



Grey
Wooded
Forage
Association

The Blade

"Creating an Awareness of Forages"

FEBRUARY 2014

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VISION STATEMENT

GWFA – The centre 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.

Manager's Notes:

By Albert Kuipers

Hey, I just got a call from an old friend. "Have you heard what's happening with fertilizer prices?" he asked. "No I haven't" "I replied. "Fertilizer prices have doubled" he told me. "We're going to have to look at alternatives. What can you suggest?" he added.

Ok, so let's have a look at what's happening with nitrogen fertilizer. As natural gas is used to manufacture nitrogen fertilizers, the price of nitrogen fertilizers will be closely tied to the price of natural gas. As natural gas prices go up, so do the prices of nitrogen fertilizer. Take a look at the natural gas futures prices. They've gone up considerably this winter.

So, what can you do to reduce or eliminate the amount of nitrogen fertilizer you use on your annual crops you grow for silage? Well, for starters, if you're feeding livestock, feed them where you plan to grow your next silage crop. For best results, try to feed evenly across the land. Lots of guys do this already on pasture and hay land; and quite a bit less on crop land.

My personal experiences have shown me that feeding on the land from February through April produced better yield results than from feeding on the land earlier in the winter. Back then I was rolling out hay bales, but you can do this with bale



shredders or, in the case of silage or mixed rations, with your mixer wagon.

Bale grazing and swath grazing are a couple of increasingly common ways to get feeding done in a cost effective way that gets organic materials and nutrients deposited directly where you want them by the livestock you're feeding. Increasing and conserving soil organic matter can go a long ways in the battle to reduce fertilizer costs.

Dr. Vern Baron's work at the Lacombe Research Centre over the last few years has shown us that fertilizer requirements for the next crop are reduced after swath grazing on a field. Soil tests have shown reduced fertilizer requirements each year.



Triticale at the Lacombe Research Centre

High yielding crops for swath grazing allow you to swath graze at a high stock density resulting in high levels of manure and urine being deposited on the site. High yielding crops also tend to reduce the daily feeding costs per cow. Triticale and corn have been the high yielders in Dr. Baron's work, with triticale getting the job done at a lower cost than corn.

But that still leaves the question of how to get your 2014 crop yielding high if you don't have the feeding options I've already mentioned available to you. Choosing a crop like triticale

or corn is a good start, although for corn you need sufficient corn heat units to get sufficient yield. That can be a challenge, particularly in the West Country.

For swath grazing, growing a legume with your cereal crop is an excellent way to increase plant available nitrogen. Be sure to use seed inoculated with the right rhizobial inoculants for the legume you select.

Peas have been an excellent companion crop with cereals for swath grazing. It wouldn't hurt to take a look at the clovers as well. Sweet clover, alsike clover or red clover could be used.

I've seen some excellent results with hairy vetch as well, when seeded with a cereal for swath grazing. If you want to learn more about some of these options, give me a call.

Ok, so you still want to use fertilizer to get your yield up. Well, then it's really important to get your fertilizer applications done right. The 4R fertilizer management system can help you get your best results for your fertilizer dollar.

The 4R nutrient stewardship concept (<http://www.cfi.ca/>) incorporates the following:

- Right fertilizer source at the
- Right rate, at the
- Right time and in the
- Right place

Watch for information on upcoming 4R fertility management workshops in the next issue of The Blade.

Director's Corner

By Ken Ziegler



Hi folks! I'm back on the board of the GWFA since last fall and certainly have been enjoying the reconnection. The Vision and Mission statements have been an integral part of my day job with Alberta Agriculture since I first came to Rocky in the fall of '83 and have found the GWFA to be an important spoke in the wheel for exploring and disseminating forage information.

I certainly enjoy living in the west country and have been able to practice and refine some of the forage management practices on our home place just a few km SW of Rocky. To date, I think we have around 22 permanent paddocks and about 5000' of above ground water line.

The concepts of nutrient transfer, plant succession, stock density and recovery period have been very important to us in maximizing growth with the fixed amount of sunlight and rainfall in a given year. All of this has been in the quest of balance stocking rate and length of grazing season.

Shortening the feeding period has been of tremendous value in achieving a low cost per cow per year and profit per calf. Thanks to the executive for inviting me back onto the board to serve as Ex-Officio Director for the good of the forage producing community.



CANADIAN FERTILIZER INSTITUTE
INSTITUT CANADIEN DES ENGRAIS



AFIN

ALBERTA FORAGE INDUSTRY NETWORK



YOU'RE INVITED...

AFIN's 2014 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

ON FEBRUARY 13, 2014

9:30 TO 4:30

ABERDEEN COMMUNITY CENTRE

**5 miles directly East of Innisfail on
Highway 590 just before the Highway
791 intersection.**

Everyone Welcome,

Lunch \$25 at the door,

Please pre-register by Feb 7, 2013

To register email: Info@albertaforages.ca

or call: 403-556-4248

For more info go to www.albertaforages.ca

*Find out what's happening in
our forage industry, locally,
provincially and nationally!*

AFIN - An Organization of Stakeholders in Alberta's Forage Industry

\$ Pricing for Profits \$

Price and profitability! Does this statement keep you awake at night?

You are not alone, many entrepreneurs who sell their products directly into a farmers' market or other direct-to-customer channels often worry about selling their products at a price that covers their costs and provides a profit. If you are experiencing this dilemma, register now for the **"Setting a Profitable Price" workshop on February 12, 2014 in Leduc**. This opportunity will provide entrepreneurs like yourself with information and tools to set profitable prices for your products.

Jan Warren, with Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development will walk you through the fundamentals of pricing products with profitability in mind. She'll discuss the essentials of pricing with cost, price and value as factors to consider, including discussions on breakeven points, identification of costs, net profit, and ways to calculate margins. You'll come away from the session with worksheets to start capturing your production and marketing costs, calculating your breakeven point and other calculations associated with your products and business.

Jerry Kitt, an organic meat producer operating First Nature Farms, approaches pricing differently than when he started. "I started raising wild turkeys and I sold them at a price that was suggested as the going rate. After the first season, I started penciling out my costs and I had to double my original price in order to get my costs covered," Kitt said. That was 18 years ago and Jerry keeps an eye on his costs and makes sure there is enough profit built into the equation to sustain his business.

"I love Excel spreadsheets. I input my costs, all the information, so that I can make sure my costs are taken into account on my product. I have a spreadsheet for each product," Kitt said.

What's his advice to other entrepreneurs?

- Make sure you know your costs. If you sell your product for less money than your costs, it is not a profitable venture. You can't sustain a business without a profit.
- Don't be chased into low prices in order to get your share of the market. You can hurt the whole industry if you sell your product below the cost of production. You may be able to do it in the short term but it's not something that can be sustained and eventually it can cost you your business.

Even after years in business there's always something I can learn at these events" Jerry said.

Consider registering for the workshop by calling 310-FARM (3276) and ask to speak to a New Venture Specialist for more information.

by Elaine Stenbraaten,
Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development.



For Your Protection – Make Sure Your Farm Implement Dealer is Licensed

News release

Farm Implement Act Administration Farmers' Advocate Office Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development

The Alberta *Farm Implement Act/Farm Implement Dealerships Act* and Regulations are administered by the Farm Implement Act Administration of the Farmers' Advocate Office of Alberta. Under this Act, anyone carrying on a business as a farm implement dealer or distributor within Alberta must hold a dealer's and/or distributor's license. The licenses are issued annually and dealers/distributors must pay a license fee to the Alberta Minister of Finance and an annual levy to the Farm Implement Compensation Fund. License fees are set under the *Farm Implement Act Regulations*. The levy is set annually by the Farm Implement Board. The Board determines the amount based on the number of claims paid out of the compensation fund during the previous year.

This legislation provides protection to farmers when purchasing new equipment. Farmers may verify if a company is licensed to carry on a business as a farm implement dealer and/

or distributor by contacting the **Farmers' Advocate Office @ 310-FARM (3276)** or asking to see their current license. All dealers and distributors are asked to have their current license visible in their place of business. January 1, 2014 is the deadline to have their new license for the 2014 year.

More information can also be found on the Farmers' Advocate Office website at www.farmersadvocate.gov.ab.ca



Canada Range Monitoring at Antelope Creek Ranch Summer 2013

A new range monitoring system for Canadian ranchers

It's often been said in that "if you don't know where you're going, any road will take you there". This can be especially true for managing native rangelands. Variation, sometimes extreme, in factors such as annual climate, changes in growing conditions, timing and location of range use vs. rest and differences in soil conditions, can often make grazing management an overwhelming and complicated task.

However, if where you want to go is the optimization of environmental and economic outcomes for your grassland forage resource, not just any road will take you there.

In July of 2013, **Operation Grassland Community** (OGC) and a few of its ranching members attended a Land EKG - Canada workshop that provided one range management approach that could prove useful in helping ranchers, and wildlife conservationists reach their goals. Land EKG is a range-land monitoring system developed, tested, proven, and applied over millions of acres in the Western USA that is now being successfully applied here in Canada. The beauty of Land EKG is in its simplicity - providing ranchers the quick and effective monitoring tools to address the route they are on, to apply the right drivers to get them where they want to go, and to adapt quickly to curves and hairpins along the way. The Land EKG monitoring system was developed in the 1970's and 80's by Charles Orchard as he drew directly from his own range management experience on his 100 section Wyoming ranch. Orchard experienced first-hand that standard agency and academic monitoring of rangeland had some practical weaknesses - they involved high levels of training, and they rarely provided answers that were of practical, applicable value for the ranching community.

Rapid & Useful: Land EKG monitoring technique

The system developed and refined by Charles Orchard didn't require landowners to spend hours observing plants and soils in order to gain some useful and rapid perspective on their range health. As Orchard states, "Land EKG is based on the objective of optimizing solar profit by creating healthy soil systems and diverse plant and animal communities. It turns data into meaningful information you can make decisions on. It's about achieving a balance between practical information and scientific rigor."

One of the important results derived from monitoring using Land EKG is the Grazing Response Index. Modified from the original GRI developed at Colorado State University, it is a simple report card for applied grazing management practices that records:

1. Grazing Intensity or Residual carry over – this value ranges from +1 to -1 and scores % utilization (40-55% = 0)
2. Season of Grazing – this value ranges from +1 to -1 and

considers the various parts of the grazing season when plants are more and less susceptible to grazing damage.

3. Rest Period – ranges from +2 to -2 as it is a very important predictor of plant health recovery. The longer growing season rest you provide (both before and after grazing) the greater will be the plant recovery.
4. Precipitation – previously not considered in the original index model, precipitation (+1 to -1) allows grazing planners and managers to account for high, average and low precipitation periods and to make adjustment accordingly.

The index provides a measurable way to assist the landowner in making critical management decisions, and adapting his or her grazing plans to maximize their economic and environmental goals within successive grazing seasons.



One of Land EKG's tools is a report card that provides rangeland managers with a checklist of information necessary for effective evaluation of grasslands.

Why is OGC interested in a tool like Land EKG monitoring?

OGC interest in the program began with an introduction to Land EKG with a two day field school in July 2013 at Antelope Creek Ranch, west of Brooks. The workshop - designed for any rancher or conservation manager seeking a rapid, repeatable monitoring program - was put together with the assistance of Neal Wilson, Antelope Creek Ranch Manager and Ted Sutton, Land EKG - Canada representative with participation by OGC ranching members from Brooks, Bassano, Medicine Hat and rangeland agrologists from the Special Areas. In addition, OGC Stewardship Coordinators were active participants in hands on learning the Land EKG process.

From Operation Grassland Community's perspective, this type of monitoring system also has significant potential to quantify beneficial approaches and outcomes for wildlife & their habitats. The Land EKG range monitoring tool is easily

adaptable to incorporate easy to measure wildlife habitat indicators, and can therefore help to more accurately quantify win-win scenarios between range and wildlife habitat quality goals, and measure when and if these goals are being maintained or improved over time. As Orchard puts it, "The monitoring program can demonstrate that the manager is paying attention. This serves to validate the



Land EKG Canada School participants at Antelope Creek Ranch, west of Brooks in July 2013.



Land EKG Canada School participants at Rolyn Hills Ranch east of Red Deer in July 2013

landowners' stewardship practices, especially those with leased land and in the face of urban public perception."

The Land EKG method does not displace or conflict with other range health assessment systems being used in Canada. It simply provides an alternative measurement to some key range indicators that can assist land managers in their individual goals.

As indicated by Ted Sutton, Director of Land EKG Canada, "Monitoring is a big deal, and getting bigger. In order to assure ranch owners/managers, leaseholders, and the public that management practices have acceptable effects on range and pasture ecosystems, it is necessary to monitor. Clearly, the ability to gather this type of information is at the core of land stewardship and ecosystem management."

The management decisions and strategies employed from Land EKG should foster healthy, diverse and more productive plant, wildlife, and soil systems...and most importantly, along the road, a better bottom line.

By Don Watson



Save the Date! "COWS, CREEKS AND COMMUNITIES"

Trade Show & Seminar

Thursday, April 24, 2014

At the Kurt Browning Complex in Caroline Alberta

For more information

call 403-845-4444



"THE BEST FOR EACH"

LJB Ranch

Jim & Barb Bauer

Ph. 403.546.2427 email: jim.bauer50@gmail.com

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Top Items from Agronomy Update 2014

At the recent Agronomy Update conference held in Red Deer there were over 30 presentations on a wide variety of topics related to crop production. The presentations provided information on crop pests, weed control, soil fertility, new crop options, grain storage and marketing. Included below is a review of some of the discussion areas that producers could consider for their farming operations.



- 1. Crop rotation:** The most common crop rotation in Alberta alternates between canola and a cereal crop. The market value for canola has made it very attractive to frequently grow this crop in rotation. As several of the presentations indicated, following a two year rotation is not without some risk. Increased concerns about pests (eg. disease, insects, weeds) are a reality with a canola – cereal rotation. For example, blackleg in canola was highlighted as a disease whose occurrence has increased in recent years and is related to the frequency of canola in the rotation.
- 2. Herbicide resistance:** Wild oat is the most common herbicide resistant weed in western Canada. To ensure current wild oat herbicide products continue to be effective, information was provided on integrated weed management. Management practices such as higher seeding rates, early removal of silage crops and using a crop rotation that includes summer annuals (wheat, canola, peas), winter annuals (winter wheat, winter triticale, fall rye) and perennial crops (alfalfa) were discussed. Results of a four year study indicated that these practices can be very effective for managing wild oat populations and if followed will help delay wild oat resistance.
- 3. Foliar fungicide use:** One of the biggest growth areas in pesticide use is foliar fungicides. The interest in foliar fungicides may be related to agronomic factors (tighter crop rotations); economic factors (higher commodity prices) and increased marketing of foliar fungicides by pesticide companies. Presentations on foliar fungicide use stressed the importance of diagnosing the diseases present (eg. leaf disease in cereals), understanding the risk of disease development (eg. sclerotinia in canola), applying the fungicides at the proper time and understanding the nature and key properties of the fungicide being used.
- 4. Disease diagnostics:** The development of digital technology has allowed high quality images to be collected by producers, agrologists and researchers. Once these images are collected, issues such as plant diseases can be diagnosed by other people viewing these images. The use of digital photographs may allow for quicker disease diagnosis and can aid in making proper management decisions on the farm. However, to be effective the use of this approach requires quality photographs and relevant background information on the field in question (eg. crop rotation, herbicide history, soil characteristics, weather conditions).
- 5. Field scouting:** Many of the presentations highlighted the importance of being in the field to evaluate growing crops. Field scouting can occur throughout the growing season. Evaluating crops at the time of emergence and determining the presence of weeds, diseases and insects as the growing season progresses is important to ensure successful crop production.

For more information on these topic areas or other topic areas discussed at Agronomy Update 2014 please go to the Government of Alberta's website "Ropin' the Web" where the majority of the presentations will be available for viewing.

Mark Cutts, 310-FARM



What's  on Foragebeef.ca?

See Front Page News
New information on forage beef issues from across Canada

New and Improved Swath Grazing Manual Available Soon!
Summarizing research done by Western Forage/Beef Group and Others

Coming Soon!
Greenhouse Gas Research Summary as it affects the forage beef industry



www.foragebeef.ca



AFIN
ALBERTA FORAGE INDUSTRY NETWORK

www.albertaforages.ca
info@albertaforages.ca



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LivestockTransport.ca



Livestock Help Line & Resource Team
To report livestock care concerns CALL
1.800.506.2273

Please call **GWFA Manager, Albert Kuipers** at **(403) 844-2645** or your local County Agricultural Services staff if you would like to complete an Environmental Farm Plan. Your EFP is required to apply for funding to the On-Farm Stewardships Program of Growing Forward 2.

Alberta EFP
Environmental Farm Plan

LIVING WITH WILDLIFE

Friday, February 21, 2014

Cremona Community Hall

Join Mountain View County & MD of Bighorn Agricultural Services, along with many of the top experts in Alberta, for a day of interesting topics and presentations regarding wildlife co-existing with agricultural operations. All interested producers and residents are invited and encouraged to attend!

Agenda

- 8 am** Breakfast – Booth Displays
- 9 am** *Predators in your Backyard (Bears, Cougars & Wolves Conflict)*, **Todd Ponich**, Regional Problem Wildlife Specialist Alberta Environment & Sustainable Resource Development
- 10:30 am** *Ungulate Damage to Feed (Prevention, Control and Options)*, **Willy Rasmussen**, Problem Wildlife Technician Alberta Environment & Sustainable Resource Development
- 12 pm** Lunch – Booth Displays
- 1 pm** *Coyote Livestock Predation (Prevention and Control)*, **Phil Merrill**, Provincial Rat and Pest Specialist Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development
- 2 pm** *Trapping Overview (How They do it, Who to call, Rules & Regulations)*, **Larry Nielsen**, Sundre Trappers Association
- 3 pm** *On Farm Carcass Composting*, **Dr. Kim Stanford**, Beef Research Scientist Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development & **Gordy Cunningham**, Sun Roc Ranching Ltd, Agricultural Service Board, Mountain View County

Details: **Free of Charge!** Please register in advance with MVC Ag Services, 403-335-3311 ext 143 or ag@mvccounty.com

Alberta Ag-Info Centre

310-farm

Phone 310-FARM (3276) toll-free to contact Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development, or visit one of our field offices across the province for your agricultural information needs.

Canada

Alberta
Government

Growing Forward
A federal-provincial-territorial initiative

THE FOREST ON YOUR DESKTOP

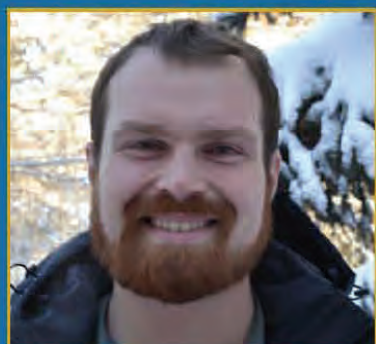
NATIONAL ELECTRONIC LECTURE SERIES

Canadian Institute of Forestry / Institut forestier du Canada

The Agroforestry and Woodlot Extension Society

Special Lecture Series - #13

*In Collaboration with the
Agroforestry & Woodlot Extension Society &
The Government of Alberta*



Agroforestry & Woodlot Extension Society – Past, Present, and Future

Jeff Renton

Project Manager

Agroforestry and Woodlot Extension Society

Wednesday, March 12th 2014 @ 11:30amMT (1:30pmET)



Environmental Values and Importance of Woodlots To Big Cities

Toso Bozic

Agroforestry/Bioenergy Specialist

Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development

Wednesday, April 9th 2014 @ 11:30amMT (1:30pmET)

All electronic lectures are free. Your consideration of CIF/IFC membership would be appreciated.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR TO REGISTER, CONTACT;

Canadian Institute of Forestry/ Institut forestier du Canada

Email: electures@cif-ifc.org

Tel: (705) 744-1715 ext. 585

Fax: (705) 744-1716

Web: <http://cif-ifc.org/site/electures>



Salutations, To All the Stewards of the Red Deer River Watershed and its Tributaries

The RDRWA will be hosting the **Annual WSG Meeting and Workshop on Feb 28th, 2014 from 9:30 to 3:00**. This year the event will take place at the **Pine Lake Hub** thanks to the Pine Lake Restoration Society. Having taken suggestions from last year's evaluations the Outreach Committee put your ideas into action. Please join us at Pine Lake for our C.(Caring) R.(Repairing) A.(Action) P.(Plans) In Our Watershed event. We are giving each Watershed Stewardship Group 5 to 10 minutes to share your goals and projects with the rest of us. Attached to this letter you will find a copy of the Agenda for the event. Please share this with others as this event is open to all stewards of the Red Deer River.

We look forward to seeing you all again at this event.

Please RSVP for the event to info@rdrwa.ca or online through our website www.rdrwa.ca

Thank You
Outreach Committee

Joey Temple
Outreach Coordinator
Red Deer River Watershed Alliance
4918 59 Street, Red Deer, Alberta
T4N 2N1
403-340-7379
403-356-9189 fax
www.rdrwa.ca

C.(Caring) R.(Repairing) A.(Action) P.(Plan) In Our Watershed

Red Deer River Watershed Alliance Annual
Watershed Stewardship Group Meeting
Friday, February 28 2014
Pine Lake Hub, Pine Lake, AB 9:30 am – 3:00 pm

Attend the next
RDRWA Ambassador Breakfast
February 21, 2014
7:30 AM through 9:00 AM
Quality Inn North Hill
7150 50th Ave, Red Deer, AB
RSVP to: info@rdrwa.ca
or call Kelly at 403-340-7379
by noon on February 19, 2014

TIME	
9:30-9:45 am	Registration (Admission \$15.00 per person)
9:45-10:00	Welcome and opening remarks
10:00 – 10:30	Pharmaceuticals and endocrine disruptors Thorsten
10:30 – 10:45	STEWARDSHIP GROUP WORK UPDATE A chance for WSG's to give an update on what their group is presently working on.
10:45 - 11:05	MINGLING AND HEALTH BREAK
11:05 – 11:35	Septic Impacts on our water bodies
11:35 – 12:00	STEWARDSHIP GROUP WORK UPDATE A chance for WSG's to give an update on what their group is presently working on.
12:00 - 12:45	Lunch and Networking Lunch to be served by Tastebuds Catering Door Prize Draws
12:45- 2:45	Aquatic Invasive Species: Public Prevention Initiative : Kate Wilson
2:45- 3:00	Closing remarks



!!!Don't miss any issues of The Blade!!!
Join Grey Wooded Forage Association
Or renew your membership!

2014 – 2015 Memberships are available now for \$20.00
and run from April 1, 2014 to March 31, 2015
For more information phone 403-844-2645

Become a part of an enthusiastic group of people who are
exploring ways to turn grass into \$\$\$.

Membership is open to anyone interested in forage production and grazing management in an
economically and environmentally sustainable way.

Members benefit by:

- Receiving discounts on Controlled Grazing Courses, seminars, tours, farm calls and consulting on grazing management, pasture rejuvenation, feed production (annual forages) and more.
- Receiving *The GWFA Newsletter* in Spring & Fall and *The Blade* monthly.
- Receive up-to-date information on G.W.F.A. activities via The Blade.

Please mail the portion below with a cheque for \$20.00 to:

Grey Wooded Forage Association
Box 1448
Rocky Mountain House, Alberta
T4T-1B1

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY:

Renewal _____ or New Member _____
Canada Post _____ or Email _____

Name..... Phone.....
Address..... Fax.....
Town..... Prov..... Email.....
Postal Code..... Confirm Email.....

Please give us an idea of what area of forage production you are interested in:

Controlled Grazing & Pasture Management: _____

Growing Annual Forages for Extended Grazing or Swath Grazing: _____

Growing Annual Forages for Silage or Greenfeed: _____

Growing Hay: _____ Ration Balancing: _____

Soil Biology: _____ Pasture Rejuvenation or Renovation: _____

Low Cost Cow/calf Production: _____

Environmental Sustainability: _____ Economical Sustainability: _____

COMMENTS: _____

AGRI-FACTS

Practical information for Alberta's Agriculture Industry

October 2004

Agdex 420/52-4

Beef Ration Rules of Thumb

This factsheet can both guide producers through a feed test and help them understand the results.

With a feed test in front of you, look at the following rules and compare them to the feed test. Remember, these are rules of thumb, which means they hold true most of the time, but variations in management and cow type will affect the end result.

These rules of thumb should not be considered a replacement for balancing rations with proven software, but rather an aid to understand the feed and where it fits in the management.

Energy

Energy gives the ability to use the building blocks for growth and other productive purposes. Learn one of the six measures for energy and stick with it. Using Total Digestible Nutrients (TDN) per cent, the Rule of Thumb is 55-60-65. This rule says that for a mature beef cow to maintain her body condition score (BCS) through the winter, the ration must have a TDN energy reading of 55 per cent in mid pregnancy, 60 per cent in late pregnancy and 65 per cent after calving.

Rules of Thumb

Dry matter

Always refer to the "dry matter" numbers. These numbers have the moisture factored out and allow the comparison of all feeds, from stage 1 grains.

Crude protein

Protein is a building block. The Beef Cow Rule of Thumb with protein is 7-9-11, which means an average cow requires a ration with crude protein of 7 per cent in late pregnancy, 9 per cent in late pregnancy

AGRI-FACTS

Practical information for Alberta's Agriculture Industry

August 2009

Agdex 130/536-1

Nutrient Management on Intensively Managed Pastures

Pastures are unique to our agricultural production system. As a result of their

and

illating and environmental risks

ols and pathways

several pools of nutrients include organic matter, growing plants, shoots, plant litter, living animals, hauled large herbivores, above and low ground invertebrates (beetles, worms) and soil microbes, and the atmosphere.

trient cycles develop as nutrients moving pathways from one pool to another. The processes and pathways trient cycles are different for various inputs, but nutrient balances over the cycles. Balances are made up of inputs, outputs and losses of nutrients in the pasture system.

Inputs = outputs + losses
If inputs are removed or losses are increased, the system will be in deficit.

Pasture Planner



Stock-poisoning Plants of Western Canada

W. MAJAK, B. M. BROOKE and R. T. OGILVIE



AGRI-FACTS

Practical information for Alberta's Agriculture Industry

September 2008

Agdex 420/56-3

Agronomic Management of Swath Grazed Pastures

Feed, feeding, cow management and pasture disposal can account for up to two-thirds of the total cost of production in a cow-calf operation. Systems that can extend the grazing season and reduce these costs are of great interest to cow-calf producers. One of these is swath grazing.

Many factors come into play to determine forage quality, quantity and unit cost of production in a swath grazing system. Some of these factors, such as weather, are

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These publications are available to our members by phoning or emailing the GWFA office!



Management of Canadian Prairie Rangeland



Wealthy Rancher Calculator
Canada

Canada

Grazing Notebook



Name: _____
Year(s): _____

Stockpiled forage for pasture can mean savings for the producer

Stockpiling pasture is a form of deferred grazing. The producer stockpiles the forage grown during the spring and summer for use when the pasture is in short supply or when cows need fall or winter feed. This practice can mean savings for the producer:

- harvesting, hauling and feeding costs associated with wintered
- to be removed from feeding

range is
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period between grazing or cutting
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stems

for a full growing season, for a
e regrowth may be stockpiled
like harvest or grazing.

is suited to the drier prairie
er rainfall prevent good
e native species in these areas
quality better than

Winter grazing on the prairie works best with little or no snow cover. Supplemental feed is needed if snow cover is too deep and forage yields are low.

In the Parkland and Northern areas, a multi-pass system where the second or third cut or regrowth from pastures is grazed in late fall or winter makes more efficient use of the land and is generally economical. Forage quality of the regrowth is higher than that of the summer first growth, especially if it is saved until fall or winter. Winter grazed cows are often required to forage through more than 50 cm (12 in.) of snow, so stockpiled forage plants must be tall.

Species selection
Species selection depends on the system being used. Ideally, in cut-and-graze or multi-pass rotational grazing systems, a species used for stockpiling should be able to do the following:

- regrow rapidly following early harvests to provide at least 2,000 kilograms (kg) of forage per hectare (1,785 lb./ac) for good fall grazing
- maintain high quality following fall frosts

If grazing is to occur after snowfall, forage mass needs to be higher as grazing efficiency is reduced and grazing losses increase. Using an erect species makes it easier for cows to get at the feed under the snow.

In a single-pass system, a species that maintains its quality as it matures is a good choice.

Alberta