CAFLA

CENTRAL ALBERTA FORAGE AND LIVESTOCK ASSOCIATION

Annual Report

2024-2025

NEW NAME
NEW LOGO
RENEWED COMMITMENT

CAFLA

CENTRAL ALBERTA FORAGE AND LIVESTOCK ASSOCIATION

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OUR MISSION

To provide knowledge, tools, and resources that build and support a thriving farming

OUR VISION

Farming and ranching is successful through progressive and innovative production methods.

County Partners

Industry Partners

Corporate Partners

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Cover page featuring Brianna Elliot at a field day event.

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

As Chair of the Central Alberta Forage and Livestock Association, it's my pleasure to report on a year of remarkable progress and renewed energy. The 2024–2025 membership year has been a pivotal one for our organization.

At the center of this positive trajectory is our commitment to transparent governance and accountability. Since creating our current strategic plan in 2023, we strengthened the foundations of responsible leadership by implementing tools such as our monthly Strategic Health Dashboard report and zero-based budgeting. These efforts ensure that our members and partners can trust not just in what we do—but how we do it.

This progress wouldn't be possible without the unwavering support of a competent, committed staff team who consistently go above and beyond to serve our producers. Their innovation, adaptability, and agricultural knowledge are what bring our strategic goals to life—from planning top-tier events to piloting new services in the field. They are the backbone of CAFLA's success, and I'm incredibly proud of their work.

We are also fortunate to have an engaged Board of Directors, eager to learn, grow, and guide. In the past year, we've seen greater participation, thoughtful oversight, and healthy dialogue at the board level. Directors attended and volunteered at CAFLA events as well as industry events such as the Western Canada Conference on Soil Health and Grazing. CAFLA hosted ARECA AGM in March of 2025 and participated in discussions exploring gaps and opportunities to increase producer support throughout Alberta. With succession planning in motion and increased interest in board roles, we're cultivating a strong leadership pipeline to carry CAFLA forward.

Our strategic direction continues to focus on three core pillars:

1. **Renowned Regional Forage and Grazing Advisors.** We've continued delivering high-impact, relevant extension services—ranging from our well-attended events to expanded Field Trial Service. These initiatives are helping producers make informed decisions, adopt beneficial practices, and see results in real time.

2. **A Thriving Organization with Dynamic, Engaged Board, Staff, and Members.** From board development to staff retention to growing our producer base, we're building a resilient organization. Our rebranding and membership drive are creating new energy and visibility, and we're excited about evolving our member value proposition to offer real, tangible benefits.

3. **Experts at Measuring Our Impact and Telling Our Story.** We're investing in measuring our impact and marketing CAFLA as a trusted resource for producers. With support from Olds College Ag Management students and media partners, we're amplifying producer voices and showcasing the difference CAFLA makes.

Looking ahead, I'm optimistic about what we can achieve together. We are an organization built on relationships, grounded in practical application, and driven by producer needs. With a strong team, a clear plan, and a community that believes in our mission, CAFLA is poised for continued impact and long-term sustainability.

To our members, staff, Board, funders, and partners—thank you. Your commitment and collaboration make this work meaningful and possible.

Sheldon Mehlhaff
Board Chair

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

THE YEAR GREY WOODED FORAGE ASSOCIATION OUTGREW ITS OVERALLS

As I reflect on 2024-2025 membership year, it's clear that this has been a year of meaningful transformation and forward momentum for the Central Alberta Forage and Livestock Association (CAFLA). With strong community support, a dedicated team, and a renewed vision, we've made great strides in delivering the kind of research, services, and extension that matter most to producers in our region.

One of the most significant changes this year was our transition from the Grey Wooded Forage Association to the Central Alberta Forage and Livestock Association. This rebranding better represents our broader geographic focus and the diverse needs of today's forage and livestock producers. Our new identity reflects not only where we work, but how we work—collaboratively, regionally, and with producers at the centre of everything we do.

CAFLA's work in 2024 has been grounded in a simple but powerful principle: meeting producers where they are, with the tools and knowledge they need. In Central Alberta, that means addressing challenges like variable weather, soil health, input costs, and the ongoing need to balance productivity with long-term sustainability. In response, we've focused on producer-led applied research, launched soil and forage sampling services, and delivered on-farm demonstrations that provide practical, real-time insights producers can trust.

Our soil sampling service pilot program has been met with an overwhelming demand. We processed more than 70 soil samples for more that 15 producers in our service area. We followed this up with a workshop to further educate producers on the benefits of understanding their soil and basic knowledge to understand the data available in the reports.

We also increased our outreach through field days, workshops, and webinars, alongside the launch of a new website and new digital resources. These efforts ensure that our work isn't just being done in the field—it's being shared, applied, and built upon throughout our network.

One of the notable events we hosted, was a field day with inventors of the Johnson-Su bioreactor. CAFLA partnered with Chinook Applied Research Association, Farming Forward and Regenerative Alberta Living Lab to build a full-size bioreactor at Brendon Anderson's farm. It was interesting to go back at a six-month mark to see the progress and hear producer feedback.

CAFLA played a significant role in the organisation of the 2024 Western Canada Conference on Soil Health and Grazing held in Edmonton. This sold-out conference is a testament to the importance of collaboration and partnership for the benefit of agriculture in Alberta.

Capital grant funding opened new doors for CAFLA. With the purchase of equipment such as a drone, hydraulic soil tester, side by side, a truck, sample drying ovens we can offer new services and improve efficiency. We are very grateful to Foothills Forage and Grazing Association for sharing a portion of their funding.

Of course, we wouldn't be where we are today without the people behind the scenes. I want to extend heartfelt thanks to:

· Greg Paranich, who officially retired this year, for his years of dedication to Grey Wooded Forage Association and the ag industry.

· Dakota Harper, who joined us on a six-month contract, for her energy, and valuable contributions to our outreach and programming.

· Reid Caukill, our Field Demonstration Coordinator, for his outstanding work in bridging research and practice—ensuring producers see value and relevance in every project we deliver.

· Our newest team member, Martina Hubl, our Communications and Member Engagement Coordinator for her commitment to the CAFLA brand and its mission.

CAFLA remains deeply committed to supporting the success and resilience of forage and livestock producers in Central Alberta. With producer needs guiding our direction, and a strong foundation built way back in 1984, we are excited for what's to come.

Thank you to our funders, corporate and industry partners, members, board, and supporters for helping us grow.

Executive Director
Tatyana Pavlovets

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

RENOWED REGIONAL FORAGE & GRAZING ADVISORS

We're excited to share that we've made significant progress in meeting our strategic priorities, and even more thrilled to announce that we've secured funding for the upcoming fiscal year. It's a testament to the hard work and dedication of our team, and it sets the stage for an impactful year ahead.

As part of this progress, the purchasing of new equipment is already underway. These investments will directly enhance our field operations and improve the quality and efficiency of our work. Be sure to keep an eye out at upcoming Field Demonstration Days and other events, where some of the new equipment will be showcased in action. These demonstrations will offer a firsthand look at how we're translating strategic goals into tangible improvements on the ground. Stay tuned—exciting things are on the horizon!

We're also proud to highlight the success of several events held throughout the year, which played a key role in engaging our members, sharing knowledge, and showcasing innovation in forage and livestock production. From hands-on Field Demonstration Days to informative workshops and pasture walks, each event offered valuable opportunities for producers to learn from both experts and one another. Topics ranged from grazing management and soil health to forage variety trials and water system solutions, reflecting the diverse needs and interests of our agricultural community.

The strong attendance and positive feedback we received underscore the value of these gatherings, not just as learning opportunities but also as a way to strengthen our network of producers and partners across Central Alberta. These events are a vital part of how we deliver on our mission, and we're already planning for an even more dynamic lineup in the year ahead. Thank you to everyone who participated and helped make these events such a success—we look forward to seeing you again soon!

EVENTS AT

Revrok Farm opened its doors to local producers for a pasture walk and a discussion on the challenges and expected outcomes of their project. Producers were introduced to practical approaches for enhancing soil biology and increasing water infiltration, all while producing high-quality feed for the custom grazing operation. As a direct result of the valuable information shared during the event, CAFLA acquired two new members.

KORVER DEMO DAY

CAFLA participated in the Mountain View County Aggie Days by hosting an informative display booth. Over the course of the two-day event, visitors engaged with resources and materials related to soil and forage sampling, producer funding opportunities, and CAFLA membership benefits. We used a creative Minecraft-themed exhibit to effectively educate families on the vital role of livestock, soil health, and forage management in sustainable agriculture.

AGGIE DAYS

CONTROL STRATEGIES: GOPHER, UNGULATE & PREDATORS

We partnered with the Foothills Forage and Grazing Association to host a Control Strategies event that addressed key land management challenges. The event covered the gopher lifecycle and control methods, managing and preventing ungulate damage, strategies for predation management, and landowner protection. Attendees gained valuable insights to support more effective land stewardship.

GENETIC VENTURES

Dale Van Sickle, Melissa Van Sickle, and Ashley Van Aken with Genetic Ventures Ltd. discussed various aspects of AI in cattle, including reproduction cycles, sexed semen technology, and CIDR synchronization programs. Producers learned practical ways to implement AI programs to increase profitability.

EAT TOUR

Over 250 grade 4 students took part in an engaging interactive presentation highlighting the vital role of livestock in building healthy soil and sustainable pastures. To capture students' interest, we designed a creative display inspired by the popular video game Minecraft. This unique approach strongly resonated with the young audience, making the content more relatable and memorable.

CAFLA participated in the Alberta AgriSystems Living Lab event in Clearwater County, where staff delivered a brief presentation highlighting the association's services and the value of membership. The event provided valuable exposure, resulting in three new members joining CAFLA.

ALBERTA AGRI LIVING LABS SKEELS FARM

ROCKY CHAMBER TRADE SHOW

CAFLA took part in the Rocky Trade Show in collaboration with the Rocky Ag Society, hosting a display booth that shared information on soil and forage sampling, producer funding opportunities, and membership benefits. Over the two-day event, CAFLA engaged families with a Minecraft-themed display to educate attendees on the vital connection between livestock, soil health, and forages.

ALBERTA invasive species COUNCIL
abinvasives.ca
info@abinvasives.ca

Certified Weed Free Forage

An overview of the Certified Weed Free Forage Program and the Alberta Invasive Species Council

Paige Kuczmarski
Invasive Species Technician

WEED FREE FORAGE PROGRAM

Recent drought seasons had put pressure on hay supplies, resulting in increased hay transportation across the province and the prairies. Hay contaminated with invasive plants was one way these species were easily spread across the country. The Alberta Invasive Species Council presented a program designed to limit the spread of invasive plant species through contaminated forage. Attendees learned what defines weed-free forage status, which municipalities were involved, how to qualify for this certification, and how to access certified hay.

POWER FENCING 101

Attendees were introduced to the fundamentals and benefits of power fencing for farm and ranch operations through a hands-on demonstration. They learned how to identify and troubleshoot common issues and received information on incentive programs supporting the purchase and installation of power fencing within rotational grazing systems. Participants also had the opportunity to view a RazorGrazer unit and explore its practical application in the field.

COVER CROPPING 101

Producers were informed about the effectiveness of various cover crop termination methods through a showcase of ongoing trials conducted by the Grey Wooded Forage Association, Kettle Ridge Organics, and the Battle River Research Group.

NEILSON BEEF TOUR

Attendees participated in a farm tour hosted by the Neilson family, gaining valuable insights into their heifer development program and their collaborative efforts with Olds College to enhance breeding efficiency. The tour also highlighted the Alberta BBQ Box, the Neilsons' innovative direct-to-consumer sales initiative. As early adopters in the industry, the Neilsons offered attendees a unique opportunity for discussion and knowledge-sharing. Their operation was featured in the August issue of Farming For Tomorrow magazine.

OLDS COLLEGE AGSMART

CAFLA participated in the AgSmart Expo with a display table, providing visitors with information on soil and forage sampling, producer funding opportunities, and membership benefits. The event generated strong interest, resulting in six new members joining the association over the two-day period.

HAGGERTY-GOOD FIELD DAY

EVENTS AT A GLANCE

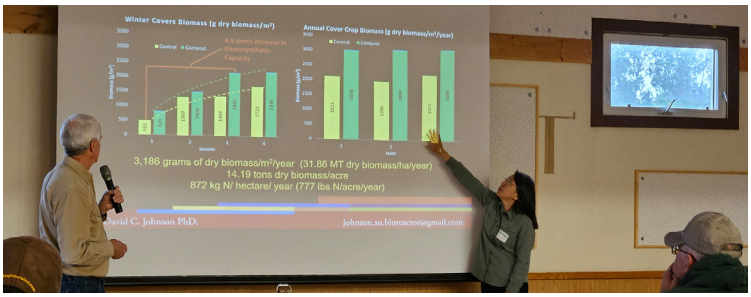
The Haggerty Field Day was a successful and well-attended event that provided producers with hands-on learning opportunities and practical insights. Participants engaged in discussions on forage and grazing management, soil health, and innovative farm practices. The day fostered strong peer-to-peer learning and highlighted the value of on-farm demonstrations in promoting sustainable and productive agricultural systems.

TECHNOLOGY AND FORAGES FIELD TOUR

Our field event showcased demonstrations of innovative agricultural technologies, including virtual fence collars, a rising plate meter, a nitrate meter, and a water level sensor. Attendees also benefited from two informative presentations: Nutrient Composition of Alberta Pastures by Abby Redman and Specialty Forages by Grant Lastiwka. The event took place at the Madden Community Hall and Pitstra Farm, providing a valuable opportunity for producers to explore new tools and practices to enhance pasture management and livestock production.

RED BOW AGRICULTURE PARTNERSHIP

As part of the Red Bow Agriculture Partnership, CAFLA participated in two key events: Ladies Livestock Lessons in Acme and Ranching Opportunities in Olds. These events featured a range of informative speaker sessions, including topics such as water management systems, tips and tricks for bale grazing, a producer panel, and more. Both events provided valuable networking and learning opportunities for producers, with a strong focus on practical, hands-on knowledge to support success in livestock and land management.



SOIL BUILDERS FIELD SCHOOL: JOHNSON-SU BIOREACTOR TRIAL

The Soil Builders Field School, held on July 3, 2024, was a collaborative effort between CAFLA, RALL, CARA and the Farming Forward Association. The event provided farmers and ranchers a unique opportunity to learn about soil health and biology. The focus was on the Johnson-Su Bioreactor, a cutting-edge method for improving soil fertility and microbial diversity. The event featured presentations by Shorty Fenske and Yamily Zavala, who focused on soil health, alongside a hands-on demonstration of building the bioreactor. The event provided a comprehensive program with presentations, producer experiences, and a hands-on demonstration of how to build the bioreactor. Attendees were also given the chance to look at soil biology under a microscope.

WESTERN CANADA CONFERENCE ON SOIL HEALTH AND GRAZING

DECEMBER 2024

The 2024 Western Canada Conference on Soil Health and Grazing, held in Edmonton from December 10 to 12, brought together over 500 producers, researchers, and industry professionals to explore the integration of soil health and grazing practices. Under the theme "A Path to Resilience: Healthy Soil, Plants, Economics, and People," the event offered a rich program of keynote presentations, panel discussions, and a trade show, providing valuable insights into regenerative agriculture. Distinguished speakers such as Tim McAllister, Stuart Chutter, Ralph Wright, Dr. Bart Lardner, and others shared their expertise on soil management, grazing strategies, and the critical balance between ecological and economic factors in sustainable farming.

CAFLA, along with its sister associations, played a pivotal role in organizing the conference, contributing significantly to its success by chairing the committee responsible for securing sponsorships and tradeshow participants. Their efforts ensured not only the financial viability of the event but also facilitated meaningful collaboration and engagement across the regenerative agriculture community. The conference proved to be an essential platform for networking, knowledge exchange, and the fostering of long-term partnerships aimed at advancing sustainable agricultural practices throughout Western Canada.

During the conference, Tatyana got a chance to talk about CAFLA as a guest on Amber Bell's RealAg podcast.

The ABC'S OF A SOIL TEST REPORT

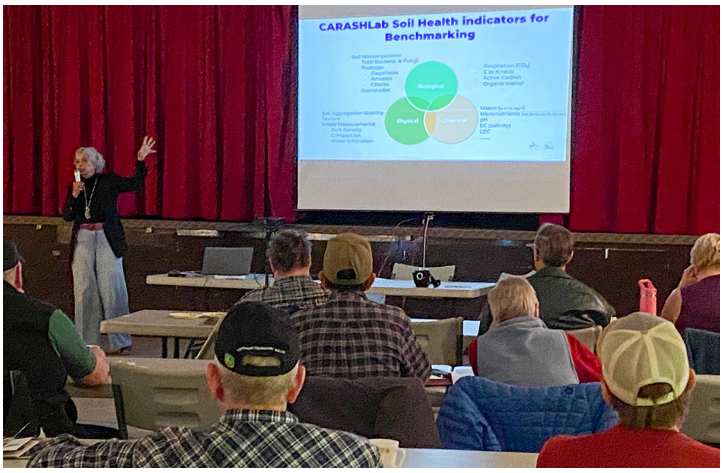
MARCH 2025- LESLIEVILLE

On Monday, March 17th, Central Alberta Forage and Livestock Association hosted The ABC's of a Soil Test Report alongside Clearwater County and CARA Soil Health Labs. The event took place at Leslieville Community Hall, where 37 local producers joined the day for an intensive rundown of how to read and understand a soil test report.

Field Demonstration Coordinator Reid Caukill of CAFLA kicked off the morning with an inclusive presentation about the sampling services CAFLA offers, the reasoning behind soil testing, and the logistics of how he takes the samples.

Devin Knopp, Agronomy and Product Specialist of Benalto Agri Services, took the stage to present an in-depth analysis of a soil sample test report. Producers followed along with a redacted example to learn how the elements interact with each other and what levels are optimal for specific kinds of soil. Knopp went into detail about the breakdown of soil, including highlighting nitrogen, phosphates, and sulfates to name a few. He also had suggestions about how and where to take soil samples, because as farmers we can be biased. He suggested making this a family activity and taking your kids along for a ride. Have your farmhand randomly stop the quad or truck throughout the field, this will ensure no/less bias. Knopp also recommended stopping recreational tillage, as it can deplete your soil much faster and is more difficult to replenish those nutrients. "If you don't test, you don't know," said Knopp.

Following, Dr. Yamily Zavala of the Chinook Applied Research Association (CARA) presented on CARA Soil Health Lab. Some highlights of Dr. Zavala's presentation included: increasing diversity of fungi, nutrient soil interaction Mulder's chart, the importance of the



depth of soil when taking samples and learning how the bulk density affects the samples. Dr Zavala also stressed the importance of a benchmark when working with your soil's health.

After lunch Mark Hagen, Account Manager of Brett Young Seeds, took the stage to present Forage Blends and Species from the Soil Up. Hagen's presentation featured the factors to consider when selecting the right forages for your land, and how soil sampling can affect your fertilizing plans. He went into detail specifically about Alfalfa root types and the difference those roots could mean for your field. The 2025 Brett Young Forage Guide illustrates alfalfa tendencies and types, along with fall dormancy and winter hardiness, as well as adaptability for PH in soils.

This packed day of learning about soil health concluded with a producer panel. Joining Mark Hagen, Devin Knopp and Dr. Yamily Zavala were producers Alana Schamber and Grant Lastiwka. Attendees were able to ask questions to panelists about their specific soil types, what results they found with rounds of testing and other factors to consider when looking at your soil test report or considering incorporating soil testing into your management system. All presenters recommended soil sampling regularly, depending on your specific soil needs, typically every 1-3 years. "Plants grow soils." said Grant Lastiwka, Forage Specialist and longtime member of CAFLA.

CAFLA
CENTRAL ALBERTA FORAGE AND LIVESTOCK ASSOCIATION

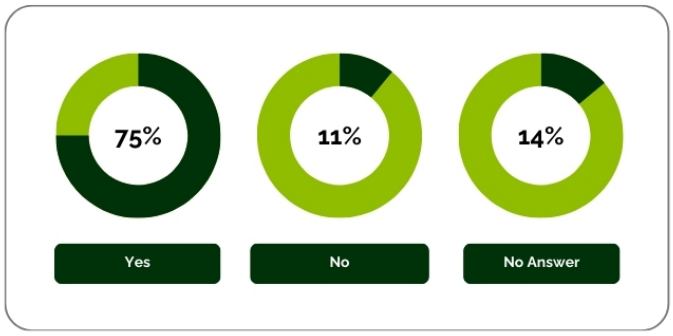
March 17, 2025

THE ABC'S OF A SOIL TEST REPORT WORKSHOP SURVEY RESULTS

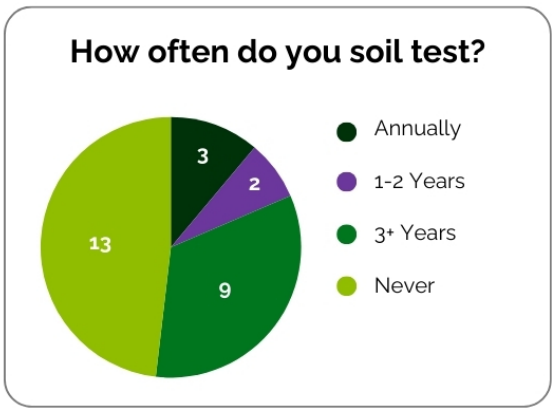
Rate your understanding of soil sampling benefits PRIOR to the workshop:

Rate your understanding of soil sampling benefits AFTER attending the workshop:

As a result of the workshop, I learned how to implement a practice change related to one or more topics covered during today's workshop:



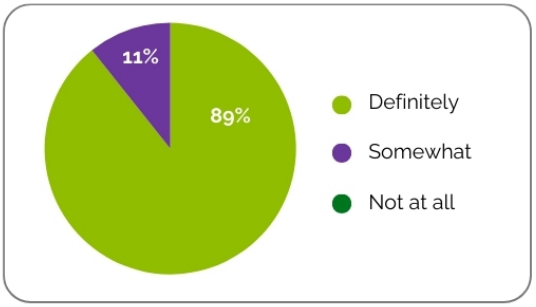
How often do you soil test?



37
PRODUCERS IN ATTENDANCE

28
SURVEYS COLLECTED

As a result of attending the workshop, I learned new information about interpreting soil sampling results:



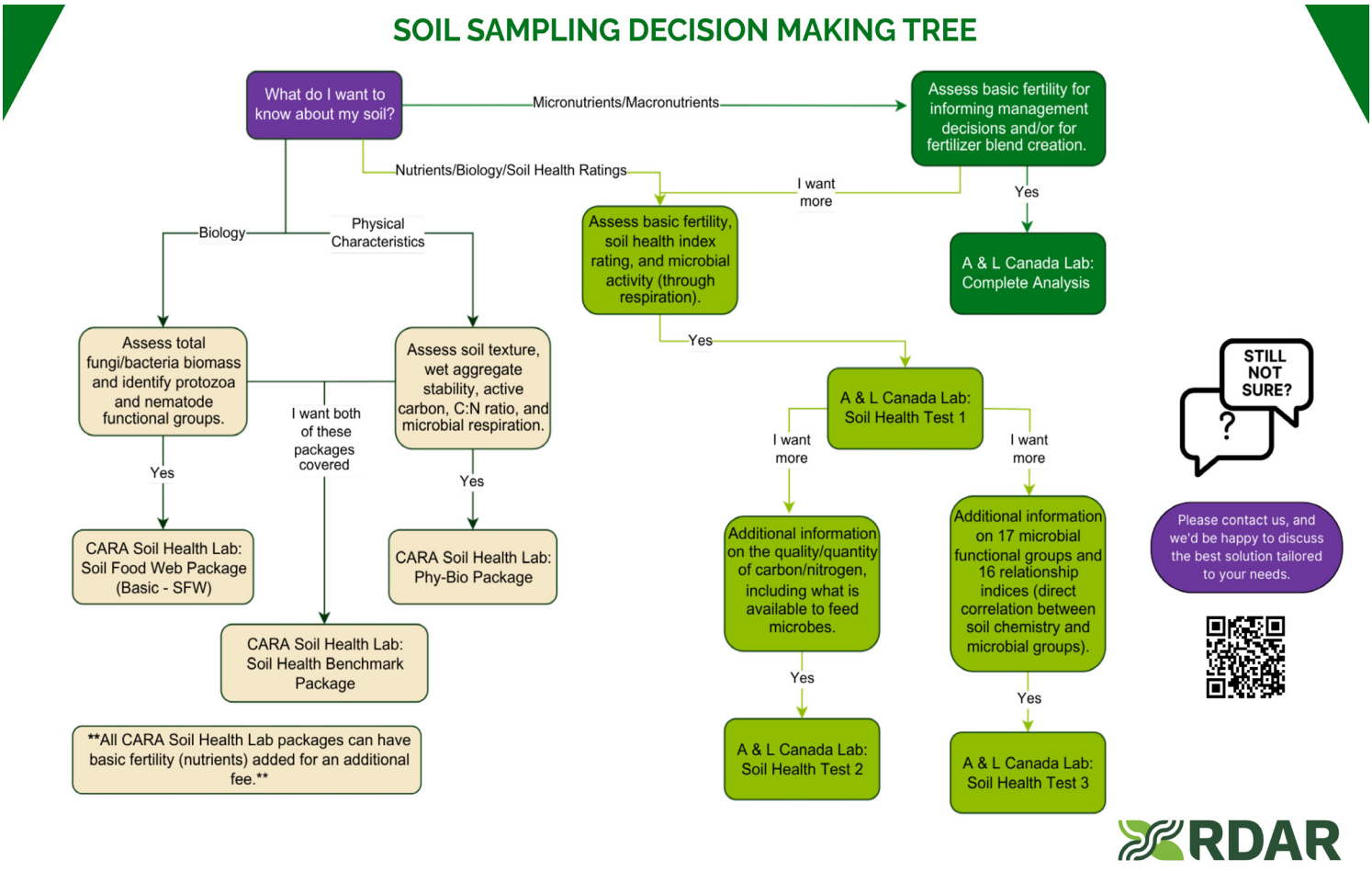
OUR SERVICES

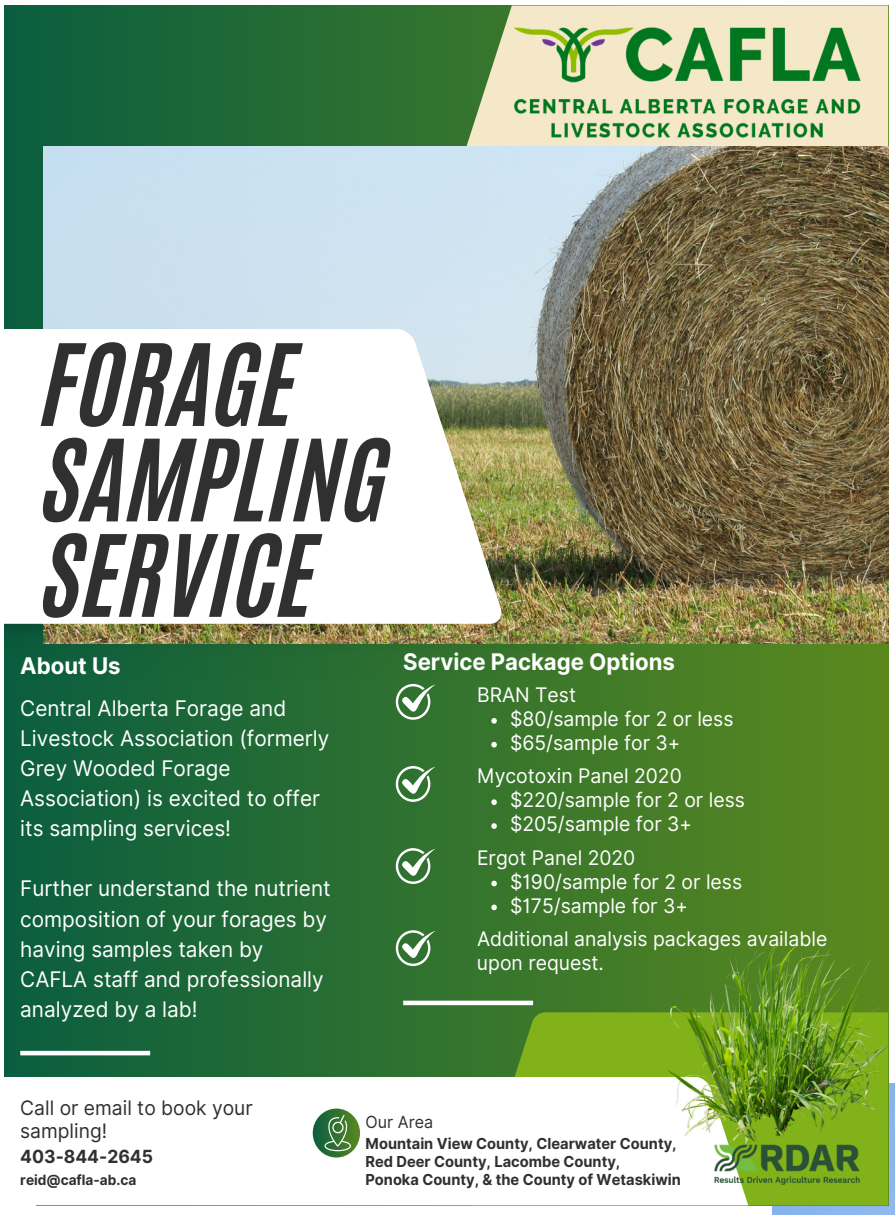
SOIL SAMPLING

CAFLA launched its Soil Sampling Service—an important new initiative aimed at supporting producers in their efforts to build healthier, more resilient soils. This service allows CAFLA staff to collect soil samples directly from producers' fields, which are then analyzed by a certified laboratory to provide accurate and detailed soil health data.

In its first season, the Soil Sampling Service processed 79 samples on behalf of local producers. The resulting reports offered critical insights into current soil conditions and served as a foundation for evaluating past management practices. By establishing this essential baseline, CAFLA has equipped producers with the data they need to guide future decisions around crop selection, fertility management, and soil amendments.

This initiative reflects CAFLA's ongoing commitment to practical, science-based support for agricultural sustainability. Through services like soil sampling, the organization is helping producers take a more informed and proactive approach to land management, contributing to long-term productivity and environmental stewardship across the region.





OUR SERVICES

FORAGE SAMPLING

CAFLA officially launched its Forage Sampling Service, a new initiative designed to help producers assess and manage the nutritional quality of their feed. In its inaugural season, CAFLA facilitated the analysis of 20 forage samples from local operations, providing producers with critical data to support livestock health and performance.

This service delivers valuable insight into the nutrient composition of forage, enabling more precise and effective ration formulation. By understanding the quality of available feed, producers can make informed decisions that enhance animal nutrition, productivity, and overall farm efficiency.

The successful launch of the Forage Sampling Service reflects CAFLA's ongoing commitment to supporting data-driven agriculture. With strong initial uptake and interest, the organization looks forward to expanding this service in the coming years and continuing to empower producers with the tools they need for informed, sustainable decision-making.

PRODUCER CONSULT PASTURE MANAGEMENT/ REJUVINATION

Twelve producers received recommendations and/or resources for one or more of the following BMPs: pasture management/rejuvenation, riparian management/fencing, livestock management, and forage production. Producers were also provided with helpful and informative support regarding a wide range of forage and livestock production queries. Due to the nature of consultation services and the timing of implementation by producers, the impact of these activities is expected to be delayed. As a result, follow-up with producers is planned to evaluate the success of these services. Through these efforts, we continued to be recognized as a trusted source of information and services for producers across our service area.

REGENERATIVE ALBERTA
LIVING LAB REPORT

Kimberly Cornish
Executive Director

The Regenerative Alberta Living Lab (RA-LL) is a province-wide innovation ecosystem that brings together 111 farms across 340,000 acres to co-develop, test, and measure regenerative agricultural practices. Grounded in user-centered design, real-world application, and interdisciplinary collaboration, the Lab is redefining how agricultural innovation is generated, shared, and scaled.

At the heart of RA-LL is experimentation. From adaptive multi-paddock grazing to compost bioreactors, producers are testing ideas not in controlled settings but on their own land, under real conditions. These trials are not isolated events but collaborative processes—supported by scientists, and peers—where farmers learn from one another and iterate in response to outcomes. For example, producers have demonstrated that multi-species silage can double forage yields in dry years, while reducing input costs. Others, are using combinations of practices like no-till, intercropping, and grazing to unlock synergies that boost soil and crop performance.

RA-LL is also leading the way in soil science and data-driven insights. With over 3,500 one-meter soil cores collected—including 1,600 this year—the project is generating unprecedented datasets on soil organic carbon, microbial communities, bulk density, and more. Soil carbon maps developed using machine learning now give producers a high-resolution baseline for tracking change. These tools are not abstract; they inform on-farm decisions and reinforce outcomes—for example, showing how perennials in a cropping system and bale grazing enhance carbon sequestration. Commercial mapping of this kind typically costs up to $250,000 per farm—RA-LL is delivering this value across Alberta.

Custom-built mobile apps for grazing management and plant community monitoring further enable producers to track practices and align them with measurable soil outcomes. The Grazing App, already live, allows for real-time field data entry and multi-year record analysis. The Plant Community App is also ready to capture forage biomass and diversity data.
RA-LL is also a powerful network. Workshops, field days, and international exchanges—such as those with French regenerative leader Frédéric Thomas and Australian farmers Ian and Dianne Haggerty—create spaces for practical, peer-to-peer learning. These events are not lectures but hands-on, participatory experiences. The result is a living map of innovation that grows through relationships.
Beyond technical gains, RA-LL is demonstrating clear climate and resilience outcomes. Field-level data and farm scale soil mapping reveals improved water retention, increased root depth, and nutrient availability. Research suggests that multi-species cover crops alone can sequester over 20 million tonnes of CO□e across Alberta's silage acres—a powerful mitigation pathway.

Looking ahead, the focus remains on working with farmers to interpret results, adjust strategies, and continue learning. Soil maps, management data, and producer input will guide future decisions, both on individual farms and across the network.
In short, RA-LL is about practical innovation—figuring out what works, sharing that knowledge, and supporting producers in making informed choices. It's not about one-size-fits-all solutions, but about building a better understanding of soil health, resilience, and productivity in the Alberta context.

CAFLA PROJECT REPORTS

Evaluation of Termination Methods for Cover Crops

INTRODUCTION AND PROJECT BACKGROUND

Within the agricultural industry, it is well known that decreasing the use of excessive tillage and implementing cover crops can have huge benefits on the health of the soil and the resulting crop yield. However, for organic producers in Alberta, without the ability to use herbicides, options for effectively terminating high biomass cover crops prior to reseeding can be limited (Kienlen 2024; Penn State Extension (2) 2023). As a result, many producers resort to multiple tillage passes to complete this task, however, this raises concerns about soil degradation as a result of over tillage (Frick 2012). To address this, farmers have turned to alternative methods to manage cover crop biomass, such as mowing and roller crimping, prior to a single pass of tillage to terminate (Frick 2012; Penn State Extension (2) 2023).

As shown in Figure 1, roller crimping involves utilizing a large steel cylinder with steel cleats welded at intervals around the diameter of the drum (Penn State Extension (2) 2023). This machine is then rolled over the cover crop, laying it down, and crimping the stalks of the plants as the cleats crush the plant material. These crimps do not sever the plant from its roots, however, they slow its growth and cause the plant to desiccate, thus eventually killing it and creating a mat of vegetation (Frick 2012; Penn State Extension (2) 2023). In contrast, a flail mower uses numerous spinning steel double-edged knives that sever the plant material from the roots and spread it over the top of the soil, thus creating a layer of finely chopped plant residue (Figure 2) (Penn State Extension (2) 2023).

Figure 1. Image showing the construction of a roller crimper (Rite Way Mfg. Co. Ltd. n.d.).

Figure 2. Image showing the knife construction of a flail mower (Kuhn n.d.).

Current studies related to this topic suggest that while roller crimping can be effective for terminating cover crops under certain conditions, using mowing may result in a higher level of regrowth post-treatment (Hill and Sprague 2024; Penn State Extension (2) 2023). However, in combination with another termination technique, mowing is effective in removing high levels of biomass to increase the effectiveness of the treatment (Hill and Sprague 2024). There is also evidence suggesting that roller crimping and mowing termination methods can impact total soil carbon and soil nitrogen due to the incorporation of plant residue (Kichler et al. 2023). Kichler et al. (2023) found that under cover crops, total soil carbon increased by 8% - 11%, while soil nitrogen increased 23% - 35% (Kichler et al. 2023). Studies further show that in certain regions, based on the soil type and climatic variances, cover crops may increase the availability of P, K, Ca, Fe, and Mg within the soil profile (Koudahe et al. 2022).

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Unfortunately, much of the current knowledge on these termination methods comes from the United States and thus does not necessarily apply to Alberta due to the differences in climate and growing season length (Kienlen 2022; Penn State Extension (2) 2023). To fill this gap, The Central Alberta Forage and Livestock Association (CAFLA), in partnership with the Battle River Research Group (BRRG) and Kettle Ridge Organics, developed the Evaluation of Termination Methods for Cover Crops project. The overall goal of this project was to quantify the effects of repeated mowing and roller crimping on a red clover cover crop in an Alberta context. The specific objectives of this

study were to determine if mowing or roller crimping were effective for managing cover crop biomass prior to a single pass of tillage, to determine if multiple mowings or roller crimpings reduced or enhanced plant growth, and to determine if the different termination methods had an impact on the soil and/or vegetation nutrient content.

METHODOLOGY

This study took place on land owned and previously seeded to red clover by Kettle Ridge Organics, located at 40024 Range Road 240 Tees, AB. Onsite, ten 13' by 98' (4m x 30m) plots were established side by side, with the area being chosen to ensure similar topography across all plots.

Across the plots, the different treatment methods were alternated. As Figure 3 shows, Plots 1 and 2 were the positive and negative controls, while Plots 3, 5, 7, and 9 were subject to differing frequencies of mowing and Plots 4, 6, 8, and 10 had different frequencies of roller crimping. The equipment used to achieve this was a 12' roller crimper with offset cleats, a 10' flail mower, and a 3 pt hitch rototiller. While the roller crimper and the mower were used for treatment application to their respective plots, the rototiller was used to simulate continual tillage on Plot 2. The plots which received a mow treatment were mown at 6" to ensure that there was sufficient vegetative material left for effective soil cover.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Analysis of the project results found that Plot 9 had the highest aboveground vegetative biomass production at 2.70 US tons DM/acre, while Plot 6 had the lowest at 1.48 US tons DM/acre (Plot 2 is ignored as the negative control) (Appendix A). In addition, of the plots sampled for roots, Plot 7 had the highest root mass at 5.23 US tons DM/acre to 3' in depth. This suggests that mowing is better for promoting both above ground and below ground growth (Li et al. 2022). Overall, for management and termination of cover crops based on limiting biomass production, the most successful treatment was seen to be Plot 6; however, since Plot 9 is mown, the additional biomass is in a form that may be easier to incorporate into the soil. Therefore, as long as the additional biomass from mowing can be incorporated with minimal tillage, mowing has the potential to add more plant residue to the soil as green manure.

Regarding the aboveground vegetation nutrient content, the mowed plots tended to produce higher quality forage than did the roller crimped plots. Overall, the mowed Plot 7 was found to maintain the highest levels of total digestible nutrients (%TDN), crude protein, and phosphorus (P), while also minimizing the amount of neutral detergent fibre (%NDF) that was present. When considering beef nutrition, it was identified that Plot 7 had the most balanced Ca:P ratio, meaning that the forage satisfied the mineral requirements of cattle while minimizing the need for supplementation to maintain the desired ratio of between 1.5 to 7 (A.A. Redman (P.Ag), personal communication, 2025). While some cover crops are at risk for accumulation of sulfur, this was not seen to be the case for red clover as all plots fell well below the threshold risk value of 0.40% sulfur (Gadberry 2018). In comparison, the belowground biomass showed similar results, with Plot 7 being found to be an effective treatment to maximize root nutrient content within a managed system.

When comparing the nutrient concentration of the soil between the plots, the soil organic matter found throughout all the plots was sufficient; however, the

Plot Treatments:

- Blue code: Control plots
- Green code: Mow treatment plots
- Orange code: Roller crimp treatment plots

Plot 1: Full Growth Control – No treatments applied.
Plot 2: Summer Fallow Control – Till: June 5, June 25, July 15, Aug. 2, Sept. 5
Plot 3: Mow 1X & Till – Mow: July 15 – Till to terminate: Aug. 2 (May 2025)
Plot 4: Crimp 1X & Till – Roller Crimp: July 15 – Till to terminate: Aug. 2 (May 2025)
Plot 5: Mow 2X & Till – Mow: June 25, July 15 – Till to terminate: Aug. 2 (May 2025)
Plot 6: Crimp 2X & Till – Roller Crimp: June 25, July 15 – Till to terminate: Aug. 2 (May 2025)
Plot 7: Mow 3X & Till – Mow: June 5, June 25, July 15 – Till to terminate: Aug. 2 (May 2025)
Plot 8: Crimp 3X & Till – Roller Crimp: June 5, June 25, July 15 – Till to terminate: Aug. 2 (May 2025)
Plot 9: Mow 4X, No Till – Mow: June 5, July 10, Aug. 5, Sept. 5 – Till: May 2025
Plot 10: Crimp 4X, No Till – Roller Crimp: June 5, July 10, Aug. 5, Sept. 5 – Till: May 2025

Figure 3. Plot treatment schedule.

mowed plots averaged higher, with Plot 9 having the highest organic matter content (D. Knopp (P.Ag), personal communication, 2025). Related to the higher organic matter content, the mowed plots also had higher expected nitrogen release values than the roller crimped plots, with Plot 9 having the highest. Although no noticeable trends in the pH, phosphorus content, potassium content, or sulfur content were found between the treatments, they were all, with the exception of sulfur, considered to be within acceptable levels for plant growth (D. Knopp (P.Ag), personal communication, 2025). Although the results suggest that the sulfur content across the plots was low, it was likely sufficient and the artificially low test values were due to the shallow sampling depth (6") not accurately representing the true availability of sulfur (Government of Manitoba (2) n.d.).

CONCLUSION

Overall, both mowing and roller crimping proved effective for managing biomass to reduce tillage, as well as for influencing, and in many cases, improving the nutrient content of the vegetation and the soil profile. However, mowing was seen to be the preferable treatment as it was consistently the highest performer. As per this study, to reduce tillage while enhancing forage quality, it is recommended that the cover crop be mown three times between the beginning of June and the middle of July (Plot 7). However, to reduce tillage while improving the soil nutrient content, mowing once a month from June until October was seen to be the best option (Plot 9). Ultimately, as both of the studied methods are viable, the decision on which to select, and what frequency to utilize, belongs to the producer and is based on the management strategies that are used.

To read the full report and to view references, please visit cafla-ab.ca/reports or contact the office at 403-844-2645 or by email general@cafla-ab.ca with the project report request in the subject line.

Appendix A - Aboveground Biomass Analysis

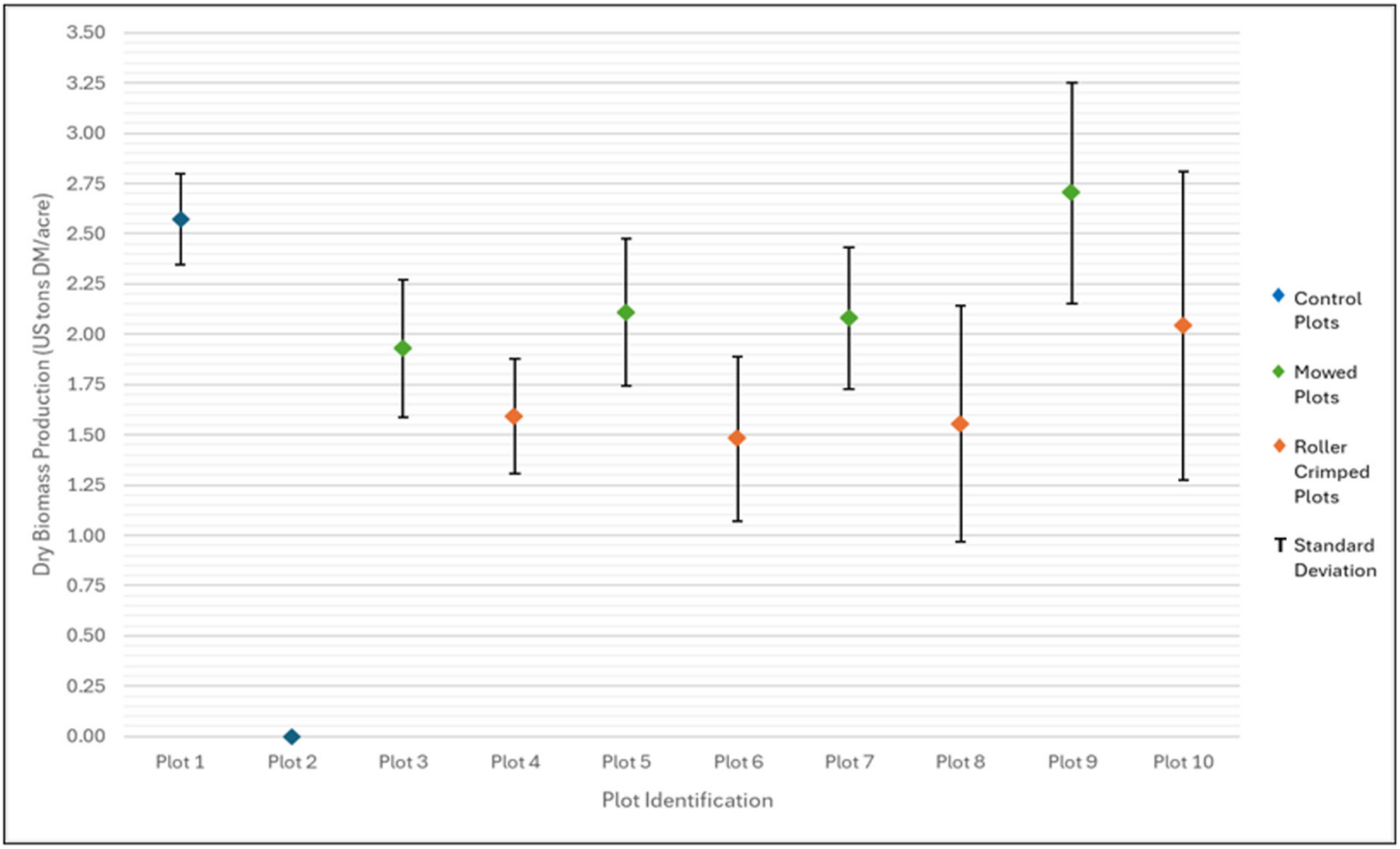


Figure A1. Annual dry biomass production of red clover above 6" (aboveground biomass).

CAFLA PROJECT REPORTS

Aspen Ranch Crop Demonstration Site

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Aspen Ranch Crop Demonstration Site is a collaborative effort between Aspen Ranch Canada (James River Bridge, AB) and the Central Alberta Forage and Livestock Association. This site is designed as a location that can be used to educate producers, youth, and the public on various agricultural practices surrounding the planting, growth, and harvest of forage and cereal crops. This site serves to showcase these species in their various growth stages, at the same time, highlighting the impact these species can have on soil and microorganism health.

OBJECTIVES

For 2024, the focus of this project was to showcase the differences between traditional cereal greenfeed and a cover crop mix.

Objectives:

- Compare the dry biomass production levels between the crop types.

- Compare the nutritional characteristics of the vegetation as a feed for beef cattle.

- Compare the impacts (if any) that the different crops have on the soil profile.

- Compare the cost of production between the crop types.

METHODOLOGY:

The project site covers approximately 4.21 acres, which was split into two sections in order to facilitate easy management. The first section hosted 3 varieties of cereals (1 malt barley, 1 feed barley, and 1 oat) planted in individual plots, as well as a Covers & Co. Full Season Cover Crop Mix (Henderson Ag.) (Figure 1). This allowed for an effective, side by side comparison of total dry biomass production and vegetation nutrient content. Soil samples were also taken to compare the impact that the different crops had on the soil. To investigate the economics behind these crops, a cost of production analysis was run comparing the three varieties of cereals to the cover crop. As the north half of the site was not utilized for the 2024 season, it was left in summer fallow.

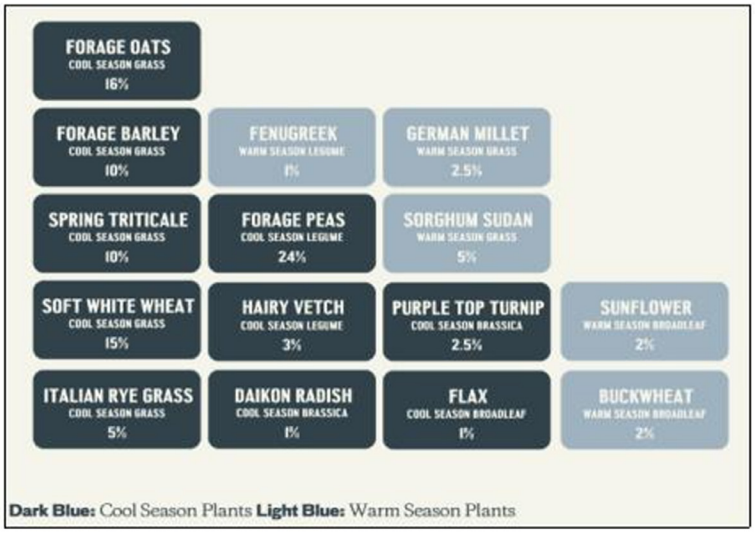


Figure 1. Covers & Co. Full Season Cover Crop Mix (Henderson Ag.) (Covers & Co. n.d.).

PLOT SET-UP:

Plots were arranged starting at the south end of the demonstration site with Plot 1 and progressing north to Plot 4 (Figure 2). Malt barley was planted in Plot 1, feed barley in Plot 2, oats in Plot 3, and the full season cover crop in Plot 4. To facilitate access to the plots, a buffer of approximately 20' was left on all sides of each plot. This buffer was disked as needed (as little as possible) throughout the year to limit weedy encroachment.

For the 2024 season, plot size was determined by the availability of seed and the width of the available seeder. Due to constraints with the availability of seeding equipment, the plots were seeded on July 11, 2024 using a Brillion Sure-Stand 10' Grass Seeder with a cage agitator in the rear seed box. For plots 1-3 the limited volume of seed available, and the ten-foot seeder, resulted in plots that were approximately 20' wide and ran the full east-west width of the demonstration site (averaging 480' long). Plot 4 was slightly larger due to the higher volume of available seed, allowing for a plot size of 40' wide and the full east-west width of the demonstration site (averaging 480' long).

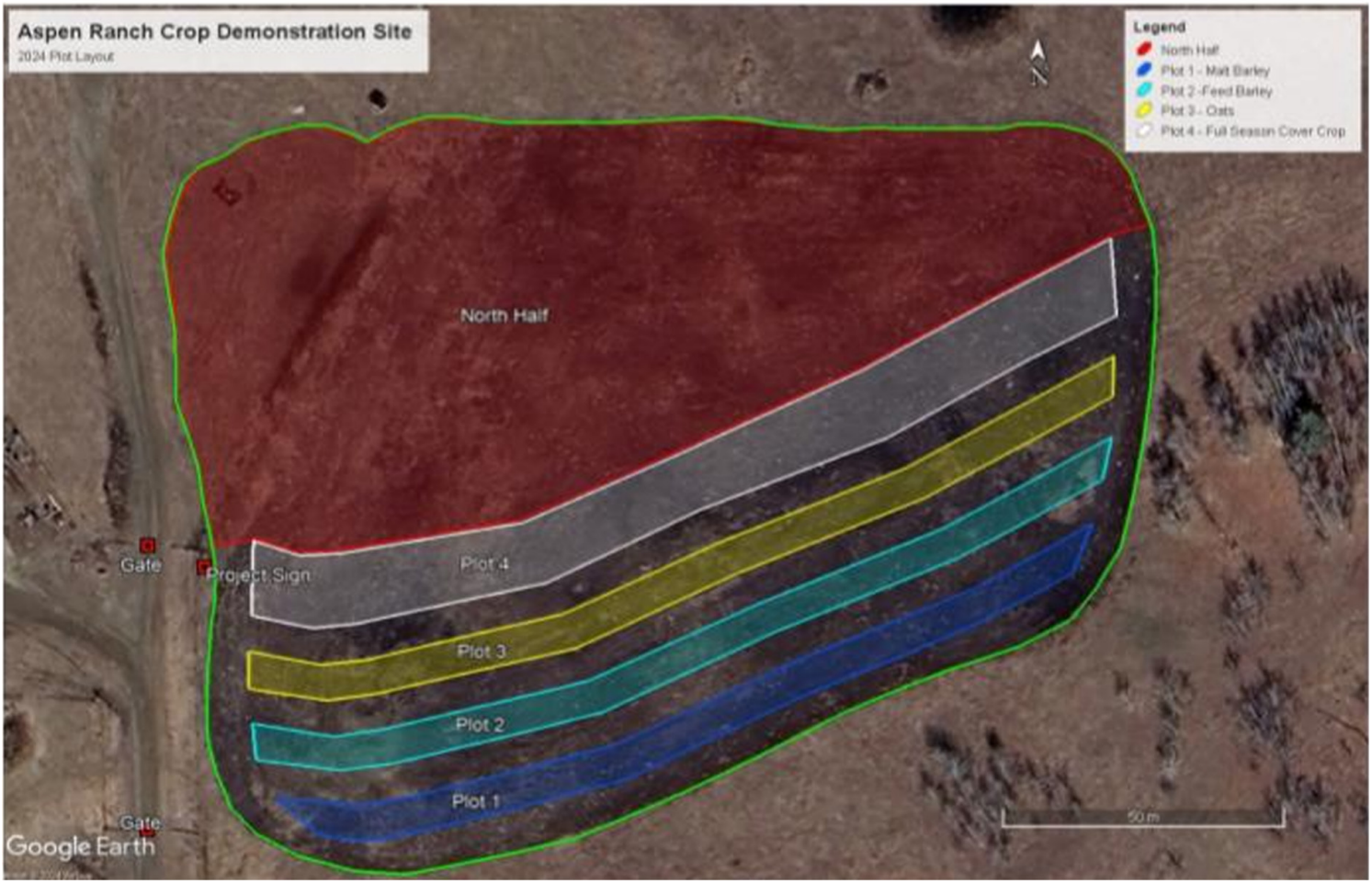


Figure 2. Aspen Ranch Crop Demonstration Plot - 2024 Plot Layout

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

VEGETATION ANALYSIS

VEGETATION BIOMASS COMPARISON

Analysis of the project results found that Plot 4 had the highest overall vegetative biomass production at 4.52 US tons DM/acre (Appendix A). In contrast, Plot 3 had the lowest biomass production at 3.12 US tons DM/acre. This highlights the fact that, overall, the cover crop plot trended towards a higher biomass production than did the annual cereal plots. Although the results suggest that Plot 3 was the least productive plot, Plot 3 was seen to sustain extensive damage due to wildlife grazing. At the time of sampling, the oats within Plot 3 were significantly shorter than what was expected, with the plant canopy having a mown appearance. Due to this, the measured biomass value for Plot 3 is likely significantly less than the true amount of biomass grown on-site. Wildlife damage was also seen to a lesser extent in Plot 4, while Plots 1 and 2 had very little to no evidence of wildlife grazing. Overall, this means that the loss of biomass from Plots 3 and 4 must be considered when comparing the overall production values between plots. However, even if there had been no wildlife damage, Plot 4 would still be expected to have the highest production as research has shown that cover crop mixtures tend to have higher production than monocrops (Beef Cattle Research Council 2019). This is largely due to the increased diversity of species within cover crop mixes and the relationship that this has with increasing production (Martinez et al. 2024).

VEGETATION NUTRIENT COMPARISON

Regarding the nutrient content of the vegetation, the oats in Plot 3 were found to have the highest amount of total digestible nutrients and crude protein, as well as the lowest percentage of neutral detergent fibre. All of the plots were found to have sufficient levels of calcium and phosphorus and all plots, except for Plot 3, met the desired Ca:P ratio to satisfy the requirements of beef cattle. In comparing sulfur, the results of this project suggest that accumulation of sulfur is not a high risk for the forages which were studied as the sulfur content of all the plots fell well below the threshold risk value of 0.40% (Gadberry 2018). Although the results suggest that Plot 3 was

the superior crop, statistical analysis showed that the differences between the plots were not significant. This means that, although there were variances between the plots, the differences were likely caused by random chance and not because of differences in the quality of the crops (Gallo 2016).

SOIL ANALYSIS

The results of the soil analysis show that, although all plots had sufficient soil organic matter, Plot 4 had the highest organic matter content (D. Knopp (P.Ag), personal communication, 2025). As a result of the high organic matter, Plot 4 also had the highest expected nitrogen release value of all the plots. In comparing the pH across the site, Plots 1, 2, and 3 experienced a decrease in pH, while Plot 4 increased. Of the crops studied, Plots 1 and 2 fell within the ideal range of 6.3 to 6.8 pH, while Plots 3 and 4 fell just outside of the upper guideline (D. Knopp (P.Ag), personal communication, 2025). The phosphorus and potassium levels, although they were found to fluctuate to some degree across the plots, largely remained within acceptable levels when considered in relation to the system as a whole (D. Knopp (P.Ag), personal communication, 2025). Overall, Plots 3 and 4 were found to average on the high end of the range for these nutrients, while Plots 1 and 2 trended towards low to acceptable levels. Although the results suggest that the sulfur content across the plots was low, it was likely sufficient and the artificially low test values were due to the shallow sampling depth (6") not accurately representing the true availability of sulfur (Government of Manitoba (2) n.d.).

COST OF PRODUCTION ANALYSIS

Using 2024 prices, Table 1 highlights the approximate cost of production for each crop type covered in this project. For the purposes of this comparison, the fertilizer cost was estimated using standard blends targeted for forage production. As Table 1 details, an advantage of the full season cover crop is the ability to seed without the need for fertilizer (Covers & Co. n.d.). This helps to lower the cost per acre, resulting in the full season cover crop with no fertilizer being the cheapest option of the crops studied. In addition, the full season cover crop has a greater ability to regrow after being harvested, thus allowing for late season grazing and further increasing the return on investment (Covers & Co. n.d.).

Table 1. Estimated cost of production per crop type (Covers & Co. n.d.: D. Knopp (P.Ag), personal communication, 2025; Olds Seed Processing Co-op Ltd., personal communication, 2025.

	Malt Barley	Feed Barley	Oats	Full Season Cover Crop (w/ fert.)	Full Season Cover Crop (no fert.)
Seed Cost ($/acre)	$29.30	$29.30	$24.00	$88.00	$88.00
Fertilizer Cost ($/acre)	$75.00	$75.00	$65.00	$34.00	$0.00
Total Cost of Production ($/acre)	$104.30	$104.30	$89.00	$122.00	$88.00

CONCLUSION

Overall, although all the studied crops work well for forage production, the full season cover crop (Plot 4) was seen to outperform the other crop types. Not only did Plot 4 produce the most vegetation, but the full season cover crop was also the equal of the other plots in terms of forage quality, while being the cheapest to produce. As per this study, for producers looking to minimize input costs and maximize production of a quality cattle forage, it is recommended that the full season cover crop mix be utilized. Ultimately, as all of the plots were successful, the decision on which species to select belongs to the producer.

To read the full report and to view references, please visit cafla-ab.ca/reports or contact the office at 403-844-2645 or by email general@cafla-ab.ca with the project report request in the subject line.

Appendix A - Aboveground Biomass Analysis

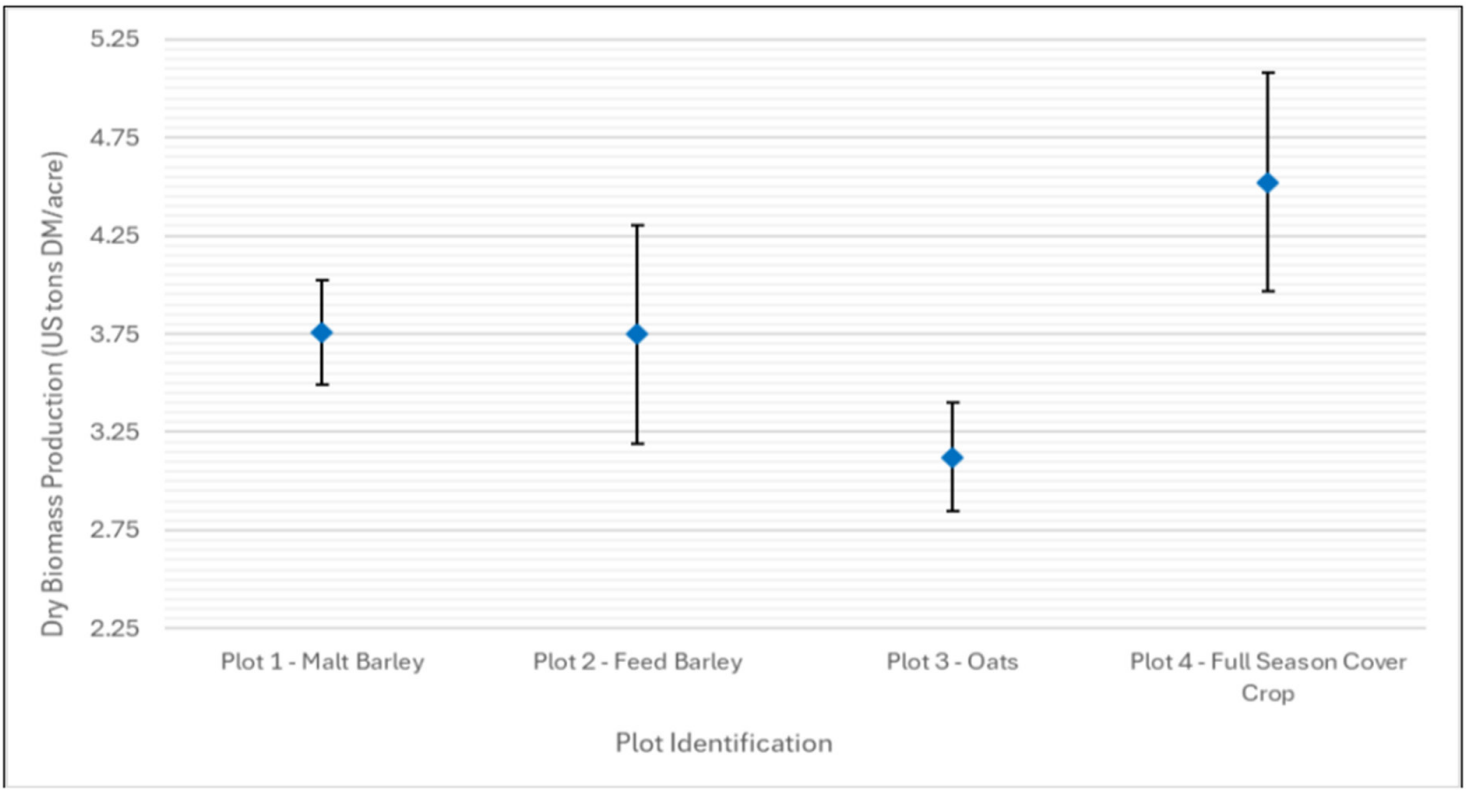


Figure A1. Annual dry biomass production of various forages (aboveground biomass).

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

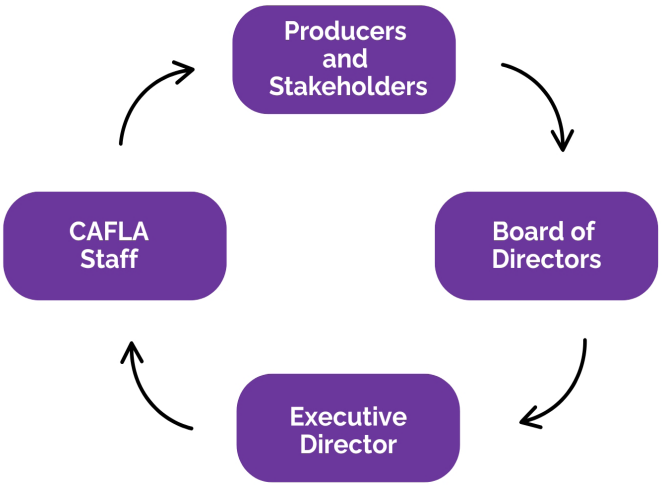
THRIVING ORGANIZATION WITH DYNAMIC, ENGAGED
BOARD AND STAFF MEMBERS

One of our key strategic priorities is to build and maintain a thriving organization—and we're proud to report that we are meeting this goal.

Our board of directors was at full capacity, with healthy competition for seats—a strong indicator of the growing interest and engagement in our mission. This diverse and dedicated group brings a wide range of perspectives and expertise to the table. Their ongoing support and responsiveness have been instrumental in guiding our organization through another year of growth and progress.

We've also made significant strides in strengthening our internal capacity. In May 2024, we welcomed Reid to a full-time role, followed by Martina in January 2025. These additions have brought valuable skills, energy, and renewed momentum to our operations, reinforcing our ability to deliver on our commitments and move confidently toward the future.

Together, these developments underscore our commitment to organizational health and sustainability. We're proud of the strong foundation we've built—and the people who make it possible.



Directors and staff participated in discussion on Alberta producer focused knowledge hubs at the ARECA AGM in March of 2025.

Young CAFLA volunteers manned our soil heath educational display featuring a popular game, Minecraft, at our AGM in 2024.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Directors
Abby-Ann Redman
Amber Bell
Carah Leacock
Dallas Jenson
Deb Skeels
DJ Formanski
Dylan Berg
Janna Wowk
Logan Thevenaz, **Vice-Chair**
Shelby Blosky
Sheldon Mehlhaff, **Chair**
SherryAnn Hoogland

Back Row Left to Right: Logan Thevenaz, Carah Leacock, Dylan Berg, Dallas Jenson
Front Row Left to Right: SherryAnn Hoogland, Tatyana Pavlovets, Abby-Ann Redman, Sheldon Mehlhaff, DJ Formanski
Not Pictured: Amber Bell, Shelby Blosky, Deb Skeels, Janna Wowk

DOUG AND DEB SKEELS

We are thrilled to celebrate Deb and Doug Skeels for receiving the 2025 Sustainable Grazing Stewardship Award in Clearwater County! This prestigious award recognizes producers who demonstrate exceptional land stewardship through sustainable grazing practices.
Deb and Doug have been passionate advocates of regenerative agriculture and active members of the CAFLA community for years. Your dedication to the land and sustainable practices is truly inspiring.

TATYANA PAVLOVETS

Tatyana Pavlovets was honored with 3rd place in the Women in Agriculture category at the Mountain View & Neighbours Women in Business Awards. This recognition highlights her dedication, leadership, and contributions to the agricultural community. Tatyana's work continues to make a meaningful impact, and this award reflects the respect and admiration she has earned from her peers and the broader community. We are proud to celebrate her achievement and the example she sets for women in the agriculture industry.

OUR STAFF

Agriculture Field Specialist
Greg Paranich
(Retired)

Greg joined the Grey Wooded Forage Association in November 2018 as the Agriculture Field Specialist, bringing with him decades of experience and a deep-rooted passion for agriculture. His career included roles as an account manager with DuPont Pioneer, retail manager with Viterra/Agricore United, and agricultural fieldman for several Alberta counties. Throughout these roles, Greg developed strong relationships with producers, industry organizations, and customers across Western Canada, becoming a trusted voice in the agricultural community. With a practical and hands-on approach, Greg specialized in agronomic crop production, forage and livestock management, sustainability, and land reclamation. His ability to offer practical, effective, and common-sense solutions—paired with a good sense of humour—made him a valuable resource and a relatable presence for producers in the field.

Raised on a mixed farm in Alberta, Greg's connection to agriculture has always extended beyond his professional life. He has managed his own modest forage and beef operations and continues to enjoy trail riding, horsemanship, and participating in Canadian Cowboy Challenge events. Greg holds a BSc in Agriculture from the University of Alberta and maintains a Certified Crop Adviser (CCA) designation.

Greg retired from the Grey Wooded Forage Association in 2024. We are grateful for his many contributions and proud to have had him as part of our team. Greg true ambassador for agriculture and extension.

Extension Coordinator
Dakota Harper
(March - Sept 2024)

Dakota grew up in Olds, surrounded by a "herd" of reptiles and amphibians, but found solitude by being on the farm, working with cattle. Whenever she needed an escape from her homework, or something to do on the weekends, she was the first to volunteer her assistance, or just show up on the farm. With a passion for agriculture, she decided to pursue a career within the industry. Straight out of high school, Dakota attended Olds College in the Agricultural Management Diploma program and majored in Production. That provided constant opportunities to participate in hands-on learning while also obtaining experience with both crops, forages, and livestock. After she graduated from the Ag. Man. program, Dakota decided she was not quite done learning yet and continued by taking their Agricultural Technology Integration post-diploma certificate course. While attending the Ag. Tech. course, she gained a more in-depth knowledge regarding the continual advancements in autonomous agriculture and precision farming. Both experiences were highly informative; however, her time at Olds College was not complete until she received her Artificial Insemination Certification in December of 2022. During the summers of 2022 and 2023, she worked as a farm hand in Mountain View County. Whilst working as a farm hand, she assisted with a majority of the cattle handling and herd management practices. Dakota also learned how to drive a manual in a Chevy C-70 dump truck and how to drive a skid steer (ISO)! Since her time at Olds College, she continues to take every chance she's given to inform the producers in her life about more sustainable and regenerative practices they could implement into their operations. Dakota is very appreciative of the opportunity to educate and inspire the current and next generations of producers.

Field Demonstration Coordinator
Reid Caukill

Reid is excited to be rejoining the team as the Field Demonstration Coordinator. Previously, he was the 2023 Summer Technician for Grey Wooded before returning to school to complete his post-secondary education. Growing up on the family farm in Red Deer County, he was involved with the ag industry from a young age and spent his free time working with the cattle whenever possible. This interest led him to join 4-H, which he was a part of for 9 years, in which time he grew his own small herd of beef cattle. Along with his cattle, Reid also enjoys horseback riding and has successfully trained ranch and rope horses for use on the farm, as well as for resale. Through his experiences, he has learned to appreciate the agricultural industry and the necessity to properly manage the land for the future. This sparked a desire within him to learn more about sustainable agriculture, in particular proper pasture management and regenerative grazing.

To pursue this, Reid attended Lakeland College, where he obtained a General Agriculture Certificate, majoring in Animal Science Technology–Equine Science, as well as a diploma in Conservation and Restoration Ecology. To round out his education, he also completed Lakeland's Bachelor of Applied Science in Environmental Management degree. This variety of credentials has given him a good background in contemporary agricultural practices, while also opening his eyes to new processes and technology that can be implemented to increase efficiencies in production and promote sustainable agricultural practices. In this position with the Grey Wooded Forage Association, he looks forward to working with producers to integrate their experiences with our shared knowledge to utilize some of these methods in real-world settings.

Communications & Member Engagement Coordinator
Martina Hubl

Martina was born and raised just outside of Rocky Mountain House on a mixed farm, where she developed a strong appreciation for agriculture and the rural way of life.
After high school, she pursued post-secondary education at MacEwan University, where she earned a Bachelor of Communication Studies degree with a major in Professional Communications. Her time at university helped her develop strong skills in writing, media, and strategic communication—skills that fill a need to within the agricultural industry.

After graduating, she returned home and was fortunate to work at Agriculture Financial Services Corporation (AFSC) as a Marketing Strategist on a term-certain contract. This role allowed her to gain valuable experience in agricultural marketing, deepen her understanding of the industry, and build connections.

Coming from a long line of farmers, Martina's family have deep roots in agriculture that have inspired her to build her own farming operation. She is currently expanding her herd of beef cattle and enjoys working alongside her family to put up hay each summer. In addition to farming, she also enjoys racing pony chuckwagons and chariots with her family throughout the province during the summer months—a tradition that has been passed down for generations.

Agriculture isn't just a career path for Martina—it's a way of life that she's passionate about preserving and promoting for future generations.

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

2024 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING & DINNER

JUNE 2024- 40th ANNUAL CELEBRATION

On June 27, we hosted our annual dinner to celebrate the year and GWFA's 40th anniversary. We compiled historical artifacts to showcase before and during the dinner. Key members from different decades were invited to share their stories about GWFA and its work. This was very well received and compliments poured in after the event. Olds College Ag Management students created a series of videos with interviews of some of our members. Top two were shared with the guests at the annual dinner.

2024 marks the 40th anniversary of the Grey Wooded Forage Association, a milestone that celebrates four decades of dedication to advancing sustainable agricultural practices and knowledge sharing in our region. This year's AGM and Dinner were a fitting tribute to that legacy, bringing together past and present members, partners, and supporters to reflect on the association's long-standing commitment to promoting beneficial management practices in forage and livestock production. It was a meaningful opportunity to honour our roots while looking ahead to the future of agriculture in Central Alberta.

ARECA REPORT

Compliments from ARECA to CAFLA for another excellent year!! Your Board of Directors and Staff have had a busy and productive year serving many of the needs of your members and ranchers/farmers. You all benefit from the top-notch know-how, information and connections that CAFLA brings. CAFLA is well recognized as a top notch and well-run organization bringing significant value to the producers in your area.

CAFLA, along with several other forage and applied research associations across Alberta work closely with each other and with a range of other organizations such as commissions and other farm/community organizations, agricultural service boards, colleges and universities, ag business, researchers, governments. This is to assist producers in incorporating research findings, adapting production practices and technologies into their operations. Feedback from producers across the province has been most positive on these efforts and the value they bring to their farm/ranch.

ARECA was created by CAFLA and other forage and applied research associations some years ago to provide support services to associations that help them do their job for you. These support services include advocacy, fund raising, program and project development, assessing benefit to producers, promotion, training, human resources.

ARECA is governed by a producer Board of Directors who are appointed by each member association. Sheldon Mehlhaff is the ARECA Board member appointed by CAFLA. The leadership and guidance from member associations and ARECA Board is key to ARECA being and staying focused and on track in providing these support services to our members.

Compliments go out to RDAR for their strong ongoing leadership and help with financing of associations and ARECA. The strong leadership from RDAR on the research front and pushing hard to go the "Final Mile" in getting research results into producer hands for their use has resulted in a robust and growing productive partnership of associations and RDAR.

There is another side of ARECA. In addition to the key responsibility of providing support services to our member organizations, ARECA also develops, delivers and administers province wide programs for producers. We work closely with associations, commissions, agricultural service boards and others in delivery of these three programs.

ARECA has handled the Environmental Farm Plan program for over a decade. Currently over 4,000 individual producers have up to date environmental farm plans in place. This is a voluntary program designed to assist producers in dealing with concerns they may have with respect to potential environmental issues affecting their farm and ranch business. CAFLA is a key partner on this effort in your area.

AgKnow is focused on getting help for individual producers who are experiencing high stress that is affecting their mental health. Recent research shows that producers suicide rate is 4 times that of society at large. Bankers and ag business see warning signs of impaired decision making in their regular farm customers. Depopulation of livestock due to disease has hit the poultry and deer/elk producers hard. Succession planning in all too many situations is stressful and affects family relationships.

ARECA is the Alberta partner with Canadian Forage and Grasslands Association (CFGA) assisting producers through grants, grazing mentors, workshops, grazing clubs etc in implementing advances in their grazing systems. This program has been extended for an additional 3 years. CAFLA can get you connected if you are looking to adjust your grazing practices.

I close by again complimenting CAFLA on the excellent work they do for you!! ARECA considers it a privilege and a pleasure to have CAFLA as a member and we look forward to the coming year.

Allan Hall, Executive Director

EMPTY SADDLES

JIM ANDERSON

November 9, 1950 - February 7, 2025

We remember and honour the life of Jim, a remarkable innovator and dedicated member of the agricultural community. Jim was best known for his inventive spirit, most notably for developing the Frostfree Nosepump in 1999—a groundbreaking solution that became his passion and legacy for the next 25 years. His invention has had a lasting impact, with pump sales reaching every province in Canada, numerous states across the U.S., and even extending into parts of Europe. Jim's commitment to practical, sustainable solutions helped shape water access on farms across North America and beyond.

In addition to his work as an inventor, Jim remained deeply rooted in the land, continuing to farm until 2012 when his youngest son, Brendon, and his family took over the farming operation. His entrepreneurial spirit lives on through his eldest son, Jeff, who now leads the Frostfree Nosepump business. Jim's legacy of innovation, dedication, and family values will continue to influence the agriculture industry for years to come. He will be deeply missed.

JOHN REID

May 17, 1949 - April 8, 2025

We remember and honour John, whose legacy in Central Alberta agriculture is marked by compassion, dedication, and service. For nearly 30 years, John made an immeasurable impact through his work with the Farm Debt Mediation Service, traveling across the province to support farm families facing some of the most difficult decisions of their lives. He was deeply committed to helping others navigate uncertainty with dignity, always offering a listening ear and practical solutions. His clients often expressed gratitude for the hope he provided—reminding them that even in the hardest moments, there were still paths forward.

Beyond his professional contributions, John was an active and passionate member of his community. He shared his knowledge freely, particularly around sustainable practices like intensive grazing and improving soil health—topics he cared about deeply. Farming wasn't just a livelihood for John; it was a calling. When asked in his seventies about retirement, he simply said, "This is my retirement." True to his word, John continued farming for as long as he could, right up until the past year. His legacy lives on in the fields he cared for, the farmers he helped, and the community he helped strengthen.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

EXPERTS AT MEASURING OUR IMPACT & TELLING OUR STORY

CAFLA-AB.CA WEBSITE

In early 2025, we proudly launched our new website, cafla-ab.ca, a major milestone in our continued commitment to supporting producers and promoting sustainable forage and livestock practices across Central Alberta. We're thrilled to unveil this redesigned platform, celebrating more than 40 years of dedication, innovation, and community connection. The new site reflects our mission to empower producers with the tools, knowledge, and resources they need to thrive in today's ever-evolving agricultural landscape.

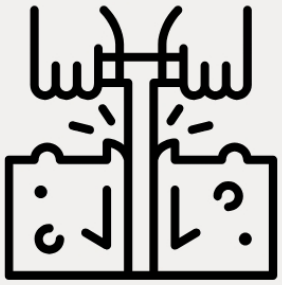
The website is your one-stop hub for all things CAFLA—offering up-to-date information on ongoing and upcoming projects, easy access to event registrations, details about our services, and a clear breakdown of the many benefits of CAFLA membership. A heartfelt thank you goes out to the talented team at Freshly Pressed for bringing our vision to life, and to Martina Hubl, our Communications and Member Engagement Coordinator, for her thoughtful and relevant content curation. We invite you to explore the new site, stay connected, and get involved—there's never been a better time to engage with CAFLA.

THE BLADE MAGAZINE

We're thrilled to announce the relaunch of The Blade, our publication that has long served as a trusted source of updates, insights, and stories from the field. Reimagined with a fresh look and renewed purpose, The Blade will continue to connect us with our community through both digital channels and print distribution. In partnership with Alberta Beef magazine, it will be mailed via Canada Post reaching approximately 3,000 members and producers across Central Alberta.

The first issue of the revitalized quarterly magazine is set to publish in May 2025, and we can't wait to share the exciting content we've been working on. Stay tuned—The Blade is back, better than ever!

FURTHER UNDERSTAND AND ELEVATE YOUR SOIL HEALTH.



Central Alberta Forage and Livestock Association is excited to offer its soil sampling services!

Further understand and elevate your soil health by having samples taken by CAFLA staff and professionally analyzed by a lab!

403-844-2645 general@cafla-ab.ca

CAFLA
CENTRAL ALBERTA FORAGE AND LIVESTOCK ASSOCIATION