

STARLAND AG TALK

Volume 7, Issue 4

IN TUNE...IN PROGRESS

January 2011



New this Issue...

Working Well: Water Well Management for Well Owners



Starland County and the Morrin Ag Society are partnering to host a Working Well Water Workshop. Please Join us on February 2, 2011 at the Morrin Hall starting at 1:00pm. **Pre-Register required**

Details on pages 2 and 3

Required participant information for the workshop:

1. Legal Land Location and/or Lot/Block/Plan #
2. Date of Well Completion
3. Original Owner OR Depth of Well

Anyone interested contact Jared Malansky at Starland County 403-772-3793 or email jared@starlandcounty.com

Funding Program Updates:

The Growing Forward Stewardship Plan for **Integrated Crop Management** is no longer accepting applications as of July 9th.

Manure Management, Long-term Water Management and Grazing/Winter Feeding management Programs are still accepting applications.

Get your registration and applications in sooner rather than later! Funding is on a first come first serve basis and is being allocated quickly.

For Questions, Applications and Work Plans Please call Jared Malansky at Starland County Office 403-772-3793, or call directly to Diana Bingham @ 780-632-5487; Heather Landiak @ 780-632-5467; Ag-Info Centre @ 310-3276.

The Delia C-2000 Annual Work-

Delia C-2000 Workshop

shop will be held on February 3 from 9:00 am to 3:30 pm includes Trade Show and lunch. For further info contact Barry Mason(403-364-2129) or Alan Hampton(403-772-3793)

Grain & Oilseed Marking Course

Seating is limited for this six-day grain marketing course at Drumheller sponsored by the Alberta Canola Producers Commission. This basic level course will help you better understand basis, futures options contracts, and strategies for grain marketing. Instructor is: Lee Melvill, MNP. The course will be held on Feb 14, 21, 23, 25, March 1 and 3.

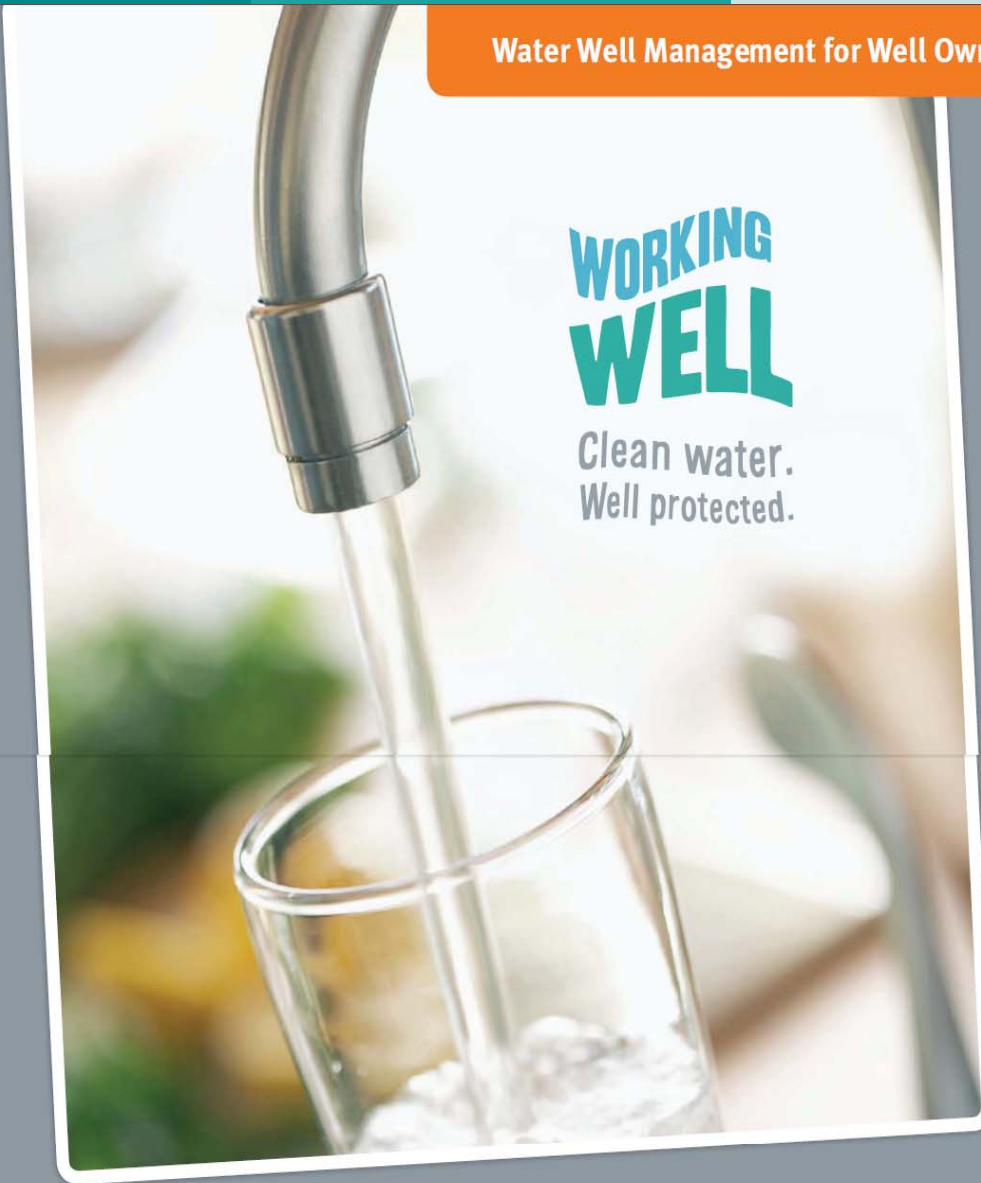
Website: http://canola.ab.ca/grain_oilseed_marketing_course_drumheller_spring_2011.aspx

Course fee is \$500 per person + GST, which includes course materials and lunches. A second member of the same farming operation is \$400. **To register, contact the Alberta Canola Producers Commission at 1- 800-551-6652. For more information on the course, contact Lee Melvill. Phone 403-376-0419**

Don't forget to get your Shelterbelt tree applications in for this years tree order. Applications available at Starland County Office 403-772-3793.

Deadline for applications is on March 1, 2011.

Water Well Management for Well Owners



Join us at a Working Well Workshop

Hosted by: Starland County / Morrin Ag Society

Date: February 2, 2011

Location: Morrin Hall

Start time: 1:00pm

Please call or email to pre-register:

Jared Malansky 403-772-3793 Email: jared@starlandcounty.com

Government of Alberta ■ Canada



BACKGROUND

The majority of people in rural Alberta rely on private, domestic water wells, which are growing by approximately 4,500 wells per year. In Alberta's thriving economy, expansion of domestic wells, industrial activity and agricultural operations is placing increasing demand on provincial groundwater supplies. As such, there is an overwhelming interest in groundwater protection and information on water well management.

To meet the demand for information, Alberta Environment, in partnership with other provincial, federal and municipal agencies, piloted several water well management workshops in 2007. These workshops were designed to help private, domestic water well owners understand and manage their water well and groundwater supplies. This successful pilot led to the establishment of the Working Well program.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Working Well is a province-wide, multi-agency program that encourages Alberta's water well owners to protect their wells and common groundwater supplies. The overarching goal of the program is to ensure safe and secure groundwater supplies for water well users in Alberta. The Working Well approach includes four elements or tools for extending key messages to water well owners: workshops, interactive activities and exhibits, information resources, and community outreach.

These elements range in audience reach and scale, some in local communities (workshops) and others being province-wide (information resources). Working Well **workshops**, delivered by staff from Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development, Alberta Environment and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, help water well owners identify actions to protect groundwater and their well. Workshops are hosted in communities by the local municipality or stewardship group.

Interactive activities are incorporated into the workshops including an exercise where participants learn how to understand their own well driller's report by using it to draw a well diagram. Engaging and accessible **information resources** such as fact sheets and brochures have been developed to communicate key messages and aid the learning of well owners. Working Well also provides **community outreach** including displays at local community events.

The following agencies are participating in the development and delivery of Working Well: Alberta Environment, Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Alberta Health Services, Alberta Water Well Drilling Association and Leduc County.

For more information contact Krista Tremblett, Alberta Environment, at 780-644-8341 or Krista.Tremblett@gov.ab.ca.

**Government
of Alberta** ■

Reducing On-Farm Energy Consumption Makes Good Business Sense

Cost savings are one of the reasons producers decide to cut back their on-farm energy consumption, according to Jason Price, Alberta Agriculture's project manager of Growing Forward's On-Farm Energy Management program.

Producers who receive funding to retrofit existing buildings submit data on their energy usage both before and after the upgrades. Once data has been collected from enough agricultural operations to ensure the anonymity of each operation, producers will be able to measure their own energy consumption against the data using it as a benchmark.

Poultry, dairy, and pork producers also have access to On-Farm Energy Assessments. The assessors look at how energy is being used on the farm, and suggest retrofits and upgrades that can save energy.

All agricultural operations in Alberta are eligible to apply for the Energy Efficiency Retrofits and Energy Efficiency Construction components of Growing Forward's On-Farm Energy Management program. Funding is available for up to 75 per cent of approved costs, to a maximum of \$50,000. Dairy, poultry, and pork operations of any size are also eligible for the free On-Farm Energy Assessments.

To apply, producers must first obtain a Growing Forward registration number from the Growing Forward website at www.growingforward.alberta.ca. This number is used when applying for all Growing Forward programs. Application forms for specific programs are also available from the website or by calling the Ag-Info Centre at 310-FARM (3276).

For producers who are wondering which Growing Forward programs would be a good fit for their agricultural operations, Price recommends using the self-assessment tool on the Growing Forward website.

Growing Forward is a federal-provincial-territorial initiative that better positions the agriculture industry for success. The national vision is "a profitable and innovative agriculture, agri-food and agri-products industry that seizes opportunities in responding to market demands, and contributes to the health and well-being of Canadians."

Contact:
Ag-Info Centre
310-FARM (3276)
Growing Forward



Alberta's 2010 greenfeed and silage production survey collected data on greenfeed and silage acreage, yields and production at the municipality level. The information was then used, along with input from Alberta Agriculture specialists, to develop provincial estimates. It should also be mentioned that the yield and production estimates in this report are on a wet weight basis. So what did the survey show? Growing conditions during the 2010 crop season in Alberta were mainly favourable, despite the lack of precipitation in the Peace Region and excessive moisture in some other areas of the province. As a result, provincial average yields and production for most crops were higher than in 2009. Based on a recently released Statistics Canada Report, total production of tame hay in the province was 9.2 million tonnes, up 71 per cent from 2009. The substantial increase in tame hay production reduced the need for greenfeed and silage. In

2010, Alberta estimated total to spring ley, oats, cale, canola total seeded was harvested seeds, six per and silage, and either grazed percentage of for grains and higher than in harvested for declined sig-



producers seeded an of 17.7 million acres wheat, durum, bar-mixed grains, triti-and dry peas. Of the area, 92 per cent as grains and oil-cent as greenfeed two per cent was or abandoned. The crop area harvested oilseeds was much 2009, as the area greenfeed and silage nificantly. Total area

harvested for greenfeed and silage in 2010 was estimated at 1.1 million acres, down 48 per cent from 2009. Total area harvested for greenfeed declined 53 per cent from 2009, to 575,000 acres, while silage acreage dropped 40 per cent to 570,000 acres. The mainly favorable crop growing conditions in 2010 also contributed to higher greenfeed and silage yields. The estimated provincial average yield for greenfeed was 3.04 tonnes per acre for barley (2.28 tonnes per acre in 2009), and 2.99 tonnes per acre for oats (1.96 tonnes per acre in 2009). For silage, the provincial average yield was estimated at 6.74 tonnes per acre for barley, and 6.94 tonnes per acre for oats, both well above their 2009 levels (4.38 tonnes per acre for barley, and 3.76 tonnes per acre for oats). Despite the higher yields, total greenfeed production declined 19 per cent from 2009, to 1.7 million tonnes. This was due to the marked reduction in harvested area. For silage, total production was estimated at 3.9 million tonnes, up 14 per cent from 2009, as higher yields more than offset the impact of a smaller harvested area. In 2010, barley and oats were the major crops harvested for greenfeed and silage production, although significant acreage of mixed grains, spring wheat and triticale were also taken off as forages. For greenfeed production, barley accounted for 34 per cent of the provincial total, while oats represented 42 per cent. Mixed grains and spring wheat accounted for 16 per cent and seven per cent, respectively. The remaining one per cent was from triticale. In terms of silage production, 65 per cent of the provincial total came from barley, 21 per cent from oats, and 11 per cent from mixed grains. Triticale and spring wheat represented two per cent, and one per cent, respectively. For all the numbers, go to Alberta Agriculture's website, www.agriculture.alberta.ca.



Join us for FarmTech 2011 Western Canada's premier crop production and farm management conference!

Register by January 7, 2011 to receive Early Bird Pricing!

SUMMARY

The single largest educational event for Alberta farmers, FarmTech 2011 is an opportunity to meet with farmers in the context of a focused, educational forum.

With speakers and international guests from around the world, gain leading-edge insights and global perspectives first-hand.

Discover and learn how to apply new technology from leading-edge producers and industry leaders in our Agricultural Industry Showcase Exhibition.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at 1-866-FARMTEC or 1-866-327-6832



DETAILS

When Wednesday, January 26, 2011 7:30 AM - Friday, January 28, 2011 4:00 PM
Mountain Time

Where Mayfield Inn and Suites
16615 - 109 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta T5P 4K8
Canada
1-800-661-9804

Websites [ACTS II](#), [Alberta Barley Commission](#), [Alberta Canola Producers Commission](#), [Alberta Pulse Growers](#), [Alberta Seed Growers Association](#), [Alberta Winter Wheat Producers Commission](#), [FarmTech Foundation of Alberta](#), [Wild Rose Agricultural Producers](#)

Young Tree Pruning, Structural Establishment, and Form

Milton Davies, C.E.T., R.P.F. of Arbor-Pro Tree Consulting Ltd.

Trees are the largest of all woody plants. They are fascinating. They have well-defined stems that act as the support for a canopy of leaves. Trees grow from their roots and shoots but they also increase the thickness of their stems and branches. An analogy to tree growth is that it is similar to a “hand-dipped” candle. Just like each new layer of wax that is added when the candle is dipped, the tree grows a new layer for each new growing season.

The wintertime is an ideal time to prune most trees. It is the best time to prune elm trees. All elm trees should be pruned from October 1 to March 31. Elm trees must NOT be pruned from April 1 to September 30. This reduces any attracting factor that may invite an elm bark beetle, the carrier of Dutch Elm Disease (DED), to invade elm trees.

Structural pruning principles should be used when pruning young trees or a tree that has not been pruned for many years. Young trees should be “trained” or pruned to promote a good foundation for its mechanical structure. A tree with an established first-rate structure can continue as part of your landscaped area for many more years than trees that have not been properly pruned.

Structural defects should be removed and a single dominant leader selected or developed. Branches should be appropriately spaced along the main trunk. Trained trees require less maintenance and have a lower probability of structural failure. Removing the small branches on a young tree leaves smaller wounds. Smaller wounds minimize surface area exposure to fungal infection and faster closure. They allow the tree to compartmentalize more quickly.

To design the structure of a tree by pruning, one must apply the knowledge of the tree species inherent crown shape or habit. The most influential factor in determining the shape of a tree’s crown is its genetically determined apical dominance. Apical dominance is the ability of a leader or a shoot to exercise the genetic growth characteristics of a tree. Apical dominance can be the result of the orientation of a plant’s directional growth, in response to external stimuli or to plant growth regulators.

If the tree’s naturally strong apical dominance allows the new lateral shoots to outgrow the original terminal shoot year after year, a decurrent tree will result. If the apical dominance invests in the tree’s upward growth, through its leader, at the detriment of the growth of its lateral shoots, an excurrent tree will be the result.

All trees start out with excurrent traits as juveniles. As they mature, the true form of a tree will reveal itself. Decurrent trees have various round or oval shapes. Excurrent trees are characteristically pyramidal in shape. It is important that an arborist carrying out the pruning of trees is familiar with the tree species inherent shape and its growth characteristics. Unless a pruner is asked to prune differently, such as in an ornamental garden, no attempt should be made to prune an excurrent tree into the shape of a decurrent one.

Similarly, no attempt should be made to transform a decurrent form into an excurrent profile. In both of these situations, tree genetics will ultimately prevail and in the future, will cause many different tree problems. In our growing region, ash, birch, cherry, poplar, elm, maple, and basswoods are all decurrent trees. Pine, spruce, and larch are all good examples of excurrent trees.

Making large cuts above one another can inhibit the Compartmentalization of Decay in Trees (CODIT). This can promote the formation of cracks (the so-called “frost cracks”) along the trunk. The most important aspect of pruning is the removal of any dead, broken, dying or damaged branches. When training trees for good structure, pruning should be extended over several years of pruning cycles.

While many arborists are taught not to remove more than 25% of the tree’s live wood in any year or growing season, in reality, any removal of more than 20% of the tree’s leaf surface area will severely stress any tree. Although young trees are more tolerant to severe pruning, it is feasible to properly train a young tree’s structure by removing less than 20% of its live wood. Additional stress factors, such as drought, the presence insects, and mechanical injuries should be considered when deciding the percentage of any tree’s total live-wood removal.

An arborist must understand tree growth characteristics in order to maintain both tree aesthetics and plant health. This is a factor that is beneficial for the management of trees in both landscaped and urban forest environments.

Source: American Society of Consulting Arborists (ASCA) and International Society of Arboriculture (ISA)

AGRONOMY UPDATE CONFERENCE 2011

January 18 - 19, 2011

**Lethbridge Lodge Hotel
Lethbridge, Alberta**



Organized by:

- Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development
- Southern Applied Research Association

Agronomy Update Conference 2011

This annual conference covers crop information on disease management, insect management, sustainable cropping, weed and herbicide management, crop management, precision farming and business management. The conference is being held in Lethbridge on January 18 and 19, 2011. Registration is \$100 per person prior to January 7, 2011 or \$115 per person after that date. For registration information and agenda, contact Judy Chow at 403-381-5170, Dr. Ross McKenzie at 403-381-5904 or Rob Dunn at 403-381-5904. Application has been made for Certified Crop Advisor and Pesticide Applicator credits.

Manure Management Update 2011

January 17, 2011



Lethbridge Lodge Hotel
Lethbridge, Alberta



Manure Management Update 2011

Circle January 17 on your calendar for ***Manure Management Update 2011***, the first time this conference has been held since 2007. Jennifer Neden, a nutrient management specialist with Alberta Agriculture, joins us on the line to talk about this year's event. Jennifer.

For more information on ***Manure Management Update 2011***, go to Alberta Agriculture's website and click on [Coming Events](#). The conference is January 17 in Lethbridge