



Agri-News

August 15, 2005

Evaluation of annual legumes for seed production in Alberta

A three-year project, funded through the Alberta Crop Industry Development Fund (ACIDF), was started in 2004 that will evaluate several annual legumes for their potential as seed crops in Alberta. The species under evaluation have various agricultural and nutritional attributes associated with their use including:

- low bloat qualities
- high yield and high nutritional quality forage
- extended grazing either as early pasture or fall pasture
- green manure and soil improvement as rotational crops
- reclamation uses and stabilization of roadsides
- specialty honey production
- alternate crops for pollinators such as leafcutter bees

“The species being evaluated include arrowleaf clover, berseem clover, crimson clover, Persian clover, rose clover and woolpod vetch,” says Henry Najda, research scientist with Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development’s Crop Diversification Centre South (CDCS), Brooks. “Comparative seeding treatments include two row spacings and three different seeding rates.”

There are four experimental locations being used in this trial. These include two irrigated sites at the CDCS and the substation at Bow Island; an irrigated site at Lethbridge with cooperator Dr. Surya Acharya of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada; and, cooperator Dr. Jane King has a rain-fed site at the University of Alberta, Edmonton.

“First-year results for three of the species of annual legumes that were tested showed encouraging potential for good economic returns. The species that showed promising results were crimson clover, rose clover and woolpod vetch,” says Najda.

Crimson clover prefers well-drained sandy, clay or loam soils with a 6.0 to 7.0 pH range. It is an early maturing clover with moderate bloat potential. It has a low hard seed content. This species had 10 per cent bloom around mid-July at most locations and the seed matured well at Bow Island and Brooks with average seed yields of 982 and 1227 kg per hectare, respectively.

Rose clover prefers sandy, clay or loam soils and is adapted to a 5.5 to 8.3 pH range. It does best on well-drained soils. It is of medium maturity and has a low bloat potential. Rose clover has a high hard seed content. Results for this species were very encouraging and commercially viable. Average seed yields at

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Bow Island and Brooks were 1263 and 1158 kg per hectare respectively.

Woolypod vetch is tolerant of poorly drained soils and to acidity. It is used for green manure and for extending the grazing season. Yields were very encouraging for this species and were 1819 and 1332 kg per hectare at Bow Island and Brooks, respectively.

“In year two of the study, harvest techniques used in alfalfa seed to encourage crop dry down will be implemented to facilitate seed harvest for later flowering species such as arrowleaf, berseem and Persian clover,” adds Najda.

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Savour regional flavours

Dine Alberta showcases the best of the province in dining rooms, at catered events and in local cafes. From country towns and mountain resorts to Alberta’s major cities, this year’s celebration of the harvest offers unique Alberta-grown menus featuring the best from over 110 local producers, farmers and ranchers.

“We live in an agriculturally rich province. People want to taste that bounty when they go to a restaurant;” says Wesley Johnson, Dine Alberta Project leader with Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development, Edmonton. “The purpose of the program is to support the family farm. The program is intended to help create links between farm products and local chefs.”

The month-long event is being celebrated during the month of September when pots will be bubbling and the grills sizzling with locally produced fare. More than 80 Alberta restaurants, from the Peace to the High Country of southern Alberta, are participating this year, celebrating the harvest from field to table.

On special menus throughout Alberta, diners will find bison and farm-raised elk, pastured pork and lamb, natural beef and free-range chicken. Fresh-picked vegetables will be at their best, with specials such as fall-harvested potatoes, squash, pumpkin and the last of the summer berries.

A full list of participating restaurants and their featured menus is available on-line at www.dinealberta.ca. The new searchable producer directory e-database is now available as well as the pdf version.

Dine Alberta Savour Regional Flavour will be in full swing in September. Some of the participating restaurants include:

- in **Calgary**, check out a well-seasoned list of regionally-inclined kitchens that includes River Cafe, The Coup, Red Tree Kitchen, Rouge, Muse, Infuse Catering and The Ranchman’s Club

- in **Bow Valley**, head for Crazyweed Kitchen in Canmore, Num-ti-Jah Lodge’s Elkhorn Dining Room on Bow Lake, Buffalo Mountain Lodge in Banff and Baker Creek Bistro in Lake Louise
- in the **Jasper area** dine at the Fairmont Jasper Park Lodge, Papa George’s and Stone Mountain at the Overlander in Hinton
- points **south** include Cafe Divine and Le P’tite Table in Okotoks, the Broxburn Cafe near Lethbridge, the Zucchini Blossom in Medicine Hat, and the Route 40 Soup Company in Turner Valley
- in **central** Alberta, stop at the Blue Ox Inn in Camrose, Huckleberrie’s in Wetaskiwin, Bricco in Calmar and the Eco Café at Pigeon Lake
- up **north**, think of the Cygnet Dining Room or Jeffrey’s Café in Grande Prairie and the Riverhouse in Athabasca
- in **Edmonton**, enjoy regional cuisine at its vibrant best at La Ronde in the Crowne Plaza Chateau Lacombe, Jack’s Grill, Mangiamo’s, Café de Ville, Madisons in the Union Bank Inn, Normand’s, Matahari, and the River House Grill in St. Albert

New this year is the **Dine Alberta Savour Regional Flavour Passport**, available after August 25, 2005. Holders of this passport will experience the best in regional cuisine and qualify for great prizes. Passport can be picked up at over 100 locations around the province, at participating restaurants, Travel Alberta, Edmonton Tourism and Calgary Tourism kiosks.

Dine Alberta is a project of Alberta Agriculture Food and Rural Development. For more information, contact Johnson at (780) 415-2321, e-mail inquiry@dinealberta.ca or visit the **Dine Alberta** website at www.dinealberta.ca.

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Sun protection tips for farmers

Farmers in Alberta are fortunate to have an “office in the fresh air.” They spend many of the daylight hours working under the hot summer sun. While fresh air and natural light can make people feel strong and healthy, the outdoor work environment can also increase the risk of overexposure to the sun’s powerful ultraviolet (UV) rays.

“Prolonged exposure to UV rays can lead to painful, blistering sunburn and premature skin wrinkling and aging,” says Madelyne Curtis, prevention outreach coordinator (Sun Safety), Alberta Cancer Board. “It can also lead to skin cancer, including the most serious and potentially fatal form, melanoma. Skin cancer is the most common cancer in Alberta, but it is also highly preventable.”

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For outdoor workers, there are a number of simple things that can be done to reduce the risk of long-term skin damage. The Alberta Cancer Board recommends that people incorporate sun protection into their daily farm safety routine.

Simple strategies for sun safety include:

- Organize your work schedule around peak UV times – the intensity of the sun’s UV rays is greatest between 11:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Try to structure the daily work routine so that outdoor duties are scheduled around this window of time. Whenever possible, try to complete tasks such as equipment maintenance inside a shop, shed, or other covered structure.
- Seek shade – if you cannot avoid being outdoors during the hours of peak UV intensity, seek shade to protect you from the sun. Shade can be found naturally from trees or buildings, or it can be created using portable structures such as canopies, umbrellas or tents.
- Cover up – choose loose-fitting clothing to enable air circulation, and opt for long pants and shirts with at least elbow-length sleeves to give your skin maximum coverage. Tightly-woven fabrics (e.g., denim, polyester) provide better sun protection than loosely-woven fabrics (e.g., cotton), and some outdoor clothing is rated using the ultraviolet protection factor (UPF) system. Look for garments that are rated UPF 15 or higher. Opt for a wide-brimmed hat that will protect your head, face, and neck, such as a cowboy hat instead of a ball cap.
- Use sunscreen – slather on a generous amount of sunscreen, sun protection factor (SPF) 15 or higher, to all exposed skin every two hours or after intense work and perspiration.

“Remember that sun safety is especially important for young people,” adds Curtis. “Children and grandchildren who visit the farm or lend a hand in the field are also at risk of skin damage; just one sunburn during childhood can increase the risk of developing skin cancer later in life.”

You can help set a positive example for your family by making sun protection part of your own daily routine. For more information about sun safety and skin cancer prevention, visit the Alberta Cancer Board web site at www.cancerboard.ab.ca.

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Protect yourself against West Nile virus

The Government of Alberta launched a public awareness campaign to highlight the simple protective measures Albertans should take to reduce their risk of contracting West Nile virus (WNV). The campaign primarily targets active adults because research indicates these individuals are more at risk due to their age and exposure from being outdoors.

The first evidence of West Nile in Alberta this year, confirmed in mosquitoes found in a surveillance station in the Provost area, was announced on August 7, 2005. Albertans should now assume the disease can be contracted anywhere in the province. The most effective means of reducing infection is to take simple personal precautions to reduce the risk of being bitten by mosquitoes by using a mosquito repellent containing DEET.

“The risk of WNV is difficult to predict from year to year because it depends upon many factors, particularly weather conditions,” says Dr. Karen Grimsrud, Deputy Provincial Health Officer of Alberta Health and Wellness. “For this reason, it is important Albertans protect themselves this summer, whether in their backyard or as they travel throughout the province, Canada or the United States.”

During 2004 there was only one case of WNV infection in Alberta related to travel outside of province; however, 275 Albertans developed West Nile fever or the more serious West Nile neurological syndrome during 2003. Most were older adults.

WNV is transmitted to humans through the bite of an infected mosquito. Albertans can reduce their risk of infection by avoiding contact with mosquitoes by:

- Using an insect repellent with DEET. When used as directed, DEET has an excellent safety record.
- Choosing products with lemon eucalyptus oil as an alternative to DEET. These products are effective for shorter periods of time.
- Applying insect repellent sparingly to clothing and exposed skin.
- Reading product labels carefully and always following instructions.

Insect repellents containing higher concentrations of DEET last longer, but do not provide any better level of protection.

- 30% DEET = 6 hours of protection
- 15% DEET = 5 hours of protection
- 10% DEET = 3 hours of protection
- 5% DEET = 2 hours of protection

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“One of the simplest ways to protect yourself is to wear light-coloured, long-sleeved shirts and pants, and a hat,” adds Dr. Grimsrud. “Also, consider staying indoors at dawn and dusk when mosquitoes are most active.”

Populations of mosquitoes that transmit WNV to humans can be reduced by completing the following simple tasks:

- get rid of standing water in your yard where mosquitoes can lay their eggs
- cover rain barrels with screens
- clean out eavestroughs regularly to prevent clogs that trap water
- ensure window and door screens have no holes or openings

For more information about protecting yourself, visit www.fightthebite.info or call Health Link Alberta:

- Edmonton call 408-LINK (5465)
- Calgary, call 943-LINK (5465)
- outside the Edmonton and Calgary local calling areas, call toll-free 1-866-408-LINK (5465).

Agri-News Briefs

August is a busy month for Thoroughbred owners

August has traditionally been an active month for Thoroughbred owners, and this year is no exception. On August 20 and 21, 2005, the Alberta Thoroughbred Summer Yearling Sale will be held at Northlands Sportex in Edmonton. For the event, 210 yearlings have been listed for sale in the 2005 catalogue. The sale is organized by the Alberta Division of the Canadian Thoroughbred Horse Society (CTHS). The following week, on August 27, 2005, the running of the 76th Canadian Derby will also take place in Edmonton at Northlands Park. This premier event, with a guaranteed purse of \$300,000, is one that horseracing enthusiasts anticipate each year. For further information on either of these events, contact the CTHS (Alberta Division) at (403) 229-3609 or visit the website at www.cthsalta.com.