 2006

coming events

“Money Grows on Grass” Manitoba Grazing School



November 29—30, 2006, Keystone Centre, Brandon, Manitoba
COST: EARLY BIRD \$125.00. After Oct. 31 - \$150.00. Registration includes all conference meals and a Manitoba Forage Council membership. Additional meal tickets \$25.00 each. **Registration is non-refundable.**

Registration with credit cards commences October 1, 2006 via the MFC website or by calling Cheryl Genik at: (204) 622-2029 or cgenik@gov.mb.ca Register on-line at www.mbforagecouncil.mb.ca (Commences October 1, 2006)

Dr. Anibal Pordomingo – Producing Forage Finished Beef

Dr. Anibal Pordomingo, a professor and rancher in Argentina, will discuss how to produce forage finished beef with particular emphasis on grass finishing. This keynote will address all the ingredients needed for success including proper genetics, environmental adaptability, and the nutritional requirements of the animals. He will focus on the system required to accomplish a reliable, predictable, remarkable product.

Brian Kelly – Marketing Opportunities for Forage-Fed Beef

Brian Kelly of Kelwin Management Consulting will discuss the potential in niche marketing of Manitoba forage finished beef products. He will discuss the results of a market study and value chain assessment conducted in Manitoba with emphasis on the importance of marketing forage finished beef.

Kevin Sedivec – Getting the Most out of Your Native Pasture

Kevin is a Rangeland Management Specialist and Associate Professor at North Dakota State University in Fargo, ND. His research specialty areas include grazing management, range nutrition, noxious weed control, and grazing and wildlife management interactions.

Bruce Chern – Seeding Cropland into Forages – Bruce is a forage and livestock producer from Stockholm, SK who will discuss his transition from Alberta to Saskatchewan and how he developed his grazing plans from historical crop land into a forage-based system.

Dr. Anibal Pordomingo – Strategies for Finishing Beef Cattle on Forages - This break out session will focus on the strategies for developing the forage chain, finding and stretching the finishing window and the type of cattle and animal category, (heifer, steer, etc.) for this type of program.

Dr. Jeff Schoenau - Fertility Management in Forages and Pastures – Dr. Schoenau is a professor at the University of Saskatchewan with interests in soil fertility and nutrient management. He is also the Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food Research Chair in Nutrient Management. Jeff will cover fertilization of forages with commercial fertilizer, liquid and solid manure, nutrient recycling and retention in in-field over wintering systems, and impacts of grazing on nutrient dynamics.

Dan Ohler – Thinkin’ Outside the Barn – Dan’s interactive presentations encourages you, and challenges you to think and act “outside the barn.” You learn common sense tools, gain encouragement, and are challenged to make positive changes. Your heart and your head will be touched as Dan shares riveting stories and valuable life lessons learned through his varied agriculture and ag-related experiences.

Dr. Garry Lacefield - Keys to Forage Productivity – Dr. Lacefield is an Extension Forage Specialist with the University of Kentucky Research & Education Center in Princeton, Kentucky. He will discuss how “money grows on grass” or the keys to profitability including ten basic factors concerning forage management practices that he has observed around the world.

Dr. Garry Lacefield – Grazing Alfalfa – This presentation will focus on the attributes of alfalfa as a grazing crop. In this presentation Garry will cover the reasons why this remarkable species should be considered as a grazing crop and discuss some critical management necessary for success.

coming events

“Money Grows on Grass” continued

Marilena Kowalchuk and Wes Pancratz – Managing the Water’s Edge – Managing the Water’s Edge is a multi-agency group that provides leadership, program development, and training in riparian health and water quality, to provide useful information for land managers. Find out more in this informative session on how to make sound decisions to maintain and restore the health and function of riparian areas, as a vital part of the landscape and economy of the province.

Gabe Brown – Integration of Livestock into a Zero-Till Cropping Program. - Gabe and Shelly Brown own and operate Brown’s Gelbvieh Ranch, Bismarck, ND. They purchased the ranch in 1991 and built a 250 head purebred cow operation. The Brown’s started working towards a sustainable cropping system after purchasing a no-till drill in 1994. Gabe enjoys exploring legumes that can be used in both his livestock grazing system and the no-till cropping system, using soil health as the fertility indicator.

Bill Gardiner and Sarah Keen – Brush Control Methods in Manitoba - The Native Pasture Improvement Program is a program that is in the process of developing new technologies for maintaining grassland productivity through the management of aspen encroachment. Find out more about these various technologies for effective management of aspen encroachment (including hardwood timber harvested areas) on grasslands used for pasture and hay.

PRODUCER PANEL—DOING THE RIGHT THINGS RIGHT!

Guy Johnson – Eddystone - Guy Johnston is a forage and beef producer from Eddystone who will discuss his experiences in raising grass for cattle production. Recently he has participated in the Native Pasture Improvement Program and will discuss how he has improved his grass production.

Dean Stoyanowski – Arborg - Relying only on pastures that would run out fast in the past, Dean decided to change things to keep his 105 cows from coming home early. Last year Dean fall grazed turnips and this year has grazed alfalfa and Italian ryegrass and is using millet for swath grazing in the fall. Dean’s goal is to graze his cows until Christmas. Dean is now the Farm Production Advisor in Arborg with MAFRI.

Don Armitage – Miniota - Don is a forage and beef producer in Miniota who has commercial and forage-finished beef. He will discuss his process of feeding and marketing forage-fed beef.

David Elias – MRAC - The Manitoba Rural Adaptation Council (MRAC) is a non-profit corporation that funds innovative agricultural projects and works to stimulate industry and government activity where voids are recognized. The presentation will focus on MRAC projects that might be of interest/benefit to forage and cattle producers with some discussion on the kinds of potential projects that might qualify for funding.

Dr. Lynn Locatelli - Dr. Locatelli is a consultant/veterinarian in Nebraska, specializing in low-stress-handling of cattle. Shrink reduction, maximizing gain and optimal cattle health for grazing are be some of the topics she will discuss.

Western
Canadian Holistic
Management
Conference

Healthy People,
Healthy Land
and Healthy Profits!
February 13-14
Brandon, MB

coming events

Get Paid to Learn!

The Canadian Farm Families Options Program (Options) is a new federal program to help lower-income farmers and farm families improve their earning potential for the long term. While farmers engage in preparing a business plan or take skills training, they receive a payment to supplement their income. The program is available for the 2005 and 2006 tax years. **Application deadline is October 31, 2006.**

Eligibility

Farmers and farm families are eligible for the first year of the Options program if: they are actively farming and have filed their income tax with the Canada Revenue Agency in 2005; they have a gross income of \$50,000 or more, and if their total income from all sources is less than \$25,000 for families or less than \$15,000 for individuals.

For details or an application call 1-866-367-8506 or go to:
www.agr.gc.ca/options



National Grazing Mentorship Program Underway

Need a little one-on-one to get a new grazing system underway? For only \$100 (the cost is subsidized), you can access a mentor who will visit your farm and provide follow-up support over the phone or by e-mail. The mentor will assess your situation and help you develop a plan for a sustainable grazing system.



Systems can include improving your pasture management, including rotational summer grazing systems, and/or year-round grazing systems such as stockpiling forages for extended fall grazing or swathing cereal crops for winter grazing.

Jim Stone, a mentor with the original program initiated in Alberta in 2003, is coordinating the National Mentorship Program, through the Agricultural Extension and Research Council of Alberta. Support funding is available until March 2007.

Interested producers should contact Jim Stone at jstone05@telus.net or call Joy Vonk at (780) 416-6046 or jvonk@telus.net

forage bits

US Auction Mart Prices - August 2006

<i>Prices are US dollars/ton except squares \$/bale, Some prices not available</i>	East River, South Dakota	Maurice, Iowa	Nebraska	Pipestone, Minnesota
ALFALFA				
Small Squares				
Supreme				
Premium				
Good		85.00		80.00
Fair				
Large Squares				
Supreme	120.00-125.00		140.00-160.00	
Premium	90.00-110.00	97.50	125.00-140.00	
Good	70.00-85.00	82.50	115.00-120.00	70.00-85.00
Fair			90.00-10.00	
Utility				
Large Rounds				
Premium	90.00-100.00	92.50-95.00		
Good	65.00-85.00		75.00-90.00	67.50-80.00
Fair	50.00-65.00		60.00-80.00	55.00-57.50
Utility	40.00-50.00			35.00-47.50
ALFALFA MIX				
Small Squares (Good)				67.50
Large Rounds (Good)				62.50-67.50
GRASS HAY				
Small Squares				
Premium	90.00-100.00			
Good	75.00-85.00		100.00	67.50
Large Squares				
Premium	90.00-95.00			
Good	70.00-85.00			
Large Rounds				
Premium		97.50		
Good	65.00-85.00	92.50	60.00-85.00	62.50-67.50
Fair	40.00-55.00			
Utility				30.00-32.50
Straw				
Small Squares				2.05-2.20 per bale
Large Squares	52.50-55.00 per ton			22.00 per bale
Large Rounds				21.00-23.00 per bale



forage bits

New Re-Vegetation Guides Now Available

“Rebuilding your land with Native Grasses” and “Critical Areas Re-vegetation”

These new re-vegetation booklets guide you through the process of reclaiming your land and provide information on: field analysis and objective setting, pre-seeding preparation, pre-seeding weed-control, seed selection, planting techniques and post planting management.

The right native grass mixture provides a strong, long lasting ground cover for land that is prone to erosion or no longer suitable for the production of annual crops. If managed properly it also provides palatable hay and pasture for livestock and an excellent habitat for a diversity of wildlife. A recent study by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada in Swift Current, SK has shown that pastures re-vegetated with diverse mixtures of native grass produce very good beef gains. These gains were recorded during the hottest and driest parts of the summer.

These guides were developed by Ducks Unlimited Canada, Native Plant Solutions, and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Greencover Canada Program. Funding was also provided by Proven Seed and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans. To get your copies call Ducks Unlimited (204) 729-3500, Native Plant Solutions (204) 953-8200 or go to: www.ducks.ca/conservation/programs/nativeplants/

MCPA Fall District Meeting Schedule

Meetings start at 7 p.m. Elections in odd-numbered districts.

- | | | |
|---------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| • District 1 | Thursday, October 19 | Tilston Community Hall |
| • District 2 | Thursday, October 12 | Baldur's Argyle Drop-in Centre |
| • District 3 | Wednesday, October 11 | Elm Creek Community Hall |
| • District 4 | Tuesday, October 10 | Vita Arena |
| • District 5 | Thursday, October 26 | Carberry Town Hall |
| • District 6 | Tuesday, October 17 | Oak Lake Community Hall |
| • District 7 | Wednesday, November 1 | Hamiota Sportsplex |
| • District 8 | Wednesday, October 18 | Eden Community Hall |
| • District 9 | Tuesday, October 24 | Stonewall Oddfellows Hall |
| • District 10 | Monday, October 23 | Fisher Branch Agriculture Office |
| • District 11 | Wednesday, October 25 | Ashern Legion Hall |
| • District 12 | Monday, October 16 | Ste. Rose Community Centre |
| • District 13 | Tuesday, October 31 | Ethelbert Curling Rink |
| • District 14 | Monday, October 30 | Pine River Community Centre |

The MCPA's Annual General Meeting will take place December 13 and 14 at the Royal Oak Inn in Brandon. For more information, call the MCPA office at 1-800-772-0458.

The MCPA would like to extend best wishes to outgoing Executive Director Keith Robertson as he leaves the Association to pursue an opportunity in Alberta.

Grazing Club Website Launched

Manitoba's 29 grazing clubs have a new resource with the launch of www.grazingclubs.ca, a website funded by the Greencover Canada program and Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC).

The new website is producer-focused, offering information, news and a discussion forum where producers can swap ideas and share their experiences about different pasture management issues, from grazing methods to watering systems. Each grazing club will have its own page and will be able to post upcoming events, news and any other information it feels could be of interest to other clubs and producers. There will also be management tools and resources available online, like a pasture planner and the grazing and forage manuals produced by the Manitoba Forage Council. Go to www.grazingclubs.ca

affiliated members

MFC Board of Directors 2006/2007

board of directors

Don Green	Chair	Fisher Branch
Clark Combs	Vice-Chair	Deloraine
Ken Harms	Director	Snowflake
Russel Chapman	Director	Virden
Nevin Bachmeier	Director	Kleefeld
Michael Thiele	Director	Shoal Lake
Ken Wright	Director	MacGregor
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Dr. Shannon Scott	AAFC Rep	Brandon
Robert Smith	Manitoba Sheep Assn.	MacGregor
<i>Fraser Stewart</i>	<i>Executive Director</i>	<i>Selkirk</i>

Manitoba Forage Council

Forage Focus is the quarterly newsletter for the Manitoba Forage Council.

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Check out past newsletters, projects, upcoming events and more at:
www.mbforagecouncil.mb.ca

That's Life!

**We the willing,
led by the unknowing,
are doing the impossible,
for the ungrateful.**

**We have done so much,
for so long,
with so little....**

**We are now qualified,
to do anything with
nothing.**
