

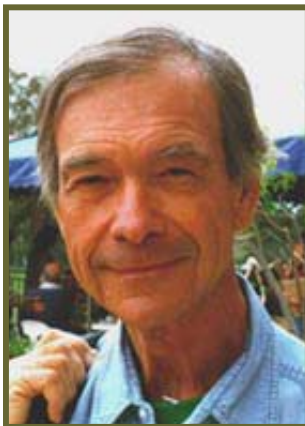


Holistic Management Model Intriguing

People are talking about holistic management and how it can fit in your operation a lot these days. But, just what is holistic management and how can it benefit you?

The concept of holistic management (HM) encompasses the total farm unit; the environment, the livestock, soils, crops and most importantly, the people who make up the total farm unit. The holistic management model helps the farm family work together to use their resources, both human and physical, to achieve their family goals.

A recent Holistic Management Conference held in Brandon sparked intense producer interest. Judging by the attendance – a sold out crowd of over 350 – many are interested in this management concept. According to Pam Iwanchysko, MAFRI, who helped coordinate the two-day event on February 13th and 14th, “you could feel the excitement and energy in the room”.



Allan Savory, Founder

Allan Savory, one of the keynote speakers, developed the concept in the 1980's as a way of helping ranchers in his native Africa, and later in central U.S.A., overcome environmental (droughts) and social issues to develop successful, productive family enterprises. He initiated many unique grazing systems that increased grassland production, reduced soil erosion, and increased farm profitability. His holistic model helps a person find their own solutions to challenges that face them, be it the farm operation or the relationships within the farm organization. He stressed the importance of →

—Manitoba Forage Symposium—Join us—March 14-15, 2007 in Winnipeg—

In this issue:

Cover Story	1	Coming Events	10
Board News	3	Forage Bits	13
MFC Reports	4	Affiliated Member Reports	15
Events - A Review	8	Board of Directors	16

Holistic Management Continued

communication and the fact that trust is the key. He noted that solutions to many agriculture problems come from the “bottom up” and can be resolved by working with our family unit.

*“Communication is important
and trust is the key”*

Allan Savory

Don Campbell, a Certified Holistic Management Educator and rancher from Meadow Lake Saskatchewan, also addressed the audience. Don has been teaching grazing management and the holistic model to families across Manitoba for several years. Many of his students were in attendance and shared how they had used their knowledge to counter challenges in their farm businesses and their family and business relationships. Many indicated that the model helped them cope with business pressures of recent years, including the BSE situation. As a result of taking the HM course, many are involved in local management groups where members can discuss/

resolve the challenges they are facing.

Another early adopter of the Holistic Management model is Gene Goven, from North Dakota, U.S.A. After taking the HM course in 1985, Goven developed a “road map” for his farm enterprise that has improved the health of his soil and the profitability of his ranch. It also helped him develop a generational farm transfer for his family.

Numerous other holistic managers shared their personal experiences at the conference, and how it has positively impacted their lives. If you would like to learn more about the holistic management concept please go to the HM website:
www.holisticmanagement.org

If you would like to attend a Holistic Management Workshop, contact Don Campbell at (306) 236-6088 or doncampbell@sasktel.net

The proceedings of this conference will be listed on the MFC website shortly; www.mbforagecouncil.mb.ca and DVD presentations of the keynote speakers will be available by contacting MFC (204) 482-6315.

forage focus

**ROUND
UP YOUR
OPTIONS!**

Canadian Agricultural Skills Service (CASS) provides \$\$ for courses in farm business management, accounting, finance, on-farm food safety, sustainable farming practices, value-added processing, farm diversification, etc.

Call: (866) 668-2277

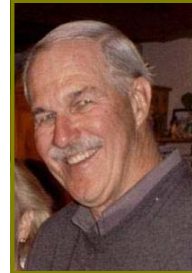
www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/programs/updates/aab20s01.html

A few lines from our Executive Director

The environment, particularly global warming has been a topic of major discussion lately and rightly so.

The role of forage crops as part of the solution to this challenge should not be forgotten, and perhaps this role can be pushed forward. Carbon sequestration (the returning of carbon back to the soil) reduces greenhouse gas emissions. Introducing forages into the rotation, rather than consistently planting annuals, (particularly row crops), increases the level of organic matter in the soil and reduces greenhouse gas production. Forage crops also increase fertility, reduce soil erosion and weed populations.

Other discussions have centered on the fossil fuel supplies in the world and our dependence on them, particularly in agriculture. "Modern agriculture" is highly dependent on fertilizers, pesticides and fuel. With the stock of fossil fuels projected to peak by 2010, the agriculture sector needs to consider lower energy systems. The use of forage and ruminant animals has a very sustainable place in these systems. Forages, particularly legumes, utilize atmospheric nitrogen for a portion of its fertility and year-round grazing systems reduce feed and management inputs by having livestock feed themselves and distribute their manure throughout the pasture. Let's introduce forages in our rotation!



This is the time of year for reports on the twenty plus projects we administer. Projects ranged from extension conferences, to research activities to supporting projects such as the Manitoba Grazing Club program. Our new web site is being used extensively worldwide by viewers in Australia, Romania, Norway, Central & South America, the U.S.A. and across Canada. If you have an idea for a project or any concerns regarding the forage industry, please give me a call (204) 482-6315.

Fraser Stewart

Congratulations

MFC Chair Don Green and his wife Jenn joined the world of parenthood! Their son, Wade Robert Green was born at 10:04 p.m. on Sat, Jan 20, 2007. He weighs a whopping 8 lbs 14oz and is 21" long.



MFC Needs You!

The Manitoba Forage Council needs you! We are looking for knowledgeable producers who are interested in helping lead the Forage Council for the next few years. Meetings are held four times per year, usually in Portage la Prairie, where we work as a team to forge the path for the industry. It's a great experience – you have an opportunity to travel to trade shows, meet contacts in the industry, learn the latest technology and have an impact on the direction of our industry.

Please consider it and contact us as soon as possible. Elections will be held on March 14th at the Manitoba Forage Symposium in Winnipeg. Call:

Glenn Friesen
Business Development Specialist – Forage,
MAFRI (204) 745-5672
Fraser Stewart, MFC, (204) 482-6315

board news

Brush Control in Manitoba Native Pasture Improvement Program

By: Sarah Keen-Chanel

Brush encroachment has become one of the key issues in pasture management on the Canadian prairies. Experts are concerned with the loss of rangeland productivity and changes in ecology due to the significant expansion of woody species onto formerly open grasslands – in particular trembling aspen and balsam poplar; however, willow, snowberry, dogwood and other shrubby cinquefoil are also serious invaders in certain locations.

Based on studies conducted, it is estimated that aspen is expanding at a rate of 1 - 5% of pasture land in the prairie provinces, depending on location. This encroachment process is slow but significant because the carrying capacity of each acre will eventually be reduced by 75% or more under a full canopy scenario.

Prior to settlement, periodic wildfires were instrumental in maintaining a balance between aspen woodlands and grasslands. Our controlled fires contribute to the encroachment process. The prairie grasslands developed as a result of a combination of fire, grazers and climate.

Aspen trees grow in separate groups of genetically identical clones connected through a root system. The main expansion occurs by suckering, however, also by shoots and seed. Suckering is stopped by auxin translocated to the roots from growing shoots and leaves, a process termed “apical dominance”. Activities that remove or significantly damage the existing top growth, such as mechanical or chemical activities or grazing, reduce the flow of auxin into the roots and encourages the growth of shoots and leaves.

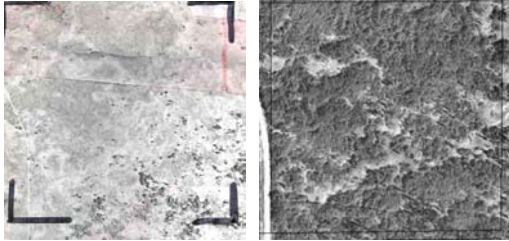
Past work has identified that gaps exist regarding the effectiveness of brush control treatments over the prairie provinces. As a result, the Native Pasture Improvement Program (NPIP) was created to expand and demonstrate current research initiatives and to explore new technologies for maintaining grassland productivity through the management of brush encroachment. The technologies explored are; 1) the regeneration control of aspen harvested sites, 2) encroachment control of aspen, and 3) the encroachment control of low brush pasture species.

The three components of the program are:

1. **Inventory Assessment** - documenting the extent of the problem over time by using aerial photographs, satellite imagery, and other historical documents.
2. **Demonstration and Technology Development** – demonstrating and evaluating existing and emerging technologies and/or management practices on the three categories of brush for their effectiveness on marginal and productive soil types.
3. **Education and Awareness** – extending information to producers through various communication types such as tours, meetings, fact sheets, and newspaper articles. →

Native Pasture Improvement Project

SE 21-09-11-W



1946

1994

An example of how significantly encroachment is affecting grassland productivity can be illustrated in the these aerial photographs. Both images are of the same quarter section of land. The loss of grassland productivity after 48 years is estimated to be the forage equivalent of the annual feed requirement for 6,000 cows.

Demonstrations/Technology Development

The NPIP is developing 41 field scale plots/mechanical technology sites across the province to demonstrate various techniques to control brush encroachment and assess their effectiveness and cost. In the past two years, over 2200 acres of demonstrations have been started with project types such as Remedy, Grazon, 2,4-D/Banvel, Glyphosate, and various mechanical applications to knock down the nuisance scruff and open the tree canopy for light penetration, (stimulating grassland growth), and accessibility for livestock. Various applications of chemicals have also been explored such as aerial spraying with both fixed wing airplanes and helicopters, and ground applications with various wick applicators.

All sites are monitored to evaluate the effectiveness of the treatment against a check area. They are assessed on four main parameters: 1) species diversity, 2) overall yield, 3) species specific yield, and 4) forage quality. All of the monitoring clippings are taken twice a growing season to simulate a twice-over grazing strategy. The time span of the monitoring component is heavily depending on attaining more funding to continue the NPIP after this current funding lifespan.

Education and Awareness

The NPIP received initial funding through the Agricultural Policy Framework (APF) chapter of Alternative Land Management in 2005. It has since then been carried over by the Agri-food Research and Development Initiative (ARDI II) till March 2008. Other partners include AAFC-PFRA and MAFRI.

A Brush Manual will be developed to create awareness about brush encroachment and the tools that are effective in combating it. Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada - PFRA, MAFRI, the University of Manitoba and the University of Saskatchewan are partners in the development of this manual. Field demonstrations will be held at the sites across the province in the coming year.

For more information please contact NPIP Coordinator:
Sarah Keen-Chanel at (204) 648-7322 or sarah.npip@mts.net.

mfc reports

How does Grazing Management affect Pasture Yield, Litter Production and Water Use?

By: Martin Entz (U of M) and Jane Thornton (MAFRI)

A new pasture research project was started in 2005 by a team from the University of Manitoba's Plant Science Department. Dr. Martin Entz is the project leader; Masters student Simon Neufeld and several summer students are also involved in the project. Primary funding is from Agri-Food Research and Development Initiative.

The study objective is to determine how grazing management affects pasture yield, litter production and water use of pasture plants. Grazing treatments are as follows.

Grazing treatment	Clipping interval
1. Continuous grazing	Clip every 2 to 3 weeks
2. Time-controlled grazing	Clip at 25 to 40 day intervals depending on growth
3. Twice-over grazing	Light clip in June and heavy clip in July
4. Stockpiled grazing	Clip in June and leave until late fall or spring
5. No grazing	No clipping (1 sample taken to establish annual growth)

The experiment is being conducted at 6 locations in southwestern Manitoba, on both native and tame pastures. This study was started in 2005 and will run until the end of 2007. In the first year of the study (2005), areas within commercial pastures were fenced off to create a space for the project. During the 2005 and 2006 growing seasons, the five treatments were applied to all 6 sites. Simulated grazing was used. Pasture dry matter was determined by clipping the plots with a 1 meter wide forage harvester. Measurements include: water use in the top 5 feet, pasture dry matter yield and species composition. At the end of the 2007 grazing season, a detailed assessment of litter accumulation will be made. →

Locations	Pasture type
Rapid City	Native
Shilo	Native
Cartwright	Native
Souris	Tame (mostly Bluegrass)
Pipestone	Tame (Meadow brome grass)
Goodlands	Tame (Meadow brome grass and alfalfa)



Taking soil water measurements at Souris using a neutron probe.



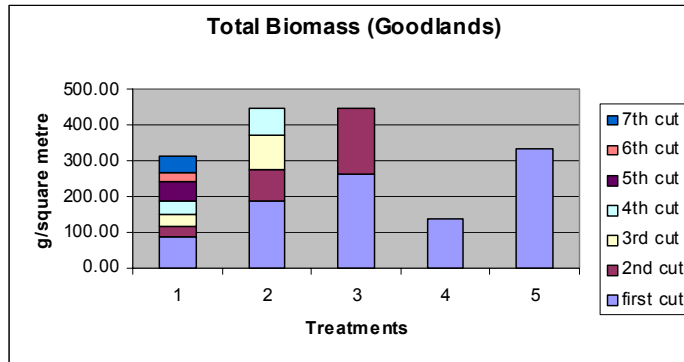
Pasture site at Cartwright. This native pasture is in excellent condition.

Grazing Management Project Continued

Results:

Figure 1. Goodlands 2006

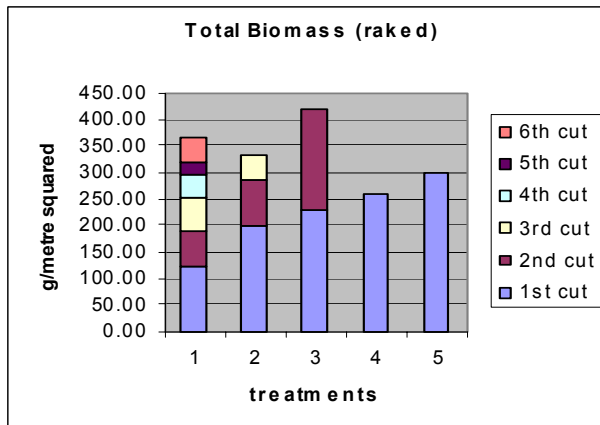
1. Clipped seven times - Pasture dry matter production for continuous grazing,
2. Clipped three times - Time-controlled grazing,
3. Clipped twice – Twice-over system
4. Clipped once - Stockpiled grazing
5. No grazing. (Multiply g/square meter by 8.92 to calculate lbs/acre).



The time-controlled and the twice-over grazing systems produced more dry matter than the continuous grazing treatment.

Figure 2. Cartwright 2006

1. Clipped six times - Pasture dry matter production for continuous grazing,
2. Clipped three times - Time-controlled grazing,
3. Clipped twice – Twice-over system
4. Clipped once - Stockpiled grazing
5. No grazing. (Multiply g/square meter by 8.92 to calculate lbs/acre).



At Cartwright, pasture yield was highest in the twice-over system, second in the continuous system and third for the time-controlled system.

Litter production was typically lowest in the continuous grazed treatment at all locations. This observation indicates that the continuously grazed treatment has the lowest water conservation potential. We are currently analyzing the water use data from these locations. This research will continue at all 6 locations in 2007.



mfc reports

Grazing School Brings in the Experts

Like minded producers gathered once again at the annual Manitoba Grazing School held in Brandon this past December. Conference coordinators brought in many excellent speakers including Anibal Pordomingo from Argentina.

Dr. Pordomingo, a forage/livestock researcher from the Argentine National Institute of Farming Technology explained how Argentina makes the most out of their seven month growing season in their management intensive grazing systems.

He acknowledges that finishing cattle on pasture to the degree most consumers prefer is not always easy. Growing a beef animal from weaning to slaughter takes a year or more and therefore high forage quality must be provided during all, or nearly all the seasons of the year. The number one constraint to weight gain is the metabolizable energy of the forages. Proper genetics for marbling are suggested and supplementing on pasture

with energy supplements during winter is common in many parts of the world. Their system targets an average daily weight gain of 1.6 pounds per day and uses forages capable of producing high weight gains. The forage energy level and the fibre level must be matched with your stocks demand for energy.



Dr. Anibal Pordomingo

Targets for High-Quality Beef

- Annual ADG greater than 1.6 lb/d
- Daily gain during last 90 days greater than 1.8 lb/day
- Growing-finishing period less than 15 months
- Age at slaughter not far from 2.5 yrs old (less better)
- Eliminate restrictions (less than 0.60 lb/d of weight gain)
- Reduced size of “restriction (stocker) group”



Meet our Graziers of the Year



Graziers of the Year Sponsors

- * FeedRite
- * Kane Veterinary Supplies

Congratulations to our Producers! (L to R), Glenn & Doreen Hicks, Ninga, MB, Perry & Karen Koss, Inglis, MB, and Wayne & Theresa Heinrichs, Brandon, MB. (Back row), Doug Bidulock, Grant Howes, Kane Veterinary Supplies.

events review

Grazing School Continued

Designing the system for high-quality beef

- Locate the high-gain window or windows (60 to 90 days of reliable finishing gains)
- Work back the gains possible for stocker phase
- Look for proper calve size/weight at the desired time
- Have some control on the animal genetics



To download this presentation and all others from Grazing School go to:<http://www.mbforagecouncil.mb.ca/>

Thank you
GS

Sponsors
(Page 12)

Seed Guide Improves Forage Info.

Attention Manitoba forage producers! Did you know that the Seed Guide includes information that will help you make the right decision regarding the variety for your farm? It contains decades of yield data collected by the Manitoba Forage Council for legume and grass varieties, as well as annual forages like barley, oats, peas, and corn and helps you choose the variety best suited to your farm and helps you obtain the best gains possible.

Listed below are some of the new changes for this year's guide:

- 1) An updated alfalfa variety table now includes:
 - a. Individual cut yields for alfalfa (1st, 2nd, 3rd) and the overall annual mean.
 - b. Numerous agronomic characteristics of each variety including fall dormancy, winter hardiness, disease resistance, relative maturity, year registered, additional special traits, and more.
 - c. Winter hardiness zone map of Manitoba
- 2) An updated legume section includes:
 - a. Agronomic characteristic ratings for winter hardiness, relative maturity, regrowth, bloat potential and year registered
 - b. List of native legumes available for commercial sale
- 3) An updated grass section includes:
 - a. Agronomic characteristics including winter survival, relative maturity, year registered
- 4) An updated annual forage section includes:
 - a. Updated forage yield data from a 5 site – 2 year project across Manitoba in 2005 and 2006
 - b. New forage quality data for tested varieties (TDN, CP, RFV, lbs beef/ac)
 - c. Agronomic characteristics for all forage type cereals and peas
- 5) A brand new 52 corn silage variety comparisons including silage yield from 2 sites (Elm Creek and St. Pierre) in 2006. Also includes feed quality comparison between varieties (TDN, ADF, NDF, lbs milk/ac)

events review

2007 Manitoba Forage Symposium

***"Marketing Cash Hay - Building Relationships
and Creating Quality"***



You can't beat the price for this fabulous opportunity to learn about the latest technology from the experts. The Coordinators have worked hard to ensure a healthy dose of educated, experienced speakers, the latest machinery displays and the finest home cooking you'll find anywhere.

Sign up now for another great forage symposium. Register online at www.mbforagecouncil.mb.ca or by contacting Joanne Bauch, MAFRI at (204) 768-2782. Credit cards accepted for tickets and display booths. \$110.00 prior to Feb 23rd, \$135.00 thereafter. Extra banquet tickets \$25.00.

**Agenda for March 14th & 15th, 2007,
MacDon Exhibition Centre, Winnipeg, MB.**

Wednesday

8:30 a.m. Registration & Visit Displays
9:00 a.m. Welcome
9:15 a.m. Update on the Canadian Hay Market, Director, Canadian Hay Association
10:00 a.m. Impact of Forages on Soil Health, Dr. Mario Tenuta, Professor of Soil Ecology, University of Manitoba
10:45 a.m. Coffee Break

Sessions

Session A

11:00 a.m. Building Client Relationships, Barrie Sigurdson, Forage Producer, Gimli
11:45 a.m. Maximizing Hay Quality using the Green Gold Program, John McGregor, Farm Production Advisor, MAFRI

Session B

11:00 a.m. Certified vs. Common Seed, Brad Pinkerton, Proven Seed
11:45 a.m. Forage Breeding Update, Dr. Bruce Coulman, Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada, Saskatoon Research Centre
12:30 p.m. Lunch & Trade Show
2:00 p.m. Producer Panel, Learning from each other
3:00 p.m. Climate Change & Water Issues on Agriculture Production on the Prairies, Dr. Dave Sauchyn, Professor of Geography, University of Regina
4:00 p.m. Manitoba Forage Council Annual General Meeting
Tour of MacDon Manufacturing Plant
Green Gold Banquet at the MacDon Showcase Building

Thursday

8:00 a.m. Registration & Visit Displays
8:30 a.m. Overview of the Horse Hay Industry, Tom Keene, Hay Marketing Specialist, University of Kentucky
9:15 a.m. Communication & Building Relationships within the Hay Business, Joe Heese, Farm Partners Supply in Harlan, Iowa
10:15 a.m. Coffee Break



coming events

Join us at the 2007 Forage Symposium

Sessions

Session A

10:30 a.m. Forage Testing: Manitoba Results, Karen Dupchak, Farm Production Extension, Animal Nutritionist, MAFRI & Glenn Friesen, Business Development Specialist, Forage, MAFRI

11:15 a.m. Insect Issues in Hay Crops, Brent Elliott, Farm Production Extension Entomologist, MAFRI

Session B

10:30 a.m. Direct Sales vs. Brokers, Tom Keene, Hay Marketing Specialist, University of Kentucky

11:15 a.m. Trucking & Transportation Issues, Custom Haulers: Cliff Kooistra, Swan River & Ed Newfield, Winnipeg

12:30 p.m. Lunch & Trade Show

1:30 p.m. Fertility Management & Options in Forages, John Heard, Farm Production Extension, MAFRI / Agri-Energy & Potential for Forages, Roy Arnott, Business Development Specialist, MAFRI

2:15 p.m. Manitoba Opportunities in Organic Production, David Schettler, Organic Producer & President of O.P.A.M., Arborg, Manitoba

2:45 p.m. The Growing Organic Movement - Do Manitoba Forages Fit In? Carmen Fernholz, Organic Farmers' Agency for Relationship Marketing (OFARM), Madison, Minnesota

3:30 p.m. Adjourn

Register now at www.mbforagecouncil.mb.ca or by calling (204) 768-2782. Credit cards accepted.

Work-shop — Hog Manure on Forages

March 7, 2007 – 9:30 a.m. Friedensfeld Hall (near Steinbach) *

The use of manure on pastures is receiving a great deal of attention as a result of new phosphorus regulations and environmental concerns.

Participate in a one-day workshop and examine the results of a three-year project that has been carried out near La Broquerie by numerous sectors of the livestock industry, including the Manitoba Forage Council and the University of Manitoba.

Topics discussed will be the effect of manure on soil nutrient levels, particularly nitrogen and phosphorus, as well as its impact on forage yield, animal gain, and ground water quality in both hayed and grazed production systems. Other topics include energy efficiency and the economics associated with the use of manure on forage.

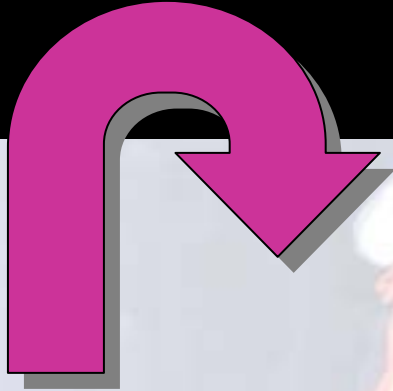
Register with MAFRI: St. Pierre (204) 439-7749, Steinbach (204) 346-6080 or Vita (204) 425-5050. The registration fee is \$5 per person until March 1, 2007 and \$15 per person after. Lunch and refreshments are included with registration.

* **Friedensfeld Hall: 3 miles south of Steinbach on Hwy. 12 and 1 mile east.**

coming events

coming events

Head South to the MidWest Horse Fair



"Rock, Roll, & Ride!"

At the Annual Midwest Horse Fair on April 20-22, 2007 at the Alliant Energy Center in Madison, WI.

Horse lovers take note.

Tons of clinicians will be educating the 50,000 plus attendees on nutrition, dressage, colt starting, and showmanship and more at the 28th Annual Midwest Horse Fair.

Visitors also have plenty of activities to keep them entertained such as perusing the 750 trade show exhibits, the 70 stallions showcased, and the 30 breeds and disciplines that are demonstrated. Check out the Midwest Horse Fair website and plan your trip to Wisconsin this spring. For more information about the exciting events planned, or to purchase advanced tickets, please visit <http://www.midwesthorsefair.com> or call (920) 623-9114.

Anyone interested in joining this trade mission please contact: Jane Thornton, Forage and Pasture Specialist, MAFRI. Contact her at: (204) 729-1387 or jane.thornton@gov.mb.ca



Thank you Grazing School Sponsors

Platinum

Canada's Agricultural Producers Addressing Environmental Issues
Greencover Canada
Canadian Farm Business Management Council
Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives
Dow AgroSciences Canada Inc.
Manitoba Forage Council

Gold

Canadian Agricultural Safety Association
Manitoba Cattle Producers Association

Silver

Farm Business Communications
MacDon Industries
Monsanto Canada Inc.

Bronze

AAFC – PFRA
Dairy Farmers of Manitoba
Gallagher Power Fencing
Managing the Water's Edge
Manitoba Agricultural Service Corporation

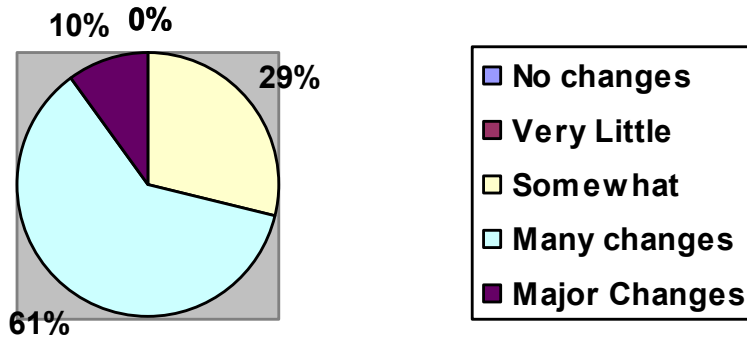
Pasture Tour Attendees Rank Event

Last summer's Pasture Tour organized by MAFRI has got the 150 plus producers who attended the event thinking about their management style. And, planning to make changes.... The following graph shows that 10% of the attendees plan to make major changes, 61% plan to make many changes and 29% plan to make some changes to their livestock or pasture management system in the next two to five years.

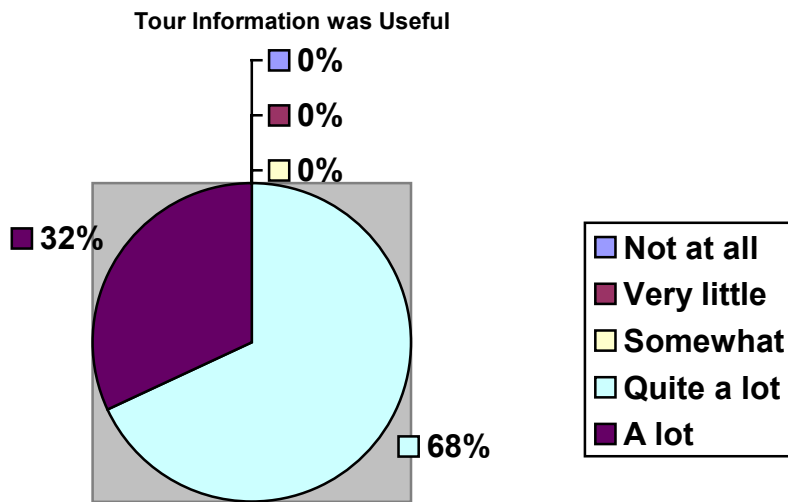


Survey finds most producers are planning to change their livestock or pasture management.

Plan to Make Changes in 2—5 Years



Many thanks to the producers who completed the survey – it appears as though you found the information provided throughout the tour useful for your operation. 100% of those surveyed believe the tour to be somewhat, to very useful. This is a motivator for our Extension Staff—be sure to attend next year to learn even more!



forage bits

U.S. Auction Mart Prices—February 2007

<i>Prices are US dollars/ton except squares \$/bale, Some prices not available</i>	East River, South Dakota	North East Nebraska	Maurice, Iowa	Pipestone, Minnesota
ALFALFA				
Small Squares				
Supreme			175.00	
Premium			105.00	97.50
Good				85-92.50
Fair				
Large Squares				
Supreme	> 185 RFV 125-130.00	> 185 RFV 140.00		
Premium	>170 RFV 110-125.00	>170-185 RFV 130-140.00	105-107.50	
Good	85-100.00	>150-170 RFV 115-120.00	95.00	95.00
Fair		>130-150 RFV 90-100.00		
Utility				
Large Rounds				
Premium	85-100.00		100-115.00	97.50-100.00
Good	75-90.00	80-100.00	82.5-97.50	77.50-90.00
Fair	50-65.00	60-80.00		70.00
Utility				
ALFALFA MIX				
Small Squares				97.50-102.50 premium
Large Rounds				102.50 P, 75-85.50 G
GRASS HAY				
Small Squares				
Premium		100-130.00 (premium-good)	130-165.00	
Good	80-90.00			87.50-90.00
Large Squares				
Premium			110-120.00	
Good			82.50	
Large Rounds				
Premium	100.00			112.50
Good	75-90.00	80-100.00		75-85.00
Fair				62.50-72.50
Utility				
Straw				
Small Squares				2.05-2.55 bale
Large Squares	55.00 per ton	50-55.00 per ton	18.00 per bale	
Large Rounds				21-26.00

forage bits



Let's Play Fair with Education Taxes

By: Ian Wishart, Keystone Agricultural Producers (KAP) Vice President.

Quality education is a universal right of every child in this province and a core provincial responsibility. All Manitobans benefit from strong education programs; so all Manitobans should contribute equitably. The increasing burden placed on the backs of property owners – including farmers - is unfair, and needs to change.

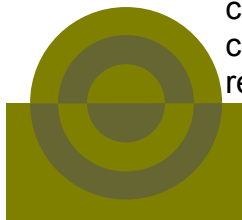
In agriculture, the education property tax system has not kept up with the way our farms operate. Instead of a homestead on every quarter-section, today's farms have a much larger land base, and the burden of property taxes is much higher. The assessed value of farmland and production buildings does not necessarily reflect a farmer's ability to pay. For farmers, land is a requirement to do business and they have little control over the prices they receive from the marketplace for the commodities they grow and raise. Farmers can now apply for a 60% rebate on the education taxes they pay on farmland, but not on production buildings such as livestock barns or storage sheds. Until the rebate was put in place, farmers were paying up to eight times more in education taxes as their non-farming neighbours and shouldering far more than their fair share. Clearly, the rebate program doesn't solve the problem because it could be eliminated at any time by government and creates unnecessary additional cost through administration and promotion. It's also possible that farmers in a difficult financial situation – those that need the rebate most – may not be able to access it because they have to pay the tax bill in full before becoming eligible.

For all of these reasons, farmers want government to remove education taxes from all property, including farmland and production buildings. KAP continues to work with a broad coalition representing 200,000 Manitobans who are pushing for a complete shift of education taxes off of property. A new web site www.letsplayfair.com has been launched to get more information out to all Manitobans. The site also has an e-letter for anyone concerned about the current education finance structure to send to the Premier and their MLA to push for change. To find out more about education funding and the negative impact that the current system has on all Manitobans, and to send your support for change, visit www.letsplayfair.com.

Export Development Canada Helps Hay Exporters



Export Development Canada (EDC) offers exporters many services including insurance, financing, bonding, client checking and claims. In the agricultural sector, EDC has provided insurance credit for merchandise exported overseas (invaluable when sending your goods to uncertain countries).



EDC can also obtain the credit records of potential customers for a fee – thus reducing the exporting risk.

For more information go to: <http://www.edc.ca/english/index.htm> or call: **1-866-283-2957**

affiliated members

Directors 2006/2007

Don Green	Chair	Fisher Branch
Clark Combs	Vice-Chair	Deloraine
Ken Harms	Director	Snowflake
Russel Chapman	Director	Viriden
Nevin Bachmeier	Director	Kleefeld
Michael Thiele	Director	Shoal Lake
Ken Wright	Director	MacGregor
Bob Elliot	Director	Stonewall
Gerald Bos	Director	Rapid City
Ken Gross	Director	Brandon
Gerry Simonson	MCPA Rep	Fannystelle
Glenn Friesen	MAFRI Rep	Carman
Maurice Delichte	Dairy Farmers of MB Rep	St. Alphonse
Heinz Nolting	MFSA Rep	Rosser
Irvin Helwer	Processor Rep	Teulon
Dr. Karin Wittenberg	U of M Rep	Winnipeg
Dr. Shannon Scott	AAFC Rep	Brandon
Robert Smith	Manitoba Sheep Assn.	MacGregor
Fraser Stewart	Executive Director	Selkirk

board of directors

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

Written and Designed by:
Corie Arbuckle
Edited by:
Fraser Stewart, Glenn Friesen

PO Box 1, Grp 310, RR #3
 Selkirk, MB
 R1A 2A8
 Phone: 204-482-6315
 Fax: 204-482-1700
 Email: mfc@mbforagecouncil.mb.ca
communications@mbforagecouncil.mb.ca



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



Cow philosophy