

AESA

Alberta Environmentally Sustainable Agriculture Program

PARTNER PROFILES

2006



Meeting AESA Priorities in Beaver and Lamont Counties

In the mixed farming area of Beaver County and Lamont County, the main AESA program priorities are sustainable grazing management and nutrient management planning. Recently, a small core group of local area beef producers decided to establish a Grazing Club. "This group of producers have decided they would like to meet on a regular basis to talk about grazing issues and management," explains Aimee Cook, Municipal Conservation Technician. "I'm working with Vicky Spent, Farm Extension Coordinator with the Parkland Conservation Farm (PCF) to assist the group with getting started and accessing resources."

One of the initial projects the Grazing Club plans to undertake is pipeline pasture watering systems. "By installing a pipeline in a pasture system, producers can take water to an offsite watering system or move water to get better distribution of cattle," explains Cook. "We're working with PFRA to bring in a pipeline pasture plow and set up some demonstrations with club members." A demonstration day is being planned for the spring.

"We're also in the process of planning our fourth annual women's grazing school," says Cook. This year's two day workshop, planned for the Wainwright area, will focus on more advanced topics, including topics requested through past workshop evaluations. "This project is an example of a successful partnership of a number of rural extension staff, and the ability to draw people from a wider area." Most participants are from the north-east region.

"We're continuing to see the interest in the Alberta Environmental Farm Plan (AEFP) grow as more people become aware of the program and the benefits of being involved," says Cook. "It also helps us interact with producers better, and gives us the opportunity to work with them one-on-one to answer questions or provide additional information to support the implementation of their plans."

Cook sees the AEFPP as a good way to get producers to think about nutrient management planning. "Producers aren't always sure what nutrient management planning is all about, or how manure fits in with soil, water and other factors," says Cook. "We're looking at setting up some field days for producers who are using different nutrient management techniques, and conducting soil tests." Cook is also planning to hold some general awareness events on nutrient management planning.

"In terms of integrated crop management, our local dealers and businesses are already doing a great job, so we support their programs and get involved by helping out with information and resources," says Cook. Last summer Cook partnered with Alberta Reduced Tillage LINKAGES (RTL) and others on a Direct Seeding Equipment Field Day and Cropping Seminar at Tofield in June. Eight local producers demonstrated their individual direct seeding systems by seeding a full field strip to canola. "Participants had the opportunity to get down on the ground and compare the seed and fertilizer placement of the various systems," says Cook.

Cook is also working with others in the Beaverhill watershed to plan some education awareness projects, with the goal of getting a local watershed group started. She is in the planning stages of education days for kids in the spring. Cook has received resources from Department of Fisheries and Oceans to assist with some of the projects.

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Targeting what producers want is an important part of program planning.
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Cook believes that one of the success factors is to make sure when working with producers that the right questions are being asked, and the right answers provided. "Sometimes we get stuck in the cycle of asking for feedback, but we don't always listen or give back the information requested," says Cook. "Targeting what producers want is an important part of program planning. We should be putting our extension efforts into programs that will help producers improve their management practices and be successful. It's all about asking the right questions."

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Central Peace Conservation Society Supporting Sustainable Agriculture Practices

The Central Peace Conservation Society (CPCS) has a long history of applied research in the Peace River region, focusing on projects within the Counties of Birch Hills, Saddle Hills and the MD of Spirit River. CPCS has some of the oldest, continuous trials on tillage and fertility management systems. Their priority is to promote sustainable agriculture practices that have proven to be economically viable and ecologically sustainable.

"One of our main program priorities is integrated crop management, including precision farming," explains Melissa Fuchs, AESA Extension Specialist. "Through various efforts, we hope to see an increase in organic matter and a decrease in soil erosion by increasing the number of farmers who are adopting reduced or zero tillage practices." There are several demonstrations comparing zero tillage to minimal tillage practices. "We hold a field tour annually in July to demonstrate these systems or management practices to producers. Producers can see how these systems work in their local areas and environments intrinsic to the Peace Region."

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We're learning from each other's successes.
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Other projects focus on herbicide use, and helping producers get the most out of their investment. "We demonstrate to producers how they can get the most out of their economics, and how they can get their herbicides to work best for them by using proper application rates, timing and rotations," says Fuchs. "The herbicide demonstrations go with reducing tillage as well."



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Nutrient management planning is another key program component. CPCS has several fertility demonstrations. "This year we are going to assess the benefits of using legumes in rotation as a nutrient component," explains Fuchs. "The increase in the cost of fertilizer has producers looking for options to reduce their input costs." Another project planned for this year is pasture rejuvenation using a low disturbance, zero tillage system. CPCS is also planning to begin projects focusing on manure, as well as fertilizer in nutrient management planning.

Fuchs is a Technical Advisor for the Alberta Environmental Farm Plan (AEFP), and is seeing the interest in the program rise. "I think the AEFP also increases producer awareness of our programs," says Fuchs. "We get a lot of followup calls and interest in our CPCS program from those workshops." Fuchs sees watersheds as an important area, and expects they will have a watershed group in the future. "We will be doing the Alberta Water Quality Awareness Day again this year. I think it's a great program, and it really increases the awareness and is hands-on for everybody."

"I think in the coming year we will focus on making our program more individual and personal," says Fuchs. She feels the old rule of thumb holds, that for each person you tell, they tell 10 others. "By focusing more on building trust with individuals, they will encourage others to get involved."

For CPCS, the AESA program continues to strengthen. "We have a pretty strong team, and I think producers are becoming more aware of our programs," says Fuchs. Producers are asking more questions, looking for more research, and the AESA program is where they are coming for more information. "I think everyone is doing a great job, and we're learning from each other's successes."

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PHOTO CREDIT - AIMEE COOK



PHOTO CREDIT – CANDICE ARMSTRONG

Chinook Applied Research Association – Programs, Demonstrations and Applied Research Benefits Area Producers

Area producers from the Municipal District of Acadia and Special Areas have benefited from the applied research and demonstration programs of the Chinook Applied Research Association (CARA) for several years. Program priorities include pasture and forage management, beef production and integrated cropping management.

“One of our priority areas is sustainable grazing and pasture management, for both native and tame pastures,” explains Cara Bomphray, AESA Extension Specialist with CARA. “One of our new exciting programs is a women’s grazing school, the first one held last fall with over 40 participants.” The course covered all aspects of pasture management, including plant species identification, riparian areas, offsite watering, cattle handling, manure management and other topics.

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 One of our new exciting programs is a women’s grazing school...

“We’re planning to hold another one day women’s grazing course in the spring, but on a smaller scale and with a more advanced, hands-on component.” Bomphray partnered with other area AESA rural extension staff, including Kirsten Cuss of the Counties of Flagstaff and Paintearth, and Starr Damron of Battle River Research Group.

“We’re planning a Family Grazing Day with similar topics, with a special focus on the next generation of farmers,” says Bomphray. “This will be a hands-on, practical demonstration day in one of the local Community Pastures in June.” Although the program is still in the planning stages, there will be sessions for younger kids, teens and adults, with an emphasis on various aspects of grazing and pasture management.

As part of sustainable grazing systems, swath grazing is receiving increased attention by producers. Bomphray has two swath grazing demonstration days planned for mid-February, one in Consort and another in Sibbald. Various speakers will be providing presentations on topics ranging from extending the grazing season to various winter grazing options to nutrient management planning. “We will follow the presentations with a tour and demonstrations including fencing systems, moving cattle and feed wastage,” explains Bomphray. An additional one-day Feed Wastage Day is planned later in the winter, in partnership with a local cooperator.

With about one-third of special areas in cropland, the CARA program also focuses on integrated crop management. Bomphray has two Crop Production Workshops planned for March in Acadia Valley and Altario, with the focus on conservation tillage, crop rotations, soils, fertilizers and other inputs, pulse, winter wheat and other crops. “We’re also putting on a marketing course for grain and oilseed producers to help them address low commodity prices and try to improve their returns,” explains Bomphray. “We often hear that producers are hesitant to adopt different practices because of low returns, high costs and lack of time. We’re hoping these programs and demonstrations will help producers make the best decisions for their operations.” CARA has several ongoing variety trials, and has started long-term crop rotations studies east of Hanna and at Acadia Valley.

Bomphray is also a technical advisor for the Alberta Environmental Farm Plan, and has seen the interest in the program increase over the past year. “Initially it was difficult to get people to come to the workshops, but now more people are calling and getting involved and we’re pleased with the success,” says Bomphray. “The course usually generates a few calls from producers for followup on various aspects, which gives me a good opportunity to work with them more one-on-one.”

There is a shelterbelt demonstration at the CARA centre. “Producers often stop in to ask about trees, which usually leads to other questions and things that are on their mind,” says Bomphray. “I think these and other opportunities such as the various workshops, the newsletter and attending various local agriculture related events as a good way to interact with local producers, find out what their needs are and help them adopt best practices.”

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County of Warner: Grazing Management Strategies for Ranchers

The County of Warner is a very diverse area, with the main AESA program priorities focusing on range and riparian management and manure management. There are also programs addressing integrated crop and pest management, and water quality. The County includes several large ranchers and producers, and Hutterite colonies.

“One of the groups I work on a lot of projects with is the Milk River Ranchers Group,” says Keston Prince, Municipal Conservation Technician for the County of Warner. “I’ve helped them get their projects established, and assisted with accessing funding and paperwork.” The Group now includes producers all along the Milk River, from Cardston County through the Counties of Warner and Forty Mile, where it goes back down to the U.S. “Any of the ranchers along the river can access funds to do projects.”

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...Expand our reach of working one-on-one...

One of the big priorities is water quality and riparian management. “Most of the ranchers are trying to manage timing of grazing and riparian areas separate from uplands through fencing and offsite watering,” explains Prince. “Prince partnered with the Cardston County last summer to hold a Remote Watering Systems and Riparian Management Tour in the Del Bonita area, profiling some existing innovative watering systems and new technologies, and riparian management. Other partners included the McIntyre Ranch, Nature Conservancy of Canada and AAFRD. Another Group project included several Riparian Health Assessments with the Cows and Fish Program.

“We’re also trying to address some of the salinity issues in the County, and have established salinity grass demonstrations,” says Prince. Several different types of grasses have been seeded to help producers determine which ones might be best suited to this drier climate area. “This year we added another component and are looking at showing the grazing response. We mowed down strips of the grasses to imitate grazing and the positive effects of late season grazing so producers could determine the impacts.” Prince is also working with two other producers on salinity reclamation projects, turning cropland back into permanent pasture to address salinity problems.

The Group is also assisting with the formation of the Milk River Watershed Council of Canada, which includes other partners such as the towns of Milk River, Warner and Coutts, the Counties of Warner, Forty Mile and Cardston, Alberta Conservation Association, Parks and Protected Places, Public Lands, Alberta Environment and others. The biggest priority for the group is to address water quality issues and species at risk in the watershed. “One of the Watershed Group’s upcoming projects is a Stockmans Grazing School planned for June, with the focus on grazing and riparian management,” says Prince. “We will also update producers on species at risk issues, which are important in this area.”

Prince sees working one-on-one with producers as a very important component of his program. “One of the projects we started last year to try and get producers more involved was a range cage project,” says Prince. Producers were provided

with range cages so they would have tools to assess their own land. “This gives producers their own project on their own land, and gets them started on more management focused strategies for their operation. The project also gave us a tool to meet new people and expand our reach of working one-on-one.”

Another program underway is the Farmer Pesticide Course. “We’re trying to become a trainer for those courses, as a lot of producers in this area use restricted chemicals, for example for rusty grain beetle, and require the Pesticide Course.” Prince is also involved in promoting the AEFPP to local producers and Hutterite Colonies, and sees the program attracting a lot more interest and involvement now, particularly with funding becoming accessible to producers. Prince also worked with a local Hutterite colony to hold a manure management meeting, where they invited members from other colonies to participate.

“The county seems to have a natural split between the north and south parts, so we tend to hold similar programs in both areas,” says Prince. He feels one of the most successful tools for extending information is through two newsletters, the Milk River Ranchers Group Newsletter and the County’s ASB Newsletter. “This is a great way to get information right to their house, and we often package it with other information we think they might keep around.”

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West Central Conservation Group: Partnership in Action

The West Central Conservation Group (WCCG), one of the larger conservation groups in Alberta, is a partnership of five counties including the Counties of Barrhead, Brazeau, Lac Ste Anne, Woodlands and Yellowhead and the West Central Forage Group. For the WCCG AESA program, sustainable pasture management and riparian management are high priorities, along with other beneficial management practices (BMPs).

"We've been running an annual Pasture School that we're very proud of," explains Amy Webber, Conservation Coordinator for WCCG. The School is spread out over three days during the year, beginning with a classroom 'back to pasture basics' in April. "In June we bring the participants together for a tour and hands-on in a pasture to identify plant and invasive species, and learn about some tools for measuring production." The final day is an opportunity for producers to discuss options and learn from each other. "We also get them to take an honest look at the economics of their operation, assess the supply and demand of their pastures and determine what management changes they need to make."

..... The 2005 Pasture School participants enjoyed the experience so much they have decided to form a Grazing Club so they can continue to meet periodically. "This has encouraged us to consider planning a Pasture School Alumni, so past participants from the various Schools have a way to communicate with others," says Webber. "Many past participants are regulars at our other AESA events and tend to be the leaders in the community." Webber is in the process of tracking down past participants and getting something organized.

"Nutrient management is an important BMP, and we encourage producers to use soil and manure tests to understand what they have on their land, and how it can affect their landbase." Producers are encouraged to follow recommended BMPs for manure spreading or injection rates, composting instead of piling, slope considerations, staying away from riparian areas and leaving adequate buffers.

"Water quality and riparian management are key," says Webber. "We encourage producers to understand what 'functional buffer zones' are and how to establish them in their grazing systems," says Webber. "We help producers discover the timing and ways that work for managing their specific riparian areas and landscape." Four of the counties are part of the North Saskatchewan Watershed Alliance, the largest watershed group in the area.

Water quality and riparian management are key

"With integrated crop management, we really emphasize to people that you need good diversity in both structure and function on your farm to make things work, and to be resilient to drought and other risks." Direct seeding and soil conservation are important, but Webber emphasizes they encourage producers to first consider adapting the machinery they have or look at custom seeding options, rather than going out and purchasing new equipment. "We're also encouraging people to develop woodlot management plans and learn more about the health, age and marketability of their trees."

The County of Woodlands has set up a demonstration woodlot on county owned property near Whitecourt. "They have cleared 12 kilometers of trails, and set up interpretive signage along the way at different places in the forest," explains Webber. In 2005 they opened the first one-kilometer to the public. The County is working on establishing an industry partnership to complete a detailed inventory and woodlot management plan, with future plans for demonstrations of various harvesting techniques.

The County of Brazeau is following Woodlands lead, but has taken a different approach. "They have partnered with NAIT's Forestry Technology Program and will be working with students to complete the inventory and a long-term woodlot management plan. It's a win-win for both, as it provides a new project site for NAIT students, and the County gains expertise and student input."

The WCCG is a partner in offering Alberta Environmental Farm Plan (AEFP) to the area. "We really challenge producers to give their feedback. It's not as hard as it looks, there is value in completing an environmental farm plan and there is lots of help available." Webber notes the AEFP is a great way to meet contacts and get to know people in your area. "It's also a way to learn about local issues from producers, get good feedback and gain ideas for programming opportunities."

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Cardston County Gains Momentum After First Year

After only one year, the AESA program in the Cardston County has made a lot of inroads, focusing particularly on riparian management and sustainable grazing issues. Cardston County is unique in its diversity of land types and agricultural practices. The vegetation ranges from lodgepole pine forests to aspen willow complexes, rough fescue and mixed grass prairie. Over 50 percent of the land is cultivated, and 40 percent still in native prairie. As the program expands, additional efforts will focus on nutrient management, integrated cropping, pest management and water quality issues.

"We held a Remote Watering Systems and Riparian Management Tour last summer in the Del Bonita area, which is on the edge of the Milk River ridge," says Tim Romanow, Rural Conservation Extension Specialist. The tour highlighted several existing innovative stock water options that producers are already using, along with

a few new technologies that producers could use to improve water quality, and riparian management. "It was a really good tour, with 27 producers attending." Other partners included the County of Warner, McIntyre Ranch, Nature Conservancy of Canada and AAFRD.

"We also had four remote watering demonstration systems available for local producers to borrow and use over the summer," says Romanow. As a result, there were about 5 producers who have invested money in their own systems. "It makes a lot of sense that producers would want to invest in improving the quality of the water for their stock." At the end of the season, with even 100 steers for example, they can realize a weight gain of 10 percent because of improved water quality. That can translate into 15 or 20 more pounds going to market. "It adds up pretty fast and makes it fairly economical in the end."

Last year Romanow co-hosted an invasive weeds and grazing workshop event in the western part of the county, with over 35 participants. "We also worked with Cows and Fish to hold a Riparian Health Workshop near Mountainview. It was co-hosted with the Nature Conservancy of Canada, a major easement and land holder in the area."

Romanow also helped initiate the Lee Creek Watershed Group, which flows from the east end of Waterton Lakes National Park through Cardston, where it eventually flows into St. Mary's River. "There are a lot of issues this group is addressing, including invasive weeds and in particular erosion problems," says Romanow. "They have had three 1-in-100 year flood events in the past 10 years, stressing riparian areas and creating a lot of erosion issues." They are looking at some off stream watering demo projects, including riparian corridor fencing and some bioengineering demo sites. The town of Cardston, who recently joined the Group, is also interested in developing a storm water awareness campaign based on the 'yellow fish road' program.

The Group recently secured \$14,000 from the Habitat Stewardship Program for Species at Risk. Two of the species at risk in the watershed are the St. Mary sculpin (fish species) in the lower 15 kilometers of the creek, and the western blue flag iris, which is scattered throughout the basin. "With this funding, the Group plans to develop an integrated pest management program for the basin, including some additional biological control release sites for leafy spurge control," explains Romanow.

"We're also conducting an interesting Integrated Pest Management project, looking at reduced risk pesticide trials using a new chemical registered for spotted knapweed, Aminopyralid, which has zero or low toxicity to aquatic organisms," says Romanow. "We're hoping we can get two for one by improving the survival of the existing biocontrol agents, instead of working against them." Romanow says

the Group has a really ambitious workplan for the coming year, and with the new funding and keen members, they are ready to move forward.

The Alberta Environmental Farm Plan is also important in the County of Cardston, and starting to catch producers' attention. Several larger producers and more of the mixed farm and ranch community have now completed environmental farm plans. "In terms of landbase, that means about one-third of the county, which has nearly 900,000 acres, has an environmental farm plan attached to it," says Romanow.

We're off to a pretty good start...

In early February, Romanow held a nutrient management planning and mortality composting workshop for confined feeding operations, with approximately 20 participants. There are more water demos planned for the summer, and Romanow is partnering with the County of Warner, and Forty Mile/Cypress to plan a three-day Grazing School in June. "This is the first year of our program," says Romanow. "We're off to a pretty good start, but we have a long way to go." Romanow hopes the weather, which was an issue for almost every event he held last year, is more cooperative this summer.

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County of Grande Prairie and West County Watershed Group Focus on Beneficial Management Practices

For the County of Grande Prairie, the key AESA program priorities focus on water quality, riparian and grazing management practices and recommended beneficial management practices (BMPs). Many of the projects are in partnership with the West County Watershed Group (WCWG), formed with assistance of the AESA Program.

Another important program in 2005 was the Alberta Environmental Farm Plan. "I think people are warming up to the program, and as they see more fellow producers get involved and realize the benefits, it will continue to gain more interest," says Nielsen. The benefits were also emphasized to producers last

"My main priority is working with farmers to incorporate BMPs that improve water quality, whether that's through riparian fencing, off-site watering or other grazing management practices,"

Producers felt good that they had taken their own initiative to assess and make positive changes ...

says Bonnie Nielsen, Conservation Coordinator for the County of Grande Prairie and the West County Watershed Group. "Some producers have shifted their riparian grazing from spring to fall, when the riparian areas are less susceptible to grazing impacts." There is also a lot of interest in riparian plantings and vegetation, partly enhanced by the increased interest in woodlots. Some producers have fenced off riparian areas and are looking for future options for managing those areas.

year, when a pollution event occurred on the Beaverlodge River. "A couple of our producers were in the fortunate position of having completed the workshops and their environmental farm plans and had already implemented some changes," explains Nielsen. When Alberta Environment started investigating, they had the information to show they weren't part of the problem.

"When all was said and done, the producers felt good that they had taken their own initiative to assess and make

positive changes in their operations," says Nielsen. "I think this probably was a huge catalyst for a lot of producers." Nielsen emphasizes that it also showed the benefits of belonging to a watershed group and the support it provides, because the producers didn't have to go it alone. "This event really solidified our position as being there only to provide assistance, support and encouragement, not enforcement."

The West County Watershed Group has several partners, from across government and industry. "We also have a lot of local support that is a bit different, and it brings a lot of benefits with it," says Nielsen. For example the UFA in Grande Prairie is a partner, and offers a discount to members of the Group when they are buying supplies that relate to riparian watershed improvements. "We're also excited about a new partner that just came on board, Encana. They have a lot of activity going on in the community and are interested in participating in some of the development meetings with our partners." Encana has expressed interest in helping and contributing funds where they can. The Group's 2006 priorities will focus on water quality monitoring.

Nielsen is excited to be the area hosting the AESA Council Tour this summer. "We just getting geared up in the planning, and expect to have a couple of major projects completed for the Council to

tour," says Nielsen. "One of the projects is a relocation of a winter feeding site, and tour participants will be able to see the results of that project."

Nielsen is looking forward to another productive year, and feels working one-on-one with producers or in very small groups is much more successful in her area. In larger groups, producers often didn't ask questions or participate as much, and felt slightly intimidated. "One of the things I try to remember when things get challenging, are words from a US workshop speaker in Red Deer a couple of years ago," says Nielsen. The expression was something like 'there is no right way, no wrong way, you just can't ever give up'. "I think we have to remember that what doesn't work with one landowner or producer may work well for another. Get to know your audience and understand where they are coming from, know they have their own set of fears."

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PHOTO CREDIT - JOHN HALLET

Counties of Flagstaff and Paintearth: Partnering for More Effective Programs

The Counties of Flagstaff and Paintearth are a mix of livestock and cropping operations throughout. The AESA program in the two counties offers something for all agricultural producers by including pasture management, riparian area management, nutrient management and integrated crop management in the program.

"Our main program priorities focus on pasture management, both tame and native, and riparian management," explains Kristin Cuss, Rural Conservation Technician for the Counties of Flagstaff and Paintearth. There are also some secondary projects that focus on nutrient management and integrated crop management. "Our program has a really big advantage with the Battle River Research Group (BRRG) in our area. The more we can partner on projects, the more effective our programming is."

Cuss feels that one of the most successful programs they offered last year was a Pasture School Series, which ran for six weeks one night a week. Cuss partnered with Jenifer Heyden of the BRRG. "We thought this was one of our best events throughout the year," says Cuss. "We heard a lot of good feedback from the producers who attended. Providing information on one topic per session was received really well by producers, and they felt the information they got was valuable." The Series covered a range of pasture management topics, such as range health, plant identification, stocking rates and carrying capacity, and included a tour of a local producer's rotational grazing system. The program will be offered again this coming year, focusing on more advanced topics.



PHOTO CREDIT - KRISTIN CUSS

"We also partnered with the Iron Creek Water Improvement Society (ICWIS) for the last session of the Pasture School, focusing on riparian health," explains Cuss. The Society is a producer-organized group, supported by AESA, BRRG, Cows and Fish Program and others. "Another successful event organized by the Society was the Wood

and Water Pancake Breakfast," says Cuss. "The breakfast was followed by presentations focusing on the importance of trees on our landscape for water quality, quantity and agricultural production. We also promoted the PFRA program for planting shelterbelts and wildlife plantings, which is another priority for us."

The more we can include the topics they [producers] identify, the more success we have...

The ICWIS conducted a Riparian Health Inventory in their watershed in 2001, and recent funding has received to revisit Iron Creek this summer. "This is one of the first watershed groups in the central region to go back and re-conduct a Riparian Health Inventory with Cows and Fish," says Cuss. "This reassessment is really important to the ICWIS, and will provide a really good indication of what is going on in our landscape." The comparison isn't just a reflection of changes in management practices, but also climate. "We've had a drought since the first Inventory, so it will be interesting to see what has happened."

Cuss partnered with the Chinook Applied Research Association (CARA) to hold a Women's Grazing School last fall. "Grazing Schools for Women have been gaining in popularity and we wanted to hold a school locally. We had an amazing response, and plan to hold an in-field follow-up school this summer." Cuss notes that in the planning of the school, they invited some of the local women to participate and provide ideas for topics and speakers. "Although we have to balance their ideas with our program objectives, I think the more we can include the topics they identify, the more success we have."

Several Alberta Environmental Farm Plan workshops were held over the winter, with the program continuing to gain momentum. "We also partnered last year with the Counties of Camrose and Stettler and the BRRG to hold a Manure Management Course in Camrose," says Cuss. Other events included a Soil Quality Day and a Pesticide Applicator's Course, which provided the opportunity for participants to gain credits toward their certification." A similar event is being planned for the coming year, with a focus on crop diseases, weeds and pests, which will also offer accreditation.

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AESA Partner Profiles is a feature of the Alberta Environmentally Sustainable Agriculture (AESA) program.

AESA's vision is that Alberta has a thriving agriculture and food industry that is operating in an environmentally responsible manner. Its mission is to lead the agriculture and food industry in addressing environmental challenges. And its goal is to develop and deliver collaborative environmental stewardship initiatives that result in sustainable growth of Alberta's farm, ranch and agri-food processing industry.

The purpose of AESA Partner Profiles is to provide a forum for profiling AESA program partners and their community based local programs addressing environmental issues in Alberta's agriculture and food processing industry.

For more information on the AESA program, call 780-422-4385



The Agricultural Policy Framework (APF) - A Federal-Provincial-Territorial Initiative