

Alberta Forage Industry Network



Welcome to the latest edition of "The Forage Voice", the official newsletter of the Alberta Forage Industry Network (AFIN).
See what's new with your AFIN Board and the Forage industry in this issue!

Alberta Forage Industry Network Chair Report May 2018 Newsletter



AFIN Chair, Dr. Surya Acharya

The new Chair sends his greetings to all readers of “The Forage Voice”.
First of all please join me in showing appreciation to our past Chair, Christine Fulkerth, who handled the responsibilities of the position since AFIN’s inception with great candor and effectiveness. As the new Chair, with her help, I hope to do as good a job as she did in previous years.

From the Alberta Forage Industry Network (AFIN) stand point, the Annual General Meeting and Forage Industry Update held on March 5 at the Best Western Plus – Leduc, Alberta is the main event for 2019. One of the highlights of the event was the AFIN Leadership Award. This year we were proud to present

this award to Mr. Grant Lastiwka. His entire family was at hand for the presentation and it seemed that Grant was pleasantly surprized to receive the award and to have his family there for this.

Grant was chosen for his illustrious career with the Government of Alberta spanning 30 plus years, although his role has changed over time, he is as enthusiastic about forages now as he was when he started. He is well known to people involved in forage industry in Alberta and in western Canada and is always ready to answer any questions people may have on forage crops. His present passion is to improve forages in general and use of high legume pastures, in particular. He also has a keen interest in improving soil health by using forages. Please see the AFIN press release about the award for other details about Grants exemplary involvement in the forage industry.

Other AFIN highlights included remarks from the Alberta Minister of Agriculture The Honourable Oneil Carlier; presentation by Mr. Graeme Finn (2018 AFIN Leadership Award winner), a talk about DUC conservation program by Brent Thygesen; BCRC update & foragebeef.ca by Stacey Domolewski, ‘Bee my Honey Telling my Story’ by Kristen Hall and a Keynote Talk on ‘Building Public Trust’ by Kim McConnell. The day also included research updates by Dr. Nityananda Khanal, hay dryer update by Emil Gulbranson, a project update by Kim Cornish and ‘the sainfoin story’ by yours truly. Everyone in attendance enjoyed the presentations and the QA sessions. A new AFIN Board was elected by the members and the following were elected to the Board:

Surya Acharya (Lethbridge)	Chair
Mark Hagen (Wainwright)	Vice Chair
Dale Engstrom (Lake Isle)	Secretary
Nora Paulovich (Manning)	Treasurer
Chris Fulkerth (Olds)	Past Chair / CFGA Rep
Brent Thygesesn (Armena)	Director
Ed Shaw (Carstairs)	Director
Katlyn Benedict (Wimborne)	Director
John Bland (Strathmore)	Director
Doug Wray (Irricana)	Director
Amber Kenyon (Busby)	Director

AFIN also has Holy Mayer and Grant Lastuka Lastiwka as advisors to the Board and Kristen Lepp / Kristen Hall for admin support.

AFIN is certainly well represented by this devoted and hard working group of volunteers!

A few things for our readers to remember:

The 10thAnnual CFGA (Canadian Forage and Grasslands Association) Conference to be held on Nov. 12 to 15 in Moncton, N.B.,. Please check out the CFGA website for conference specifics

www.canadianfga.ca.

www.Foragebeef.ca, a website providing technical information for the Canadian Forage Beef Industry is now hosted by the Beef Cattle Research Council (BCRC).

AFIN Board members revisited the position papers that were developed few years ago and decided to keep them as such as they are as relevant today as they were before.

I want to take this opportunity to thank outgoing AFIN Board member Brian Palichuk and Heinz Lemmer

for their service to AFIN. We are really saddened by the untimely and sudden demise of Heinz Lemmer, he will be missed by the industry people.

Have a nice summer everyone.

Sincerely,
Your proud Chair, Surya Acharya



Export Forage Industry Alberta View

Edward J Shaw
AFIN export representative

The quality and quantity of forage outlook in Alberta is not as good as both domestic and exporters would like to see. The drought conditions of the past 2 years have put a moisture deficit into the 2019 crop year. Hay was short going into 2018 and cattle were put out to pastures early. Combined with another dry summer, the smoke conditions, both the volume and quality were reduced significantly. This was the same as going into the spring of 2019, no carry over, heavily utilized pastures and a cold and slow spring.

Winter kill was more serious, insects are taking a toll, and due to the cold start, weeds such as dandelions and Sheppard’s purse have come out strong, even in the irrigated areas.

Stating all that, there is a growing demand internationally for all grades of forage. This is driven by a growing middle class wishing to put more protein into their diet, and the fact that some countries have stopped using their underground water sources to irrigate low value crops. Alfalfa of all grades, timothy of all grades, lower quality forages and mixed hay is high in demand so the outlook for export inquiries are high but there will be a problem with the supply side yet another year.

Traditional markets such as Japan, Korea, Taiwan, the horse markets in UK, Ireland and the USA are strong and stable. The up coming markets such as China, the Middle East and now India are demanding higher volumes for all qualities of exportable hay.

One new trend is the acceptance and use of hay driers. Several stationary units are now being utilized as well as portable units. All units are used to decrease the baling times, increase the feed value and the volume.

The export market demand is increasing and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future and will continue to provide farmers with new options for crops to grow. Growing forages in rotations is an excellent idea to improve the soil for following crops.

The politics is having some negative effect on Canadian exports, including forages.

The China market has not yet been affected, but what we have seen with Canola and with Pork, we are a little concerned.

The situation in Saudi is improving slightly, as ships are now allowed to ship Canadian goods into Saudi, but we must overcome some reluctance for Saudi Companies to import Canadian products.



Drought Management Strategies

The key to a sustainable beef cattle operation is ensuring soil and forages remain healthy in the long term. These native and tame perennial forages are the backbone of the beef industry, and when they suffer, the viability of a ranching operation will also start to suffer. While it may be necessary to graze or take more of the plant base than you wanted to through a year of drought, it is very important to have a long term strategy to replenish these pastures and soils, otherwise they will be damaged in the long term.

This year (2019) has already presented some challenges for many beef producers in Alberta, where rain didn't come at right time. Although we have seen recent good rainfall in many parts of the province, in many cases it came too late to significantly contribute to forage growth. We are likely going to see some hay shortages this fall which will hopefully see some relief through a decent greenfeed crop (keep your fingers crossed). Nevertheless, Alberta Beef Producers will continue to monitor drought in the province and continue to participate in the Drought and Excess Moisture Advisory Group to see whether it will be necessary to trigger any drought recovery programming for affected areas.

In the meantime, the strategies highlighted in this article should help ranchers deal with drought on the farm, to ensure they keep their soil and forages as healthy as possible going into the fall and winter season and help ensure the soil and plants are as healthy as possible for next spring.

Tom Lynch- Staunton

[Read the full Drought Management Strategies article here.](#)

Source: [BeefResearch.ca](https://beefresearch.ca). Developed by the Beef Cattle Research Council with support from the Alberta Beef, Forage and Grazing Centre.

Drought Management Strategies

Recurring drought is a natural part of the climate in many areas of Canada and creates a challenge when managing grazing and forage resources. Although droughts are often unpredictable, they are inevitable in many regions, so long-term farm and ranch management must include planning for and consideration of how drought will affect the entire system – including plants, livestock and water sources.



Upcoming Events



WESTERN CANADA CONFERENCE ON SOIL HEALTH & GRAZING

BROUGHT TO YOU BY SEVERAL OF YOUR ALBERTA FORAGE AND RESEARCH ASSOCIATIONS

DECEMBER 10, 11 & 12 2019
DOUBLE TREE BY HILTON WEST EDMONTON

Featuring:

Gabe Brown, Joel Williams, Dr. Dwayne Beck, Brendon Rockey, Lance Gunderson, Dr. Kris Nichols, Kimberley Cornish, Derek Axten, Dr. Elaine Ingham, Dr. Yamily Zavala, Dr. Allen Williams, Dr. Shabtai Bitman, Dr. Peter Ballerstedt, Dr. Surya Acharya, Dr. Llewellyn Manske, Jay Fuhrer and more!

FOR THE AGENDA & REGISTRATION INFORMATION VISIT:

www.absoilgrazing.com





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