



## Forage and Livestock eNews

*Updates and information from across the industry*

**Volume 13, Issue 8, August 17, 2021**

### Saskatchewan Pasture Tour

On August 10th, the Saskatchewan Pasture Tour was held near Francis, with a large group of engaged participants. The annual tour, which had to be suspended in 2020, was hosted at the Lorne Klein farm with a focus on grazing management, water supply and quality and plant identification.

Individual topics included tame hay management, stockpile grazing (spring and fall), native plant identification, soil fertility, commercial fertilizer demonstrations, bale grazing, dugout construction, water monitoring and quality testing and delivery systems, including solar-powered. The last stop of the day visited the site of a salinity project which studied forage blends on saline soils. The day's discussions also included funding and insurance options with a talk about the Farm and Ranch Water Infrastructure Program and a programming update from Saskatchewan Crop Insurance.

Presenters included site host Lorne Klein, Jeremy Brown from Ducks Unlimited, Bill Houston from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Kim McLean from Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation and Catherine Lang, Maddy Lazurko and Kelly Cochrane from the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture.

The Saskatchewan Pasture Tour is hosted by a partnership group that includes Ducks Unlimited Saskatchewan, the Saskatchewan Cattlemen's Association, the Saskatchewan Forage Council, the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture and the University of Saskatchewan.

**Resources from the Saskatchewan Pasture Tour has been assembled on the Saskatchewan Forage Council website. View them at: [www.saskforage.ca/spt2021](http://www.saskforage.ca/spt2021)**

*Image credit: Shannon McArton*



**Our sincere thanks to our Tour Sponsors:**



## Saskatchewan Forage Council AGM 2021

The Saskatchewan Forage Council held its first face-to-face gathering in more than a year on July 28th. The day began with a plot tour at the Discovery Farm, co-hosted by SFC gold sponsor Nutrien Proven Seed. The field tour looked at work being done on salinity management, as well as a large number of forage varieties and grazing options that included barley and corn.

Members gathered for lunch in Saskatoon, followed by the annual general meeting. In addition to the review of business operations over the past fiscal year, the agenda included appointment of the board of directors.

Newly appointed directors included Alan Van Caeselle from Brett Young Seeds, cattle producer and VBP+ Coordinator Holly Sparrow, rancher and grain farmer Autumn Lynn, dairy producer Paul Kernalguen and forage producer and Swift Current Creek Watershed Stewards ED Kevin Steinley. They join directors Mark McNinch, Jeremy Brown, Sarah Sommerfeld, David MacTaggart, Dr. Greg Penner, Brent Griffin, Dr. Bill Biligetu, Terry Kowalchuk and Dr. Jillian Bainard to form the new board of directors.

Mervin-area rancher Mark McNinch was named Saskatchewan Forage Council President and Jeremy Brown, a custom grazer who works as an agrologist with Ducks Unlimited, was named Vice-President.

[Read the full news release here](#)



## Experts Respond to Drought Questions

### Beef Cattle Research Council (BCRC), August 10, 2021

On July 29, the Beef Cattle Research Council hosted a [webinar](#) that allowed beef producers to ask [drought-related questions](#) to a panel of nutrition and animal health experts. Producers asked for everything from recommendations for grazing canola, how to manage for antinutritional factors, tips on ammoniation and to how to manage grass into the fall. While questions were varied and diverse, a few main themes emerged.

#### Feed Testing:

In a drought year, [testing your feed sources](#) is more important than ever. Especially when using [alternative feed sources](#), a feed test allows you to understand what you have in terms of energy and protein and therefore what you will need to supplement to maintain the health and body condition of cows and other classes of cattle. A feed test will also identify some of the antinutritional factors and potential toxic levels of substances such as nitrates or sulfates that are more prevalent in drought years or unconventional feeds. Feed tests can be performed on standing or swathed crops, bales or silage. A feed test can be instrumental in determining how a particular feed will fit into your overall feeding strategy.

#### Water testing:

With hot dry conditions water conditions can change rapidly. As water evaporates it leaves behind the minerals and other compounds that can be problematic, toxic, or result in death or dehydration. [Water should be tested](#) frequently during drought and cattle should be monitored more closely. For example, one of the first warning signs of high sulfates is that cattle will refuse to drink the water. It is important to monitor cattle and remove them from the water source if you see signs that cattle have not been drinking. Depending on what levels of mineral(s) or toxin(s) are present in the water source, aeration or diluting the water with a clean water source may help mitigate the concerns.

#### [Read more](#)

More drought-related info can be found at <https://www.beefresearch.ca/blog/drought2021/>

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## Helping farmers to reduce GHGs and improve resiliency to climate change

### Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, August 12, 2021

Today, the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, the Honourable Marie-Claude Bibeau, launched a call for proposals for the On-Farm Climate Action Fund, a new fund under Agricultural Climate Solutions. Starting this year and until 2024, the \$200-million Fund will provide direct support to farmers to adopt beneficial management practices that store carbon and reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in three target areas: cover cropping, nitrogen management, and rotational grazing practices. These three on-farm actions not only reduce GHG emissions but also offer farmers a cost-effective solution to improve soil health and achieve other environmental benefits.

#### [Read more](#)

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## Bison calves leading the way to biobank creation

**by Jessie Hellquist, Livestock and Forage Centre of Excellence, July 27, 2021**

The wood and plains bison are majestic creatures weighing 1,200 pounds, but their conservation could depend on single-celled gametes (reproductive cells) that are measured in microns.

These sperm and egg gametes, which carry the bison's genetic material, are a vital component of research that's dedicated to preserving the genetics and longevity of the threatened species.

On July 10, 2020, researchers at the University of Saskatchewan's (USask) Livestock and Forage Centre of Excellence welcomed Skeeter and Mo, two highly anticipated additions to their bison population. The Specialized Livestock Research Facility is now home to approximately 50 wood and 50 plains bison, a demographically diverse group of bulls, cows and calves.

[Read more](#)

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## Feeding Drought-Stressed Crops to Cattle

**South Dakota State University Extension, Updated April 2021**

As drought conditions continue to expand across South Dakota, a number of producers will be considering harvesting failed grain crops as forage as a way to salvage some value from those fields. Besides considering crop insurance and other considerations, another factor that has to be considered during the process is the potential for nitrate toxicity.

### Nitrate Considerations

All plants contain nitrates, but when plant growth is slowed because of drought or hail, nitrates can accumulate to levels high enough to cause losses, especially when high rates of nitrogen fertilizer have been applied. Rumen microorganisms can convert nitrates into microbial protein, but if the intake of nitrates is too high, then toxic levels of an intermediate chemical (nitrite) are absorbed into the bloodstream. At high enough levels of nitrite, the oxygen carrying capacity of the red blood cells is reduced to the point that the animal will asphyxiate.

So can high nitrate forages be utilized? The answer is yes, if we know what the levels of nitrates are in the feedstuffs in question. Once the nitrate level is known, management decisions can be made about the best harvesting and feeding techniques to best utilize that roughage.

In most cases, laboratories will report nitrate test results as percent nitrate nitrogen on a dry matter basis. The table below contains usage guidelines for nitrate levels in forage for mature cattle.

[Read more](#)

## Producers warned about hay fraud in Saskatchewan

**CBC News, August 9, 2021**

Fraudsters are committing hay fraud and scamming producers in the province, Saskatchewan RCMP warn.

The fraudsters are placing ads on social media and other buying platforms, police said in a Monday news release. They request immediate payment before the buyer has a chance to see

the hay or is in a position to take delivery.

According to a message from the RCMP Saskatchewan Crime Watch Advisory Network, several producers sent funds over, only to later find out that the scammer did not have any hay.

[Read more](#)

*Image credit: Shannon McArton*



## CAP Virtual Presentations: FRWIP Rebate

This YouTube series from Saskatchewan Agriculture highlights Canadian Agricultural Partnership (CAP) programs available to Saskatchewan producers.

This video describes the Farm Ranch Water Infrastructure Program (FRWIP) details for those items eligible on a rebate basis. like dugouts, pipelines and wells that meet program criteria.

[Watch this video now on YouTube](#) or [learn about other CAP programs here.](#)

## Upcoming Events

### **Ag in Motion**

June-December, 2021

Virtual Events

[Find the schedule of events here](#)

### **Beef Cattle Feeding webinar series-nitrates in feed**

August 17, 2021

via webinar

[Learn more here](#)

### **Beef Cattle Feeding webinar series-winter cereals for spring grazing and annuals for feed**

August 19, 2021

via webinar

[Learn more here](#)

### **Beef Cattle Feeding webinar series-alternative feeds**

August 24, 2021

via webinar

[Learn more here](#)

### **CSIDC Virtual Field Day**

August 25-26, 2021

via webinar

[Learn more here](#)

**Beef Cattle Feeding webinar series-straw and grain rations**

August 30, 2021

via webinar

[Learn more here](#)

**Canadian Beef Industry Conference**

August 31-September 2, 2021

Virtual event

[Learn more and register on the website](#)

**2021 MFGA Regenerative Agriculture Conference**

November 15-17, 2021

To be determined

[Visit the conference website to learn more](#)

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