



*Grain, Grass & Growth*

*February 2020*

*www.ChinookAppliedResearch.ca*



## Soil Health Mini Conference

Oyen, Alberta

Thursday, February 20

9:00 am—3:00 pm

### **SPEAKER Session**

**\$100 per person**

**\$150 Farm Unit (2 people)**

#### **Dr. Mir M. Seyedbagheri**

Humic - Benefits of Using Humic as a Soil Amendment & Case Study

#### **Kevin Elmy**

Cover Crop Management Strategies for Soil Health

#### **Dr. Yamily Zavala**

Alberta Soil Bio-Signatures What Can They Offer Your Soils?

### **LAB sessions**

**\$200 per person**

Three hour sessions with two times available:

#### **Wednesday, February 19**

2:00pm—5:00pm

*\*Limited spots available*

#### **Friday, February 21**

9:00am—12:00pm

*\*Limited spots available*

### **REGISTER**

Call CARA at 403-664-3777  
or online through EventBrite

## Pests A Plenty

While some of us may associate the winter months with hibernation (or we sure would like to), some of our furry friends are on a different page. Your local Special Areas Agricultural Service Boards would like to remind you of some of the pest services they offer ratepayers.

### Livestock Predation by Coyotes

With calving and lambing season right around the corner for many producers, it's a good time to review your coyote predation protection measures. Sound husbandry practices can go a long way to reduce interactions between livestock and coyotes. These include herd surveillance (the presence of a livestock manager greatly reduces coyote conflicts), corralling of sheep at night, disposing of deadstock, utilizing guard animals and classing animals according to age (keep your youngest calves close to home). Net fencing kept in good repair, or an electric fence will deter many coyotes.

If you keep your fences up, your guard donkey happy, your deadstock far away, and you still experience coyote predation, contact your Ag Fieldman. They may be able to provide you with Compound 1080, a slow acting poison that can be used with bait to control a problem coyote. A permit is required for this and is subject to several conditions.

If you see a particularly aggressive coyote, especially towards humans, please contact your Ag Fieldman.

### Mouse Infestations

When it comes to keeping mice out of your home, vehicles and equipment there are plenty of old wives' tales. However, tried and true methods of removing nesting areas/food sources, sealing holes greater than ¼", and maintaining cleanliness (get that broom out!) are the most effective. If you are still struggling, Ramex (dipacinone) poison is available from your Ag Fieldman at their District Offices. This oat-based bait is a popular choice for bale infestations but can be quite toxic to pets. Warfarin mouse poison, available at your local feed store, is less toxic and may be a better choice if accidental poisoning is a concern. Always

remember to keep your poison in bait stations, out of the reach of children, pets and livestock.

Hantavirus pulmonary syndrome can be carried by several mouse species, not to mention other diseases such as salmonellosis, rickettsialpox, roundworms and tapeworms. Rodent droppings need to be removed with gloved hands, using a dust mask, and cleaning with wet methods including disinfectants like bleach. Avoid sweeping and vacuuming when possible to reduce exposure to fine dust particles.

### Report a Rat!

Think you saw a rat but not sure? Your Ag Fieldmen are experts at rat identification. Being so close to the Saskatchewan border, we even have a rat control officer, Jory Hoffman, your MD of Acadia Ag Fieldman. Help keep Alberta rat free - report any potential sighting to Jory to implement control measures immediately.

### Richardson's Ground Squirrel Control

Thanks to the efforts of multiple stakeholder groups, the Pest Management Regulatory Agency renewed the registration for 2% Liquid Strychnine, a popular tool for Richardson's Ground Squirrel population control in agriculture. When used properly, according to the label, non-target risks are low. Producer education and compliance with pest management practices greatly increase safety of the product. In order to continue to use this valuable tool in pest management, expect in-depth conversations about the product when you pick yours up at the Special Areas District Offices this spring. Sales start March 1, 2020 at the Hanna, Consort and Oyen Offices. All sales cease July 31st, 2020. A maximum of 2 cases (48 bottles) per landowner per year is enforced at the discretion of the Ag Fieldman.

**Help us promote the environmental benefit of Canadian pulses.**

The pulse industry is collecting data on the environmental footprint of pea and lentil production in Western Canada. Your production data is key to ensuring Canada remains positioned as a global leader in the pulse industry. Share your production practices by taking part in our online survey.

**Take our online survey to be entered in a draw to win a  
\$1,000 Amazon gift card!**

Respond by February 7 at:  
[www.PulseCanada.com/GrowerSurvey](http://www.PulseCanada.com/GrowerSurvey)





# Farm Succession Planning Seminar

with **MERLE GOOD**

*Passing on the family operation to the next generation isn't as easy as it used to be, but with the proper tactics, it can still be done.*

**FEBRUARY 6, 2020**

## AGENDA

**CONSORT, AB**

11:30 - Registration

**CONSORT GEM CENTRE**

12:00 - Lunch

**12:00 PM - 5:00 PM**

1:00 - Succession Planning  
& Tax Strategies

5:00 - Wrap up

**Brought to you by:**



**Cost:** (includes lunch)

\$20/ person

\$30/ farm unit (2 people)



**To Register:**

Please call CARA at 403-664-3777,  
email [cara-3@telus.net](mailto:cara-3@telus.net) or  
online through Eventbrite

The Chinook Applied Research Association has connected research to farmers and ranchers in the Special Areas and MD of Acadia since 1979 through a wide range of applied research projects, demonstrations and many forms of extension activities. A huge network of support has made this possible.

### Did You Know?

CARA is a non-for-profit society registered as a Charitable Organization with Revenue Canada. Our operation is directed by local farmers who set priorities for our program based on the needs and current issues affecting producers in our area. Annual funding has typically included a core grant from Alberta Agriculture and Forestry (AAF), which covers a portion of basic operating costs and manpower. Another very important portion of our primary budget has come from the Special Areas Board (SAB) and the MD of Acadia (MD). Without this support from our local municipalities, CARA would not function as it does today. AAF, SAB and MD funds provide the base from which CARA accesses other revenue, ie. grants for specific projects, collaborations with commodity commissions and private industry as well as partnerships with other associations, ag service boards, ag societies and educational institutions, government and others.

Funding for CARA (and all applied research and forage associations in Alberta) has always been a challenge, as the priorities of government and the private sector change, market conditions fluctuate and public scrutiny of agriculture increases. CARA has been very fortunate in having great alliances which have resulted in bringing a wide range of projects to east central Alberta.

A huge factor in CARA's success has been the contribution and support we have received from our local ag community. The list of contributors is long, including the Special Areas and MD of Acadia as mentioned above, a dedicated Board of Directors, project cooperators (landowners), Ag Service Boards, Ag Societies and many local agribusinesses. Support is not always in the form of cash but has included manpower, equipment and other physical assets as well. CARA's Soil Health Lab Initiative (*The Farmer's Lab*) is an excellent example of impressive community support (see insert). More names have recently been added to the contribution list.

***The Board Members and Staff of CARA are so very appreciative of the incredible contributions which have kept CARA functioning and moving ahead. Many, many thanks!***

### Be a Part of the Legacy

Contributions to the operation of CARA have a lasting impact on our agricultural community and CARA's Charitable Status make donations beneficial to those who give as well through tax credits. Donations can be targeted to specific items or projects or for general operations. If you are interested to support agriculture through CARA, either now or possibly through your estate in the future, please talk to Dianne. Formal recognition of donations will be made.

**CARA Soil Health Lab** Thank You

Platinum Contributor

**RAWEST INI**

Gold Contributors

Special Areas Board **REDNECK SWABBING** Foothills Forage and Grazing Association

Silver Contributors

Municipal District of Acadia #34 Grey Wooded Forage Association  
Creating an Awareness of Forages

Dr. Yamily Zavala Ann & Don Rafa Marc Legoult

Bronze Contributors

Linda Bingeman Silversun Farms  
 Redel Farms Ltd K.G.M. WELDING  
 Strankman Farms Tyler & Megan Chiliak  
 Ylimay Zavala Waters Plumbing & Heating Ltd.

# Alberta EFP

## Environmental Farm Plan

# WORKSHOPS

Join us for our **FREE EFP Workshop** and let us help you to start a new EFP or update your current EFP.

Effective April 1, 2018 producers will need to have an EFP completion letter within the last 10 years to be eligible for potential grant funding, renew your EFP now!

Individual attention and assistance with the EFP workbook.

Space is limited. Please **REGISTER** by calling CARA at 403-664-3777  
Or email [cara-3@telus.net](mailto:cara-3@telus.net)

## HANNA

Hanna Special Areas Office  
February 11th  
1:00 pm - 4:00pm

## CONSORT

Neutral Hills Learning &  
Community Centre  
February 12th  
1:00 pm - 4:00pm

## OYEN

Big Country Community Adult  
Learning Centre  
February 13th  
1:00 pm - 4:00pm

## Mental health checkups are for farmers, too

Feb 25, 2016

Farming is a unique way of life that offers many rewards. But many pressures also come with the territory, from market prices and debt loads to machinery upkeep and repair to weather and dealing with family. And unlike most jobs, farmers can't go home and leave those worries behind.

### Stress and mental health

You don't have to be a rocket scientist – nor a psychiatrist – to get an inkling of the impacts that such relentless responsibilities can have on mental health. Many studies show a direct correlation between chronic stress and a multitude of mood disorders, including depression. It also increases the risk of developing a host of health problems, including diabetes, heart disease, cancer and weakened immune systems.

Trouble is, farmers have a reputation for being tough, and learn from an early age to put on a brave face and work through their problems.

"I fooled a lot of people," says Gerry Frieson, a prominent Manitoba farmer who struggled with depression a decade ago and now talks and writes about his recovery.

"Looking back, I now recognize it's ingrained in us that if we just work harder we will get rid of these problems, whether it's financial stress or depression."

### Awareness is half the battle

It doesn't have to be that way. Awareness campaigns by various mental health care stakeholders, for example, have helped to both



increase understanding and reduce the stigma of mental health conditions. Treatment methods, too, continue to improve, as has the access to mental health services and programs.

"Many more Canadians deal with mental health problems every year than cancer, diabetes and respiratory problems combined," says Mark Henick, program manager with Mental Health Works, an offshoot of one of Canada's oldest charities, the Canadian Mental Health Association.

According to Henick, who became a mental health advocate after a passerby stopped him from jumping off a Cape Breton bridge at age 15, most mental health conditions are treatable.

"The challenge for many people, especially middle-aged and older men," he adds, "is to realize mental health issues are normal." Henick says that realization can make it easier to seek help.

### Help is available

While that help is more accessible for people who live in big cities, where most mental health services are concentrated, the Internet is breaking down the distance barriers to rural regions. Saskatchewan, for example, is the first and so far only Canadian province to offer an online counselling service for depression and anxiety called [OnlineTherapyUser.ca](http://OnlineTherapyUser.ca).

In Alberta, local resources include FCSS offices that can be found in Oyen, Consort, and Hanna; Distress Line 403-266-4375; Mental Health Helpline 1-877-303-2642.

## Cows and Chaos webinar series back in 2020

The webinar series that addresses livestock producers feed concerns resumes January 30.

The Cows and Chaos - Feed, Forage and Management Strategies webinar series gets underway Thursday, January 30, 2020 at 1 pm.

This edition of the series will be covering topics producers face in late winter and early spring – from maintaining stored forage to this year’s calving season and making the most out of your livestock on pasture.

Barry Yaremco, Beef and Forage Specialist at the Alberta Ag-Info Centre, hosts the January 30 webinar. He will be looking at what it takes to ensure the cow herd is set for calving and rebreeding.

Upcoming topics: (To join the webinar, please register at [www.register.gotowebinar.com/register](http://www.register.gotowebinar.com/register).)

- January 30 – **Third Trimester and Lactation Rations**
- February 6 – **Maintaining Stored Forage Quality Over Time and the Economics**
- February 13 – **Public and Stakeholder Engagement – Getting our Story Out**
- February 20 – **General Grazing Strategies**
- February 27 – **Finding Acres to Run Cattle – Creative Thinking**
- March 5 – **Market Outlook**
- March 12 – **Utilizing Annuals – Cocktail Crops**

March 19 – **Utilizing Annuals – Corn**

Webinars in this now weekly series will be available on AF’s YouTube channel under the [Cows and Chaos - Feed, Forage and Management Strategies playlist](#). Each webinar will be uploaded to the site the week following the broadcast.

The series is presented by a team from Alberta Agriculture and Forestry, forage and research associations and the livestock industry.

For more information, contact the Alberta Ag-Info Centre: [310-FARM \(3276\)](tel:310-FARM(3276))

**The Western Canada Conference on Soil Health & Grazing Video Recordings are NOW AVAILABLE!**  
Please visit:  
[www.absoilgrazing.com/recordings](http://www.absoilgrazing.com/recordings)



### EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The Chinook Applied Research Association (CARA) is now accepting applications for **Summer Field Technicians** (May through August).

CARA is a non-profit, producer driven agricultural research society based in Oyen. Our program includes small plot and field scale research and demonstration projects as well as a number of extension events including workshops, seminars and field days. We are committed to improving management practices, supporting environmental stewardship and demonstrating techniques to increase the profitability of grain, forage and livestock producers in East Central Alberta.

Summer Research Technicians will work closely with CARA Program Coordinators to ensure that demonstration and research trials are of outstanding quality.

#### Summer Field Technician responsibilities:

- Assist with the establishment, maintenance and harvest of various applied research and demonstration projects
- Operate and assist with minor maintenance of facility, field and plot equipment
- Assist with development of tours, field days and other extension events

#### Qualifications:

- Valid driver’s license
- Agricultural background & knowledge of crops and farming systems would be an asset
- Working knowledge of word and excel computer programs is beneficial
- Ability to work independently as well as contribute to a team
- Self-motivated and organized.
- Committed to quality and getting the job done.

#### Why work for CARA?

- Expand knowledge of agricultural production
- Learn skills in agricultural research and extension
- Work in the great outdoors
- Opportunities for personal development

Compensation: Wage is dependent on experience.

Closing date: February 29, 2020

For more information & to submit a resume:  
Dianne Westerlund, Manager  
Box 690  
Oyen, Alberta T0J 2J0  
Email: [caradw@telus.net](mailto:caradw@telus.net)  
Phone: 403-664-3777

\*Visit [www.ChinookAppliedResearch.ca](http://www.ChinookAppliedResearch.ca) to view all of CARA’s current job postings.

## Making sense of what your balance sheet is telling you

Balance sheets and statements of net worth both include assets and liabilities. The difference between the two is that a statement of net worth will have capital assets, such as land and quota, reported at fair market value. Balance sheets have capital assets valued at original cost, minus amortization for depreciable assets, such as buildings and equipment. Assets minus liabilities equals equity. As a farmer, assets are what you own. Liabilities are what you owe. Equity is what's yours. Another explanation is that assets always equal liabilities plus equity — it's a formula and it has to be in "balance."

Retained earnings is an alternative way of expressing equity and usually used as the descriptor in balance sheets.

Changes from one year's balance sheet to another is a function of profit, or earnings, for the year. Obviously, a farmer would want to see their retained earnings increase from year to year. But, if a farm loses money in a year, there would be a decrease in retained earnings from one year to the next. Changes in retained earnings are a function of earned financial progress.

Shifts from one year's statement of net worth to another include profit but also can include increases in the fair market values of capital assets. This is generally referred to as unearned financial progress because the increase in the value of land, for example, was not directly related to profit generated from operations.

An income statement summarizes revenue and expenses for any given period of time. At a farm's year-end, it will be for the past year. Cost of production analysis gets lots of attention as farmers make decisions around rotation, inputs, including rations and feed costs for livestock enterprises, and marketing. Cost of production correlates directly with profit and profit is the engine that drives the business. This is important. As we all know, margins are narrow and costs are increasing. However....

An observation I have, shared by many others, is that balance sheets, or statements of net worth, do not receive the attention they deserve.

Farm businesses should strive to drive wealth into their business. Simply stated, owners should want their businesses to be worth more each year. The wealth, measured as equity, has many potential uses:

To leverage (borrow against) to fund growth and reinvestment.

To support inter-generational transition.

To sustain a business through periods of time when profit is low or losses occur, resulting in weak or non-existent cashflow and a requirement to restructure the debt in the business.

To leave a legacy.

Trend-line analysis is key when looking at balance sheets and statement of net worth. The structure of the balance sheet should be monitored closely. There are typically two categories for assets and liabilities — current and term. It is important to track the relationship between current assets and current liabilities because these correlate closely with liquidity or cashflow.

Further, it is important to track the relationship between current and term liabilities. How much of the total debt of a farm is due in the next year — current refers to the next 12 months. A farm's current liabilities are the liabilities that must be paid in the next year.

A common year-end date for farms is Oct. 31, Nov. 30 or Dec. 31. Of course, a year-end date can be at any point of time during a year. There are reasons why year-end dates other than a calendar year-end are chosen. A year-end is a great time to look at your balance sheet or statement of net worth.

If you are not incorporated, record your assets and liabilities at Dec. 31 every year. It is common to find unincorporated farms that will have, for example, a statement of assets and liabilities at Nov. 30 one year, Feb. 15 another, perhaps March 31 on another and maybe even be missing one or two years. This sporadic approach to recording assets and liabilities makes it extremely difficult to capture accurate information that can be used to analyze trends in financial performance and perhaps, support a loan application or be used to discuss the financial implications of inter-generational transition.

It's generally accepted that "if you can't measure it, you can't manage it." There are numerous ratios and indicators — the measurements — that can be used to manage financial performance on a farm. A key measurement looks at the relationship between the assets and liabilities of the business. The analysis and related management require that a preliminary step be taken that first defines what is actually being measured. Balance sheets are a great place to start!

Terry Betker, PAg, is a farm management consultant based in Winnipeg. He can be reached at 204-782-8200 or [terry.betker@backswath.com](mailto:terry.betker@backswath.com).

<https://www.producer.com/2020/01/making-sense-of-what-your-balance-sheet-is-telling-you/>



# Upcoming Events

<b>Navigating Farm Grants</b>  February 3 Consort, AB	Receive one on one assistant navigating farm grants and the applications. If you are interested in booking a time for one of these 1 hour one on one sessions, please call the CARA office at 403-664-3777 for availability.
<b>Farm Succession Planning with Merle Good</b>  February 6 Consort	Passing on the family operation to the next generation isn't easy, but with the proper tactics, it can be less stressful. Join us at the Farm Succession Planning Seminar with MERLE GOOD (Taxation & business arrangement specialist).  To register please call CARA at 403-664-3777 or email us at cara-3@telus.net
<b>Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) Clinic</b>  February 11 Hanna, AB  February 12 Consort, AB  February 13 Oyen, AB	This workshop will provide individual attention to help farm or ranch owners create an effective EFP. The EFP plan is required for the new CAP program (aka Growing Forward) Environmental Stewardship & Climate Change Producer program.  As of April 1, 2018, producers need to have a completion letter dated within the past 10 years to be eligible.  If you would like to attend please call CARA at 403-664-3777
<b>Soil Health Mini Conference</b>  February 20 Oyen, AB	Management Alternatives for Soil Health (MASH) Speaker sessions include Dr. Yamily Zavala, Dr. Mir Seyedbagheri and Kevin Elmy as well as sessions within the CARA Soil Health Lab (space limited)  <a href="http://www.CARASoilHealthLab.ca">www.CARASoilHealthLab.ca</a> Registration online through Eventbrite
<b>Ladies Calving Clinic</b>  March 5 Pollockville, AB	Kick off your boots and enjoy an evening of learning, laughter and great food! This year's Ladies Calving Clinic will include Dr. Kirby Finkbeiner & Dr. Tamara Quaschnick , mini tradeshow and more! Register online through Eventbrite or by calling CARA at 403-664-3777
<b>To Be Announced</b>	<b>Crop Strategy Seminar</b> <b>Young Farmer &amp; Ranch Seminar</b> <b>CARA's Annual Project Review</b>

Visit [www.CARASoilHealthLab.ca](http://www.CARASoilHealthLab.ca) to have your Soils Health analyzed to help your farm become more sustainable.



***Prefer Digital ?***

If you would like to receive this newsletter via email, please contact Olivia at [cara-3@telus.net](mailto:cara-3@telus.net)

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