



# Agri-News

July 26, 2010

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## **Cow Parsnip Frequently Misidentified as Giant Hogweed**

Giant hogweed, *Heracleum mantegazzianum*, which has been featured recently in national media reports, is one of the new invasive alien plants designated as Prohibited Noxious under Alberta's newly revised Weed Control Act. The Prohibited Noxious designation is given to plants that are either not present in Alberta, not recorded in Alberta or are present in such low numbers that there is an opportunity to eradicate them. To date, giant hogweed has not been confirmed anywhere in Alberta.

"Giant hogweed belongs to the Carrot family, Apiaceae, like several common native plants, including cow-parnsnip, *Heracleum maximum*, which is a very common plant in Alberta landscapes, especially in natural areas," says Jim Broatch, pest management specialist with Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development. "Cow parsnip is frequently misidentified as giant hogweed because they look very much alike and it is easy to confuse the two."

Giant hogweed grows up to 20 feet in height. It has stout, green to dark-reddish-purple stems, compound leaves up to five feet in breadth, and white flowers on an umbrella-shaped head up to 2.5 feet in diameter.

"Because contact with giant hogweed can cause skin irritation, blistering and burning, it has become a major concern to Alberta residents who have received information from the national media sources," says Broatch. "While there have been concerns that they might have giant hogweed, thus far, the plants reported have proven to be cow-parnsnip."

Public education regarding the correct identification of these plants is important. Anyone who believes they have giant hogweed should contact their municipal offices and ask to speak to a weed inspector. The weed inspector can assist in the

correct identification. Information can also be obtained from the Alberta Ag. Info Centre at 310-FARM (3276).

Further information can also be found on the Alberta Invasive Plants Council website at [www.invasiveplants.ab.ca](http://www.invasiveplants.ab.ca)

Contact: Jim Broatch P. Ag.  
403-782-8619  
Cell: 403-877-4687  
E-mail to: [jim.broatch@gov.ab.ca](mailto:jim.broatch@gov.ab.ca)

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## **Alberta Crop Producers Receive Support to Deal with Excess Moisture**

Crop producers in Southern and Central Alberta dealing with extraordinary losses as a result of excess moisture and flooding will receive funding from the federal and provincial governments through AgriRecovery to help restore their cropland.

“This is a joint federal-provincial program, and Alberta’s application form is ready to go and is awaiting input from our federal counterparts,” said Jack Hayden, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development. “As soon as it is finalized we will post it online, mail it out to producers and make it available at all Agriculture Financial Services Corporation (AFSC) offices. We expect that to be as early as next week.”

Federal Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz and Minister Hayden made the announcement following the Federal-Provincial-Territory Ministers meeting in Saskatoon on July 8, along with the governments of Manitoba and Saskatchewan.

Under this AgriRecovery response, eligible crop producers who were affected by excess moisture will receive a payment of \$30 per acre. The entire cost of the proposed AgriRecovery payments to all eligible Alberta crop producers is \$42.1 million, with \$25.26 million borne by the federal government and \$16.84 million by the province. The program will be administered by AFSC.

Crop producers must self-declare for the payment by filling out the application form and submitting it to their local AFSC office. More information about the program is available at [www.afsc.ca](http://www.afsc.ca) or by calling 1-877-899-2372.

In the affected areas, approximately 370,000 acres of land remain unseeded, with more than one million acres seeded, then flooded. Land that was seeded is now non-viable. Overall, crop producers who experience these losses will receive assistance of almost \$300 million through AgriStability, AgriRecovery and AgriInsurance.

In addition, on July 6 the Alberta government announced two new provincial disaster recovery programs totaling \$203.5 million to help citizens and municipalities in Southern and Central Alberta recover from recent flooding and severe weather.

Contact: *Ag Media Line*  
780-422-1005

To call toll free within Alberta dial 310-0000

## **Enjoy Some Summer Sunshine at a U-Pick or Market**

Spending some family time in the Alberta sunshine and visiting one of the province’s markets, u-pick or farm gate operations is a summer experience not to be missed.

While fresh fruit and vegetables can be found throughout the province, strawberries still top the list as one of the most popular fresh picked fruits. June-bearing strawberries are only in season for a short few weeks, but the day-neutral strawberry varieties will produce fruit until the fall frosts.

Before you head out for a morning, afternoon or day of picking remember:

- call ahead to make sure the produce is ready and to find out what time the field is open – most farms have regular hours, but there are some where an appointment to pick is needed, so take a moment to check first
- be sure to ask how the farm wants payment
- be a good guest – be respectful and follow the rules whether written or verbal
- leave pets at home and keep your children close to you
- wear a hat, sunglasses and sunscreen, and bring some mosquito repellent
- wear loose, comfortable clothing such as a long sleeved shirt and pants
- bring your own pails (or plan to buy them from the operator, but only if they have them for sale)
- bring a picnic cooler with ice packs to keep berries and vegetables cool until you get home – don’t put produce in a cooler without an ice pack – it will just get warmer
- use the product quickly – for fruit two to three days is a maximum, and the fresher the better, whether eating out of hand or preserving

Whether you are looking for strawberries, Saskatoons, raspberries, cucumbers, tomatoes, peppers, carrots, potatoes or cabbage, finding Alberta farm markets is easy, and it’s made even simpler if you consult your free copy of ***Come To Our Farms***, available by calling 1-800-661-2642, or plan your daytrip by first visiting the Alberta Farm Fresh website at [www.albertafarmfresh.com](http://www.albertafarmfresh.com)

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## **Point-of-Sale Incentive-Discounts on Animal Tags**

Alberta's Age-Verification Incentive Program is now offering its point-of-sale incentive-discount to cow-calf producers at participating animal identification tag dealers across the province.

The new \$15-million Government of Alberta program encourages Alberta's cattle industry to adopt tagging and age-verification best practices. The incentive-discounts, of up to three dollars for each age-verified animal, represent the valuable information producers contribute to support marketing and food safety efforts.

The three-year program applies to radio frequency identification (RFID) tag purchases made between January 1, 2009 and December 31, 2012. Eligibility is based on the number of animals a producer has, or intends to have, age-verified from the previous year's calf crop.

Greater participation in age-verification will help Alberta's industry respond to foreign market requirements, improve animal disease investigation and response, and is a vital part of Canada's and Alberta's BSE Surveillance program.

In accordance with the Animal Health Act, age-verification improves Alberta's ability to prevent, prepare, respond to and recover from an emergency situation such as a foreign animal disease outbreak or a natural disaster that may affect public or animal health. Age-verification also assists industry in accessing existing and new markets.

Alberta's livestock traceability system is dependent on tagging an animal and entering the associated birth date into the Canadian Livestock Tracking System. This process is critical to identify when an animal enters the food production system.

For more information on traceability, premises identification, age verification and for a list of participating animal tag dealers call toll-free 310-FARM (3276) or visit the Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development website at [www.agriculture.alberta.ca](http://www.agriculture.alberta.ca)

The Age-Verification Incentive Program is an investment in industry's long-term success and the economic health of Alberta's rural communities and is part of The Way Forward, the Government of Alberta's clear plan for a strong economic recovery.

*Contact: Brent McEwan, Executive Director, Traceability  
Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development  
780-643-1572  
To call toll-free within Alberta dial 310-0000*

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## **More rural communities connected to high-speed internet**

A provincial pilot program is helping provide high-speed broadband to un-served or underserved areas of the province and better connecting rural Albertans through internet training and video-conferencing.

"The internet opens so many doors for Albertans - it broadens their business opportunities, helps them stay connected with loved ones and exposes them to an extensive knowledge base," said Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development Minister, Jack Hayden. "By extending the broadband network in rural areas, we are making it easier for people to access and transfer information and communicate."

The \$2.4-million of funding under the Rural Connections: Community Broadband Infrastructure Pilot Program will extend and enhance broadband coverage by funding infrastructure projects, evaluating technologies, assisting in community assessments and supporting the delivery of internet training.

"Access to the Internet is becoming increasingly important and valuable for Albertans, and this program is a great opportunity to further connect those who live in a rural area to high-speed Internet service," said Service Alberta Minister Heather Klimchuk, responsible for the Alberta SuperNet.

Now in its final year of implementation, the program is providing funding for the following projects:

East Smoky Gas Co-op Ltd. will receive \$500,000 to assist in the deployment of a wireless broadband network and allow for automated meter readings within the applicant's rural gas utility franchise area including the Debolt, Little, Smoky and Fox Creek areas.

A \$500,000 grant will assist the Lac La Biche District Natural Gas Co-op Ltd. with the deployment of a wireless broadband network to provide coverage to areas around Plamondon, Lac La Biche and Hylo.

The Green Hectares Corporation will use a \$446,105 grant to support the delivery of broadband internet training in 10 rural Alberta regions including the Peace country; and rural areas around Edson, Slave Lake, Edmonton, Camrose, Olds, Calgary, Brooks and Fort MacLeod.

Ponoka Country will receive a \$500,000 grant to assist in the deployment of a wireless broadband network to areas in the rural northeast region of the County.

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A \$500,000 grant will support the Community Learning Network - an Alberta Association of Leaders in Lifelong Learning in their efforts to extend broadband outreach through community assessments and the installation of 15 LifeSize video-conference units in select rural Alberta communities.

A description of all approved projects, as well as more information on the Rural Connections: Community Broadband Infrastructure Pilot Program is available at [www.rural.alberta.ca](http://www.rural.alberta.ca) or by calling 780-427-2409.

No further applications for the Rural Connections: Community Broadband Infrastructure Pilot Program or the Rural Community Adaptation Grant Program are being accepted, as both programs were fully subscribed by June 30, 2010.

Funding for the Rural Connections program was made available through the Government of Canada's Community Development Trust Fund to help provinces and territories assist communities, organizations and workers move towards greater economic sustainability.

*Contact: Drew Hiltz  
Rural Development Division  
Agriculture and Rural Development  
780-643-1830*

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## **4-H Members Learn How to “Take the Helm” at LTCS 2010**

Summer means one thing for Alberta 4-H members: camps. Whether regional or provincial, members are excited and ready to learn new skills, create and rekindle friendships, and make a ton of new memories. Instrumental to this camp experience are the summer program staff and counsellors, and at the Leadership Through Counselling Seminar (LTCS), 4-H members learn how to make summer camping programs a memorable experience for all delegates.

LTCS is a program designed to provide the opportunity for members ages 15 and up to expand their leadership skills. “LTCS is an intensive training program for future counsellors,” explains Mark Shand, Alberta 4-H program specialist. “This training helps to continue their experience as they can pass along their enthusiasm for the 4-H Program and its summer programs.” 4-H members who attend LTCS have the chance to counsel at many 4-H programs throughout the summer.

Most teenagers likely wouldn't jump at the chance to spend a week working with children who are energetic, excited and don't always pay attention. But delegates at LTCS willingly accept the challenge.

“I remember coming to these camps and seeing all of the counsellors and thinking that I wanted to be one,” says Austin Reimer, a delegate of LTCS and soon-to-be counsellor.

The way LTCS is designed gives delegates the chance to organize and schedule the program. Through hands-on learning, everyone is given the chance to learn about and evaluate the different activities that make an entire program enjoyable and effective.

LTCS also gives future counsellors the tools needed to lead and teach interest sessions, such as archery, dance and canoeing. LTCS delegates also participate in self-development sessions such as behaviour management, first aid and working with youth.

“This program gives me the opportunity to improve my leadership skills and learn how to better communicate with members and show them how to have fun. It also helps me learn how to become more of a positive role model in their lives,” says delegate Kendra Rawluk from Loughheed.

As the delegates of LTCS learn, plan and prepare for their counselling opportunities, they become just as excited to counsel camp as younger members are to experience it.

Leadership Through Counselling Seminar is sponsored by Penn West Energy, Agrium, Farm Credit Canada, Government of Alberta, Monsanto, Olds College, Peavey Mart and the Canadian Wheat Board. The program is hosted by the Alberta 4-H Centre.

*Contact: Mark Shand  
4-H specialist - programs  
403-948-8508*

## **Agri-News Briefs**

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### **International Livestock Congress 2010**

The International Livestock Congress (ILC) - Calgary is holding the **Beef 2010: Raising Optimism – Global Strategies** conference on August 11, 2010. The conference is an opportunity for livestock producers to join beef industry leaders and hear industry experts discuss current issues. Registration cost for the conference is \$175 plus GST for primary producers and \$370 plus GST for industry members. For further information, contact Iris Mech or Carol Huculak at 403-686-8407 or e-mail [ilcreg@imcievents.ca](mailto:ilcreg@imcievents.ca). A full agenda, list of speakers and registration form are available on the ILC website at [www.ilccalgary.com](http://www.ilccalgary.com).

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### **Emergency Registration for Centurion EC Herbicide**

The federal Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) has approved an Emergency Registration for aerial application of Centurion EC Herbicide for the control of labelled weeds in canola, flax, field peas, dry bean, soybean, lentils, chickpeas, potatoes, sunflowers and mustards in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. The Emergency Registration expires on October 31, 2010. The pre-harvest interval for application of Centurion EC on field peas and soybeans is 75 days, and for lentils, chickpeas and dry beans is 60 days. Producers are reminded to read the label for cautionary information, and as with all chemicals, keep out of reach of children. For further information, contact PMRA.