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EAGLE CREEK
WATERSHED GROUP

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EAGLE CREEK WATERSHED NEWS

ARE YOU GETTING THE MESSAGE OUT?

By Glenn Barclay PAg

Let's assume you are a producer in the Eagle Creek Watershed. If I asked you "Are you a good environmental steward of your land?" I'm sure you would answer "Of course. Sure I have to clean up some minor issues but yes, I do a good job looking after the environment". Are you getting that message out to the public?

As a crop producer could you explain to someone how much fertilizer is taken up by the plant and how the remaining fertilizer acts in the soil after application? Nitrogen, potassium, phosphorus and sulfur, for example, don't follow the same rules when it comes to plant uptake. Could you explain how much nitrogen is mineralized and made available to plants by the soil per year?

When plants grow they remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere to make leaves, stems, roots, and grain. Non-harvested plant parts return to the soil and become soil organic matter. Soil organic matter is more than half carbon by weight. At one time soil organic carbon was carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. The process of removing CO₂ from the atmosphere and storing it in the soil is termed carbon sequestration. It has been estimated that on a worldwide basis there is more than twice as much carbon tied up in soil organic carbon and plant residues than there is as carbon in CO₂ in the atmosphere. Soil carbon has increased because of reduced tillage practices. Is the general public aware of these facts and how modern farming practices can help the atmosphere?

As a cattle producer have you ever been challenged with the statements like "It takes 15,415 litres of water to produce one kilogram of beef or if we ate less beef it would dramatically reduce greenhouse gas emissions in our earth's atmosphere." You should be able to counter these statements.

Are your friends and relatives in the city or your local town aware of the modern farming practices that keep the environment in good shape? Are your kids and grandchildren aware of how fertilizers and pesticides are used on your fields and what happens to these products after application? How much does agriculture contribute to worldwide green house gases?

As a producer you are a proud steward of the environment. Share that message with the public!

Canada

Growing Forward 2



Seeding a New Forage Stand – What to consider?

**Sarah Sommerfeld, PAg, Regional Forage Specialist, Outlook
Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture**

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If you are planning to seed a new forage stand this spring, there are questions to consider before putting any seeds into the ground.

Are there any weed issues present in the area to be seeded?

Identifying and controlling any weed issues prior to forage establishment is crucial. Close attention should be given to perennial weeds. Perennial weeds are very competitive with forages during establishment and can significantly reduce future forage yields. Control of perennial weeds can be difficult and expensive once the forage stand is established, so make the effort to control them prior to seeding. Be mindful of the re-cropping restrictions that follow with herbicide use for perennial weed control. Herbicides with the active ingredients of picloram, metsulfuron methyl or aminopyralid, all have long term re-cropping restrictions. There are also limited in-crop herbicide options available for use on forages, especially legume/grass mixed stands.

What are the soil conditions of the area to be seeded?

Knowing the type of soil and growing conditions of the area will aid in selecting the most suitable forage species. Forage species are not equal in their capability to tolerate conditions such as drought, flooding or salinity. Taking the time to look into which forage species are suitable for specific soil conditions will be worth the effort. A producer should also consider submitting a soil sample for nutrient analysis. Soil test results help determine the fertilizer requirements for the new forage crop and indicate any nutrient deficiencies that may limit forage production. It is important to remember that grasses will benefit the most from nitrogen, while legumes will benefit from phosphorus, potassium and sulphur applications. A balanced approach to soil fertility is important. If any one nutrient is lacking, production will be affected, and the response to applying other nutrients will be reduced.

What is the intended use for this forage stand?

Identifying the end use of the forage stand will help to select forage species suited for the intended purpose. Most forage stands are grown for hay, pasture or a dual role. When harvested as a hay crop, the forage stand may include a large proportion of alfalfa or grasses that have a higher yield potential and a slower rate of regrowth. If the forage stand is to be used for grazing, the stand may include grasses that have excellent regrowth qualities with a very low proportion of alfalfa or no alfalfa at all. Alternatively, non-bloat legumes, such as sainfoin and cicer milkvetch, may be considered for use in a grazing system. Non-bloat legumes can be used in mixtures with alfalfa and/or grasses to improve the forage yield, quality and to reduce the risk of bloat.

How long do you intend to keep this forage stand in production?

Forage species differ in stand persistence. Choosing forages that meet the goals of the crop rotation is important. A short duration forage stand integrated into an annual crop rotation will contain different forage species than a long lived forage stand intended for ground cover, reclamation or restoration.

Decide on the forage species to include in a mixture based on your answers to the above questions. Forage seed companies offer a wide range of pre-mixed forage seed options, but will also prepare custom blended forage mixtures to meet specific producer goals. For more information on forage selection and establishment, contact

Sarah at 306-867-5559 or the Agriculture Knowledge Centre at 1-866-457-2377.

Farm Stewardship Program

Beneficial Management Practice	Funding Level	Pre-Approval/Rebate
Livestock Site Management		
Relocation of Livestock Confinement*	60% to \$50,000	Pre-Approval
Fencing to Protect Surface Water*	50% to \$10,000	Rebate
Farmyard Runoff Control*	50% to \$30,000	Pre-Approval
Riparian Area Grazing Management and Fencing*	50% to \$10,000	Pre-Approval
Native Grassland Grazing Management*	50% to \$10,000	Pre-Approval
Carcass Disposal Plans	75% to \$30,000	Pre-Approval
Manure Management		
Manure Storage Enhancements	30% to \$50,000	Pre-Approval
Manure Application Equipment and Technologies	30% to \$30,000	Rebate
Land Management		
Natural Waterway Erosion Control*	75% to \$30,000	Pre-Approval
Creek and Stream Crossing*	50% to \$20,000	Pre-Approval
Native Plant Establishment*	75% to \$10,000	Pre-Approval
Protecting High Risk Erodible and Saline Soils*	50% to \$10,000	Rebate
Shelterbelt Establishment	\$1200/mile to \$5,000	Rebate
Water Flow and Erosion Control*	50% to \$20,000	Pre-Approval
IPM Collection and Monitoring	50% to \$1,000	Rebate
Irrigation Management		
Irrigation Management Planning	50% to \$2,000	Rebate
Irrigation Equipment Modification	30% to \$50,000	Pre-Approval
Variable Rate Irrigation Technology	30% to \$15,000	Pre-Approval
Precision Farming		
Variable Rate Fertilizer Equipment	30% to \$5,000	Rebate
Variable Rate Mapping	30% to \$2,000	Rebate
Agricultural Wastes		
Used Oil Storage	50% to \$2,000	Rebate
Grain Bag Recycling	50% to \$5,000	Rebate
Environmental Solutions		
Environmental Solutions	20-50% of \$50,000	Pre-Approval

*Available through AEGP without EFP, all BMPs available with an EFP
There is a Multi-Producer Erosion Control BMP. Contact AEGP tech for details.

There are two types of Farm Stewardship Program (FSP) applications:

Pre-approval applications:

Projects must be approved prior to work being done.

Rebate applications:

Projects do not have to be pre-approved.

Details on all of these Beneficial Management Practices can be found on the Eagle Creek website; www.eaglecreekwatershed.ca

A Tip:

When you are applying for a pre-approval or rebate under the Farm Stewardship Program or applying under the Farm and Ranch Water Infrastructure Program use my name, Glenn Barclay (306-831-6009) as the “alternate contact” on your application form. If you leave it blank or use another family member, the reviewers in Regina cannot divulge any information to me.

If necessary, I can assist Regina in answering questions and clarifying information about your application.

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Environmental Farm Plans by Glenn Barclay PAg

Since 2005 over 12,000 Environmental Farm Plans have been developed in Saskatchewan. The process to develop an EFP required a producer to attend two workshops, go through a self-assessment of environmental risks and develop an action plan to deal with these risks. After the action plan had been developed it would be sent to an anonymous peer review process for further refinement or receive an endorsement and a certificate of completion. Today, in an effort to be more innovative the Sask. Ministry of Agriculture is rolling out an on-line version of the Environmental Farm Plans (EFP). EF Plans are assessments voluntarily prepared by producers to increase their environmental awareness in up to 25 different areas on their farm. Through the EFP process, farmers will highlight their farm's environmental strengths, identify areas of environmental concern, and set realistic action plans with time tables to improve environmental conditions.

To complete or update an EFP visit efp.saskatchewan.ca. This online, interactive, self-assessment tool will allow producers to work through their EF Plans at their own pace to complete an individual action plan. **For technical assistance or more information on the Environmental Farm Plan Program please contact the Agriculture Knowledge Centre at 1-866-457-2377 or aginfo@gov.sk.ca.**

The Farm Stewardship Program (FSP), outlined on page 3 of this newsletter, provides funding to assist in implementing specific projects. To access BMPs under the Farm Stewardship Program, producers must complete an Environmental Farm Plan (EFP). When individual EFPs reach 10 years of age, producers will be required to review and update their plan in order to continue to qualify for the FSP.

If you do not have an individual Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) producers can apply through the Eagle Creek Watershed for Farm Stewardship Program funding for select Beneficial Management Practices (BMPs). **Phone Glenn Barclay at 306-831-6009 for more information.**

Why should you develop an Environmental Farm Plan?

By Glenn Barclay PAg

- Improving farm health and safety.
- Building acceptance of the operation among neighbours and the public.
- Increasing personal satisfaction and knowledge.
- Adding value to the farm property.
- Agricultural sustainability.

Other reasons might include:

- To reduce farm inputs like herbicides, insecticides, fertilizers, and fuel.
- To demonstrate to the public, governments, regulators, lenders, and/or investors that you are managing your environmental risks.
- To increase your understanding of your legal requirements related to environmental issues.
- To identify what you are already doing well and pinpoint where improvements could be made.

An example of a completed action plan entry within an EFP would be to address a concern like monitoring and testing of farm water quality. The end result could be taking a water sample and testing it the same week annually. A file of these test reports would be maintained as a long term action.