

SPECIAL AREAS BOARD



Notes from the Field — February 2017

Plan Your Shelterbelt Now!

Believe it or not, February is the time you should be thinking about shelterbelt planning for spring tree delivery. While the popular PFRA Prairie Shelterbelt Program closed in 2013, there are several companies offering shelterbelt varieties for sale within our area for spring delivery. Check out these three websites: www.prairieshelterbeltprogram.ca, www.prairietechpropagation.com, www.treetime.ca.

Before you order, there are several considerations to make when designing your shelterbelt. First, ask yourself what present requirements are for your shelterbelt, what future needs might be and then estimate the quality of existing shelterbelts. Also take a look at what area you are trying to protect. A dugout will have different shelterbelt needs than a snow control belt or tree plantings for wildlife. You may also want to consider fruit-bearing shelterbelts for multi-use purposes.

Your Ag Fieldman has [Shelterbelt Planning Workbooks for Livestock Farms in Alberta](#) to help you make

the best decisions for longevity, soil erosion control, multi-purpose use, livestock shelter and esthetics. Together with CARA, Special Areas will be hosting a spring Shelterbelt Workshop for producers in Hanna, AB so watch for updates.

GEOGRAPHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Before you start shopping, there are a few things to know about our region and trees. Special Areas falls within the 3A, 3B and 4A Hardiness Zones. These zones are based on the coldest minimum temperatures, and you should pick species accordingly. Click [here](#) for a map to find out more about your area.

You should be aware of soil texture, salinity and organic matter in your soils before choosing a species. Remember Special Areas has a very strong profile of solonchic soils, which are areas of very low organic matter, often referred to as "blowouts". It may be difficult to establish trees in these areas without soil remediation first.

Salinity, organic matter, prevailing wind direction and soil texture maps can be found within the [Shelterbelt Planning Workbook for Livestock Farms in Alberta](#).

DID YOU KNOW?

Yields can increase 29% by planting a shelterbelt adjacent to hay land.

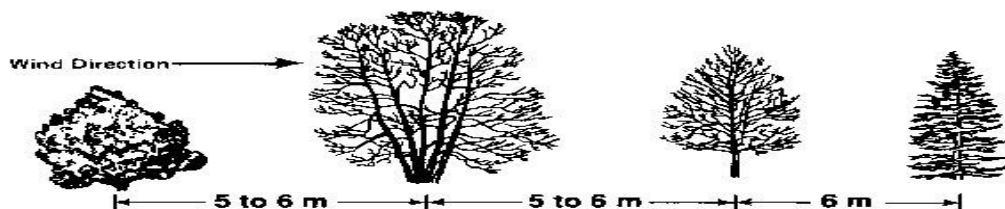
For more information go to:

[http://
www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/
\\$department/deptdocs.nsf/
all/sag3328](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/sag3328)

Plant multi-species, multi-row shelterbelts whenever possible. Include a mix of species: fast & slow growing, long-lived & short lived, summer dense & winter dense species of varying heights. This will maximize the effectiveness of the shelterbelt over time and throughout all seasons. A potential mix could include: caragana/virosa & lilac

shrubs beside willow/maple/ash trees, followed by Colorado blue spruce/white spruce/Scots pine.

A recommended layout for a four-row farmstead windbreak is as follows



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Plan Your Shelterbelt Now! (cont'd)

SPECIAL AREAS SET BACKS

Remember to keep your shelterbelts 30m (100ft) away from municipal right of ways. It is also a good rule of thumb for all buildings and driveways to minimize snow build up. Each tree species you consider will state mature sizes, recommended tree spacing and competitive root ratings. Willows, Siberian Elm, Maple and Poplar trees have very fibrous and competitive root systems and therefore should not be planted next to gardens, orchards or areas you plan to work up, without respecting proper planting distances.

For more shelterbelt planning resources visit [Shelterbelts in Alberta](#), [Effect of Field Shelterbelts on Crop Yields in Alberta](#), [Field Shelterbelts for Soil Conservation](#), [Weed Control for Alberta](#)

[Shelterbelts](#), [Shelterbelt Varieties for Alberta](#), [Trees & Shrubs for the Prairies](#). You can also pick up these great books and other resources about shelterbelts, woody ornamentals, tree & shrub insects, pruning and landscaping from your Ag Fieldman at no cost.



Special Areas tree planters are available for rent to all ratepayers

FUNDING AVAILABLE

There is Growing Forward 2 funding available for Shelterbelt Establishment (50% cost share up to a maximum of \$10,000) under the [On Farm Stewardship Program](#). This program closed in 2016 but may become available in 2017, so keep checking the [Growing Forward](#) website for updates. You must have your [Environmental Farm Plan](#) to be eligible (your Ag Fieldman can help you with this). This program covers tree planting, watering system, grass seeding and first year fencing expenses for shelterbelt establishment. However, shelterbelts planted around farmyards are **not** eligible.

Each Special Areas District Office has tree planters available free of charge for ratepayers. CARA has a plastic mulch applicator for rent as well.

Call your Ag Fieldmen or CARA to reserve your spring spot!

Spring Gravel Pit Inspections

Did you know that all public gravel pits within Special Areas are inspected for noxious weeds before any gravel is hauled for the year? Your Ag Fieldmen and staff complete these inspections to keep our roads weed free.

Do you own a gravel pit?

Owners with private gravel pit(s) within the Special Areas can request an

Ag. Fieldman to inspect their private pit(s) for noxious weeds.

Special Areas offers four hours of free regulated noxious weed spraying to each ratepayer.

CALL YOUR AG. FIELDMAN TO ARRANGE AN INSPECTION FOR THE SPRING.



Gravel pits can be suitable growing areas for many noxious weeds, including poisonous Black Henbane, pictured above.

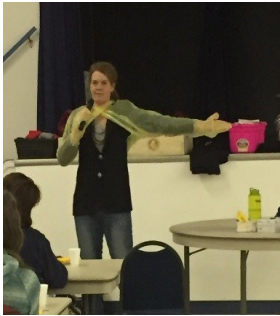
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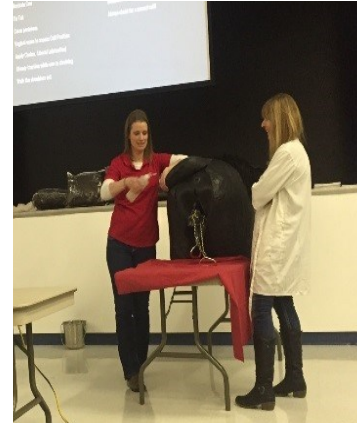
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Ladies Calving Clinic a Big Hit with Area Ranchers

Special Areas recently partnered with [Alberta Farm Animal Care \(AFAC\)](#) and [Starland County](#) and the [County of Stettler](#) to bring the 3rd Ladies Calving Clinic to Byemore. This one of a kind event encourages ranching women to sharpen beef cattle welfare skills and network to build relevant business relationships. All of the presentations and handouts from this year's event can be viewed [here](#).



Over 80 ladies met at Byemore Hall to listen to Special Areas native Dr. Quaschnick of [Steadfast Veterinary Services](#) share her expertise on calving care, as well as Dr. Cantafio from [Stettler Veterinary Clinic](#) who shared the latest information on cattle vaccinations and medications. AFAC's Kristen Mortenson explained their winter programming and resources available for livestock producers. Some resources include their ALERT line, emergency response livestock trailers and annual [Livestock Care Conference](#). There was also a quick update on [Growing Forward 2](#) funding opportunities available for cattle



producers from Kooter Kaiser of Bar 7 Bar.

Thanks to all the ladies who attended this event, as well as the sponsors, door prize donators and volunteers

which made it possible. If you would like more information or want to host the 2018 Ladies Calving Clinic in your area, please contact Jesse Williams at (403) 854-1114.

Provincial Agricultural Service Board Conference

On January 24- 27, Special Areas Agricultural Service Boards (ASB) attended the annual [Provincial ASB Conference](#) held in Edmonton. Eleven ASB members from the Special Areas joined over 600 other members from across the province to discuss important issues affecting agriculture in Alberta today.

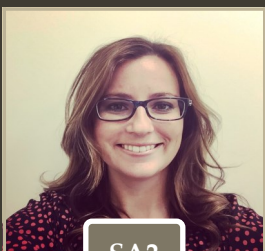
Three resolutions were presented and passed at the conference, which included: promoting agriculture in the Alberta school curriculum, requests for more proactive vegetation management on provincial highways including mowing and herbicide control of all legislated weeds, and support for competitive agricultural seeds

and crop protection products from crop protection company mergers.

Two emergent resolutions were presented and passed including: carbon levy exemption on natural gas and propane for grain drying, and eradication of bovine tuberculosis and brucellosis in bison within and surrounding Wood Buffalo National Park. You can read the full 2017 resolutions [here](#), while the 2016 resolutions and their report cards are available [here](#). If you have any resolutions you would like to put forward on Alberta's agriculture issues you can speak with your [Special Areas ASB members](#).

Your Agriculture Fieldmen

JESSE WILLIAMS



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854-1114

DON HOGAN



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(403) 664-3618/(403)
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JUSTINE SIMPSON



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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.

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Upcoming Events!



NAVIGATING your way to AGRICULTURAL SUCCESS

Young Ranchers Forum
February 7, 2017
Hanna Legion Hall
3:30 pm—9:00 pm

Cattlemen's Young Leaders Cost: \$25 (includes supper)
or \$40 for attending both Young
Ranchers & Young Farmers Forums

Social Media – Telling Your Farm Story

What Buyers Are Wanting Register early to put your name
into the draw for a 3-Day pass to
the Soil Health & Grazing
Conference (December 5-7, 2017)!

Tracking Herd Health

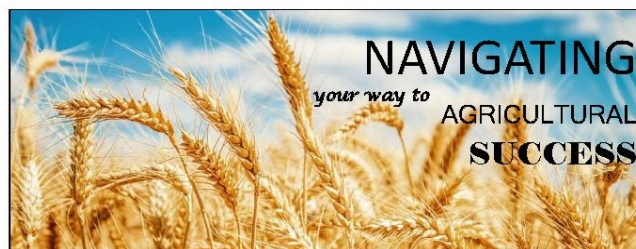
Interpreting Feed Sample Analysis

Market Updates

Agenda is subject to change

The early bird door prize will be
drawn January 18, 2017.

To register please call CARA at 403-664-3777
or email cara-3@telus.net



NAVIGATING your way to AGRICULTURAL SUCCESS

Young Farmers Forum
February 8, 2017
Cereal Hall
3:30 pm—9:00 pm

Alberta Young Farmers

Decision Making Tools

Grading Factors

AFSC Crop Insurance

Practical Guide To Navigating Grain Contracts

Market Updates

Agenda is subject to change

Cost: \$25 (includes supper)
or \$40 for attending both Young
Ranchers & Young Farmers Forums

Register early to put your
name into the draw for a 3-Day
pass to Farm Tech 2017
(Jan. 30-Feb 2)

The early bird door prize will
be drawn January 18, 2017.

To register please call CARA at 403-664-3777
or email cara-3@telus.net



THE COWS ARE IN THE CORN!



Join **CARA, Dupont Pioneer and AF Feed Specialist Barry Yaremicio** on
Wednesday, February 15th for a discussion about corn as a winter grazing option,
its potential feed value and how it has measured up this winter. We will be visiting
two corn grazing sites after lunch.

Where: Neutral Hills Adult Learning Centre, Consort

Time: 11:00 am - 3:00 pm

Cost: \$15/person (Lunch Provided)



Please Register by calling
403-664-3777 or emailing
cara-lr@telus.net

If you are using corn as feed this year we welcome you to come and chat about your experience!