

Forage FOCUS

October 2010

Examining potential forage crop exports

A new project is underway to examine the current Manitoba forage industry, its ability to produce and export forage commodities, and the most cost effective way to ship to world markets.

A large component of creating successful export markets is sourcing economical transportation. Considering the ever-increasing price of overland transportation, shipping over water could provide a competitive advantage for farmers. With the Port of Churchill "ice free" longer as a result of climate change, it is worth evaluating whether this will be a cost effective method of transport. The Churchill port also services Northeastern Saskatchewan so interested forage producers could also utilize the Port of Churchill.

This project will assess Manitoba's ability to produce and export forage commodities including present transportation costs and whether they are a hindrance to accessing a greater global market share. It will also include an assessment of: volume of hay and alfalfa available; what forage products are p / 2



Port of Churchill

Manitoba Grazing School

December 7 - 8th, 2010
Victoria Inn, Brandon, MB

Going Gr\$N with Grazing
p / 10



read about the grass fed beef association's progress p / 6

Forage Marketing Group moving forward

Much progress has been made by the recently formed marketing group Manitoba Forage Marketers (MFM). The website manitobaforage.ca has just been launched and is taking advantage of the new marketing tools including Facebook and Twitter. Landon Friesen, one of the marketers suggested it at a marketing meeting, having heard from a seller how he is marketing his hay by tweeting out his inventory over the phone.

"It's apparent that people are interested in following what we are doing," says Corie Arbuckle, Coordinator for the site development. "We've only been up for a few p / 3

*Canadian Forage @ Grassland AGM 2010
December 14 - 15th, Winnipeg, MB p. 11*

Examining potential forage markets continued

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available (pellets, cubes, long-fibre); what qualities of hay and alfalfa are most readily available; what varieties of forage are most suitable for which markets and strategic locations to establish processing facilities in Manitoba. The project will also investigate whether the Port of Churchill is a more economical transportation route than shipping via rail to other ports in the west or southwest.

The project objectives are outlined below and will provide us with clear information to move forward.

Project Objectives:

Determine:

- Potential export market demand;
- Manitoba's current processing abilities and needs;
- Manitoba's preferred processing needs to reach export markets;
- Preferred type of forage commodity by market;
- Current transportation costs;
- Alternative transportation routes;
- Transportation policy regarding the movement of forage products;
- Strategic locations for establishing processing and handling facilities.

The production capacity of the Churchill catchment area will be evaluated and will determine:

- Volume of hay and alfalfa available;
- What forage products are available (pellets, cubes, long-fibre);
- What qualities of hay and alfalfa are most readily available;
- What varieties of forage are most suitable for which markets.

Our recently completed Provincial Forage and Grassland Industry Strategic Plan (available at www.mbforagecouncil.mb.ca) identified that we improve market opportunities through improved logistics and infrastructure by working with industry partners to find solutions to industries' logistical challenges. The development of export forage markets is a key priority area for the MFC and there is a desire to continue to work with the Churchill Gateway Development Corporation to develop opportunities to use the port of Churchill for hay exports.

Manitoba Forage Council is leading the project and funding support has been provided by the Churchill Gateway Development Corporation (CGDC) and Manitoba Rural Adaptation Council. The CGDC is working with the Forage Council to help us identify new export opportunities available and review any obstacles to distribution.



Happy Halloween

Forage Marketing Group continued

weeks and we already have followers. It's a great tool for the marketers – I post their inventory updates on Facebook and the information is forwarded to Twitter which tweets it out to all our followers. This will generate awareness about their product and hopefully generate some sales in the future.”

The marketers are off to World Dairy Expo in Madison, Wisconsin the last week of September. For the past decade Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives and the Manitoba Forage Council have shared a booth at the Expo to promote Manitoba forage to the 65,000 + attendees. This world class show continues to generate leads for our sellers and raise the profile of our world class hay. A brochure is being created to promote the group and their products at World Dairy Expo.

The MFM is also participating in the Churchill Export project (page 1 & 2) and will help the researcher(s) identify market potential, processing plans, etc.

Keep your calendars open in early spring for the Manitoba Forage Symposium. The MFM will also be involved in the management/content of the event. More details to follow in the December newsletter. If you would like to join the Manitoba Forage Marketing Group please contact us at (204) 726-9393.

Manitoba Forage Marketers

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Highest Quality Forage in the World

Knowledgeable and Trustworthy

Prime Growing Ingredients

Manitoba's Northern Climate

Premier Supplier of Hay & Straw

Highest Quality Forage in the World
OUR ABUNDANT SUNLIGHT, WARM DAYS & COOL NIGHTS PRODUCE EXCELLENT FORAGE

Producers' Inventory

Inventory Types

Hay

- 3x3x8 Hay Bales
- 3x4x8 Hay Bales
- 4x4x8 Hay Bales
- Certified Organic Hay
- Large Round Hay Bales
- Small Square Hay Bales

Straw

- 3x3x8 Straw Bales

Producer Profiles

- Chapman Farms
- Heppner Farms
- Kletke Farms
- Sigurdson Farms (Gimli) Ltd.
- Smith Farms
- Southman Alfalfa Producers Ltd.

Get Updates

For updates on our latest inventory, follow us on Twitter

Find us on Facebook

Wayne's Clippings

Well, just when we thought that we had a very interesting year last year we have an even more interesting and challenging one this year. At least for now, Mother Nature has decided that the prairies will no longer be the dry prairies. It has been a real difficult year as far as putting up any quantity of good quality feed.



With both the Manitoba Forage Council and the Canadian Forage and Grassland Association (CFGA) operating out of our office it has been a very busy and interesting few months. It is very gratifying to see the CFGA taking on an increasingly important role. Following I have included a few points of interest:

Forage and Grassland Strategy

A meeting with the Honourable Stan Struthers, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives and Deputy Minister Barry Todd provided an opportunity to go over a number of key points in the F&G Strategy. MFC will be working very closely with MAFRI and other partners as we move forward in implementing the Strategy. Minister Struthers expressed his strong support for the forage and grassland sector and the direction laid out in the Strategy.

Manitoba Grazing School

MFC is once again working with MAFRI and other partners in putting on the Manitoba Grazing School. Manitoba Cattle Producers Association is a major sponsor of the Grazing School. A big note of appreciation to the MAFRI staff and particularly to Pam Iwanchysko for her leadership and effort in organizing this event. This year we will

be holding the Manitoba Forage Council AGM during the Grazing School so we are looking forward to much more exposure for MFC and input from producers. The Manitoba Grazing School is once again offering an excellent program with a great line up of speakers. This is one event you do not want to miss – December 7 & 8th at the Victoria Inn in Brandon – see page 10 for details.

Looking for Information – Check out the MFC Website. If you haven't checked out the MFC Website lately it is time to do so. I am always amazed at the number of people we have looking for information and the value of our MFC website in providing that information. Check out the new Forage and Grassland Reference Manual which Fraser Stewart helped us update over the past year. This website based reference manual is a very valuable resource. A big thank-you to Corie for riding herd on the MFC website and her input in developing the new CFGA site www.canadianfga.ca

Manitoba Forage Marketers

The recently formed Manitoba Forage Marketers group is up and running. They are playing a major role in the World Dairy Expo this year and are providing valuable input into the Forage Export Committee of the Canadian Forage and Grassland Association as well as input to the Churchill Study. If you are a forage marketer in Manitoba have a close look at belonging to this Group to help add value and market opportunities for your business www.manitobaforage.ca

MFC's AGM
1 p.m. Dec 7, 2010 at
Grazing School
Join us!

MFC Board Meeting Planned for October

We will be holding our fall MFC Board of Directors later in October. This will be an important meeting as we further prioritize the Forage and Grassland Strategy action plans for both the long and short term.

Sincerely,

Wayne Digby
Executive Director

Revised Forage & Grassland Manual Hits Website

Thanks to our most dedicated and “never retired” forage expert – Fraser Stewart – we now have a revised Forage & Grassland Manual.

A paper edition was created by Fraser in 2004, and in 2007 it was revised and uploaded onto the MFC website. To this day our forage and grassland manual is one of the top visited pages on our website!

This past year Fraser has spent countless hours revamping the manual once again. The latest version on the site is in a pdf format and is available for downloading. CD's are in development and can be obtained through the Forage Council.

Call to reserve yours today (204) 726-9393.

Thank you to our sponsors: Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Greencover Canada Program, the Manitoba Forage Council and Fraser Stewart (editor).



MFC
MANITOBA FORAGE COUNCIL

Grass Fed Beef Model

This model will help you determine your costs and return for the production of grass fed beef. There are several spreadsheets for you to complete throughout the process.

Step 1. Complete the **white boxes** on the Grassfed Summary. You will be required to determine your forage land base and balance it to your animals. You must also determine your grazing days during the various phases. The yellow boxes will be automatically filled in once you complete the following spreadsheets.

Step 2. Complete the **white boxes** in the Cow Calf Phase.

Step 3. Complete the **white boxes** in the Grazing Yearling Phase.

Step 4. Complete the **white boxes** in the Forage Finishing Phase.

Step 5. Complete the **white boxes** on the Marketing Spreadsheet.

Step 6. Complete the **white boxes** on the Forage Establishment Spreadsheet.

Step 7. Complete the **white boxes** on the Stored Harvest Spreadsheet.

Step 8. Complete the **white boxes** on the Pasture Fencing Spreadsheet.

Step 9. Return to the Grassfed Production Summary and you will have a **net return per head** for your operation.

The three production phases included in this model are:

1. **Cow Calf Phase** - Production costs for the weaned calf may include management systems such as: use of low cost forages, extended grazing systems and weath and bale grazing systems.

2. **Grazing Yearlings Phase** - Includes: use of high quality grass/legume forages and winter feeding and early summer grazing.

3. **Forage Finishing Phase** - Includes: use of high quality/energy forages for finishing and use of non-starch feeds to retain a health advantage of grass fed beef.

Other worksheets included in this model are: marketing, forage establishment, stored harvest and pasture fencing.

Developer of this Model: Fraser Stewart, Selkirk, MB, February 2009.

* The Manitoba Forage Council accepts no responsibility for the utilization of this information.

Grass Fed Beef Interactive Workbook Available

This interactive model will help you determine the costs and return for the production of grass fed beef within your operation. You simply input data specific to your land base and cattle herd and determine a net return per head. This model has been developed with 2008 statistics.

Go to the Resources/Technical /Information/ Publications page of the MFC website to download it for free. www.mbforagecouncil.mb.ca



MFC Reports

Grass Fed Beef Association steams ahead

by: Paula Havixbeck

The Manitoba Grass-fed Beef Producers Association (MGFBPA) has been in full swing these last few months with a number of excellent products having been developed by Chef Helmut Mathae. Throughout the summer these new products were sampled by nearly 3000 consumers and sold at the St. Norbert Farmer's Market, Crampton's Market and one new retailer, Jardin St. Leon's Gardens. There are also longer term, year round markets being developed including a new partnership with Vita Health Foods in Winnipeg.

The new processed products include: Grass-fed Beef Wine Sausage, Grass-fed Beef Maple Sausage, Grass-fed Beef Pate, and Grass-fed Beef Meat Pies. The meat pies are unique in that they are a single serving and come in a flax-based crust and a regular crust. All of these products have no antibiotics, growth hormones, nitrates, and gluten and consumer response to all of them has been very well-received. Labels were developed including each product's nutritional analysis.

Beef cuts continue to sell alongside processed products with the popular cuts moving quickly and sales compared to the same period last year are approximately 40% higher for the group collectively. Growth is expected to continue in this area as well.

The group developed additional promotional materials including two pop-up displays, more signage that was used roadside to attract customers, a new bookmark information piece, and cooking aprons. The group was a sponsor for "Appatoba" or the Manitoba Open Barbeque Competition held in Morden, Manitoba, August 28-29. Despite the rain, there was a good turnout and a record year for judges—people who come from all walks of life—to take the judges' training and then judge at the few thousand open barbeque competitions throughout North America. Beef brisket was donated and the chefs prepared it to perfection! Plans are to have a team in the competition next year.

Consider joining..... Membership has many benefits including having product marketed on your behalf. We are at a point where more volume is needed so we hope you will consider joining the Association if you are a grass-fed beef producer and meet the protocols. A membership form can be sent to you; membership is only \$100. This entitles you to access our customers, use our marketing materials, and gather insight from our information sharing process. Please contact the group through the web-site: www.manitobagrassfedbeef.ca



Above: grass-fed beef prepared at the Manitoba Open Barbeque Competition in Morden, Manitoba August 28-29 where MGFBPA was a sponsor for the event. Below: Grass-fed beef now sold at Jardin St. Leon's Market in St. Vital (South Winnipeg).



130+ attend Brandon Research Centre Tour

Grazing Solutions for Range and Pasture

Brandon Research Centre (BRC) opened its doors to over 130 cattle producers, extension specialists and agricultural students during a tour of beef and pasture management studies on September 8 and 9. For the first time, this tour was expanded into a two-day event co-hosted by the Research Branch and Agri-Environment Services Branch (AESB) of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC), Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives (MAFRI) and the Northern Great Plains Section of the Society for Range Management.

An agronomist from Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC) joined several scientists from BRC and the Semiarid Prairie Agricultural Research Centre (SPARC) in Swift Current as well as rangeland specialists from AESB in presenting the issues they are currently studying. New information gleaned from their research will contribute to the development of profitable and environmentally sustainable forage-based beef production systems in support of the cattle industry in western Canada.

Spearheading efforts to organize the tour were Shannon Scott, BRC Research Scientist – Beef Nutrition Management; Hushton Block, BRC Research Scientist – Beef Production Systems; Mike Schellenberg, SPARC Range and Forage Plant Ecologist; Dan MacDonald, AESB Senior Specialist – Range and Forage; Heather Davis, MAFRI Livestock Program Coordinator; and Sharon Ramsay, AAFC Regional Science Communications Officer. Their efforts were supported by technicians and beef herdsman at BRC.

The program blended site tours with conference room presentations. The presenters included:

- Mario Therrien, BRC Barley Breeder, and Hushton Block on waxy-coated barley for swath grazing;
- Hushton Block on the use of dry distillers grains with solubles for wintering beef cows and flax feed supplements to boost omega-3 levels in beef;
- Shannon Scott on the comparative benefits of early (March-April) versus late (May-June) calving for cow-calf production and steer finishing;
- Harold Steppuhn, SPARC Soil Salinity Researcher, and Alan Iwaasa, SPARC Grazing Management Researcher, on the forage and grazing potential of AC Saltlander green wheatgrass;
- Shannon Scott on rested grazing and its effects on forage productivity, alfalfa persistence and water use efficiency and on new research into pasture mixes;
- Clayton Robins, BRC beef research assistant, on winter site management to help control leafy spurge infestations and on the forage and grazing potential of AC Killarney orchardgrass;
- Mae Elsinger, AESB Rangeland Biologist, on the use of twice-over rotational grazing to increase forage productivity and improve the health of native grasses in community pastures;
- Zane Fredbjornson, AESB Pasture Manager, on grazing management of the AESB Community Pasture of Wallace;
- Barry Ross, AESB Land Manager, on the objectives of the AESB Community Pasture Program;
- Mike Schellenberg on a Sustainable Agriculture Environmental Systems (SAGES) project to examine the potential impact of increased temperature or changed precipitation pattern and time of grazing on range plant communities;



Ken Gross, DUC Agronomist, talks about the benefits of planting dense nesting cover for waterfowl and other animals, as well as for the health and productivity of native stands.

- Ken Gross, DUC Agronomist, on the use of polycrops to improve soil fertility and structure and on management tools to rejuvenate native stands, particularly the planting of dense nesting cover for waterfowl and other animals. To see the summaries go to www.mbforagecouncil.mb.ca



A busy Grazing Clubs season

It's been a busy Grazing Club season. The following report by Grazing Club Coordinator Michael Thiele outlines their activity the past 6 months.

Holistic Management (HM) Pasture Tour (Ralph and Linda Corcoran, Moosomin, Sk) – June 16

Seven Manitoba producers attended the tour and travelled to the farm of Ralph and Linda Corcoran (Certified Holistic Educators) for a day of classroom and pasture education. The morning was spent reviewing Holistic Management biology concepts: water cycle, mineral cycle, energy cycle and community dynamics. The importance of a pasture plan to provide appropriate grazing period and adequate rest period for optimum forage production was also reviewed. Lunch was served in the yard and the afternoon was out in the pasture talking about grass and pasture management.

HM Meeting and Provincial Tour (Ninga) – July 7

Almost 60 individuals attended presentations by Rodger Savory, Alfred & Maureen Epp - Solar and Gravity watering systems on a multi species farm, cattle sheep & pastured poultry; Glen & Doreen Hicks - stocker operation, tour of paddocks/watering system, mole problems & cattle loading system. There was also a Holistic Club Producer Panel and Cowboy Poetry.

Miniota Grazing Club Tour – July 8

Seven producers listened to Ducks Unlimited speakers: - Kelly, Graham, Jamie, Chelsea (summer students), and Janine Souque, MAFRI. They toured Brian Greaves' Farm (grazing management, multi-species grazing, winter and summer watering systems, and Kirk Kliever's Farm {Holistic Management (goal setting, planning, monitoring), grazing management, wetland restoration, conservation agreements}.

Cartwright Grazing Club Summer Tour – July 13

Twelve producers toured Russell Moffat's farm (twice-over grazing on native pasture) and Jim and Wayne McDonald's farm (pasture management and water systems and saw how their cows, sheep and pigs all birth on pasture. Jim and Wayne have synchronized all animals on their farm to begin birthing June 21, the longest day of the year.

Shoal Lake Grazing Club Summer Tour – July 14

Thirteen producers toured Oliver Joslin's farm (strip grazing with the goal of short grazing period and long rest period) and Darren Naherniak's farm (pasture divided into 51 cells to improve uniformity of grazing and distribution of manure and urine; custom grazes 300 grassers with 1.5 day grazing period and 65 day rest).

Minnedosa Grazing Club Summer Tour – July 20

Six producers toured Gerald Bos' farm (a grain farm converted to a grass farm over the past 8 years; has Holistic Management and Ranching for Profit training), toured several pastures, watched a large herd moved into a fresh paddock and inspected a tire water system on a pasture pipeline. Also toured Ryan Boyd's farm (Ryan has spent several years working hard to improve his pasture management; goal is shorter grazing period and longer rest period; viewed field of fall rye and hairy vetch that will be used for silage).

Woodworth Grazing Club Summer Tour – August 4

35 producers came to tour Larry Wergner's farm – Holistic Management and pasture planning; soybean, perennial rye grass, and summer watering systems.

MZTRA Grazing Club Summer Tour – Aug 10

Stops at the Research Farm included: alfalfa establishment using canola, alfalfa grazing trials, intensive grazing and burning trials, cicer milk vetch establishment. Also saw the farm of Gerald Bos to discuss the evolution of his operation from grain to grass.

Grazing Club Tour to Ekert Farm at Moosomin – August 17

Glen and Dawn Ekert received the Saskatchewan TESA award for environmental stewardship of their farm. (The Ekerts are holistic managers). They toured their pastures and discussed the evolution of their thinking, pasture management and stewardship.

Bus Trip to Bangor, Saskatchewan – August 24

A 15 passenger bus was rented with pickup in Shoal Lake. Producers: Oliver Joslin, Ryan Canart. Writer – Angela Lovell. The theme was cover crops. Local producer Garry Richards spoke on the benefits of cover crops on his farm and Dr. Jill Clapperton spoke on soil health and cover crops. Producers toured two cover crop fields and discussed the benefits, possible mixes and the amounts of each.



Cicer milk vetch and fall rye (right) at Ryan



Oak Lake Summer Grazing Club Tour – August 25

Toured MAFRI cover crop plot at Tod Wallace's farm. Cover crop looked excellent (mix of oats, millet, turnip, radish, hairy vetch and peas). Tod planned to cut the cover crop for silage. They also looked at a new variety of Desperado barley compared to Ranger barley. Toured Ron Batho's pastures (he continues to make improvements on his farm even into his 70's. Water has been a focus. He has installed a winter watering system and several summer watering windmill systems). Ron has been involved for 5 years with MHHC and the twice-over grazing system on his native pastures. Shrub control has been an ongoing issue and fire has been used to knock back shrub.

North Parkland Area Grazing Club Tours – June 22-24, 2010

Three pasture tours were organized in Alonsa, Toutes Aides, and Gilbert Plains. Topics covered included extending the grazing season through Corn Grazing and Bale Grazing, Polycropping, manure management and using electric fencing as a tool to increase grazing efficiency on pastures. The tours concluded with the electric fencing demonstration from Gallagher Fencing Rep – Wil Rex, who also sponsored the supper meal for all participants of the tours.

Provincial Grazing Tour – North Parkland Area – July 21

60 participants were involved in this year's tour. The first site at Circle Y farms (owned and operated by Ken and Nadia Yakielashek) encompassed viewing a stock piled pasture site which included many different species of legumes and grasses including Cicer Milk Vetch, a new species of non-bloating legumes for stockpiling. The tour continued to their intensively managed pasture which included some 30 different paddocks in their grazing operation as well as a corn grazing site for extended grazing. Marilena Kowalchuk (Managing the Water's Edge) spoke on Riparian Area Management and Sundog Solar and Powerflex fencing spoke on the benefits of using electric fencing and solar power for intensive grazing management. Participants travelled to view the Garland Project – a 10 year project encompassing the co-existence of livestock and forestry for the forestry and grass resources. The tour continued onto the Podolsky Honey Farm which was a "sweet" treat for the tour. This was definitely a highlight of the tour for many of the participants, in being able to see a different side of agriculture than just the forage and livestock sector.

For more information about Grazing Clubs go to: www.mbforagecouncil.mb.ca



Events Review

Going Gr\$\$n with Grazing School



Our 13th annual Manitoba Grazing School is out to educate, inform, interact and deliver top notch speakers to make you the best at what you do. Check out our line up and get onto your computer or phone to register.

Get connected: Here's the chance to socialize with our speakers, our exhibitors and fellow ranchers. The social is from 7:00 – 10:00 PM on the 6th (Wednesday) and offers a cash bar and free munchies.

Tuesday, December 7th

8:30 REGISTRATION AND COFFEE

9:00 GRAND SALON – Dr. Kevin Sedivec – How Does a Grazing System “Really” Work? Grazing systems are tools that require time management, space and labor to enhance grazing efficiency, increase economic return, and optimally utilize our range and pasturelands of today. The composition of our plant communities have changed due to climatic conditions, weed invasion, and Kentucky bluegrass encroachment. We need to change our management strategies to reflect our current range and pastureland conditions to improve forage consumption, enhance native range plant growth, and increase our profits.

10:00 COFFEE AND DISPLAYS

11:00 GRAND SALON – Brenda Schoepp – The Beef Industry, Deboned – Brenda will “debone” the beef industry and identify its markets and opportunities.

12:00 GRAND SALON – LUNCH AND DISPLAYS

1:00 Responding to Challenges and Opportunities in the Forage and Grassland Sector (Reports from Manitoba Forage Council and the Canadian Forage and Grassland Association & Manitoba Forage Council AGM).

2:30 BREAKOUT SESSION A (Each session will be given twice, choose two of the three)

A-1 SALON 2 – Grant Palmer – Analyzing and Benchmarking Your Operation – Where You Need to Start, Where You Need to Go! - Grant will discuss how to start analyzing your operation, including the basics of costs of production, as well as how to incorporate management changes to assist in making your operations more profitable.

A-2 SALON 3 – Tanis Sirski – The Effect Of Two Calving Seasons On Cow-Calf Economic Risk And Return In Western Canada – March and June calving seasons were tested across three sites in Western Canada to determine which would be the most profitable and low risk system. Find out more to determine which calving season may be an option for your operation.

A-3 GRAND SALON – Jeff Thorpe – Adaptation to Climate Change in Prairie Grasslands - This presentation will discuss how climate change will affect our native grasslands, and what kind of adaptations may be needed. Climate change could reduce overall productivity, increase the frequency of extreme events such as droughts, and cause new plant species (including weeds) to move north into Canada. All of these changes could affect the use of grasslands for livestock production, and adaptations in grazing management will be required.

3:30 Refreshment Break / Visit Displays

4:00 REPEAT OF BREAKOUT SESSION A

5:00 GRAND SALON – Graziers of the Year

6:15 IMPERIAL BALLROOM – Cocktails and Banquet

7:30 GRAND SALON – Dessert and Entertainment by group Double Vision followed by MFC Silent Auction and Socializing

Wednesday, December 8th

8:00 GRAND SALON – Doug Wray – The Future of Forage and Grasslands - Doug is a rancher from southern Alberta who has long been behind the charge to give forages the notariety they need and deserve. The forage industry has and will continue to evolve in terms of forage breeding, management and use. Find out about the required changes needed to profile forages as a profitable venture.

9:00 GRAND SALON – Dr. Jim Gerrish – Management Intensive Grazing (MiG) – The Grassroots of Grass Farming – Jim will take graziers step-by-step through the MiG system. He begins from the ground up with the soil, and advances through the management of pastures and animals. Jim's insight and personal experience can also help experienced graziers fine tune their grazing operations for added income.

10:00 Refreshment Break / Visit Displays

10:30 BREAKOUT SESSION B (Each session will be given twice; choose two of the three)

B-1 GRAND SALON – Dr. Jim Gerrish – Why Do We Make Hay? With today's grazing management systems, the cost of making hay far exceeds its value to the grazing business. Have you ever taken the time to make hay because you've always done so? Would you not rather spend your time monitoring pastures and moving livestock instead of making hay? Find out how to kick the hay habit and make the transition from hay feeding to grazing and much more.

B-2 SALON 1 – Dr. Joe Stookey – Minimizing Weaning Stress in Beef Cattle. Dr. Stookey will be covering the various methods used to wean beef cattle and the advantages and disadvantages of the various weaning protocols.

B-3 SALON 2 – Dr. Art Bailey – Manitoba Forage Benchmarking Project – The Manitoba Forage Benchmarking Project was initiated in 2004 and has been collecting data (including yield) on native pastures/rangeland specific to different vegetation types, soil types within and climatic/ecozones within the province. The data from this project will guide future extension activities relative to rangeland management as well as assist in updating current classification of Crown land leases. Findings of the overall study will be presented.

11:30 REPEAT OF BREAKOUT SESSION

12:30 NOON - LUNCH AND DISPLAYS

1:30 GRAND SALON – PRODUCER PANEL – The Next Generation! Find out how young farmers are determined to “make a living on the farm”. (Ben Hamm – Vita, Manitoba, Tod Wallace – Oak Lake, Manitoba, Gwen Donahoe – The Pas, Manitoba)

3:00 Closing Remarks and Adjourn

GRAZIERS OF THE YEAR - find out who is recognized for their insightful, proactive cattle/forage production!

To register or for more details go to: www.mbforagecouncil.mb.ca or call MAFRI (204) 622-2006.

Canadian Forage & Grassland Association First Annual General Meeting

December 14 – 15, 2010

Canadian International Grains Institute

1000-303 Main Street

Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

Our first ever Canadian Forage & Grassland (CFGF) Annual Meeting will be held December 14 and 15, in conjunction with the Canadian Forum on Forages & Rangelands (CFFR) Annual Meeting. “We are very pleased to be holding our AGM jointly with the CFFR” says Wayne Digby, Executive Director of CFGF. “The Canadian Forum on Forage and Rangelands represents a broad cross section from the research and extension community throughout Canada and this will allow us to engage with them directly and work at addressing the many research and technology transfer challenges/opportunities in the forage and grassland sector”.

Although the agenda has not yet been finalized the AGM and conference will provide intellectual stimuli on various fronts. Suggested speaker topics are: Maximizing Quality and Yield in Forage Production (for grazing needs and export markets), Challenges and Opportunities in Exporting to the U.S., and Forage Export Opportunities and Challenges to China and the Middle East. As well a round table discussion on the role of the CFGF in Advancing the Forage and Grassland Sector is being planned.

The CFFR segment of the meeting which is planned for December 13 and 14, will have their representatives from industry, forage councils, Universities and provincial and federal government bodies addressing issues and concerns relative to the forage industry. Watch our website for further details. www.mbforagecouncil.mb.ca Ph: (204) 726-9393.



Coming Events

How Rain Affects the Quality of Hay

This year's haying season has had its fair share of difficulties. Cool temperatures and frequent rains have made making good quality hay a difficult business. Rained on hay has reduced yield and quality. Not only are there issues with storing and feeding lower quality hay, it's also not as marketable in today's market conditions; where many buyers may not have the money to pay for it, or are not willing to take the risk of continuing to feed cattle that may not have a market. More often than not, it's years like this that we see only the "cream of the crop" (best quality feed) being bought, and the medium to lower quality being fed at home. Rained on hay accrues losses via the following ways:

- Leaching of soluble carbohydrates and certain minerals (protein often not significantly affected);
- Mild/long-term rainfall events will remove more soluble nutrients than short-term/ intensive rainfall events. As much as 50% of the dry matter removed might be soluble carbohydrates. These carbohydrates are what feed the microbes in charge of ensiling, thus losing them can reduce the option to ensile the crop. Additives can be used to supplement lost carbohydrates, but this adds cost;
- Increased and prolonged plant respiration;
- The plant continues to convert collected carbohydrates to CO₂ gas until it reaches 30% moisture. Re-wetting the hay beyond 30% moisture will essentially restart the respiration process;
- Leaf shattering and loss; continued handling (e.g. raking) to dry the swath, along with frequent wet – drying cycles increase the leaf drop;
- Microbial activity. Wet hay will support continued microbial breakdown of plant structure and nutrients, and promote the development of molds;
- Color bleaching. Continued exposure to the sun and elements will result in the loss of green color, thus reducing marketability.

How Baling Wet Hay Affects Storage Management

Due to the unpredictable weather, many producers ended up baling their hay a little wet.

When storing these bales, it's important to note that bales automatically increase in temperature after baling due to microbial activity and plant respiration inside the bale; generally up to about 540° C. Bales also keep the heat of the day inside if baled during a hot day. Therefore, if you plan on storing hay inside a building (e.g. hay for export), it is at risk of spontaneously combusting when baled at 18% moisture or greater.

To counter the risk of heating and mold development, some producers have added natural enzyme-based additives in hays baled above 20% moisture; others have stuck with using more traditional acid-based additives. If you have assumed some risk in baling this year's hay a little wetter than normal you need to MONITOR YOUR STACK while aware of the details below. If you've baled wet hay that is at risk to heating, leave the hay unstacked for the first 3 weeks after baling, allowing the heat to escape.

If you do stack the hay, use a temperature probe to measure heat. Probe the stack in several places, making sure to reach the middle (therefore may need 2-3 foot long thermometer). Buy one that can read up to at least 950° C.

The cheaper option is to build your own from ½" - ¾" steel pipe. Pinch one end and drill 3 to 4 small holes in the side of the pinched end to allow air flow. Then weld a T-shaped handle on the other end. Then simply slide a glass thermometer on a string down the tube which is stuck in the stack. Check your stack as frequent as possible; once a day is a nice place to start. If temperatures are rising, consider pulling the stack apart to cool off. Be sure to check the most tightly packed area in the bale as this is where the temperatures will first begin to rise. For example, check within 6-12" from the center of a round bale. Use the temperature ranges below to determine the risk of losing the quality of your bales to heating.

- up to 490° C: Caused as fungi and bacteria carry out normal respiration. The process is referred to as normal sweating during hay curing. This temperature rise occurs when hay is baled at 15-20% moisture. These temperatures generally do not cause serious concerns in forage quality loss. However, mold may develop at this temperature range.
- 43-650° C: Caused by fungi able to grow at this temperature range. Chemical re-actions during heating will denature some protein and cause some fiber to be less digestible.
- 57-710° C: Caused by fungi respiration. At 650° C, check temperature every day. At temperatures above 710° C, chemical reactions dominate the heating process. If the temperature continues to rise, check it every four hours. At this stage, the situation may become dangerous.
- 790° C: Continue to check the temperature every few hours and notify your local fire department. Do not attempt to move the hay without fire department assistance.
- 900° C or more: Spontaneous combustion is possible. Ask your fire department to assist you.

Source: North Dakota State University; South Dakota State University; Iowa State University Extension.

Impact of cold acclimatization on enteric methane emissions of beef cows fed protein deficient and sufficient forage-based diets

J. Bernier, K. Wittenberg, K. Plaizier, M. Tenuta, D. Flaten, D. Krause, E. Kebreab, K. Ominski

The Canadian beef cow herd is exposed to long periods of cold temperatures and a range of forage qualities in the winter months. Throughout much of Western Canada, beef cows are commonly overwintered using low quality forages, which often have low protein content. Expansion of a wheat-based ethanol industry in Canada has led to the production of dried distiller's grain with solubles (DDGS), a co-product of ethanol production. DDGS may play an important role as an inexpensive protein supplement in beef cow diets. However, little is known about nutrient utilization and net greenhouse gas emissions in overwintering beef cattle supplemented with wheat-based DDGS, therefore further investigation is required.

Identification of environmentally sustainable, low-cost production practices in overwintering cattle is critical to the future of the cattle industry. Those practices which serve to reduce net greenhouse gas emissions (including methane emissions) and reduce nutrient excretion to ground and surface water are of particular interest. Since low protein levels and cold acclimatization are suggested to influence enteric methane emissions, examination of these parameters is valuable in improving estimates of methane emissions from Canadian beef cattle.

To accomplish this, thirty beef cows with an average body weight of 675.4 ± 51.8 kg were divided into three treatment groups and fed diets consisting of 6% crude protein (CP) forage (50 hay: 50 straw) with no DDGS (control), 10% DDGS (8.7% CP) or 20% DDGS (11.5% CP). The control diet was deficient in N compared to the cows' N requirements, whereas the 10% DDGS diet contained borderline sufficient N compared to requirements, and the 20% DDGS diet provided N in excess of requirements. These diets were fed in thermal neutral (fall; October to November 2008) and cold-stressed (winter; January to February 2009) environments, with average temperatures of 7.3 and -17.7°C in fall and winter, respectively. The data results were compared between diets to determine if greater protein (DDGS) supplementation would lower enteric methane emission levels, and between seasons to determine if exposure to cold environments would also reduce methane production.

Regardless of being exposed to cold temperatures in the winter, dry matter intake was not different between diets or seasons. In response to the increasing levels of DDGS supplementation, available CP intake increased significantly across diets. However, since the same diets were fed in fall and winter, there was no difference in available CP intake between seasons. As expected, blood samples indicated that serum urea nitrogen (SUN; an indicator of protein or nitrogen cycling within the animal) increased significantly as dietary available CP intake increased across diets. Although cows consumed the same diets in both seasons, SUN was significantly higher in winter than in fall. As a result of increasing dietary CP content through greater DDGS supplementation, enteric CH₄ emissions expressed as a percent of gross energy intake (% GEI) were significantly different between diets, with emissions of 6.5, 6.8, and 5.3% GEI for control, 10% and 20% DDGS diets, respectively. Cows acclimatized to the cold winter environment had significantly lower emissions than when acclimatized to the thermal neutral (fall) environment (5.2 versus 7.1% GEI). This represents a 26.8% reduction in enteric methane emissions when cows are acclimatized to cold environments!

These results indicate that enteric CH₄ emissions (% GEI) were reduced when increasing dietary CP was supplied in excess of animal requirements. Therefore, supplementation of low quality forage diets with 20% DDGS appears effective in reducing enteric CH₄ emissions when expressed as % GEI. Further, DDGS supplementation and cold acclimatization in cattle may reduce enteric CH₄ emissions. Methane production in cold acclimatized cattle requires further exploration as these results suggest that the Canadian beef herd may produce less methane than previously predicted. Such information is essential for accurate model development and improved prediction of CH₄ emissions from Canadian beef cattle. For more information on this research, please contact Jennilee Bernier, Forage and Beef Research Specialist (MAFRI) at Jennilee.Bernier@gov.mb.ca or (204) 761-0649.



Nearing Completion: University of Manitoba's Discovery Centre

The Bruce D. Campbell Farm & Food Discovery Centre, located at the University of Manitoba's Glenlea Research Station south of Winnipeg, is an innovative agricultural education facility that will feature interactive hands-on displays about every aspect of food production, from farming practices to the marketing and retailing of food. The 8,280 square-foot centre has been supported by government, industry and individual donors.



Guy Robbins, Manager, in front of Bruce D. Campbell Farm & Food Discovery Centre.



UNIVERSITY
OF MANITOBA

Construction of the Discovery Centre is 90 per cent complete and creation of the exhibits is underway. The facility is expected to officially open in spring 2011. With 30,000 visitors anticipated annually, the Centre will be a valuable food production experience for people all ages.

Visitor services manager Guy Robbins will oversee the operation of the new Discovery Centre, including the planning and implementation of its programs and services. He will guide education and public outreach programming, develop marketing and coordinate staff and volunteers at the centre. Lorrie Koroscil has also been appointed as assistant manager, and will facilitate connections with the agricultural community and the university. For more information, please contact: Crystal Jorgenson (204) 474-9435.

Manitoba Forage Council AGM
Join us at 1 p.m. Dec 7th at
Grazing School

Western Canadian Holistic Management Conference
February 15 & 16, 2011
Lloydminster Agricultural Exhibition
Lloydminster, Alberta
info: Pam Iwanchysko, (204) 648-3965

Working with partners

Working with Partners (Ducks Unlimited and Manitoba Forage Council)

Ducks Unlimited Canada and the Manitoba Forage Council have built a strong relationship over the past 20 years. Ken Gross, provincial agrologist with DU, has served on our board for the past 15 years; formerly as Vice President and now as an industry representative.

“DU originally got involved with the Council as we were interested in the forage industry,” explained Ken. “Our research clearly indicates that the more forage there is on the landscape the more productive it is for waterfowl.” As a result DU has launched several programs to promote proper grazing management and the planting of forages. According to Ken, producers readily increased their forage acres during the 1990’s as they were expanding their herds and needed to improve pasture condition. Since BSE hit the cattle industry there has been less interest in forage conversion, however this year was very positive. DU partnered with Viterra to deliver a forage program – a \$30 per acre incentive to convert annually cropped land into forage – that sold out. “Our goal was to seed 3200 acres and we succeeded,” Ken was pleased to say. He noted that the wet weather made it difficult for many producers to get the seed in but what’s in looks really good.

DU also has a very successful initiative that assists producers in dealing with saline areas, continued Ken. Saline areas produce little crop so are best seeded to saline tolerant forages that root deeply and prevent salinity from spreading. DU

provides producers with a FREE saline tolerant forage seed mix if they live in one of these four conservation districts: Little Saskatchewan River, Upper Assiniboine, Pembina Valley and Turtle Mountain. DU custom orders the seed mix and partners with these Conservation districts who distribute the seed to area landowners. Most of the areas seeded are 3 – 10 acres in size, says Ken. This year, many saline areas were too wet for spring seeding but dormant seeding is still an option. If you need seed and farm in any of the above four districts call your District to see if there is seed available.

Grazing Clubs are another successful program that has been delivered by DU with support from MAFRI and the MFC with major funding support from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. Numerous other industry partners assist with sponsorship of individual events. “The first club started in Minnedosa in 1999, and interest was so strong that we added another 5 clubs in 2000. The tours and club events generated so much interest from producers and industry that the concept took off. Today we have a total of 27 clubs running events around the province,” says Ken. We have a great partnership with MA-



Ken Gross, Ducks Unlimited Canada / MFC Director

FRI staff including Pam Iwanchysko in Dauphin and Tim Clarke in Ashern who help run meetings that focus on producer’s needs, plus we have Michael Thiele, our Grazing Club Coordinator for the southwest part of the province. “Research tells us that ag clubs last on average five years, but the fact that our clubs have lasted more than 10 years is a testament to how successful they are, especially since times haven’t been that kind to the cattle industry.”

Over the past 10 years the Forage Council has been available to administrate the grazing club program and promote activities/events through its website, newsletters and press releases. Be sure to check out the MFC website frequently to see what is on tap for this fall.

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2009/10

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