

SPECIAL AREAS BOARD



Notes from the Field — October 2017

Testing Winter Feed

Excerpt from 10/9/17 issue of Agri-News

Testing feed at the start of the feeding season, allows producers to develop a feeding strategy to feed all cattle in the herd to production goals and to avoid extra costs. calcium, and phosphorus, magnesium and potassium. A basic analysis should cost less than \$50—much less than the cost of a round bale..

"Livestock feed supplies are going to be tight in some areas of Alberta and quality may be an issue," says Andrea Hanson, beef extension specialist. "Testing feed stuffs...is important as you need to know what nutrients are available. When feed costs are the largest variable expense of over wintering a beef cow, over feeding is wasting dollars and, conversely, if the animal's nutrient requirements aren't being met, it can negatively affect their immediate well-being and future reproductive efficiency." Ration composition depends on nutrient composition of forage. The only way to accurately determine forage's nutrient composition is through testing the feed.



More advanced analysis can provide details about the feed depending on what has been requested. If an early frost or crop stress has been experienced in the area, a nitrate test or a toxin test may be very beneficial.

Getting a representative sample of feed to test is important in feeling confident in the results, says Hanson. "If sampling bales, samples need to be taken from a number of bales (at least 15-20) from different areas in the field and then mixed into one sample. Using a commercial forage sampler makes the process much easier." Often agriculture service boards and forage associations have equipment available for use by producers.

Some tips on getting a sample include: using plastic bags to ship sample, rub loose material off face when sampling silage, and freezing samples if a delay is expected before the materi-

"Using last year's feed tests, or even worse, using a provincial average for a feed's nutritional content, isn't realistic or useful," says Hanson. "While physical attributes are part of feed quality, they don't tell the whole story. A bright green colour does help indicate the feed was put up with little or no rain, and that the mould level is little to none, but it doesn't tell much more than that. Protein and energy content of the same hay field can vary greatly depending on when it was cut. Brome cut very early in the year could reach 18% protein while that same forage may only be 5-6% protein if cut late."

The most important information in a feed test is protein, energy and fibre.

A basic forage analysis will list the moisture content of the feed stuff, energy as total digestible nutrients (TDN), net energy (NE) and/or digestible energy (DE), crude protein values as well as

al can be sent to the lab. For more tips on sampling feed, and information on available tools and testing, head to Alberta Agriculture and Forestry website, contact Alberta Ag-Info Centre at 310-FARM (3276) or more locally, contact CARA.

Alberta Agriculture and Forestry, together with forage and research associations, is hosting a series of workshops the weeks of October 23 and 30. "Entitled *Tools to Build Your Cow Herd*, these day-long workshops will address genetic tools producers can use to achieve their herd's goals," says Hanson. "They'll also look at how to best address the nutritional issues producers have in their area to get the most out of their herd's potential."

GET TO KNOW YOUR FEED WITH CARA

Feed analysis, equipment rental, Cowbytes & more!

Call (403) 664-3777 for more information



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Preparing Trees & Shrubs for Winter

From Alberta Agriculture & Forestry

"As we enjoy the beauty of our trees and shrubs during the spring, summer and fall, we need to be mindful that Alberta's harsh winter conditions can kill or deteriorate their vigor," says Toso Bozic, Agroforestry specialist. "We can't prevent winter from coming, but we can do a few things to prepare trees and shrubs to better survive it."

Choosing appropriate tree and shrub species is the first step, followed with proper tree planting and maintenance during the growing season. "When winter does arrive, cold temperature, wind, winter sun, frost, heavy snow, or freezing rain can greatly damage needles, buds, branches, bark and even roots. Heavy snow and ice can break branches or topple down a whole tree. Winter wind will create evergreen needle desiccation. As winter creates shortages of food for wildlife, various rodents, deer and moose will feed on branches and bark, and greatly damage trees. Even birds feeding on too many buds can damage to the plants."

So what can you do right now to help protect your trees and shrubs this winter?

Watering - It's crucial to water trees as soon as deciduous trees lose their leaves and before the ground freezes. Bozic shares, "evergreens don't go to full dormancy and may use the water in winter. Water will freeze around the roots and will be the only water available to survive a possibly dry

spring."



Some fall watering tips:

Water slowly and deep around the drip line (the outmost circumference of the tree canopy where water drips to the ground) and not close to the tree trunk. If you have younger trees, water at the root ball. One way to water is to make few small holes in 10 gallon bucket, fill it with water and stand it on the roots. You may also use drip irrigation or deep watering.

Mulching - Having 4 to 6 inches of mulch helps keep moisture and prevent freezing of the roots. Don't put much mulch next to the trunk; rather, create a donut shape of mulch around the tree.

Removing leaves and dead vegetation - Dead leaves and understory vegetation are home for many insects and diseases during winter. Raking and removing dead leaves will reduce the potential of diseases and insects coming back next spring.

Pruning - "Pruning is usually recommended during the winter and spring here in Alberta with the exception of 3D (dead, diseased and damaged) branches," says Bozic. "Removing 3D branches will reduce the snow or ice weight on the whole tree and eliminate a potential host for many insects and diseases."

Animals - Rodents, deer and moose can greatly damage or kill trees and shrubs. "Protecting your trees is a long-term and frequently costly battle," says Bozic. "For example, you can use wire mesh products, tree plastic tubes, various repellants or electrical wires to deter deer and moose."

Salt - Salt used for deicing is one of the major killers of trees and shrubs in Alberta as the run off damages roots, hinders growth and foliage."

For more information, contact [Toso Bozic](#) at 780-415-2681.

Agriculture Service Board—2017 Snapshot

The Agricultural Service Board (ASB) Grant Program promotes long-term sustainability of the agriculture industry and rural communities and the development and delivery of environmental extension programming.

ASBs are responsible for implementing and enforcing legislative requirements under the *Agricultural Service Board Act*, the *Weed Control Act* (WCA), the *Agricultural Pests Act* (APA), the *Soil Conservation Act* (SCA) and assist with the control of animal disease under the *Animal Health Act* (AHA).

How did 2017 shape up for ASBs across Alberta?

- **29,500** prohibited and noxious weed infestations investigated and managed
- Over **150,000 kilometers** of municipal roadways weeds controlled by Inte-

grated Pest Management means including mechanical, chemical and cultural methods such as hand picking or biological control technologies.

- **100%** of the **67 Seed Cleaning Plants** Operating in Alberta are inspected
- **8,335** fields inspected for clubroot
- **1,726** fields inspected for virulent blackleg
- **1,333** fields inspected for *Fusarium*
- **2,528** pest insect surveys including Grasshopper, Wheat Midge, Bertha Armyworm and Diamond Back Moth
- **380** extension events delivered
- **228** Environmental Farm Plans completed
- **396** GF2 Projects completed with support from our ASB partners
- **227** fields inspected for soil erosion issues

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Beef Cattle Research Council & the National Beef Strategy

The National Beef Strategy is setting the Canadian beef industry up to be more profitable, to grow, and to continue to produce some of the world's finest beef. The Beef Cattle Research Council (BCRC), funded by the research allocation of the Canadian Beef Cattle Check-Off, works on all the Strategy's pillars – Productivity, Beef Demand, Connectivity and Competitiveness.

The Canadian Beef Cattle Check-Off is scheduled to increase from \$1.00 to \$2.50/head in most provinces in the spring of 2018. Each province decides how much of the check-off is spent on research and marketing. It is recommended \$0.75 be allocated to research to maintain and enhance research investments. Increased research funding from the Canadian Beef Cattle Check-Off will enable:

CONTINUED INVESTMENT IN PRIORITY RESEARCH PROGRAMMING

Ongoing long-term investments in research will ensure continued improvements are made in:

- Forage and Grassland Productivity
- Environmental Sustainability
- Feed Grains and Feed Efficiency
- Animal Health and Welfare
- Antimicrobial Use, Resistance and Alternatives
- Food Safety
- Beef Quality

These research priorities will continue to focus on:

1. Improving competitiveness in the production of

- beef cattle,
2. Supporting science-based policy, regulation and trade,
3. Supporting science-based public education and advocacy,
4. Supporting the Canadian Beef Advantage,
5. Accelerating the adoption of beneficial innovations by the Canadian beef industry.

STRATEGIC INVESTMENT IN RESEARCH CAPACITY IN PRIORITY AREAS

Some research outcomes identified under the National Beef Strategy cannot be achieved at current funding levels. The increased Canadian Beef Cattle Check-Off will build research capacity and program funding in areas that have been on the decline in Canada.

The increased Canadian Beef Cattle Check-off will ensure that new producer-focused forage breeders, agronomists and grazing researchers are trained and hired in Canada.

RESEARCH SURVEILLANCE NETWORKS

Governments have been reducing involvement in animal health and disease surveillance and monitoring activities. Surveillance is critically important, and industry needs to take a greater role in it. Maintaining and building better surveillance networks for diseases, animal health, and antimicrobial resistance is critical for our industry. These networks demonstrate the integrity of the Canadian beef supply chain to consumers, food companies and

global trading partners. Surveillance validates animal health and welfare practices, as well as overall efficiency (which has environmental benefits). Surveillance identifies areas where research and/or changes in production practices can help raise cattle better and more profitably.

DOMESTIC AND INT'L RESEARCH LIAISON

Sometimes it's simpler to adopt practices that already work. A domestic and international research liaison will look for practices and technologies with the potential to benefit producers, modifying them to work here. Getting research results, knowledge, improved practices, and technology from scientific publications into the hands of producers is an end result. Creating decision-making tools and resources to help producers weigh the costs and benefits of adopting new technologies or management practices is a critical part of this work.

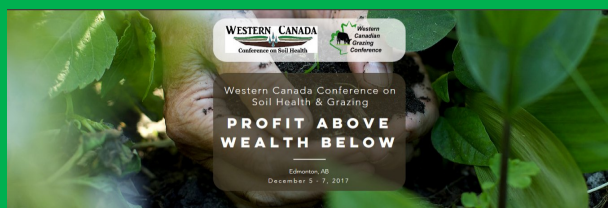
ONGOING DELIVERY OF THE VERIFIED BEEF PRODUCTION PLUS (VBP+) PROGRAM

In addition to funding research, the BCRC is responsible for the delivery of the Verified Beef Production Plus (VBP+) program, which verifies on-farm practices related to food safety, animal care, biosecurity, and environment. Ongoing national industry investment will ensure the consistent delivery of the VBP+ program as it becomes a core pillar in verifying sustainable beef production in partnership with end-users.

Zone 1 Meetings 7pm start, free supper 6pm
October 25 Medicine Hat, Feeding Company
October 26 Brooks, Bow Slope Shipping



Zone 4 Meetings 7pm start, free supper 6pm
October 24 Castor, Legion
October 26, Hardisty, Community Hall
October 29 Pollockville, Community Hall



Western Canada Conference on Soil Health & Grazing

December 5-7, 2017—Edm., AB

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Upcoming Events in the Special Areas

Tools to build your cow herd

This workshop will discuss how genetic and genomic tools can help identify superior animals to develop a productive and profitable cow herd. With weather related challenges in recent years there is a huge variability in feed supply and quality; speakers will discuss potential health and nutrition related problems producers may face this winter and how to minimize difficulties during calving and breeding seasons. A local veterinarian will speak on local health issues and concerns.

Agenda	Speakers
9:00 a.m. Registration	
9:30 a.m. Welcome / Introduction	Local Forage Association
9:45 a.m. "My Herd and Me" Genetic tools for the commercial herd	John Basarab
10:45 a.m. Break	
11:00 a.m. Lunch	
11:15 a.m. DSM - Vitamin requirements for cattle	Brian Campbell or Mark Engstrom
1:15 p.m. Current feed issues in Alberta and upcoming challenges	Berry Yermelo
2:15 p.m. Break	
3:15 p.m. Proper nutrition increases animal performance and reproductive efficiency	Berry Yermelo
3:55 p.m. Local issues and concerns	Local Veterinarian

Registration: Pre-registration is required, includes lunch and nutrition breaks
 Registration Fee: \$30 per person
 Registration deadline: 7 days prior to event and no refund after deadline
 For more information Contact: Andrea Hanson at 403 948-1528 or 310- FARM (3276)

Growing Forward 2 Alberta Canada

MEAT GOAT SEMINAR

Tuesday November 21, 2017
 Stettler Agri-Plex Pavillion
 9:00am - 3:00pm

Save the Date!

JOIN THE BATTLE RIVER RESEARCH GROUP TO LEARN THE IN'S AND OUTS OF RAISING MEAT GOATS!
 WHETHER YOU ARE THINKING OF GETTING GOATS OR ALREADY HAVE THEM WE GUARANTEE YOU WILL LEARN SOMETHING NEW!

TOPICS INCLUDE: NUTRITION, BIOSECURITY, TIPS ON KIDDING AND "HOW MEAT GOATS PAID MY MORTGAGE!"

COME LISTEN TO A VARIETY OF SMALL RUMINANT VETERINARIANS AND EXPERIENCED PRODUCERS IN THE BUSINESS!

For more info or to register:
www.battliverresearch.com/upcomingevents
 780-582-7308
events@battliverresearch.com
 Cost: \$40/Includes Lunch

Battle River Research Group



Join us November 8 & 9 for BeefTech — a interactive beef industry learning event.

Explore and experience emerging technologies and innovative management practices. Learn how to implement technology in your beef operation to improve production and increase profitability.

- Hands-on workshops and labs
- Technology demonstrations
- Technical learning sessions

Featured Keynotes

Robert Saik, Agri-Trend - "The Agriculture Manifesto"
 Andrew Campbell, Fresh Air - "Stand Up for Your Industry!"

Your Agriculture Fieldmen

JESSE WILLIAMS

DON HOGAN

JUSTINE COMEAU



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SA3

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SA4

(403) 577-3523
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We offer support for programs including:

- ♦ Plant identification & noxious weed control
- ♦ Grazing management & strategies
- ♦ Pest management & controls
- ♦ Growing Forward 2
- ♦ Environmental Farm Plans
- ♦ Shelterbelt programs & planning
- ♦ Animal predation concerns
- ♦ Equipment rentals including RFID tag readers & pest traps
- ♦ Concerns related to *Soil Conservation Act*, *Weed Control Act*, *Agricultural Pest Act*, *Animal Health Act*, and other legislation.

Special Area No. 2

Hanna District Office
 (403) 854-5600

Special Area No. 3

Oyen District Office
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Special Area No. 4

Consort District Office
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