

Forage Facts



Published by the Peace Country Beef & Forage Association

March 2022, Volume 17, Issue 206

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DID YOU KNOW?

**In 2020,
68% of Canada's
beef was
produced in
Alberta**

In Person PCBFA Annual General Meeting Coming Up Friday, March 18th

After a couple years of COVID restrictions, we are excited to get back to normal with a traditional AGM! Mark your calendars for our Annual General Meeting being held on Friday, March 18th at the Rycroft Ag Center.

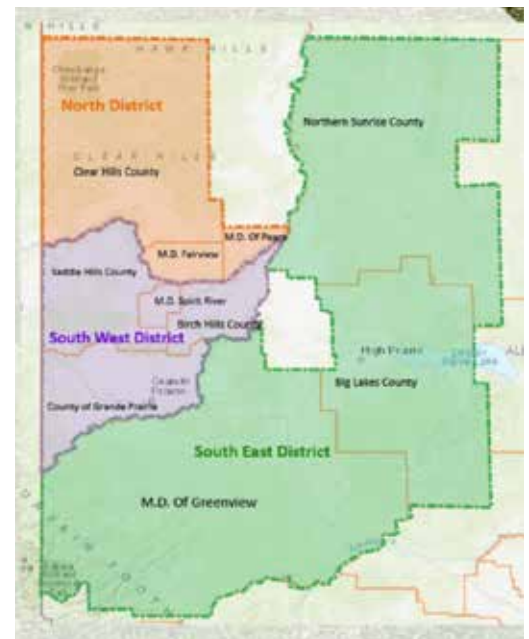
Doors will open at 3:30pm, with the business meeting kicking off at 4pm. This year's business meeting will feature a round table discussion with membership regarding PCBFA's programming and how we can serve you, our members, to the best of our ability. Please see the center fold for more information on this session.

After a delicious supper, we will hear from PCBFA's own Akim Omokanye about Forage Performance in Extreme Weather Conditions. We look forward to seeing everyone again and creating a space to network with our fellow producers.

There are 2 openings on our board of directors, one position in the North and one position in the South East, with more positions available for re-election. The map to the right shows our electoral areas.

If you would like more information on the PCBFA Board Member experience, please contact our Chairman, Allan McLachlan, at 780-834-7399. If you are unable to attend, but would like for your name to stand for nomination, please either send a letter of support with someone who will be attending the meeting, or email executivedirector@pcbfa.ca.

Your PCBFA Membership needs to be renewed for 2022-23 in order to participate at the meeting. You can register and renew your membership in advance by visiting our website peacecountrybeef.ca/2022agm or call Johanna to register by calling 780-523-4033 or Katie at 780-772-0277.



Hello, my name is Emily Kyle and I am excited to be working for Peace Country Beef and Forage Association as an Agri-Environmental Research Intern. I come from a mixed farming operation in Southern Ontario focusing on organic soybeans and corn, cow-calf shorthorns, and sheep.

I completed my undergraduate degree from Trent University in Peterborough, Ontario with a joint major in Environmental Science and Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems in 2020. During my degree I had the opportunity to study abroad in Scotland for a semester. I was also able to spend a summer on 4 farms in Switzerland representing the Junior Farmers Association of Ontario on an exchange.

I love to travel and gain new experiences from throughout the world and learn more about different farm management styles. In 2019, in both of my exchanges I was able to see how farm policies and cultures shape agricultural practices.

I am glad to be able to be spending this summer in Peace Country and look forward to what I will be able to learn.



Soil & Grazing: Biology Not Geology



**Western Canada Conference
on Soil Health & Grazing**

SAVE THE DATE

December 13, 14 & 15, 2022
Double Tree by Hilton West Edmonton




Biosecurity & Predators



By Emily Kyle & Johanna Murray

There have been increasing reports from producers who are dealing with large predators, most notably grizzly bears. Bears have been spotted in areas they have never been seen before, and are becoming more and more brass, wandering through herds and into farm yards.

Biosecurity is an important management tool to decrease biological risks on the farm. It can include managing wildlife such as bears, wolves, coyotes, and cougars to decrease risks to livestock. Wildlife have the potential to kill, injure, spread disease, or harass livestock.

Managing wildlife, and especially bears can be a tricky task and there are several ways to go about it. Proper prevention of negative encounters is an important part of long-term success. Methods can include: fencing, carcass management, storage of feeds, and learning about wildlife behaviours. Hunting, while useful as a management tool, should not necessarily be the first option especially when addressing human-bear conflicts. Bears are omnivorous and 75-90% if their diet is plants, however, they are opportunistic scavengers and will eat the most nutritious food that is available to them including animal carcasses. Carcass management is important because if they get a taste for the animal easily they may start to prey on live animals including calves. (<https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/489d077a-8f26-4528-9c48-7d1b376a119b/resource/d9bc254f-e22a-4e48-88b9-7368d3a852eb/download/zz-2011-bear-smart-brochure-2011-06.pdf>)

Something as simple as a good fence can reduce the need to remove or kill bears if set up properly and maintained. When fencing, it is important to consider what type of fencing is needed to keep predators out and livestock in. It may be a good idea to include electric fencing and double fencing in higher risk areas such as around carcasses and calving ar-

reas. If you do decide to use electric fencing make sure that the fence is maintained at an adequate voltage and that the volts are spread out evenly around the fence and not short circuiting anywhere. (<https://inspection.canada.ca/animal-health/terrestrial-animals/biosecurity/standards-and-principles/beef-cattle/eng/1378825897354/1378825940112?chap=5#s27c5>)

(<https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/e8e3910d-026c-4b12-9cc7-a5d023270019/resource/acbeb2d2-142d-4edb-8d37-9500c17f8f76/download/bearsmart-electricfences-bears-feb2017.pdf>)

Solar chargers can be used where there is no direct current electricity. However, when using solar charger, its important to consider how it will be charged in the winter when daylight is reduced. If you're using an electric fence in the winter, be prepared to maintain the fence and make sure that wind, ice, and snow do not interfere with the

- Continued on Page 6 -

RELEASE THE HERD.

The list of tasks to do is long. The equipment you use to run down that list is critical. Run with mowers, compact utility tractors and utility vehicles from John Deere. And never stop running.



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PEACE COUNTRY BEEF &
FORAGE ASSOCIATION
**2022 ANNUAL GENERAL
MEETING**

In-Person

Friday, March 18th

Venue: Rycroft Ag Centre

Doors open at 3:30pm

Cost:

Supper Only - \$30

One Year Membership - \$80

Three Year Membership - \$170

Five Year Membership - \$255

FOR MORE INFO OR TO REGISTER:

INFO@PCBFA.CA | PEACECOUNTRYBEEF.CA | 780-523-4033

Members – We Need Your Help!

The funding and delivery of agriculture research and extension in Alberta has changed significantly in recent years, and this has led us to ask some tough questions about the priorities, direction, and purpose of the Peace Country Beef & Forage Association.

Starting with roundtable discussions at the AGM and our annual producer survey, we will be asking for your guidance in determining priorities and setting a course for the future. We want to know – how could we better support your farm? What is our most important role?

Please join us at the AGM on March 18th in Rycroft to begin the discussion.

Thank you,

Liisa Jeffrey

Allan McLachlan



Executive Director



Chairman

Thank You to Our Municipal Partners!



NORTHERN SUNRISE
COUNTY



fence and check the volts using a voltage meter or fence tester. When using an electric fence in the summer be aware that grounding in dry conditions requires a ground-return fencing system for the animal to receive an adequate shock. (<https://agriflfeextension.tamu.edu/library/wildlife-nature-environment/deterring-bears-with-electrified-fences-a-beginners-guide/>)

Electric fences can be built with 12 to 16 gauge wire, the heavier the wire the easier it is for the current to travel. Along with the size of the wire, the type of material in the wire is something to consider. Aluminum wire conducts electricity four times better than steel but comes with a higher cost. Some other things to consider are if you need temporary or permanent fencing for the area: the spacing between the wires, and grounding of the wires. Bears testing the fence in many spots including at gates can be a concern; electrifying gates is a possibility to consider by placing electrified wires on the outside of the gate but be careful when placing the wires close to gate handles. (<https://dwr.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/fencing.pdf>)

<https://agriflfeextension.tamu.edu/library/wildlife-nature-environment/deterring-bears-with-electrified-fences-a-beginners-guide/>)




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In addition to fencing, keeping carcasses away from areas that you want to keep livestock in, such as; away from outbuildings and calving pens is a vital consideration. There are options in carcass management including composting, burning, burial, and rendering. Composting in windrows or in bins is an option that may use existing machinery and be a cost effective strategy for removal of deadstock and reducing predation. Some important things to consider for effective composting include temperature, moisture, aeration, and carbon to nitrogen ratio. (<https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/c5511dd2-a32d-4bfe-adde-2944cf80b155/resource/a5b5b1e6-d657-4f67-bcf0-dc0ad97db30d/download/af-large-animal-mortality-composting-2021-06.pdf>)

The ideal conditions for composting includes; a temperature above 55 degrees Celsius (131 Fahrenheit) to kill most pathogens, with 65% moisture, air mixed throughout the pile, and a Carbon to nitrogen ratio of 30:1. Adding some brown ma-

terial such as manure with straw will help in the decomposition by increasing the carbon content, moisture, and temperature of the compost. (<http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/engineer/facts/10-063.htm#5>)

If you are going to bury deadstock, consider putting an electric fence around it to prevent bears from digging up the carcass. It is also recommended to bury the carcass at least 1.2m (4ft) underground and cover with lime to reduce odours and help with decomposition. (<https://www.alberta.ca/bears-and-agricultural-producers.aspx>)

Animals should be disposed of within 7 days of death and should follow the Disposal of Dead Animals Regulation which sets minimum setbacks for livestock disposal. Including a minimum setback of a composting pile of; 100m from a well, 100m from a residence, and 300m from any provincial highway.

Another way to be bear smart is to keep a close eye on livestock especially while cattle are young. It is recommended to keep livestock confined for 10 days after castration, dehorning, and branding. Be aware of any animals that may be sick or injured as they can be easy prey. (<https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/7459c69a-f80b-458e-bf41-3c2a23c4c509/resource/4ee71586-4efb-4621-aa85-9083dbe6a59f/download/2011-bebearsmart-agriculturechecklist.pdf>)

If you suspect that an animal has been killed by wildlife there may be compensation available. An injury from a bear will often be to the withers, spine, neck, and skull area. Grizzly bears are more likely to prey on larger livestock and black bears are more likely to prey on small livestock including calves. (<https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/b5bee14e-1339-48b7-9388-b71bc6d378d1/resource/8f8e1c21-cb35-4485-8df8-439c8e83e7b7/download/ranchersguidetopredatorattacks-mar2018.pdf>)

Compensation comes from the federal government and a portion of the sales of fishing and hunting licenses in Alberta. Compensation may be available for attacks by wolves, grizzly bears,

black bears, cougars, and eagles. A compensation claim should be made with the local Fish and Wildlife office and must be reported within three days. The officer may come out to your farm to see evidence of an attack on the animal. The officer may look for evidence of blood, the carcass, evidence of struggle, predator tracks, and/or a predator bite on the animal. It may be helpful to show pictures of the scene with measurements. (<https://www.alberta.ca/wildlife-predator-compensation-program.aspx>)

Taking preventative measures such as keeping a close eye on vulnerable livestock, using and maintaining strong and sturdy fencing, and managing carcasses will help to protect your animals and your bottom line.

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[peacecountrybeef.ca](https://www.peacecountrybeef.ca)

Member Feed Testing Service

PCBFA Members receive 2 free 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, Mould, and Mycotoxin tests can be completed and will be invoiced at lab cost.

Feed Test Pricing:

Feed Tests for Members (after 2 free) - \$45/sample

Feed Tests for Non-Members - Billed at Lab Cost

Nitrate Testing - \$15/sample

Rush Shipping - \$50

Hay Probe Deposit for Non-Members - \$100

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, and the Lesser Slave Watershed Council Office in High Prairie

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