



Grey Wooded Forage Association

"Creating an Awareness of Forages"

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Email: Ginette - GWFA3@telus.net or Albert - GWFA2@telus.net

Website: www.greywoodedforageassociation.com

Annual Report 2014/2015

VISION STATEMENT

GWFA – The center of choice for gathering and dispersing of forage and livestock information, providing a strong link with producers and the research community.

MISSION STATEMENT

To enhance awareness of the organization as an information exchange centre, illustrating forage and livestock production practices that are environmentally and economically sustainable for the agricultural community.

You can now read 'The Blade' and the Spring & Fall Newsletters on our website and enjoy reading our publications from anywhere!

www.greywoodedforageassociation.com



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2014-2015 Manager's Notes

By Albert Kuipers



Greetings, GWFA members and friends. I'd say it's been quite a year, with lots of change. While we often resist change because it causes us some anxiety, change is a good thing. Rather than running from change, we need to embrace change, especially when it's for the betterment of ourselves, our families and the organization we're part of.

About a year ago we hired Ginette as our summer staff. She brought such great enthusiasm and energy to our organization, it was like a breath of fresh air for the Directors and for me. It didn't take long for her to start helping me to improve our service to you, our members and to our many friends and collaborators in the industry.

Then, in mid summer we got an announcement from Minister of Agriculture, Verlyn Olson, that our major funding would be doubled. This got us enthusiastically working on plans to build and grow our organization. We kept Ginette on to continue working with us to build the organization.

Then, as oil prices dived as they did, we learned that this was not to be. With resulting budget constraints and the long term future of our organization in mind, the Directors made decisions to re-structure staffing to become more efficient and effective. As a result the position of office manager was discontinued and Muriel Finkbeiner was laid off. We wish her the very best in her future endeavors.

Then, to improve our effectiveness even more the Board, upon my suggestion, moved Ginette into the position of General Manager and my position became that of Forage and Grazing Specialist. Ginette brings to our organization some excellent management and marketing skills along with her enthusiasm and energy. I can now focus much more of my time gathering and delivering forage production and grazing management information to you through the various means we have at our disposal.

I'd say this is a big triple win. We are now making the best use of Ginette's skills and energy; we are using my skills and experience in the best way possible; and our organization will grow in strength and stability, and in the value we bring to you.



New General Manager's Notes

By Ginette Boucher

Greetings,

I pray regularly for wisdom and guidance to make sound decisions with respect to the future of our organization. There have been many changes at GWFA in the past year and I would like to thank the Board of Directors for the long evenings and dedication and for the hard choices they have had to make to insure the organizations' future. Policies are being put in place to deal with any deficiencies that have arisen in the past year. With guidance & leadership from our Board, we will continue to grow and develop with our vision in mind. We have been streamlining processes to improve efficiencies and productivity and assure integrity of the organization.

With the new government and these uncertain times we are moving forward positively, with caution and are looking at other opportunities. We will continue to build and develop strong relationships with our sponsors and industry so that we may continue in the delivery of key information in a timely matter. I will continue to seek other sources of revenue to build our finances and fulfill our commitment to GWFA's funders and secure much needed funds. I will manage our resources with integrity.

We are fortunate that Albert has remained with us in his new role of Forage & Grazing specialist and we have access to his area of specialty. We work extremely well as a team.

Our responsibility to family, community and business is to manage the land that we have in the best of our abilities. This will in turn provide the quality of life we all seek.

In closing what we need most is to hear from each and every one of you on how we can assist you in improving production, herd health, build our soils improve profit in an environmental & sustainable way for future generations. We will continue to increase value in our services & information we provide.



I am looking forward to an exciting & challenging year,

Thank you to our corporate sponsors who support our organization and all of its activities throughout the year!



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RANCH & SALES



Thank you to our Annual General Meeting & Tradeshow sponsors!



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Thank you to the counties who support us and collaborate with us.!





Grey Wooded Forage Association

"Creating an Awareness of Forages"

2014-2015 Board of Directors & Staff

Chair:	Victor Penner	Rocky Mountain House	403-729-2973
Vice Chair:	Kristen Ritson-Bennett	Innisfail	403-358-1674
Treasurer:	Cameron Jenkins	Spruceview	403-728-3300
Secretary:	Deb Skeels	Rocky Mountain House	403-845-2515
Directors:			
	Iain Aitken	Rimbey	403-843-0094
	Brendon Anderson	Rimbey	403-843-3314
	Chris Sande	Rocky Mountain House	403-729-3896
	Vance Graham	Rocky Mountain House	403-845-6249
ARECA Rep:	Herman Wyering	Ponoka	403-783-2681
Ex-officio:	Ken Ziegler	Rocky Mountain House	403-845-8204
Manager:	Ginette Boucher	GWFA Office:	403-844-2645
Forage & Grazing Specialist:	Albert Kuipers	GWFA Office:	403-844-2645



From left standing: Ken Ziegler, Vance Graham, Chris Sande, Cameron Jenkins, Herman Wyering, Brendon Anderson, Iain Aitken & Victor Penner.
From left seated: Ginette Boucher, Albert Kuipers, Deb Skeels, & Kristen Ritson-Bennett.
Inset: Muriel Finkbeiner.

Grey Wooded Forage Association Publications

The Newsletter

Most of you have received the Grey Wooded Forage Association Newsletter in the past. This publication was a sixteen page paper presenting articles on GWFA projects and happenings and many other forage and livestock related items that may be of interest to forage producers and an advertising opportunity for agricultural service businesses to show what they have to offer. 17,000 copies of this paper were being printed twice annually, spring and fall, and mailed to members and the rural public in West Central Alberta in April and November. The Western Star published the Spring and Fall Newsletters for us.

After much consideration of the production costs and the value to producers, we have decided to discontinue publishing the Spring and Fall Newsletters. Instead, we are now submitting articles to various farm and rural publications already being read by farmers, ranchers and rural folks. The Alberta Farmer Express is the first of these publications to include an article from GWFA.



The Blade

This monthly publication is an important vehicle for regularly getting event announcements and information to the members. *The Blade* has grown over the past few years from four pages to eight pages, twelve pages and is now 16 pages.

We have been working at developing *The Blade* into a publication that is of high enough value that people want to be GWFA members just to get it. We're getting feedback that we're on the right track.

Grey Wooded Forage Association publishes this paper in house, printing up to 500 copies and mailing 450 of them to members and associates of GWFA. Copies are also used to keep in touch with our partners, potential event sponsors and service providers, as well as placing a few in strategic locations where people can pick them up as examples of what the forage association has available.

The Blade and the Spring and Fall Newsletters are available on our website:

www.greywoodedforageassociation.com

Forage & Grazing Mgmt Consulting Services for GWFA Members

Forage production and grazing management consulting services have been available, and continue to be available to members. So far, this valuable service has been available free to current members. In the past year we did 48 individual consults for members throughout our area.



Photo credits: Albert Kuipers

Printer and Printing Services for GWFA Members & ARECA Member Associations

As you may remember from previous years, GWFA purchased a large printer, capable of printing The Blade effectively 'in house'. We had been awarded funding from the Alberta government and administrated by ARECA for purchasing and replacing capital assets, so some of this funding was used for this purchase. In early 2009 we replaced this printer with a new one of the same make and model. We also used capital purchases funding for this replacement.

ARECA and some of our sister organizations come to us for their printing jobs. Low cost printing is available to GWFA members as well. Please call the office for details.

Revenue from sources other than government funding is very important as we must show that we get 'matching dollars' to get any of our government funding. It also contributes to our fund for replacement of office equipment in the future.



Publications available to members

Over the last few years we've been collaborating with Dr. Vern Baron and the now retired, Duane McCartney and Arvid Aasen, from the Lacombe Research Station, to make information available to you from research they've worked on. Thanks to Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada's Green Cover Program for funding, we are able to make the following publications available to you.

Management of Canadian Prairie Rangelands is an excellent manual for managers of rangelands. Some of Canada's leading rangeland researchers have contributed to this publication.

We still have a few copies of the book entitled: "**Stock – poisoning Plants of Western Canada**". Forage Researcher, Duane McCartney was involved in publishing this book. This is a very comprehensive collection of information on a large variety of plants that have toxic attributes which could affect livestock. Some of Canada's leading authorities on toxic plants have contributed to this book.

The **Wealthy Rancher Calculator**, by Arnold Mattson, formerly from Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada, is also available at our office. Anyone who has participated in a GWFA grazing course designed by Albert Kuipers will have seen Arnold Mattson's Wealthy Rancher presentation demonstrating the use of the calculator.

This calculator is available on a cd and is useful for comparing different enterprises or profit centres in your operation, using an Excel Spreadsheet format. You can also use it to try a bunch of "what-if" scenarios for pasturing beef cow/calf or feeder cattle.

We also have the factsheets "**Agdex 420/56-3 - Agronomic Management of Swath Grazed Pastures**", "**Agdex 420/56-4 - Agronomic Management of Stockpiled Pastures**" and **Agdex 130/538-1 - "Nutrient Management on Intensively Managed Pastures"** available. We'll email or mail you one or more of these if you email or call us and ask for them.

Grazing Notebooks are a handy pocket size pasture record keeping tool that have been popular for quite a few years. We have some of these available at the GWFA office.

We have a handy, dandy **Pasture Planner** manual that was originally developed in Manitoba and was re-designed and published in Alberta by West Central Forage Association, our neighbour to the north of us. We have lots of these available at the office.

We have a few copies of the **Sod Seeding** manuals left. These were published in Manitoba by the Manitoba Forage Council, Manitoba Agriculture and Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada.

So give us a call, or an email if you want one or more of these publications. We can have them ready for you to pick up, or we can get them to you.

The new **Alberta Forage Manual, 2nd Edition**, offers producers comprehensive information on a range of forage topics: adaptation, legumes and grasses, annuals, mixtures, establishment, fertility, pasture management, harvesting and rejuvenation. In addition, sections on forage pest insects and diseases present detailed discussion of these problems in forage crops, helping producers diagnose damage. The extensive descriptions of forage species and their growth habits will help in planning forage management programs. Fully illustrated with colour images, line drawings, tables, charts and graphs, this forage reference work provides a wealth of information.


350 pages. **Agdex 120/20-1 \$30.00**

This manual may be purchased by:

- * Calling 1-800-292-5697 (toll-free in Canada) or (780) 427-0391
- * Calling the GWFA office 403-844-2645 (we can order a copy for you)



Grey Wooded Forage Association events and events in which GWFA partnered with industry, other organizations and/or government



Grey Wooded Forage Association

"Creating an Awareness of Forages"


Plan to Attend

!!GWFA's 30th Anniversary Celebration!!

!!Annual General Meeting & Tradeshow!!

!!Wednesday, May 7, 2014

at the Eckville Community Centre!!



"COWS, CREEKS AND COMMUNITIES"

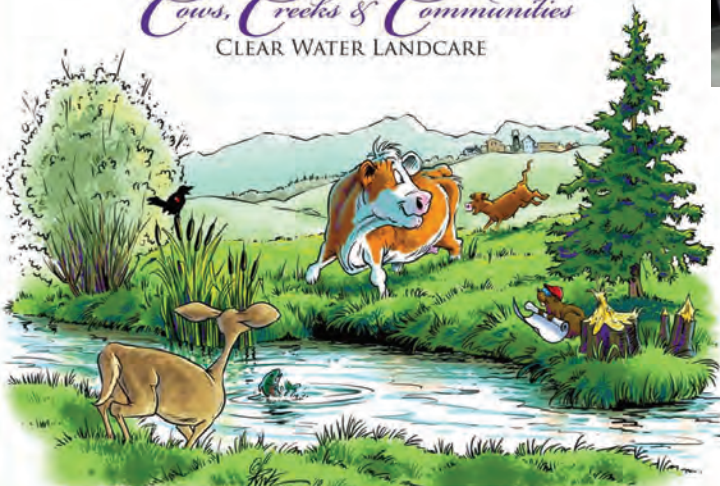
Trade Show & Seminar

Thursday, April 24, 2014

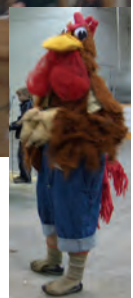
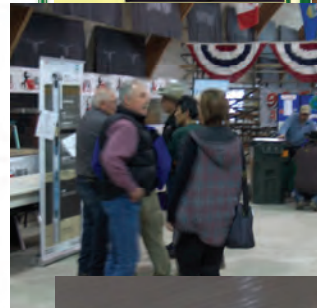
At the Kurt Browning Complex in Caroline Alberta

Cows, Creeks & Communities

CLEAR WATER LANDCARE



"THE BEST FOR EACH"



May 14, 2014 Rocky Ag Society's Ag Theme Park

Due to the fact that the arenas in Rocky Mountain House were under construction, the Ag Theme Park was changed to the Ag Theme Tour for 2014. This event, headed up by the Rocky Ag Society assisted by Clearwater County, hosted about 250 grade 4 and 5 students from Rocky Mountain House and Clearwater county. The tour consisted of three stops where various demonstrations were held. Buses full of students started out at each of the stops and rotated to the other stops at specific intervals. Tour stops included:

- the Marland's riding arena which included a vaulting demonstration, rope making and roping sessions and a stock dog demonstration.
- Marty Winchell Mixed Farm Extravaganza with baby pigs for the tour as well as sheep with lambs and chickens.
- Robotic milking at a dairy farm owned by Stan and Brenda Nicolay.

Pasture Walk with the renowned Jim Gerrish

A Special Event in two locations
on July 9th, 2014

Improving animal nutrition through
increased pasture health & productivity.



Sigurd DeBruijn's pasture

Thank you for your Sponsorship!

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The ARECA Forage Livestock Team brought Jim Gerrish to Alberta for a tour of pasture walks at various locations across the province. He was in Alberta from July 7th through 11th. We held our pasture walks with Jim on July 9th at Iain Aitken's pasture and Sigurd DeBruijn's pasture.

We started the morning off at the Leedale Hall with a pancake breakfast after which we headed for Iain Aitken's pasture just to the north of Leedale and west of Rimbey. Jim spent a lot of time teaching the group how to estimate the amount of forage available for grazing.

For the afternoon we headed out to Sigurd DeBruijn's pasture east of Red Deer. We enjoyed somewhat of a repeat of Jim's lessons in the morning on a very different pasture from what we saw that morning.

We really appreciate everyone who helped make this event a success.



Iain Aitken's pasture





27th Annual West Country Ag Tour

Thursday, August 21, 2014

Leslieville Hall

7:30 am till 4:30 pm



Thank you
for your Sponsorship



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Hosted by:



Clearwater County Agricultural Services, Clear Water Landcare and GWFA collaborated to bring you this popular annual event. About 100 people attended the tour which featured Clearwater County's Glyphosate trials, robotic milking, Canada's largest herd of Yak, riparian health in the Medicine watershed and grazing management. We started the day with a pancake breakfast by GWFA at the Leslieville Hall and feasted on yak burgers and bratwurst at Shane and Patti Juuti's ranch. We finished the day off with coffee and donuts back at the Leslieville Hall.



Forage & Crop Agronomy for Profit

Forshee Hall (North of Bentley)



February 17, 2015 - Registration & coffee 9:30am
Workshop 10:00am –3:00pm

What you will learn:

1. Controlling Weeds with Fertilizer
J.C.(Jack) Payne P. Ag. Agronomy Instructor
2. Herbicide (glyphosate) Resistant Weeds & Using Forages in Crop Rotation to Control Weeds
Neil Harker Ph.D Research Scientist
3. Understand Soil Quality/ Soil Testing & Interpretation.
J.C.(Jack) Payne P. Ag.
4. Tools to Assess Financial Benefits of Practise Change
Ted Nibourg, Business Mgmt Specialist
AARD Ag-Info Centre



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Registration fee \$25.00 by February 12th & \$30.00
 after the 12th. To register call GWFA office
 at 403-844-2645 or email gwfa3@telus.net



About 30 people attended this highly informative workshop. While the focus was mostly on annual crops, much of the content was useful for forage production as well. We really appreciate all the help and support we received in planning and holding this workshop. We would especially like to thank Jack Payne, who helped a lot with planning the event as well as being one of the presenters for the event. We would also like to thank our major funder, the Alberta government through their Agricultural Opportunities (AOF) fund and all of our corporate and event sponsors.



OUR CORPORATE SPONSORS





Alberta
Barley

Smart Farming Workshop

March 12, 9:30 AM - 3:00 PM

Soil Health & Productivity

Pulse Production

Crop Disease Management by Mike Harding

Market Outlook by Lee Melvill

At the Royal Canadian Legion, 4815-47th Street, Calmar!

About 50 people attended this highly informative event which had a strong focus on annual crop production. Collaborators for this event included West Central Forage Association (WCFA), Gateway Research Organization (GRO), ARECA, Leduc County, the County of Wetaskiwin and Crop Production Services in Calmar. Major funding for this event came from the Alberta Crop Extension (ACE) organization, made up of the Alberta Wheat Commission, the Alberta Canola Producers commission, Alberta Pulse Growers and Alberta Barley. The Agricultural Opportunities Fund (AOF) is a major funder of ARECA, WCFA, GRO and GWFA. Additional sponsorship came from MNP_{LLP}. Many thanks to everyone who helped make this event a successful and valuable one.





Western Canadian Grazing Conference



"Going Beyond Sustainability"

December 9, 10 & 11, 2014

**Radisson Hotel
Edmonton South**



Keynote Speakers:

Judith Schwartz - Cows Save the Planet

Dr. Diane Knight - How Legumes Feed the Soil

Josh Dukart - Thinking Regeneratively...Beyond Our Own Borders

Producer Panel - Transitioning to Pasture

Banquet: *Greg Johnson - I'm Just a Tornado Hunter*

The Western Canadian Grazing Conference is organized by the Agricultural Research & Extension Council of Alberta (ARECA) Forage Livestock Team and is held every second year. About 300 people attended this excellent event. GWFA helped to plan and promote the event and Albert Kuipers chaired the Audio/Visual Team for the conference.



Photo credit: Albert Kuipers

Search Workshops, or Users.

PROFILE

The 4 Principles of Grazing Management

WORKSHOPS

Topics: Cattle Grazing Land Management Fast Farmer Forages

90 views | 0 comments | 1 followers

Like 3

by: Grey Wooded

E-MAG

MEMBERS

STREAM

SUPPORT



Grazing Management Principle #4 - Monitoring



In recent years we've been developing a very nice WIN/WIN relationship with the FarmOn Foundation. FarmOn has become well known for their excellent web-based educational resources for young farmers of any age. Their videographer, Ben Wilson, does an awesome job of putting short videos together. "The FarmOn Manifesto" and "FarmVoices-It's Our Turn" are excellent examples of his work and can be found on FarmOn.com, on YouTube, or can be reached from the GWFA website as well.

Ben and the FarmOn Foundation Chair, Sarah Wray, approached me about working with them to develop some simple electric fencing videos and some videos on "The 4 Principles of Grazing Management". These videos can be found on the FarmOn website in the "Fast Farmer" workshops.

We also collaborated with Dr. Tom Flesch, U of A, Dr. Vern Baron, AAFC, Dr. John Basarab, ARD and Ben Wilson to develop several videos showcasing Dr. Flesch's work with measuring greenhouse gases on pasture; Dr. Baron's work on improving swath grazing efficiency; and Dr. Basarab's work on feed efficiency in beef cattle.

GWFA and FarmOn will continue to collaborate on these kinds of projects, so watch our website and the FarmOn website for anything new we come up with.

Installing Permanent Electric Fence



How To Brace a Corner Fence Post, Underground



How To Set Up Portable Electric Fence



How To Splice High Tensile Fencing Wire



ABOUT THIS GUIDE

Grey Wooded



Browse all Workshops by Grey Wooded Forage Association

GWFA's Website

The Grey Wooded Forage Association is located in Central Alberta, and offers support to members involved in forage production and grazing management, through information, consultation, projects and events....View profile

Other Workshops by Grey Wooded:

[The 4 Principles of Grazing Management](#)

[How To Splice High Tensile Fencing Wire](#)

[How To Set Up Portable Electric Fence](#)



Measuring Methane Emissions from Cattle
E-MAG

- MEMBERS
- STREAM
- SUPPORT



For more information about the ground breaking research by
Rural Development at the Lacombe Research Centre, check



Where are we at with swath grazing?



Dr. John Basarab - Where we're at with low RFI "Feed Efficiency"

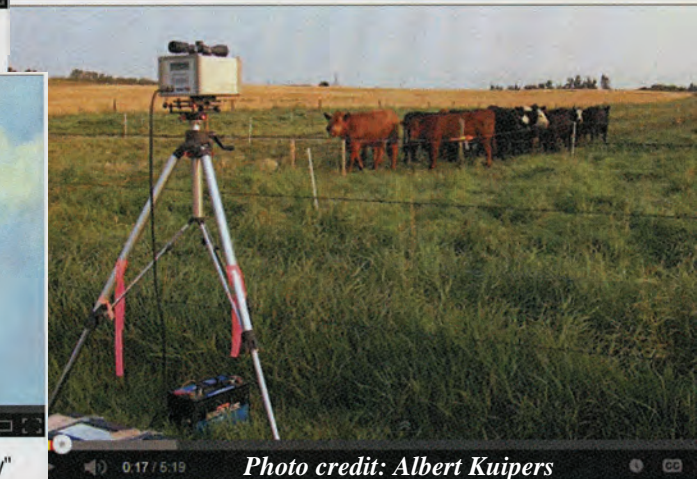
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The Grey Wooded Forage Association
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production and grazing management,
through information, consultation,
projects and events....View profile



Alberta Beef, Forage & Grazing Centre

The beef cow-calf sector has suffered economically since 2002-2003 due to many factors, but the sector, which relies on feedstuffs consisting of 90% forage and pasture, remains a significant contributor to the Canadian and Albertan economy and environment. Recent economic, climatic and market events have left the industry less competitive, globally, than a decade ago.

An *Alberta Forage/Beef Centre Strategic Plan* was developed in the summer of 2012 by a steering committee representing producers' associations of Alberta Beef Producers (ABP); Agriculture Research and Extension Council of Alberta (ARECA); Grey Wooded Forage Association (GWFA); Alberta Forage Industry Network (AFIN); Beef Cattle Research Commission (BCRC) and the Canadian Forage and Grasslands Association (CFGa) in partnership with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) and Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development (ARD).

The Strategic Plan was developed as a result of preliminary discussions between AAFC and ARD for a forage beef program and the outcome of 2011 industry focus group sessions that were held in Strathmore, Lacombe, Vegreville and Grande Prairie; *to explore the need for Forage Beef Research and Extension in Alberta*. The Focus Group Steering Committee consisted of the producer groups and organizations cited along with the Alberta Livestock and Meat Agency and University of Alberta.

Priorities for the Strategic Plan are based on the focus group participants' response to questions about the current situation, the issues, and the threats, opportunities and solutions to move the forage and beef industry forward. The participants were asked for advice on research priorities and what the steering committee needs to do. There are seven main outcomes outlined in the strategic plan under the overarching goal:

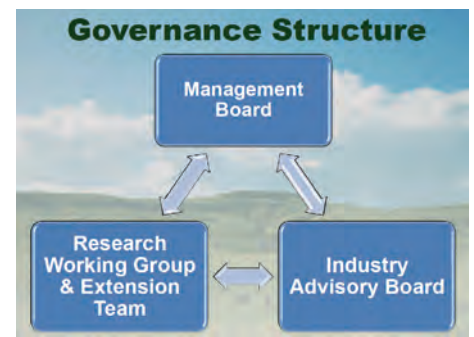
Improve productivity, competitiveness, sustainability, land and resource use efficiency of the forage/beef system by:

- * Reducing winter feeding costs by 50%
- * Environmental sustainability
- * Improving cow efficiency by 15%
- * Reducing back-grounding costs by 50%
- * Improving late summer/fall pasture productivity by 30%
- * Improving the role of forage in meat quality
- * Building and maintaining research and extension capacity

To fulfill these objectives, it was deemed necessary to have a strong base and leadership for this initiative. Given the resources available at Lacombe (expertise, land

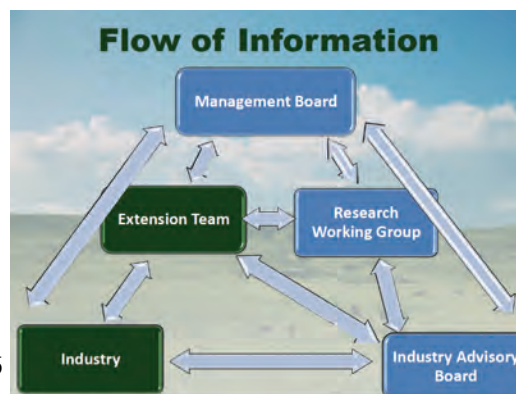
base, research facilities, cowherd, etc.), a consolidation of resources at this site will provide the best utility for the currently limited resources. Subsequently, in early May of 2013, AAFC announced that the Lacombe Research Station would be called **The Cow-Calf-Forage Centre** and through consolidation will move an animal nutrition position to Lacombe. The close linkages with the federally inspected abattoir, as well as existing ARD personnel and the **Field Crop Development Centre** are invaluable resources located at Lacombe. Given the recent closure of AAFC Brandon, Lacombe is uniquely positioned to become a centre of excellence in the research areas of forage/beef systems, management and utilization of forages, and cow/calf production. From this concept of the **Alberta Forage Beef Centre (AFBC)** was born.

The steering committee then focused on developing a governance structure with industry, represented by ABP and ARECA, being a major component of every level. The committee developed a structure for the flow of information within the AFBC and terms of references were drawn up for each component.



Throughout the process the committee checked in with ARD's Deputy Ministers office and their AAFC counterparts. The process is now to the point where an official agreement between ARD, AAFC and the forage and beef industry was drawn up and has now been signed. During the process the name has been changed to the **Alberta Beef, Forage & Grazing Centre**. The next step will be to set up the governance structure and then get on with the business of forage and beef research and extension of information to forage and beef producers across western Canada.

GWFA's manager has been involved with this initiative throughout the process and, besides GWFA, has been representing ARECA and AFIN at this table. GWFA's



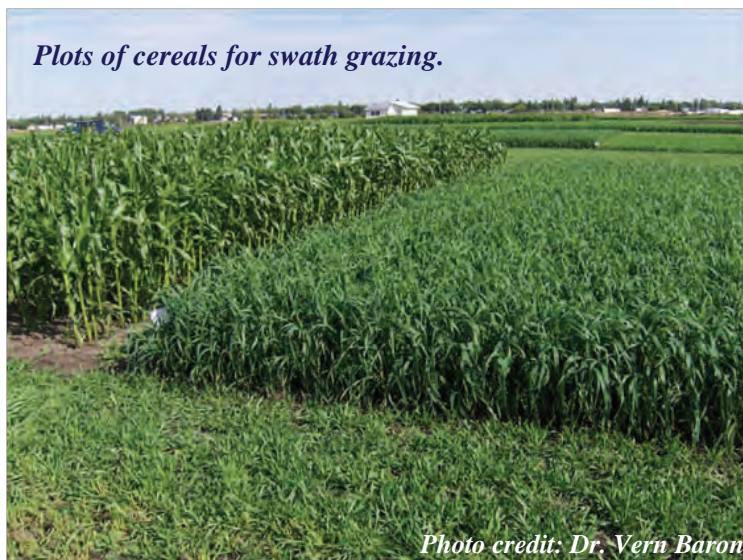
members stand to gain considerably from the forage and beef production and economics information products generated from the Alberta Beef, Forage & Grazing Centre.

Applied Research Project Partnerships

Innovative Swath Grazing / Increasing Forage Research Capacity

Timeframe: April, 2013 through March, 2018.

Project Leader: Dr. Vern Baron (AAFC), **Co-Investigators:** Dr. Raquel Doce (AAFC), Dr. John Basarab (ARD), Dr. Patricia Juskiw (ARD), and Albert Kuipers (GWFA).



Purpose:

Reduce the cost of calf production by reducing the cost of overwintering beef cows as a result of improving carrying capacity of swath grazed pastures.

Objectives:

1. Compare "in-swath" weathering losses among popular and new cereal lines used for swath grazing. Deliverable: Improved recommendations to reduce weathering loss.
2. Determine the feasibility of utilizing strip-mixtures of spring and winter triticale to improve swath nutritive value. Deliverable: Develop high quality swath grazing system.
3. Test and compare new barley and triticale lines, selected for high fiber digestibility, under swath grazing conditions. Deliverable: New varieties selected for swath grazing.
4. Train and mentor a new forage scientist. Deliverable: Increase science capacity.

Summary:

Progress has been made in increasing yield of the swathed-grazed crop, thus increasing the carrying capacity, reducing the daily cost of overwintering the beef cow and reducing the amount of land required to produce enough feed to overwinter the cow herd. This is important during times when high grain and canola prices cause competition for land.

However, producers are concerned about low nutritive value of the swathed-grazed crop and loss in nutritive value due to weathering during fall, winter and spring. Increasing nutritive value or maintaining nutritive value could increase carrying capacity, more, by lowering the dry matter (DM) intake required for maintenance. This would reduce the daily feed cost per cow, further, and could make the swath grazing system more flexible. For example, a swath-grazed system that could maintain In vitro True Digestibility (IVTD) or TDN

above 60% for 150 days of grazing might be used for back-grounding or at least allow cows to maintain good body condition during extremely cold conditions without supplementation. It would allow swath-grazing to be used over a broader geographical area.

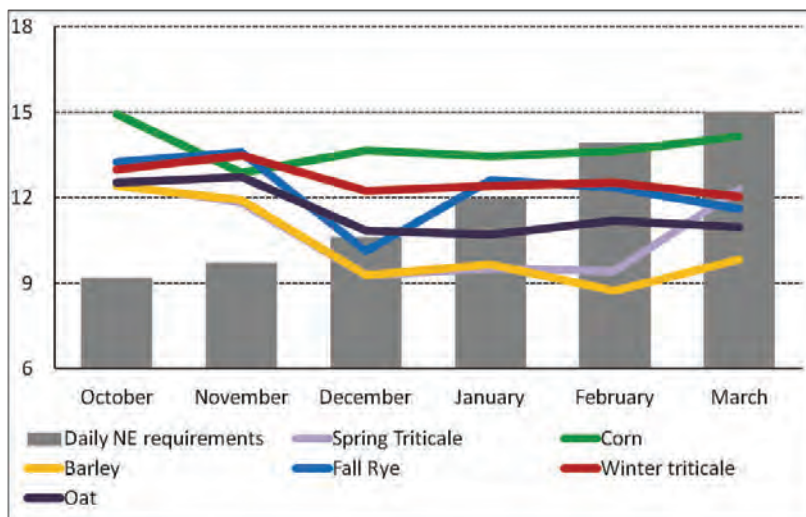
Improvement to the swath-system requires innovative management and enhanced genetic material specifically designed to improve digestibility and be used under winter grazing conditions. AARD breeders are selecting and have available advanced lines of barley and triticale with improved fiber digestibility. However, the lines must be tested for resistance to weathering loss and compared to popular forage types under winter grazing conditions. The project includes a comprehensive weathering trial and two winter grazing trials to evaluate the suitability of this new material for overwintering beef cows.

The **weathering trial** began with the selection and planting of several cereal lines of commonly used species for swath grazing. The table below shows which species and va-

Cultivars and lines used in the weathering trial			
	Cultivar or line	Species	Swathed or Standing
1	Pioneer 39F44	corn	swathed
2	Pioneer 39F44	corn	standing
3	94L	Spring triticale	swathed
4	Bunker	Spring triticale	swathed
5	Hay Maker	oat	swathed
6	Mustang	oat	swathed
7	Gadsby	barley	swathed
8	AC Ranger	barley	swathed
9	Luoma	Winter triticale	standing
10	AC Remington	Fall rye	standing

rieties were chosen. Some of these lines were chosen as a result of a survey GWFA did more than a year ago to learn what species and varieties are commonly used in our area. Some lines (e.g. 94L) were chosen from the AARD breeding program on the basis of fiber digestibility, lignin, starch content and agronomic characteristics.

As it turned out, swath grazing and weathering conditions were severe this past winter. The information shown represents one season and data is variable. Corn and winter cereals maintained nutritive value well during the winter.



Weathering loss for forage species over winter in 2013-14 compared to increasing daily energy requirements for pregnant cows with cows calving at the end of March. Produced by Raquel Doce

Both barley and spring triticale suffered the greatest losses in quality; oat was intermediate in this regard. The graph above shows that corn could provide adequate energy to meet the cows increasing nutritional requirements throughout the winter. Cows would likely lose weight grazing the small grain cereals. This difference among corn, triticale and barley was shown in Baron et. al (2014).

Even though corn costs twice as much to grow as the small grain cereals (Baron et al. 2014) it maintained carrying capacity for cows well into the winter, resulting in a relatively low daily feeding cost. Hay Maker oat and AC Ranger barley maintained carrying capacity closer to October values than others resulting in relatively low daily feeding costs. Keep in mind that results could be quite different from year to year.

The **first grazing trial** is about improving the quality of swath-grazed spring triticale using winter triticale strips. Bunker spring triticale and Pika winter triticale were used.

Growing conditions in summer were conducive to high yields of spring and winter triticale. Swath grazing was carried out according to Dr. Baron's usual protocol, however, heavy snow and ice conditions caused difficulty in winter grazing. This made it difficult for cows to access forage and obviously required more energy to graze than in past research. Swath grazing was discontinued about a month earlier than usual so the cows wouldn't lose too much body condition and wastage.

Cost of feed delivery per cow-day between pen fed and swath-grazed cows was approximately equivalent ranging from \$0.35 to \$0.39 cow-d⁻¹ for swath-grazed spring triticale and the control. Normally swath-grazed triticale costs less than \$0.10 cow-d⁻¹, but extra costs of moving snow to allow cows to access swaths increased the cost of machine time, labour and fuel.

The **second grazing trial** will compare barley and triticale lines selected for swath grazing compared to popular forage-types. Treatments: 1. "Popular" triticale; 2. "Best triticale line" 3. "Popular" barley; 4. "Best" barley line; 5. Control. Treatments 1 to 4 replicated twice. "Best" lines were chosen and seed was increased at ARD's Field Crop Development Centre so that sufficient seed is available for a field-scale test.

Triticale will be planted during the first week in June, 2015 and barley after June 15, 2015. All triticale treatments will be planted at 120 kg/ha and barley at 77 kg per ha. In both grazing trials fertilizer will be applied according to soil test to bring soil nutrients up to a common level across treatments.

As this project is intended to run from April, 2013 to March, 2018, obviously this summary shows only preliminary results of the first production year and winter. The unusually long and harsh winter had considerable impact on the results so far. By 2015 we hope to have enough information to hold a workshop showing what this and other related research can do for your beef operations.

Once the project is completed in 2018 we'll be compiling the results and developing various extension products to get the information out to you and many other beef producers in Western Canada.



Winter conditions for grazing cows and for sampling

Photo credits: Nadine Lamb & Adele Ohama

Results from the completed project "Reducing the cost of swath grazing cows by increasing the swathed-crop yield" were published in the "Canadian Journal of Plant Science" in late 2014. Resulting information will also be included in the workshop we're planning for February, 2016. We'll be developing other extension products such as factsheets and videos as well.

Managing Nutrients in Extensive Cattle Wintering Sites

Project #: 2011C

Cooperator: Doug & Deb Skeels

By: Agriculture and Agri-food Canada

Extension Partner: Grey Wooded Forage Association

GWFA Funding: ARD/AOF Environmental Funding



Agriculture and
Agri-Food Canada

Agriculture et
Agroalimentaire Canada

Canada

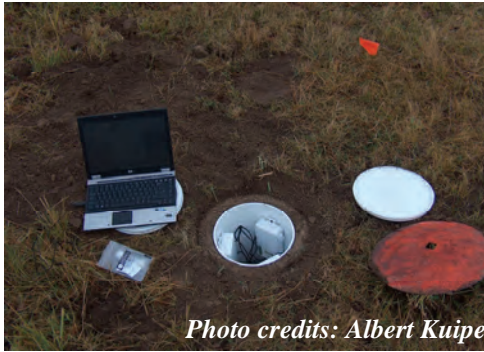


Photo credits: Albert Kuipers



Early in 2011 we were approached by Dennis Lastuka from Ag Canada to see if we had a suitable site and an interested cooperator for a nutrient intensity and distribution study in bale grazing situation. GWFA Director Doug Skeels was quick to volunteer as he was planning to try bale anyway.

Some high tech moisture and temperature sensors were buried at various depths at specific distances from the centre of the two test bale's locations. A set of sensors were also set up just outside of the bale grazed area.

These sensors were then connected to special transponders that were buried in 5 gallon buckets as well. Apparently, these transponders can hold up to seven years of temperature and moisture data, which can be readily downloaded onto lap-top computers. Many soil samples were taken at the beginning of the project and each year following.

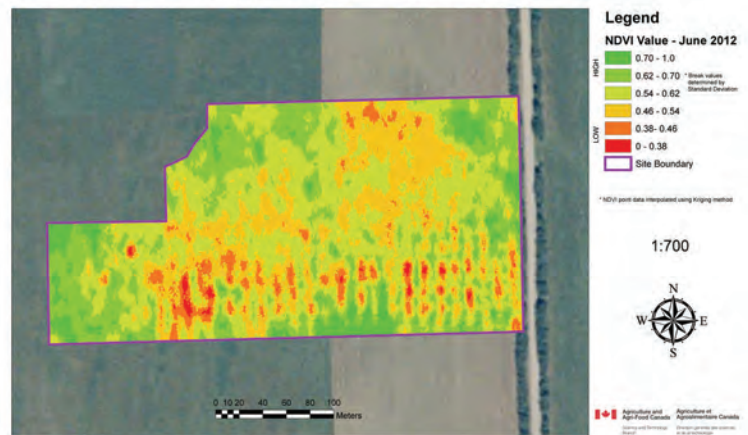
Bales are set at 40 foot centres and a different area of the pasture is used each year. Doug and Gerald Skeels (Doug's Dad) manage the bale grazing each winter. They've been quite impressed with the ease of bale grazing as compared to the conventional feeding system they normally used.

Data is collected from the transponders in each year. Many more soil samples are taken in strategic distances from the bale centres. Forage samples are also taken each year to see the correlation between high soil nutrient content and high quality forage.

At intervals during each summer, forage yield is mapped using "Green Seeker" technology. The "Green Seeker" unit mounts on the front of a quad which is driven back and forth over the pasture till the whole thing was recorded. The colourful maps that are produced show where the forage production is the highest, and in so doing, show where the nutrient deposits were the highest.

The plan is to run this project for several years to be able to collect meaningful information over time. This information is intended to help develop bale grazing Best Management Practices (BMPs) for future publication.

Normalized Difference Vegetation Index Map - June 2012



GWFA Demonstration Projects

Grazing Tall Buttercup Pastures

Project #: 2011B

Cooperator: Alan & Wanda Sunde

By: Grey Wooded Forage Association

Funding: Agriculture Opportunities Fund (AOF)

Sponsor: Seaborn Seeds



Photo credit: Tia Stadnicki



Photo credit: Tia Stadnicki



Photo credit: Tia Stadnicki



Photo credit: Bonita Knopp

This project began in 2010 with Clearwater County Ag Services applying herbicide to kill Tall Buttercup in strips on this predominantly wetland pasture. The goal was to see how dense the buttercup infestation had to be to deter cattle from grazing.

In 2011 we were asked to collaborate with the county on this the project. We worked with the county to build electric fencing so the grazing could be controlled in the project area. Grazing cages were set up and we collected samples to determine how much forage was available and how much remained after grazing. This was done separately in areas where Tall Buttercup was sprayed out, and where no herbicide had been applied.

After, what turned out to be a fairly severe grazing, we found that the cattle ate everything, buttercups and all.

When we tallied up the numbers after the growing season, we found that the un-sprayed areas had produced more total forage than the sprayed strips. We noted that there was quite a lot of clover, as well as dandelions and other forbes that contributed to the total forage mass. This broadleaf component was absent from the sprayed strips.

After 2012, our friends from Clearwater Ag Services decided to leave the project. We decided to continue the project by monitoring photo points to track species composition and forage density on this pasture.

In 2013 we set up a Land EKG style transect to help us consistently monitor the site for several years. We monitored the site with this transect and the previously established photo points in 2014 to see what changes occur to species composition and productivity under the Sunde's management of grazing on that pasture.



Photo credit: Bonita Knopp



Photo credit: Bonita Knopp

Photo credit: Bonita Knopp

Photo credit: Bonita Knopp



Project #: 2011C 3D Fencing - Protecting Stored Feed From Deer and Elk

Ponoka site (2011-2014):

Cooperator: Warren Bloomquist (East of Ponoka)

Sponsors: Ponoka County Agricultural Services, PowerFlex Fence Canada & Gallagher



Sundre sites (2014-2018):

Cooperators: Otto Seidel (Southeast of Sundre) and Darryll Murphy/Renee Poirier (South of Sundre)

Sponsors: Lone Star Ranch & Sales, Gallagher, Rocky Mountain House Co-op, Anchor JB Ranch, Sundog Solar & Wind, PowerFlex Fence Canada, Kokanee Heavy Truck Sales, West Frazer, Signs by Jan and Mountain View County.

Funding for all sites: Agriculture Opportunities Fund (AOF)



Ponoka Site: In November of 2011 we built a “3D” electric fence around a 10 acre field of swaths for swath grazing. This fence consisted of a four wire inner fence and a one wire outer fence constructed three feet away from the inner fence and about three feet high. A 3D fence was also built around a grain storage bag at another nearby site.

Rob Davidson, from PowerFlex Fence Canada, supplied enough high tensile wire and PowerFlex posts for both sites, as well as a 30 Joule fence energizer. Shayne Steffen and Justin Babcock from Ponoka County provided manpower, corner posts, rented a post pounder and had a sign made to promote the project. Ponoka County also sponsored the project with \$500.00 for GWFA travel expenses. GWFA provided a variety of electric fence insulators and manpower for the project.

During the winter of 2011/2012 there had been no evidence of deer going through the fences all winter. During the winter of 2012/2013 the area received more than the usual amount of snow, and it was a long winter to boot. Warren discovered that deer were breaching the fence in late December and early January.



Photo credit: Shayne Steffen

high tensile wire. We added scent caps with deer attractant scent and also rubbed some on the Polytape. We found one place where the bottom wire of the 4 wire fence was making a dead ground. Fixing this and the improved ground field would improve the fence's shocking power considerably. Warren told us in January, 2014 that he had finished grazing the swaths in that field and had no deer issues in there.

Warren sold his cows in December, 2014, so the project at his farm is completed. We would like to thank Warren Bloomquist and his family, Shayne Steffen and Justin Babcock from Ponoka County, Rob Davidson from PowerFlex Fence Canada and Garth Hein from Gallagher for their contributions towards the success of this project.



Photo credit: Justin Babcock

In 2013 we added 6 more ground rods 10 feet apart. We added a Gallagher Polytape on the south side on the outside single wire fence, and we put it 6” lower than the



Photo credit: Albert Kuipers

3D FENCING PROJECT PROTECTING FEED FROM ELK

PROJECT BY:



COOPERATORS

Darryl Murphy Renee Poirier



3D FENCING PROJECT PROTECTING FEED FROM ELK

PROJECT BY:



COOPERATOR - Otto Seidel



Sundre Sites: After much discussion in our Projects Committee meetings, we decided to put the 3D Fencing system to test where elk have been the main problem. In the fall of 2014, Ginette Boucher found opportunities to experiment with 3D Fencing at two sites in the Sundre area where damage to stored hay bales is a major problem. Otto Seidel witnessed up to 75 elk at a time and Darryl Murphy witnessed up to 140 elk making a mess of their feed supplies. Both Otto and Darryl agreed to be cooperators for the project.

Ginette then got to work rounding up supplies and sponsorship for the project. Thanks to her hard work, most of the supplies for the project were donated. Steve Cannon, of Lonestar Ranch & Sales in Red Deer donated two Gallagher fence energizers, complete with solar panels and batteries. He also supplied us with an awesome aluminum energizer/solar panel stand, the high tensile wire, spinning jenny and tighteners. Gallagher donated insulators, Jim Bauer, of Anchor JB Ranch, supplied us with a pile of Pasture-Pro composite fence posts and the "cotter pins" to fasten the wire to the posts. The Rocky Mountain House Co-op and West Frazer supplied the wooden fence posts, PowerFlex Fence Canada provided an energizer and Sundog Solar provided a solar panel and regulator. Signs for the two sites were made by "Signs by Jan" and sponsored and installed by Mountain View County. Kokanee Heavy Truck Sales provided a generous cash contribution to help with some of the purchased supplies and expenses for the project.

Ginette and I, with the help of our cooperators, Otto and Darryl, built the fences around bale yards at the two locations. We were fortunate that the weather was decent for the week we were working at the sites, even though it had been cold already. A good cover of snow kept the ground from freezing, so we had no trouble putting posts in, except where vehicles had travelled.

Fence construction consisted of erecting a 4 wire, high tensile electric fence about 4 feet high. An additional one wire fence was built outside of that, 3 feet from the 4 wire fence and 3 feet high. Gates were built to have the same configuration. Once the fences and gates were built, fence energizers and ground fields were installed. We also flagged the fence and attached foil cups with scents to attract cow elk.

Albert contacted Todd Ponich, the Problem Wildlife Specialist for our area. He's very interested in our project

and he's open to collaborating with us. Todd got us in touch with a fish & wildlife officer in Sundre who supplied some trailcams.

Ginette checked the fences and kept in touch with the cooperators. Otto Seidel called on January 12th to tell us that a large herd of elk visited his site over night with half a dozen actually getting inside the fence. Later up to a dozen elk got into the enclosure.

At the Murphy/Poirier site a few mule deer found their way into the enclosure. The elk that had been such a huge problem there in previous years, moved to another nearby location instead.

We will be looking at ways we can improve the fences so no elk breach the fences in the future. Some of our discussions at the Board level have been about trying other designs at different locations.

The Peace River Forage Association of BC has been experimenting with some alternative 3D Fencing designs. We have been sharing information with them, so hopefully we can learn from them as well.

3D Fencing is quite possibly a way producers who have problems with wildlife damage to feed supplies, can reduce or eliminate that damage. 3D fencing can be used around swath grazing, stockpiled grass, grain storage, bale yards and even gardens.

We sure appreciate all the help we got with this project. From all the electric fencing supplies and the dollars donated to the information that helped us build the fences, to Ponoka and Mountain View Counties, and to the Alberta government who's funding keeps us able to do what we do, we thank you all for your contributions.



Hardy Alfalfa Varieties

Project #: 2013A

Cooperator: Doug & Deb Skeels

By: Grey Wooded Forage Association

Funding: Agriculture Opportunities Fund (AOF)

Sponsors: Seaborn Seeds, Secan, Glen Lundgard, Allen Batt & Dave Bartlett

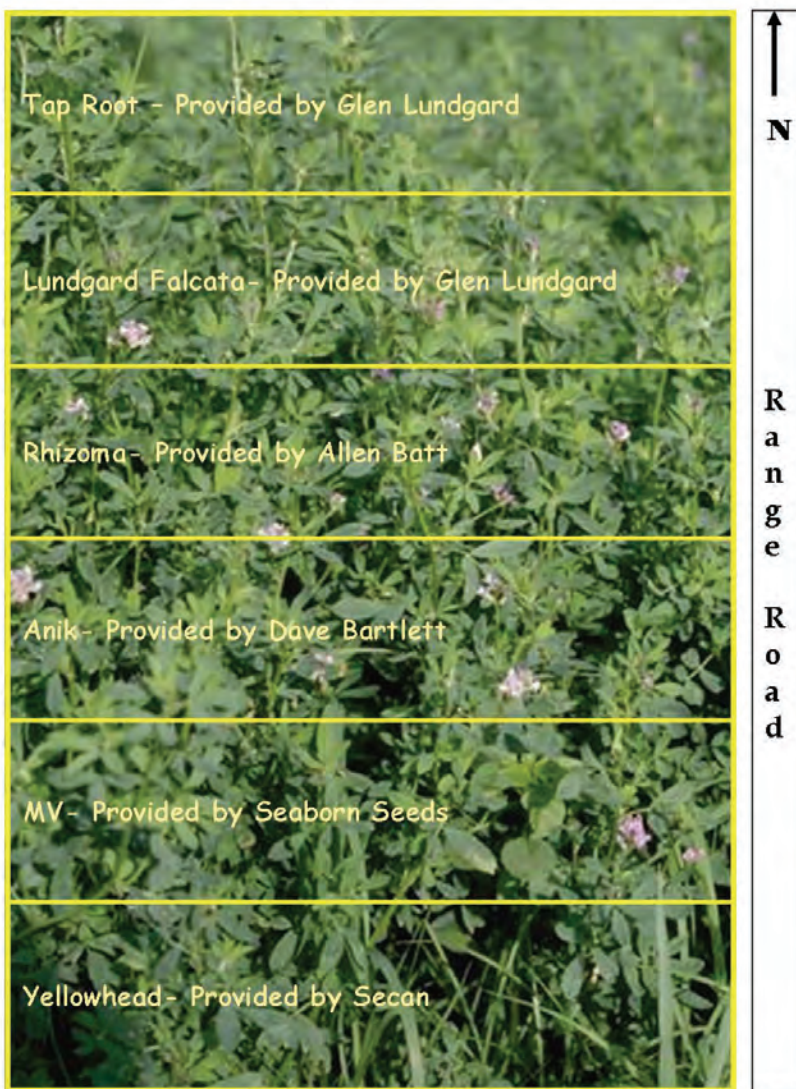


Our Hardy Alfalfa Varieties demo was started in 2013 at Deb & Doug Skeels' pasture quarter, the same quarter where the Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) bale grazing nutrient study is situated. We had been in lots of conversations regarding the lack of longevity of alfalfa stands in the west country. In some cases alfalfa wouldn't even establish well enough to keep in production.

In one of our projects committee meetings we got discussing the availability of some of the old alfalfa varieties that had good longevity. "Grimm" was one old cultivar that was mentioned.

We started searching for some seed for Grimm and learned that, while there was someone growing it for seed up in the Peace, he didn't have any seed for sale in 2013. We widened our search to find other hardy varieties of alfalfa. We got Yellowhead from Secan, Anik from Dave Bartlett, Rhizoma from Allen Batt, Lundgard's Falcata (a Siberian creeping rooted type) and Lundgard's taprooted cultivar. Kirk Seaborn supplied us with Seaborn Seeds' MV Blend as it is commonly planted in the west country.

All of these, with the exception of Yellowhead and Seaborn's MV Blend, are from very old seed stands, some over 30 years old. We expect that there has been some natural selection via survival of the fit-



test and lots of cross-breeding with outside cultivars, so they're not likely to be the same as what was originally planted.

We seeded these varieties on July 1, 2013 and included them in the West Country Ag Tour that year. It looks like we stirred up some more interest in development of hardy cultivars of alfalfa. Dr. Vern Baron heard what we are doing here and has started a project based on our project. The AAFC project includes scientists at Swift current and in Quebec. They are starting with genetic testing seed from the seed growers who supplied us with seed. Dr. Baron and Darren Bruhjell, also from AAFC, are working with us to use appropriate protocols to get us useful results.



We especially would like to thank our major funders, Alberta Agriculture & Rural Development's Agriculture Opportunities Fund (AOF) and Alberta Agriculture & Rural Development for their support of our association. Without them we would not be what we are today.

We would also like to thank ARECA (the Agricultural Research and Extension Council of Alberta). ARECA unifies all the member applied research associations and forage associations in Alberta. ARECA helps us get funding, channels funding and gives our associations a level of strength that we would not have alone.



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