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## EAGLE CREEK WATERSHED NEWS

### **Growing Forward 2 can assist your Operation;**

There are **24** Beneficial Management Practices (BMPs) that provide funding to farmers and ranchers in Saskatchewan. These BMPs are in seven categories; Livestock Site Management, Manure Management, Irrigation Management, Land Management, Precision Farming, Agricultural Waste Management and Environmental Solutions. Details of all **24** practices can be found on the Eagle Creek website;

[www.eaglecreekwatershed.ca](http://www.eaglecreekwatershed.ca)

(go to “Programs” then go to “Farm Stewardship Program”).

#### **Basic Eligibility;**

To be eligible, applicants must:

- Be a Saskatchewan resident or file income tax with farm income in Saskatchewan;
- Have a Saskatchewan Environmental Farm Plan endorsed within the last 10 years;
- For certain BMPs applicants may also be eligible by working through the Eagle Creek Agri-Environmental Group Plan.
- Own or control a minimum of **320** acres of farmland in Saskatchewan and earn a minimum of **\$35,000** of farm income in Saskatchewan in the year of application.

#### **Program Funding Levels:**

Each BMP has a funding limit; however, the total funding an applicant can receive is **\$50,000** under Growing Forward 2 Farm Stewardship Program (FSP). You may apply more than once provided the applications are for separate eligible projects and expenditures, and do not exceed the BMP or overall funding caps.

## Eagle Creek Board of Directors

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When you go to the Eagle Creek website [www.eaglecreekwatershed.ca](http://www.eaglecreekwatershed.ca) And then to “Programs” and then to “Farm Stewardship Program” you will find each of the 24 Beneficial Management Practices (BMP) have the same basic format:

- ◆ **Intent of BMP**
- ◆ **Funding Level**
- ◆ **Application Type**
- ◆ **Technical Resource**
- ◆ **Eligibility**
- ◆ **Projects Costs—Details are given on Eligible Costs and Ineligible Costs**
- ◆ **At the bottom of the page is a link to the correct application form**

Here is an example of how one of these BMPs would work on your farm. You have a quarter section of land that you have tried growing annual crops on for a number of years with little economic reward. The land is a loamy sand texture and you want to seed it down to a forage.

After going to the Eagle Creek webpage > Programs > Farm Stewardship Program you notice under the “Land Management” category a BMP is available entitled “[Protecting High Risk Erodible & Saline Soils](#)”

**The Intent of the BMP;** To assist producers in implementing practices that minimize erosion and soil salinity on agricultural land by converting highly erodible and saline land from annual grain production to permanent cover ...

**Funding Level;** [50 per cent of eligible costs to a maximum of \\$10,000.](#)

**Application Type;** [Rebate](#) (but may require pre-approval of seed mixture).

**Technical Resource;** For technical assistance (or Forage Field Sheet where required) contact a Ministry of Agriculture Regional Forage Specialist.

**Eligibility;** Must have an EFP or AEGP Certificate of Completion.

**Basic Eligibility Criteria** plus:

- ◆ Own or control land in annual crop production which is at risk of erosion or salinity including: coarse or moderately coarse textured soils, land with steep slopes, runoff spill ways, sloughs, lowland with accumulated salts.
- ◆ Projects MUST be completed on land that has been previously used for annual crop production for a minimum of two years to be eligible.
- ◆ Land previously used for native or perennial tame forage production is NOT eligible

**Project Costs; (Eligible)**

- ◆ Maximum eligible rebate for **establishment costs is set at \$17.50/acre** (based on maximum costs for establishment of \$35/acre). Establishment costs including seed bed preparation, herbicide application and seeding. Establishment costs must be supported by list of activities performed and associated costs.
- ◆ Rented equipment or applicant's equipment charged at rates included in the Saskatchewan Farm Machinery Custom and Rental Rate Guide (these rates include labour).
- ◆ Max. eligible rebate for **seed is \$17.50/acre** (based on max. costs for seed of \$35/ac).

## Project Costs (Ineligible costs);

- Costs for planting cover or companion crops.
- Seeding a grass seed mix including more than 20 per cent biennial species (such as yellow clover).
- Seeding mixes with NO creeping rooted grasses.
- Rejuvenation of existing forages, pastures or hay land.
- Fertilizer.
- Applicant or employee labour not part of in-kind equipment rates.

## Rebate Applications;

All work must occur between April 1, 2013 and January 31, 2018. Refer to the BMP guidelines for details on project eligibility.

### Here is another example; Plastic Grain Bag Roller

**Intent of BMP:** Having access to a grain bag roller as the grain is extracted makes consolidation and recycling of the plastic easier and more convenient. The plastic also remains cleaner if immediately rolled which is preferred by the recycling industry. Recycling is an environmentally preferred alternative to burning, burying or taking bags to landfill sites.

This BMP will assist producers with the purchase of a grain bag roller. The intent of the BMP is to better manage, store and recycle grain bags thereby reducing the environmental risks associated with improper disposal.

**Funding Level: 50 per cent of eligible costs to a maximum of \$5,000.**

**Application Type: Rebate**

**Technical Resource:** For more information on this BMP, please contact Financial Programs Branch at 1-877-874-5365. For information about grain bag recycling programs please contact SimplyAg Solutions Inc. at 1-866-298-7222.

**Eligibility:** Must have an Environmental Farm Plan plus meet Basic Eligibility Criteria.

#### Project Costs:      Eligible Costs:

- Plastic grain bag stand-alone roller unit.
- Incorporated roller unit in a grain extractor if it produces a roll acceptable to recycle.
- Hydraulic components to connect to the tractor hydraulic system if not part of the roller system.

#### Project Costs:      Ineligible Costs:

- Costs for projects started prior to April 1, 2015.
- A trailer to haul the stand-alone roller unit.
- Equipment for loading or hauling used plastic.
- Labour including applicant, employee or custom.
- In-kind labour costs to assemble equipment.
- Power units not built into the roller unit.
- Transportation of the roller unit from the dealership to the farm.
- Used or leased items or equipment. To be eligible, new items or equipment must be purchased from a grain bag dealer or manufacturer.

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## WHY DECOMMISSION OLD WELLS?



**Old wells are a threat to public safety as people (especially children), animals and farm machinery have fallen into them.**

All wells can provide a direct pathway from the surface to the aquifer. When a well becomes abandoned the risk of contamination from surface pollutants increases. If the aquifer becomes contaminated remediation can be costly, time consuming and sometimes ineffective. This may limit securing a safe water supply from the aquifer for a land owner.

Abandoned or improperly decommissioned well could increase your liability, affect property values and could impede a real estate transaction.

Costs related to well decommissioning can receive a grant for up to 90 per cent of eligible expenses.

Application deadline is August 1st 2017.

Phone Glenn at 306-831-6009 for further information.

## WHAT CAN YOU DO ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT?

By Glenn Barclay PAg

The Eagle Creek Watershed promotes Environmental Farm Planning and helps farmers access funding for various practices to help the environment. Most of these funds protect and enhance our water supplies and land resources. There is also funding for practices that assist in waste management such as plastic grain bag rollers and used oil storage.

However, there are many practices that aren't tied to any funding programs that you can consider to enhance your farm or ranch's environment. I will outline some examples below. I'm sure you can come up with many other examples.

**Increase organic matter on your cultivated and pasture land.** Organic matter increases spore space in your soil and reduces the threat of soil compaction. It also means oxygen and nitrogen gases can circulate better and increase nitrogen mineralization. 75% of available phosphorus is held by organic matter. Organic matter increases water infiltration and the water holding capacity of soil. Organic matter can hold two to ten times its weight in water. Organic matter stabilizes soil structure. Gums and resins bind soil particles together which will decrease erosion potential. Organic matter improves soil workability indicating that the higher the organic matter the earlier in the season the soil can be worked or seeded. Enhancing crop growth with fertilizers ultimately increases the organic Nitrogen levels in soil. Organic matter plays a major role in the soil's ability to tie up or absorb pesticides. This provides for a safe storage place where microorganisms can degrade these materials.

Grazing management impacts soil quality. Overgrazed pastures develop a less extensive root system. Soil fertility, organic matter content and water holding capacity benefit when forages have a healthy root system.

**Monitor and manage your water quality.** Regularly test your domestic water supplies and your livestock's water sources. The old saying, "if you don't know what the problems are you can't manage them", still applies. Studies have shown time and time again that good water quality assists in good weight gain for cattle.

**Reducing Green House Gases (GHG) on the Farm.** Our province's greenhouse gas emissions were 74.8 million tonnes in 2012 according to Environment Canada. Agriculture in our province accounts for 16% of provincial GHG emissions (Source: *Environment Canada National Inventory Report, 1990-2012*). Agriculture is a biological production system in which the major GHG are methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) and nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O) whereas in most other sectors of the Canadian economy, carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) from the burning of fossil fuels is the major GHG.

Cattlemen, for example, can reduce GHG by;

- Selecting animals for high feed conversion since these animals will produce a smaller component of emissions per animal.
- Feed good quality diets since less methane will be produced.
- Good pasture management. More methane (and less production) comes from consuming stalky (harder to digest) grass than lush vegetative leaves.
- More legumes in pastures and hay which make the feed easier to digest and increase rate of gain per day.

**Many practices that increase production efficiency also contribute to environmental enhancement.**