



Grey  
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Association

# The Blade

*"Creating an Awareness of Forages"*

**MAY 2014**

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## Save the Date!!

West Country Ag Tour  
August 21, 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.



## SAVE THE DATE!

Dec 9, 10 & 11, 2014

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## Manager's Notes:

*By Albert Kuipers*

Wow! I thoroughly enjoyed our 30th Anniversary, Tradeshow & AGM. Many thanks to all of you who contributed to our special day. You made the day for us. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

I gotta say, David Irvine did an awesome job of helping us celebrate the contributions of the many people who served on our Board, as project cooperators and helped us in so very many ways to be the organization we are.

David also did an awesome job with our Board Governance and Leadership Skills Training session we held earlier that day. This training really helped clarify the role of the Board and taught us ways we can intentionally take the effectiveness of our organization to new, higher levels. This session was open to all current Directors, new Director nominees and to all past Directors of GWFA. Significant others of all of these contributors to GWFA were welcomed as well.

I'm excited about my opportunity to continue serving you in helping you get the forage and livestock production results you're passionate about. I want you to be totally happy with your experience with GWFA. If you see ways we can improve on that, please let us know.



I get a weekly e-newsletter called "On Pasture" from Kathy Voth and Rachel Gilker. Kathy and Rachel are experts on teaching livestock to eat many highly nutritious plants that we often call weeds. I came across an excellent article while reading their April 28th issue.

This article, "Start Your Grazing Season Off With Kindness" was written by Troy Bishopp, known in some parts of the US as the "Grass Whisperer" ([www.thegrasswhisperer.com](http://www.thegrasswhisperer.com)). In his article, Troy quotes a fellow by the name of Lee Manske, a range scientist at North Dakota State University's Dickinson Research Extension Center.

Lee states **"When 25% of the grass tillers leaf area is removed during the first grazing period, the quantity of secondary tillers increases 38% during that same growing season and increases 64% to 173% during the second growing season. When 50% of the grass tiller leaf area is removed during the first grazing period, the quantity of secondary tillers decreases 53% that same growing season and decreases 63% to 144% during the second growing season."**

Now, I don't think I've ever heard that statement before, but it sure says well what I've kinda known for years. This is why I often suggest to move the herd very fast through all the paddocks for the first grazing period on the paddocks. Using strip grazing instead of set paddocks? The same applies.

The idea is to move the livestock over the pasture quickly enough that they eat less than 25% of the plants on that first round over the pasture. I'd say this is the most important pasture management choice you can make. How you manage your pasture during the lush spring growth determines much of your pasture's productivity for the whole growing season. This critical season is late May and June for most of Central Alberta. If



you want to bank grass for winter, or early spring use, this is incredibly important for you to get good yield, or carrying capacity on your stockpiled pastures.

To read all of Troy's article and many more interesting articles go to [www.onpasture.com](http://www.onpasture.com) and then look for the article's title. If you're reading this on our website, you can copy and paste this link in your web browser: <http://onpasture.com/2014/04/28/start-your-grazing-season-off-with-kindness/#sthash.oYaJvVW9.dpuf>.



Over the past few years you've likely heard the words "sustainable" or "sustainability" used a lot, maybe even over-used. Lately I've been hearing some people say that sustainability isn't enough, that we must look beyond sustainability. I suppose, if your understanding of sustainability is the ability to maintain status quo, then sustainability is often not enough.

Now I got thinking, the other night when I should have been sleeping, of how a different meaning for the word "sustainable" is often implied. Try this one out:

**"Sustainability - the ability to perpetually stay healthy and regenerate itself."**

Now, I understand that there are lots of pastures, ranges, woodlands and riparian areas that need to improve a whole lot before they could be considered healthy enough to perpetually regenerate themselves. In many cases, even the soils these various ecosystems are found on would need to improve a lot to be able to regenerate themselves.

So this is just some food for thought while you're seeding, or fixing fences, or anything else you're doing in this gorgeous spring weather.

Hello, my name is **Ginette Boucher**. I was born in Matagami, Quebec. I grew up in northern Ontario in the Temiskaming region in a French Canadian family of four children. I was very active in sports.

After completing high school I transferred to Nelson BC to manage a retail outlet. I worked in sales for many years and have extensive sales training, although this wasn't my aspiration.

In 1994 I had a beautiful daughter. Her name is Jasmine and she is a blessing. I raised her on my own.

In 2003 I enrolled in a program at Olds College called Environmental Stewardship; this was a two years program and I graduated with honours. Since then I worked seasonally, some in agriculture/farming, and maintenance work.

Jasmine graduated high school and is currently attending Olds College. Since her move I have been seeking full-time employment where my interests are.

Through a series of coincidences I was blessed with the opportunity to become part of the GWFA where I can apply my education and continue to learn. I am also a member of the Rocky trappers group and I currently do animal damage control for Clearwater County. I look forward to the many experiences ahead with GWFA for the current season and to continue my journey where my heart lies.



# Thank you for Sponsoring our 30th Anniversary and AGM!



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# Ergot Prevention in Cereal Crops

Affecting all cereal crops except oats, ergot produces mycotoxins that are extremely toxic to humans and livestock. Although not significantly impacting yield, the low tolerance level for affected grain can cause grain rejection or downgrading at the elevator. *Forage grasses and roadside grasses are also susceptible to this fungal disease.* Since no seed treatments, pesticides or resistant varieties are available as control measures, prevention is the only way to manage this disease.



If a field does end up having a significant amount of ergot in cereal heads at harvest time, delaying swathing/harvesting can allow the wind to blow ergot bodies from infected crop heads prior to harvesting. If the headlands are more infected from field edge grasses, harvest and bin grain from the headlands separately.

The early part of this growing season may not have prolonged, cool and moist weather, which increases ergot infection, however, since there are numerous

ergot appears as dark, hardened resting bodies (sclerotia) in harvested grain that either fall to the ground or become harvested with the grain. Prolonged wet soils in spring and early summer promote germination of disease spores from overwintering sclerotia in the soil. During the early part of the growing season, the disease cycle has two stages – the primary and the secondary stage.

Primary infection occurs when wind blows spores from germinating sclerotia to the tiny florets of flowering cereal crops or field edge grasses. The ergot fungus then produces another spore type in infected florets that results in a mass of spores and a sugary, sticky substance. Secondary infection happens when these spores stick to insects or are splashed by rain drops that in turn spread these spores to the florets of nearby cereal or grass heads. Prolonged wet, cloudy and cool weather not only extends the infection window but can also favor an increase of insect populations like aphids, midge and leaf hoppers that contribute to spore transfer. Sclerotia eventually develop in place of the kernels in infected florets.

The most effective preventive measures are crop rotation and mowing field edges. Since ergot bodies only remain viable for one to two years in the soil, rotation out of cereals for two years limits infection; especially do not plant a cereal crop on rye or triticale stubble. Since they can be a major infection source, field edge grasses should be mowed prior to their flowering period and nearby forage grasses should be cut or grazed before they flower in the heading stage.

Since open cereal flowers are susceptible to ergot infection, anything that extends the overall flowering period or prevents uniform crop maturity in a field enhances the risk of ergot by increasing the window of time during which infection can occur. Therefore, ensuring a uniform crop stand is important and can be enhanced by using a high seed germination percentage, avoidance of seeding into cold soil, seeding shallow and at an even depth, maintaining a balanced fertilizer program, preventing herbicide injury to the crop including avoidance of late herbicide applications, and using a higher seeding rate to prevent tillering. Deficiencies in copper and boron can lead to reduced pollen viability which may also extend the flowering period. Wheat and barley are normally closed flower self-pollinators, however, a reduction in pollen viability causes these normally closed flowers to open to access pollen from adjacent plants, heightening the possibility of infection. Therefore, amendments of copper and boron may help, but only if soil tests indicate a deficiency in these micronutrients.

viable sclerotia currently present in the soil from last year, it is important to consider preventive control methods to avoid an infestation in 2014.

*Neil Whatley, Crop Specialist, ARD Ag-Info Centre, Stettler*

## Ergot Poisoning in Livestock:

- Ergot contains numerous toxic alkaloids that cause four different syndromes in livestock: gangrenous ergotism, convulsive/nervous ergotism, reproductive ergotism and hyperthermic ergotism. The gangrenous and nervous forms are most common.
- General symptoms of ergot poisoning include lameness, excitability, belligerence, weight loss and loss of appetite. It can take 2-8 weeks for these symptoms to become visible.
- Gangrenous ergotism is associated with longer term ingestion of ergot. Ergot alkaloids cause small blood vessels to constrict reducing the blood supply to limbs, tails, teats and ears. If blood flow is restricted for long periods of time, the tissues become oxygen deprived and die. Hooves can slough off and in cold weather ears freeze off.
- Convulsive or nervous ergotism is more common in horses and sheep and is the acute form of ergotism. Symptoms include dizziness, drowsiness, convulsions, paralysis and death. These symptoms usually disappear about 3 to 10 days after the ergot is removed.
- Reproductive ergotism is caused by high levels of estrogen in the ergot bodies. This can lead to abortions or lowered fertility due to abnormal cycling. Once the ergot is removed, it takes a long time for estrogen levels to return to normal.
- Hyperthermic ergotism results from long term exposure to ergot. It is made worse on hot and humid days with no shade. Animals pant and lose weight.
- If your pastures have a history of ergot, make sure to graze so the plants don't head out or mow them to prevent the ergot bodies from developing.
- The upper feeding limit of ergot in older, non-pregnant cattle is 0.1% by weight of feed consumed. However, ergot could still have a negative impact on cattle health at this level. Pregnant, breeding and lactating animals are the most sensitive to ergot and should not be fed any ergot.

From [www.foragebeef.ca](http://www.foragebeef.ca)

# Land EKG Monitoring - Antelope Creek 2013

A new range monitoring system for Canadian ranchers

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 wild-life conservationists reach their goals. It proved a perfect fit for OGC, a small Alberta non-profit organization that, for more than 20 years has collaborated with ranchers to balance economic needs on the ranch with the ecological needs of the wild-life that reside there.

Land EKG is a rangeland 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 Charley 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. 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.

## **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.

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



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

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.

## Contact information:

Kerry Grisley, Program Director  
Operation Grassland Community  
Alberta Fish and Game Association  
6924 - 104<sup>th</sup> Street NW  
Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 2L7  
Phone: 780-722-0944

*For more information on Operation Grassland Community and the work we do, please visit us on the web:*

[www.grasslandcommunity.org](http://www.grasslandcommunity.org)

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# Save the date!

## LAND EKG-CANADA School

**EKG Blink Monitoring Basics - June 24 & 25, 2014 - Rain dates - July 2 & 3, 2014**

Participants will leave this two-day course with well-practiced abilities in choosing monitoring sites, transect layout mechanics, and EKG photo procedures. This class is designed for any rancher or conservation manager seeking a rapid, repeatable monitoring program, right away.

Participants will practice thorough land monitoring basics, soil survey using Alberta Soil Information Viewer, grazing indexing, forage production measurement methods, surface cover percents, and EZ-EKG assessments, but will spend the majority of time learning monitoring mechanics for EKG transect lines.

Additional time will be spent on "situational monitoring" and site recording techniques including an introduction to EKG DataStore. Monitoring kits will be available for those wishing to purchase this item.

**Prerequisite: None, bring a camera if you have one.**

**JOIN TED SUTTON FOR THIS INFORMATIVE 'HANDS-ON' COURSE**

For course content information contact Ted Sutton  
Tel: 403.764.7402, Cell: 403.909.1772, [Ted@ekgcan.com](mailto:Ted@ekgcan.com)

For registration information and to register  
please contact the GWFA office at 403-844-2645



## Time for a Physical!

(for your land that is...Monitoring Pasture Health with Land EKG)

*By Ken Lewis, Conservation Coordinator (adapted from a County News article from August 2013)*

There are many reasons to monitor the health and productivity of your pastures...economics being the number one of course. Put another way...there's a saying that goes: "You can't manage what you don't measure".

On June 24 and 25, Ted Sutton from Land EKG Canada, will be leading a group of us through the "EKG Blink" pasture monitoring system they've developed. The very hands-on, largely outside workshop will take place on pasture lands west of Bowden.

The Land EKG Blink pasture monitoring system has been designed with the rancher in mind...it's efficient, effective, repeatable, objective, and practical.

Here's a few of the fundamentals to pasture monitoring and management with the Land EKG methods:

- Recording precipitation on the pasture
- Knowing forage utilization with grazing cages and yield measurements
- Keeping good grazing records (number of animals of what size, when, where, and how long they grazed, how much is being left, how many days of rest and recovery for the grass)
- Recording ground cover and plant diversity
- Setting up transects and photo points - A picture is worth a

thousand words. Repeating the exact picture, in the exact spot over time, is worth 10,000 words at least, if you want to know how your management is affecting what is happening on the land.

Examples of some of the pictures you take at a transect, are provided here. One picture is a landscape picture, the other is a picture of an EKG hoop site, which occurs along the transect line. By following the EKG Blink procedure, you can quickly and easily go back to the exact site, year after year, and take the exact pictures again...so you can see exactly what is happening on the land over time, then make management changes according to what you see.

To find out more, or to register, please contact:

- Ken Lewis at 403-342-8653, or [kewis@rdcounty.ca](mailto:kewis@rdcounty.ca), or
- Lorelee Grattidge at 403-335-3311 ext 163 or
- Grey Wooded Forage Association at 403-844-2645, [gwfa1@telus.net](mailto:gwfa1@telus.net), or [gwfa2@telus.net](mailto:gwfa2@telus.net).





## Record Cattle Prices Spark Increased Demand For Livestock Price Insurance Program

### Higher Prices Bring Higher Risk, Says Market Analyst

As Alberta's Livestock Price Insurance Program expands across Western Canada this month, demand for price insurance in Alberta is growing as cattle producers witness cattle prices that have been hitting record highs over the last few months.

"Cattle producers are experiencing some of the strongest prices in history on their cattle, and they don't want to risk losing that money if prices fall for some reason. That's why so many Alberta producers are using price insurance to protect the high cattle prices they're seeing today. Participation in cattle price insurance has tripled in Alberta over the last year because it gives producers an Alberta floor price that locks in up to 95 per cent of the future forecasted price on their cattle. And it doesn't put a ceiling on the price they can sell their cattle for if markets keep climbing," explains Brenda Hagen, with Agriculture Financial Services Corporation (AFSC) – the provincial Crown corporation that has administered livestock price insurance since the program was first unveiled in Alberta five years ago.

### No Program Changes in Alberta as WLPIP Expands Across West

Now renamed the **Western Livestock Price Insurance Program (WLPIP)**, Hagen says the success and uptake of price insurance in Alberta was a major factor in the decision to expand it across Western Canada this spring. AFSC will now deliver the program – which has only been available in Alberta – to cattle and hog producers across the West on behalf of the federal and provincial governments.

As WLPIP rolls out across the region, there will be no changes to the program in Alberta, says Hagen. "Other than a new logo and website at [www.wlpip.ca](http://www.wlpip.ca), it's the same program Alberta producers have used for years to protect themselves from any risk that could cause these high cattle prices to drop below their insured floor price," she says, noting, "We're adding settlement indexes and coverage levels for the other provinces, but coverage and settlement prices in Alberta will still be based on the Alberta cattle market."

### Cattle Prices Jumped 20 Per Cent

The expansion of WLPIP comes at a good time, says Brian Perillat, a senior Alberta cattle market analyst with Canfax. Cattle prices have jumped about 20 per cent over the last four months – and those higher prices bring higher risk, says Perillat, especially for feedlots and backgrounders that buy high-priced calves and feeder cattle to place on feed or pasture. "Those producers have more money on the table than ever before. And with the increased market volatility that often comes with high prices, producers could easily lose a lot more money a lot faster if they're not using tools like price insurance in today's markets," he explains.

### Unexpected Risks

While there's every indication today's strong prices will continue through 2014 – due to tight cattle supplies in Canada and the U.S., a weak Canadian dollar, and low feed costs – there are always unexpected risks that can come out of no-



*Brenda Hagen, with AFSC, says high cattle prices have sparked growing demand for Livestock Price Insurance in Alberta. As the program expands across Western Canada, she reminds producers of the May 29 deadline for WCPIPCalf policies this year.*

where and change that picture, adds Perillat. "For example, the Canadian dollar can be extremely volatile and negatively impact cattle prices. Or if there's a drought or some other weather concern that results in a small U.S. grain crop, that could reduce cattle prices this year," he explains.

"There's too much at stake not to protect the high prices we're seeing today with price insurance. That's why we actively promote WLPIP to our members," says Reg Schmidt, with the Feeder Associations of Alberta (FAA), an industry group that sat on the steering committee that developed livestock price insurance in Alberta. The FAA helps producers finance feeder cattle purchases through a Loan Guarantee Program. "We also finance WLPIP premiums with our loans so every producer can purchase coverage if they wish," says Schmidt, noting that as cattle prices have increased, so have the floor prices producers can lock in with WLPIP.

### Bankable

About 40 per cent of FAA members enrol in WLPIP through the Cattle Price Insurance Program (WCPIP). Schmidt anticipates that number could double because "producers are realizing price insurance is a necessary part of doing business. It's bankable so they can take it to their lender to access credit more easily. And you don't have to look hard for examples of how WLPIP has helped cattle producers manage their price risk," he says, pointing to the XL Foods plant closure in Brooks almost two years ago due to E. coli concerns. "Feeder cattle fell nearly \$20 per 100 pounds at that time, and producers who had price insurance were getting payouts of nearly \$200/head," he says.

### May 29 Calf Deadline

WLPIP programs are available year-round for fed cattle, feeder cattle, and hogs. The only exception is WCPIP Calf, which is offered from February to May due to the seasonality of calf sales, says Hagen, noting the deadline to purchase WCPIP-Calf policies this year is May 29.

For more information about WLPIP, producers can contact their local AFSC Branch, the AFSC Call Centre at 1-877-899-AFSC (2372) or visit [www.wlpip.ca](http://www.wlpip.ca).

# ALBERTA'S LAND USE SECRETARIAT WANTS YOUR INPUT!

This month the first phase of public consultation is being organized for the North Saskatchewan Regional Plan. We invite you to attend the upcoming daytime or evening sessions to learn more about the region as well as share your thoughts on the issues and strategies contained in the Terms of Reference for Developing the North Saskatchewan Regional Plan. See the dates and locations to the right, which are subject to change.

The North Saskatchewan Region is located in central Alberta and has approximately 85,780 square kilometres, or just under 13 per cent of Alberta's total land base. The region is bordered by Saskatchewan to the east, British Columbia to the west, the Upper Athabasca and the Lower Athabasca regions to the north and the South Saskatchewan and Red Deer regions to the south.

The purpose of regional planning is to support the numerous policies and strategies that guide natural resource development, support economic growth and protect our environment. Regional plans will integrate these policies and strategies at the regional level and provide the policy direction and clarity for decision makers at the federal, provincial and local levels.

Daytime and afternoon/evening sessions are being planned for the following communities. Stay tuned for more information about how you can RSVP to one of these workshops.

## Workshop dates & locations:

- May 27 – Rocky Mountain House & Lloydminster
- May 28 – Drayton Valley & St. Paul
- May 29 – Spruce Grove & Fort Saskatchewan
- June 3 – Banff
- June 4 – Caroline
- June 5 – Wetaskiwin
- June 10 – Smokey Lake & Wainwright
- June 11 – St. Albert & Vegreville
- June 12 – Leduc & Sherwood Park
- June 17 – Provost
- June 18 – Killam
- June 19 – Camrose
- June 24 – Calgary
- June 25 – Red Deer
- June 26 – Edmonton

Land Use Secretariat  
9<sup>th</sup> floor, 10035-108st  
Centre West Building  
[LUF@gov.ab.ca](mailto:LUF@gov.ab.ca)



## ALBERTA ENVIRONMENTAL FARM PLAN UNVEILS NEW WEBSITE

### News release

The Alberta Environmental Farm Plan's NEW website is now LIVE and mobile friendly ([www.albertaefp.com](http://www.albertaefp.com)). The website features farmer stories, articles, videos and twitter feed. The new site makes it easier to find an EFP technician in your area and get started on completing an EFP.

The Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) process helps producers identify and address environmental risks and opportunities in their operation by completing an EFP workbook. Maintaining a healthy environment is essential to the success of Alberta's agricultural producers and an EFP shows a commitment to stewardship. A web version of the EFP Workbook will be released later this spring.

For more information on the Alberta Environmental Farm Plan call 310-FARM (3276), email [info@albertaefp.com](mailto:info@albertaefp.com) or check out the new website [www.albertaefp.com](http://www.albertaefp.com).



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# Now in Rocky Mountain House

AFSC provides full-time hours to local clients



Agriculture Financial Services Corporation (AFSC) is proud to announce its newest full-time AFSC Branch in Rocky Mountain House. While the AFSC – Rocky Mountain House location has been around for several years, it has expanded its hours to better serve clients. Their hours of operation are Monday to Friday, from 8:15am to 4:30pm (closed between 12-1pm).

AFSC is a provincial Crown corporation that works with Alberta's agriculture producers and commercial enterprises to help grow their business. With more than 50 offices located across the province, AFSC delivers income stabilization programs, provides insurance products and offers a range of lending products and services.

## Lending Products and Services

A proud supporter of rural Alberta, AFSC strives to help grow and sustain small businesses across the province by offering loans to commercial and agri-businesses, as well as lending products to agriculture producers, and value-added enterprises. AFSC also offers loan guarantees and capital sourcing services.

Loan programs can be customized with flexible repayment options, as well as fixed or renewable interest rate terms. There are also additional interest rate incentives offered to qualifying clients. All AFSC loans can be prepaid or paid in full at any time without penalty.

## Income Stabilization Programs

AFSC is the delivery agent for the AgriStability program

in Alberta. AgriStability directs government funds to those program participants who experience margin declines greater than fifteen percent.

## Insurance Products

AFSC offers a range of insurance programs that include:

- Production insurance for annual and perennial crops
- Area based insurance programs for silage and green feed, corn heat units, moisture deficiency and satellite yield
- Cattle and Hog Insurance Programs
- Straight Hail
- Bee-Overwintering

Drop in at the Rocky Mountain House Branch for more information about AFSC programs and services. Our local and knowledgeable staff members include:

Heather Karst, *Account Manager*  
Chantel Taylor, *Client Services Representative*

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## You can advertise in The Blade!

You likely have seen the advertising in our spring and fall newsletters, but did you know you can advertise in The Blade? Well, yes you can.

For some time now we have accepted a limited number of paid ads submitted by GWFA members. (Membership is only \$20/year.) If you have a bull or production sale coming up, or if you have hay for sale, pasture for rent and you'd like to reach our audience, give us a call. Also, if you sell products, equipment or services that would be of interest to our readers we can help you reach our audience. Of course, we do want to make sure that ads we put in The Blade are for products and services that would be of considerable benefit to our members, so ads will be accepted for The Blade at our discretion.

So, give us a call at **403-844-2645** or email Muriel at **gwfa1@telus.net** or Albert at **gwfa2@telus.net** to learn more about our advertising policy for the Blade and to find out what it would cost to have your ad in the next issue.

**LJB Ranch**

**Jim & Barb Bauer**  
Ph. 403.546.2427 email: jim.bauer50@gmail.com

**Offering Electric Fencing Solutions**

**Now handling Tru-Test scales and RFID Wand readers!**

**speedrite** **TRU-TEST** **PasturePro**

**AFIN**  
ALBERTA FORAGE INDUSTRY NETWORK

[www.albertaforages.ca](http://www.albertaforages.ca)  
[info@albertaforages.ca](mailto:info@albertaforages.ca)



**RDRMUG & RDRWA**  
**Red Deer River Municipal Users Group &**  
**Red Deer River Watershed Alliance**



**"Connecting Through Water Day"**

Please join us for a first class day of Water 101 issues that are relevant to the Red Deer River Basin. We have booked a series of excellent world class speakers and presentations.

**Friday June 13, 2014**

**Quality Inn, North Hill (7150 50 Avenue Red Deer)**

**9:00am until 3:00pm**



**COME HELL OR HIGH WATER:**

Hydro-Climate Change and Its  
Consequences for Albertans  
**ROBERT W. SANDFORD**

Bob Sandford is the EPCOR Chair of the Canadian Partnership Initiative in support of United Nations "Water for Life" Decade.

This national partnership initiative aims to inform the public on water issues and translate scientific research outcomes into language decision-makers can use to craft timely and meaningful public policy. Bob is also an associate of the Centre for Hydrology, an associate of the Global Water Institute at the University of Saskatchewan and a Fellow of the Biogeoscience Institute at the University of Calgary. He sits on the Advisory Board of Living Lakes Canada, the Canadian Chapter of Living Lakes International and is also a member of the Forum for Leadership on Water (FLOW), a national water policy research group centred in Toronto. Bob also serves as Water Governance Adviser and Senior Policy Author for Simon Fraser University's Adaptation to Climate Change Team.



Minister of Environment and  
Sustainable Resource Development

**HONOURABLE ROBIN CAMPBELL**

Has been invited to be our lunch time  
keynote speaker. (not confirmed)

**WATER CONSERVATION:**

*STRATEGIES AND TOOLKITS For Water  
Conservation.*

Although officially with the Government of Alberta, Curt Horning is currently filling an 18-month secondment with the AUMA (Alberta Urban Municipalities Association) in the position of Water Management Coordinator. In this position, his role is to support and build the capacity of AUMA member municipalities to successfully undertake water conservation planning and initiatives, and to report on the progress and successes of the urban municipal sector in achieving water savings.



**AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES:**

Sharina Kennedy is the AERSD Environmental Education and Awareness Specialist Planning and has an excellent and timely presentation on "Aquatic Invasive Species".

**MUST REGISTER IN ADVANCE AS SEATING IS  
LIMITED**

To register [click here](#) or visit [www.rdrwa.ca](http://www.rdrwa.ca) events.

**Or Call RDRWA 403-340-7379**

Cost: \$30.00 includes all presentations and chef's  
buffet lunch.



**!!!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 mature 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. They are a source of food and

and  
illating and environmental risks

### ools and pathways

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

trient cycles develop as nutrients ing pathways from one pool to other. The processes and pathways trient cycles are different for van inputs, but nutrient balances on the cycles. Balances are made up sis, outputs and losses of nutrient on the pasture system.

inputs = outputs + losses  
they are removed or  
usage export

# 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 mature 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

### Swath

Swath

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

Canada Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada



## Management of Canadian Prairie Rangeland



Wealthy Rancher Calculator

Canada

Canada

## Grazing Notebook



Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Year(s): \_\_\_\_\_

October 2008

Agdex 420/56-4

## Agronomic Management of Stockpiled Pastures

Stockpiling pasture is a producer stockpiles spring and summer for supply or when cows need can mean savings for the

- harvesting, hauling and conserving feed are the

# Sod Seeding

Seeding forages into existing stands using minimal tillage

