



Agri-News

July 6, 2009

Greater Flexibility on 2009 Crop Insurance

Agriculture Financial Services Corporation (AFSC) is working closely with producers to assess the impact of current dry conditions on crops and livestock across the province. Adjusters are being dispatched to the areas most severely affected in order to respond to an increasing volume of claims.

“For the first time AFSC is introducing average area yields to expedite pre-harvest claims in the most severely affected areas,” said George Groeneveld, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development. “This gives producers the option of having their crops released over the phone without an inspection.”

Payments will be made to producers once AFSC has confirmed the crop has been put to an alternate use. Producers must contact AFSC before putting their crop to an alternate use, such as grazing, silaging or spraying out the crop to conserve moisture and fertilizer reserves.

“The Alberta government recognizes the challenges producers are facing, that’s why we have highly responsive, effective and flexible crop insurance protection in this province,” said Groeneveld. “We’ve learned from the 2002 drought and as a result are implementing these proactive procedures which reflect the full spectrum of producer needs.”

AFSC’s business risk management programs (BRM) are reviewed on an on-going basis to ensure they continue to meet the needs of the agriculture industry. In addition to these programs, producers can also access other provincial programs such as agricultural loans and water management programs that contribute to industry’s long-term sustainability.

For more information on AFSC’s insurance programs visit www.afsc.ca or call 1-888-786-7475.

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Alberta Takes the Lead in Greenhouse Gas Mitigation for Beef Cattle

Alberta is the first province in Canada to legislate greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reductions. Starting on July 1, 2007, all companies that emit more than 100,000 tonnes of GHG a year must reduce their emission intensity by 12 per cent compared to a baseline (Specified Gas Emitters Regulation). Companies can reduce their intensities by making internal improvements to their operations, by buying an Alberta-based offset to apply against their emission reduction total, or by contributing to a fund that will invest in technology to reduce GHG emissions in the province.

Offset project developers must register their verified emissions reductions online with the Alberta Emissions Offset Registry. This provides transparency and accountability to the market, as well as a 'meeting place' for both buyers and sellers (www.CarbonOffsetSolutions.ca). Project developers (sellers) must follow one of 24 government-approved quantification protocols listed at this website. Primary producers and GHG aggregators in Alberta have already sold close to \$11 million in agricultural carbon offsets to regulated facilities using the Reduced Tillage Management Quantification Protocol and submitted these for compliance.

To create the high quality of offsets that are needed to meet regulatory requirements, science-based protocols were developed to identify GHG emission reductions that result from the use of different management practices. Protocols are developed according to an international 'gold standard' using the ISO 14064-2 requirements. These requirements also specify that practice changes must represent improvements beyond business as usual and must be verifiable. Protocols have been developed by the climate change/greenhouse gas technical team (CC/GHG) of Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development, in cooperation with Climate Change Central and Alberta Environment. Dr. John Basarab, beef research scientist with Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development, Lacombe, has led the development of three GHG-mitigating quantification protocols in the area of beef cattle production. These protocols address management improvements that:

- include edible oils in cattle feeding regimes
- reduce the number of days that cattle feed in the feedlot
- reduce age at slaughter (or reduced lifespan) in cattle

Basarab is presently developing a fourth protocol that selects for low residual feed intake in beef cattle or, as coined by the popular press, develops *the fuel efficient cow*. These practice changes have the potential to reduce GHG emissions from cattle by 0.1 to 1.0 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent per animal, with an estimated value ranging from \$1 to \$11 per head in the emerging Alberta carbon market.

"Alberta is the first jurisdiction in North America to have science-based protocols that mitigate GHG emissions from beef cattle registered in a regulatory context," says Basarab. "These protocols have been developed with several long-term strategic goals in mind. The first and foremost goal is to identify management to improve the efficiency of feed and energy utilization without adversely affecting production and profitability. The second goal is to reduce the environmental impacts of forage-beef production; third is to take advantage of the carbon credit market; and, fourth to differentiate 'green' beef products on the basis of an improved carbon footprint."

Basarab also noted that agriculture contributes only eight per cent of the total GHG emissions in Canada. Of this, 50 per cent is attributed to emissions from soils primarily due to nitrous oxide (N₂O) from fertilizer application, 32 per cent from ruminants due to methane (CH₄) emissions from enteric fermentation and 17 per cent from N₂O emissions due to manure management. In Australia, agriculture accounts for 16 per cent of that country's total GHG emissions, with livestock accounting for two-thirds of agriculture emissions. Agriculture represents 49.4 per cent of all New Zealand's emissions and is dominated by CH₄ (32.8%) and N₂O (16.6%). This level of GHG emissions from agriculture has a liability in excess of \$3 billion annually for the New Zealand government.

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Watch For the Alberta Farm Safety Logo This Summer



This summer, the Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development Farm Safety Team will be traveling to rodeos, trade fairs and other agricultural events throughout Alberta. The most recent events attended were the Leduc Dairy Congress and Brazeau County Fair in Drayton Valley, and Focus on 4-H in Drayton Valley. Some of the next events where the team will be include the Carstairs Rodeo and Tradeshow July 17 to 18, and the Vermilion Agricultural Fair July 23 to 25.

The goal of the *Safety Up* campaign is to create and improve awareness of farm safety. The campaign is targeted towards new and young workers aged 17 to 25 and it reminds them

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of the importance of safety on the job so they can enjoy life off the job.

Young workers have been identified as having a high risk of injury and death on the job. According to the Workers Compensation Board, young workers are one-third more likely to be injured on the job than those over 25. New workers are often unaware of the potential hazards of their jobs. In fact, over 50 per cent of accidents involving young workers occur during their first six months on the job. It is important that new workers be aware of the risks they face on their new job and of the need for training to prevent injuries and fatalities.

In recent years, there have been far too many fatalities occurring on farms throughout Alberta. There is an average of 18 farm-related deaths per year throughout the province. These tragedies result from a range of farm activities including ATV crashes and rollovers to farmers being crushed or trapped by their equipment. Incidents involving animal handling and water sources such as dugouts, and irrigation ditches have also resulted in many devastating injuries and fatalities. These incidents typically peak around harvest time during periods of increased stress and longer working hours.

A series of **Safety Up** fact sheets have been created and can be accessed online at www.agriculture.gov.ab.ca/farmsafety. These fact sheets will also be available at various events throughout the summer along with other educational items including farm orientation and safety training guides, farm survival guides, farm safety CDs and promotional items.

Anyone attending the summer events has a chance to win one of many farm safety door prizes including backpacks, first aid kits and t-shirts. All names will be entered into the **Safety Up** year-end draw for prizes including **Safety Up** logo wear. The draw will take place September 30, 2009, and the winner will be posted on Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development's website. If you haven't entered yet, go online to www.agriculture.alberta.ab.ca/farmsafety and look for the **Safety Up** contest.

If you miss the Farm Safety Team at rodeos and summer fairs this summer, check out the website and remember to **Safety Up**. Save yourself for the good times. Stay safe on the farm so you can enjoy all that life has to offer.

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Alberta Biomaterials Development Centre Connecting with Industry

The Alberta Biomaterials Development Centre (ABDC) is intended to be a premier centre for sustainable bioindustry commercialization in Canada offering industry access to a network of highly qualified staff and specialized equipment for the rapid and effective development of biomaterials, biochemicals and bioenergy. The ABDC network extends beyond just equipment and researchers. Guiding industry clients to the government or partner services available that best advance each client's project is an integral function of the new Centre.

Our goal is to bring biomaterials (advanced products and sustainable solutions) to market," says Trevor Kloeck, leader of biomaterial development for Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development, Edmonton. "These biomaterials are made of agriculture- and forestry-based feedstocks with the focus being on forest residues, cereal straws, flax and hemp. We take under-utilized feedstocks from forestry and agricultural practices and convert them into value-added products. This utilizes Alberta's natural advantage in biomass to develop new economic opportunities for agriculture in the areas of biomaterials."

he centre will work closely with industry, producers, institutions, government, funding agencies, non-government organizations from around the world and in various sectors (agriculture, forestry, manufacturing, oil and gas, transportation, environment, etc.) Demand is increasing for environmental goods such as biomaterials. There is a need to fill technical gaps in processing and business gaps to get these products to market.

he ABDC is a \$15-million investment by partners Advanced Education and Technology through the Alberta Life Sciences Institute, Agriculture and Rural Development, Sustainable Resource Development and the Alberta Research Council.

Farmers and processors want to find a way to connect with manufacturers and consumers to supply sustainable products," says Kloeck. "With the fundamental shift in consumer commitment to sustainability, biomaterials offer producers and processors a way to differentiate and secure demand for their products. Sustainability is not an option, it is a must."

The ABDC allows clients to develop their businesses and access expertise along the entire value chain from producer, on-farm processor, product manufacturers, distributors to retailers.

"In 10 years time, Alberta producers will be contributors in building homes, developing consumer products and protecting the environment in exciting and novel ways," says Kloeck.

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“This is what we can expect if we change the way we do things and are open to the opportunity for advancement of a sustainable and profitable Canadian bioeconomy.”

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Licensed Farm Implement Dealers and Distributors

All farm implement distributors and dealers operating within the province of Alberta are required to be licensed. As part of its role, the Farmers' Advocate Office (FAO) administers the compliance of the *Farm Implement Act* (FIA) and *Farm Implement Dealerships Act* (FIDA).

The FIA and FIDA provide protection for consumers, dealers and distributors to ensure business is conducted in compliance with the legislation. Consumers can find out if their dealer or distributor is licensed in two ways. Each farm implement party receives a 2009 licence to be posted for consumers to view at their place of business. Also, a complete list of licensed dealers (365) and distributors (98) are available on the FAO website at www.farmersadvocate.gov.ab.ca. Exact web links are:

- 2009 Dealers: [www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/ofa12074](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/ofa12074)
- 2009 Distributors: [www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/ofa12118](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/ofa12118)

If you are conducting business with an unlicensed farm implement business you will not have any protection under the FIA or the FIDA. Please be aware that it is a violation of legislation to operate as a farm implement dealer or distributor of farm implements sold in Alberta by a dealer without a licence and can hold steep penalties.

The FAO also has a farm implement inspector on staff to handle dispute resolution options on a wide range of farm implement issues. For example, some of the disputes handled by the inspector have been related to warranty, sale and dealer agreements, parts and equipment performance.

Should you have any questions regarding farm implement dealer or distributor licensing, inspection services, or if you would like a copy of either of the Acts, contact the FAO at 310-FARM (3276) and ask for Janet Patriquin, *Farm Implement Act* administrator, or Robert Martin, farm implement inspector.

Contact: *Janet Patriquin*
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Calgarian Receives 4-H Honourary Member Award

The Canadian 4-H Council recently announced three Honourary Member recipients at its 2009 Annual Conference and General Meeting. Honourary membership is awarded to individuals who have demonstrated a positive impact in the 4-H program through their work, commitment and leadership.

Nominees, who may have served 4-H in a volunteer, professional (i.e. paid staff) or any other appropriate capacity, must have been involved in one or more levels of 4-H work for a minimum of ten years, and must demonstrate significant initiative, leadership and a positive impact on the program.

“We were very pleased to award Honourary Membership to Gordon Bryant, John J. MacDonald, and Gary Skogberg,” said Judy Shaw, president of the Canadian 4-H Council. “Each of these individuals has exemplified a commitment to the 4-H program in Canada, and their tireless efforts has helped make 4-H such a great program for Canadian youth.”

Gary Skogberg, Calgary, Alberta, (formerly from Saskatchewan) has been actively involved with the Canadian 4-H Council for more than 15 years, and his commitment to the 4-H program has been demonstrated in the number of roles he has taken on. Gary works with the Co-operators, where he is the member representative for the Canadian 4-H Council and has devoted countless hours in supporting Council activities. He has sat on various committees, including the financial management and public relations committees, and has served as a president of the Canadian 4-H Council from 2001-2002. The Youth Advisory Committee is also supported by The Co-operators. As a key sponsor and contributor for the Canadian 4-H Council and Canadian 4-H Foundation, the Co-operators is a valued partner for the 4-H program. Gary's tireless efforts and commitment to 4-H has helped to make this such a strong partnership.

Gordon Bryant worked with 4-H and the British Columbia youth development programs for more than 30 years before retiring in 2004. His continuing work in the agricultural industry and 4-H has set a strong example for devotion and commitment to the 4-H program. Gordon grew up on a dairy farm in Rosedale, British Columbia, where he established a strong foundation in the agricultural industry and 4-H. As a youth member, he attended National 4-H Conference in 1967, and began his work in 4-H as a 4-H summer assistant during his summer vacations from University. With his work in the 4-H and Youth Development Programs, Gordon has inspired staff, young people and volunteers to work together and build communities that work and grow together. He has served as a president of the Canadian 4-H Council, been recognized for his financial contributions to 4-H and recently received honorary membership with the British Columbia 4-H Council.

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John J. MacDonald has been a part of the 4-H program in for more than 50 years, and his commitment to the program is unparalleled. As a youth, John was a member of 4-H for eight years, and he has since been involved in 4-H on every level of the program, including his role as a leader and judge for 4-H achievement days. He has been enthusiastically involved in agriculture his entire life, and continues to support the 4-H program through his ongoing activities with 4-H and his work with 4-H in Prince Edward Island. In addition to his time with 4-H, John has gone to great lengths to serve his community and the agriculture industry. He has served as President for numerous agricultural associations and councils, including the P.E.I. 4-H Council, Canadian Federation of Agriculture and the Canadian 4-H Council. He continues to support the 4-H program financially, and was recently welcomed as a Silver contributor to the P.E.I. 4-H Trust Heart Club.

4-H is one of the country's longest-running and most respected youth organizations, offering fun, excitement and learning for youth in communities large and small across Canada. More than 8,500 trained volunteer Leaders help more than 26,000 4-H Members develop self-confidence and learn a wide variety of skills through hands-on project work. The Canadian 4-H Council was founded in 1933 to oversee all national 4-H affairs.

Note: a photo is available upon request from the Canadian 4-H Council.

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Agri-News Briefs

Annual Lacombe Field Day

Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development's Field Crop Development Centre and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Lacombe Research Centre are hosting the annual field day in Lacombe on July 30, 2009. Topics on the agenda this year include:

- feed quality and germplasm development
- forage quality
- swath grazing
- triticale and winter wheat
- pulse breeding and pathology
- nitrogen use efficiency
- agronomy – rotation studies
- biotechnology for breeding and risk management

Along with current research and crop trials, information on current conditions and pests that producers are facing this year will also be discussed. There is a \$20 registration fee, and registration closes July 24, 2009. For more information, contact Kristy at 403-782-8100 ext. 0, or Loree Verquin at 403-782-8114 or e-mail: loree.verquin@agr.gc.ca