

AGRiVIEW

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Saskatchewan
Agriculture

Minister's Message



Excess moisture has once again caused significant challenges for farmers and ranchers across Saskatchewan this year. To help address these challenges, I, along with federal Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz, recently announced more than \$250 million in funding to Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers affected by excess moisture.

This funding includes the Excess Moisture Program (EMP), which will once again provide producers with \$30 per eligible acre for crop land that could not be seeded as of June 20, 2011, and crop land that was seeded and subsequently flooded out on or before July 31, 2011.

Forages seeded in 2010 or 2011 that failed to establish due to excess moisture are also eligible under the EMP.

For producers enrolled in Crop Insurance, this \$30 per eligible acre is in addition to the \$70 per eligible acre coverage for land too wet to seed under Crop Insurance's Unseeded Acreage Benefit.

Our government also announced Saskatchewan's 40 per cent share of the Saskatchewan Feed and Forage Program, which includes feed shortfall assistance and reseeding assistance.

The feed shortfall component will provide \$12 per ton to eligible producers who have to purchase additional feed for their breeding herd due to excess moisture. This represents the provincial government's 40 per cent share of a \$30 per ton payment.

For the reseeding component, producers will be eligible to receive \$12 per acre for reseeding hay, forage and pasture land damaged by excess moisture in 2010 or 2011. This represents the provincial government's 40 per cent share of a \$30 per acre payment. We are hopeful the federal government will contribute their 60 per cent share for both of these programs in the near future.

We also announced a new Intensive Livestock Operation (ILO) Environmental Program. Under this program, ILOs, such as feedlots, are eligible for a 75 per cent rebate up to a maximum payment of \$250,000 on the costs of repairing or replacing pens and manure storage systems that have been damaged by excess moisture in 2010 or 2011.

Lastly, we also announced further assistance is available through the Provincial Disaster Assistance Program (PDAP) for producers affected by excess moisture. This includes assistance for transporting feed and livestock, pasture rental assistance, and compensation for spoiled grain or feed.

While I know this support will not solve all of the problems producers are dealing with, I hope these programs will help to address some of the challenges caused by excess moisture.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bob Bjornerud".

Bob Bjornerud



STORY SNAPSHOTS



Dandelion control



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White cockle research



Government moisture program announced

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Cover: Jason Brown from Brown Brothers Welding and Fabrication, demonstrates their grain bag roller at the opening of the Moose Jaw Regional Office expansion in July. Read more on page 5.



Saskatchewan
Agriculture

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To view this publication online, visit www.agriculture.gov.sk.ca/programs-services.



Desiccation and pre-harvest glyphosate



by Ian Schemenauer, AAg, BSA
Regional Crops Specialist, Outlook
Regional Services Branch

Desiccation is a tool farmers can use to dry down crops and patches of green weeds. This operation can increase the speed and ease of straight cutting, as well as reduce weeds. Pre-harvest desiccation does not accelerate the maturity of the crop and the crop must be at an acceptable level of maturity before application of a desiccant.

Desiccation can be divided into two distinct groups: true desiccants such as Reglone, and pre-harvest herbicides such as glyphosate. True desiccants are contact herbicides that rapidly kill and dry above-ground growth on contact, and require good water volume. True desiccants do not often provide good weed control. By only killing the top growth, late season moisture can allow plants to begin re-growing once more.

Reglone is an example of a true desiccant and is best applied in cloudy conditions or in the evening. Lentils and peas can be desiccated as soon as bottom pods are ripe and seeds are detached from pods. Lentils will rattle when shaken. In yellow peas, desiccation should not occur until most of the seeds have changed from green to yellow because colour change will not occur after the plant starts to dry down.

The second group of desiccants is pre-harvest herbicides, such as glyphosate. Glyphosate is not a true desiccant and works much slower.

Instead of killing the plant tissue on contact, glyphosate must be absorbed by the plant and is then translocated to the roots. For glyphosate to be effective, an actively growing plant is required. Glyphosate is slow acting but is more effective at weed control than Reglone and will help dry green patches in the field and increase harvestability.

Dry-down after a pre-harvest application can be anywhere from one to three weeks depending on weather conditions. Cool cloudy weather will delay dry down.

In general, cereals are ready for pre-harvest glyphosate when the seeds are at hard dough stage and a thumbnail impression will remain on a seed. Lentils are ready when the bottom 15 per cent of the pods are brown and rattle when shaken. Pre-harvest glyphosate can be applied to peas when 75 per cent to 80 per cent of the pods are brown.

Remember to never use glyphosate on any crop that you want for seed, as germination and plant vigour can be severely reduced. Also remember that European buyers are sensitive to the amount of glyphosate residue found on lentils. The pre-harvest application of glyphosate on lentils could reduce its marketability.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact a Regional Crops Specialist near you; or
- Call the Agriculture Knowledge Centre at 1-866-457-2377.

FIND OUT HOW MUCH FERTILIZER YOU NEED BY SOIL TESTING THIS FALL



by Patrick Mooleki, PhD, PAg
Soil/Nutrient Management Specialist
Regional Services Branch

Soil testing determines the level of plant available nutrients available in the soil and is needed to determine the amount of nutrients to be added as fertilizer. Given the wet 2010 season and wet conditions again in 2011, nitrogen levels will be difficult to predict for the next cropping year. The only way to find out is to soil test. One of the best times to soil test is in the fall.

Fall soil sampling provides enough time to: sample the fields properly to get truly representative soil samples, order the required fertilizer, and where required, fall-band nitrogen before the soil freezes. Although time of soil sampling for phosphorus, potassium and other nutrients is less critical, fall soil testing allows the producer to consider all nutrients for crop planning. Soil nitrogen levels determined in the fall remain relatively unchanged during the winter months as microbial activity is slowed down.

For accurate results ensure that you:

- contact the soil test lab for proper sampling procedures and shipping instructions;

- provide the lab with cropping history and intentions;
- measure subsoil moisture in each field near freeze up to assist in crop planning by setting realistic target yields, and adjusting soil test recommendations; and
- measure subsoil moisture again in spring to make final adjustments to crop inputs.

It is a good idea to call the soil test lab to understand their sampling procedure and recommendation philosophy to determine if they are consistent with your nutrient management objectives. Soil sampling is also an important step in adopting the industry developed 4-R nutrient stewardship plan: the right source, at the right rate, applied at the right time and right placement.

Know what nutrients you have in the soil by soil testing. Don't guess.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact the Agriculture Knowledge Centre at 1-866-457-2377.



Ken Panchuk of Saskatchewan Agriculture conducts soil sampling.





Saskatchewan Agriculture - rolling up recycling for producers



by *Daphne Cruise, PAg*
Regional Crops Specialist, Moose Jaw
Regional Services Branch

Grain bags have become a popular alternative for grain storage, but disposal options are limited.

As part of a one-year Grain Bag Recycling Pilot Project, the Provincial Council of Agriculture Development and Diversification Boards (PCAB) started collecting grain bags and bale twine in July. This pilot project, funded by the provincial and federal governments and PCAB, helps explore solutions to dispose of plastic grain bags and bale twine in an environmentally friendly way.

Grain bag rollers are available to help producers roll grain bags into a compact form made easier for shipping. These rollers are located at each collection location and made available to producers. The plastic is then transported to a facility for recycling.

The one-year pilot project will involve six locations throughout the province: Estevan, Kelvington, Prince Albert, Viscount, Abbey and Unity. In addition, PCAB will be working with the Moose Jaw River Watershed Stewards at their two collection sites at Moose Jaw and Milestone.

There are also other organizations helping producers recycle grain bag and bale twine collection. The Wascana Upper Qu'Appelle Watersheds Association has set up collection sites at Humboldt, Watrous and Raymore.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact the Provincial Council of Agriculture Development and Diversification Boards at 1-866-298-7222; or
- Moose Jaw River Watershed Stewards at (306) 691-3399; or
- Wascana Upper Qu'Appelle Watersheds Association at (306) 757-1704; or
- The Agriculture Knowledge Centre at 1-866-457-2377.



Rolled grain bags ready for recycling.

FALL: A PERFECT TIME FOR DANDELION CONTROL



by *Clark Brenzil, PAg*
Provincial Specialist – Weed Control
Crops Branch

Fall is the best time to control dandelions whether in the field or in the yard.

Because of its perennial lifecycle, shortening day lengths trigger dandelions to produce new buds for next year's growth and move large amounts of sugar produced in the leaves, to the root. The sugar produced at this time of year is used to produce these new buds and starch for storage in large taproots for winter survival. Starch converted back to sugar also drives the new growth in the spring, making dandelion one of the first plants to flower.

This lifecycle can be used to our advantage when herbicides are applied for control. Studies done at the University of Saskatchewan, as well as elsewhere, discovered that herbicide applications to dandelion in the fall were significantly more effective than similar applications made in the spring. The herbicide combinations evaluated were: glyphosate at various rates alone, glyphosate plus 2,4-D, and glyphosate plus Express or PrePass (glyphosate plus florasulam).

Fall applications are best done in September when dandelion leaves are still undamaged by frost and temperatures are still relatively warm. If leaves become too damaged by frost or temperatures at application are cold, herbicides will be less effective.

The second best time for control of dandelion is very early spring, when the plants first begin to flower. Dandelions are growing actively at that time, but once they complete flowering they enter a state of summer dormancy. In the spring, applications made from early to full flower are the most effective and beneficial to crop yield. Once flowering is complete and seed is produced, dandelion is tougher to control and has already had a significant impact on yield even before the crop has been seeded.

For herbicides registered for dandelion control see the *2011 Guide to Crop Protection* on the Ministry of Agriculture's website at www.agriculture.gov.sk.ca.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact the Agriculture Knowledge Centre at 1-866-457-2377; or
- Contact your Regional Crops Specialist.





On-farm anhydrous ammonia safety



by Ken Panchuk, PAg
Provincial Specialist, Soils
Crops Branch

Farmers are reminded of the importance of safely handling anhydrous ammonia on their operations.

Anhydrous ammonia is an economical form of nitrogen fertilizer commonly used in Saskatchewan. It is banded into the soil either in the fall after the soil cools to below 10C, usually after the first week of October, or in the spring prior to seeding or during the seeding operation.



Farm ammonia safety measures are important to know.

The farm input industry provides safety training to all those handling and using anhydrous ammonia, along with reminders on ammonia safety.

Farm input dealers have the responsibility to ensure anhydrous ammonia tanks, fittings, hoses and couplers meet the strict standards set by *The Saskatchewan Boiler and Pressure Vessels Act*. Tanks need to have proper placards and safety equipment for transporting as well as have first aid and personal protective equipment supplies on board.

Goggles and ammonia-resistant gloves must be worn when working with anhydrous ammonia. A container with at least four gallons of water must be mounted above head height with a drench hose for emergency flushing purposes.

Operators should also keep a small supply of water available in the tractor and carry a small squeeze bottle of water in their shirt pocket to immediately flush eyes in the event of an accident. Working upwind is an important practice to keep potential escaping gas away from the eyes and body.

Instructions from the manufacturer and input dealer must be followed carefully, including frequent inspection of equipment. Repairs should be made by a properly trained dealer.

Always carry a cell phone to quickly call for help.

On Jan. 1, 2011, the fertilizer industry's Ammonia Code of Practice came into force, reaffirming the commitment to keep Canadians safe. In this process, the dealer must be certified through the Ammonia Code of Practice before receiving any product.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Ministry of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety, Occupational Health and Safety Division at www.lrws.gov.sk.ca/ammonia-information ;
- Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure for information on transporting anhydrous ammonia at www.highways.gov.sk.ca;
- Ministry of Corrections, Public Safety and Policing for information on *The Boiler and Pressure Vessel Act* at www.cpsp.gov.sk.ca/bpvsafetyboard;
- Canadian Association of Agri-Retailers (CAAR); ammonia training programs at <http://caar.org>; and
- Canadian Fertilizer Institute: Ammonia Code of Practice at www.cfi.ca.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT ONLY WORKS IF YOU USE IT

by Bonita Mechor, BA, B.Ed
Education Consultant, Agricultural Health and Safety Network
Canadian Centre for Health and Safety in Agriculture (CCHSA)

Focus on Feet

Proper footwear protects our feet from potential hazards, and prevents the pain and fatigue that can distract us from the task at hand. Sore feet can lead us to unsafe shortcuts and slower reaction time.

The most expensive pair of shoes you own shouldn't necessarily be the ones you wear for special occasions. The shoes you wear to work every day should be your best shoes. Good shoes are important to your comfort, safety and productivity. Various workplace foot injuries and health issues can decrease your quality of life and take away from the enjoyment of your occupation.

When selecting work shoes and boots, consider that good footwear:

- should grip the heel firmly;
- allow free movement of the toes;
- have a low wide-based heel to stabilize the ankle; and
- have a fastening across the instep to prevent the foot from slipping in the shoe.

Design your workplace to increase foot safety by keeping all walkways, stairs and ramps free of debris. Keep moving equipment away from areas of foot traffic and ensure that all guards are installed properly on machinery. Keep work areas well lit to reduce slips, trips and falls.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact the Agriculture Health and Safety Network at (306) 966-6647.





Ergot monitoring and management



by Faye Dokken-Bouchard, MSc., AAgr
Provincial Specialist, Plant Disease
Crops Branch

As we near harvest, our attention turns from the factors affecting yield to those affecting crop quality.

No matter what the destination after harvest, seed quality will play an important role in determining its value and end-use suitability. Marketplace seed quality is characterized by grading factors that are designated by the Canadian Grain Commission, and is normally assessed at the elevator. Quality of seed destined for planting will be characterized by a different set of factors.

Prior to harvest, potential issues such as ergot can be identified by monitoring the crop for symptoms. Further seed testing can be done any time after harvest. Seed testing laboratories can help you determine germination and vigour, and can detect certain diseases. Some seed abnormalities and discolourations can be caused by fungal organisms, while others may be a result of weather conditions.

Ergot levels have remained high in some areas since the last province-wide outbreak in 2008. Cool, damp weather and uneven flowering may have favoured ergot in some areas of the province this year. *Claviceps purpurea* causes ergot on most cereals and grasses in Canada, and is a particularly important disease of rye. Infected heads are made evident by one or several dark purplish ergot bodies protruding from the spike in place of normal kernels. If observed prior to harvest in select areas of the field (such as the headlands), affected areas should be harvested and binned separately.

Ergot bodies are visible in grain and can usually be removed through commercial cleaning. Ergot is not tested for at seed testing labs; however, downgrading may occur at the elevator (thresholds for No. 1 wheat or barley is one ergot body per kilogram of seed). Toxic levels to livestock are 0.1 per cent ergot material or 10 ergot bodies per litre or one ergot body per 1,000 kernels.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact Faye Dokken-Bouchard, Provincial Specialist, Plant Diseases at (306) 787-4671 or by e-mail at faye.dokkenbouchard@gov.sk.ca; or
- Visit www.agriculture.gov.sk.ca and search for the Ergot of Cereals and Grasses factsheet.



Ergot body in wheat head.



Disaster Assistance for Producers

The federal and provincial governments are providing over \$250 million to support Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers affected by excess moisture.

Excess Moisture Program

The **Excess Moisture Program** provides \$30 per eligible acre to producers for land they were unable to seed as of June 20 and seeded cropland that was flooded out on or before July 31. For more information, contact your local Crop Insurance office, visit www.saskcropinsurance.com or call **1-888-935-0000**. Applications are also available at RM offices. The deadline to apply is September 30.

Forage and Livestock Programs

The **Saskatchewan Feed and Forage Program** will help livestock producers affected by excess moisture purchase additional winter feed and reseed damaged forage acres. There is also a program to help intensive livestock operations repair and upgrade pens and manure storage systems damaged by excess moisture. Application forms and more information can be accessed through the Ministry of Agriculture's regional offices, RM offices and Crop Insurance offices, www.agriculture.gov.sk.ca, or by calling **1-877-874-5365**.

Provincial Disaster Assistance Program

The **Provincial Disaster Assistance Program** will provide assistance to agriculture producers for several flood related items including feed and livestock transportation, pasture rental and spoiled stored grain or feed. For more information, producers can also call **1-866-632-4033**.










Breeding for Profit producer bus tour



*by Jenifer Heyden M.Sc., PAg
Regional Livestock Specialist, North Battleford
Regional Services Branch*

From June 19 - 24, 2011, Saskatchewan Agriculture livestock specialists Colby Elford, Jenifer Heyden, Travis Peardon, and Bob Springer, travelled with Saskatchewan beef producers through North and South Dakota and Nebraska. This bus trip was designed for beef producers to travel into the north central United States, stopping at leading research, extension and industry facilities highlighting heifer development and herd improvement technologies. The tour focused primarily on gleaned information and technology on herd improvement at the grassroots level of production.

The 23 producers on the tour represented more than 9,000 head of beef cattle and over 4,700 head of feedlot cattle from Duck Lake, Rosthern, Canora, Shell Lake, Moose Jaw, Chaplin, Assiniboia, Theodore, Biggar, Speers, Midale, Marsden, Leroy, Netherhill, Glidden, Ponteix, Humboldt, Kyle and Pincher Creek (Alberta). The cost of the tour was shared between producers and the Ministry.

Stops on the tour included: Schaff Angus Valley (one of the oldest on-going Angus herds in North America), Genex Dakota Sire Service (semen collection, processing, storage and shipping), Roman L. Hruska United States Department of Agriculture Meat Animal Research Center (a world-class research facility whose objective is to increase production efficiency while maintaining a lean, high quality,

safe product), Heartland Cattle Company (a revolutionary professional heifer development centre with over 20 years experience and 80,000 heifers developed and bred), Gudmundsen Sandhills Laboratory (University of Nebraska – Lincoln extension research facility), and the Rex Ranch (a 300,000 acre, 12,500 head commercial cattle ranch located in the sandhills of Nebraska).

The Heartland Cattle Company (heifer development centre) was one of the stops that kept producers talking. When asked what changes they would make on their own operations the most popular answer was more emphasis on heifer development and production.

The Breeding for Profit Bus Tour was a great opportunity for producers, industry and government to network. It brought together forward thinking, leading edge individuals with genuine interest in the industry and its future. Producers commented that the trip was well planned, perfectly timed and had interesting stops. Accommodations and meals were excellent, staff were pleasant, helpful and knowledgeable, and producers said they gained a vast amount of new and valuable information.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact the Agriculture Knowledge Centre at 1-866-457-2377.



HEARTLAND CATTLE COMPANY



*Travis Peardon, PAg
Regional Livestock Specialist, Outlook
Regional Services Branch*

Heartland Cattle Company, located at McCook, Nebraska, focuses on custom heifer development. Twenty years in business has resulted in 80,000 heifers through their gates and a long waiting list for their services.

The program at Heartland revolves around heifers arriving at least 90 days pre-breeding. This allows the heifers to be fed to proper weight and condition to maximize fertility by having animals in good body condition but not over fat. Before breeding, heifers are evaluated on criteria including pelvic measurement, reproductive tract score, weight, frame score and overall general health and appearance. Any heifers found unsatisfactory are culled from the program.

The heifers are synchronized and bred using artificial insemination to proven sires chosen for calving ease, growth and carcass traits. The heifers are then watched for 45 days and any heifers cycling are bred again using artificial insemination. Typical conception rates are 95 per cent. Heartland utilizes ultrasound technology to check pregnancies before cattle are returned home 45 days following the breeding season. The post-breeding period allows Heartland the ability to return confirmed, low-risk pregnancies to the rancher.

Charges for this service vary from year to year based on feed costs. For heifers developed in 2011, the total cost including all feed, yardage and breeding was \$350 USD/head.

Customers of Heartland also enjoy several indirect benefits of professional heifer development. When heifers are developed off ranch, a comparable number of mature producing cow units can be added to the production systems that can result in increased cash flow due to more calves weaned. It also allows younger cows to be managed separately from the main herd when facilities, labour and the best feed resources are no longer directed toward replacements. As well, data from Heartland collected on each animal allows producers to determine strengths and weaknesses in their herd.

The visit to Heartland Cattle Company resulted in hours of discussion among tour participants. The unique services offered at Heartland had everyone evaluating their own heifer development programs and discussing how a feedyard like this would be popular in Saskatchewan.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Visit www.heartlandcattle.com; or
- Contact Travis Peardon, Regional Livestock Specialist at travis.peardon@gov.sk.ca or call 306-867-5504.





Research at the Gudmundsen Sandhills Laboratory



by Colby Elford, BSc, AAg
Regional Livestock Specialist, Moose Jaw
Regional Services Branch

The Gudmundsen Sandhills Laboratory (GSL) is an applied research facility operated by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Currently, the facility consists of 12,800 acres of grassland with 750 cows and 200 yearlings.

The cow herd is composed of a specific combination of Red Angus and Simmental cattle. This herd is divided into a March calving herd and a May/June calving herd, and the calves are weaned in October and December, respectively. The spring herd is bred using artificial insemination, while the late calving herd is bred with natural service. Hay for these cows is produced on site from a 1,100 acre sub irrigated meadow.

This University facility operates as a stand-alone ranch. Income from cattle sales keeps them operational. Like many ranches in Saskatchewan their goal is to feed as little as possible because winter feeding is one of their largest costs. Part of the purpose of this operation is to provide relevant information to Sandhills area ranchers. With the goal of economic and environmental sustainability, the GSL has integrated ranch economics into many facets of their research.

Although the GSL operates as a normally functioning ranch that has to generate income and pay bills, there are several interesting research projects that involve the cattle.

Some cattle have esophageal fistulas installed which allow the researchers to monitor exactly what the cows are eating at any specific time in the grazing season. This is significantly more accurate than taking pasture clippings because cattle selectively graze. The GSL is also doing research on fetal programming in cattle, which explores the idea that a cow is teaching her fetus how to survive in her specific environment months before it is actually born. They have also done developmental heifer research to try to find what percentage of mature body weight heifers should be when they are bred. Their goal is to reduce costs and educate producers in the most efficient ways to raise cattle.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Visit the University of Nebraska-Lincoln website at <http://gsl.unl.edu/home>.



A bird's eye view of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Gudmundsen Sandhills Laboratory.

UNITED STATES MEAT ANIMAL RESEARCH CENTER (USMARC)



by Jenifer Heyden M.Sc., PAg
Regional Livestock Specialist, North Battleford
Regional Services Branch

and



by Bob Springer, BSc., PAg
Regional Livestock Specialist, Swift Current
Regional Services Branch

One of the stops on the tour was the Roman L. Hruska United States Meat Animal Research Center (USMARC). It is located near Clay Center, Nebraska and is run by the Agricultural Research Service within the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The center's scientists work to develop new technology and provide leading edge research to producers across North America.

USMARC is divided into six research units:

- Animal Health
- Environmental Management
- Genetics and Breeding
- Meat Safety and Quality
- Animal Nutrition
- Reproduction

Presently, research programs are using a female breeding population of 6,500 cattle of 18 breeds, 4,000 sheep of 10 breeds, and 700 swine litters per year. Objectives are to increase efficiency of production

while maintaining a lean, high quality, safe product. This way, the research ultimately benefits the consumer as well as the production and agri-business sectors of animal agriculture. About 50 per cent of the effort is with beef cattle, 30 per cent with swine, and 20 per cent with sheep. The programs are cooperative with the University of Nebraska and land-grant universities in the United States.

The tour group was fortunate to be able to sit in on a number of presentations on genomic research being conducted throughout the United States. The theme for the day was DNA Technology: where we've been, where we are and where we're headed. Researchers from USMARC, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, the University of California-Davis, and the University of Missouri presented their latest findings. They covered topics including realistic expectations of genomics and current applications, the impact of pedigree relationship in molecular breeding value accuracy, tracking fertility using pooled DNA information, commercial heifer selection using genomics, updates on novel trait discovery, as well as updates on a few projects currently underway at USMARC and the universities represented.

Over the past 10 years, DNA technology has proven useful in both the purebred and commercial cattle industries in terms of identification of parentage, recessive alleles, simply inherited traits like colour and polled versus horned, as well as the identification of cattle that are carriers of genetic defects. Work continues on identifying genetic markers for traits of economic importance, such as fertility, feed efficiency, weaning weight, lean meat yield, muscle marbling and rib eye area.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Visit www.ars.usda.gov/Main/docs.htm?docid=2340; or
- Call the Agriculture Knowledge Centre at 1-866-457-2377.





Rabies testing now available at Prairie Diagnostic Services



by Wendy Wilkins, DVM, PhD
Disease Surveillance Technician
Livestock Branch

Rabies is present in the wildlife populations in Saskatchewan. Bats, skunks and foxes throughout the province should be assumed to be potentially carrying rabies.

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) is responsible for conducting rabies testing of suspect domestic animal cases and in suspect wildlife cases in which there has been human or domestic animal contact. These tests are carried out in CFIA laboratories.

However, in certain situations, individuals may wish to test suspect cases that do not meet CFIA's criteria (e.g. wildlife cases with no known contact with humans or domestic animals). Up until now, Saskatchewan residents did not have access to private testing options.

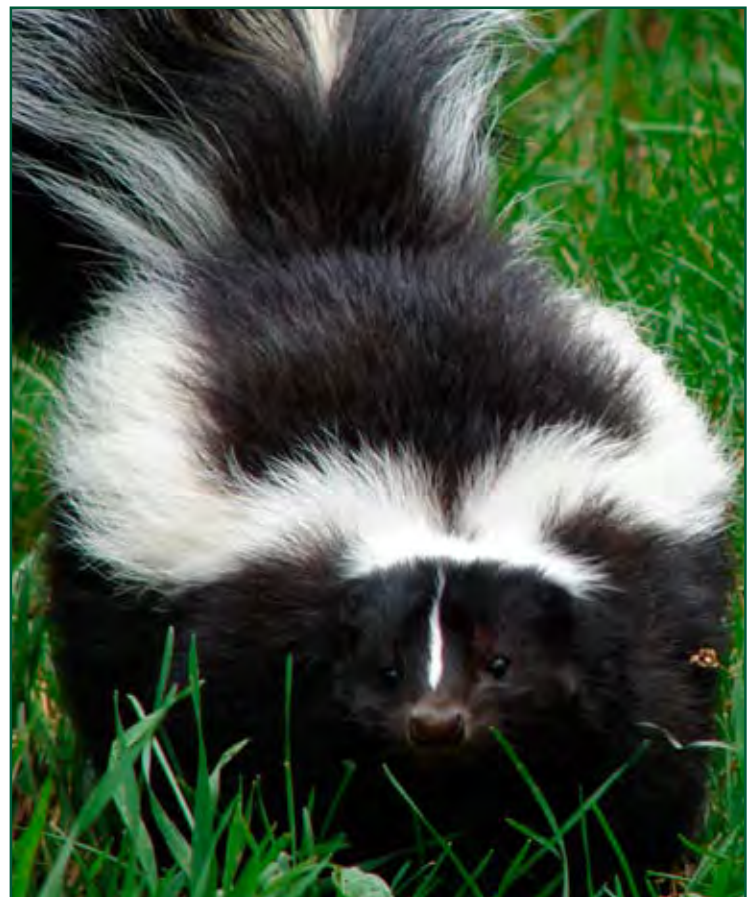
Prairie Diagnostic Services is now offering a rabies immunohistochemistry (IHC) test for cases that do not meet CFIA's testing criteria. Veterinary clinics can submit specimens directly to PDS for testing. Suitable samples include the whole brain or the intact head from suspect animals. In the case of very small animals, the whole body may be submitted. Samples should be submitted, chilled or frozen with identification attached, in a leak-proof container as soon as possible after death. A complete history and test request should be attached, in a waterproof envelope or ziplock bag, to the outside of the container. Positive samples will be forwarded to CFIA for confirmation.

The cost of testing is estimated to be \$150 for small animals and \$200-\$250 for large animals such as adult moose. This cost will be billed directly to the client requesting the test. **The IHC test for rabies is not accredited by CFIA but, like all other IHC tests at PDS, it is subject to internal quality assurance.**

To find out if your case meets CFIA testing criteria, contact your CFIA district veterinarian. If it does not meet the CFIA mandate, it can then be submitted to PDS for IHC.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact Dr. Dale Godson with PDS at (306) 966-7247; or
- Contact Dr. Brendan O'Connor with PDS at (306) 966-7297; or
- Visit www.pdsinc.ca.



In Saskatchewan, rabies is most often diagnosed in skunks.

FALL-SEEDING FORAGES - COMMON QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS



by Andre Bonneau, BSA, PAg
Forage Management Specialist
Regional services branch

What is fall-seeding?

When forage is seeded late enough in the fall to prevent germination until the following spring, it's considered fall-seeding. If seed is protected from the elements over the winter, and has access to moisture in the spring, it will germinate.

Why seed in the fall?

Time and moisture are usually the best reasons to seed in the fall. Often, producers seed all other annual crops first, and by the time they get to seeding forages, soil conditions may be too dry to get a quick establishment. Seeding late in the fall will place the seed in a position where moisture will usually be available when germination begins. However, if the seed germinates too early in the spring, the risk of frost damage increases.

When to seed?

It's important the forage seed does not germinate before winter. For many parts of the province, forages seeded in late October or early November will remain dormant until freeze-up. It may be mechanically difficult to seed after a hard freeze-up.

At what rate?

In grasses, seeding rates are similar for fall seeding as compared to spring seeding. In alfalfa the seed coat may crack and the seed may get a fungal infection. These seeds will not germinate so seeding rates should be adjusted. Increasing the alfalfa seeding rate by up to 20 per cent should compensate for lost seedlings.

It's recommended that the seed be drilled rather than broadcast when fall-seeding. Broadcasting and harrowing provides little assurance that the seed is well placed and secure in the soil. Flowing water in the spring can move the seed around and leave open patches in the field.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact the Agriculture Knowledge Centre at 1-866-457-2377.





The biology and control of white cockle

Silene latifolia, or white cockle, as it's known to most, was introduced to North America in the early 19th century. Since then, this pesky plant has evolved to be more aggressive than its European ancestors and can be troublesome in forage and no-till cropping systems.

White cockle is easily confused with the annual weed, night-flowering catchfly. The main difference between these two is that white cockle is a short-lived perennial and plants will usually start from overwintering lateral or tap roots. So if you are in doubt dig up one of the larger plants in the spring.

Despite the fact that white cockle is considered a noxious weed in most agricultural regions of Canada, little research has been conducted on its ecology.



North American white cockle has evolved to be more aggressive than its European ancestors and can be troublesome in forage and no-till cropping systems.

To remedy this, researchers from the University of Saskatchewan and the University of Alberta, with funding from the Agriculture Development Fund of Saskatchewan Agriculture, took an extensive look at how white cockle can be kept under control.

The purpose of this project was to examine the pollination process of white cockle in order to understand its invasive potential; and to find which herbicide works best at controlling white cockle.

The study found that insects play a large role in pollinating the female plants. It was interesting to note that insect pollination occurs at night. White cockle that was only exposed at night had similar seed production to those exposed all day, whereas those only exposed during the day had significantly less seed production.

One further trial found that female plants that were distant from male plants produced much less seed than females close to male plants. This probably occurred because night flying pollinators could not find distant female plants after visiting male plants. What this means for farmers is that the speed of invasion of white cockle should not be too fast and, if farmers can control the plants early, they should be able to slow or stop the invasion.

Herbicide tests showed multiple herbicide applications were the most efficient at controlling white cockle. Like the pollination trials, the experiments were done on naturally occurring white cockle infestations.

Results showed that a pre-seed treatment combined with an in-crop treatment was the only way to adequately control white cockle seedlings and plants. Two options showed the best control: the first combination was to pre-seed with Roundup at 450 g ai/h followed by a Group 2 herbicide in-crop. The second successful mixture was pre-seeding with Roundup at 450 g ai/h in combination with a Group 2 herbicide, followed by another application of a Group 2 herbicide.

Pre-seeding tillage can be substituted for pre-seeding herbicide, but successful control throughout the growing season requires an effective in-crop herbicide as well.

The Agriculture Development Fund provides funding to help institutions, companies and industry organizations carry out research, development and value-added activities in the agriculture and agri-food sector. The results produce new knowledge, information and choices in technologies, techniques and varieties for farmers, ranchers, processors and input suppliers, to improve the competitiveness of Saskatchewan's agriculture sector.

In 2011, the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture committed \$14.5 million in new funding for 71 ADF research projects.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Visit the Saskatchewan Agriculture research reports page at www.agriculture.gov.sk.ca/ADF/Search and enter the report number (#20070192) into the search function.



Research showed that multiple herbicide applications were the most effective means of controlling white cockle.





Agricultural Biotechnology Week in Saskatchewan

Minister of Agriculture Bob Bjornerud will once again proclaim Sept. 16-23, 2011, to be Agricultural Biotechnology Week in Saskatchewan.

Agricultural biotechnology focuses on studying the genetics underlying normal development of plants and animals, and is used to improve food, feed, and fibre crops as well as livestock. Saskatchewan hosts 30 per cent of the Canadian agricultural biotechnology industry, proof of how important this research is to advancing agriculture in the province.

The Government of Saskatchewan dedicates a week in September to correspond with the wider Canadian National Biotechnology Week and to highlight the importance of agricultural biotechnology in advancing the agriculture industry in Saskatchewan.

Agricultural biotechnology has led to the development of higher yielding crops and new sources of biofuels as well as the ability to track quality traits in livestock. These innovations increase the efficiency

of production systems and, in turn, boost producer returns.

Saskatchewan is an international leader in agricultural biotechnology and proudly supports further research in this field as a key component to increasing the competitiveness of the agricultural industry in Saskatchewan.

The Ministry is committed to supporting biotechnology research, much of which is underway at the three Innovation Place research parks in Regina, Saskatoon, and Prince Albert. In September of 2010, Premier Brad Wall announced an additional provincial investment of \$5 million over four years to agricultural biotechnology research. With this investment, Saskatchewan will keep its place at the forefront of scientific research in agricultural biotechnology.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- on Saskatchewan and Canadian events during agricultural biotechnology week visit www.agwest.sk.ca/events/20.



OUTSTANDING IN SASKATCHEWAN

2011 Outstanding Young Farmers announced

Franck and Kari Groeneweg took home more than brochures and business cards from the Western Canadian Farm Progress Show – they took home a title too. The Groenewegs were chosen as the 2011 Saskatchewan Outstanding Young Farmers at a luncheon at the Farm Progress Show on June 17, 2011.

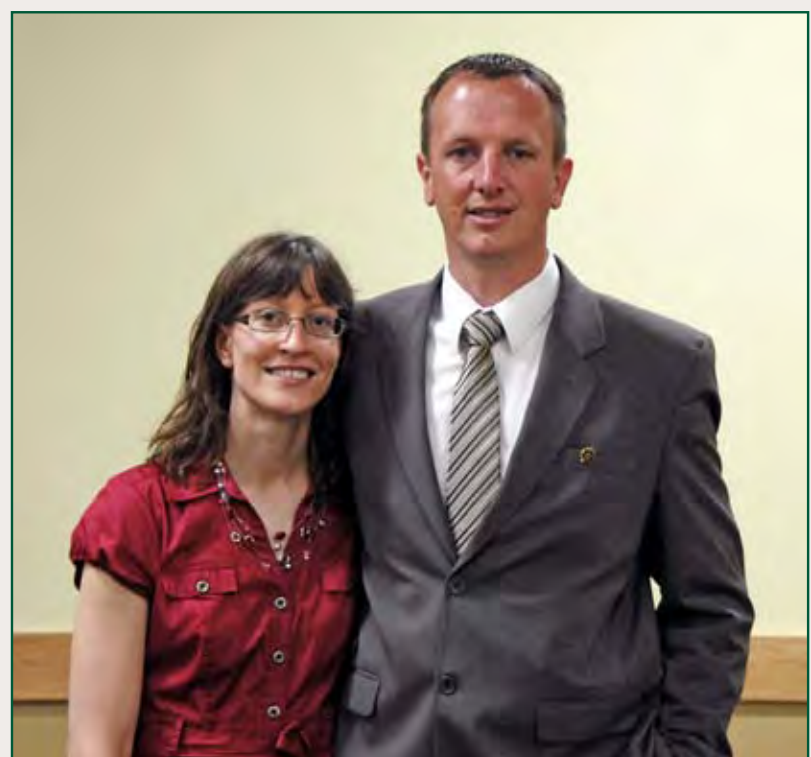
The couple will now represent Saskatchewan at the national Outstanding Young Farmers competition in November. At the national level, the Groenewegs will be judged on their agricultural career achievements, environmental stewardship, financial management and practices, contributions to their community, and a number of other factors.

In 2010, Saskatchewan Outstanding Young Farmers Lauren and Ryan Maurer won the national title.

Also nominated for the provincial award this year were Donaro Farms' Larry and Michael Spratt from Melfort.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Visit www.saskoyf.ca.



Congratulations to Franck and Kari Groeneweg, Saskatchewan's 2011 Outstanding Young Farmers.





Agencies welcome Governance and Industry Development Conference



by **Lyndi Blakley**
Research Officer
Policy Branch

The Agri-Food Council hosted its first Governance and Industry Development Conference in March 2011, as a means of providing support for the boards and staff of the 18 agencies operating under *The Agri-Food Act, 2004*. The conference also aimed to further the agencies' shared mandate to advance their respective industries through research and development activities. Sask Canola, Sask Pork and the Saskatchewan Cattlemen's Association were among some of the 13 agencies in attendance.

Strive! – one of the country's leading governance organizations – led an interactive governance training session on the first day. This session focused on developing a broad understanding of good governance principles that can be adapted to the individual needs of the organization and built upon in the future.

Research, development and trade formed the basis of the second day's agenda, which was kicked off with opening remarks provided by Alanna Koch, Deputy Minister of Saskatchewan Agriculture. The session continued with the following presentations:

- Dr. Abdul Jalil, Director of the Ministry's Agriculture Research Branch, discussed provincial research and development programs;
- Mary Buhr, Dean of Agriculture and Bioresources at the University of Saskatchewan, described the agriculture research being done at

the university and the agencies' integral role in accomplishing that research;

- Jerome Konecsni, Director General of the National Research Council's Plant Biotechnology Institute in Saskatoon, profiled the developing new technologies that will drive innovation in the ag-bio sector;
- Sid Friesen and Rob Swallow, Ministry trade specialists, discussed the various trade agreements in place and current trade issues;
- James Kettel, Manager of the Ministry's Industry and Trade Unit, reported on the Ministry's February 2011 trip to Washington, and discussed the important role of developing and maintaining strong relationships with our American counterparts;
- Leslie Geddie, Ministry Marketing Specialist, provided an overview of Saskatchewan's export markets; and
- Jordan Gaw, Trade Specialist with the Saskatchewan Trade and Export Partnership (STEP), discussed the role of STEP in working with agencies to develop Saskatchewan export markets.

Feedback from participants confirmed the conference was a valuable opportunity for the agencies. The Agri-Food Council, which supervises and monitors the activities of the agri-food agencies established under *The Agri-Food Act, 2004*, remains committed to advancing Saskatchewan's agri-food industry and hopes to offer further conferences in the future.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact the Agri-Food Council at (306) 787-5978; or
- E-mail corey.ruud@gov.sk.ca.

Growing Forward



A SWEET MOVE FORWARD WITH SAVI



by **Leroy Bader, PAg**
Farm Business Management Specialist, Tisdale
Regional Services Branch

Everyone likes a success story. It's positive to hear of an entrepreneur who has a great idea and somehow manages to turn it into a successful and thriving business. That is where the Saskatchewan Agri-Value Program (SAVI) comes in to help entrepreneurs with business planning services and financial assistance to help ensure that their idea is one that succeeds.

Sweet Pure Honey is an example of entrepreneurship that started with a great idea but hit the wall in terms of finances.

Stella Sehn and Sheldon Hill, along with their three young children, are beekeepers. They own about 400 hives in the northeast community of Porcupine Plain. Stella says that since the beginning, their goal has been to "brand an entire generation of Sweet Pure Honey products with our naturally inspired healthy living while paying local beekeepers above market value and creating sustainable employment for their families and their partners." The added value to their honey production also means that Sheldon no longer faces the possibility of leaving the family farm to work in the oilfields.

Armed with a variety of product ideas from raw honey to cosmetics, Stella and Sheldon set out to introduce their line of high quality products and their farm to consumers. To accomplish this meant defining their marketplace and spending the time and money to connect with consumers. However, with credit cards maxed out and minimal cash income from the business, they had reached their financial limits to carry out their business plan.

Sweet Pure Honey was able to continue with its business plan due to funding received from the SAVI program. This allowed Stella to attend some trade shows in Alberta and to create an Internet presence for online sales. Stella says that after using the SAVI program, "I don't understand why other entrepreneurs would not use this program. The Ministry of Agriculture staff can help you through the process and the program definitely was a huge help to us. I will never give up on Sweet Pure Honey, but I can say the SAVI support was crucial to how far Sweet Pure Honey has come since the funding began."

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact your Regional Farm Business Management Specialist or visit the Ministry website at www.agriculture.gov.sk.ca/SAVI for more information on the SAVI Program.
- Sweet Pure Honey can be found online at www.sweetpurehoney.ca.





Growing Forward



Government announces support for producers affected by excess moisture

Recognizing the challenges posed by excess moisture in Saskatchewan, the federal and provincial governments are providing more than \$250 million in funding to Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers affected by excess moisture.

This AgriRecovery initiative is in response to the estimated eight million acres of farmland across the province that was affected by excess moisture. AgriRecovery allows governments to respond effectively when disaster strikes a region to address gaps not covered by existing programs.

Producers with cropland that could not be seeded as of June 20 or was seeded and subsequently flooded as of July 31, will have access to the 2011 Excess Moisture Program. This is being administered by the Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation and will provide \$30 per eligible acre. A five per cent deductible is applied to the affected wet acres.

All producers in Saskatchewan are eligible for this program; you do not have to be a Crop Insurance customer. Crop Insurance customers do not have to apply for the EMP unless an established crop was flooded between June 20 and July 31, 2011. Crop Insurance customers will receive EMP payments automatically for acres reported as unseeded on their Seeded Acreage Reports. Applications are available at all SCIC customer service offices, SCIC head office in Melville, and RM offices, as well as online at www.saskcropinsurance.com or by calling 1-888-935-0000. The deadline to apply for the EMP is Sept. 30, 2011.

Provincial Disaster Assistance Program (PDAP)

PDAP will provide assistance to producers for managing the challenges caused by excess moisture, such as transporting feed or livestock, renting pasture or compensating for spoiled stored grain and feed.



Agriculture Minister Bob Bjornrud and Federal Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz announced excess moisture programming in McTaggart, SK on August 4.

To access this support, producers should check with their local RM to ensure it has been designated as a disaster under PDAP. For more information call 1-866-632-4033.

GOVERNMENTS AID FLOODED-OUT LIVESTOCK PRODUCERS

The governments of Canada and Saskatchewan are providing help to livestock producers who are coping with the effects of excess moisture this spring and summer.

Under the Saskatchewan Feed and Forage Program (SFFP), the deadline for forage reseedling has been extended to Oct. 31, 2012. Feed shortfall assistance has been reinstated to help producers purchase feed for this coming winter.

The SFFP can provide financial assistance for forage and livestock producers affected by excess moisture. This initiative includes feed shortfall assistance for eligible producers who have to purchase additional feed and reseeding assistance for hay, forage or pasture land damaged by excess moisture.

In addition funding is available through the Intensive Livestock Operation Environmental Program to help intensive livestock operations with the cost of rehabilitating pens as well as manure storage and containment systems that have been damaged by excess moisture.

Producers can learn more about the SFFP and the Intensive Livestock Operation Environmental Program by contacting their closest Ministry of Agriculture's Regional Office or by calling 1-877-874-5365.

Through the federal/provincial Growing Forward framework, livestock operators will also get help to combat damage from the excess moisture conditions in 2010 and 2011. A new program for Intensive Livestock Operations (ILOs) will help operators with the cost of rehabilitating pens and manure storage/containment systems. Operators who are approved under the *Agricultural Operations Act* and are not eligible under the Provincial Disaster Assistance Program (PDAP) are eligible for a 75 per cent rebate on expenditures to a maximum payment of \$250,000.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact a Ministry of Agriculture Regional Office nearest you; or
- A Crop Insurance customer service office;
- Rural Municipality offices; or
- Visit www.agriculture.gov.sk.ca.





Growing Forward



Volunteer forage acres to establish individual coverage

Beginning in 2011, producers have the opportunity to volunteer forage yields even if the crop is not insured.

By volunteering forage yields, producers can establish individual coverage levels more representative of their farming operations. They will be able to use this individual coverage level should they ever decide to purchase forage insurance.

Producers can submit 2011 production information for forage crops on the Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation's (SCIC) Forage Declaration form. Forage insurance customers will have received a package containing this form. Crop Insurance customers who insure grain acres may receive this form if they requested the ability to volunteer forage yields on their Seeded Acreage Report.

If producers wish to report production from years previous to 2011, they should contact a local customer service office. Producers can submit sales receipts, individual farm management records, AgriStability-submitted information and any other verifiable yield data.

The deadline to submit a Forage Declaration is Sept. 30, 2011. This is also the deadline to register all forage claims.

If producers think they are in a claim position prior to harvesting their forage crop and want to put it to an alternate use such as grazing or silage, they should contact their local customer service office five days

prior to doing so. A Crop Insurance adjuster will visit to appraise the crop.

If producers think they are in a claim position after harvesting their forage crop, they should register a claim and notify SCIC before moving production off the farm. SCIC will pay a limited number of these claims

based on customer-submitted production information and without a visit from an adjuster. This improves the timeliness of claim payments to customers. If customers are eligible, a customer service representative will let them know. To ensure the integrity of this initiative, a percentage of these claims will be reviewed.

Wildlife Damage

Producers experiencing damage to stacked forage due to wildlife should contact SCIC

immediately. SCIC will send an adjuster to record current inventories. Compensation will be provided on losses in comparison to the recorded inventory levels. It is essential for producers to report initial damage to SCIC as early as possible.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact the nearest customer service office;
- Call 1-888-935-0000; or
- Visit www.saskcropinsurance.com.



TIME TO SUBMIT 2010 APPLICATIONS

An important AgriStability deadline is nearing.

Sept. 30, 2011 is when program forms are to be filed. By submitting your program forms on or before this date, you improve the likelihood of having benefits calculated sooner, as the Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation (SCIC) processes on a first-in, first-served basis. Participants filing their forms by Sept. 30 also avoid a \$500 per month penalty, which is deducted from any AgriStability benefit, if the necessary information is still submitted by Dec. 31.

As participants work to meet the Sept. 30 form filing deadline, SCIC wants to ensure there is easy access to the support and tools needed to effectively work with the AgriStability program. The 21 customer service offices across the province have staff and resources should producers, accountants or form preparers have questions about completing program forms or about the information needed to calculate AgriStability benefits.

One of the resources that can be tapped is SCIC's AgriStability Advisors. These program experts are spread throughout the province and can provide advice on working with this business risk management program and help clarify any concerns or issues that may come up. They can be contacted through the customer service offices.

Submitting program forms to the right location is also very important. For the 2010 program year, individuals (sole proprietors) are still required to file their AgriStability documents to the Canada Revenue

Agency (CRA) in Winnipeg. The CRA will then share the information with SCIC for calculating AgriStability benefits.

Corporations, co-operatives and other entities can submit their information directly to SCIC; however, there are a number of options for doing this. You can:

- drop off your forms at any of the 21 customer service offices across the province;
- fax your forms to 1-888-728-0440; and/or
- mail to: The Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation
484 Prince William Drive
PO Box 3000
Melville, SK S0A 2P0

When corporations send in their AgriStability forms, they also need to submit a copy of their T2 SCH1 that is filed with their income tax return. This information is required by SCIC to verify participants have filed their tax return and met the eligibility requirements.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Access to all the forms and the guides for completing the forms, can be found at www.saskcropinsurance.com.
- Program inquiries can also be made by contacting the AgriStability call centre at 1-866-270-8450.





DATE	EVENT	LOCATION	PHONE	INTERNET
Sept. 11 - 12	Agriculture in the City - Family oriented festival with exhibits and displays	Saskatoon, Farmers' Market	306-787-5160	www.celebrateagriculture.ca
Sept. 15	Deadline to seed fall rye and winter wheat and be eligible for winterkill insurance		1-888-935-0000	www.saskcropinsurance.com
Sept. 16 - 23	Bio-tech Week in Saskatchewan		306-787-5160	www.agwest.sk.ca/events/20
Sept. 30	Deadline to register forage yield-loss claims or request an extension of insurance on unharvested forage acres		1-888-935-0000	www.saskcropinsurance.com
Sept. 30	SCIC deadline to submit the AgriStability application form		1-888-935-0000	www.saskcropinsurance.com

Regional Services Satellite Offices now open

BRINGING YOU AGRICULTURAL EXPERTISE AND ADVICE WHEN YOU NEED IT AND WHERE YOU NEED IT.

In order to better serve producers, seven new Ministry of Agriculture satellite offices in Assiniboia, Estevan, Lloydminster, Meadow Lake, Moosomin, Shaunavon and Wadena are now open.

The new satellite offices are in addition to 10 regional offices in Kindersley, Moose Jaw, North Battleford, Outlook, Prince Albert, Swift Current, Tisdale, Weyburn, Watrous and Yorkton.

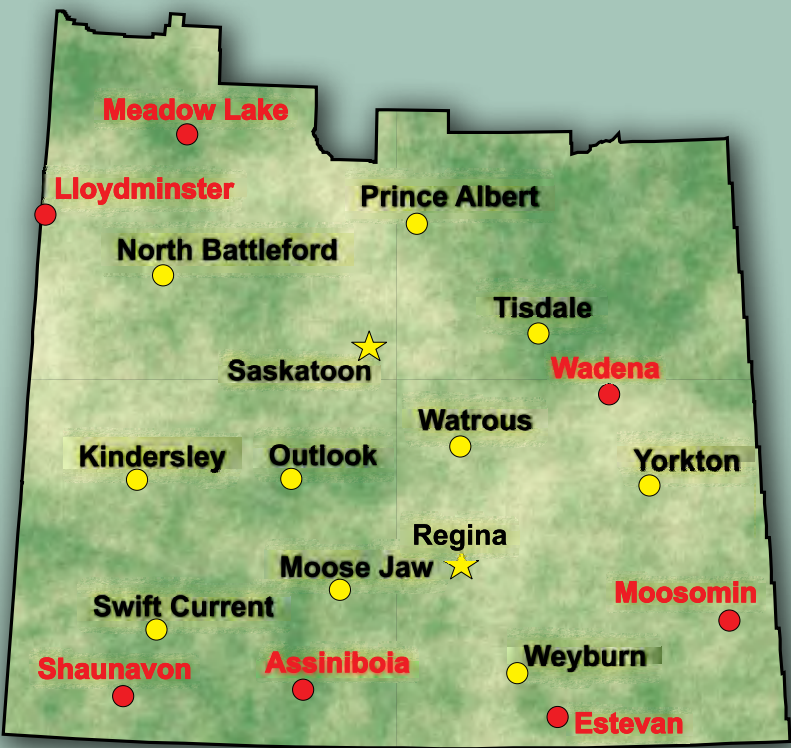
FOR MORE INFORMATION

or to make an appointment with a crops, livestock, forage or farm business management specialist, contact:

Assiniboia
Tuesdays 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
SCIC Customer Service Office,
401 - 1st Avenue West,
Assiniboia
Phone: 1-866-457-2377

Estevan
Wednesdays 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
SCIC Customer Service
Office, #5 – 419 Kensington
Avenue, Estevan
Phone: (306) 848-2857

Lloydminster
Thursdays 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Suite 107, 5303-50th Avenue,
Lloydminster
Phone: (306) 446-7962



Meadow Lake
Wednesdays 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Wiciwakan Place, 101 Railway Place,
Meadow Lake
Phone: (306) 446-7962

Moosomin
Wednesdays 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
SCIC Customer Service Office,
709 Carleton Street, Moosomin
Phone: (306) 786-1531

Shaunavon
Wednesdays 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
SCIC Customer Service Office,
55 3rd Avenue East, Shaunavon
Phone: (306) 778-8285

Wadena
Tuesdays 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
RM of Lakeview Office,
Highway 35 South, Wadena
Phone: (306) 946-3230



Saskatchewan
Agriculture

