



GRO NEWS

SEEDING SEASON

Here at the GRO office May means setting our priorities to seeding, seeding, seeding.

While small plot preparation is slightly different than large scale farm seeding preparation, a lot of the same consideration need to be made. Seeding is based on thousand kernel weight just as it is for large scale producers, but our plots are far less than an acre in size. The fertilizer and seedbed preparation choices are made based on the same factors, seed requirements and field history, simply applied at the much smaller scale.

For those producers looking for a handy tool to help with all the fine details of crop production AARD has just the thing for you!

CropChoice\$ 2015 available

Producers can analyze crop opportunities with latest data

CropChoice\$ is available on Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development's website, Ropin' the Web. To download a free copy, go to www.agric.gov.ab.ca and click on "Decision Making Tools".

For further information, contact the AgInfo Center toll-free at 310-FARM (3276)."



Spring time brings us a flush of new life including plants and insects, and with that being said GRO has begun its pest monitoring. Our first pest monitoring traps to be set up are our diamond back moth traps. These are monitored weekly and compiled with provincial data.



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Seeding	1
Moisture Update	2
Annual Forages	3
GRO Trials	4



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AARD MOISTURE SITUATION UPDATE AS OF APRIL 22, 2015

Warmer weather has seen an early start to spring this year, with winter snows retreating from most of the Agricultural areas of the province. Over the past 30-days, precipitation accumulations have been highly variable, ranging from less than 5 mm throughout much of central Alberta, to well over 50 mm across parts of the southern Peace Region.

Early spring soil moisture reserves are highly variable through the province, with most areas south of Red Deer and the Peace Region, estimated to be near normal to above normal. However, relatively dry areas are emerging through large parts of the Northern region and through most of the northern parts of the Peace Region.

At this time of year, dry areas still have ample time to receive adequate moisture ahead of germination and wet areas have time to dry, providing the weather cooperates.

Precipitation Received During the Past 30 Days as of April 22, 2015

-Most of the central parts of Alberta have been relatively dry over the past 30 days with less than 5 mm of precipitation recorded at many locations.

-The southern Peace Region is much wetter than normal with most areas south of the town of Peace River seeing over 35 mm. Areas around Grande Prairie and west have seen in excess of 50 mm.

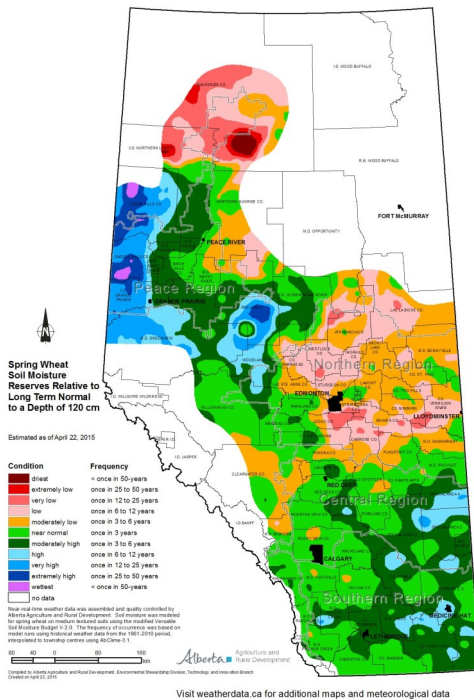
Soil Moisture Reserves Relative to Long Term Normal as of April 22, 2015

-Parts of the extreme northern tip of the Peace Region are dry with soil moisture reserves estimated to very low (seen on average less than once in 12 to 25 years).

-Most of the Northern Region is starting to dry, with soil moisture reserves estimated to be near at least one in three to six year lows. South of the Yellowhead Highway, between Edmonton and Lloydminster, some areas are estimated to be near one in 12 to 25 year lows.

-Much of the southern and western Peace region is well above normal with many areas exceeding one in 25 year highs for this time of year.

-Most areas south of Red Deer are near normal, with several isolated pockets east of Highway 2, estimated to have one in six to 12 year highs.



PETER DONOVAN COMING TO WESTLOCK JUNE 25TH , 2015

Continuing the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization 2015 International Year of Soils (IYS) celebration in Alberta, the Agricultural Research and Extension Council of Alberta (ARECA) has released the schedule for the Soil Carbon Challenge tour with Peter Donovan. Peter will be touring in his school bus to six locations in Alberta, conducting soil carbon workshops. Peter establishes baseline measurements for soil carbon in dedicated plots from Mexico to Canada, Vermont to California as part of the Soil Carbon Challenge. He wants to help people move from a problem-solving orientation around carbon cycling, soils, water, and climate, to a creative one.

“Peter Donovan will conduct workshops on soil carbon and will set baselines for quantifying how land managers can transform atmospheric carbon into water-holding, fertility-enhancing soil organic matter (SOM) to improve soil health” said Dr. Yamily Zavala, Crop and Soil researcher for Chinook Applied Research Association (CARA) at Oyen. “Participants will learn how to measure soil attributes and document the changes under their own management strategies.”

For more information about Peter Donovan visit www.soilcarboncoalition.org



Photo credit of Roger Andrejuk

**BUSINESS TIPS
LEARNED FROM THE
ADVANCING WOMENS
CONFERENCE**

APRIL 6,7TH CALGARY , AB

There were valuable lessons and tips to be learned from every speaker at this leadership skills focused event.

Courtney Wolfe a venture capitalist and current Chairwoman of Vital Alert & Brilliant Resources out of Toronto lended some of her own networking tips at the conference.

1. **Have & bring personal and professional business cards with you everywhere**
2. **Carry a notebook**
3. **Use a contact management system to better manage and keep track of business contacts you receive**
4. **Have a follow up system, and actually follow up on commitments you make to new contacts**
5. **Embrace social media, but recognize it is a compliment and not a replacement to face-to-face networking**

SASK FORAGE COUNCIL : GRAZING NON-TRADITIONAL ANNUAL FORAGE MIXTURES

Taken from the Saskatchewan Forage Council Annual Forage Report: Grazing Non-Traditional Annual Forage Mixtures (SFC Project)

www.saskforage.ca

Conclusions and Recommendations

The purpose of this project was to demonstrate alternative options for annual forage production including a measure of forage production and quality, soil health and cost comparison with more traditional annual forage options.

The project was somewhat successful in comparing livestock grazing on non-traditional forage blends versus more traditional annual forage species. One of the three sites had to be abandoned after it was accidentally sprayed out by a custom operator so therefore was not included in the discussion of results. The two other sites were able to establish and graze the non-traditional forage blends using sheep at the Bredenbury site and cattle at the Blumenort site. Both producer cooperators remarked that the non-traditional forage blend provided actively growing, green grazing during a period when most other forage options were brown and dormant. At both sites the non-traditional blends were less productive than the comparison crops. This may have been due to environmental conditions that were unfavorable to this particular blend. Forage quality of the non-traditional blends at both sites was comparable to the oats crop grown at Bredenbury and the producer mixed non-traditional blend at the Blumenort

site. Trends in soil health were more difficult to identify due to the short-term nature of this demonstration. However an increase in soil protozoa numbers and plant available N were noted on the non-traditional soils from 2011 to 2012 at the Blumenort site. Soil health improvements were noted on both the traditional and



non-traditional fields at the Bredenbury site between 2011 and 2012. These included

increases in both protozoa and plant available N as well as increases in fungal biomass.

Late season grazing options remain a focus for livestock producers in Saskatchewan and this demonstration has suggested that non-traditional annual forage blends may be a fit for some operations. While previous work has suggested that diverse blends of annual forage species may have benefits to soil health, more than two years of monitoring is necessary to establish a trend. While more detailed research on the blend of non-traditional annual forages appropriate for various soil types and the long-term effect on soil health is necessary, demonstrations such as this one have increased the awareness of non-traditional annual forages as a potential soil improvement method and a grazing option.

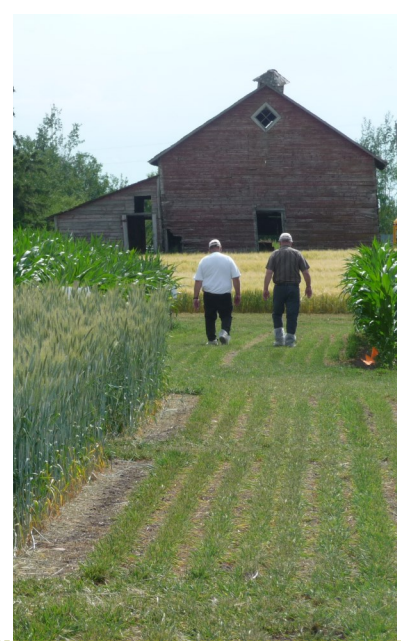
For the complete project report:

http://www.saskforage.ca/Coy%20Folder/Projects/ADOPT/ADOPT_Non-Tradition-al_Forages_Final_Report.pdf

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM GRO IN THE 2015 GROWING SEASON

Our project list for 2015 will include:

- Regional Variety Demonstration: wheat (utility & HRS), barley (2-row & 6-row), oats, triticale
- Regional Silage Trial: barley, wheat & oats
- Mountainview Sainfoin Trial
- Cover Crop Demonstrations
- Ag Canada Winter Wheat Variety Trial
- Stem Mining Weevil Trial
- Heifer Pasture Rotational Grazing System
- Pasture Rejuvenation at Busby
- Pest Monitoring
- A series of extension events



“Our mission is to provide cost-effective applied agricultural research, demonstration, and extension for producers in order to facilitate greater returns to farms by providing economically & scientifically sound information that enables our clients to make informed decisions” GRO

AGRICULTURAL INTERNATIONAL TOUR TO GERMANY

AGRITECHNICA 2015

The world's leading exhibition for agricultural machinery and equipment

Departing November 7 to 18, 2015

Tour includes: Frankfurt, Wolfsburg, Hannover, Berlin, Hamburg

John Deere factory visit in Mannheim, Agriculture farm visits, 2 full days at Agritechnica,

Optional VW Factory visit in Wolfsburg, Berlin City Tour, Sightseeing tour of Potsdam

Brewery Tour, Guided sightseeing and a harbour tour in Hamburg

AGRITECHNICA is now the world's leading trade fair for agricultural machinery and equipment. AGRITECHNICA 2013 was attended by 2,897 exhibitors from 47 countries, including all the world market leaders. Altogether 1,513 of these exhibitors came from outside Germany. The trade fair was divided into sector groups in 24 halls covering a floor space of 423,000 m² and its nearly 200 forum events and specialist conferences allowed a unique exchange of information and opinions.

The trade fair attracted around 450,000 visitors from 88 countries, including 106,700 international visitors.

Please contact: Leader Tours Inc. Lawrence Rowley or Sawyer Asmundson

AGRITECHNICA PRICING

Twin Rate: CAD \$3842 per person land only

Single rate: CAD add extra \$991 land only



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