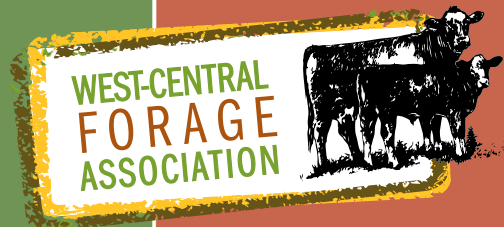


forage VIEWS



OCTOBER | 2013



Don't guess, soil test

In This Issue

- Don't guess, soil test1
- Office News.....2
- 8 top questions to consider before buying farmland3
- Top 15 Tips for Sheep Feeding for Performance4
- Pointers from Award-Winning Shepherds5
- Tips for a successful calf weaning season7
- SACA – Growing Forward 2....8

WHAT? WHY?

Proper soil fertility is the foundation for plant health and soil testing provides an accurate assessment of that status. Scientific analysis can tell you some important things about your soil that you cannot determine just by looking at it, smelling it, or feeling it.

Soil testing is a valuable management tool for your farm and an inexpensive way to maximize your fertilizer investment. Measuring soil health and potential available nutrients determines the inputs required for efficient and economic production.

The cost of a soil test ranges between \$35 to \$100, depending on the chosen lab and analyses performed. A basic test will determine available levels of macronutrients (N (NO₃), P, K, S, Mg and Ca) as well as pH and electrical conductivity (EC) levels, while advanced testing also adds levels of micronutrient (B, Cu, Fe, Mn, Zn) and organic matter. Results ensure the application of enough fertilizer to meet

crop requirements while taking advantage of the nutrients already present.

Productive capacity depends on complex interactions between the biological, chemical and physical properties of soil. Good farm practice manages all of these variables to improve crop yields and economic viability, while remaining environmentally sustainable.

With increasing awareness of fertilizer effects on environmental quality, soil testing diagnoses problem areas and determines where fertilizers or manure should not be applied. Test results reveal where adequate soil nutrients are already present, thus preventing excessive, unnecessary and harmful fertilizer applications. For example: in dry years, tests can detect accumulated nitrogen (N) and allow you to adjust recommendations. Excess rainfall years might reflect low N due to greater crop removal or leaching.

One of the most important measurements within a soil test is acidity. The role of pH determines the availability

of nutrients to plant roots, nutrient run-off and leaching and microbial efficiency. By maintaining your soil within the correct pH range, not only is less fertilizer needed, but efficiency is increased, improving profitability by saving money, as well as increasing yields and protecting the future health of the soil. (place image here)

WHEN? HOW?

The best time of year to soil sample is in the fall directly after the crop is removed and soil temperatures have dropped below 7°C. Microbial processes in the soil slow down as temperatures cool, so sampling late in the fall will provide a close representation of nutrient levels at seeding next spring.

Conducting tests in the fall also allows time to process samples and get results and recommendations. Allowing producers to develop a fertilizer program for this fall or next spring, and have more time to order fertilizer, taking advantage of typically lower fall prices, and to spreading the workload out over two seasons.





Continued | Don't guess, soil test

Today, producers are soil sampling two different ways; traditional, whole-field management, and precision management approaches.

To collect samples under traditional management, one composite sample is taken by combining approximately 20 cores, taken with a soil probe to a depth of 6 inches. Once the cores are taken, plant residue and rocks are removed, clumps are broken, and the soil is air-dried. After the soil is dried, approximately 2 cups of soil is placed into labeled soil sample bag and sample is submitted for testing.

Using the precision management approach, composite samples are also taken, however the sampling areas are divided based on variables such as different elevation, soil type, treatment history, and drainage. This type of management may not save money on fertilizer costs, but will allow for more precision application, ensuring that the correct amount of nutrients in the correct locations.

When taking soil cores, do not sample old fencerows, areas of manure/hay/ lime storage, dead furrows, areas close to trees, roads and/or windrows, tops or bottoms of hills or areas of high erosion.

CONCLUSION

The economic importance of testing your soil is even greater today in terms of using it as a risk management tool to maintain your soil's productivity while still making a profit;

the cost of soil sampling and analysis has changed little over the last several years, something that cannot be said for fertilizer and crop prices.

Until retail fertilizer prices drop to match grain prices, the importance of accurate soil sampling information cannot be overemphasized. It is critical that investments of this size be made with the best information possible, based on careful soil testing.

WCFA Board of Directors

- President Grant Taillieu
- Vice President Bob Kidd
- Secretary Don Barry
- Treasurer Henry McKinnon

Directors

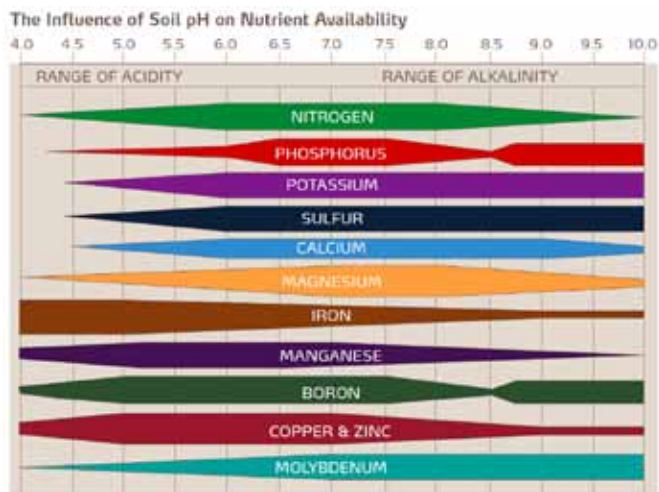
- Tom Thompson Ted Commandeur
- Eric Vanderwell Jeanette Brown
- Jesse Smith Dale Engstrom
- John Fearnley

Staff

- Manager Carla Amonson
- Conservation Agriculture Program Manager Torsten Flyng
- Forage & Livestock Program Manager Fito Zamudio

Contact

ph: 780-727-4447
 #1 5013 50 Ave
 Box 360, Evansburg AB TOE OTO



Office news

West-Central Forage Association is sorry to see Torsten Flyng, our Conservation Ag and Extension Program Manager leaving us. Torsten has accepted a position with the United Nations World Food Programme in Myanmar (formerly Burma). He will be a program officer leading a monitoring and evaluations unit of the Protract Relief and Recovery Operations programme. This will cover everything from their immediate action projects after natural disasters or conflicts (fairly well constant in both respects in Myanmar) to more long term projects to address extreme poverty through food aid/food assistance.

WCFA has hired a replacement for Torsten with Tina Pultz.

Tina was born into a military family in Germany and grew up mainly on the base in Cold Lake. She completed a technical diploma in Renewable Resource Management from the Northern Institute of Technology in 2005, and went on to the University of Alberta to get her degree in Environmental Conservation Sciences, majoring in Wildlife and Rangeland Resources Management, graduating in 2012. She has worked in applied agricultural and environmental research for approximately six years, mostly in field research experimental plots, including at the Breton Plots. She is currently training to be an Environmental Farm Plan Technician and will offer the delivery of this program for the west-central region of Alberta.

Before entering this industry, Tina was a professional cook; she loves vegetable gardening, and has recently discovered a passion for canning.



Agriculture
 Opportunity Fund

This publication is made possible by funding from our major sponsor, the Agriculture Opportunities Fund (AOF), Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

West-Central Forage Association (WCFA) is a non-profit agricultural organization based out of Evansburg, Alberta. Since 1978, WCFA has aimed to serve the needs of forage and livestock producers in the region by demonstrating new agricultural technology and production practices through extension activities, applied research, demonstrations and knowledge sharing.

West-Central Forage Association serves its members by:

- Responding to producers' need for research and information to address issues that support better management practices and decisions for their farms;
- Encouraging active participation by local/regional producers;
- Providing a good resource for information/technology transfer and extension;
- Delivering high quality, unbiased research to its members and partners;
- Collaborating with specialists from the agriculture industry, government, and educational institutions;
- Soliciting funding and in-kind support to help offset costs and operates in a cost-efficient manner to minimize costs to producers.

Membership entitles you to discounted rates for extension events in addition to rental access to sampling equipment (forage and soil) and calf scale, alley way scale system and RFID reader, reduced prices on forage and soil samples and a subscription for monthly issues of Forage Views.

First Name _____ Last Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Prov. _____ Postal Code _____

Email _____

Home Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

What type of operation(s) are you running?

LIVESTOCK cow/calf sheep feedlot other _____

FORAGE pasture hay silage other _____

GRAIN barley oats wheat other _____

Type of Membership

Active Membership \$30 per farm unit/year Associate Membership

Please mail to:

West-Central Forage
Box 360 Evansburg AB TOE 0T0

According to the Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA), no membership information collected for use by WCFA will be sold or distributed at any time.

Continued | from Sept. 2013 Forage News

8 top questions to consider before buying farmland

9. What is the current estimated market value of similar land? Are there comparable sales available in your area? Although real estate appraisals/evaluation reports have a cost, they are the best indicator of land values. Even if you don't get a full appraisal, attempt to find some comparable sales to determine estimated market value. Talk to knowledgeable farm realtors and farm lenders; they often have the latest trends of farmland values readily available in your area.

10. What is the soil story? What is the capability of the soil you are buying and how does this impact your revenue forecast? Good soil is paramount. Know the soil you're buying and the history of annual crop rotations with herbicide and pesticide applications. With clubroot becoming more prevalent, these are important questions to ask. Any seller should be more than happy to provide you with information about past farming practices.

11. What is the water source? Is the property irrigated? Are water rights included in the purchase price? Adequate water is essential

to establishing the value of the property. Account for water cost in your financial plan to ensure this cost doesn't negatively impact your return. Make sure all water wells are registered and licensed under Alberta's Water Act.

12. What do you know about the oil/gas, mineral and wind rights for the property? Are they currently under lease? Is the surface lease active and if so, under what terms? Is the lease an assignable part of the purchase? Have a thorough knowledge of property rights, as mining and drilling can have an impact on surface and water quality, access to the property, erecting buildings and the viability of the farm or ranch. Are there pipeline easements registered on title? There are legislative setbacks from pipeline easements, varying on the size of pipe and what is flowing through that pipe. This can affect your use and development of the property.

13. How is the property zoned? Will your plans for the property conflict with existing zoning restrictions. Are there conservation easements (i.e. Ducks Unlimited or Nature

Conservancy of Canada) that could be a restrictive covenant regarding the use of the property? This factor has a significant impact on your valuation of the property, particularly if your plans conflict with the current zoning or easement restrictions. Make sure you understand the leases and easements that go with the property. As noted previously, Alberta has a lot of pipelines, and power lines crossing properties in Alberta. Obtain a copy of the land title at any registries office throughout the province. Ask your county development office if there are any active or potential applications for development on any adjacent or reasonably close properties.

14. How will you register the title to the property? Will you register title individually, jointly with a spouse, a partner, a family member or a family-owned corporation or trust? The pros and cons of how you own the land will depend on your long-term goals. Seek the advice of your lawyer or accountant.

15. Are there any environmental problems? The last thing you want to buy is a costly environmental problem. Ask the owner regarding the

history of the property? Paying for an on-site environmental audit before you buy the land may be worth the cost and help ensure you're not buying into an expensive clean-up. Find out if there are any abandoned wells on the lands you are proposing to purchase?

16. How long will you actively farm? Make sure your financing plan matches the rest of your intended career as an active producer. Will you fully retire all debt from the purchase before you retire? Do you have sufficient life and disability insurance? Make sure you have enough cash to meet your living costs.

"Buying land in this market is an important decision, and will impact your farm business," says Dehod. "Use all of the resources available to do your financial and cash flow planning. Speak to your banker, your accountant or your farm advisor. Speak to your lawyer regarding issues that could affect title ownership. A strong purchase plan will aid in making the purchase of land a good investment."

Top 15 Tips for Sheep Feeding for Performance

Dr. Susan Markus, Livestock Research Scientist,
Alberta Agriculture

Tips to keep in mind when feeding sheep for optimum performance.



1. Test and analyze feed and water sources – nutrients change

throughout the growing season; and feed type makes a difference. You can't accurately balance a ration with feed ingredients of unknown quality.

2. Estimate feed intake for groups of animals – intakes vary depending on age, performance level and ration quality. Generally, younger animals have higher intakes as a per cent of their body weight than mature animals. Lactating ewes/ewe lambs have the highest intakes. Poor feed quality reduces dry matter intake while cold weather increases intakes.

3. Sheep adapt their feed intakes depending on the weather – prior to a cold front, sheep will increase their feed intake and during heat spells will back off of feed. Monitor feed consumption of animals on low quality roughage during cold weather as they may impact from the increase in intake and poor digestibility of the feed, while animals off their feed in hot weather will under consume and not meet performance goals.

4. Formulate rations – use SheepBytes and consider cost per day of ration, performance of animals, weather and days to market to determine total requirements, daily intakes and costs. Consider ewes to be more like a dairy cow than a beef cow and feed accordingly. When using SheepBytes ration balance don't underestimate ewe weight or overestimate bale weights. There can be up to 30 lbs difference in a condition score (15% of

BW). Lactation affects energy requirements as earlier weeks of lactation have higher nutrient demands compared to later weeks.

5. Estimate and adjust for waste – sheep sort their feed. Equipment delivery makes a difference on how much is wasted. Bunk feeding conserves more of the feed than ground feeding. Fine, small particles (ex. leaves) on high quality hays such as alfalfa are often higher in nutrients than the bulky course material (ex. stalks).

6. Don't change rations too abruptly – take more time changing a forage-based to a grain-based ration or moving up grain to finishing ration levels. Rumen micro-organisms need time to adapt to the new ration composition.

7. Recognize odd feeding behaviours – sheep chew their cud more often than cattle, yet feed less often than cattle do. Generally sheep are noisy when hungry, and while this is definitely true of young lambs, older animals need to be fed the correct amount of nutrients and not be fed to fullness only. Learn to recognize animals that have too loose or too tight of manure, or are not very active when on high grain diets as this could mean ruminal acidosis (grain overload). Also, sheep can't handle eating a lot of twine or net wrap, so if delivering feed through a bale shredder or tub grinder, remove this covering or you may see full looking animals that can die from being plastic impacted.

8. Body condition score females and put condition on ewes early – thin females should be flushed before breeding. Thin females need

to have weight put on before they are in late gestation or lactating. Nutritional/fitness level of the ewe will affect lamb survivability and performance.

9. Be aware of mineral imbalances – winter tetany, milk fever, goiter, foot rot and urinary calculi are related to mineral imbalances. Calcium and Phosphorus ratio; Calcium, Potassium and Magnesium ratio; salt amount; Zinc and Molybdenum and Sulfur ratios impact animal health.

10. Use one salt source free choice – when animals have access to many sources of salt or mineral they may only consume from some and not get the correct amount of nutrients. If minerals and salt are offered free choice they should be mixed together because some animals will consume the salt without the mineral and vice versa.

11. Vitamin supplementation can be done weekly rather than daily – because vitamin is required at such small amounts per head per day (making it difficult to mix and deliver to the flock), fat soluble vitamins such as ADE can be added to the ration once or twice a month rather than daily because these animals will store the excess in their liver for future use. Calculate how much is required for two weeks for the number of animals you have and feed that amount twice a month.

12. Feed quality of hay, cereal and grain varies depending on the growing season – in drought years it is usually low quantity but high quality as nutrients are condensed into the poor growth. However, the opposite is true of wet growing

years where feed quantity is high but feed quality is generally low due to the dilution effect on the nutrients of excessive moisture.

13. Consider price and nutrient list on special supplements – convenience feeds such as lick tubs and blocks may deliver certain nutrients with others you may not need at a high price. Protein and vitamins are expensive to supplement so carefully consider the price of mineral supplements that have added protein if your rations are not protein deficient.

14. Bedding for sheep – hypothermia in lambs can occur at any time of year. While bedding sheep in winter weather is not always necessary (if they are in a maintenance phase, are not overcrowded in a dry lot situation or have access to shelter from wind), it is necessary for late gestation or lactating ewes and young lambs. Rams require bedding in cold weather to avoid frostbite on testicles.

15. Snow as a water source – is only recommended for animals not heavy in gestation or lactating and only if mature. Young animals will have compromised performance if relying on snow as water. While it is possible for sheep to forage through snow up to 12 inches deep, it needs to be loose and not crusted over so they can easily consume the snow for a water replacement.

Information included in this article was gathered for use at the Alberta Lamb Producers' regional meetings and is an example of the many resources available for the sheep industry from Alberta Lamb. Contact: Ag-Info Centre 310-FARM (3276)

Pointers from Award-Winning Shepherds

Jim Schultz Clintonville, Wisconsin

Ten tips learned from 20 years of shepherding

1. Raising sheep commercially isn't a dog and pony show

Choose breeds of sheep that can easily be marketed through the industry infrastructure. Ask the experts who will be selling your sheep to explain the market needs, then find breeds that can meet them and thrive in your production system. Don't ask your marketing agent to do the impossible. I am disgusted with shepherds who whine about the low prices they receive for their small lot of improperly prepared lambs that don't fit the market requirements. Exotic breeds with specialized market niches are difficult to profit from commercially.

2. Make the sheep care for themselves

Sheep can provide their own housing, harvest their own feed, and spread their own manure.

Design a system to take advantage of these remarkable abilities. Wool may not be worth much shorn, but it provides perfect housing except for those few days when it has just been removed. Sheep that are outside are healthier, cleaner, and kinder to the back. Sheep walking on ground wear off their own hooves. We have stopped flock hoof trimming except in rare individual cases. Sheep can graze through 12" of snow on stockpiled forage.

3. Graze, graze, graze,...

The wisest decision we have made was to change to an intensive grazing system 18

years ago. Putting the sheep on grass has put green in my wallet. Growing pasture is different from growing hay. If you intend to make the switch to grazing, get involved with a grazing network. Managing productive pasture is knowledge intensive. Learning grazing management is the most cost effective practice you can implement. When properly managed, land grazing sheep can net more per acre than corn.

4. Buy hay, don't make it

We have found that it is much cheaper to buy all of our hay than to make our own. Haying equipment is expensive to own and hay of the right quality is seldom available on the farm. I can buy whatever quality hay I need in whatever package I desire, delivered, for a reasonable price. Dairy farms are rapidly going out of business in our area and there is a hay surplus most years. Best of all, we can spend summer vacations snorkeling in the Bahamas or hiking in a Costa Rican rain forest instead of fretting about the weather.

5. Self-feed hay during the winter

We set-up round bale self-feeding stations in selected paddocks for winter feeding. These require little maintenance and tractors don't have to be started or pulled out of snowdrifts. Self-feeding saves a lot of time and energy in the teeth of winter. It is not unusual

for 3 to 4 days to go by in the darkness of winter between visits to the out-wintered flock.

6. "A sick sheep is a dead sheep"

But, a sheep that doesn't get sick can live a long and productive life. Eliminate costly diseases and prevent their reintroduction. Keep a closed flock as much as possible and be very careful when bringing in rams. Resist the temptation to buy that good ewe or two that your neighbor has such a deal on. The introduction of foot rot could put us out of business. All thin ewes should be culled to prevent possible spreading of CL and Johne's. We have eliminated OPP and periodically test for it. Our sheep don't cough, or have runny noses, or breathe hard after a long run to the next paddock. We vaccinate ewes annually with CDT and have almost no losses due to infectious diseases. Most of our deaths result from tipped-over ewes. Parasites can cause major problems in a grazing system. Become familiar with parasite life cycles and discuss strategic deworming strategies with your veterinarian to save money and prevent creating parasite resistance.

7. It's the sheep's fault

Whenever a problem occurs, always blame the sheep. If the problem affects most of the flock, then a management change may be needed, but if only some individuals or breeds are affected, then it is

Our Production System

We have a 78 acre farm with 60 agriculturally useful acres. The land is divided into approximately 7.5-acre paddocks with high-tensile electric fence. Paddocks are further subdivided with removable electric fencing.

Our flock of 200 ewes is raised with low inputs of labor and capital. We lamb in May on pasture and keep the ewes and lambs together until pasture conditions dictate weaning, usually mid-September. Based on feed resources and prices, we sell the lambs as feeders sometime in September through late October. If feeder lamb prices are not competitive, we are prepared to raise the lambs to slaughter weight. The ewes are kept outside all winter on stockpiled pasture and large bale feeding stations. The labor requirements are about 300 hours per year plus some hired help during shearing and weaning. We can net over \$10,000 per year on a good year and haven't lost money in the last 15 years.





Continued | Pointers from Award-Winning Shepherds

probably the sheep's fault.

There is a genetic component to disease susceptibility and unthriftiness. Cull rigorously and you will prevent many problems and improve flock performance on your terms. Put evolution to work. Make the sheep adapt to your system.

8. Heterosis is heavenly

Crossbred ewes are healthier, hardier, more productive and profitable than purebreds.

Choose breeds that are well adapted to your particular production system. To make the best use of hybrid vigor, choose

breeds that are genetically different from each other and use purebred rams.

Unfortunately, it is difficult to find purebred rams of many breeds. We keep production records and adjust the breeds used to improve performance. The top 20% of the flock over 2 yrs old is bred to maternal rams. The rest of the ewes are exposed to blackface terminal sires.

9. Feed the ewes what they need, not what they want

Become familiar with the nutritional requirements of the sheep and feed them accordingly. If the ewes are listened to, they will be over-

fed. Mature ewes don't need high quality dairy hay during gestation. Feed them well only when they are working for you, while lactating. We feed grain only to replacement ewe lambs. We have ignored the standard practice of feeding grain during the last 6 weeks of gestation with no ill effects. Sheep that are grain predators are loud and obnoxious, and damage themselves, their lambs, and the soft-headed shepherd that gets in the way. We use a nutritionist to balance rations and design vitamin and mineral mixes tailored to the stage of production and class of sheep.

10. Ewe want it, ewe buy it

Make the sheep pay for capital

purchases. If you don't have the money for a paddock watering system, make do with what you have until your sheep profits justify the expense. Weigh each purchase against other ways you could spend the money. (A week on the beach with your spouse or a new scale?) The surest way to make more money is to buy more sheep. But if you can't make money with your current flock, you will probably lose even more by expanding.


When done properly, raising sheep can provide pleasure as well as profit. Some days the predictability of the sheep calms my psyche after a tense day at school.

Landowners wanted!





The Alberta Conservation Association is looking for landowners who own & manage land along the Edson River to participate in our Riparian Program aimed to improve habitat for Arctic Grayling and Athabasca rainbow. Funding is available to landowners for projects such as off-site watering systems, riparian fencing and Habitat Retention Agreements.

For further information, please contact Juanna at: (780) 238-4809
 Juanna.Thompson@ab-conservation.com
 www.ab-conservation.com



Errol and Barb Verbeek and Family

Box 649, Evansburg, AB T0E 0T0
 Ph: 780-727-2775



Sources: Patrick Gunn, ISU Extension cow-calf specialist, Iowa Beef Center & Dan Loy, Beef Specialist, Iowa State University Extension, Ames



Tips for a successful calf weaning season

As my grandfather always said when I was growing up, “Another year, another weaning program.” For most spring-calving producers, it likely seems that there is no shortage of options or opinions when it comes to weaning calves in the fall. Not only can this period be stressful on both the cow and the calf, the length of time that the newly-weaned calf spends bawling can be stressful for the producer as well.

Minimizing this stress is key to enhancing productivity, welfare, and profitability. While the weaning process may seem like a one-time event that is short in duration, it is comprised of multiple components, all with their own potential stressors. How a calf responds to the weaning process very well may dictate the long-term productivity of that animal.

A successful weaning program that minimizes calf set-backs begins well in advance of the physical separation between the dam and the offspring. Given the added stress associated with production practices such as castration, dehorning and branding, these procedures should be carried out well in advance of, or 30 days after, weaning. In addition, because immunity is impaired during times of stress, administration of vaccines should be conducted 3-4 weeks in advance of weaning if possible.

Producers who have been forced to start supplementing cows to extend the grazing season should consider weaning as soon as possible. Weaning the calf can reduce nutrient requirements of the cow by as much as 50%. Plus, the most efficient period for weight gain occurs as a calf; so feeding the calf directly when grazing resources are limited is usually more economically advantageous than feeding the cow to support lactation.

While it is important to meet the nutritional requirements of the calf as soon as possible, it is also important that feedstuffs and feed amounts are changed on a gradual basis to allow the rumen to adapt and prevent acidosis.

Newly weaned calves should have enough feedbunk space so all the calves can eat at one time (18-24”). Many different feeding systems have been used to successfully get cattle started on feed. A total

mixed ration is the easiest to control and monitor. This ration can be put together with a host of grains and roughages and can be fed in addition to the long stem hay for the first few days. Many feeders find that slightly limiting intake and keeping calves somewhat aggressive allows for easier detection and pulling of sick calves. One approach to managing feed intake is to feed 2% of the bodyweight as long stem hay on day one. Introduce about 1% of their body weight on a dry matter basis of the complete ration on the second day and begin phasing out the long hay.

You can increase the intake of the calves about a pound of feed every 2-3 days. Each group of calves is different, and health problems may cause some setbacks, but on a normal healthy group of calves they should be consuming 2.5 to 3.0 % of their body weight by 3-4 weeks on feed. The calves are then ready to be stepped up on grain if that is the system.

Regardless of whether producers adopt an early weaning or traditional weaning program in any given year, one often-overlooked aspect is the surrounding environment. The ability to keep calves in a familiar paddock or pasture where they are acquainted with water and feed bunk location can mitigate stress significantly. Thus, removing the cows from the calves is often less stressful than removing the calves from the cows.

One particular weaning strategy that has gained notoriety over the last few years for being lower stress is fence-line weaning. In this system, cows are placed on the opposite side of the fence from the weaned calves so that visual and even some physical contact is possible. Over a period of time ranging from a few days to a week, the number of fence-line visits between cow and calf gradually decline. Researchers have reported increased weight gains and reduced vocalization during the weaning period in calves weaned in the fence-line system when compared with traditional separation methods.

Producers should utilize a system that works best for their individual operation. If you have questions on tailoring a weaning program to your individual operations, contact one of the state or field beef specialists from the Iowa Beef Center for assistance.

Growing Forward 2 **Common Questions about Growing Forward 2:**

What is Growing Forward 2?

Growing Forward 2 is a federal-provincial-territorial agreement to drive an innovative, competitive and profitable Canadian agriculture and agri-food sector. It is a renewed commitment to Canada's agriculture sector by the federal, provincial and territorial governments, to work together in building the productivity, profitability and competitiveness of our agricultural industry. Growing Forward 2 focuses on three priorities for the agricultural sector: innovation, competitiveness, and market development. The programs within Growing Forward 2 aim to help the industry position itself to respond to future opportunities and challenges and to achieve its full potential as a productive and profitable sector of the Canadian economy.

For a complete listing of Alberta's Growing Forward 2 programs and to see which programs are currently accepting applications, please see <http://www.growingforward.alberta.ca/>

How do I determine if I am eligible for a Growing Forward 2 program?

Each Growing Forward 2 program has specific eligibility requirements. To determine if you are eligible for a specific Growing Forward 2 program, please review the program eligibility requirements listed in the Terms and Conditions document which can be found on individual program pages on the site.

How do I apply for a Growing Forward 2 program?

Each Growing Forward 2 program has an application form and an application process that may differ from program to program. For example, some programs have multiple application forms, depending on the type of funding or support you require under the program, and some programs have pre-application requirements, while others do not. To determine the application process for a particular program, or to view the application form, refer to the individual program pages on the Growing Forward 2 website. Each program page provides access to the program's Terms and Conditions, application form, and important information about program deadlines, the application process and eligible activities.

You can also contact us, West-Central Forage Association, to get assistance with your Growing Forward 2 applications.

What programs does WCFA specialize in for local farmers?

The Growing Forward 2 On-Farm Stewardship Program helps producers implement projects and management practices that have a direct and positive impact on water quality. Funding is available in five categories that can influence water quality. Each category has its own program application.

- **Category A: Grazing Management.** This includes riparian area fencing and management, summer and year-round watering systems, portable shelters or windbreaks and wetland restoration (some specific requirements apply; contact program lead for information.)

- **Category B: Manure and Livestock Facilities Management.** This includes improvements to manure storage facilities, livestock facilities runoff control and livestock facilities relocation.

- **Category C: Improved Pest Management.** This includes new purchases of low-drift nozzles and air induction tips, sprayer cones and shrouds, chemical handling systems with jug rinse, sectional control operation system, sprayer boom height control and weather monitoring equipment (upgrades, maintenance and replacement of existing equipment are not eligible).

- **Category D: Fuel and Used Oil Storage.** This includes the purchase of new double-walled fuel tanks that are CSA or ULC approved and/or double-walled storage tanks for used oil that are identified with a ULC-652 name plate or equivalent. For an application for fuel storage to be accepted, at least one old fuel tank must be decommissioned.

- **Category E: Innovative Stewardship Solutions.** Contact a Program Lead to discuss your innovative idea prior to applying for funding.

The On-Farm Water Management Program provides technical assistance to agricultural producers to complete a Long-Term Water Management Plan (LTWMP), and shares the cost of related enhancements of their on-farm water supply management.

The Growing Forward 2 On-Farm Water Management Program (2013-2018) addresses two key industry priorities.

1. Improved resource management. The program helps producers achieve greater water security and more effective and efficient management of their on-farm water resources, enhancing the sustainability of those resources.

2. Improved production capacity. Producers who improve their water management capability advance the long-term competitiveness of their operation, making them better able to embrace business opportunities.

If you are interested in Growing Forward 2 for projects that fit under the two programs mentioned above, or for any of the other Growing Forward 2 programs, then please contact West-Central Forage Association – 780 727 4447 or write to info@westcentralforage.com

Questions and answers as taken from the Growing Forward 2 website