

Forage Facts

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DID YOU KNOW?

Cattle circle when being worked because they want to go back to where they came from. Handling systems with curves and turns take advantage of cattle's natural circling behaviour

Project Highlight: Reducing Fertility Needs

By: Katie McLachlan

Did you know that fertilizer costs constitute up to 25% of the total variable costs in cereal production, and up to about 30% for canola? (Alberta Agriculture & Forestry, AgriProfit\$) Inorganic fertilizer use also contributes to a rise in atmospheric nitrous oxide (N₂O), a major greenhouse gas contributing to global climate change.

Evidence from past research shows that incorporating livestock into a cropping system can help to reduce fertility needs, improve soil health, and sequester atmospheric carbon.

This past fall, we wrapped up a ma-

ajor farm-scale research project entitled 'Strategies to Reduce Fertility Inputs and Improve Soil Health and Carbon Sequestration in Mixed Crop-Livestock Systems'. In this project, we were looking at the effect of introducing livestock into a traditional cropping system. We hoped to find a practice that will improve soil nutrients and overall soil health, while reducing fertilizer input expenses, and lowering carbon footprint, without sacrificing yield and maintaining or increasing farm profits.

We received funding for this three year project through the Agriculture Funding Consortium, with funds coming from the Alberta Canola Producers Commission, Alberta Wheat Commission, and Alberta Agriculture & Forestry.

We conducted this study at our

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Due to COVID-19 gathering restrictions, we are postponing our Annual General Meeting scheduled for February 2021 to a later date. For the most up-to-date information, please visit [peacecountrybeef.ca/agm](https://www.peacecountrybeef.ca/agm)



Reducing Fertility Needs in a Mixed Farming System

Fairview Research Farm. This study was also replicated with our sister group, Chinook Applied Research Association in Oyen, AB to see if there was any variation among soil types.

In the 2018 crop year, we seeded 7 different treatments, including; cocktail cover crop that was grazed standing, cocktail cover crop that was swath grazed, cocktail cover crop that was cut and baled for greenfeed, high legume cocktail that was rolled, barley with manure applied and combined, barley with Penegetic seed and soil amendments applied for combine, and our control was peas seeded to combine.

In the 2019 crop year, we seeded canola across the entire project to combine. Finally in the 2020 crop year, we seeded wheat across the entire acreage to combine. All 7 plots were replicated 3 times.

Each plot was sampled for:

1. Soil - biology, soil organic carbon, surface soil water infiltration, bulk

density, soil moisture, and soil nutrients (N, P, K, S) from different depths

2. Crop Growth - Plant growth, plant vigor, grain yield & quality, Straw yield and quality, and GreenSeeker readings for soil cover and plant health.
3. Livestock - Forage yield and quality in year 1 only (2018)
4. Economics - An economic analysis of the input costs and output revenue.

Our Research Team is currently wrapping up findings from this project. A full report with results from this project will be available in our 2020 Annual Report that will be available this spring!

If you have any questions about this project, or are looking into ways to reduce fertility needs on your farm, please reach out to our Research Program Manager, Akim Omokanye. Contact information for Akim can be found on the back page of this document.



Thank You to the PCBFA Board of Directors

Preston Basnett
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Do You Have Project or Workshop Ideas?

We are always looking for ideas! Give us a call!

PCBFA Member Perks:

- Two Free Feed Tests Per Year
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- CAP Application Assistance
- Environmental Farm Plans
- Scale & Tag Reader Available for Member Use
- Soil & Water Quality Testing

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Notice of PCBFA Staffing Changes



On behalf of the Board and Staff of PCBFA, I would like to send warmest congratulations to our Operations Manager, Chelsey Hostettler, as she prepares to head out on maternity leave in the coming months. Chelsey has been an invaluable addition to our team in her new role, and we look forward to her return!

In the meantime, we are also thrilled to announce that one of very own will be stepping up to fill in as her maternity leave term replacement – Kaitlin McLachlan! With her agribusiness education, her experience at the bank, and her long history of commitment to PCBFA, we are certain that Katie will do a wonderful job in this new role.

Given that Katie's brother Allan is our current Board Chairman, and Katie is now stepping into a management role, we also wanted to address the potential perceived conflict of interest, and reassure our members that there is no possibility for conflict.

As Executive Director, I am fully and solely responsible for management of the person in the Operations Manager role - the Board does not have the ability to make decisions relating to that position.

The board and staff jointly decided to take this one step further to ensure that absolutely no possible conflict could exist. Together, we have developed a new Conflict-of-Interest Policy, whereby related (through family, marriage, or business) directors and employees must agree to the following:

- They will not discuss PCBFA business outside of what is required for their roles at work and on the board;
- They cannot both be listed as signing authorities for PCBFA; and
- They will recuse themselves from any discussion and/or voting on any matters that pertain to their relative

If there are any additional concerns or questions about this arrangement, please feel free to contact myself or a director at any time.

Thank you,

Liisa Jeffrey, BSc(Agr), PAg
Executive Director, PCBFA
(780) 394-7419



Upcoming Events

Event	Date & Time	Location
Planning Your 2021 Cocktail with Dr. Akim Omokanye	February 9th Noon - 1:30pm	Online via Zoom
What's New in Soil Health & Plant Nutrition 101 with Joel Williams	February 11th 1:00 - 2:30pm	Online via Zoom
Transitioning to a Low Input System with Joel Williams	February 16th 1:00 - 2:30pm	Online via Zoom
Rejuvenating Perennial & Annual Crop Land Rejuvenatively with Joel Williams	February 23rd 7:00 - 8:30pm	Online via Zoom
Soil Health Q & A with Joel Williams	March 2nd 7:00 - 8:30pm	Online via Zoom
<p><i>AHS & Local Guidelines will be followed at in-person events.</i></p> <p><i>For More Information & to Register:</i></p> <p><i>Visit peacecountrybeef.ca/upcoming-events or Call 780-523-4033</i></p>		

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To support young farmers and ranchers to attend courses, training, and seminars to further their farm management.

Accepting Applications until March 31st, 2021

Contact Our Team!

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