

MD of Provost



Agricultural Roundup



JANUARY / FEBRUARY 2021



Charlene Hadfield Photo

LET'S MANAGE IT!

A farmer's guide to mitigating and managing fusarium head blight in Alberta.

Plan your FHB management strategy...

- Season planning
- In-season management
- Harvest management
- Storage and handling management

Visit managefhb.ca to view this great resource available to AB producers.



You are invited to a special virtual screening of *SILO The Film*. Join AgSafe Alberta on January 19th at 7:00 pm MST for an exclusive showing of this one-of-a-kind film.

Inspired by true events, *SILO* follows a harrowing day in an American farm town. Disaster strikes when teenager Cody Rose is entrapped in a 50-foot-tall grain bin. When the corn turns to quicksand, family, neighbors and first responders must put aside their differences to rescue Cody from drowning in the crop that has sustained their community for generations.

Joining AgSafe Alberta after the screening will be an expert panel to discuss farm safety and grain entrapment. This is an event you won't want to miss.

RSVP for FREE today!!

AgSafe
ALBERTA

FHB Management
Resource

AgSafe Alberta Film

Did You Know?

Overwintering
Chickens

Manure Management

Recipe

Grain Bag & Twine
Recycling Program

Feeding Birds in
Winter

Norway Rats

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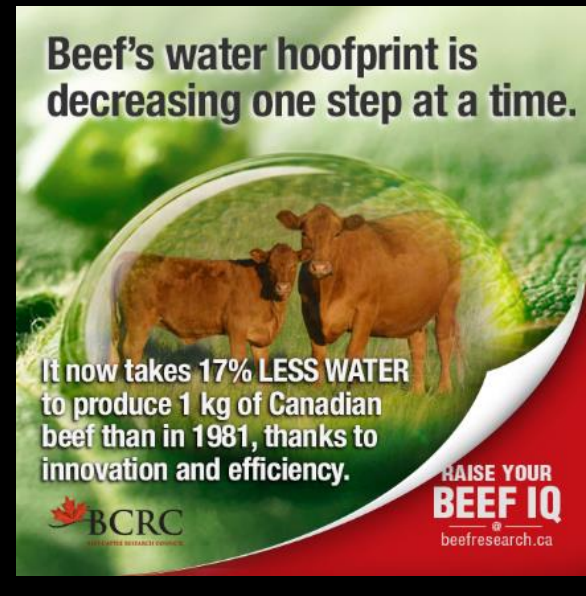
If you are interested in receiving an electronic version of the newsletter, please email cwolf@mdprovost.ca

Did You Know??

From 1981 to 2011, there was a 17% decrease in water needed to produce 1kg of beef. It now takes 15,500 litres of water to produce that 1kg; 5% of that being blue water (surface or groundwater) and 95% green water (water from precipitation). Most of that green water is used for growing the livestock feed. The decrease was due to increased feed & forage productivity, and animal productivity.

1981 – 2011 comparison to produce same amount of beef:

- 29% fewer breeding cows.
- 27% fewer slaughter cattle... all while producing 15% less GHG.
- 24% less land.



Beef's water hoofprint is decreasing one step at a time.

It now takes 17% LESS WATER to produce 1 kg of Canadian beef than in 1981, thanks to innovation and efficiency.

BCRC
RAISE YOUR BEEF IQ
beefresearch.ca

Tips for Overwintering Chickens

Chickens don't need a heater. Not only is it a fire hazard, but the chickens will huddle together in the coop to create warmth. Most breeds tolerate cold extremely well. A chicken can increase its body temperature by eating more in colder weather. Digestion creates internal heat, which radiates through the skin and gets trapped against its body by feathers. Chickens are tiny furnaces!

Don't allow drafts to blow on roosting chickens. These drafts will deprive chickens of the heat they have generated to keep themselves warm. Insulating the coop is a good option to retain heat.

While drafts are bad, **ensure your coop is well ventilated;** moisture must be removed from the coop even if it means losing some heat. Freezing temperature inside the coop along with moisture is a recipe for frostbite. Sand is a good choice for litter in the winter as it evaporates moisture quicker than other litter options, such as straw.

Make sure they always have water. Water is an essential nutrient in a chicken's diet; helps regulate body temperature, growth, and egg production. Ensure waterers are never frozen. Keep these waterers outside the coop, to avoid excess moisture inside.

<https://the-chicken-chick.com/surviving-winter-with-chickens/>



Key Points of Manure Management

To read the whole research paper visit <http://www.beefresearch.ca/research-topic.cfm/manure-and-nutrient-management-7>.

- Cattle manure is a valuable source of key nutrients including nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, sulphur, magnesium, and calcium, as well as certain micronutrients.
- Cattle manure is a dilute fertilizer due to its high content of water and organic materials.
- Manure with straw and bedding is an excellent source of organic matter when added to the land.
- Applying manure or nutrients beyond the plant requirements wastes time and money. It can also impact the environment if over applied nutrients leach into water bodies.
- Treatment of stored manure can include stockpiling, composting, drying, and less commonly, separation and filtering.
- Timing of application is important to reduce odours and potential runoff.
- Application rates should be chosen based on nutrient requirements of the soil and crop to be grown, nutrient composition of manure, and the application method.
- Ensure that stored manure areas are at least 60m from drilled water wells, and 120m from all other wells, streams, rivers, lakes and ponds.

Taco Soup

Ingredients:

- 4-5 chicken breasts (cooked and diced)
- 1 or 2 cans white kidney beans
- 1 can corn
- 1 can cream of chicken soup
- 1 can chicken broth
- 1 envelope taco seasoning
- 1 can chiles

Stovetop Directions: Mix all ingredients in large pot and cook on medium until heated through.

Crockpot Directions: Mix all ingredients together in crockpot and cook on low for 8-10 hours.

Top with shredded cheese, chives, sour cream, and crushed Tostitos when served.

ALBERTA AG-PLASTICS 'RECYCLE IT!' PILOT PROGRAM

REMINDER that the designated collection days for grain bags and twine are on the **FIRST WEDNESDAY OF EVERY MONTH AT THE PROVOST REGIONAL LANDFILL**. Our first collection day was held on December 2nd, 2020. Twine bags are available to producers at the landfill, and Provost & Hughenden MD shops.



Feeding Your Garden Birds in Canadian Winters...

Since birds need to move around more throughout the winter to keep warm and survive the cold temperatures, it is best to offer food that has a high fat content. Suet is a great option, as it suspends a variety of ingredients in fat, which is a great source of energy.

You can also provide a mixture of seed (black oil sunflower is like a hamburger in the bird world), hulled peanuts or peanut hearts, thistle seed, white milled seed, and peanut butter. The food diversity in your feeder will help attract a variety of different birds.

If you are new to bird feeders, you may not see many birds at first, but in time your population will increase in number and variety. The black oil sunflowers seeds are likely to attract chickadees, white-breasted nuthatches, finches, cardinals, and blue jays. Suet often attracts white-breasted nuthatches and brown creepers. American goldfinches and common redpolls enjoy the thistle seed!

Birds also enjoy winter berries from shrubs such as cotoneaster, hawthorn and yew, and the seed heads of sunflowers! Cedar waxwings particularly enjoy the berries off cedar trees.

Unfortunately, the bird feeders often attract less desirable friends such as mice, magpies and crow.

It is important to sterilize your feeders a few times per year to prevent spread of disease.



<https://globalnews.ca/news/4632962/canadian-birds-feeding-winter/>

<https://www.earthrangers.com/top-10/top-ten-birds-that-stay-in-canada-in-the-winter/>
The Old Farmer's Almanac

The Norway Rat

The Norway rat can be easily identified by its size; approximately 22cm body length with a tail just shorter than the body. They are light brown in colour, with a white to light grey underbelly. Female Norway rats can produce offspring every 21-23 days with litters of up to 12. In one year, a female rat can have up to 15,000 offspring. Therefore, prevention and immediate control are very important.

The most effective way to prevent a rat infestation is to be proactive on your farm. It is very common for rats to reside in carryover greenfeed bales, so it is recommended to use up any carryover feed first. Silage pits are the perfect home for rats as they provide shelter, food, and moisture. It is also common for rats to seek shelter in/beneath wooden floor grain bins. Rats have the ability to chew 2-3 inch holes through walls, floors, doors etc. made of different materials (wood being one of them), so it is uncommon for them to be found beneath concrete floor bins. Rats teeth never stop growing, so they are constantly chewing which does considerable damage to buildings. Keeping your property clean and tidy is an effective rat control method as rats love anything they can get under and use as cover.

Here are some common rat signs to look for on your farm:

- Rat tracks: look for tail drag marks between footprints (most easily identified in fresh fallen snow).
- Rat scat: very similar appearance to mouse scat, but much bigger.
- Holes: Generally, a very clean hole that is an inch and half to two inches in diameter. These holes can be found in the ground, in granary walls, or in feed such as bales or silage pits. Look for tracks and scat around the area.
- Rat runs under bales, silage plastic or wooden floor grain bins. They will look similar to mouse runs, just larger.

***Note: Follow the tracks to inspect what kind of holes they lead to... kangaroo mice leave similar tracks but only leave holes with half inch diameter.*

If you see a rat or any suspicious rat signs on your property, please report the siting to Kent Kozlinski, the municipal PCO at 780-209-1710, or 310-RATS



“Continually striving to provide a rural environment where residents may enjoy an excellent quality of life.”