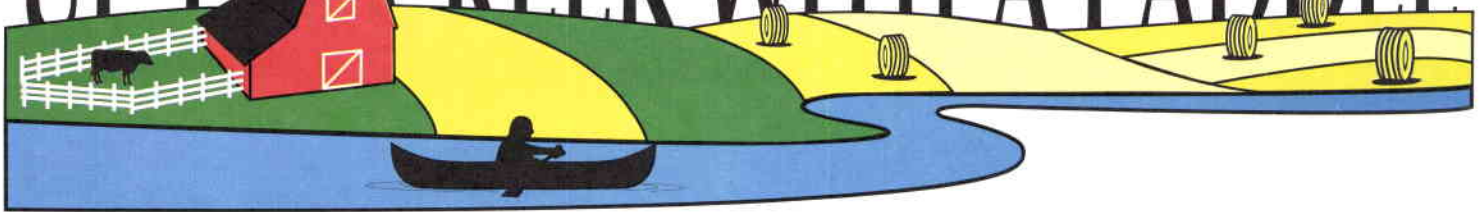


UP THE CREEK WITH A PADDLE



" c a r i n g f o r y o u r l a n d a n d w a t e r "

WEBSITES OF INTEREST Alberta

Invasive Plant Council
*Pictures and fact sheets of
weeds!*

www.invasiveplants.ab.ca

Alberta Agriculture
www.agric.gov.ab.ca
**Alberta Stewardship
Network**

www.stewardshipcanada.ca

**Alberta Environmental
Farm Plan Company**
www.albertaefp.com

**Alberta Conservation
Association**

www.ab-conservation.com

Alberta Environment
www.environment.gov.ab.ca
**Sustainable Resource
Development**

www3.gov.ab.ca/srd

**FOR ALBERTA ACTS AND
REGULATIONS**

The Queens Printer
www.gov.ab.ca/gp
780 427 4952

**Livestock Inspection
Service**

www.lis-alberta.com
Brand Inspector
403 934 2544

BIGHORN HAPPENINGS

September, 2008

By Dwight Tannas

Another busy summer season has come to an end. Because of the excellent growing conditions, our pastures were in excellent health this year. Seems, there is going to be a good supply of feed as well. The conditions also allowed for an unbelievable crop of weeds as well. This has kept us very busy. Keeping staff was also a problem this year; there are more jobs than people in this vicinity. I would like to thank Matthew Gow who helped us out this summer. He went back to the University of Alberta to continue his studies. Also a big thanks to Andrew Stiles and his crew for helping us again with weed control in the Bow Corridor. Winning the war on Invasive Plants takes the efforts of all of us. Thanks to all for helping protect our environment.

Changes are coming to Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development. For a number of years the Provincial Agricultural Services Board Committee and my fellow members of the Association of Alberta Agricultural Fieldmen have sought changes to the way that the provincial department does business. On Sept. 12, a conference call took place

between the Fieldmen and Deputy Minister John Knapp. At that time, he stated that they will be making some of the changes that we requested. Among them is assistance with the Age Verification program that frustrates many producers. Others changes include a revamping of the Alberta Environmental Sustainable Agriculture program, a review of the Agricultural Call Center and the most important one, the ability of producers to have direct contact with AARD staff; which they were denied in the last few years. Along with the departments changes, the Environmental Farm Plan Company is going through some changes that will be announced soon. Hopefully this is not



another bunch of smoke and mirrors!

Fall is upon us and, hopefully, by November I can take some time off. Being that the field season is almost over does not mean that we are not busy. This is the time of the year that we put together our budgets. We also have to evaluate our programs and compile our data on the weed program.

Planning for our major winter events is also in the works. Emily Smith will assist me in planning our Living in the Natural Environment event again scheduled for Feb. 6. We will have more info in the next newsletter.

As a member of the Red-Bow Regional Watersheds Alliance, that provides a lot of the information in this newsletter, is planning our second Ranching Opportunities workshop. Olds College partners with us on this workshop. This is an excellent opportunity for us to network with the students who are also involved with the planning and hosting of this event. This year's event will be the day before our Living in the Natural Environment just like it was last year. I was very glad to see that a number of you attended both events. We would like to have time between the two events, but booking venues and availability of volunteers makes this difficult. A good example is that the Provincial Agricultural Service Board Conference is the week before. This year it will be held in Medicine Hat. Planning for the third Ladies Livestock Lessons (a ladies grazing school) is well under way as well. Our second one at the Silver Creek Guest Ranch west of Water Valley kept its status as the largest of the three held in the province!

As a result of the opportunity to communicate with a lot of you

over this past summer, I will do a series of articles about some of the things local producer brought to my attention. The first article will be in this issue and deal with fences and stray animals.

CONSIDERATIONS WHEN CHOOSING ALTERNATE FEEDS

by Holly Spicer

The price of feed grains has increased substantially, a trend that is expected to continue largely due to the production of bio-fuels and shortages, particularly of wheat for human food consumption on the world market. Luckily, for western Canadian livestock producers there are a number of non-traditional and by-product feeds available that may provide substantial savings in feed costs. Depending upon the location of your farm you may be able to source human food manufacturing wastes, by-products from ethanol production, the milling and brewing industries as well as, a variety of screening products. However, there are some factors to consider before determining which of these feed sources to use this winter.

One of the key components in the decision making process is of course cost. "Cost shouldn't be the only consideration though," says Doug Roxburgh, Beef Specialist, Masterfeeds. "The nutrient content of the feed also needs to be taken into account." Especially since nutrient and moisture content can be very inconsistent depending on the type of alternative feed used and the supplier. Consequently, Roxburgh highly recommends producers feed test to determine the nutrient content of the alternative feeds and use a qualified nutritionist to custom formulate the rations to ensure that all the nutritional needs of the

animals are met. "This will also ensure that you are not paying for the addition of nutrients to the diet that you don't need," says Roxburgh. The level of protein, minerals and vitamins should be tested for. The energy content of the feedstuff is expressed as total digestible nutrients and can be calculated based on the acid detergent fibre content of the feed. These analyses will help to determine inclusion rates of the alternative feeds.

Even though alternative feedstuffs may have comparable nutrient content to more commonly used feeds, livestock may not always perform similarly when fed these products. Smell, bitterness and excessive fines in some products may reduce feed intakes.

There also may be higher transportation, handling and storage costs associated with particular feeds that producers must consider.

While there are many factors to consider before ultimately determining the inclusion levels and the best alternative feeds to use this winter, with the right choices you can reduce your overall feed costs this winter.

STRAY ANIMALS AND FENCES

by Dwight Tannas

Over the last few weeks I have had a lot of questions about both stray animals and fences. Being a rancher for many years I take it for granted that most people are aware of what to do about stray animals and who is responsible for fences. I forget that most of our residents were not brought up on a farm and are unaware of what to do.

The issues are actually legislated by two provincial acts; The Line Fence Act and the Stray Animals Act. The Line Fence Act is a relatively short act but it does set

out who is responsible for the fence between two residents. In short it is the responsibility of both parties and they are both responsible for the cost of construction and upkeep. Many long time landowners have followed an unofficial rule that the half of the fence to ones right when facing it is theirs to maintain. This works well most of the time. There is an exception. If one landowner does not have livestock, the one having livestock is responsible for the fence. However if the person without livestock acquires livestock he then must compensate the one having livestock in the past for his share of the cost of the fence and repair. In most cases it is just best to share costs and responsibilities as it is likely to the interest of all to have a proper fence. If two people can not agree an arbitrator can be appointed.

The question of stray livestock is a little more involved. In our historical past livestock were run on open range. Each cattleman had a brand that he used to identify his animals and helped him in the sorting of the livestock on the fall roundup. Remember also that brands must be registered. This is regulated in Alberta by the Livestock Identification and Brand Inspection Act. Brands may be registered or bought by contacting the Livestock Identification Services (www.lis-alberta.com) (Phone 1 866 509 2088). Brands still are used for identification and for proof of ownership. Most people should know the brands of their neighbours. If you do not know whos livestock may be trespassing on your lands the person to get hold of would be the "Brand Inspector". One can find the contact info by contacting the LIS head office at 403 740 4105 or for most of our municipality the



Strathmore Brand office at 403 934 2544. Remember also, that a manifest or permit must be filled out in most cases when moving livestock. These manifests are available at the Brand Offices or at most Auction Markets.

The Stray Animals Act, as I have stated, is a more involved act. It does allow for compensation for rounding up and for boarding of stray livestock. The regulations of how this is done are rather complicated and advice from a brand inspector is probably a good idea. One interesting point about the act is that it is an offence for someone to leave a gate open or to put a fence down to deliberately allow livestock to escape. The offence could result in a fine of \$5,000. Another part of the act deals with protection of livestock from dogs. Any landowner has the right to destroy a dog that is pursuing, worrying or destroying livestock or fowl on his land and he may also apply to the Provincial Court to have a dog destroyed that he believes has pursued, worried or destroyed his livestock.

All this aside, the best thing to do is to try to get along. Most

neighbours are generally good. And some just might not be aware that their livestock have wandered off or are causing a problem. If you want to read more about your rights the Acts and Regulations are all available on the Queens Printers website (www.gov.ab.ca/qp) or are available by phoning 780 427 4952 (be sure to dial the government rite number 310 0000 first for free phone service).

NEWS BRIEFS

by Claudette Lacombe

Farm Management Forums

Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development and Alberta Finance and Enterprise, together with several other key sponsors are offering industry two, one-day management forums. Donald Cooper, an international speaker on marketing, service and business excellence, will be delivering the forums.

The forums are in Edmonton Sept. 30 and in Calgary Oct. 2. The forums' design aim to help industry rethink, refocus and re-energize. Business owners,