

2014 Extension Highlights

Newsletters

Five editions of CARA's 'Grain, Grass and Growth' newsletter were mass-mailed to 1500 producers.



Cooperator Appreciation Evening

CARA hosted project cooperators, local funders and other supporters to a banquet on January 9 in Cereal to show appreciation for contributions to our program during the past year.

Yamily Zavala provided the crowd with a glimpse of her international research.

Wintering Site Field Day February 4, Consort

A combination of classroom presentations and field visits sparked discussions on nutrient management, energy efficient watering systems, Growing Forward programs as well as grazing corn and large square hay bales. The event was held in Consort with visits to sites near the Neutral Hills and hayfields south of Consort.



Understanding Soils Seminars February 5, Oyen; March 27, Acadia Valley



CARA hosted producers to two events focused on the importance of good soil management strategies. The first was held at the Canalta Hotel in Oyen where 25 producers heard Dr. Yamily Zavala address 'Soils – the Base of all Production & Interpreting Soil Test Results', Dr. Dan Haney '4R Management Program' and

Keith Gabert 'Feeding a Canola Crop'. Another 25 producers met in Acadia Valley March 27 where Yamily again shared her soils presentation.



CARA's Annual Meeting and Projects Review February 27, Cereal

In addition to annual business, CARA staff reviewed results of CARA's 2013 program and plans for 2014 at the February 26 meeting. Guest speaker was Neil Blue, Market Specialist with Alberta Agriculture, who provided a crop market outlook for several cereal, oilseed and pulse crops.



Environmental Farm Plan Workshops February 18, Pollockville, April 15, Oyen and April 17, Consort
EFP workshops were held to assist producers with understanding and completing their environmental farm plans.

Classroom Ag Program *March*

Presentations on CARA's program, soil health, nutrient cycles, the importance of safety, care of the environment and the diversity of agricultural production in Alberta were made by CARA staff to elementary students at five local schools.

Planning & Maintaining Yards *March 30, Oyen*

Well known horticulturalist from Saskatoon, Sarah Williams led a discussion of species selection and tips for low maintenance farmyards.

Shelterbelt Maintenance and Pruning Workshop *April 3, Hanna*

Specialists Nigel Seymour and Shelley Barkley provided information on managing pests, maintaining shelterbelts and pruning techniques.



Farm Safety Program *May 26, Consort*

CARA staff partnered with local volunteers and businesses to bring a one day Safety Camp to over 200 grade one through grade nine students from Altario, Consort and Veteran Schools. The event was held at the Consort Sportex where the students rotated through a number of stations focused on different safety topics.

Jim Gerrish Grazing Field Day *July 10, Consort*

A day long discussion of grazing strategies with Jim Gerrish, grazier from Idaho, was held in Consort and at Westview Cattle Co. The event was in partnership with the Battle River Research Group as part of ARECA's Gerrish Field Day series.



Nuffield Scholars *July 22, Oyen & Chinook field site*

CARA was visited by Nuffield Scholars Bob Nixon from Kalannie, Western Australia and Daryl Chubb of Irricana, Alberta for a discussion of local production practices and a visit to crop trials and demonstrations.

Summer Crop Field Day *July 23, Chinook*

Producers spent the day with Robyn Bowness, ARD Pulse Specialist; Sydney Vos, Alberta Pulse Growers; Rick Bennett, Agrisoma and Keith Gabert, Canola Council Agrologist; while visiting a Pulse Diagnostic Demo, Canola Agronomics Demo and Stoller Seed & Foliar Treatments, Carinata and Mustard trials. Highlight of the day was a soil discussion led by Dr. Yamily Zavala using a soil pit dug at the field day site by landowner Charles Schmidt.



Crop Walks *July 30 and August 12*

Two Crop walks were held July 30 – one in the morning along highway 12 west of Consort and the second in the afternoon west of Hanna. The walks began with a tour of CARA's Crop Trials followed by a visit to local grower canola fields. ARD Crop

Specialist Neil Whatley led discussion on crop scouting, disease and pest management and tips for harvest. Although only 5 producers attended the Consort site and 3 the Hanna site, the discussion was excellent and the producers appreciated the one-on-one discussion with Neil and Yamily. A second day of Crop Walks was held August 12 with a morning session west of Empress and the afternoon at CARA's Crop Trial site south of Acadia Valley. Only 3 producers joined the morning walk, and one came to the afternoon session due to an early beginning to the local pea harvest. The Empress Crop Walk resulted in CARA linking a first time lentil grower with Neil Whatley and Yamily Zavala for a field visit a few days later in August.



Gabe Brown Cocktail Crop Seminar *October 30, Pollockville*
CARA hosted North Dakota farmer Gabe Brown to lead a discussion on the use of cocktail cover crops for soil improvement in the Hardgrass Hub in Pollockville. This event was one stop in ARECA's seminar series.



Christine Jones November 4, Olds

CARA partnered with other ARECA member associations to invite Dr. Christine Jones, soil ecologist from South Australia, to speak to a full house at Olds College.

Cattlemen Clinic *November 28, Oyen*

Over 20 cattlemen and women took part in several interesting discussions at the CARA's 5th annual Cattlemen Clinic in Oyen. Presentations including Reportable Diseases and Lead Poisoning, Dr. Tracy Logan, Oyen Vet Services; ARD's Nutrient Calculator tool for swath or bale grazing, Trevor Wallace, ARD Specialist; Ergot, Harry Brook, ARD Specialist; CARA Program Review, Dianne Westerlund and a demonstration of a portable corral system at the Crossroads Center by James and Lorie Ford.

Western Canadian Grazing Conference *December 9-11, Edmonton*

CARA staff participated in the planning and execution of the Western Canadian Grazing Conference held in December in Edmonton. Dianne Westerlund presented an overview of the Commission for Environmental Cooperation, leading into a panel discussion by Marj Veno, Hanna and Matthew Gould, Consort on their CEC projects.



Winter Grazing Videos

CARA is partnering with Alberta Agriculture, Growing Forward II, West Central Forage Association and the Lakeland Agricultural Research Association in the development of videos focused on risk management of winter grazing practises. Several local producers are being featured in the videos which will be available later in 2015.

Green Certificate Testing

CARA hosted testing days for the Green Certificate Program at the CARA Center in March, May and December.

Growing Forward

Many producers were assisted with applications to various Growing Forward programs during the year, including Grazing and Winter Feeding, Water Management, Crop, Manure, Energy, Animal Welfare, Health and Biosecurity.

Producer Survey

Over 100 producers responded to an electronic survey of agricultural production topics to help develop CARA's future programming.

Feed, Seed and Soil Analysis CARA continued to provide producers with information, use of bale sampling probes and/or facilitation of analysis of feed, seed, plant, soil and water samples in 2014.



Website, Facebook, Twitter and Email

CARA's website (www.chinookappliedresearch.ca) has received over 34,000 hits during the past two years. Information is also distributed to producers via Facebook, Twitter and email contact lists.

Twitter: @CARAresearch

Visit us on Facebook

Email: cara-1@telus.net

