



Grey
Wooded
Forage
Association

The Blade

"Creating an Awareness of Forages"



NOV./DEC. 2015

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MISSION STATEMENT

To promote environmentally and economically sustainable forage and agricultural practices.

VISION STATEMENT

The community is engaged in regenerative agricultural production methods.



Please help us meet your needs!

URGENT!

Please answer these few questions for us:

1. What are the most critical needs that GWFA can assist your operation with?
2. What events/ activities would you like to see GWFA host or help organize in the next 3 years ?
3. What is your preferred method of delivery (online webinar vs in-person) for information sessions?
4. What topics would you like to see covered in The Blade?
5. How can GWFA work with the agricultural business community to deliver relevant information to producers?

Save the Date!



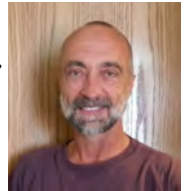
Annual General Meeting
Saturday, April 30, 2015
Eckville Community Centre

Watch for more information
in upcoming issues of The
Blade and on our website!

www.greywoodedforageassociation.com

Message from the Chair

By Ken Ziegler



My gosh! Here we are and it's time for the November Blade (*November/December*). Where has the fall gone?

Trusting that the fall months have been relatively uneventful and that you're well along in getting the many pre-winter tasks done. Picture for a moment: It's -20C, you have your gloves off doing a task and your fingers are dumb and hurting. You're asking yourself, "Why didn't I do this when it was warm out?" Sound familiar? Hope not, cuz you're incredibly well organized! ;)

Well Ginette and Albert seem to be very well organized and have been working at many of their pre-winter tasks including this edition of the Blade. We sincerely hope that you're finding the material on these pages useful.

Thank you very much to the various contributors for making this newsletter noteworthy, useful and special. Also, thank you to the many advertisers for your interest as well, as it allows us to offer the Blade more economically to everyone. We hope you reach a larger audience by advertising with us.

On the side, if any of you have questioned the need for all this controlled grazing work throughout the summer, consider the quality of pasture that your calves are on now. This young, youthful, sugar laden re-growth is growing your calves at maximum. Your cows are stinkin' fat and milking like Holsteins (well almost).

Had you continuously grazed, the pasture would now be old, ripe and dormant. Calves on continuously grazed pasture are lean with lots of frame and runnin' gear but have stopped gaining weight long ago.

AND, when the snows get so deep that you stop grazing, the material that you hadn't gotten to will stay in the fridge (under the snow) lying in wait for next spring when the snow recedes, and the milking cows and their new born calves can graze again saving you weeks of not having to feed hay - well worth the summer time work.....

Best wishes to the rest of November, for a healthy weaning process, good weights and good prices.

Ken

Manager's Notes:

By Ginette Boucher, Manager

Season's greetings,

We are developing our next three years program and we need to hear from you. We are planning to expand our environmental program and are currently in the midst of a program assessment. In order to better serve you we are looking for your input in our program delivery. In the Blade; and on our website will be a survey you can fill in and return to us via email or by telephone. We will compile the information and deliver on the needs assessment. The more detail you can provide the better our program will be. It is imperative that you communicate your thoughts for the future of your association, and what you see the need is for the coming years. Our funders (AOF) require a needs assessment on an annual basis in our reporting to ensure that we are delivering content that is needed.

We invite everyone to send in their survey; this would include producers, industry, partners, and collaborators. We would like this survey filled in and returned to us prior to the end of December 2015, as our application deadline is the first week of January 2016. This is your opportunity to speak to the direction you would like your association to take, what content you would like delivered, and the method in which you would like the delivery. We are confident that you will assist us in the mandate of this needs assessment. Thank you so much for your cooperation.



Mark your calendars, our AGM has been scheduled for Saturday April 30th 2016 at the Eckville Community Hall. After much discussion and thought with the Board, this date was chosen to enable those that are unable to attend during a weeknight. This will allow for an evening of fellowship and sharing a meal together. We will have our annual meeting and bring in a speaker of interest. We are currently planning this day and would like to hear thoughts. We would like to make this AGM memorable and with your input it will be a success.



We have recently met with most MLA's in the Counties we work in and have been very well received in our endeavour



L-R: Ginette Boucher, Brendon Anderson & Barb Miller, MLA for the Red Deer South Constituency.

Photo credit: MLA office staff



to do some advocacy. Each MLA shared some valuable comments and was pleased to learn about our mandate, our program funding, and the importance of agriculture in Alberta. In general each MLA was extremely supportive of our program and will consult with Minister Carlier to insure continued support / funding for our program. Thank you to each GWFA member and Board members who contributed to the advocacy.



Our collaboration with Organic Alberta in the Planned Grazing Management Webinar & Workshop on Oct 27 was a great success. There were 30 producers and industry members at this event and great discussions took place after the Jim Gerish webinar. The webinar is posted on our website. The producer panel assisted other producers in effective ways of implementing BMPs (best management practices). If these types of activity interest you, please let us know and we will work towards delivering the right content, in the right method.



We were very well received at our most recent event at Buck Lake Community Centre "Grazing for Dollars" in the County of Wetaskiwin. Our mandate was to develop a partnership with the County of Wetaskiwin and start effectively delivering credible information to the producers in various methods.

The evaluation forms submitted from the attendees showed us that there is a need in this County for us to assist with and continue to develop a strong partnership. Thirty five producers and industry partners attended, two new members came of this event and a couple membership renewals. Many others need assistance with BMP's in their grazing practices and few need assistance with weed control. Overall we were very pleased with this outcome.

We have much follow up work to do and look forward to building a strong partnership with the County of Wetaskiwin. Thanks Kim Barkwell.



After a long November hunt with extremely mild weather, success was on the last day of the season, some venison in the deep freeze for the winter.



Merry Christmas & Happy New Year to you!

Ginette

Winter Fencing Tips and Tricks

This has been an incredibly mild fall in our region. We have yet to see any of that fluffy, cold and wet stuff stick to the ground. This has given us here at Greener Pastures Ranching Ltd. the perfect opportunity to install electric fencing at the pea straw residue fields while it's still enjoyable to be outside. Although the ground is nice and dry now, we do live in Alberta and we know that snow is bound to make an appearance at some point. With the snow often comes electric fencing headaches. Snow acts as an insulator, reducing the shock that your animals will feel when they get to thinking that the grass (or hay, or silage, or in our case pea straw) is greener on the other side of the fence. So how do you keep your animals trained to electric fence throughout the winter?

Probably one of the most important things that we do to reduce the amount of headaches during the winter grazing period, is training our animals to be very respectful of electric fence in the fall, before the snow hits. We'll set up a training fence in the watering area in the fall and make sure that it's incredibly hot. At least 9 kV (9,000 volts) will give the animals a reason to not want to push fences. (It similarly trains us to be a lot more respectful when working with our fences.) In order to get our fences that hot, we will take our best fencer and use it on short fences. If necessary we will put two fencers in the watering area. By doing this the cattle are very unlikely to even bother with any of our fences in the winter.

With that point in mind, we will also keep a two strand hot fence near the water throughout the winter. This can often be enough to remind the animals throughout the winter that touching fences is not a very good idea. If you are using snow for water I'd recommend putting an educational fence somewhere else that there might be a bit of pressure. A mineral feeder or something of that nature would work well for this.

We build this fence with high tensile or barbed wire, as there is often a bit of pressure when cattle get pushy in the watering area. For this fence, one of the wires works as a ground and the other wire is hot. When we have cow calf pairs the bottom one will be hot in order to keep the calves educated. The top wire is then attached to a ground rod, that if near a dugout we will have put right through the water or ice and into the mud to allow for good circulation of the current. Because the ground wire is now above the snow, the second wire will be a lot hotter than through just a ground rod alone. By having a good educational fence, our animals are a lot less likely to try testing the one wire cross fences that are set up in our fields. →



Photo by Amber Kenyon

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When we set up our cross fences we always do our best to ensure that the animals have no reason to want to try to reach across the polywire. We set up our next fence far enough away from the next set of bales, swaths, or bunches to reduce any temptation that the animals might have to get an early bite of the next meal. We generally use pig tail posts in the ground, but if using posts in the bales, we make sure that they are long enough to keep the cattle from reaching underneath or over top. Eight foot posts will usually do the trick. When swath grazing we will run our fences parallel to the swaths and plan our end posts for this. This ensures that there is no reason for the animals to test the fence.

We also make sure to put up our second cross fence immediately after moving our animals to the next piece. If you don't, the excited and hungry animals are almost guaranteed to try pushing the current fence while you're trying to get the next one set up. We use two polywire fences with pigtail posts in a series and then leapfrog across the field. By putting up the second fence right after having moved the animals, we can move right away when we show up to move them the next time around.

When we go to move our cattle we always try to avoid moving them at night. This goes for both summer and winter. There have been too many times (we consider even once too many times) that we have come home late, needing to move animals in the dark and after taking down a fence, or opening a gate, the animals rush in and don't see posts or other fences. Something almost always goes wrong when trying to move in the dark. In the winter this is one of our hardest rules to follow,

as in our area we are very limited on daylight hours. When we do have to move in the dark, we roll out a hay bale or give the animals some other 'treat' in order to distract them while we take down fences or open gates. By doing this the animals are a lot calmer when going into the new paddock.

These are just a few of things that we do at Greener Pastures Ranching to try to limit the number of wrecks that we might possibly experience throughout the winter. I recommend doing some internet research on what other producers might be doing to limit their winter headaches. Snowshoeing is a lot more enjoyable when you're doing it to move fences, rather than doing it because you need to chase after the herd of stray cows that decided it was a good idea to push your fence.

Happy grazing!

Amber

Amber Kenyon
Greener Pastures Ranching Ltd.
akenyon@greenerpasturesranching.com



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| - Grazing Management | - Swath Grazing/Bale Grazing |

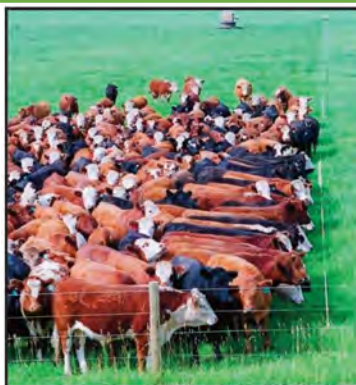
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Beef Production Without Use of Antibiotic Growth Promoters

As a result of the increased concern about the development of bacterial populations resistant to therapeutic use of antibiotics, more cow-calf and feedlot operations are exploring cattle production without the use of antibiotic growth promoters (AGP).

Such AGP-free approaches are further driven by increased consumer demand for antibiotic-free beef in both the retail and restaurant industries. In the U.S., many retailers offering such niche-market products are forced to get meat from overseas, citing that there is not enough AGP-free beef produced in the U.S. to meet demand. This would seem to provide a tremendous opportunity for beef producers in the U.S.

There are still many roadblocks that stand in the way of the “would-be” AGP-free producer. Most important is the concern that in order to maintain animal health through to market weight, AGP-free beef cattle must be fed diets with higher forage and lower concentrate levels.

The associated changes in feed cost and feed formulations, coupled with losses in performance and production efficiency, may make AGP-free beef production price-prohibitive.

However, a quick review of available technologies suggests it is possible to produce beef without antibiotics while maintaining standard dietary concentrate levels and the performance associated with industry-wide practices in the beef cattle industry.

The development of effective AGP replacement programs will most likely not be simple and will require strategic programs that result in changes in feed formulation, the use of non-antibiotic feed supplements, and changes in biosecurity and management practices. Several aspects of nutrition and supplementation strategies are becoming useful in this respect.

Mineral management: Strengthening the immune system

Resistance to disease and optimal function of the immune system are highly dependent on a supply of nutrients. Important nutrients include sufficient protein, energy and micronutrients.

As a result, the goal of AGP-free production is to strategically use functional nutrient forms to support the animal immune system at all stages of life. Specific trace mineral supplementation strategies can be used as functional tools to help boost immune function and disease resistance.

Simply put, healthy animals do not need antibiotics if the immune function is appropriately adapted to protect the animal. A solid nutritional foundation for the animal's optimal immune function requires particular focus on mineral management and gut health, and these can be delivered to the animal in a tailored feeding program.

Trace minerals are particularly important to the function and regulations of the immune system. As a result, appropriate mineral nutrition is critical to optimal immune function.

Unfortunately, it is difficult to ensure that cattle consume sufficient minerals. This is due to the fact that inorganic mineral salts, the form in which they are most often fed, tend

to interact with each other in the diet and with other minerals in the water supply, ultimately making the inorganic minerals less available to the animal.

Organic minerals can be used to ensure the immune system is adequately supplied with trace minerals, which is why they are becoming increasingly important tools for improving the health of challenged feedlot cattle.

By being complexed with organic molecules, mineral preparations are protected from adverse interaction in the gut, making them more bioavailable to the animal.

The latest research in this area suggests these alternative forms of minerals may also prevent unintended oxidative damage to animal tissues associated with inorganic mineral salts, resulting in other benefits to animal health, performance and product quality.

Gut health management: Creating proper balance for improved gut health

Another central objective of a proper nutritional foundation for AGP-free beef production is to ensure optimal gut health. The two fundamentals of gut health in cattle are rumen functionality and microbial balance. →



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Rumen functionality

Ensuring a functional rumen is critical to the digestion of feed and to providing energy and high-quality protein to the animal. Any nutritional strategies that adversely affect rumen function can seriously influence production efficiency and animal health.

Low levels and prophylactic antibiotic applications have been used as rumen modifiers for decades to improve efficiency, maintain health and regulate rumen function.

However, recent research has shown there are alternative strategies that can be used to effectively manipulate rumen function without antibiotics.

One of these strategies is the use of direct-fed microbials. These are live organisms supplemented in the feed to modify the fermentation processes in the rumen and to support beneficial microbial population in the gastrointestinal tract.

Specific strains of yeast cultures are particularly effective at maintaining a stable rumen pH, enhancing the digestion of feed and improving the efficiency of microbial protein production. This is critical when feeding the typical high-energy commercial feedlot diets.

Another strategy for manipulating rumen function is the use of enzymes as tools for modifying ruminal bacterial populations and overall rumen function. These generally require diet-specific applications but are often as effective as antibiotics as tools for manipulating microbial activities.

Research is also ongoing on the use of specific plant-derived compounds and essential oils to beneficially mitigate rumen function.

Again, the selective activity of many of these materials can be as effective as AGPs and may be used to enhance specific types of antimicrobial activities and changes in ruminal microbial populations.

Gastrointestinal balance

There is a fine balance in the intestine between beneficial and pathogenic organisms. When this balance is disturbed, opportunistic bacterial infections in the intestine can wreak havoc on the efficiency of digestion and absorption of feed.

Antibiotics have traditionally been used sub-therapeutically or in prophylactic strategies to control potentially pathogenic gut bacteria in an attempt to prevent intestinal infections. These are particularly important in stressed cattle.

However, these antibiotics do not necessarily differentiate between pathogenic bacteria and the beneficial bacteria essential for the proper function of the intestine. The results can compromise normal intestinal balance and the long-term health and performance of the animal.

Antibiotic-free strategies help address such issues by supporting a healthy microbial population of bacteria in the gastrointestinal tract. Prebiotic technologies, such as associated supplements containing specific fractions from yeast cell wall, are designed to do just that.

By supporting populations of beneficial micro-organisms, preventing colonization by pathogens and modulating immune function, these supplements have been shown in numerous studies to significantly improve animal health and performance in animals maintained on AGP-free programs.

Building the nutritional foundation of AGP-free production: A tailored feeding program

The foundation for an effective AGP-free program can be built using the appropriate application of existing nutrition strategies such as those developed with organic trace minerals, direct-fed microbials, prebiotics and enzymes.

However, these nutritional technologies must be delivered to the animal properly through a tailored and targeted feeding program. The timing of each of the interventions is paramount to their success.

More research has validated these approaches. A recent trial examined the use of one such nutritional program for replacing the traditional use of Monensin and Tylosin in feedlot rations.

While such programs require specific attention to feed formulation and management, they provide alternative, cost-effective feeding strategies that produce similar feedlot performance and carcass composition when compared to traditional AGP programs.

Such programs also improve water-holding capacity of the resulting meat products, leading to greater overall consumer acceptance.

It is clear from this work that AGP-free beef production is achievable through targeted support of the immune system and establishment of optimal gut health without antimicrobial supplementation.

These types of strategies will provide the tools needed to effectively introduce AGP-free programs in beef production systems.

Reference: Dr. Karl Dawson, vice president and chief scientific officer at Alltech. Additional references omitted due to limited space, but are available upon request.

By Vaughn Holder, Beef Specialist, Alltech

Originally published in Progressive Cattleman, August 2015.



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Have You Considered All Your Costs in Backgrounding?



High forage prices this summer and fall have predominated farm discussions at coffee shops, auction markets and social media outlets the last few months. At this time of year the profitability of backgrounding calves also comes in to question. Hay is usually a major component of backgrounding rations. Focusing on just the feed costs can give the impression that backgrounding will be economically feasible this fall. While feed costs are a major part of any production system they are certainly not the only ones. Numerous other costs are involved and risk management has to be considered as well.

Using an example with current feeder prices can illustrate a cost of production scenario for a backgrounding operation. The example involves taking 6 weight steers to 8 weights gaining about 2 lbs/day. Last Friday's Weekly Livestock Market Review indicated that steers averaging 650 lbs in central Alberta sold for an average of \$263/cwt for a total cost of \$1710/head. 850 lb steers averaged \$243/cwt for a \$2066 value. Assuming the price on 8 weights holds, the profit potential is \$356/head before expenses. Now let's look at all the costs.

The 2 lbs/day gain will likely take about 20 lbs. of feed per day consisting of 6 lbs of barley and 14 lbs of hay, each component averaging 10¢/lb. A 100 day feeding period will cost approximately \$200, leaving \$156/head profit potential. If feed is the only cost considered, this leaves a healthy profit even with strong hay prices. Other costs come into play, however. Yardage can run about 50 cents/head/day which leaves \$106. A 1% death loss will pull an additional \$17 out of the mix. Carrying cost at 5% on feeders drags the profit down another \$23/head. Commissions will reduce the net another \$22/head leaving \$44/head. Trucking, check-offs and brand inspection can easily add \$14/head. Total

expenses add up to about \$326 leaving a \$30 margin. Feed costs could amount to 61% of total costs for a typical backgrounding operation.

The \$30 margin is dependent on 8 weight steers staying at \$243/cwt. Risk management is a cost that is difficult to calculate. As of Oct 15th the Western Livestock Price Insurance Program for feeders will guarantee a price of only \$208/cwt for a premium cost of \$54/head leaving a negative \$24/head margin if one chooses to go that route.

The breakeven price for the example cited would be \$240/cwt for 850 lb steers. Basically, the WLPPI will only mitigate a price wreck and should not be looked upon as a profit centre in this scenario. The profit would have to come from a bullish market for feeders going forward.

Knowing all cost will go a long way in managing those costs. There may be ways of reducing or even eliminating some costs to help generate profit or, alternatively, decide not to participate in a money losing proposition.

If you have any questions regarding farm management, give us a call at the Ag-Info Centre. Our phone number is **310-FARM (3276)**.

*Ted Nibourg, B.Sc.Ag, M.Ed.,
Farm Business Management Specialist, Ag-Info Centre*

Alberta Ag-Info Centre

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Forage & Grazing Points to Ponder

By Albert Kuipers,
Forage & Grazing Specialist

After the “Grazing for Dollars Workshop” in Buck Lake long time GWFA Member and friend, Glenn Mainland, and I had an email conversation I considered to be of value to share. Here’s what transpired:

Hello Albert,

At the meeting on pastures last week someone enquired about using harrows on the pastures. You responded that it was not a good idea since they tended to lift the manure up onto the plants rather than leaving it in contact with the ground. I would generally agree with you – depending a bit on the nature of the harrow – rigid or flexible.

As you can see from my photos we use a 12ft wide chain harrow, which is very flexible. Many years ago one of the GWFA folk demonstrated a chain harrow with the addition of cut tires behind it. I made up this model. Had a tough time slicing the tires in half using an angle grinder. Those steel wires in the tread can eat up grinding wheels very quickly! I believe that folks like KalTire had a gadget a bit like a can opener which would slice the tire.

Any way, this set up is really good. I wouldn’t be without it now. As soon as the critters are off pasture we run over it. The chains break up the shit into maybe tennis ball sizes, and then the tires take it down to pea size. The change from the cow pats, generating isolated very rich clumps of grass – which the critters are not keen to eat – to the very wide distribution really does help the pastures.

I was interested in your presentations. When I took over this quarter the pastures were in poor shape. Lots of rocks – and bare spots. I played around with some trials of artificial fertilizer on the bare areas, without great success. Gathering up rocks – I developed a routine of filling the tractor bucket each day and dumping them in the creek. This cleared land and built



Photo Credits: Glenn Mainland

a



firm water crossing.

Then I winter fed by rolling out bales. This spread manure all over the fields and was a good start for the chain harrows.

The combination has made an incredible difference to the pastures. Haven’t put any artificial fertilizer on the pastures, critters recycling works wonders!

Glenn

Hi Glenn,

Thank you for your input. I’d say the chain link harrows with the tires would be more effective than most other harrows. It seems I vaguely remember such discussions many years ago at a GWFA event. I think the timing of harrowing that you use might be the key to your success using harrows. What you’re doing is more like adding a little more “animal” impact right after a grazing period. I can see the logic in that practice.

I should have maybe asked about the timing when asked the question about harrowing. When most people ask about harrowing they’re talking about harrowing in spring to break up cow pies from winter and the previous grazing season. That’s the practice I found to be not effective enough to warrant the costs of harrowing.

Albert

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What's the Scoop with POOP?

Manure from the back end of a cow is a great indicator of the health of the rumen and intestines. Manure of healthy, productive cows should have a stacked appearance with “pudding like consistency.” Evaluating the manure piles in a pasture or feeding areas can provide huge clues into the conditions within the rumen and the quality, or lack thereof, of your feed stuffs.

Producers are typically aware that “loose” manure can be an indicator of excess protein in a ration, but digging a ‘little deeper’ we can use it to evaluate the health of the cow. Making changes to the ration based on manure consistency, color and content can increase milk production, improve efficient use of feed and leave us with a happy cow!

The 3 C's of Manure Evaluation - Color, Consistency and Content:

Color:

Manure color is influenced by forage in the ration, bile concentration and passage rate. Beef cows, when grazing fresh, lush forage in the summer have manure that has a dark green color. When they change to a typical hay diet in the winter period that color changes to an olive-green-brown color.

On the other end of the spectrum, rations with excess grain will have a yellow-olive-gray color from the high concentration of grain in the ration. Grey is often an indicator of diarrhea.

Dark brown, or reddish manure indicates the presence of blood, which is never a good thing! The reason for this can be from hemorrhaging of the intestinal wall, coccidiosis, and mycotoxins.

A color of light green or yellow diarrhea can be an indicator of a bacterial infection such as salmonella. A pale white color on the surface of dried manure can be from undigested starch from poor feed utilization. That



Photo Credits: Kristen Ritson-Bennett

can be due to feed processing (or lack thereof) or high passage rate.

Consistency:

Consistency is largely related to the water content, including feed moisture and access to free choice water. It is also an indicator of passage rate, which means how long it takes for feedstuffs to pass from front to back. Porridge, or pudding like consistency with a pile that stacks about 1-2 inches is a good indication of ideal passage rate and water content.

The presence of diarrhea can be the result of many things: a high level of hindgut fermentation and acid production (excess grain), dramatic changes to the feed ration, excess protein, bacterial or viral infections and parasites. When we see manure that is firmer in appearance it can be a suggestion that the cattle do not have adequate access to water, or there is inadequate levels of protein in the diet. When I see stools that are too loose it is likely from 2 things: Excess protein or high pas-

sage rate.

I often encourage producers to add some fiber, like straw or hay to slow down the passage rate and allow the rumen to extract more nutrients from the feed. When we have a fast passage rate, the fermentation takes place in the hindgut, where there is very poor to no absorption of nutrients. The primary location for absorption of required nutrients takes place in the rumen. If it is due to excess protein, rebalance your rations. Wasting protein is wasting dollars.

This publication is made possible by funding from Alberta Agriculture & Forestry & Alberta Environment and Parks via the Agriculture Opportunities Fund (AOF).



General Inquiries:

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or Email: faye@areca.ab.ca



Content:

When looking at fecal material we should see a very uniform dispersion of particles. If not, there could be poor utilization of nutrients and poor digestion. Undigested grain, or long stems (greater than 0.5 inches) can be a result of poor rumen fermentation or high feed passage rate....which means your lovely cows are not getting the nutrient potential out of the feed.

When there is a lack of effective fiber in the ration the rumen mat will not form properly. This rumen mat is essential to keep the contents in the rumen long enough to be fermented properly and maintain a stable rumen pH.

The reason we see long stems in the manure when the fibre mat is not properly formed is because the microbes that break down fibre are negatively affected by a low pH. So what to do?

You need to slow down the passage rate by putting more fiber into the ration. An addition of straw into the ration can almost always slow down passage. It increases saliva production during rumination, which also buffers the gut and keeps the pH stable. Other contents in the feed such as undigested grain can be an indication of poor grain processing. Generally all grains need to be processed to some degree to give the microbes in the rumen access to the starch.

Have you ever looked close enough to see mucus in the manure? Sometimes this can be an indicator of gut inflammation and low pH, most likely from excess hindgut fermentation from a high grain ration. Bubbles? This can

also be a sign of excess hindgut fermentation and excess gas production. Overall, a good rule of thumb in manure that is shiny, loose and has bubbles is most likely a result of rapid drop in pH in the rumen which is also known as acidosis.

So now you know the scoop with poop! Any questions please feel free to give me a call! I am willing to bet that the next time you step in a cow pie, you will use it as a learning experience!

Kristen Ritson-Bennett

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Farmers' Advocate Office Updating Key Resources

The Farmers' Advocate Office (FAO) is updating some important resources for Albertan landowners. For nearly 20 years, the FAO's *Pipelines in Alberta*, *Negotiating Surface Rights*, and *Seismic Operation and Landowners Rights* have been providing Alberta farmers and ranchers with valuable information on property rights.

Updates to the documents have been done on an on-going basis over the years, but it is time for a larger overhaul. "The guides have always been living, breathing documents, but there has been a number of significant changes over the past few years, including the creation of the Alberta Energy Regulator in 2012" states Jeana Les, research and communications specialist for the FAO. The hope is to have the updated documents ready for distribution in spring 2016.

The current documents are available digitally at www.farmersadvocate.gov.ab.ca. As in the past, print copies will be available, but the FAO is also exploring alternative delivery models. Watch Facebook (Farmers' Advocate Office) and Twitter (@fao_alberta) for the release of the documents in spring 2016.

For more information, please call 780-427-7956 or email jeana.les@gov.ab.ca.



Photo credit: Consort Alberta iGEM 2013 web page



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