

Forage Facts



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Annual General Meeting & CultivateAg Annual Reception

Our **Annual General Meeting & CultivateAg Annual Reception** is fast approaching, and we're looking forward to seeing you!

Doors for the AGM will open at 3:15 PM at the **Holiday Inn in Grande Prairie, Alberta**. The event will begin at 3:30, and everyone is welcome! Members have voting rights; memberships will be available at the door if you wish to vote and are not a current member.

Following the AGM, we will close the venue and re-open for the CultivateAg Annual Reception at 5:15; a glorious evening full of inspiration, transformation and honoring Peace Region Producers.

Tickets are available Online or through a PCBFA Representative on October 25th, 2023. Pre-Purchasing tickets is strongly preferred.

We hope to see you there!

DID YOU KNOW?

In 2021, Women made up 30.4% of the Farm Operators in Canada.



Crop-Livestock Integration Project

By Alaina Archibald, with support of Dr. Akim Omokanye

Many astute readers may recall our article "Where's The Beef?" in the September edition of Forage Facts, and for those of you who don't, for the first time in many years Peace Country Beef & Forage had a Beef Project happening on the Research Farm! With the support of local producer Brock Friedel, we housed 17 Cow-Calf pairs, utilizing their desire to forage for feed while depositing fertilizer on our Crop-Livestock Integration Project.

The purpose behind this project is to evaluate the benefits of integrating cows on grain production fields, and to examine the improvement of soil composition, crop fertility and carbon sequestration through grazing and utilizing manure. Soil samples were taken before seeding, and after grazing of the cover crop cocktail mixture. The botanical composition of the cocktail, forage production and quality indicators were taken prior to the cattle entering the property. Results from the soil samples will be available at a later date.

These hungry herbivores spent 55 days rotating between 4 paddocks spanning over roughly 15 acres filled with a beautiful, lush Forage Cover Crop designed by Covers & Co. The Cover Crop housed many varieties of plants including Hairy Vetch, Italian Rye Grass, Spring Triticale, Forage Oats, Daikon Radish, Purple Top Turnip, Forage Peas, Berseem Clover, Forage Barley, Sorghum Sudan, German Millet, Flax, Sunflower, Non-GMO Soybeans and Buckwheat.

The crop was seeded in the spring of 2023, and showed peak maturity in September. During bloom in August, it was a beautiful crop to witness; with great pollinator activities resulting from the 15 diverse crop species seeded in the cocktail blend.

Our furry volunteers were weighed prior to arrival as well as upon returning home. The travel days were deducted from the 55 day schedule to account for partial days and stress. Based on 53 full days of grazing, we saw no gain in the lactating beef cows, but rather, the beef cows seemed to maintain their weights as expected this time of year. However, we saw an average rate of gain of 2.69 ADG in the calves, with the highest being 3.25 ADG for one calf.

The average rate of gain in the calves was impressive considering that the typical growth rate for beef calves is between 0.8 and 1.2kg per day (1.75 - 2.75lb per day) from birth weight through weaning. The cocktail blend offered an average of 16% protein and 63% energy in the form of total digestible nutrients.

We gained valuable knowledge with this portion of the project and would like to try it again with a different approach to grazing such as strip grazing or grazing at a different stage of plant maturity, to compare results.



Extension Coordinator, Shelby Dillman

Feed Options in the North

By Shelby Dillman

Severe hay shortages over the past few years have forced many producers to get creative when feeding their livestock, especially in order to sustain them over our harsh northern Alberta winters. Hay has been a staple forage in Alberta for well over a century, and with new technological developments over recent decades, we have been able to expand our feed options with silage and haylage.

Traditionally, barley silage has been popular for many years as it matures early and performs well in cool weather and most soil zones. Barley averages 12% protein, 12% starch, and 65% TDN. Corn silage, however, has gained significant popularity in southern Alberta with many benefits including being very palatable, yielding a higher dry matter intake, it's higher in nutrients (averaging 8% Protein, 20% Starch, 70% Total Digestible Nutrients), and it offers higher live weight gains. Corn silage is also more digestible than its grassy counterparts, but does require some additional supplementation.

Silage pits are not as common in the north as other areas of the country, but they do offer more protection from the weather and ferment a feed source that is high in nutrients. Chop length is important during the production phase, as it will directly relate to how much feed will be consumed. Medium chop length tends to be the most effective for increased intake. Cattle do exceptionally well on silage, but with the good comes the bad - due to the high moisture content, transporting this heavy, soggy cow-chow can take a big hit to the pocketbook, burning more fuel for transport to the pit and running more equipment due to feeding more frequently. It also requires a whole new lineup of equipment including choppers to harvest, silage trucks to haul, a tractor or loader to pack pits/fill trucks, and a feed wagon or feed truck. That being said, the nutritional benefits of silage can offset these factors by reducing feed wastage and maximizing gains.

Wrapped haylage bales have been popping up throughout the region for many years. When harvested correctly, like silage, it is a great nutrient-packed feed alternative to dry hay and hosts a variety of other benefits including less exposure to weather damage, increased palatability and greater digestibility. These bales are easy to handle with a tractor, though a little on the heavy side due to their moisture content. Once a bale is open, it must be fed immediately to avoid spoilage. Additional risks can include mold, freezing and heat damage or spontaneous combustion. One of the best ways to get the most out of haylage and prevent waste is to either roll it out or shred it with a bale processor when feeding for maximum utilization.

Hay has always been a go-to, readily available forage due to the fact that harvest equipment is abundant in the Peace Country, there is a larger market for hay, lower baling costs per tonne, and it is very easy to handle. On the flip side, dry hay often has lower nutritional value, the bales are easily prone to weather damage and there is more significant loss if stored improperly. With hay deemed "good" quality, we generally strive to see Protein around 12% and TDN at 55% or higher. When feed quality is sparse, another common practice is to tub-grind bales with straw to stretch out forage options. Another newer practice is injecting bales with a molasses-mixture that supplements vitamins and minerals, while making the feed source more palatable. Regardless of the forage option you choose, it is critical to feed test and supplement with proper vitamins, minerals and rations in order to achieve balanced nutrition that will yield the best results for your herd.



Upcoming Events

| Event | Date & Time | Location |
|---|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Forest Grazing Workshop Big Lakes County | November 10 9:00 AM - 4:30 PM | Triangle Hall High Prairie, AB |
| PCBFA AGM | November 25 3:30 PM | Holiday Inn Grande Prairie, AB |
| CultivateAg Annual Reception | November 25 5:15 PM | Holiday Inn Grande Prairie, AB |
| Wintering Cattle in the Peace | November 30 4:30 - 8:00 PM | Eureka River Hall Eureka River, AB |

Want to know more about any of these upcoming events?
Contact us at info@pcbfa.ca, or give us a call at 780-834-7256!

Thank You to our 2023 Farm-Scale Partners

Seeding,
Allan Mclachlan & Garth Shaw

Spraying & Herbicide,
Kramer Custom Agri Services
& Hawkview Ag

Thank You!

Harvesting & Trucking,
Prairie Coast Equipment Fairview
Hostettler Farm
MJ Ag Solutions

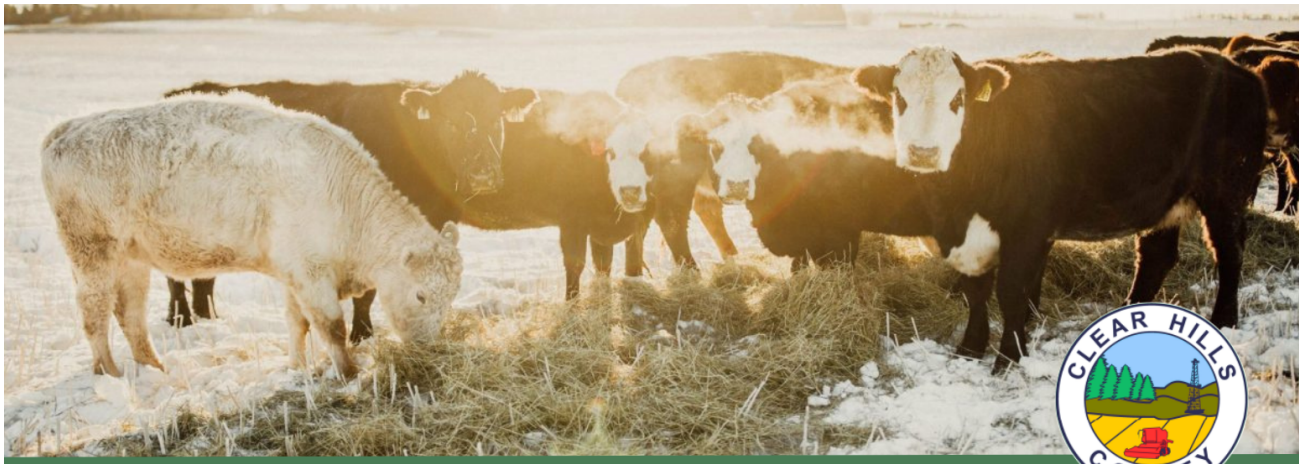
Thank You to Our Municipal Partners!



NORTHERN SUNRISE COUNTY



Wintering Cattle in the Peace



Wintering Cattle in the Peace

Helping farmers to grow better, together.

Eureka River Hall

**November 30
2023**

Doors Open @ 4:30
Supper Provided

Tickets will be available
November 1st both
online or through a
PCBFA Representative.

Pre-Purchasing of Tickets
is preferred.



THE SEMINAR VISION

Join us for an informative evening with fellow Peace Region Cattle Producers to come together in the face of a challenging year.



PREDATION PRESENTATION

Presented By
Sergeant Daniel Downie



NUTRITION PRESENTATION

Presented by
Barry Yaremciio



@ info@pcbfa.ca

peacecountrybeef.ca



Feed Testing Program

PCBFA Members receive **2 Free Feed Tests** with their Membership!

Additional tests or tests for non-members are billed at cost.

Probes Available - Additional Charges May Apply

Drop-Off Locations

PCBFA Research Farm
County of GP Clairmont Office
MD of Greenview Office
Big Lakes County Office
Saddle Hills County Office

Need more info?

Contact us at info@pcbfa.ca



On-Farm Funding Opportunities:

OFCAF Program on Hold

As of May 10th the OFCAF program will be on pause.

Intake is expected to resume in 2024.

The SCAP & RALP Programs are Open!

If you're still interested in applying for funding,, the **Sustainable Canadian Agriculture Partnership** and **Resilient Agricultural Landscapes Programs** are open. These two programs are the successors of the CAP and Growing Forward Programs and will require an active EFP to receive funding.

Some of the activities funded are: Cross Fencing, Offsite Watering Systems, Converting cropland to perennial pasture, farm technology (soil sensors etc), and shelter belts.

More information and full funding lists can be found at:

<https://www.alberta.ca/sustainable-cap-programs.aspx>

Call to Action!



Interested in becoming a PCBFA Director?

PCBFA is a producer-led charity dedicated to moving forward the agriculture industry in the Peace – by enhancing its environmental, social, and economic sustainability. Our board of directors represent the voices of the producers from across the Peace Region and work together to develop long-term strategy, direction, and goals for the association.

Director Responsibilities

Directors are expected to attend as many board meetings as possible. We meet monthly, with a target of 8 meetings per year occurring over Zoom, and 4 meetings per year in person. Directors are expected to attend the Annual General Meeting. Directors are encouraged to host a PCBFA Project or Event on their farm. Directors are also expected to represent PCBFA and advocate for PCBFA when needed.

If you are interested, please join us at our AGM on November 25, 2023 and have someone prepared to nominate you. If you are unable to attend, please send a letter expressing your willingness to let your name stand for nomination, either with someone attending the meeting or via e-mail executivedirector@pcbfa.ca

Welcome!



Congratulations to Liisa Jeffrey and her family on their healthy new baby boy!

MIKK JEFFREY

August 25, 2023



Member Information

Follow Us



/peacecountrybeef



@PCBFA



@peacecountrybeef



Peace Country Beef & Forage Association



peacecountrybeef.ca

Member Feed Testing Service

PCBFA Members receive 2 free basic feed tests with their membership.

All feed tests are sent to Central Testing Labs in Winnipeg. Nutrients and minerals are tested by wet chemistry.

Nitrate, Mold, and Mycotoxin tests can be added and will be invoiced at lab cost.

Feed Test Pricing:

Feed Tests for Members (after 2 free)

OR Non-Members

Billed at Lab Cost

Rush Shipping

\$50

Hay Probe Deposit

\$200

Feed Test Drop Off Sites:

Fairview Research Farm, County of Grande Prairie's Clairmont Office, MD of Greenview's Valleyview Office, Saddle Hills County Office, Big Lakes County Office.

2023-24 Board of Directors

Chairman:

Jordan Barnfield

Vice Chairman:

Andrew Hale

Treasurer:

Dan Martin

Secretary:

Louise Liebenberg

Directors:

Allan McLachlan

Bonnie Wanchuk

Garth Shaw

Kasity Bilous

Kyle Davies

Michael Strebchuk

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Coming Soon!

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