



Forage and Livestock eNews

Updates and information from across the industry

Volume 16 Issue 9, September 21, 2023



Saskatchewan Forage Advisory Meeting

Save the date for the Saskatchewan Forage Advisory Meeting, coming up on November 9, 2023 in Saskatoon!

This meeting is held annually with representatives from government, industry, producer groups and researchers to share information and to identify issues of concern regarding forage production and utilization.

Watch the SFC website and newsletter for registration info and more details coming soon.

The Results Are In on Proof of Concept Projects

by: Beef Cattle Research Council (BCRC), August 29, 2023

The following projects were funded under the BCRC's Proof of Concept program. This program funds 12-month projects with a maximum budget of \$50,000 and has two main purposes. One is to help the researchers (and BCRC) decide whether an unusual research idea is promising enough to develop into a larger, more defined project. The other purpose is to validate practices or technologies that have been discovered through research projects and/or to facilitate the adaptation of technologies utilized in other sectors, commodities or countries. In other words, finding out whether we can adapt someone else's solution instead of reinventing the wheel for Canada's beef industry

Proof of Concept projects are not designed to fully answer a big science question. They're simply intended as a small investment to find out whether the idea is worth scaling up and pursuing further. These results are intended to be preliminary—if they're promising, they're good candidates for a full-fledged research trial. With these projects, even a complete "failure" is really a success, because it means we are able to cut our losses early.

Native Prairie Restoration/Reclamation Workshop

The 10th Native Prairie Restoration/Reclamation Workshop is taking place February 7th to 8th, 2024 in Saskatoon!

The Call for Abstracts is Open and the deadline to submit for oral presentations is coming up on October 5, 2023. Watch for more information coming soon from the Saskatchewan Prairie Conservation Action Plan.

[To learn more about submitting abstract, tradeshow and sponsorship opportunities, visit the website.](#)

Over 90 Per Cent of Insured Forage Rainfall Insurance Program Acres in Saskatchewan Receive Payout for 2023

by: Saskatchewan Agriculture, September 5, 2023

Today, the Governments of Canada and Saskatchewan announced a record-breaking level of payments under the Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation (SCIC) Forage Rainfall Insurance Program.

"While producers face ongoing risks related to climate change and extreme weather events, the support of Business Risk Management programs provides some level of stability against income and production loss," said Federal Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lawrence MacAulay. "This record high level of payments to producers is a testament to the need for, and value of, the AgriInsurance Program."

"There is additional support for our livestock producers, as over 90 per cent of insured acres enrolled in the Forage Rainfall Insurance Program received a payment," Saskatchewan Agriculture Minister David Marit said. "This is additional cash flow to participating Crop Insurance customers, in reaction to the dry conditions. We are seeing this Program respond to producers needs where precipitation shortages result in feed and pasture shortfalls. I encourage producers to continually reassess options available through the full suite of Business Risk Management Programs."

[Read more](#)

The Highlights: Kris Nichols at the South Dakota 2023 Soil Health Conference

by: Foothills Forage

The South Dakota Soil Health Coalition, a nonprofit organization led by farmers and producers, held their annual Soil Health Conference last January. The conference invites students, business professionals, producers, and community members to learn about soil science and the importance of healthy soils. As a keynote speaker, Dr. Kris Nichols gave a presentation about decision making tools for soil health.

At the beginning of her talk, Kris alluded to the audience experience at conferences such as this one. When you come home from a conference, she explained, you might have some ideas you want to implement or several plans that keep changing. But this isn't a bad thing: plans should be flexible and iterative, changing in response to the situation.

Update: SK Ministry of Agriculture Strategic Feed Research Chair Program in Legume Silage and Legume-Cereal Intercropping Silage for Beef and Dairy Cattle in Saskatchewan

by: Dr. Peiqiang Yu, Professor and Ministry of Agriculture Strategic Feed Research Chair in Feeds R&D, Department of Animal and Poultry Science University of Saskatchewan

Recently, the 19th International Silage Conference (19th ISC) was successful held in Beijing in August (8-12) 2023. The silage industry, feed additive industry, animal nutritionists, graduate students and researchers in the world came together to share their research findings and recommendation in recent silage research. Total participants in the 19th ISC including in-person and on-line participants are more than 5000 people. The next 20th International Silage Conference (20th ISC) will be held in the University of Florida, USA.

During this conference, we were invited as a Keynote Speaker to present our silage research in our legume silage and legume-cereal intercropping silage research projects (eg. whole plant faba bean silage project, intercropping faba-oat silage project, fibrolytic enzymes for silage project). These projects are part of the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture Strategic Research Chair in Feed R&D Programs lead by Professor Dr. Peiqiang Yu. Two PhD and Two MSc graduate students are involved in these legume silage and legume-cereal intercropping silage feed research programs: Two PhD students, Víctor H. Guevara-Oquendo and Maria E. Rodriguez Espinosa and Two MSc students Carlene Nagy and Jen-Chieh Yang. These silage research programs have been carrying out in collaboration with several researchers (David Christensen, Bart Lardner, John McKinnon, Bunyamin Tar'an, Brent Barlow), Crop Development Center, Crop and livestock producers, SaskPulse and SaskMilk industry.

[Read the full article on the Sask Forage website.](#)

What's so critical about fall cutting

by: Amber Friedrichson, Associate editor, Hay & Forage Grower Magazine, August 29, 2023

The critical fall period for alfalfa has been said to start about six weeks before the first killing frost, which is roughly around the first week of September for most of the Midwest. This hard stop in harvest schedules is supposed to ensure plants store enough energy in their roots to survive the winter, but with improved alfalfa varieties, variable stand conditions, and warmer weather patterns, how critical can this period really be?

Despite heat indices recently reaching the triple digits in some parts of the Central U.S., temperatures will likely calm down as we flip the calendar from August to September. The sun is also setting noticeably earlier each day, and the combination of milder temperatures and shorter day lengths sends a signal to alfalfa to prepare for fall dormancy.

Alfalfa will begin translocating energy produced during photosynthesis to its root system instead of using these carbohydrates to fuel vegetative growth and forage

development. Plants perform this cycle after each cutting during the growing season, but they need to stock up on extra energy this time of year. Like a squirrel stores acorns in a hollowed-out tree for hibernation, alfalfa stores energy in its crown to survive the winter and kickstart growth again in the spring.

Better forage quality achieved by autumn weather may incentivize farmers to squeeze in one last cutting from their fields, but taking a hasty harvest of alfalfa when plants are in the process of moving photosynthates from shoots to roots can make them more vulnerable to winterkill and jeopardize future forage productivity. While the best solution is usually to skip this final cut, there are some situations where a fall harvest may be less risky, if not justified.

many forbs tend to have thicker taproots to search for water deeper in the profile, but with a significant number of lateral branches to explore near the surface, too. Taproots may be able to compete better than fibrous roots for water and nutrients deeper in the soil profile.

Extracting water deep in the soil profile can lead to days and weeks of more available forage when growth is prolific and summer winds start drying out the upper profile. Deep roots provide a steady conduit of water to keep forages actively growing and able to withstand drought. Soils are healthier when roots can proliferate to extract water and nutrients while depositing carbon throughout the soil profile.

How grasslands are managed can alter the extent of rooting depth. Usefully, the extent of forage mass above ground is a reflection of the rooting mass below ground. Therefore, tall forage stands that have been deferred from grazing can be envisioned to have deeper rooting systems than short forage stands that have been continuously grazed. More precisely, greater rooting density near the soil surface mirrors that of greater density of forage per inch of height from the soil surface.

[Read more](#)



Take your best shot video series

The Saskatchewan Cattlemen's Association has created a video series dedicated to keeping cattle herds healthy.

Take your best shot features videos about vaccine protocols, syringe demo and cleaning, mixing vaccines, processing calves and more

[Watch the videos at saskbeef.com](https://saskbeef.com)

Upcoming Events

Native Prairie Speaker Series - Ecological Gifts Program

September 27, 2023

via Webinar

[Register and learn more here](#)

Native Prairie Speaker Series - Wetland conservation is for the birds

October 12, 2023

via Webinar

[Register and learn more here](#)

CONNECT - The Heart of the Farm

November 7-9, 2023

Saskatoon, SK

[Read more here](#)

MFGA Regenerative Ag Conference

November 13-15, 2023

Brandon, MB

[Read more here](#)

Canadian Western Agribition

November 20-25, 2023

Regina, SK

[Read more here](#)

AgEx Conference 2023

November 21-23, 2023

Guelph, ON

[Learn more here](#)

Financial support for the Forage and Livestock eNews is provided in part by one of our partners, the **Saskatchewan Forage Seed Development Commission.**



Forage and Livestock eNews is published by the Saskatchewan Forage Council (SFC). Opinions and information are provided by the authors and publication does not imply endorsement by the SFC.

The Saskatchewan Forage Council gratefully acknowledges funding for our "Facilitating Forage Initiatives in Saskatchewan" project through the **Saskatchewan Cattlemen's Association Industry Development Fund:**



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