

SPECIAL AREAS BOARD



Notes from the Field — April 2020

Strychnine Available for Ground Squirrels Control

On March 4, 2020, Health Canada and the Pest Management Regulatory Agency publicized their final decision on the registration of Strychnine for control of Richardson's Ground Squirrels. **The registration has been cancelled.** You can also view the [Final Decision documents from Pest Management Regulatory Agency](#).



The following deadlines are in effect:

- **MANUFACTURER CAN SELL TO MUNICIPALITIES UNTIL MARCH 4TH, 2021.**
- **MUNICIPALITIES (SAB) CAN SELL THE PRODUCT UNTIL MARCH 4TH, 2022.**
- **PRODUCERS HAVE UNTIL MARCH 4TH 2023 TO USE ALL REMAINING PRODUCT.**

The Agricultural Service Boards met jointly to discuss this decision, and have decided strychnine sales will continue until March 4th 2022. Sale of strychnine for the 2020 and 2021 seasons will proceed with sales starting in early spring and ending August 1st. For 2022, the sale of strychnine may have adjusted time frames, and will be finalized at a later date.

Producers will be able to purchase a maximum of 2 cases per year at the discretion of the local Agricultural Fieldman. **As a result of the closure of**

Special Areas offices to the public, sales of strychnine to producers will proceed on an appointment basis only. To book your appointment, or for more information on strychnine sales and uses, contact your local Ag Fieldman.

Irrigating Efficiently at Pollockville

On March 11, Agriculture Irrigation experts were hosted in Pollockville by Carolside Irrigators, the Berry Creek Ag Society and Special Area No. 2 Ag Service Board. This event helped irrigators to make sure they get information needed to irrigate most efficiently, especially if another year of low runoff occurs.

One tip shared at this event was for irrigators to access the [Alberta Irrigation Management Manual](#) online from Alberta Agriculture. This

manual gives a comprehensive look at management principles and how crop specific management can improve economic outcomes, especially when water is limited.

Michele Konschuh with Alberta Agriculture explained crops have critical times when water is needed, typically during the reproductive stages. Tailoring water irrigation to these times can greatly improve yields. It's not just about putting three circles on once a week, or when the ground feels wet. In times

of water conservation managing critical periods will impact crop yields. In droughts, it is more economical to remain with adequate irrigation on fewer acres than to irrigate with reduced water volumes on all acres.

Ted Harms, another guest speaker, stressed that producers need to have timely knowledge to make these kinds of management decisions, including how crops and soil is using irrigation water. Cont'd on pg. 2

REMINDER

*You can purchase Western Calf Price Insurance every
Tuesday to Thursday from 2:00PM-5:00PM until May 28, 2020*



Looking for mulch for your shelterbelts? Special Area's Youngstown Service Center sells mulch for \$30/yard & GST. Call (403) 779-3733 prior to arrange loading & pick up.

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Notes from the Field — April 2020

Irrigating Efficiently at Pollockville (cont'd)

Producers need to know the application rate and how much applied water soils can hold. This depends on soil texture. Retired Alberta Agriculture Irrigation Specialist Dave Hyland walked attendees through a [hand texturing technique](#) to determine the texture of their soil. He urged producers to do this at every

pivot to ensure the right information is being used to make irrigation decisions. Knowing soil textures then allows producers to use programs like the Alberta Irrigation Management Model (AIMM) to make daily irrigation decisions. Len Hingley cautioned unless you have upwards of 40 pivots, it is

probably easier to use the Washington State University Irrigation Scheduler [online](#) or their handy [iOS](#) or [Android](#) apps. For more information [contact Len Hingley](#), Irrigation Division Soil & Farm Water Specialist at the Crop Diversification Center South in Brooks.

Value-Added Beef Training Session a Hit!



Over thirty-five cattle producers came to Spondin Community Hall on February 25th to become [Verified Beef Production Plus \(VBP+\)](#). This training, delivered from Melissa Downing (provincial coordinator) was the first step for producers to become certified as a VBP+ producer. This certification also credits producers as being Certified Sustainable under the [Canadian Roundtable for Sustainable Beef](#), allowing them to participate in Certified Sustainable Beef value chains. This voluntary program includes cattle raised from birth through to harvest using certified sustainable operations. Tracked through a program called [BIX](#), producers are then eligible for a per head payment back.

VBP+ is not new to cattle producers. It was a popular program when operations with this training were eligible to apply for Growing

Forward Funding. Since 2017, some of this funding has ended, but producers are again finding value in the training, especially considering some payments for certified sustainable cattle were as high as \$20/head. It's not just the producer getting a payment - backgrounders and feedlot operators are also getting the same payment. For feedlots, where average profit per head has been \$12 for decades, an additional \$10 to \$20/head is a no brainer. Prominent feeders located in feedlot alley in Southern Alberta have been very vocal about only buying VBP+ certified cattle for their operation. If that doesn't signal where the industry is heading, I don't know what does.

To receive payments from the program you need to:

1. age verify your cattle
2. receive training and become audited through VBP+, and
3. be registered with BIX, the system that tracks your cattle via CCIA tags through the supply chain.

There is a five year audit cycle, with one of the five years being an on-farm audit, followed by digital record auditing for the others. Average costs for cow/calf producers are around \$250/year.

The Canadian Beef Sustainability Program is led by Cargill in conjunction with a number of restaurant and food service providers, including McDonald's. This group is committed to sourcing sustainable Canadian beef for their customers and have created a fund to reward producers who participate in producing these products. Each quarter this group divides the funds by the number of cattle harvested sustainably and the number of producers, feedlots, backgrounders, etc. who produced them. The per head payment is then calculated and disbursed. Payments have ranged from \$10 to \$20/head since the program began in late 2017.

Over 50% of feedlot production in Alberta is VBP+ audited and approximately 10% of cow/calf production. Cargill is no longer the only Alberta harvester audited, as JBS recently announced they became audited. While JBS is not involved in the Canadian Beef Sustainability Program, it is expected they will create their own value chain to reward audited customers.

For more information on this program, or to schedule your audit, please contact Melissa Downing with Alberta Verified Beef Production Plus at 1-866-242-7404 or through email at AB@verifiedbeef.ca.



A Tip from VBP+ Training:

Don't use soaps when washing your syringes, only hot water (not boiling as extremely high temperatures can affect the integrity of the plastic)

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Watch Out! First Noxious Weeds Emerge in Special Areas



Downy Brome (*Bromus tectorum* L.)

This species isn't found very often in Special Areas, but is usually found in southern areas near Cypress County. Several infestations exist south of the Red Deer River in the Jenner-Buffalo-Empress corridor. This brome species isn't of any feed value, but is a major fire hazard. Because this summer annual is the very first grass species to green up in the spring, it accumulates a lot of dry litter later in the season when it appears purple-brown in color with drooping awns. Once established, this species is very difficult to eradicate. While seeds drop near the plant, they are easily carried and spread through grain, vehicle contamination, or by rodents. Seed longevity is usually only a few years and seed germination is high. Effective control methods include a combination of methods, but early season chemical control prior to seed set is essential.

Burdock (*Arctium lappa* L., *Arctium minus* (Hill) Bernh.)

Commonly mistaken for rhubarb in its first year, this biennial produces huge rosettes before sending up a shoot 1-3 meters tall in the second year. With its giant taproot, this plant is most often identified once it produces burs (the inspiration for Velcro!) that wreak havoc on your livestock's hides. Because of the sticky burs, these plants are most commonly found anywhere wildlife, birds or livestock can rub the burs off, such as in coulees, around rubbing rocks, and in trees/brush. These plants can easily be controlled. For first year rhubarb-looking plants, spray with 2,4-D or glyphosate. For second year plants or "skeletons" with old burs attached, pick all the burs (wear gloves & sleeves to prevent itchiness), bag them, and then burn them to prevent spread. A few years of doing this and you will see greatly improvements in your infestations!



Black Henbane (*Hyoscyamus niger*)

This toxic plant can act as an annual or biennial and prefers sunny areas with good drainage. While it can be located anywhere, it's often found in gravel pits and graveled areas. This plant only reproduces by seeds, so picking, bagging, and burning plants are best prevention methods. Be sure to wear gloves to avoid irritation. Because it is not a strong competitor, this noxious weed can easily be outcompeted by healthy forage or crop. This woody stemmed plant can grow to be more than 1 meter tall with showy pale yellow flowers with deep purple veins.



**See a Noxious Weed?
Contact your local Ag
Fieldman**

All infestations are tracked and recorded. We may also be able to help you with control. All ratepayers are eligible for up to four hours of noxious weed spraying, time permitting.

For a listing of all Noxious & Prohibited Noxious Weeds & Factsheets,

visit: www.abinvasives.ca

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Notes from the Field — April 2020

Know Your Farm Equipment Exemptions

Special Area Community Peace Office Jamie Erickson sat down with Ag Fieldman to help dispel common myths about farm equipment exemptions.

First, CPO Erickson summarized what is considered “**farm equipment**”. This includes equipment designed and intended for use in farming operations, but **does not include**: (a truck, trailer or semi-trailer, farm equipment loaded on a truck, trailer or semi-trailer, or farm equipment towing equipment other than another piece of farm equipment. “**Implement of husbandry**”, on the other hand, means a tractor designed and used for agricultural purposes, or a vehicle designed and adapted exclusively for agricultural, horticultural, aquacultural or livestock raising operations. These two categories are important to remember because no persons less than 14 years old can drive an implement of husbandry on a highway.

Farm plated vehicles are considered Class 2 Commercial Vehicles and must follow all commercial vehicle regulations unless specifically exempted. This includes reporting to an inspection station when open (lights flashing) if the total weight of the vehicle and load (or trailer) is over 4500 kgs.

Dimensional Requirements (\$4)

No person shall:

- operate farm equipment on a highway when the farm equipment, including any load, exceeds 2.6 metres in width; the height of the highest point of the farm equipment, including any load, is greater than 5 metres from the surface of the highway; or the overall length of the farm equipment, including any load, exceeds 30.5 metres;



- operate a truck towing farm equipment, other than a grain auger, on a highway when the height of the highest point of the farm equipment, including any load, is greater than 5 metres from the surface of the highway; or the overall length of the combination exceeds 23 metres

- operate a truck or farm equipment towing a grain auger on a highway when the height of the highest point of the farm equipment, including any load, is greater than 5 metres from the surface of the highway; or the overall length of the combination exceeds (i) 30.5 metres during daytime, or (ii) 23 metres during nighttime or when visibility is less than 150 metres

- transport farm equipment loaded on a trailer on a highway when the height of the highest point of the farm equipment, including any load, is greater than 5 metres from the surface of the highway; the overall width exceeds 2.6 metres; or the overall length of the combination exceeds 23 metres.

If no exemption criteria are met or if an exemption is voided for failing to comply with requirements, then producers must comply with Commercial Vehicle Dimension requirements and obtain an over dimensional permit.

Over-dimension permits as follows:

- over 2.6 m wide – requires flags at widest point (day) and warning lights at widest point (night)
- over 3.05 m wide – requires both front and rear over dimensional signs plus:
- over 3.35 m wide – requires minimum of 1 flashing light plus a) and
- over 3.85 m wide – requires pilot truck plus a), b) and c) *
- over 4.45 m wide – requires pilot and trail vehicle plus a), b) and c) *
- *for both d) and e) no moving from 3pm-midnight on Friday or day before a stat holiday, and
- *no moving on a Sunday or Stat holiday

Width Exemptions for Farm Equipment (Commercial Vehicle Dimensions and Weight Regulation) - (\$6)

Exempt from width if:

- rubber tired farm tractor with a dozer blade (during day – must have flags at widest points, during night – must have warning lights at widest point)
- farm equipment loaded on a trailer (during day – must have flags at widest points, during night – must have warning lights at widest point)
- trailer and load if trailer and load is less than 3.8 m wide, and (i) is towed by a farm tractor, and (ii) is moving from one field to another field
- any other farm equipment (during day is ok, but during night must have warning lights at widest points)

(cont'd on pg. 5)

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Notes from the Field — April 2020

Know Your Farm Equipment Exemptions (cont'd)

The provisions of section 4 with respect to the width and height of a commercial vehicle do not apply to :

- (a) a commercial vehicle transporting hay or straw within a 50-kilometre radius of the load's place of origin if (i) the load is not more than (A) 3.2 metres in width, and (B) 5 metres in height from the surface of the highway, and (ii) when the load is being transported during nighttime, adequate warning lights are displayed on the extreme corners of the load or vehicle, whichever is the wider.
- (b) a commercial vehicle transporting stacks or round bales of hay or straw within a 50-kilometre radius of the load's place of origin if (i) the load is not more than (A) 4 metres in width, and (B) 5 metres in height from the surface of the highway, and (ii) when the load is more than 3.2 metres in width and is being transported during nighttime, there are displayed (A) to the front of the vehicle a dimensional sign that complies with a sign shown in Schedule 2 or 3, (B) a revolving amber flashing lamp on the vehicle, and (C) adequate warning lights on the extreme corners of the load or vehicle, whichever is the wider.
- (c) a commercial vehicle equipped to transport a load referred to in clause (a) or (b) if, when the vehicle is empty, any deck extensions or outriggers are folded down or retracted so that the vehicle is no more than 2.8 metres in width;
- (d) a commercial vehicle moving a grain bin on a secondary or rural highway for a distance of 60 kilometres or less during daytime if, (i) in the case of a grain bin more than 5.3 metres in height, the movement of the grain bin is via a route approved by the local utilities companies, (ii) in the case of a grain bin less than 5.0 metres in width, the movement of the grain bin is over terrain such that visibility is not impaired so as to create a safety hazard, and (iii) in the case of a grain bin 5.0 metres or more in width, the movement of the

grain bin is accompanied by a vehicle with hazard warning lights flashing.



Weight Requirements - Farm vehicles and equipment (S12)

The following vehicles are exempt from a road ban:

- (a) a rubber tired farm tractor if it is not pulling a trailer
- (b) a vehicle transporting fresh milk and cream, or either of them, from the place where the milk or cream is produced;
- (c) a vehicle transporting pregnant mare urine from the place where the urine is produced
- (d) a vehicle transporting eggs from the place where the eggs are produced.

If a road ban is in effect, the following commercial vehicles may carry on the axles on that highway up to 90% of the maximum allowable weight permitted for that axle group: a vehicle transporting (i) bread or (ii) fertilizer

Cargo Securement - Commercial Vehicle Safety Regulation (S4)

Cargo transported by a vehicle shall be contained, immobilized or secured so that it cannot (a) leak, spill, blow off, fall from, fall through or otherwise be dislodged from the vehicle, or (b) shift upon or within the vehicle to such an extent that the vehicle's stability or manoeuvrability is adversely affected. The provisions of sections 10 and 22 of NSC Standard 10 do not apply to a commercial vehicle that is registered as a Class 2 commercial vehicle under section 77(1)(b) and (2)(g) of the Operator Licensing and Vehicle Control Regulation (AR 320/2002), or a commercial vehicle that is operated under contract with a farmer for the purpose of hauling hay, used either singly or in combination with one or more

trailers, when it is transporting stacks or round or rectangular bales of hay or straw within a 50-kilometre radius of the load's place of origin if

- (a) the vehicle while transporting the load does not exceed (i) the posted speed limit, where the posted speed limit is lower than 80 kilometres per hour, or (ii) 80 kilometres per hour, where the posted speed limit is 80 kilometres per hour or higher, and
- (b) the vehicle is not operated on any highway or portion of a highway listed in Schedule 7 except to cross the highway.

National Safety Code Standard 10 Cargo Securement

This Standard applies to a vehicle or combination of vehicles (a) transporting cargo on a highway, and (b) exceeding a registered gross vehicle weight of 4 500 kilograms.

Cargo Securement Systems

4(1) Cargo securement systems, and each component of a system, used to contain, immobilize or secure cargo on or within the vehicle shall be strong enough to withstand the forces described in section 5(1) of NSC.

(2) The components of the cargo securement system of a vehicle (a) shall be in proper working order, (b) shall be fit for the purpose for which they are used, (c) shall have no knots, damaged or weakened components that will adversely affect their performance for cargo securement purposes, and (d) shall not have any cracks or cuts

Performance criteria

5(1) The cargo securement system shall be capable of withstanding the forces that result if the vehicle is subjected to each of the following accelerations: (a) 0.8 g deceleration in a forward direction; (b) 0.5 g deceleration in a rearward direction; (c) 0.5 g acceleration in either sideways direction.

(2) The cargo securement system shall provide a downward force equal to at least 20 % of the weight of an article of cargo if the article is not fully contained within the structure of the vehicle. (Every Stack of Bales needs a strap capable of 20% downward force)

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Rural Crime— Bale & Cattle Thefts

A Rural Crime Watch meeting was held in Richdale on February 24, including RCMP Livestock Investigator Corporal Lindsey Anderson and RCMP Sergeant Trent Sperlie, Hanna Detachment. The importance of reporting any suspect thefts was highlighted when quite a few hands were raised when asked if they thought they had been a victim of bale or cattle theft. When the question was asked as to who reported these thefts to the RCMP, very few hands remained up. Sgt. Sperlie stressed these crimes need to be reported to the RCMP, whether it's a few missing pairs, or a load of bales. It might not seem like worth investigating, but it could be a trend developing or a more widespread problem. Sgt. Sperlie stressed that even if you only have a suspicion, it's always worth reporting to the RCMP by calling your local dispatch.

If you report a livestock theft through the RCMP, they will contact Livestock Investigator Cpl. Anderson. Producers are always welcome to contact her directly at (403) 420-4972.



So what can you do to prevent livestock theft? Cpl. Anderson says branding is one answer. A registered hide brand can be the only reliable source of identification in an investigation. While CCIA tags are valuable in identification, they can be easily removed. Cpl. Anderson stressed CCIA tag numbers should be accurately recorded to the best of your ability in the case cattle are found and thieves did not remove tags.

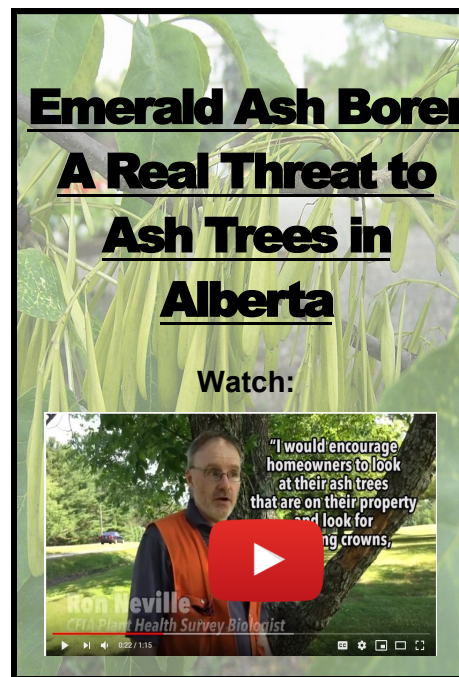
If cattle are stolen and transferred to Saskatchewan and British Columbia, Cpl. Anderson assured producers provincial brand inspection agencies work very closely together. If you ship cattle to/from Saskatchewan, a permit must be obtained with a brand inspection completed. Manitoba does not currently have a brand inspection agency, making stolen cattle extremely easy to get rid of there. To help get Manitoba on the same page as the rest of the prairie provinces, Cpl. Anderson urged you to contact your local politicians.

What about stolen bales? Similar to cattle, always report any suspicious looking behavior. If cattle or bales are being loaded at night, this could be suspicious. If you don't recognize the truck/trailer loading cattle or bales, call your neighbor and double check they are aware of the activity. It's helpful to have accurate counts of bales in fields so you can later compare when you are loading/unloading. With bale counters on your baler

monitor these days it is an easy task to complete. The trick is to remember to do it.

Finally, Cpl. Anderson urged producers to check their cattle often. While it's not always practical, the narrower the time frame cattle went missing in is, the easier it is for officers to investigate.

For those interested there are [iOS](#) and [Android](#) Apps to download called Hanna Rural Crime. You cannot report rural crime, but you do get alerts and can post things to watch out for in the community.



ASB RENTALS— Get your name on the spring list!

Tree Seedling Planter

Skunk Traps

Fabric Layer

Pipe Plows

RFID Tag Readers

Cattle Moving Signs

Have some extra time on your hands these days? Why not complete your [Environmental Farm Plan](#) to access [CAP Funding](#). If you find you need assistance email cara-3@telus.net.

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Notes from the Field — April 2020

Early Emerging Native Plants **Diana Boxma, Rangeland Agrologist**

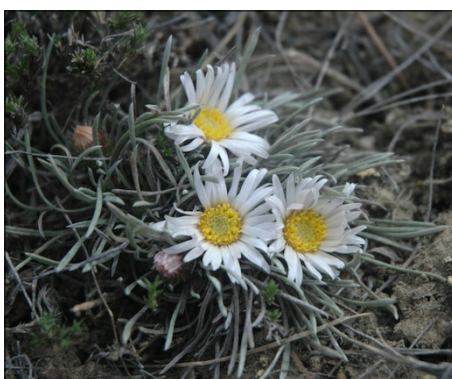
With March behind us we can hope to start seeing some green on the prairie. Along with the green some of our early flowering species are also starting to emerge. These early flowering species are an important food source for the native bees and other pollinators as they are emerging from hibernation and looking for their first spring meal. The earliest flowering species that you can start looking out for include prairie crocus, moss phlox, and the hard to spot prairie townsendia.



Prairie Crocus Photo Credit: Diana Boxma

Prairie crocus (*Anemone patens*) is our most conspicuous early flowering species. The prairie crocus is actually not a true crocus but a member of the anemone family. You can find it in most native areas beginning

in mid April, with fuzzy purple petals poking out of last year's grass. Leaves and stems elongate and develop after flowering and are also hair covered, leaves are deeply divided giving them a filamentous look.



Prairie Townsendia Photo Credit: June Flanigan, *Common Coulee Plants of Southern Alberta*

Prairie Townsendia (*Townsendia hookeri*) is listed in Alberta as an S3 species, meaning it only has 21-80 occurrences across the province, it is also one of our earliest flowering species, is quite small in size, and has a rather limited range so finding it is a rare treat. The plant is stemless, with grey-green, hairy, linear leaves arising from a tuft. On top of this tuft of leaves are flowers approximately 1 cm in diameter and consisting of a yellow disk surrounded by

white or light pink rays. You can start looking for these flowers in early April on dry exposed ridges such as coulees.



Moss Phlox Photo Credit: Diana Boxma

Moss phlox (*Phlox hoodii*) is a low growing ground cover that looks like a moss as the name suggests, but is actually a vascular plant. Moss phlox is an important species in native prairie acting as a stand in for litter in areas that have been overgrazed or disturbed by providing cover for soil which helps with moisture retention and soil cooling. You can identify moss phlox by its silvery-green moss-like foliage. Flowers are 1 cm in diameter and have five white or occasionally pink rounded petals which fuse into a tube at their base. Look for this flower starting in late April.

Did you know?

[WL Ag Supply Flaman Rentals](#) now rents 30' John Deere 455 Box Seeder Drills for all your grass seeding needs.
Call (403) 854-2474 to book!

Through [Ducks Unlimited's Forage Program](#) you can receive a rebate of \$100 per 50lb bag of Proven Forage Seed to convert cultivated land to hay or pastureland. Contact your Nutrien Ag Solutions Retailer (Delia, 403 364-3735) for more information.



Looking for agricultural teaching resources while the kids are at home?
Check out the [Classroom Agriculture Program for Student Activity Booklets & Teach Resource Manual!](#)

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New Livestock Transport Regulations Alberta Beef Producers

New regulations for the humane transport of livestock came into force on February 20, 2020 with a two-year transition period attached to the feed, water and rest interval provisions for the cattle sector. This will allow time for education, increased awareness, and development of rest stop infrastructure.

As the beef industry adapts to the new regulations, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) is focused on promoting compliance for feed, water and rest times during the two-year transition period. This will

allow industry to continue working with the CFIA on effective solutions to identified issues and then implementing any adjustments.

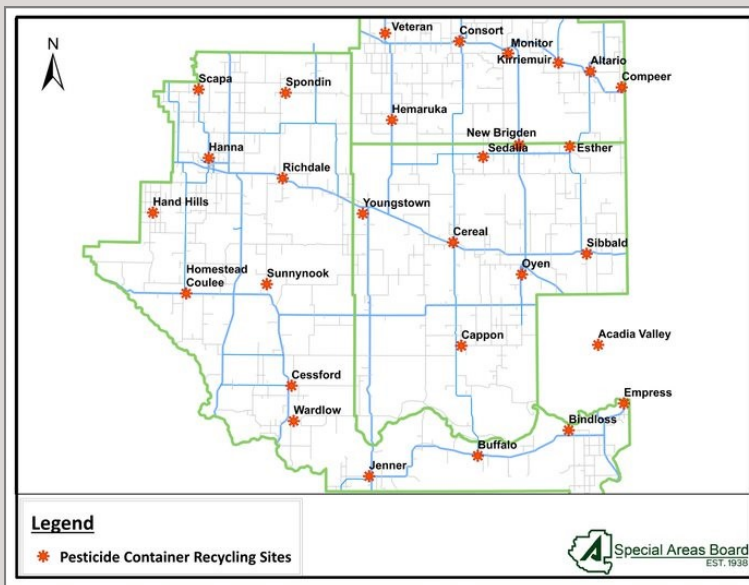
Proper animal care and welfare is a top priority for the Canadian beef industry. Producers are committed to animal welfare best practices focusing on proactive approaches to maintaining animal health, improving industry practices, and minimizing animal stress.

The Canadian Cattlemen's Association (CCA)

continues to work with government to ensure changes made will contribute to demonstrable improvements in cattle welfare and will not negatively impact beef cattle transportation.

To help raise awareness of the new regulations coming into force and to promote compliance, the CFIA has developed a [e-learning course introducing the regulations](#) and a [Livestock Transport in Canada brochure](#). More information is available on the [CCA website](#).

Rinse. Remove Caps & Booklets. Return to Collection Site.



Special Areas Chemical Recycling Site Guidelines:

WHAT'S IN	WHAT'S OUT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clean, rinsed pesticide & fertilizer containers (classified as 'Commercial') Includes seed treatment containers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unrinsed containers Containers used for home and garden care with the words 'Domestic' on their label



You can now download the [AB Crop Protection Guide \(Blue Book\)](#) or get the App for [Apple](#) or [Android](#)!

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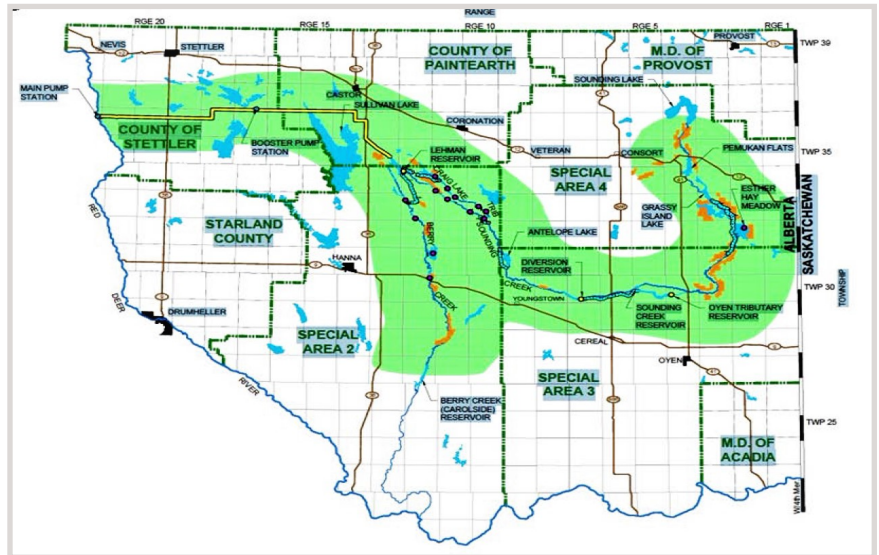


Notes from the Field — April 2020

Southern Alberta Water Supply Project (SAWSP)

Special Areas hosted a series of successful community information sessions on the Special Areas Water Supply Project last week in Consort, Hanna, and Oyen. These sessions, which provided an overview of the project and its design, also shared some history of the project and the EIA process. The highlight of the sessions? For many, the chance to discuss the Environmental Impact Assessment report - and its key outcomes - with the professionals responsible for the detailed work helped to better understand what the options are moving forward.

Copies of the presentations from the information sessions, along with key project information and background, are available at www.specialareas.ab.ca and at local District Offices.



AG EVENTS IN YOUR AREA

Due to the current outbreak of COVID-19 many Agricultural Events are now being offered online. Follow [Chinook Applied Research Association's](#) pages for current information or go to [CARAwebinar](#).



Date	Time	Event Information
Thursday, April 2	2 to 3 pm	Intercropping Insights webinar—register here
Monday, April 6	2 to 3 pm	Bee Diversity in Southern Alberta—register here
Tuesday, April 7	2 to 3 pm	Plants for Bee Habitat—register here
Wednesday, April 8	2 to 3 pm	Propagating & Growing Native Plants—register here
Wednesday, April 8	12 to 1 pm	Pulse Agronomy Webinar: Pulse weed control—register here
Thursday, April 16	2 to 3 pm	Social Media & Agriculture Webinar—register here
Thursday, April 16	10 to 11 am	Explore Local—Alternative market channels to retail and food service—register here
Thursday, April 30		Explore Local—Local food council recommendations—register here



A Tip from VBP+ Training:
Cancer eye, foot rot or broken leg?
Check out the [Fit for Transport Guidelines](#) from CFIA before you ship livestock

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Tree Pruning

For beginners doing pruning in their yards.

For any large pruning please contact professional certified arborist.

When to prune?

- **Coniferous trees**, like spruce or pine, can be pruned any time of year. For most trees, the best is time from March to mid-April or during the winter
- **Birch and Maple** – prune ONLY during the growing season – June and July – leaves must be fully developed
- **Elm trees** – DO NOT prune from April 1 till October 1
- **Hardwood trees**, like aspen or ash, **and shrubs without showy flowers**, prune in the dormant season
 - to easily visualize the structure of the tree,
 - to maximize wound closure in the growing season after pruning,
 - to reduce the chance of transmitting disease, and
 - to discourage excessive sap flow from wounds

Why prune trees?

- To remove “**3D**- **D**ead, **D**iseased or storm-**D**amaged” branches
- To thin the crown to permit new growth and better air circulation
- To reduce the height of a tree or to remove obstructing lower branches
- To shape a tree for design purposes
- To reduce potential fire hazards
- To encourage flowering, to promote fruit production
- To address safety issues for people or property

How much to prune?

- Every time you prune a tree, it stresses the tree and increases vulnerability
- Pruning increases the opportunity for insects and diseases to invade trees
- Generally speaking, prune no more than 25 % of living branches
- The amount of live tissue that should be removed depends on the tree size, species, and age, as well as the pruning objectives



Basic principles of pruning

- Visualize the shape of the plant at maturity – how the tree will look like after pruning
- Remove dead, damaged and diseased wood
- Select the key branches or main stems that you want to keep
- Remove weak crotches, crossed branches, suckers and watersprouts (new branches growing near bottom of the tree)
- Cut back to branch collar to leave the smallest wound possible
- Remember that more is not always better – you can always prune next year



Pruning techniques

- **Cleaning** is the removal of dead, dying, diseased, crowded, weakly attached, and low-vigor branches from the crown of a tree.
- **Crown Thinning** is the selective removal of branches to increase light penetration and air movement through the crown (the branches and leaves extending from the trunk or main stems). Thinning opens the foliage of a tree, reduces weight on heavy limbs, and helps retain the tree's natural shape.
- **Raising** removes the lower branches from a tree in order to provide clearance for buildings, vehicles, pedestrians, and vistas.
- **Reduction** reduces the size of a tree, often for clearance for utility lines.



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Pruning Tools

- Keep pruning equipment (pruning shears, loppers, saws, etc.) sharp and clean.
- You get what you pay for, so cheaper tools....usually are !!!!
- Before you cut, dip your pruner for a few seconds in bleach.
- After pruning, put the tools under running water for 10 minutes and thoroughly dry.
- Dry tools after clean up – don't let them rust.
- Clean up tools after you finish your work.
- Buy only the tools that you really need – pruners, rounding saw, loopers, sheers, secateurs

Pruning Shrubs

- Shrubs that bloom **before June 20** should be pruned immediately after the bloom period.
- Shrubs that bloom **after June 20** should be pruned in the dormant season or just before growth in spring.
- Not all shrubs need to be pruned, not every year and not severely.
- Many flowering trees/shrubs (eg crabapple, hawthorn, pin cherry, chokecherry, etc) are susceptible to fire blight and black knot fungus, and pruning can spread these diseases.

Pruning Roses

- In the wild, roses produce strong new shoots from near the base of the plant each season.
- Prune during the winter – March/April just before the season starts.
- Deadhead during the summer – prune back to a five leaflet leaf.
- Cut above an outward pointing bud to encourage an open center.
- Cut back into healthy wood.
- Cut any diseased or damaged branch.
- Remove all thin, weak canes that are smaller in diameter than a pencil .



SAFETY IN PRUNING

- Get pruning safety training, available at many arborists.
- Have an emergency plan in place in case an incident occurs.
- Wear eye protection at all times.
- Wear a hard hat and steel toed boots.
- Wear leather or other appropriate gloves.
- Do not use axes or hatchets—use proper pruning equipment.
- If you use power tools, please follow their safety procedures.
- For beginners, do not climb trees.
- Before trimming a tree, inspect the area to identify possible hazards (e.g. presence of power lines, broken or cracked limbs after a severe storm) and take appropriate actions to prevent injuries or accidents.
- Do not prune under power lines
- Do not use dead branches for support.
- Do not leave partially sawn limbs on trees.

Myths about Pruning

(and the truth)

1. Pruning is difficult – *pruning is not complicated, but it is hard work*
2. Plants will die if they are pruned wrong time of year - *not true*
3. All pruning must be done during the winter - *with a few exceptions, you can prune year-round*
4. Removing and pruning trees is a crime against nature - *not true*
5. Most trees need pruning - *this is not true, unless there is a valid reason to prune a tree*
6. Hedge shears are all you need to prune shrubs - *shrubs require more than hedge shears, they require proper pruning*
7. Anybody with a pick-up truck, chainsaw, and pruners is an expert - *use people with knowledge and expertise in this area*
8. All cuts must be treated with paint - *not true*

SPECIAL AREAS BOARD



Notes from the Field — April 2020

Meet Your Local Agricultural Service Boards

Special Area No. 2

Chair: Neal Roes

Vice Chair: Nathan Berg

**Brad Osadczuk
Lee Quaschnick**

**Derek Christensen
Greg Standing**

Special Area No. 3

Chair: Walt Scarff

Vice Chair: Jerry Logan

**Scott Wood
Travis Foot**

Sam Shadlock

Special Area No. 4

Chair: Trevor Deagle

Vice Chair: Gordon Long

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Graham Schetszle**

Todd Murphy

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PLANTING NOW!**

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TreeTime

Prairie Shelterbelt Program

**Live Skunk Traps
are available for rent
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Your Agriculture Fieldmen

JESSE WILLIAMS



**SA2
(403) 854-5625/
(403) 854-1114**

DON HOGAN



**SA3
(403) 664-3618/
(403) 664-5585**

JUSTINE COMEAU



**SA4
(403) 577-3523/
(403) 575-5525**

We offer support for programs including:

- ◆ Plant identification & noxious weed control
- ◆ Grazing management & strategies
- ◆ Pest management & controls
- ◆ Canadian Ag Partnership (CAP) Funding
- ◆ 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.