



## 1979 to 2015 and Beyond!

Local agricultural producers have been the driving force of the Chinook Applied Research Association for 35 years. The association was established in 1979 by a few producers who saw a need for the application of agricultural research and new technologies to the environmental and climatic conditions in east central Alberta. With support from Alberta Agriculture, the Special Areas Board and the MD of Acadia, a non-profit society was formed. The organization continues to be directed by producers from these four municipalities. These 'grass root' men and women have contributed not only to the growth and sustainability of CARA but participated in the development of ARD's programs for the funding of several other applied research associations in the province as well as the formation of ARECA, the Agricultural Research and Extension Council of Alberta. CARA's Board members were not strangers to politicians or provincial staffers.



Above: Breaking sod at the CARA Center in Oyen in 1984

CARA operated out of the provincial building in Oyen until the construction of the CARA Center in 1984, which includes offices, working shops, drying room and equipment storage. A full line of small plot equipment gives CARA the capability to conduct quality applied research and demonstration projects. Projects are located on farm and ranch sites across the 5 million acres within the Special Areas and MD of Acadia.

Since 1979, the association's program has evolved to include a broad range of applied research, demonstration and extension projects. The program reflects production concerns of local producers and includes many long term projects but also has the flexibility to react to current issues. CARA has also responded to scientists with project ideas which have merit for east central Alberta. Many new technologies and crops have been introduced into the area over the years, testing their application to the local conditions. Jack Butler, one of CARA's founding Directors, had said many times *"There's no such thing as bad results – it's just as important to learn what doesn't work as what does"*.

The evolution continues as CARA looks ahead. Farms are huge. Equipment is larger and much more technical. Thousands of acres are seeded to pulse crops. Marketing methods and opportunities have changed dramatically. Farmers are concerned about the health of their soils. CARA's program will flex to continue providing meaningful information. If staff cannot provide the requested data, a link will

be made to the appropriate source. As a key provider of agricultural extension, CARA staff will deliver information by electronic means not even considered 35 years ago. The personal touch will not be forgotten, however, as time will also be committed to individual diagnostic consultations. Various partnerships will expand CARA's extension activities beyond traditional borders. Evaluation of basic soil health characteristics may soon be available at the CARA Center.

A celebration of CARA's 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary will be held in Cereal on Thursday, February 5. Please call the office if you'd like to join the celebration.

### CARA Agronomist Part Time in Hanna Special Area Office

CARA is pleased to announce office hours will now be held most Tuesdays and Thursdays at the Special Area office in Hanna. Jesse Williams will be the primary contact at this location, but other CARA staff will be there periodically as well. It is anticipated this will improve access to CARA's information and services for producers in the western portion of our area. There is currently lots of interest in the Growing Forward Programs, EFP's and winter feeding rations. Stop in or call 403-664-3777 or 403-363-5160 with your questions—Jesse can help you out or find answers for you.

**Thank you to Special Areas for making room for us!**

## Including Forages in Crop Rotations

Sarah Sommerfeld, PAg,

Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture  
Regional Forage Specialist, Outlook SK

Establishing forages on marginal lands is a commonly accepted agriculture practice. The question to ask is: does establishing forages on good-quality soils and including forages into the crop rotation provide a benefit?

The benefits of forages can include:

- improved soil quality, fertility and organic matter; and
- reduced weed and disease pressure.

Forage legumes fix nitrogen from the atmosphere. On average, nitrogen fixation from alfalfa can contribute 45 pounds of nitrogen per acre annually. Fixation potential varies with growing conditions. Moisture conditions and the amount of legume present in the forage stand are also critical factors in nitrogen fixation potential and the subsequent crop yield benefit.

The nitrogen release rate to the

subsequent crop will depend on the amount of nitrogen fixed and the organic matter present in the soil. Moisture, temperature and soil conditions will also affect microbial activity and the rate of nitrogen release. The total nitrogen benefit to subsequent crops may range from 100 to 200 pounds of nitrogen per acre over a two- to three-year period following stand termination.

Production benefits from including perennial forages into a crop rotation are optimized after two or three years, but forage production is often extended to account for the cost of establishment. Whether production is terminated after three years or further beyond that, a producer incorporating perennial forages into an annual crop rotation should consider the timing and method of terminating the stand. The rate of nitrogen mineralization is affected by the termination method used. Stands terminated with only herbicide have a slower mineralization rate and nitrogen release compared to tillage or tillage-herbicide systems. Earlier timing of stand

termination also plays a role in nitrogen mineralization and ensures that an adequate supply of nitrogen is available for the following crop to make use of. Early termination also provides for more opportunity to replenish soil moisture levels.

Often the goal of forage production is to maximize forage stand life and forages are rotated only when production declines beyond the point of efficient harvesting. Research has shown that nitrogen accumulation and weed suppression from an alfalfa stand is optimized after two to three years. The economic optimum for stand duration is four to five years. Rotating forages more quickly through a crop rotation on good-quality land may provide greater agronomic and economic benefits compared to establishing forages for longer periods of time.

*Taken from the Jan 19 2015 Saskatchewan Forage Council Forage and Livestock eNews*

[advancingwomenconference.ca](http://advancingwomenconference.ca)

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## We've Got To Do Something!

Succession planning has been identified as one of the biggest challenges facing the agricultural industry over the next decade. CARA's recent producer survey supports this statement, 30% of respondents intend to exit farming within the next 10 years. 70% of respondents indicated this topic was important to them.



85 east central producers took advantage of the opportunity to learn more about the succession process by attending one of four seminars with Reg Shandro, Farmacist Advisory Services Inc., during the week of January 12 – 15. Reg is a highly regarded succession coach and

mediator. During his seminars, he shared real life examples to illustrate the necessary steps required to prepare a successful succession plan. He focused on the importance of communication amongst all family members as an exit plan is developed. Understanding everyone's perspective of the farm operation, the need to make decisions and fair may not mean equal were other key points in his discussion.

For more information, visit  
[www.regshandro.com](http://www.regshandro.com).



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# Tools For Insect Management

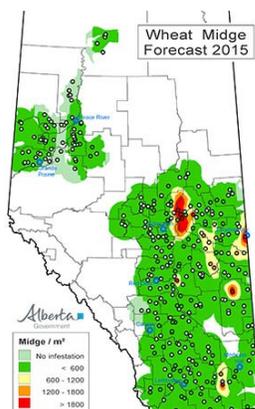
Mark Cutts  
ARD Specialist

Crops face many challenges during the growing season. One of the challenges that can impact yield and grain quality is the presence of insect pests. A number of insects can cause crop damage at various times throughout the growing season. For example, insects can impact canola from the time of emergence (eg. cutworms) to pod ripening stage (eg. lygus bugs). In order to understand the potential risk that insect pests cause, sources of available information should be utilized.

One important source of information that producers can utilize is forecast maps. Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development produce a number of forecast maps for various insect pests that occur in Alberta. These forecast maps provide information on insects of canola, cereal and pulse crops. These maps are updated annually and are published on the Alberta Agriculture website ([www.agric.gov.ab.ca](http://www.agric.gov.ab.ca)).

Several of the forecast maps are produced from data collected in the fall and are made available prior to the growing season. Forecast maps for grasshoppers,

wheat midge and wheat stem sawfly are generated from fall sampling. These maps allow producers to evaluate if any of these insects could be a concern in the upcoming growing season.



The 2015 Wheat Midge Forecast from the Alberta Pest Monitoring Network website.

A second type of forecast map provides insect updates during the growing season. This allows producers to receive timely information on the number of insects in their farming area. Bertha armyworm and diamondback moth activity is monitored through the use of pheromone traps during a portion of the growing season. The number of moths captured in

the traps is updated weekly. Areas with high moth counts are more likely to see feeding damage by the larvae that emerge later in the growing season.

Forecast maps are also provided based on surveys performed the previous growing season. The maps provided for pea leaf weevil and cabbage seed pod weevil are generated in this manner. Although they are not strict forecast maps the information is still beneficial. Generally, areas with high numbers of these pests in one growing season (eg. 2014) are at risk to have economically damaging populations the next growing season (eg. 2015).

It is important to note that while forecast maps provide insight into a potential insect pest, they cannot replace a field scouting program. Field scouting allows producers to evaluate the type and number of insect pests present, the presence of any insect damage and the growth stage of the crop. This information can then be utilized to make an appropriate management decision regarding the control of an insect pest.

Please contact the Ag-Info Centre for more information on insect forecast maps and insect management.

## Winter Day Project: Rural Emergency Plan

In 2007 Alberta Agriculture, Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada and the Alberta Fire Chiefs Association collaborated with the Environmental Farm Plan Company to create a simple on-farm tool for rural landowners to help safety personnel navigate their farms in the case of emergencies- the Rural Emergency Plan (REP). This easy-to-use document can be personalized for your farm's specific layout, farm employees, emergency contacts and on-farm operations in order to safely and efficiently let your local emergency departments know the immediate risks associated with a call on your property.

### Create Your Own

The Rural Emergency Plan template is available for free downloading at [www.ruralemergencyplan.com](http://www.ruralemergencyplan.com) but can also be accessed directly through CARA. The download includes a 17 page fill-in-the-blanks document to customize to your

farm. It includes printable posters to display around your farm and in your home, an opportunity to draw a site plan of your farm indicating hazardous materials and instructions on how to build a water proof tube out of PVC pipe to keep your plan safe outdoors.

The REP recommends that you place a copy of your plan within this waterproof device and place it in an easily identifiable area of your farm such as on your main power pole. You can then phone your local fire department to let them know where on the property you keep your REP in case there is ever a farm emergency.

### Fundraising Opportunity

The REP program can also be used for local service clubs as a fundraising opportunity. This program will cooperate with interested groups to help them produce the Rural Emergency Response

Tubes to sell to local producers. If interested, please contact your local fire department to arrange a potential fundraiser.



## Growing Forward 2 Updates

The new program year for the Growing Forward 2 programs begins April 1, 2015. Visit [www.growingforward.alberta.ca](http://www.growingforward.alberta.ca) for the latest updates or call CARA at (403) 664-3777.

# Ladies Calving Clinic

**Kick off your boots & enjoy a night out!**

Monday February 23rd, 2015      4:00PM- 9:00PM      Hanna, AB- Lions Hall

Registration is appreciated by February 18th Call CARA at (403) 664-3777.

Cost: \$25/person payable at the door

### The Business of Calving- *Dr. Quaschnick, Steadfast Veterinary Services*

The Doc will show us how to pull calves correctly, potential complications, supplies to have on-hand, when to intervene, post-partum care & more. Bring your questions!

**Door Prizes!**

**RECIPE EXCHANGE**

Supper Is On Us (We'll even do the dishes!)

**Recipe Exchange-** Bring your go-to recipe for keeping the help happy during brandings & harvest meals. We will compile them and send you a copy of the recipe book!

### Juggling Kids, Cows, Calving & Safety- *Lori Blake, Farm Safety Center*

Lori will remind us how to keep safe during this busy time of year and give us tips on balancing the needs of our little ones with the daily duties of the ranch.

### Keeping Cattle Records Current- *Sue Giles, Canadian Cattle Identification Agency*

Find out what livestock records you should be keeping from year to year, the easiest ways to report to the Canadian Livestock Tracking System and what Age Verification can do for your farm.



**There is something for everyone.**

**Old Timers, Youngin's, Experienced Ranchers & Newbies!**

[www.chinookappliedresearch.com](http://www.chinookappliedresearch.com)

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## Video: Reducing Risks in Extended Winter Grazing

In partnership with West Central Forage Association in Evansburg and Lakeland Agricultural Research Association in Vermilion, CARA agronomists have been busy visiting farm operations throughout Alberta with extended winter grazing programs to capture on video. With the help of Alberta Agriculture's Growing Forward 2 program, these organizations have committed to a two year filming project dedicated to understanding how ranchers are managing the array of risks associated with a full winter cattle grazing strategy.

Upon completion the video series will show volunteer producers' operations accompanied by on-farm interviews explaining the risks they face with this type of feeding system and the preparations they make to insure success.

Grant Lastiwka is with Alberta Agriculture and has played a key role in the creation of the project. He explains that during the difficult years ranchers experienced after BSE, Alberta producers stepped up to the plate and discovered new ways to create profit margins in their cattle herds. One such strategy was to reduce feeding and equipment costs by extending the length of grazing well into the winter or even all year round. Popular examples are bale, swath & corn grazing. Lastiwka was concerned however, that with high cattle prices and improved

margins producers would unintentionally allow their well deserved profit margins to slowly decrease. With the optimism in agriculture today, he fears that ranchers will quickly forget the hardships they faced just a few short years ago.

With any livestock management strategy there are risks and the video series will not only showcase affordable feeding opportunities but will delve into the risks of each system and how local producers mitigate them and formulate backup plans.

This past month CARA visited four farms in the Special Areas to feature in the video series.



Colt & Torie Peterson who ranch near Scapa have been bale grazing (above) their cattle throughout the last few winters and allowed us to visit their operation, demonstrating how they drastically decreased the time and costs dedicated to feeding.

James Madge north of Stanmore invited us to view his swath grazing and clusters of Frost-Free Nose pumps that allow his 300 head of bred cows to graze through the majority of the winter with minimal management.



Edward Rosenau Jr. at Chinook shared the chaff pile grazing that he utilizes on his herd (above) and Calvin Bishell of Veteran allowed us to film his red proso millet swath grazing, bale grazing in feeders and unique Nifty Feed Dispenser that he uses to pour pellets on the swaths for supplementation.

This is the first of the two year video project and filming will continue throughout 2015 and early 2016. You can expect to see these local producer videos released likely in late 2016. If you have a unique winter grazing strategy that you would like to discuss for our video series, please let CARA know.



### CARA's Annual Project Review

Thursday February 26th, 2015  
10:30am– 3:30pm  
Cereal Community Hall

- **2014 Program Results & Plans for 2015** *Cereals, Pulses, Forages and Conservation Projects*
- **Soil Management Options**

**Guest Presentation:**

MARKETING OPTIONS  
Sarah Weigum, CanCrop Marketing

Lunch is on us!

For more information call CARA  
at (403) 664-3777

## Leasing Versus Buying Farm Machinery

Kari Burnett, PAg,

*Regional Farm Business Management Specialist, Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture, Swift Current*

Now that winter is here, producers are sitting down to catch up on their bookkeeping and reviewing their finances. Currently, strong prices are being seen for both cattle and grain, and this may lead many producers to consider upgrading their equipment.

A lot of time and effort goes into picking new equipment, and the payment often becomes more of an afterthought rather than playing an important part in the decision. Leasing equipment is becoming a more common way to finance equipment, rather than borrowing or purchasing outright.

So how is the decision made on whether to lease or buy? Leasing is often thought to be the tax-efficient way to make a purchase; however, in some situations there can be better tax savings by buying

the asset versus leasing it. Many things need to be considered.

The positive side of leasing is that there is a minimal, if any, down payment, and often there is a lower monthly payment. There can be a lower payment requirement due at the end of the lease term if it is purchased, freeing up capital for other uses. There can also be the benefit of continually having new equipment with (hopefully) fewer things that could go wrong. These features can result in protecting the cash flow for the farm operation, and that is sometimes a very attractive quality. On the down side, depreciation cannot be claimed on the machinery that is being leased, and lease payments do not build equity.

It is important to consider how long the equipment will be used. Perhaps the machinery may only be required for a limited time, or it will become outdated in the near future. Or perhaps the intention is to upgrade the equipment every few years. There may also be a desire to try a different make of equipment without a long-term commitment. In these cases,

leasing may be the better option. The lease payments are timely and consistent, and they can also be a tax write-off.

The positive side of purchasing is that the machinery becomes part of your asset base and shows up on the liability side of your balance sheet if there is a loan. The owner can also write off the depreciation on the equipment, as well as the interest portion of the loan payments. There will also be equity in the equipment when the time comes to upgrade again.

There is no correct answer in the debate without comparing the total leasing cost to the cost of financing. Before you decide to lease or buy, do some cash flow projections and look at the financial impact on your operation. Always consult your accountant to make sure you are looking at the whole story and calculating the benefits and costs for your operation.

For more information, stop by or contact your local Regional Office, or contact the Agriculture Knowledge Centre at 1-866-457-2377.



### Delia C-2000 Club presents... 21st Annual Workshop & Tradeshow

**Thursday February 5th, 2015**

**Delia Community Hall**

Registration & Tradeshow 8:30AM

Workshop 9:30AM-4:00PM

**AFSC Program Update**

*Cam Sinclair*

**Herbicide Tolerance Breakdown**

*Chris Neeser, CDC South*

**Hiring Temporary Foreign Workers**

*Shannon Nauss, FNA*

**Root Rot in Pulses**

*Robyne Bowness, Pulse Research Scientist*

**Managing Market Risk & 2015 Market Outlook**

*Charlie Pearson & Jason Wood, Alberta Ag*

Cost: \$20/person (includes Lunch, Door Prizes & Tradeshow)

**Please Pre-register with Starland County at (403) 772-3793  
or Barry Mason at (403) 364-2129**

# This Business of Farming

Monday March 2, 2015 10:00am—4:30pm  
Oyen Senior's Center

Cost: \$20/person or \$30/ couple

Registration is appreciated by Friday February 20, 2015 . Call CARA at (403) 664-3777.



## A Tale of Two Generations

Merle Good, Farm Business Advisor GRS Limited

*Learn how to tax plan for succession and hear what Merle thinks about the impact of rising land prices on future farm expansion & survival.*

## Weather Wise: What will 2015 & beyond bring?

Mark Robinson, STORM HUNTER

*Mark is a severe weather expert, educator and stormchaser based out of Toronto, Canada and featured on The Weather Network. Hear his opinion on what weather we should be expecting in 2015 and beyond.*



Grain Market Forecast Lee Melvill, Farm Marketing Advisor

Cattle Market Forecast Neil Blue, ARD Market Specialist

## Lunch Is On Us!



Alberta Barley

Big Country Ag Society



# CROP STRATEGY SEMINAR

Thursday March 12, 2015 9:30am– 4:00pm  
Provost, AB Provost Recreation & Culture Center– *Alberta Room*

Cost: \$20/person or \$30/couple

**2015 Crop Pest Outlook**– Scott Meers, ARD Insect Management Specialist

**Canola Seeding for Success**– Canadian Canola Council Agronomist

**Fababean 101**- Robyne Bowness, ARD Pulse Research Scientist



## Weather Watch: 2015 & Beyond

Drew Lerner  
Founder & President of World Weather Inc.  
Overland Park, Kansas, USA

**2015 Grain Marketing Forecast**– Neil Blue, ARD Marketing Specialist

**Pulse Producer Panel**– Local growers will give you an insight into their operations, their pulse successes & the lessons they learned over the years.

## LUNCH IS ON US!

Registration is appreciated by Friday March 6th, 2015.  
Call CARA at (403) 664-3777 to register.



Provost  
Ag Service  
Board



Alberta  
Barley

## WCCCS

Western Canadian Cow-Calf Survey

## Survey Participants Still Needed

Access online at:

<http://www.wbdc.sk.ca/wcccs.htm>

## CHINOOK APPLIED RESEARCH ASSOCIATION

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