



ARECA WORKS WITH PARTNER

The Agricultural Research and Extension Council (ARECA) conducts applied research and extension for farmers across Alberta. The principle partner in this valuable work has been the Government of Alberta. In 2014, that partnership was strengthened with increased funding of ARECA's work.

ARECA Board Chair, Bill Gaugler, and Vice Chair, Ian Murray, were pleased to meet with Ag Minister, Verlyn Olson to talk about how to better serve farmers and communities in rural Alberta. "ARECA aims to connect producers and government leaders," says Gaugler. "It was good to talk with Minister Olson about how to connect research with extension with production on the land."

"We know that farmers need more and better information in order to be successful," says Vice Chair Murray. "And, we know that ARECA associations are a great way to help farmers access the information they need. We are pleased that the Government of Alberta has increased funding for research and forage associations in 2014 and beyond."



ARECA Chair Bill Gaugler and Vice Chair Ian Murray talk with Ag Minister Verlyn Olson about delivering information to Alberta farmers.



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GRO'S NEW FIELD TECHNICIAN

Rick Tarasiuk

Rick grew up on a mixed farm in the Lloydminster area. He left the farm in 1989 to pursue a career in golf course maintenance. After obtaining a Turfgrass Management Diploma from Fairview College he accepted the superintendent's job at the Barrhead Golf Course holding that position for over 20 years. Rick and his wife Terrie have two girls now past school age and mostly independent. Rick enjoys boating and golf in the summer, skiing and snowmobiling in the winter.

We are very excited to welcome Rick to the team!

Follow us on Twitter or Facebook to stay up to date on events and GRO information!

COMING SOON

GRO is currently in the process of designing and developing a website to give producers another option for reading publications, looking at past reports, and finding out about upcoming events or workshops.

Stay tuned to find out about www.gatewayresearchorganization.com



GENERATING ELECTRICITY FROM THE SUN

A one-day workshop on grid-tie solar options for Alberta farmers

It is becoming increasingly profitable for Alberta farmers to generate their own electricity and sell it to the grid, utilizing the renewable energy sources are available right on their property. This one-day workshop will cover solar electric system siting, installation, permitting process and economics.

This event is being held :

April 28th

Rochester Ag Society Hall

8:30 am Registration

9:00 am to 4:30 pm Workshop

Lunch will be provided

Cost to attend is \$10

Pre Registration is required.

phone the office at (780)349-4546

or by texting (780)307-7157





ON FARM RESEARCH TRIALING

This year GRO staff had the pleasure of attending Farm Tech in Edmonton, AB at Northlands January 28th and 29th.

There were many sessions, and each with its own take home message. One session in particular that tied into what GRO delivers was Ross Mckenzie's session: "On-Farm Research Trialing—Design, Management and Analysis".

Ross discussed the usefulness and actual application of on farm research. A producer will typically want to do some trialing to see "when a product will work or won't work". Research trialing is the science of products as opposed to the marketing of products. Which means we as producers want unbiased and sound information to make decisions. Mckenzie urged producers to think critically and make practical decisions, based on actual real information or data.

The message that stuck with me the most was the idea of variability, and if results are real or due to chance. In farming it is difficult to ensure that everything is exactly the same every year, so our best option is to work with what we know we can control.

When setting up test strips you need to be prepared to identify potential variables, Mckenzie mentions a few steps to minimize these:

- 1) Keep the trial simple
- 2) Keep your trial uniform
- 3) Make your test strips or trial strips long and narrow
- 4) Have at least 4 repetitions
- 5) Keep your field activity consistent across the entire trial
- 6) Take notes, notes, notes!

It was refreshing to see how many producers were sitting in the room, hear comments from those producers based on critical thinking, and learn about their own on farm research trialing.

ARE YOU LEADING THE WAY?

Rob Napier with Napier Agrifutures challenged producers to ask themselves the following questions to gauge their leading edge behaviours at Farm Tech 2015. Here is the list:

1. Plan from the outside in—not the inside out
2. Have written & regularly revised individual, family & business goals + a business plan
3. Do ordinary things extraordinarily well—monitoring, analysis, improvement
4. Seek & evaluate new technologies—focus on systems—work with researchers
5. Are market driven—integrated with all steps in the supply chain
6. Work together with like minded people
7. Grow the business using new management models
8. Prepare for volatility—risk management plans—ask what if?
9. Look for opportunities to add businesses & services
10. Achieve excellence in people development, management & succession planning

CROPPING SERIES

GRO, in partnership with ARECA, LARA, WCFA and GWFA are bringing in-formative session to local producers.

These sessions will focus on annual crop agronomics.

There are two opportunities to attend.

March 12th in Calmar

March 24th in Smoky Lake

AARD MOISTURE SITUATION UPDATE AS OF FEB 10, 2015

As of February 10th, the moisture situation across most of the agricultural areas of province is generally promising, with the below normal snow packs found south of the TransCanada Highway being offset by above normal soil moisture levels. North of the TransCanada Highway snow packs are generally near normal overlying soil moisture reserves that are below normal. One notable exception remains and that is the extreme northern Peace County, where soil moisture reserves and snow packs are below normal for this time of year. This follows several years of below normal precipitation. Hopefully with the coming of spring, this area will experience a long awaited turnaround and see at least near normal precipitation patterns.



“Researchers in Lethbridge swapped wheat for barley in a cattle ration without any negative effects — but the wheat must be properly processed”

MYTH BUSTED: PROPERLY PROCESSED FEED WHEAT WON'T CAUSE DIGESTIVE UPSET

Article taken from the Alberta Farmer Express January 29, 2015 article by Jennifer Blair

Shrinking barley acres have cattle producers on the hunt for a low-cost feed option.

And feed wheat could be the answer — as long as the wheat is processed properly.

“There was a feeling out there that you probably couldn't feed more than 50 per cent wheat in the diet because wheat is quite rapidly digested in the rumen of cattle,” said Tim McAllister, principal research scientist in ruminant nutrition with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada in Lethbridge.

“We were able to, both in a backgrounding and a finishing phase, replace all the barley with wheat without any negative consequences.”

The use of feed wheat in cattle rations has been growing in Western Canada as a result of its increasing availability, demand has been restricted because of the belief that diets high in wheat cause

rumen acidosis and bloat, said McAllister. That's a myth, he said. The “No. 1 factor” that contributes to wheat-related digestive upsets is the degree of processing.

“If the wheat was properly processed — whether it be temper rolled or dry rolled to the point that the kernels were just cracked in two — we found that the wheat was efficiently utilized without any problems with digestive upset,” said McAllister.

“If it was over processed, that could start to increase the likelihood of acidosis or bloat occurring.”

Usually, less than two per cent of cattle are susceptible to developing clinical acidosis, he said. “You'd still have to have the proper protocols in place in terms of pen checking and monitoring,” said McAllister. “If you were to have problems, the most likely factor responsible for that would be the processing of the wheat to too fine a particle size.”

