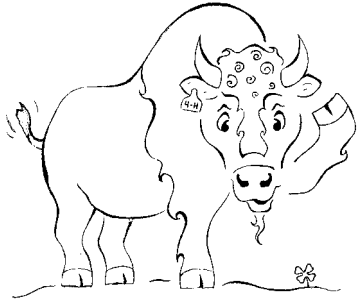


Range and Pasture Management



Roll Call:

Name one plant that you might find out in the pasture.

Range or pasture?

Can you remember the difference between range and pasture?

Range is... _____ Pasture is... _____

Range is... _____ Pasture is... _____

Range is... _____ Pasture is... _____

Range is... _____ Pasture is... _____

Range is... _____ Pasture is... _____



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Flashback...

If you could travel back in time to when there were hundreds of thousands of bison roaming Alberta's vast plains, do you think that you would find the same plants as now? No, of course not. Although you would probably recognize most of the plants, some of the plants we see today were started from seeds that were brought by the first settlers.

Native plants are plants that were here before the first settlers arrived. Introduced plants are plants that have been brought in from outside North America.

Many people are raising native seed plants for reclamation purposes on gas and oil sites.

Most ranchers, whether they are raising beef animals or bison, will tell you that they grow grass and their livestock is the harvester. Grasslands are important to all Albertans, yet many people probably cannot identify a lot of the grass plants growing on our rangelands. Here are a few reasons why range grasses are so important:

- Grasses are the most abundant of the plants on the range when it is in top condition. (70 – 90% of the total plants should be grass.)
- Most of the forage grazed by livestock on the range is from the grass plants.
- Grasses have good root systems for protecting the soil and holding it in place.
- Range grasses are the most important plants to the Alberta bison industry.

Overgrazing...

Grazing animals will eat the plants that they like the best first. Shorter plants also sometimes escape grazing which might result in certain grasses being overgrazed while others are not grazed at all.

As a result of overgrazing, increaser plants crowd out decreaser plants, and finally invaders crowd out increaser plants. While decreasers make up 70% or more of the vegetation of range in excellent condition, they make up less than 10% in a range in poor condition. While increaser plants make up most of the vegetation in a fair condition range, the invaders and increasers are the most common plants in the poor condition range.

So what exactly are decreaseers, increasers and invaders?

Decreasers

Some plants tend to decrease from a range site when animals overgraze them because they usually are the most palatable and desirable forage plants.

Increasesers

Some plants tend to increase when a range site is overgrazed. But, if the overgrazing continues for a long time, they, too, will decrease. They are called increasers. Increasesers usually are less palatable than decreaseers, and do not provide as much forage.

Invaders

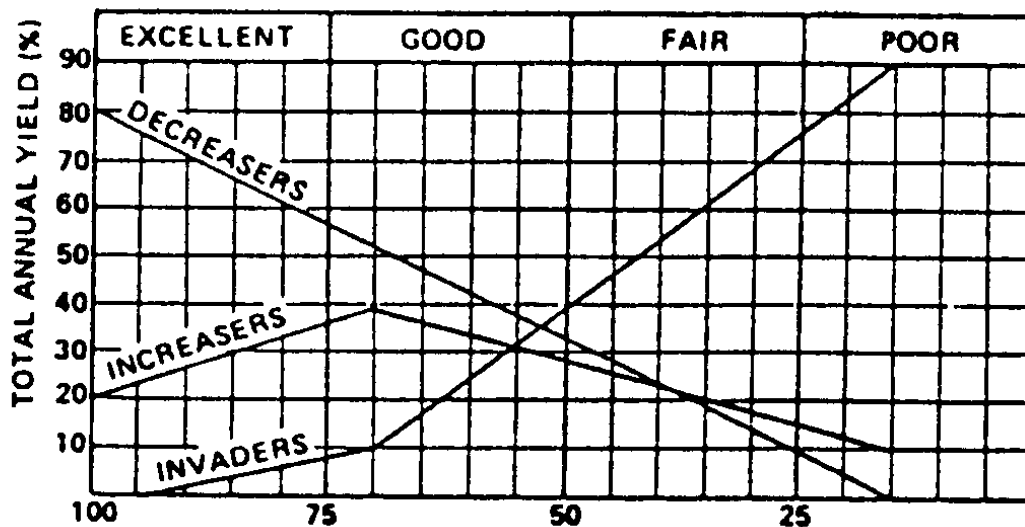
Invaders are the least desirable plants. They tend to increase rapidly when a range site is over-grazed. All annual plants, introduced plants and only a few native plants, are invaders.

Range conditions

There are four range condition classes:

1. Excellent - 76 - 100% condition. Most of the vegetation consists of decreaser plants.
2. Good - 51 - 75% condition. Fewer decreaser plants are present and increaser plants are more common.
3. Fair - 26 - 50% condition. Vegetation is mostly increaser plants with some invaders present. A few decreaser plants may be present but are low in vigor.
4. Poor - 0 - 25% condition. Low growing plants and invaders make up most of the vegetation. Soil erosion may be evident.

It is important to find out what type of soil zone you live in. Refer to the Alberta soil zone map on the next page and see where you are located. Understanding what soil zone you live in will help you to determine the type of grasses that will do the best in your area.



Percentage of climax vegetation in response to overgrazing.

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Major soil zones in Alberta are:

Brown soils –

- Semi-arid short grass prairie
- Annual precipitation is 30 cm

Dark brown soils –

- Prairie region – short grass
- Annual precipitation is 35 cm

Thin black soils –

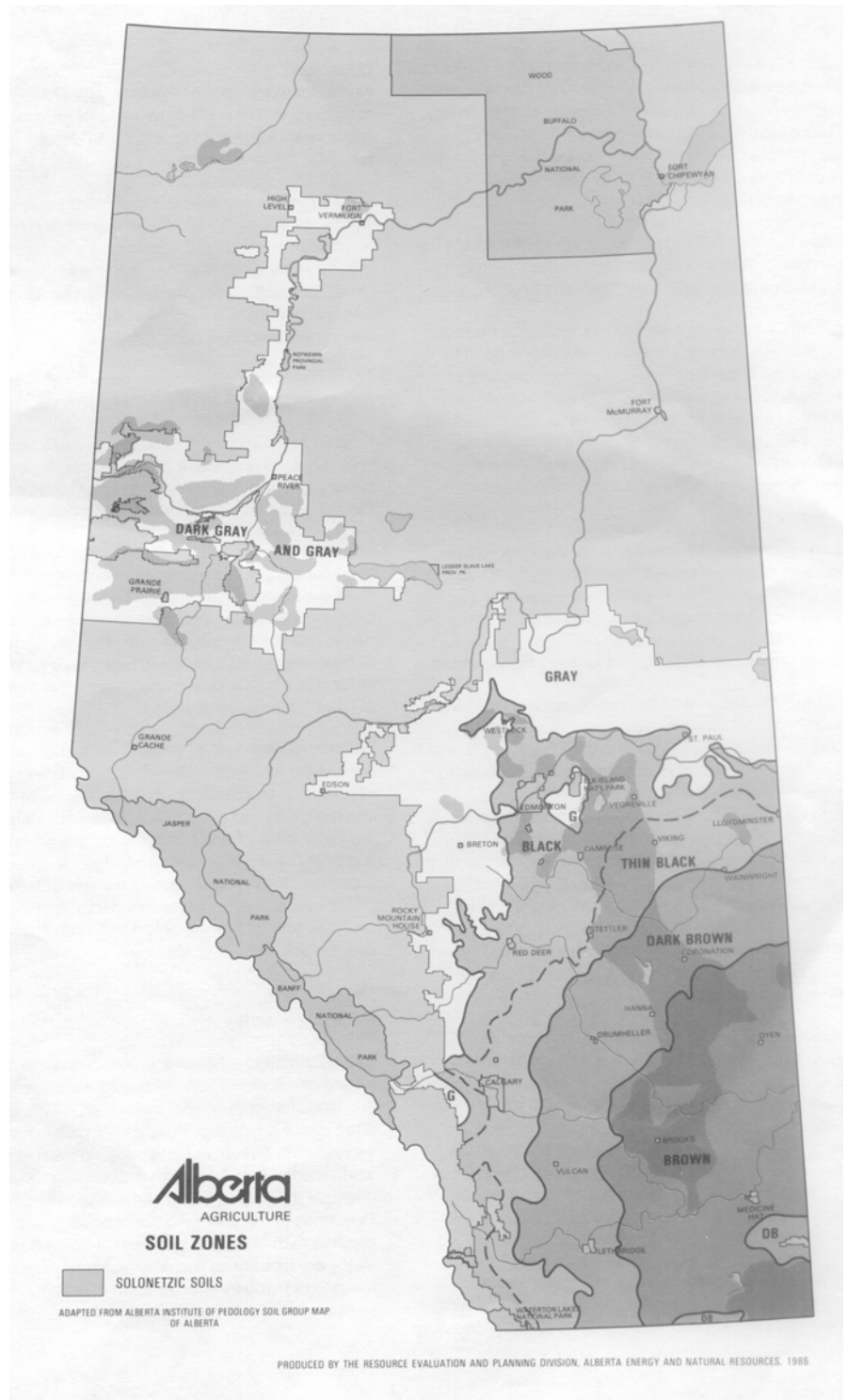
- Tall grass prairie
- Precipitation is somewhat higher than the brown soil zones.

Black and dark grey –

- Grassland & forest vegetation
- Moisture is less limiting to crop production

Gray wooded soils –

- Lower pH levels due to development under forest



Can you find your home on the map?

What type of soil is predominant in your soil zone? _____

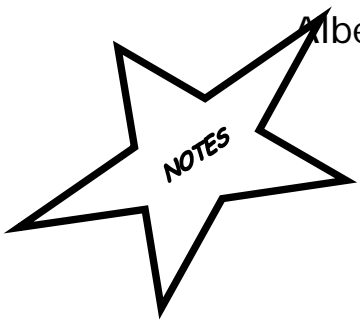
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Investigating plants...

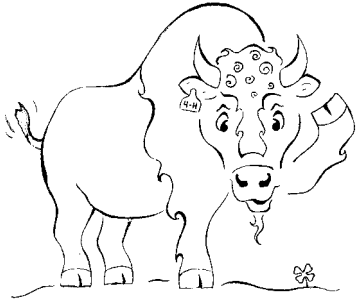
Search the field below for words related to Range & Pasture management. Find one word for every year you are old. (Hint: If you are over 18, pretend you are not!!)



E	G	I	N	V	A	D	E	R	D
G	P	A	S	T	U	R	E	U	W
R	A	X	I	M	A	A	H	S	L
A	T	S	S	A	T	Z	T	H	I
S	C	R	A	N	G	E	W	E	O
S	H	Y	G	A	R	O	O	S	S
E	R	E	G	G	S	H	R	U	B
S	E	D	G	E	S	S	G	E	R
C	O	N	S	E	R	V	E	G	O
B	R	O	M	E	G	A	R	O	F



Business Management



Roll Call:

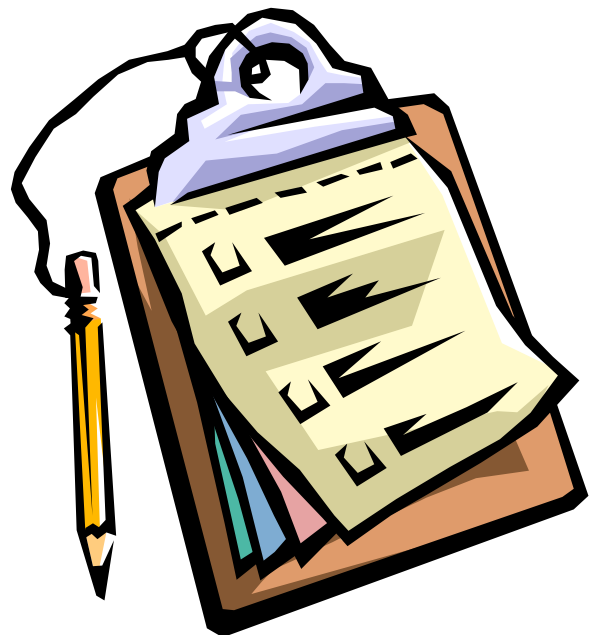
List one thing that would be important to keep as a record.

In Level One we looked at record keeping as a special chapter. For the next two levels we will be looking at the entire management of a business, with record keeping as one essential portion of the whole management system.

Importance of record keeping

Keeping clear and careful records will benefit you in your both your personal and business finances. Good records will

- Measure actual business performance against your original projections and goals.
- Help you make informed decisions with regards to production and breeding decisions.
- Save time and effort.
- Have quick access to important information.
- Quickly recognize new problems, challenges and opportunities as they arise
- Have members develop a record keeping system for their project.





Record it....BI SON!

This is a fun activity to do with your club. Involve all the members, parents and siblings. The first thing that you need to do is fill in the card below. This will be your "bison" card; this is like a bingo card.

In the five squares under the letter "B" put down any five numbers from 0 – 9.

In the five squares under the letter "I" put down any five numbers from 10 – 19.

In the five squares under the letter "S" put down any five numbers from 20 – 29.

In the five squares under the letter "O" put down any five numbers from 30 – 31.

In the five squares under the letter "N" put down any five numbers from 40 – 49.

Once you have completed this, you are ready to start the game. The number caller will decide what pattern you need to fill on your "bison" card. For example, all squares on the card are a blackout, or all the squares in the top line and all the squares in the "S" column, this would be a "T". When the game starts, you will hear the caller say something like "S 29" then if you have that number you fill in that square. Once you have the pattern that was said at the beginning all filled in you put up your hand and yell "BI SON"!

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Have fun!

B	I	S	O	N

Developing a business plan

Why is a plan important?

Developing a business plan is an important first step for you to take regardless of the type business you wish to venture into. The business plan will allow you to put down on paper the specific business elements that you will need to start and develop a successful business. The plan will help you to evaluate what opportunities may exist, and explore how feasible an idea really is. It is also very helpful when determining what resources you may have available to you. Basically it helps you to create a road map for you to follow!

When is a plan important?

If you have an idea for a business, now is the time to put a plan down on paper. A good business plan will require you to do a lot of research and investigation to find your ideal market. Who will be your potential customer for your product or service? You will want to think about the following questions:

- How soon will your product pay for itself?
- Is this what customers really want or need?
- Investors like to back businesses that are market-driven, not product or technology driven. If there is no need for your product or service it does not matter how technologically advanced it may be. Is your product or service truly viable?

Developing a business plan forces you to really think about how your business would make money. Does your product or service appeal to the masses, or just to a small portion of the population? If your product is thought to be a superior product to what is currently offered, you will need to examine the validity of such a claim. Be honest with yourself, if you really want to make money at this venture, you will have to consider all aspects of the picture.

Who should you show your business plan to?

Business plans have a variety of purposes and uses. You may be looking for financial support to get a business started in which case it will be necessary to show your plan to banks, private investors and venture capitalists. You may want to use the plan to create support from those around you, and by reviewing it frequently yourself, you will stay focused on your main objective.

Writing a winning business plan

General rules for writing a business plan:

- Your plan should be concise (do not make it so long the reader is not interested in reviewing the whole thing.)
- Your plan should be easy to read and understand, without typos or grammatical errors.
- Your plan should convey large and profitable market opportunities for the business.
- Your plan should convey the strength and depth of your management team.

A few things to avoid

- Don't make unrealistic assumptions.
- Don't underestimate the difficulties of growing a new business.
- Don't underestimate your competitors.
- Don't assume that the reader knows the industry and jargon.
- Don't include long, tedious or overly technical information.
- Don't include highly confidential information.
- Don't avoid discussing the risks of the business. This may detract from the plan's credibility.

Important elements for the business plan

Cover page:

The cover page should be professional and informative.

Table of contents:

This is used to organize the material and allow the reader to easily reference the type of information that you have provided.

Executive summary:

The executive summary is the introduction to your business plan and the most vital section. Although it comes first, you generally write this portion last, because it summarizes the entire plan. Effective summaries generally cover:

1. The background, history, and if the business is not a brand new, startup. Include any key accomplishments that your company has experienced.
2. The product or service and its uniqueness or competitive advantage.
3. The company's goals / mission statement.
4. The nature and scope of the market opportunity – the size of the market in dollars, units sold, trends.
5. The nature of the services or products you'll be providing – pricing, cost, scope and potential consumers.
6. The nature of the competition and your company strengths and weaknesses vs. theirs.
7. The factors for success – and why you'll succeed.
8. The background and skills of your management team.
9. The amount of money the company will need, and how it will be used.
10. The exit strategy – How will your investors make their money back?
11. Financial data: Five-year profit and loss estimates and cash flow and balance sheet projections.

Company description:

This should include a summary of the company's principal objectives – both long-term and realistic interim goals.

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Management:

The management section of the plan identifies key members of the management team, describes their responsibilities and establishes their relevant experience and accomplishments.

The product – If the company is selling a product, this section describes what the product is or will be and shows why it can penetrate the existing market.

The market – You must convince prospective investors that the company's market is large, growing and receptive to your products or services.

Competition - The competition section of the plan identifies competing products and technologies. Compare your product or service with the competition. How will your price and quality be different? What will make it successful?

Marketing – The marketing section of the business plan should describe the company's marketing strategy in as much detail as possible.

Implementation schedule:

Lay out a schedule of milestones or significant events for the implementation of your business and a timetable for completion. It is important to indicate who will be responsible for completion of each task.

Financial plan:

It is extremely important that you show your investors how you will use their money and when they can expect to see returns. Be realistic, and don't forget to assign a dollar figure to your labour input. Many individuals start business and underestimate or don't account for the number of hours of their labour that will be inputted into the business. Unless you are independently wealthy, this is not the answer.

Reality check

After you complete your draft business plan, circulate it for comment to your friends, professionals, and other trusted individuals. Ask for honest feedback, or better yet ask them to "mark" it up for you with recommended changes. This may allow you to see potential problem areas that you had simply not thought of, or allow you to explain a little more clearly what your original intent was.



Taking your business on-line

If you plan to take your business on-line, you will need to investigate how you think that you will attract buyers to your site. As more and more businesses pop up on the world wide web, it is increasingly important for young entrepreneurs to research potential markets before jumping in. Investors will need to know, how you will generate revenue.

Business finder

With this activity you are challenged to find bison related businesses in your region, province, country or within North America.



Procedure:

1. Find as many bison related businesses as you possibly can.
2. Create a list of the businesses. Organize the businesses based on what products or services they offer. Then answer the following questions:
 - Where is the business located?
 - Who is the businesses target market?
 - How do they contact or get product or service information to their potential and current customers?
 - What appeals to you about their business? Is there anything that does not appeal to you?
 - Do they have a lot of competition? If so, what makes them unique or different from the rest?
 - Present or share with the other members of your club the business you were able to locate.
3. What sort of businesses were the easiest to find? Where did you find them?