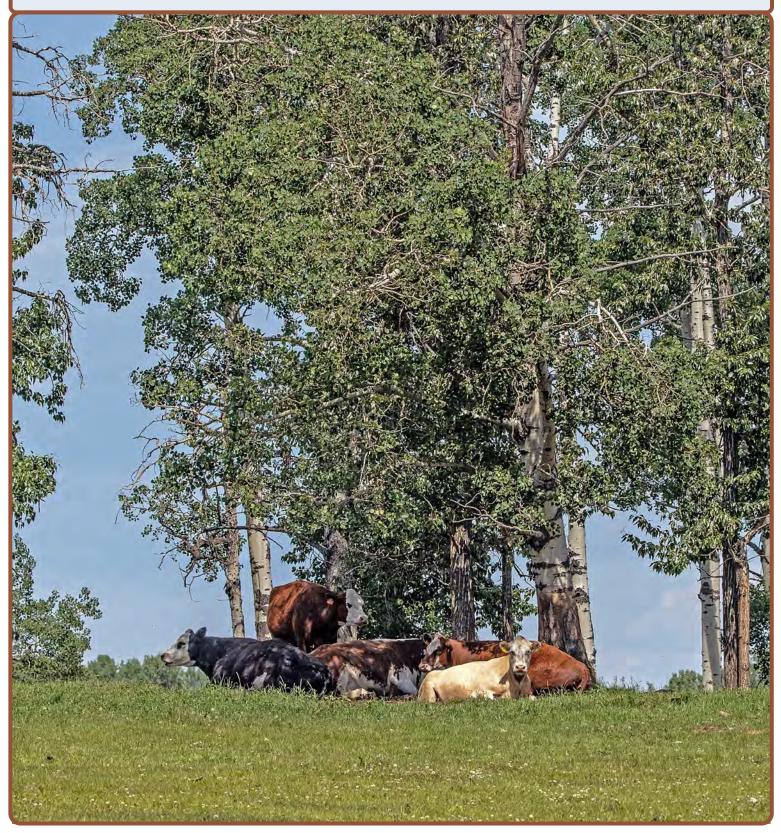


The Blade

Monthly Newsletter of the **Grey Wooded Forage Association**

JUNE 2021



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The Grey Wooded Forage Association was established in 1984 to help forage and livestock producers develop sound and sustainable strategies within their operations. Our efforts are made possible with support from the Province of Alberta and through membership in the Agricultural Research and Extension Association of Alberta.

Contact us:

Box 1448 5039-45 Street, Rocky Mtn. House, AB. T4T 1B1 403-844-2645 www.greywoodedforageassociation.com

Carolyn: office@greywoodedforageassociation.com Greg: field@greywoodedforageassociation.com

Digital subscriptions are free.
Please call or email to learn more.

Published by: Brenda Kossowan Cover Photo: Brenda Kossowan









SAVE THE DATES

Date	Event	Details
July 13, 15, & 20	Alberta Lamb Producers Town Hall	See Poster on Page 11
December 13-15, 2022	Western Canadian Conference on Soil Health and Grazing	See Poster on Page 11

Please let us know if you have an event coming up in August or later that we can publicize on this page.

Send details to Carolyn Jones, office@greywoodedforageassociation.com

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Business office report

By Carolyn Jones, business manager

ello. My name is Carolyn Jones. I am the new Business Manager for The Grey Wooded Forage Association. I look forward to working closely with the Grey Wooded Forage Association team to continue the excellent work that has been done by this group.

I have been involved in farming and agriculture in many aspects over my life, with a passion for

sustainable agriculture. I was privileged to be tasked with horse care and cattle herding growing up in Central Alberta. My spare time was spent running through the pastures, eating new grass shoots, and exploring the abundance of nature. It was an incredible time. My paternal grandmother was born on the wagon trail to homestead in what is now Central Alberta from East Central United States. My maternal grandparents were part of the original group who built the Hand Hills Lake Community Centre. I grew up in the Club House kitchen, volunteering at events that grew the community. I experienced the rewards of forming relationships working alongside family and others from the community: Great food, great people, great time. I look forward to improving my land stewardship practices through the amazing resources of the GWFA, and to get to work with members of my new community, The Grey Wooded Forage Association.

With the election of a new board at the AGM on June 10th, a new year begins. Chair Dallas Jensen welcomed three new acclaimed GWFA Board members; Greg Campkin, Grant Smith, and Ken Trout. It's an exciting time for the Grey Wooded Forage Association Board, with new ideas and energy flowing. Summer is proving to be busy for the GWFA Board of Directors, with the Hay Raffle ready to kick off. There is a lot of excitement and anticipation for the Hay Raffle. We are convinced the tickets will go fast! You will hear from us about the programs and services offered by GWFA, to chat about what new services we could implement to serve our members better and to build our membership base. We want to make sure you know what services we have available, and we want you to let us know how we can serve you better.



I can't wait to be out attending events and meeting GWFA members in person! The Hay Raffle draw event is one we are all greatly anticipating. Until then, I am only a phone call away and have a fresh cup of coffee for you when you stop by the office.

A note from the publisher:

Operational changes at GWFA enable us to offer a firm commitment to regular publishing of *The Blade* on the first Friday of every month, starting with the September edition.

This promise will require a commitment from our sponsors, advertisers and contributors as well.

Copy for July is now due, with all material for the August edition due on Wednesday, July 14. From that point on, copy for each edition will be due on the second Wednesday of each month.

We have set out a schedule of themes for upcoming issues of The Blade, which will be posted in advance and shared with regular contributors.

Suggested themes for the next three months:

July: Silaging

August: Riparian and environmental health

September: Weaning

As always, *The Blade* encourages producers to send in their own high-resolution photos for consideration in the newsletter. Contributors including Jacquie Turuk of Leslieville and Ron Richardson of Olds have provided some great images from their livestock operations and more are always welcome. Also, please let Carolyn know if you run across an article or an idea that you believe has a place in this newsletter.

-Brenda K



GWFA SUMMER TECHNICIAN CASSANDRA DOOLAEGE



Please join us in offering a hearty welcome to "Cassie" Doolaege, who will be with us until Labour Day to help out in the field and in the office. Raise on a mixed farm near Castor, Cassie brings a a truckload of talent arising from her skills as a rancher, hockey player and aspiring scientist. She convocated from the University of Alberta in spring with a Bachelor of Science degree in biochemistry and hopes to enter a Masters program in environmental sciences and livestock production.

Cassie's position is partially funded through the federal government's Canada Summer Jobs Program. Thanks go to Yellowhead MP Gerald Soroka for supporting our application.



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Over 20 Years of Riparian and Ecological Enhancement Projects and Now More Funding Available

For more than 20 years, Mountain View County, in partnership with the Alberta Conservation Association, has delivered funding for riparian and ecologically sensitive area projects. And for the last 6 years, there have been opportunities for wetland enhancements and marginal land improvements through ALUS Canada.

Eligible projects include:

- Riparian & Sensitive Area Fencing
- Off-site watering systems
- Creek crossings
- Buffers for wetland and stream preservation

For information or applications contact:

Lorelee Grattidge 403-335-3311 ext 163 ag@mvcounty.com







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Inside ARECA

By Alan Hall, Executive Director, Agriculture Research and Extension Council of Alberta



Hi everyone.

It sure is good to see summer moving in!

Welcome aboard Carolyn! We are all looking forward to working with you as Grey Wooded Forage Association continues to serve their members. GWFA is a great organization providing excellent support to farmers and ranchers in west central Alberta.

All the best in your future Brenda. Good to see that you will be staying on, albeit in a reduced role. Your know-how and abilities around com-

municating good information is a very valuable contribution to those using the services and expertise of your Association. Looking forward to our trails still crossing.

Compliments to everyone for your successful AGM and welcome to your new Board of Directors. Having a strong Board coupled with great people like Greg, Brenda and now Carolyn bodes well for the coming years.

We have teamed up with Grey Wooded Forage Association and many of the other Associations in making available some top-notch livestock and crop people who you can tap into at no cost. These folks all have multiple years of experience in working with farmers and ranchers to bring excellent information and problem solving support to individual producers.

Barry Yaremcio has done a lot of work with the cow calf and feedlot sectors around production practices, ration formulation, feeding systems and cattle nutrition, and finding those sweet spots for profitability. His training, experience and years of working with cattle folks has resulted in his being a go to person for expertise and solutions. Barry has a good handle on sheep, bison and some of the other ruminant livestock as well.

Neil Whatley and Bill Chapman each have tremendous knowledge, experience and connections in the crop, agronomy, crop nutrition and crop protection worlds. They are well hooked up with the latest research and technology on many fronts: Great people to utilize when you get the chance to. If you are contemplating growing a crop that you have not grown previously, either Bill or Neil can help sort out a good approach to taking it on.

Grant Lastiwka is a walking forage and soil health encyclopedia! His extensive workings with producers over the years on grazing, overwintering cattle, hay/silage/forage seed production, and improving our soils have resulted in Grant becoming a go-to person in the eyes of many in the farming and ranching business.

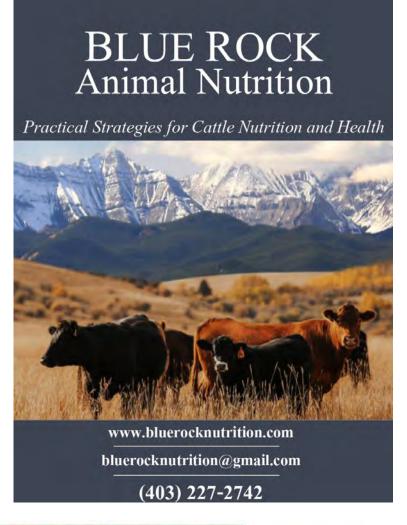
Ted Nibourg is a whiz when it comes to overall farm management and farm economics. He has a knack of helping individual farmers figure out best options for profitability and managing risk. He is on top of custom rates, land rentals, costs and returns and other management angles that over the years have helped many.

These gentlemen are all readily available to you for one-on-one confidential support. Your business is your business, hence the confidentiality. We have arranged sufficient financing so that there will be no cost should you use their services over the coming year.

To get in touch with any of them, just give Greg Paranich a call at Grey Wooded Forage Association and he will line it up.

With things now opening up after our past 18 months dealing with pestilence, perhaps we will see you at one of the upcoming events and activities that Grey Wooded Forage Association puts on. I look forward to that!

√









ALBERTA FORAGE INDUSTRY NETWORK

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Revitalization of the Alberta Certified Weed Free Forage Program

Submitted by the Alberta Invasive Species Council

Going haywire over contaminated hay?

Contaminated hay is one means by which invasive plants are spread. Invasive species such as terrestrial invasive plants are detrimental to Alberta's economy and environment. They degrade natural areas, decrease biodiversity, and reduce food and habitat for wildlife. Economically, they cost Alberta an estimated \$1 billion each year.

To address this, in 2000, Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the North American Invasive Weed Management Association to bring the Certified Weed Free Forage program online in Alberta. While demand for these products remains high, there has been dwindling participation in the program, which is largely attributed to lack of awareness of the program itself.

That's where we come in! Established in 2006 as a non-profit organization, the Alberta Invasive Species Council (AISC) protects the province against the destructive impacts of invasive species. Our most recent initiative is the revitalization of the Alberta Certified Weed Free Forage program and we are very grateful to have received funding from the Canadian Agricultural Partnership to launch this initiative. Our goal is to promote this program to potential buyers and help producers sell their Certified Weed Free Forage, which will support farming and ranching communities as well as limit the spread of invasive species in our province.

Acre-ing to hear more?

This is the only program in North America that provides land managers with assurance that noxious weeds will not be spread though the movement of forage, hay, mulch or gravel brought in to a property! Forage producers and Weed Inspectors with authority under the Weed Control Act will work together to inspect fields and certify the forage as weed free:

- Inspections must be conducted by a Certified Weed Free Forage Inspector within 10 days of harvest. If the crop is not cut within 10 days, a new inspection must be conducted.
- Inspectors may certify all or a portion of a field as 'weed free'.
- Invasive species may be present in a field certified as weed free if there are no propagative plant parts (e.g., flowers, seed heads,

root fragments) present.

 Participation by municipalities in this program is voluntary. If you produce forage in a municipality that is not participating in the program, but you are interested in having an inspection conducted, please contact the AISC and we will work to find a solution

The AISC intends to maintain a publicly available list of producer contact information for producers with inventory of Certified Weed Free Forage on our website. Please let the AISC know if you would like to be added to that list.

For information on how to get your field inspected, contact your local <u>Agriculture Fieldmen</u> or the <u>AISC</u>. Help us protect Alberta from the harmful impacts of invasive species by spreading the word (not the plant!) about Alberta's Weed Free Forage program! For more information visit the AISC's website: <u>abinvasives.ca</u>, phone: 587 999 0954 or email: <u>info@abinvasives.ca</u>Thank you very <u>mulch!</u>



Shock Chlorination Tank Rental

Available to Clearwater County landowners

\$35.00/ day with a \$50.00 deposit

When should I shock chlorinate my well?

- Immediately after installing a new well
- Whenever repair work is done on your well, pump or distribution system
- Following contamination by flood water or any change in water clarity, color, or taste
- When lab tests show coliform bacteria in your well water
- Every year for maintenance, to prevent biofouling



For more information or to book the tank, call Agriculture and Community Services at 403-845-4444





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Potential impact of refusing access to OWA

Publisher's note:

The following article was submitted by the Orphan Well Association through an agreement with members of the Agricultural Research and Extension Council of Alberta. It is the third and final article in a series provided as information to producers and landowners who are affected by oilfield activity on their properties.

This article was written as a collaboration between the Orphan Well Association and Farmer's Advocate Office with input from the Land and Property Rights Tribunal. We thank all participating parties involved.

The Orphan Well Association (OWA) has fostered great relationships with landowners on sites where they execute work. However, occasionally, a few landowners feel that by restricting access to the OWA, they may create leverage to obtain overdue surface lease payments from defunct companies or the Land and Property Rights Tribunal (formerly, the Surface Rights Board). In fact, by refusing access to the OWA, landowners may be harming their ability to obtain payments and/or reduce the amount of payment they may ultimately receive. Let's look into this issue a little further.

What Happens When A Company Fails To Make Surface Rental Payments?

When a company fails to make annual lease payments, landowners may apply to the Tribunal to recover the missed payments by submitting a *Recovery of Compensation Application* under section 36 of the *Surface Rights Act (SRA)*. After a complete application is received and the Tribunal is satisfied with the non-payment, the Tribunal will demand

payment from the operator and any working interest participants (WIPs) identified and provide a deadline to comply. Following that, one of two scenarios play out.

If the operator or WIP responds within the deadline and provides proof of payment to the Tribunal, no further review of the application is necessary.

If the operator or WIP does not make payment within the deadline, a panel of the Tribunal will consider the application and any evidence provided by the parties in a hearing by written submissions. Following that, the Tribunal will issue a Decision and/or a Direction to Pay Order where it may direct the Minister to pay to the landowner the full amount claimed or a reduced amount. The Tribunal may also suspend and terminate the operator's rights to enter the site, other than for required maintenance or reclamation purposes.

Please Note: Payments directed by the Tribunal and paid by the Minister come from provincial tax dollars and become a debt owing to the Crown from the operator and any identified WIPs.

It's important to note that this does not terminate the lease or the operator's associated responsibilities for decommissioning (also known as abandonment) and reclamation. Landowners may claim missed lease payments for subsequent years by submitting a *Returning Recovery of Compensation Application* with the Tribunal until a reclamation certification has been formally issued.

How Do Sites End Up In The Orphan Well Program?

Once companies stop making annual surface lease payments, as outlined above, there is a good chance that they are struggling to survive. Unfortunately, in Alberta, over the past

(continued on next page)



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Orphan Well Association (continued from previous page)

several years many oil and gas producers have failed.

When this happens, their wells, pipelines, and facilities often end up in the Orphan Well program. For a site to be designated an Orphan, the Alberta Energy Regulator (AER) must first conduct a thorough review to determine that no responsible party remains. After this review the AER provides the OWA regulatory authority to deal with the site.

Insolvency, Bankruptcy, Receivership, and Inactive

These terms are thrown around a lot, and many landowners find themselves wondering what exactly these terms mean. If the operator on your land is struggling financially, you may have received a letter regarding your surface lease. Let us break it down so you know what's going on:

It is possible that the well on your land has simply been shutin and is no longer producing (called inactive). In these cases, the company is still viable, and you should continue to receive your rental payment.

A struggling company may enter into what is known as *Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act* or CCAA. At this stage, the company still exists and are attempting to restructure and survive. If CCAA is unsuccessful, companies may become insolvent and fall into bankruptcy.

Bankruptcy is a federally regulated process that may result in a court-appointed receiver taking over the company and selling off assets to pay back creditors. At this stage rental payments will likely cease and as a landowner you would need to file for rental payments from the Land and Property Rights Tribunal.

In some cases, the lease and infrastructure may be sold. This typically happens when the well is still producing or considered to be an asset. In these situations, landowners should receive notice of the sale (but may not). The new owner would have an obligation to pay rentals. As a landowner, it is important to contact the new company and ensure the information on their file is correct, so you continue to receive rental payments going forward.

Wells and facilities that are no longer viable will not sell through the receivership and may ultimately come into the orphan well program or become the responsibility of a WIP that may hold an interest in the well. This process can take several years and can leave landowners frustrated as surface lease payments are not typically paid while sites are in receiverships and must be applied for from the Tribunal. If the wells or facilities on your land have become orphan, you will receive a letter from the OWA. You may also go onto the OWA website to see if any of the wells on your land are listed within the inventory.

(Further info and website links can be found at the end of this article.)

Can Landowners Deny Access To A Wellsite?

When an operator has missed or reduced an annual lease payment or where the well has become orphaned, landowners often seek clarification on whether they can refuse access to their land. Unfortunately, denying access will not help your situation or speed up the payment process. The best thing to do in this situation is to apply to the Tribunal for payment as soon as possible.

When it comes to the abandonment or reclamation of a wellsite, facility or pipeline on your land associated with a defunct operator, several other parties may legally enter the site. They include the Alberta Energy Regulator, the Orphan Well Association and any WIPs.

Denying access to the AER, OWA, or WIPs may result in the Tribunal stopping all future payments in accordance with Section 36 (8) of the SRA. This section states "The Board may direct the Minister not to make any further payments due to the person if it considers that the person entitled to receive them is refusing access for operations, abandonment or reclamation allowed by law".

The Orphan Well Association

The Orphan Well Association is a not-for-profit organization created from a joint industry and government initiative to manage the abandonment and reclamation of upstream oil and gas "orphans" in Alberta. Orphans are oil or gas wells, pipelines, facilities or associated sites left behind by a defunct company and have been legally deemed as orphans by the AER. The OWA operates under the delegated legal authority of the AER, with funding from the oil and gas industry. This includes the repayable loans provided by the Provincial and Federal Government you may have heard about.

The OWA has the legal authority to access all private and public lands in Alberta to suspend or decommission orphaned oil and gas assets, including wells, pipelines, facilities and associated infrastructure. This authority is based on statutes contained within the *Oil and Gas Conservation Act*. The Association is further authorized to access any Specified Lands for reclamation and remediation under the authority of the *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act*.

The OWA has a well-earned reputation of working cooperatively with landowners; however, they have been denied access in rare cases. In these cases, the OWA informs the Tribunal and/or the Farmers Advocate, and any potential for surface lease payments from the Tribunal may be suspended or denied until access is granted. The OWA can also seek law enforcement support for access if they feel public safety is at risk or in other cases they simply bypass the site and move on to other areas. This may mean that bypassed sites remain on the land for prolonged periods.

It's also important to know that the OWA does not take the place of the former operator and does not hold any surface lease or license for the well or infrastructure. Therefore, the OWA is unable to compensate landowners for unpaid surface lease payments from defunct companies. So, what can landowners do?

While it may seem in your best interest to refuse access to your land, doing so will only impact future work and will not get you the compensation you're looking for.

(continued on next page)

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Orphan Well Association (continued from previous page)

Working Together

It's important to note that the OWA will work alongside landowners and communicate openly about the process and timelines in place. Stakeholders will also be engaged during the decommissioning and reclamation process.

Keep in mind that the OWA only receives sites that were owned completely (i.e., 100%) by the defunct company. The OWA will then contact landowners and let them know the well site has been designated an orphan.

The OWA is not responsible for rental payments, only the care, management, decommissioning and reclamation of the site.

Taking Care of Landowners

Although the OWA requires access to sites year-round, it's important to know that they will do their best to communicate openly with landowners before accessing their land. They will also consider landowners' perspectives and concerns but may not be able to delay work and therefore some landowners may be impacted minimally. Again, these impacts should be documented and provided to the Tribunal as part of the application.

Interested in learning more?

For additional information about applying to the Tribunal for missed payments under a Surface Lease or Compensation Order, please visit www.alberta.ca/surface-rights-board.aspx. For additional information on the Farmers Advocate, please visit https://www.alberta.ca/farmers-advocate-office.aspx

For additional information on the Alberta Energy Regulator, please contact inquiries@aer.ca

For additional information on the Orphan Well Association, please visit https://www.orphanwell.ca/





NEW LOOK — SAME PRICE PROTECTION THAT WORKS!

The Western Livestock Price Insurance Program is now Livestock Price Insurance (LPI).

LPI is a risk management tool that provides beef producers the ability to manage price risk. The program is easy to use and can be tailored to fit individual operational needs. LPI offers policies for calf, feeder, fed, and hog.

Protect yourself against market fluctuations by covering off price, currency, and basis risk.

Visit LPI.ca or phone 1.877.899.2372 for more information.











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Keep Your Cattails Up. (And get paid when you do)

By Ken Lewis, Conservation Coordinator

As you are seeding this spring, you might come across cattails or other signs of a seasonal or temporary wetland in your field. With our ALUS Program you can be paid up to \$75 per acre per year, when you farm around that wetland.

How does this work? We're keeping it simple:

- 1) Farm around the seasonal or temporary wetland(s) in your field
- 2) Give me a call at 403-505-9038 or email me at <u>klewis@rdcounty.ca</u>
- 3) We figure out the total area that is eligible for ALUS funding
- 4) I take your project to our ALUS Committee, for them to make the final funding decisions
- 5) If you are approved for funding, we sign an ALUS Agreement and you start getting your Annual Payment.

In 2021, we are signing 5-year ALUS Agreements. So, you can get a guaranteed annual ALUS payment, of up to \$75 per acre for 5 years.

SIDEBAR: More good news for annual crop producers! It you want to convert marginal land around your wetland(s), to a permanent cover of native or tame forage – ALUS can help pay for that too. In ALUS, we call that "Establishment Costs". ALUS can cost-share with you for projects like this, up to 85% of invoiced establishment costs, to a maximum of \$100 per acre.

ALUS works with farmers who are producing increased ecosystem services on their farms. Here are some of the ecosys-

tem services being produced by farmers who farm around seasonal or temporary wetlands:

- Increased biodiversity
- Carbon storage
- Nutrient cycling
- Groundwater recharge
- Flood mitigation
- Water filtration.

To find out more, please contact us ALUS folks any time. My number is 403-505-9038 and my email is klewis@rdcounty.ca OR: if you'd like to talk to a fellow farmer about ALUS, contact an ALUS Farmer Liaison: Kevin Ziola (West) at 403-352-0662, Tom Towers (Central) at 403-352-6901, Stephen Smith (East) at 403-318-3371.

Learn more online at www.alus.ca or www.rdcounty.ca/603/ALUS



A Weston Family Initiative



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Alberta Lamb Producer Town Hall Meetings

Following this past year's AGM, the ALP Board of Directors decided to create a Producer Consultation Committee, as we recognized that we as an organization can do better to engage and connect with our eligible producers between AGMs. The Producer Consultation Committee's first step was to create and distribute a producer survey, which was sent out following the AGM. Through the feedback we received, we are following up by establishing townhall meetings for eligible Alberta Lamb Producers, that are scheduled to take place mid-July, 2021. In order to be an eligible producer to register, you need to have purchased tags within the last 2 years of ALP's fiscal year end (August 31).



We recognize that different production sizes come with unique goals and challenges and we have attempted to organize the town halls into similarly sized producers. Please find the meeting dates and registration links below.

Large Size Eligible Producers (300 plus breeding ewes)

When: Tuesday, July 13, 2021 Time: 7:30pm to

9:00pm

Producers will need to register in advance: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZlkde2hrj0rHtG8QbBh0FRa9vQ7_aTe75Nb

*After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining themeeting.

Medium Size Eligible Producers (100 – 300 breeding ewes)

When: Thursday, July 15, 2021 Time: 7:30pm to

9:00pm

Producers will need to register in advance for this meeting: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZIld-srT8sGtOlCZdvGgv5qRCW9JaXgY6M

*After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining themeeting.

Size Eligible Producers (0-100 breeding ewes)

When: Tuesday, July 20, 2021 Time: 7:30pm to

9:00pm

Producers will need to register in advance for this meeting: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZIkce-qi4sG9ARL1Z5zDzNjSaLRw HJ5MC

* After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining themseting.

We hope all eligible Alberta lamb producers will engage in these townhalls and that the format will allow focus on the ideas and opportunities at each level of production. Attendance and engagement will signal a need to continue with them and your feedback on content and format will shape them to make the most of the time together. If you have any questions, please contact Ashley Scott, ALP Executive Director at info@ablamb.ca.

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2021/22 Membership Application Form

Membership in the GWFA is open to anyone interested in forage production,
grazing management and environment sustainability.

The fee is \$40 per year, running from April 1 to March 31

For information, call 403-844-2645 or email office@greywoodedforageassociation.com

Benefits of joining GWFA:

- Discounts on courses, seminars, workshops and tours.
- An automatic subscription to The Blade, published monthly online. Hard copy is available on request.
- Assistance with your Environmental Farm Plan.
- Equipment rental (deposit required).
- Access to our reference library.
- · Access to our members-only Facebook group.
- Networking with like-minded producers and advisors.
- Farm consultation services (farm calls are 55 cents per kilometre, each way).
- A copy of the GWFA Annual Report.

Please mail your completed form and cheque to:

Grey Wooded Forage Association

PO Box 1448, Rocky Mountain House, AB T4T 1B1,

Or scan and email the completed form and send an e-transfer to office@greywoodedforageassociation.com
YOU CAN ALSO SIGN UP ONLINE—VISIT THE MEMBER PAGE AT GREYWOODEDFORAGEASSOCIATION.COM

Name:	Email:	Email:		
Mailing address:				
Landline:	Cell:			
*How do you describ operation (tick all th	그렇다 귀속하셨다. 이 아이는 사람들이 가장 아이를 하는데 가장 그 사람들이 하는데 하는데 하는데 하는데 하는데 되었다.	*How many acres of land do you manage:		
☐ Beef producer ☐ Sheep/goat\ producer ☐ Dairy producer ☐ Annual crops producer ☐ Forage producer ☐ Other	Beef cows/heifers Dairy cows Feeders Ewes Does Other	Pasture Hay Crop Other *These questions are voluntary. We do not share your information		
How can we improve our service to	you?			
Please suggest topics you would like	ke to learn more about:			