

STARLAND AG TALK

Volume 3, Issue 1

IN TUNE...IN PROGRESS

March 2006



Events to Keep in Mind

Landowners & Surface Rights Holders Information Meeting: Oil and Gas Development Issues

MONDAY MARCH 6, 2006
7:00 pm
Morrin Community Hall

Organized by local landowners for landowners
Sponsored by Starland County

- ⇒ All surface rights holders welcome
- ⇒ Examination & discussion of current and past leases welcomed
- ⇒ No oil and gas representatives, please

Guest Speaker and Facilitator:
Norma LaFonte
(LaFonte Consulting Service)

Coalbed Methane— Impact on Alberta Crop Producers & Landowners

Alberta Environmental Farm Plan Workshops

Rumsey ~ Rumsey Community Center

Workshop I ~ March 8
Workshop II ~ March 15

Drumheller ~ Co-op Boardroom
Workshop I ~ March 20th
Workshop II ~ March 27th

~ All workshops start at 10am
~ For more information or to register for a workshop, contact Lindsay Cherpin, Technical Assistant (772-3793 or by email at Lindsay@starlandcounty.com) or Gordon Ellis, Workshop Facilitator (403-556-1258 or by email at ellis@AlbertaEFP.com).

Manure Management for Cow/Calf Producers: What is Required by the Agricultural Operation Practices Act (AOPA)

- from The Standard: Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development, March 2005

*This document is not intended as legal advice, but as an interpretive document to the Agricultural Operations Practices Act

Manure management requirements for all livestock operations in Alberta are included under the Agricultural Operation Practices Act (AOPA). While this legislation focuses more on confined feeding operations (e.g., feedlots, backgrounder operations, etc.), there are also direct implications for cow/calf producers.

Although this legislation does not regulate livestock in a grazing situation, cow/calf operations are subject to the regulations for manure collection, application and storage setback distances from neighbours and common bodies of water. A common body of water refers to the bed and shores of rivers, canals, sloughs and lakes that are surrounded by (common to) more than one landowner.

Key requirements

Managing manure is an integral part of protecting the environment (surface water and groundwater), and minimizing nuisance impacts on neighbours. Cow/calf producers should be familiar with the requirements for:

- Manure storage
- Corrals and wintering sites
- Manure application
- Record keeping and soil testing

Manure storage

There are different requirements for short-term than for long-term manure storage. A "short-term" solid manure storage site can only be used for a maximum of 7 months over a 3-year period. If a person stores manure or compost for a longer period, the site used must meet the requirements in the legislation for a manure storage facility. Short-term manure storage sites are generally used to store manure collected from locations where manure has accumulated before it can be spread on the land. Feedlot pens are considered manure storage facilities not short-term storage. Producers with short-term sites must deal with runoff issues and must locate manure or compost at least:

- 150 m from residences not under their control
- 100 m from a spring or water well
- 30 m from a common body of water
- 1 m above the water table
- 1 m above the 1 in 25 year maximum flood level

Corrals and wintering sites

Livestock corrals and wintering sites (locations where animals are fed and sheltered over the winter) must be located at least 30 metres (m) away from a common body of water to reduce runoff risks.

If a corral or site is closer than 30 m and cannot be moved either:

- An interceptor (e.g., berm or ditch) must be constructed between the site and the water to divert runoff from the site away from the water; **OR**
- Manure and bedding accumulated at the site must be moved to an appropriate manure storage facility or area before runoff occurs.

Note: Regulations for manure application, record keeping, and soil testing must also be followed.

GREETINGS

Hello! I am the new Assistant Fieldman for Starland County. I came to Starland from the County of Newell where I have been administering a rural conservation program. My program in the south country had been involved with Environmental Farm Plan workshop delivery, nutrient management practices, range health, and integrated crop management - which ranged from conservation cropping practices to shelterbelt development.

In Starland County I will be administering a Rural Conservation Program, along with diagnosis and monitoring of weeds, insects and disease, and daily Agricultural Service Board Activities. The Rural Conservation Program is based on a partnership between Starland County and Alberta Environmentally Sustainable Agriculture (A.E.S.A.). The goal of the program is to promote industry initiative in environmental stewardship. My position supports this initiative by facilitating information exchange between agriculture producers, govern-

ment and private industry. The program targets four areas of improvement, which are Nutrient Management, Pasture and Riparian Health, Integrated Crop Management and Biodiversity Enhancement. Information is conveyed to producers through means such as farm visits, newsletters, field days, conferences and awareness programs such as the Environmental Farm Plans. I can also help link producers to appropriate funding programs that provide assistance in implementing environmentally beneficial management practices. I encourage you to contact me with any questions or suggestions ~ I look forward to working with you! I can be reached by phone at 772-3793 or by email at

Lindsay@starlandcounty.com.

Lindsay Cherpin



2006 AGRICULTURAL SERVICE BOARD EQUIPMENT RENTAL RATES

The ASB recently purchased a JD 1590 no-till drill which will be available to rent to county farmers this spring. This is a 15 foot unit with a grass seed attachment and should be ideal for seeding grass into standing stubble or even into sprayed out sod.

1. 15 foot JD No-till Drill
\$ 6.00 / Acre (*min 25 acre charge includes delivery*)
2. 10 Foot Brillion Grass Seeder
\$ 1.00 / Acre (*min charge \$25.00*)
3. Cattle Squeeze
\$ 10.00 / Day
4. Hoof Trimming Chute
\$ 20.00 / Day
5. Livestock Weigh Scale
\$ 10.00 / Day
6. Water Transfer System
\$ 250.00 / Dugout (*includes delivery*)
7. Magpie Traps
\$ 5.00 / Week
8. Skunk Traps
\$ 5.00 / Week (*paid up front*)
9. Pruning Tools
1 Day Free \$5.00 / Day Thereafter
10. Measuring Wheel
1 Day Free \$5.00 / Day Thereafter
11. Back Pack Sprayer
1 Day Free \$5.00 / Day Thereafter
12. Bran Bait Applicator for Grasshopper Control or Broadcast Grass Seeding
\$25.00 per Day (*\$25.00 damage deposit*)

Adjustments to the Canada-Alberta Farm Stewardship Program Funding for 2006

BMP Category	Category Name	Change/Addition
2	Manure Treatment	Composting of manure and deads
8	Product and Waste Management	Improved silage storage
14	Improved Cropping Systems	Inclusion of GPS controlled variable rate technology
14	Improved Cropping Systems	Zero-till openers
16	Improved Pest Management	New B MP practice for pressure jug rinser
16	Improved Pest Management	New BMP practice for rinse tank on sprayer
17	Nutrient Recovery from Wastewater—Greenhouses	Increase to cap changes at \$20k
18	Irrigation Management	Conversion to low pressure pivots and conversions from flood to low pressure pivots
21	Enhancing Wildlife Habitat and Biodiversity	Added wetland restoration
ALL	In-Kind Labour Rate Increase	Increased to \$20/hour

FIELDMANS FORUM

As I write this column it is snowing outside. I'm not sure if it will amount to much, however it does give us the sense that it is actually winter. I have talked to several farmers who are concerned that the ground is drying out due to lack of any precipitation this winter and have asked me how dry it will be in the spring. Now I must qualify that I'm no soil scientist and I certainly have no ability to predict the weather, however I would think given the amount of rain which fell in Starland from the middle of August until October we have the best sub-soil conditions we have seen in quite some time. As well most everywhere I have been the soil is frozen solid to the surface. I would think that we are still in pretty good shape all things considered. The only down side to this lack of snow cover is the run off issue and I do know that there are areas that could use snow melt to fill some dugouts and sloughs.

What to grow this spring? How much fertilizer? Should I chem. fallow? Do I need to purchase seed? These questions are on farmers minds at this time of year every year. However this upcoming season appears it could be even more challenging to decide on these issues given the "rosy" price outlook for all commodities. My first piece of advice would be to figure out your cost of production. If you have internet access there are some good spreadsheets available from both the Alberta and Saskatchewan Ag websites if you look for crop production economics. If you have not got access please give me a call as we have copies of the Sask Ag Crop Planning guide at the office.

Once you have your cost of production pegged you should have a clearer picture of what may or may not work for your operation and hopefully this allows you the ability to lock in profit should the opportunity arise. Right now I am waiting for the CWB fixed price and basis contracts to come out on February 27. Given the drought in the US winter wheat area I think we may have the ability to lock in some reasonable prices on the wheat side in the short

tem through this pricing mechanism.

As far as the rest of the crops go, your guess is as good as mine. At this stage of the game feed grains, canola and flax don't appear to me to have a whole bunch of life due to the amount of carryover we will likely have in our system. Peas might be a good choice as they certainly don't require the fertilizer inputs; however will there be wall to wall peas in western Canada due to high fertilizer prices?

Given that most of us are in a crop rotation we will likely be growing some or all of these commodities so it will be imperative that we know our cost of production so we can price on any weather rally spikes as they hopefully arise.

On a final note get a fusarium and germination test done. Due to the wet fall and the amount of weathering your crop may have been exposed to the germinations have been all over the map. Regarding fusarium, don't take the chance, get the test. This highly adaptable pathogen will survive in our climate and it is showing up in seed samples. In this highly competitive industry can we afford to knowingly or unknowingly seed a crop which may contain this pest? Remember once fusarium becomes established it will not go away. Samples can be submitted for testing through the Starland Seed Plant, most elevators and the county office.

Until next time stay safe and if you have any questions please contact me at 772-3793.

Alan Hampton
Agricultural Fieldman



SHELTERBELT TREES

The deadline to get your application in for PFRA shelterbelt trees is March 15. In order to qualify you must have a minimum of 39 acres of land. For anyone looking for trees that have less than 39 acres the Alberta Tree Nursery in Bowden has a very good selection of trees at a minimal cost. The deadline for the AB Nurseries is the middle of April, although they may accept applications later if they have trees available. Contact the County Office to get an application form.

This e-mail just arrived from PFRA which updated us on what species they still have available:

- Green Ash
- Caragana
- Villosa Lilac
- Buffaloberry (past order limit of 800 per applicant is waived this year)
- Chokecherry
- Dogwood
- Sea Buckthorn (past order limit of 800 per applicant is waived this year)
- Siberian Crab
- Snowberry
- Scots Pine (past order limit of 300 per applicant is waived this year)
- Siberian Larch (plugs)
- Colorado spruce (order limit has been raised to 1000 for this year)
- Mongolian cherry

MORE Events to Keep in Mind



CAIS Meeting

March 2, 2006
Drumheller Stampede
Barn
7:30 to 9:30pm

C-2000 Club Meeting

Delia Community Center
March 13, 9am Start
Speaker: Lee Melvill on
Marketing, Futures and
more

Helpful Links

cowsandfish.org

Grazing management in relation to riparian health and productivity

foragebeef.ca

Technical information of forage and beef production

www.agric.gov.ab.ca ~ Ropin' the Web

Broad Range of Agriculture Info
Publication Orders

reducedtillage.ca

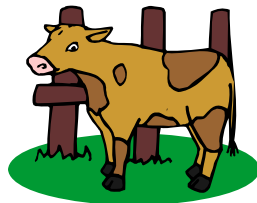
Sustainable crop production systems

“Can We Graze Cows for More than 300 Days a Year?”

“Research at the Lacombe Research Center has shown that swath grazing can reduce the traditional winter feeding and yardage costs by up to 50% with cows coming through the winter in the same body condition as those wintered on stored feed.”

~ Duane McCartney, Forage/Beef Systems, Western Forage/Beef Group, Volume 9, Issue 2; November 2005

For more information, refer to the foragebeef.ca website.



2006 RTUW Gopher Bait Distribution Program

The Service Board will once again be selling a Ready to Use Wet Strychnine product for use in Richardson ground squirrel control. This is a .4% strychnine solution mixed with AB grown clean oats. The product is mixed in Coaldale and is shipped fresh the same day to our drop off point. We are able to get it to you the following morning which ensures that the product is no more than 24 hours in the pail.

Order & Distribution Dates

Order Date Tuesday

March 21
April 4
April 11
April 18
April 25
May 2
May 16

Distribution Date Friday

March 24
April 7
April 14
April 21
April 28
May 5
May 19

Pricing for 2006

12 Kg pail \$97.00/pail
8 Kg \$72.00/pail

Orders must be into Starland County by 11:00 A.M. on Tuesdays

Orders may be extended into June depending on the demand. Contact Alan Hampton or Lindsay Cherpin @ 772-3793 for further information.

SPILL REPORTING IN ALBERTA

Environmental Spills

Alberta Environment 24-Hour Environmental Hotline
1-800-222-6514

Transportation Spills (Road and Rail)

Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation
1-800-272-9600
CANUTEC: **1-623-996-6666**

ASB SERVICES

1. Shelterbelt Spraying Program 150 Gallon Tank
\$50.00 per hour plus Chemical (*minimum charge \$50.00*)
2. Noxious Weed Spraying Program for spot control 150 Gallon Tank
\$50.00 per hour plus Chemical
3. Backsloping Program for Fenceline Topsoil Work (*currently under review*)
60 % Incentive Program for Qualifying Projects
4. Weed Spraying Honda Quad 15 gallon Tank
\$50.00 per hour plus Chemical (*minimum charge \$50.00*)
5. Tree Planter Free of charge if trees ordered through County Office
6. Treflan Applicator & Disc for Shelterbelt Weed Control
\$50.00 per Hour plus Chemical
7. Fabric Roller for Shelterbelt Weed Control
\$20.00 per Hour plus cost of fabric (*minimum charge \$50.00*)



For further information or to book any of our equipment please contact the office at 772-3793