

Forage First

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New Day Dawns in Forage Crop Research Program in Western Canada

"Martin Budget Dismantles Existing Program of Forage Research at Ag Canada Research Stations"

One of the features of the recent deficit reducing federal budget in late February was the big hit delivered to forage crop researchers at virtually every Ag Canada Research Station in the four Western Provinces.

Essentially the Martin budget produced so much devastation with cutbacks and cut outs in the federal government research program that for all practical purposes the entire forage research program at Research Stations has been dismantled as of January 1, 1996, a shell of its former self.

So as of now, cattle and other livestock producers have no research program to support the industry upon which their animals feed. It is virtually inconceivable that the existing beef cattle industry can continue to thrive and prosper without the support and backup provided by a organized system of forage crop research, basic and applied. (Continued page 3)

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Forage Variety and Cultivar Testing to Carry On in Peace River Block in 1995

Your local forage Association has developed a partnered agreement for the B.C. Peace to allow the continuation of forage cultivar and varietal testing during 1995.

Groups expected to be participating in this agreement as a partner include: the B.C. Forage Council, the Peace River Forage Association of B.C., PRASPS, the B.C. Grain Producers Association, the BCMAFF (Prince George - Dawson Creek - Fort St. John), Beaverlodge Ag Canada and Agri Business.

Last years budget was \$43,000 and for 1995 a similar amount is likely to be allocated.

Four forage test sites will be involved: Bob and Joan Tubb, Tomslake; Jim and Doreen Collins Farm, Fort St. John, Odden Ranch, Groundbirch; Fred Lehman Farm, Cecil Lake. (Continued page 4)

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British Columbia Forage Council Holds Most Successful Convention Ever " In the Peace Country, Where Else!"

January 26th and 27th saw the B.C. Forage Council hold their annual meeting and related activities in the B.C. Peace for the first time in the history of the organization.

While there was a lot of work required by the organizing committee and other forage enthusiasts, the three part forage program turned out to be an unqualified success, with even the weather cooperating 100%.

The Annual General Meeting, the Trade Fair and the Quality Forage Seminar all achieved good attendance and those attending pretty well figured it was a good investment of their time and money.

A special tour of Ridgeview Reindeer Farm at Pouce Coupe and the Bison Feedlot at the Centre for Agricultural Diversification east of Dawson Creek was enjoyed by participants as part of the Convention activities. (Continued page 5)

Editorial



This issue of the Newsletter has been written edited, printed and mailed by "The Forage First Committee. Please address your observations on this issue to the Association at: Box 908, Dawson Creek, B.C.V1G 1L6.

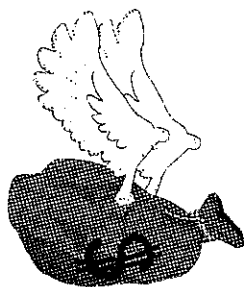
Ag Week from February 27th through March 3 overall seemed to be a pretty successful series of events. However, attendance from

livestock people was definitely at a minimum. This year's program was in Dawson Creek and next year it will be in Fort St. John. Two questions for the Forage Association arise in conjunction with Ag Week:

#1 **Should we participate** with our Quality Forage Seminar in 1996? #2 **Will the Ag week Planning Group move Ag Week** to the last week in January or first week in February so that Livestock producers will have the opportunity to participate?

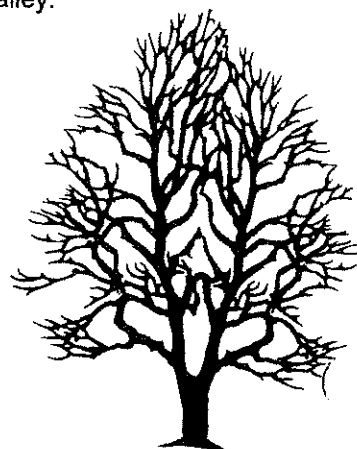
We congratulate the **Peace River Forage Seed Association** on its formation in early March. Their objective is the advancement of the forage seed growing industry in all its phases throughout the Peace River Bioregion of Alberta and B.C. Included in this new group working together are: producers, the seed trade, researchers and government officials. Further information please phone Sandra Burton (604) 789-3450.

Big Changes have arrived in Forage Based Agriculture and more are coming as the effects of the Crow Benefit flying away, the dismantling of the Federal Forage Research Program, continued NAFTA wheeling and dealing and user pay attitudes of governments everywhere become reality to managers of farms and ranches. We believe our local forage association is providing useful economic information transfer services to our members and supporters; **so express your appreciation in the way that it counts: Renew your membership today** (if you have not already done so) and also sign up your neighbours. \$30.00 per year and make cheques payable to the Peace River Forage Association of B.C. (Includes B.C.F.C. membership tool)



Association Fund Raiser is scheduled for **Saturday August 5th at the Kiskatinaw River Ranch**. Support in both contributions and buying power is required from all members for this event to be a success. Weaver Brothers Auctions have volunteered to help us out on this project; and, we have also talked to Bonny and Baldy and they are prepared to haul the ranch chuckwagon up to the sale site so that Dutchoven Delilah and her cookys can whopup some good ranch grub for the participants. A brief tour of the ranch pastures, hayfields and livestock will likely be on the agenda too. However the directors need a lot of inputs from the membership so let us hear from you. Please note: Consignment items will be accepted for the auction and dropoff points for Auction goods are these three locations: 1. Ernie Fuhr, The Honey Place, Mile 42 Alaska Highway, Fort St. John, 2. Bob Tubb, Tomslake 3. Ernest Nimitz, Sunset Prairie and Sunrise Valley.

Members should be aware that it is possible to **live with the New Forest Practices Code**. The Association has developed a program which any members can take advantage of and if followed for several years will put that farm or ranch into a very knowledgeable position in which to deal with a government agency like the B.C. Forest Service. It is called **Long Term Forage Productivity Benchmarks (L.T.F.P.B.)** and is part of a larger concept called **B.E.R.G. (Balanced Ecology with Rotational Grazing)**. Essentially L.T.F.P.B. is a system of collecting actual livestock use per pasture information plus vegetative condition and use information and relating it to the grazing capacity, the economic return and the overall health of the pasture and winterfeed production unit. Anybody can learn to do this and achieve the benefits from having a better handle on their pasture productivity and animal performance. Contact the Secretary for further information.



The Stockmans Grass Farmer, "The Grass Profit Paper" and editor H. Allan Nation can be contacted in Jackson, Mississippi by phoning 1-800-748-9808

Tour Host Available Myron Bjorge has offered to host a forage tour for our members in the Rocky Mountain House area this year. Some things to see in that area include intensive grazing of beef and dairy cattle, winter feed production systems, compacted timothy for export. Please contact the director nearest you so that we can get something organized.

Thank you to **Patsy Nagel** of Pouce Coupe for supplying the nice pictures we have used in this issue.

New Day Dawns in Forage Crop Research Program in Western Canada

After all, the application at the practical level of good forage crop research techniques and information is one reason the Western Canadian beef industry is where it is today, thriving!

For the immediate short term, this new day in forage research means existing programs all shrink or are cancelled, unless other means can be found to fund research programs, PDQ. To support one forage scientist position and at a federal research station costs roughly \$200,000 to \$250,000 annually, so we aren't talking peanuts here! One possibility exists in the federal governments **Matching Investment Initiative**. The feds will match 50/50 in dollar contributions by non government groups (such as the C.S.G.A.). In these days of User Pay, the reality is that for any forage crops research to continue a new system of funding is going to have to be determined.

In Alberta, the provincial government is sponsoring applied research organizations (A.R.O.). With this system, provincial, local government and industry funds are partnered to benefit a local group of farmers and ranchers. This local group operates under a board of directors who select the research projects and hire staff to carry them out. The most well known ARO is the Chinook Applied Research Association which operates out of the Special Areas. Two of the seven ARO's are in the Peace, at Fahler and Manning.

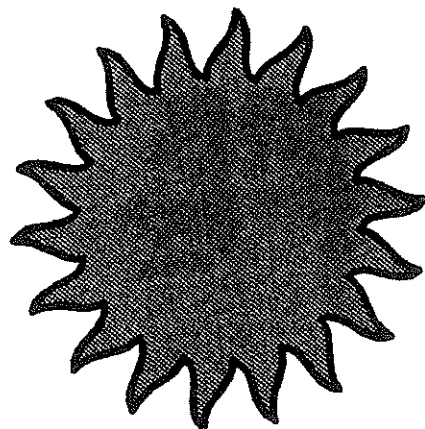
The objective of the ARO's is to get away from topdown research which may or may not be suitable for any other area than the local research station site, and produce pertinent research results for local farmers.

However, generally the ARO's seem to have one or all of these problems:

1. Qualified and recognized research programs often require masters and PHD personal to insure they are planned and managed properly.
2. Lack of permanent facilities and research equipment.
3. Lack of skilled permanent staff over the long term.
4. Duplication of what is being done elsewhere.
5. Blurring of boundaries between a good demonstration and a properly conducted research project.

It does appear that in many cases, federal research stations have not yet been included to any particular degree in design of AROs or in functioning thereof?

Perhaps, the most damaging possibility to primary producers of livestock who depend on forages for their base diet, is the potential and immediate brain drain of highly skilled scientists such as:



Dr. Joanna Fraser, Scientist in Forage Agronomy and Physiology, Lethbridge Research Station. She is probably the foremost authority in Canada on white clover. (*Trifolium repens*.)

Mr. Duane McCartney, Program Leader: Beef Cow-calf and Pasture Management: Melfort Research Station. Duane's program in rotational grazing is of the consistent quality that has made Melfort forage research well respected in the livestock industry over the years.

Dr. Daphne T. Fairey, Legume Seed Production Scientist. Daphne is well known throughout the Peace as a highly skilled legume researcher, plus an extremely effective communicator.

The Dawning of the New Forage Day actually offers quite a challenge to those who believe both in the importance of forage crops to the livestock industry and in the value of forage crop research to the beef dairy and sheep industries.

Pretty well all cultivar and varietal development in forages will now surely be handled privately by outfits like Proven (UGG and Northrup King) and Secan (The Prairie Pools). Within about six months we will likely see who else is prepared to put their money where their mouth is regarding other needed forage type research.

You might say that forage based agriculture presently sits in the interesting situation where the horse has gotten out of the barn and now we have to decide if we just want to close the door and let it run or, do we try to get the horse back in the barn (or maybe trade for a new horse and put it in the barn); and who is going to do it?

Forage Variety and Cultivar Testing to Carry On in Peace River Block of B.C. in 1995



The objectives of this testing program are fivefold:

1. To evaluate winterhardness and forage and seed production of new cultivars of red clover.
2. To continue winterhardness measurements, of alfalfa cultivars in the Peace by:
 - * summarizing all available information
 - * harvesting old and present forage testing sites to gather new yield and longevity data
 - * establishing new forage tests of falcatta alfalfa cultivars.
3. To evaluate new annual legume and cereal species for use as winterfeed or to extend the grazing season.
4. To continue field trials testing new cultivars /varieties of alfalfa, other legumes and selected tamegrasses in terms of comparative yield relative to recommended benchmark varieties.
5. To publish the acquired information in the appropriate BCMAFF information piece, in local forage newsletters and to present the data at local forage association meetings and field days.

Grazing Red Clover Successfully

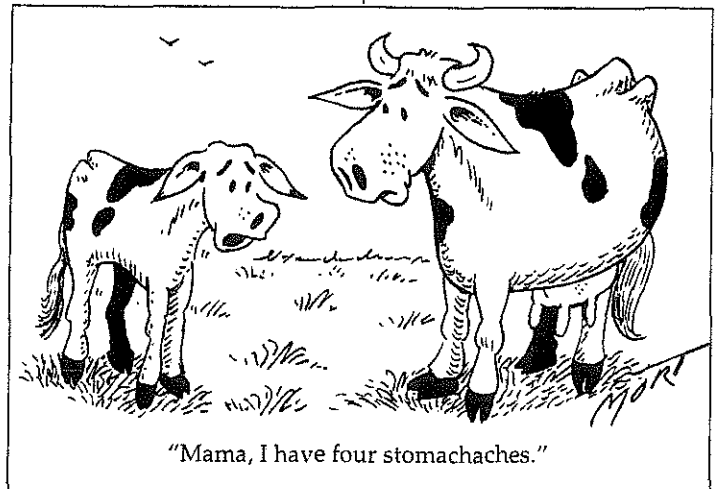
Don Halladay of Rocky Mountain House believes in a long enough recovery period following each grazing so that his key management plants are strong, healthy and wellgrown when the livestock return to graze again.

In 1993 to achieve this objective with his pasture program he bought some first crop red clover from a neighbour and grazed 275 yearlings on it for 28 days without any bloat.

How did he avoid bloat? According to Don: We intensify our management when they are on the legume pasture in that we make more moves a day so that the steers have a smaller areas to select from. Before hand, we just make sure they are full when they go onto legume pastures and then give them a small chunk of legume pasture to start with. **We increase the stock density** so that steers never get to selective graze whatever is available there. Five different times a day, everybody has equal chance to select what they like. **But what they like doesn't last very long!**

If you move them frequently through the day, as well as eating the fines off the plant they also are eating the fibre, so they are never able to go in and have a complete ration of fines; **they have to have a mix of fines and fibre.** We also controlled the time they rested. When we would give them a fresh strip, everybody had to get up and eat because if they didn't it would soon be gone.

(Gleaned from the Grey Wooded Forage Association Newsletter.)



British Columbia Forage Council Holds Most Successful Convention Ever "In the Peace Country, Where Else!.

A special thank you to our outstanding slate of guest speakers who shared a great deal of knowledge with us: Bruce Johnson, B.C. Forestry, Prince George; Dr. Daphne T. Fairey, Ag Canada, Beaverlodge; Louis Melanson, New Holland Corporation, Calgary; Myron Bjorge, Alberta Ag, Food and Rural Development, Lacombe; Roger Baldwin, Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration, Regina; Dr. Nigel A. Fairey, AG Canada, Beaverlodge

And thank you to our participants in the Trade Fair for exhibiting their fine products, services and providing useful information on forages:

B.C. Forage Council, Toms Lake; B.C. Cattlemen's Association, Progress; B.C. Grain Producers Association, Fort St. John; Bee Ag-Electronics Inc., Edmonton; North Peace Forage Association, Fairview; Peace River Forage Association of B.C.; Champion Feeds Services Ltd., Grande Prairie; Dawson Seed Co. Ltd., Surrey; Farm Credit Corporation, Dawson Creek; BCMAFF, Dawson Creek & Fort St. John; Grande Prairie Feed Service 1971 Ltd., Grande Prairie; Monsanto, Grande Prairie; New Holland Corporation, Calgary; Pickseed Canada Inc., Beaverlodge; Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration, Dawson Creek; PRASPS, Fort St. John; RNC Sales, Dawson Creek; South Peace Forage Association, Grande Prairie; Stirling Silage Systems, Lower Nicola; Superior Canadian Livestock Auctions, Eaglesham; Timberline Pontiac Buick, GMC Ltd., Dawson Creek; United Grain Growers, Grande Prairie Proven Seed, Grande Prairie; United Farmers of Alberta, Fairview; Wild Rose Seeds Inc., Sexsmith.

A further thank you is in order to our Financial Sponsors for their contributions which helped us out a great deal with our convention effort:

Wes Anderson & Associates, Dawson Creek; Bank of Montreal, Dawson Creek; Case Power & Equipment, Dawson Creek; Center Agricultural Diversification, Dawson Creek; Dawson Creek Veterinary Clinic, Dawson Creek; Erbe Feeds, Dawson Creek; Foothills Equipment Ltd., Fort St. John; Great West Farm Supply Ltd., Fort St. John; Inland Auto Centre Ltd., Dawson Creek; Kenver Equipment Ltd., Dawson Creek; Keystone Ranch, Toms Lake; New Holland Corporation, Calgary; Peace River Regional District, Dawson Creek; Peace River Regional Cattlemen's Association, Progress; Peavey Mart, Dawson Creek; Petro Canada Petro Sales, Jack Koosel Bulk, Dawson Creek; PRASPS, Fort St. John; PROVEL, Sherwood Park, Edmonton; RNC Sales, Dawson Creek; Weaver Brothers Auction, Toms Lake; Windsong Equipment, Cecil Lake.

Also, thank you to our Door Prize Sponsors:

Dawson Coop Union Service Centre, Dawson Creek; Dawson Seed Co. Ltd., Surrey; Erbe Feeds, Dawson Creek; Kal Tire, Dawson Creek; North Peace Apiaries, Fort St. John; Ridge View Reindeer Ranch, Pouce Coupe;

United Grain Growers, Dawson Creek; United Farmers of Alberta Co-op, Fairview.

Last but not least, thank you to the organizing committee:

Horst David; Jim Forbes; Walter and Pamela Fritsche; Gerry Gleeson; Burnem Grant; Glenn and Ralf Hogberg; Donna McColl; Henry and Patsy Nagel; Ernest Nimitz; Tom Pittman; Bruce Rutley; Bob and Joan Tubb; Keith, Greg and Jeff Weaver.

At the Directors meeting toward the end of the Convention, Bob Tubb of Toms Lake was re-elected president for 1995 and Tom Pittman, BCMAFF, Fort St. John was elected Treasurer. Joining them on the executive were Klaas Broersma, Ag Canada at Kamloops as Secretary and Roger Wikkerrink of Cobble Hill as Vice President.

Video, Videos, Videos

Cable Television from Fort St. John videoed the entire proceedings of the 1995 BCFC Forage Seminar and related activities.

Therefore, if you want videos of the following speakers:

* Dr. Daphne T. Fairey, Forage Research Scientist, Ag Canada, Beaverlodge, "Forage Research in a Northern Environment"

* Louis Melanson, New Products Testing Manager for Canada, New Holland Corporation "New Technology in forage Harvesting and Corporate Alignments in the Forage Industry"

* Bruce Johnson, Range Management Section, B.C. Forest Service, Prince George: New Forest Practices Code and How it Affect Ranchers and Farmers.

* Myron Bjorge, Provincial Forage Specialist, Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development, Lacombe "Successful Grazing and Pasture Management in Alberta".

* Roger Baldwin, Director of Land Management Services Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration, Regina "Community Pasture Management Successes on the Prairies"

* Louis Melanson, New Products Testing Manager for Canada, New Holland Corporation "New Technology in Forage harvesting and New Forage Harvest Equipment"

* Dr. Nigel A Fairey, Forage Research Scientist, Ag Canada, Beaverlodge, "Grass As a Crop"

Please indicate which ones you are interested in and contact Tom Pittman, Treasurer, B.C.F.C. direct at (604) 787-3240. We aren't entirely sure of the cost but it is our intention that it be a modest one.

Directors Profiles



Ernie Fuhr, Mile 42 Alaska Highway, Fort St. John

Ernie and Rose Fuhr are the owners of North Peace Apiaries. They call their business location on the Alaska Highway, "The Honey Place". From there they sell honey and pollen, plus operate a Tandy Leather Products dealership and also offer a custom quilt manufacturing service with their quilting machine. Honey and pollen are actually dually marketed, some sold locally some sold out of the region.

As well as having 900 bee hives for honey and pollen plus overwintering bees, the Fuhrs also operate a large farm in the Sunset Prairie area between the Community Pasture and Bavaria South Peace Farms. Their main farm product is hay, sold on a quality basis for a competitive price.

The Fuhrs came to the Peace Country in the late 1950's to farm and raise a family. One son Garry has his own business as a computer programmer in Vancouver; the other son Wayne is an aircraft engineer at Fort St. John International Airport. Their daughter Lynn is a producers assistant for movie commercials in Vancouver.

Ernie believes that proper marketing of a product is the key to success as a farmer. He sees the forage association as a very good way to improve forage crop management in the Peace and he also wants to stress to the overall agricultural community how bee keeping and forage work together to produce economic benefits.



Walter Fritsche, Dawson Creek

Located just north of the Seed Cleaning Plant, Walter and Pamela Fritsche operate a small, neat and efficient farm.

Walter came to Canada from Switzerland in 1965 while Pamela has deep roots in the Peace as her father was one of the two partners (Gibbs and Cornell) who started up the large farming operation that today is known as Bavaria South Peace Farms.

Primary products are quality hay (sold mainly to horse people) and finished lambs, often sold direct off the farm to local customers.

Walter works as a machinist at West Coast Energy in Taylor, plus assists Pamela with their PFAFF Sewing Machinery dealership. As well as these involvements Pamela also has found time for considerable volunteer work with the Dawson Creek Fair Board and the Lakeview Credit Union over the years.

Their oldest son Walter works in the Sales Department at Aspol Motors plus with the John Shipton Grain Farm at Doe River. Michael is just finishing his grade 12 and is leaning towards silviculture and other forestry programmes as a career.

The Fritsches use sheep to maximize the production on their limited land base and find that hay is a complimentary product to their sheep enterprise.

Walter joined the forage association in order to be able to get the information to allow him to grow better forage and improve the total forage management on their limited land base.

He believes that the forage association can play a crucial role in promoting good land management in the Peace Country.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PEACE RIVER FORAGE ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

" Encourage the maximum net profit for each and every member"

The Policy of your Association is to take a dual approach towards achieving a noticeable net profit increase for the members. Here is how we hope to accomplish this feat.

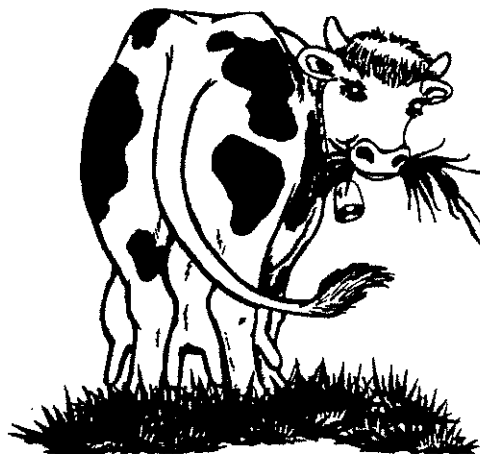
Firstly, a maximum of information transfer leading to increased forage knowledge and the appropriate methodology to apply it effectively. **Secondly**, the necessary involvements by the directors and members leading to an optimum level of influence with the government, business and consumer sectors of our society.

Specifically, this information garnered and involvements occurring will lead our members to a better understanding of:

1. **Intensive Forage Production** - Silage, hay and tame pastures managed to maximize the yield of forage per acre at an economic level leading to high production of red meat per acre.
2. **Successful Use of Crop Rotations** - Balancing hay and tame pasture in the rotation with grain and oilseed crops to insure proper conservation techniques are applied consistent with achieving maximum economic yield per field.
3. **Holistic Resource Management** - Short duration grazing with high numbers of livestock, power(electric) fencing programs to assist in developing economic pasture rotation programs; and, other management techniques involving the balancing of ecology and economics to produce a long term sustainable agricultural operation.
4. **Newest and Most Efficient Harvesting Methods** - Successful systems for harvesting, hauling and storing a maximum of top quality winter feed for your farm or ranch.
5. **Forage as a Valued Commodity** - How to make money with forages and how to properly value each type of forage enterprise you have on your farm/ranch.
6. **Variety Trials and Seeding Techniques** - What annual and perennial varieties and mixtures yield best economically for your management conditions for tame pasture and winter feed production; including the appropriate seeding rates and utilization of most effective seeding techniques to get a proper stand of forage established rapidly and effectively.
7. **Innovative Winter Livestock Feeding Systems** - Successful and economic equipment systems for feeding beef cows and other classes of livestock; plus, innovative, labour efficient techniques utilized by top line operators.
8. **State of the Art Grazing Management and Pasture Rotation Programs** - What is the best system to employ for your farm or ranch to achieve the optimum economic return per acre?
9. **Maximizing Proper Soil Conservation Techniques** - The encouragement of good soil management is the firm foundation for development of excellent forage production systems leading to economically viable livestock enterprises.
10. **The Politics of Food Production** - An awareness of the many powerful influences affecting individual agricultural producers from beyond their farm gate as epitomized by the current activities and future plans of governments and consumers/environment organizations and the willingness of producers to become involved in looking after their own welfare in this regard.

This understanding will encourage our members to adopt the various practices in these 10 categories suitable to their own individual farming and ranching operation to allow them to:

1. Promote, encourage, develop and protect the forage industry in the Peace River Area of British Columbia.
2. Represent those persons producing forage in the Peace River Area of British Columbia in all matters in which they are generally interested.
3. Encourage the production of the maximum net profit for each and every member.



Comparison of Bloat Control Products on Pasture

The economic advantages to grazing alfalfa and clover pastures can often be substantial over grass pastures, if the cattle manager can determine how to properly graze so as to reduce the threat of bloat substantially. Here are some products worth knowing about.

Bloat Guard - Poloxalene

Bloat Guard is the only legally approved feed additive product for use in bloat reduction on pasture. Bloat Guard is recommended to be fed in a grain ration which is not always feasible on pasture. Bloat Guard does provide extremely good control of bloat when fed daily at the proper dose. Poloxalene only provides bloat control and has no other benefits. Generally, Bloat Guard would cost approximately \$0.15 head per day.

Rumensin CRC Bolus

Rumensin Controlled Release Capsules were just introduced in the spring of 1994 as an answer to bloat reduction on pasture. They are cleared only for cattle 440-770 lb. body weight. These capsules are not cleared for use on cows, therefore one should consult with a veterinarian prior to implanting. The Rumensin CRC Bolus are very large boluses and are difficult to administer. Every animal that may be subjected to bloat producing situations must be implanted. The bolus provides for a guaranteed daily consistent dosage of Rumensin for 120 days, otherwise the money invested in implanting would not be recovered. Feedlots are reluctant to purchase animals that have active boluses as the bolus and Rumensin supplement fed in the feedlot have an additive effect causing animals to back off feed. Therefore, implanting with Rumensin Boluses limits when one can market treated animals. The manufacturers of the Rumensin CRC Bolus claim an 80% reduction in bloat in implanted animals. The bolus not only reduces the likelihood of bloat but it also provides coccidiosis control as well as improves feed efficiency. The Rumensin CRC Bolus ranges in cost from \$0.10 - \$0.12 per head per day.

Bovatec in Salt

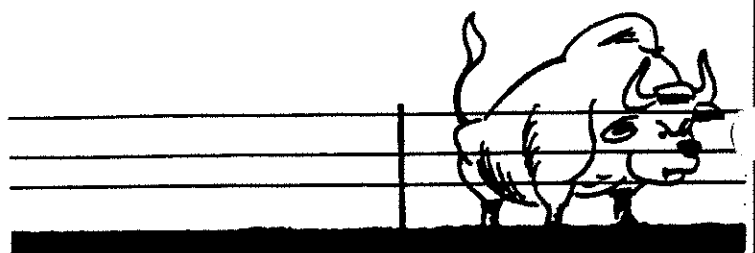
Bovatec in Salt is not legally approved by Agriculture Canada. To use it you must obtain a Veterinarian's prescription. Champion Grand Prairie stocks a Bovatec Salt which contains 15,000mg lasalocid per kg. This is a fortified salt with selenium with Bovatec added. Lasalocid Sodium is the medicating ingredient in Bovatec. For cattle consuming 25 - 35 grams of Bovatec Salt per head per day (0.9 to 1.25 oz/h/day) 375-525 mg of lasalocid will be ingested. Trials completed by a number of grazing associations have indicated 300 - 400 mg of lasalocid/h/day aided in bloat control on heavy clover pasture. Bovatec was chosen as the ionophore of choice over Rumensin or Posistac because of Bovatec's wider margin of safety. The salt consumption of different animals may vary tremendously. If cattle consume greater amounts than

expected it is unlikely that the Bovatec will cause adverse effects in feed consumption or rates of consumption or rates of gain. Bovatec also provided coccidiosis control and improved feed efficiency and increased rate of weight gain. The major drawback to using Bovatec in salt is the variable intake. If bloat is expected to be problematic, Bovatec Salt should be introduced 5 - 7 days prior to exposure to bloat producing situations. Also, the number of salt feeders should be increased by providing one feeder for every 25 - 30 head. Increasing the number of salt feeders and strategic placement of feeders increases the likelihood of salt intake and hopefully more consistent intake of Bovatec medicated salt. Bovatec Salt would range in cost from \$0.04 - \$0.06/h/day. The fortified salt with Selenium accounts for \$0.01 of the cost.

Rumensin Salt Control Pellets

Rumensin in a grain and salt pellet have effectively reduced bloat on pasture. Salt is added to a grain ration to limit intake to three pounds and Rumensin is added to provide bloat control. The ration is then pelleted so that ingredients do not separate. The benefits of a pelleted Rumensin Salt Control Ration are that the grain in the ration does help extend the pasture, thus one can either increase the stocking rate or increase the grazing period. A pelleted ration ensures consistency throughout and as a result, intakes on these pelleted salt control rations have been highly dependable. The salt limits intake. Also the Rumensin itself aids in checking intake, so the range of intakes is narrow. Because these rations are grain based the animals receive a portion of grain. This grain intake not only helps in extending pasture but it also contributes to weight gain. A typical Rumensin Salt Control Pellet fed at 3lb/h/day would contribute 2.7 lb of grain/h/day. This would result in 0.34lbs of weight gain/h/day strictly from the grain. On 100 head of cattle over a 120 day grazing period, an extra 4,000 lbs would fetch \$4,400. The Rumensin not only helps to reduce bloat but it also provides coccidiosis control and improves feed efficiency. To provide salt control rations a self feeder is necessary and the feeder must be checked and filled frequently. If wet weather reduces accessibility to the feeder, bloat problem may occur. Rumensin rations cost approximately \$0.21/h/day. The Rumensin accounts for .02/head per day.

(Thank you to Champion Feeds of Grande Prairie for providing us this useful information.)



Seminar: A Peak at Holistic Resource Management

On November first, following an extremely heavy Halloween snowfall, the Association held an HRM Seminar in the Farmington Hall. Co Sponsors were BCMAFF and PRASPS. Instructors were Don Halladay, practicing holistic grazer from Rocky Mountain House and Noel McNaughton, well known Registered Holistic Educator from Edmonton.

While the attendance was a little off due to the weather, Tom Pittman, BCMAFF made the following positive report to our annual meeting in Taylor on December 1st.

Content:

- an introduction or overview of what managing resources by a whole farm approach offers.

- one of the things that appealed to those attending was the fundamental principle of managing from a quality of life perspective. We hear lots of discussion about farmers and ranchers experiences that more and more production techniques wasn't meeting their goals. Examples included the tremendous influence we have seen in massive clearing practices on such things as stream water flows and wind in this country. Also the perspective of controlling weed problems with more and more chemicals rather than the approach of addressing why there are more and more weed problems.

- with this in mind, the instructors provided a look at how this "whole-istic" approach could make a real difference in farming and ranching.

- contrary to popular belief, the focus of Holistic Resource Management that was presented was not on the hocus pocus or living off the land methods we sometimes have difficulty with. Instead, they gave an overview of a new way to integrate financial planning and biological planning.

- they described how the system used tools such as technology animal grazing and monitoring and they

provided a picture of a system that offers real benefit for ranch management - a better way of meeting production goals with a quality of life.

- I found the system they were describing particularly inviting for forage management, especially because it provides a means of answering many of the questions ranchers face on their ranches. Such as: How does one make these grazing systems we hear about really work?

How do you get better results from forage management techniques without mortgaging the farm to do it?

- based on the testimony of people who swear that this Holistic approach has made them real money and eased the burden of deciding what to do next, I feel that this Holistic Resource Management offers real potential for agricultural producers of this area.

- the course is expensive, real expensive by standards we are familiar with. But I have been assured by a number of independent sources that HRM will be a growing way of managing farm and ranch resources because the benefits are real.

- I would be happy to recommend this type of course to members of this association and would entertain working with you to explore opportunities to bring this tool to producers of this region.

Editors Note:

It is now time for those agricultural producers (including beef, forage, grain, oilseeds, sheep bison and game) and other agricultural enthusiasts to make their wishes known, PDQ about an indepth HRM course. Why? Because these things take a lot of lead time (6 - 12 months) to set up and a lot of money per farm management unit (\$1500 more or less without any form of sponsorship). The P.F.R.A. has already indicated a desire for helping staff such as in depth course if our members are interested so this might help reduce the overall cost per farm.

Letter to The Editor

We are publishing this letter of Mrs. Baumeister's in this issue of "Forage First" in order to give it airing in timely fashion. Regarding her comments, while we most certainly appreciate her interest we will leave it to our readers to determine whether they wish to purchase a Lister Pasture Pump, an Aquamat or use some other method to off dugout water their cattle. To refresh your memory refer to: Forage File: Farm Forage Facts # 940 Livestock Watering Systems, Hogberg Ranch, Progress. "The Forager" Special convention Edition 1994 December.

Re: Lister Pasture Pump

A recent article in your publication has erroneously implied that the Lister Pasture Pump is not too much different from any other nose pump that is available "except in price".

Most shrewd farm machinery and equipment buyers are aware that differences in price often reflect differences in quality, performance, warranty or life of the article. Such is the case of the comparison of the Lister Pasture Pump to Aquamat Pumps. Independent Evaluation of the Lister Pasture Pump has shown that the height and length of water draw, the number of cattle served and the durability of this pump exceeds the performance publicized by other nose pumps that are currently available

It is apparent from this and other farm equipment purchases, that initial purchase price is only one of the considerations to take into account when deciding on what purchase to make. It is also apparent that testimonials on equipment value are not as dependable as are independent evaluation of equipment performance. If you would like more information on the Lister Pasture Pump please contact us.

Yours truly Ute Baumeister, LK Ranch, Box 86, Montney, B.C. V0C 1Y0

Getting \$ Green \$ with Grass



Allen Nation, editor of the Stockman Grass Farmer believes that you as a producer can get rich on grass! Here are summaries of his material from recent seminars".

Basic Agricultural Economics

1. Produce something that by the nature of your soil and climate gives you a natural advantage over most farmers.
2. Among commodities with equal advantages chose the one you like the best.
3. Have one major enterprise that produces 40 - 60 percent of your total income and two or three other supplementary enterprises that utilize excess labour and capital needed for the primary enterprise. For many farmers the primary income producer will be an off farm job and enterprises chosen will have to compliment this.
4. Farming enterprises that are not machine harvested tend to be size neutral in comparative advantage. If you are make a profit with a small cow herd, you can make a profit with a larger one, and conversely, if you can't make profit with 10 cows you won't be able to with 100 cows.
5. All farm commodities are cyclical. Never use leverage to buy into a profitable farm commodity. Learn to love the livestock cycle. Buy into a commodity during its profitable phase is seldom profitable. Using leverage to buy into a commodity during its profitable phase is almost certain financial suicide.
6. Labour saving investments are only cost effective if the time saved is used to do more work. It is not cost effective to invest in labour saving devices if an increase in leisure is your goal.

A Structure for Profit

Minimal to no leverage on animals.

Reasonable leverage on land and equipment.

Operation in sync with nature.

Optimum stocking rate.

Building Capital

Profit is the repayment of capital no longer needed to grow (I.E. Capital must exist before there can be profit. A positive gross margin is not a profit.)

1. Have a long term goal. Be willing to commit 10 - 12 years to learning and reinvesting your profits. You must always give something up to gain something new. A clean shave costs you a beard. You can't have it both ways.
2. Seek out a joint venture with the best grazier you know.

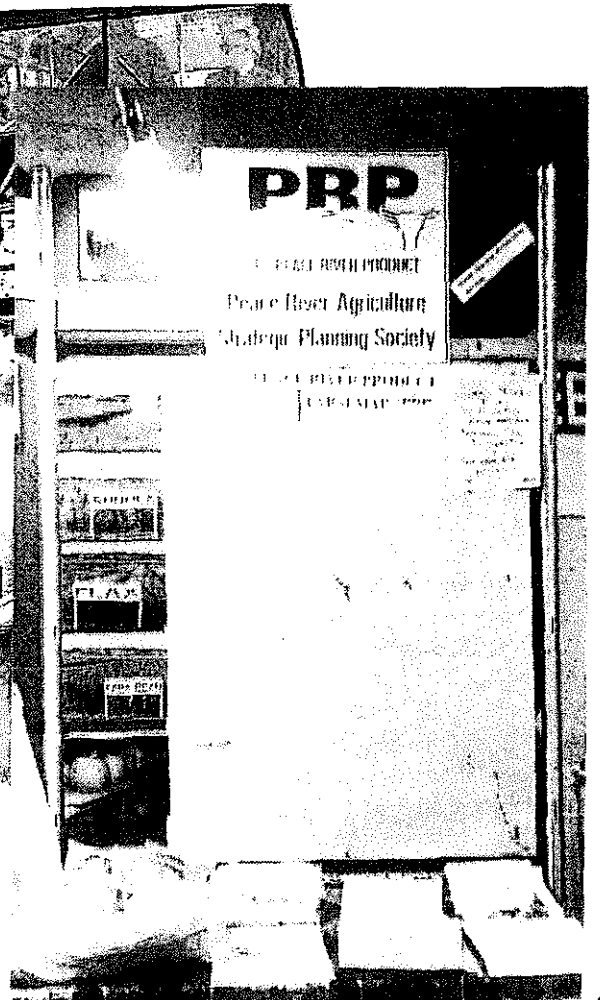
Avoid negative people. Peer pressure is designed to dampen extraordinary efforts and results that would make the norm look bad. The best start-up is a joint venture with a successful boot-strapped grazier.

3. Maintain a frugal lifestyle. Avoid expensive housing. Profits must be directed toward livestock ownership.
4. Have one team member with an off-farm income. Live on the off-farm income and reinvest the farm profits in livestock.
5. Keep the size of your operation consistent with the level of your management skills.
6. Seek to substitute labour for capital whenever possible.
7. Maintain minimal equipment ownership. One small used tractor or horse team, pasture mower, four wheeler with a spin seeder. Hire everything else done. The relationship of commodity prices to manufactured goods hit at an all time record low in 1986 and were as low as in 1932.
8. Plan on your stored forages being of low quality. You will seldom be disappointed.
9. Never own more land than you can comfortably stock from your own capital resources. Lease land for dry stock, bred beef cows. Use all of your grass for production class animals.
10. Use beef cows and intensive grazing to condition perennial pastures for use with stockers, sheep or dairy cattle. This conditioning process usually takes a minimum of three years.
11. Consider farming out or taking in replacement heifer(young stock and dry stock to better balance feed supply and demand.
12. Eat your own grass finished beef and lamb. Once you like the taste better than anything you can buy in the store start selling at least some of your production direct to the customer.

Budgeting Capital

1. Use capital for animals. Only after a paid for herd capable of sustaining your family lifestyle and producing a capital surplus is build should land ownership be considered.
2. If you have paid for or inherited land, sell some to obtain capital for animals. Do not put land up for collateral against highly leveraged animals.
3. Do not mortgage animals (too easy to foreclose on)
4. Learn to love the livestock cycle. Buy more when they are cheap. Stand pat when they are high. Have alternative investments in mind.
5. Charge each animal (including your own) an annual fee to graze your land. Put this money in a savings account for additional land.
6. Keep a good relationship with a banker, but only use him for extraordinary and preferably self-liquidating purposes.
7. Remember debt must be paid back in after tax dollars. It requires at least a \$1.30 of profit to retire \$1.00 of debt.

"B.C.F.C. 1995 Convention Dawson Creek"



Alfalfa Grazing Symposium Highlights

Quite a few livestock producers are starting to graze alfalfa and other bloat type legumes and a lot more are beginning to give this idea a lot of thought.

Why? Because the pounds of beef that can be produced per acre (and related positive economics) are very high compared to almost any other forage. However, the fear of death loss problems whilst grazing alfalfa leading to significant economic minuses make many livestock owners reluctant to utilize alfalfa other than slightly as early spring and late fall grazing of their hayfields.

With these thoughts in mind, the Alberta Forage Council sponsored several symposiums last winter. One of these was in Rycroft. It was cosponsored by the North and South Peace Forage Association.

Here is what the experts had to say.

Paul McCaughey, Ag Canada Research Station, Brandon. He predicted the pendulum will swing towards more use of pastures in the finishing programs for beef cattle, reducing the time for cattle to be on grain at the feedlot to 30 to 60 days. The key is to use high quality alfalfa pasture for grazing. At Brandon they have achieved over 3 lbs. ADG for a full grazing season on steers grazing alfalfa in continuous or simple pasture rotation programs. He believes these gains at about 20¢/lb can work out to terrific economies with 300 - 450 lbs gain per steer for the season. Bloat hasn't been much of a problem, certainly nothing economically significant. They used Smith Kline Beecham Bloatguard for several years and the PROVEL monensin CRC anti bloat capsule in 1994. Grazing techniques for red or alsike clover in his opinion should be roughly the same as for alfalfa.

Bruce Coulman, Ag Canada Research Station, Saskatoon

Dr. Coulman is working on LIRD alfalfa. this stands for **Low Initial Rate of Digestion**. Alfalfa causes bloat (and Red Clover too) because unlike the low yielding, non bloaters (Sainfoin, Birdsfoot Trefoil and Cicer Milkvetch) alfalfa doesn't possess these characteristics: high tannin levels, slow digestion, thick cell wall, reticulate veins. The high content of foaming agents in alfalfa and high release of these agents through rapid digestion leads to more incidence of bloat. A breeding program for LIRD alfalfa started in 1978 with a 1600 plant nursery of Kane, Anchor, Beaver and Vernal varieties is now in its fourth cycle. In 1994 the first significant grazing comparisons were made at Kamloops Research Station to compare the bloat characteristics of Beaver versus LIRD with steers on pasture. LIRD achieved positive results: only 5 cases of bloat on prebud irrigated alfalfa over a 2 week period versus 54 bloats for Beaver under the same management regime.

Bob Ehr, PROVEL/ELI Lilly, Sherwood Park

He introduced their new product the Rumensin Controlled Release Capsule. After many years of successful use in Australia this product is finally available in Canada for use in grazing steers on alfalfa and clover pastures. This bolus when used, effectively reduces the risk of bloat in cattle grazing legume pastures, according to Bob.

Martin Entz, University of Manitoba Winnipeg

Dr. Entz stressed the value of alfalfa in crop rotations in terms of positive benefits agronomically and environmentally for the farmer involved.

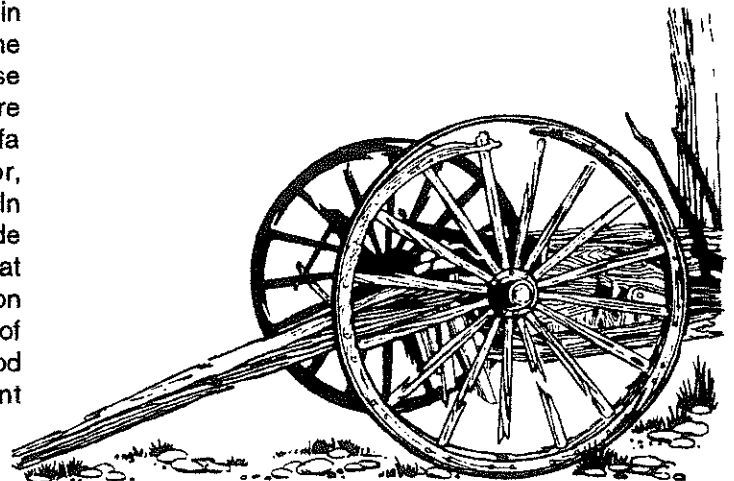
Three Graziers (Wendell Mullet, Fairview; Ernie Hills, Grande Prairie; Wyatt Swanson, Provost) have been grazing alfalfa (and clovers to some extent) successfully for several years. They all see bloat as a non economic problem with their type of management. All three graze intensively (frequent moves and high stocking rates) and keep a good eye on their livestock.

Generally these graziers: leave their livestock on the alfalfa pasture once they put them on; put them onto alfalfa pastures with a full stomach; try to avoid moving livestock onto alfalfa under heavy dew or rainy conditions.

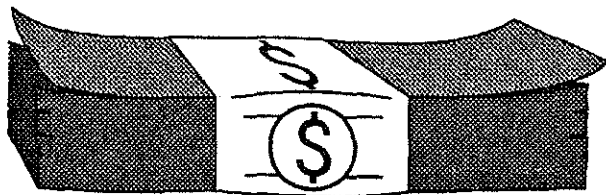
They have repeatedly observed that cattle and sheep prefer to eat the grass forage first with alfalfa a definite lower priority. **Ernie Hills** uses One Stop Mineral with salt yearlong and no other bloat preventatives. **Wendell Mullet** spends a lot of time with his cattle each time they move to a new location and **Wyatt Swanson** has the economic records to show \$120 net back to him per acre for steers grazing alfalfa. He used the Rumensin CRC successfully in 1994 as part of his comprehensive alfalfa management program.

Wayne Knight, Smith Kline-Beecham, Lacombe

Dr. Knight pointed out that Bloatguard contains the antifoam agent (Poloxalene) and if you get this into the animal everyday (1-2 gms per 100 lbs body weight) in the feed then you approach 100 % effective bloat control.



"And More Getting \$ Green \$ with Grass"



Benefits of Intensive Grazing

1. Higher stocking rates
2. Increased animal performance
3. Lower death loss and sickness
4. Lower labour input - more even work year
5. Less environmental deterioration
6. Better utilization of rainfall and fertilizer
7. Able to preserve preferred grass species
8. Increased Peace of mind - fewer surprises.

Let's not forget that whether we raise beef cattle, sheep or dairy cattle we are really in the grass business - we grow and harvest forages.

Recommendations for Intensive Grazing

1. Do not start in the late spring.
2. Start in slow --or no growth -- months
3. Do not increase current stocking rates.
4. Capture pasture surplus as hay or silage.
5. Use low production class animals.
6. Have patience and practice, practice, practice!

The ultimate goal of Intensive Grazing is a pleasant life in the country. No profit grows where there is no pleasure taken.

Three Secrets of Business Survival

Liquidity: animals, stored grains, cash

Productivity: the application of knowledge to work. Work smarter not harder, Invest in developing your skills and knowledge.

Profit: the return of capital no longer need to grow. Note: capital always precedes profit. Also, fast growing businesses seldom show much profit. Profit should not be confused with gross margin.

Note: This is not a random structure, but what is needed for your survival.

Eleven Keys to Ranching with a Minimum of Capital

Laurie Lasater, Isa Cattle Co, San Angelo , Texas

1. Involve your family. Your best source of ideas, help and start up capital will probably come from your wife, parents and extended family.
2. Do not buy equipment. Train yourself and your employees to prefer profits to playthings.
4. Lease land instead of owning. Your grazing entity owns the leases.
5. In addition to leasing land pasture cattle owned by yourself and others.
6. Develop grazing expertise. From the standpoint of profitability in the ranching business advances in grazing technology are the most important development in the last 20 years.
7. Develop cattle expertise. Handle only quality, one brand cattle performing at a high level in a low cost operation. Don't have any death loss, and use cheaper, better feeds such as whole cottonseed or mill run molasses.
8. Develop management expertise. Hire and keep top people, run a lot of cattle, develop your own breakeven budgets. Have your employees do your own enterprise accounting.
9. Develop a specialty and stay with it. For example: develop breed and sell replacement heifers for a large ranch. Develop and sell bulls for a large breeder or breed group. Pasture cattle for a large feeding company.
10. Use feedlots as a resource. They are a valuable escape for a soured pasture deal. Don't ever be forced to sell thin cattle.
11. Attract a financial partner or partners to form an investment group to finance the cattle you pasture. You must be financially able to accept part of the risk. There are certain keys to raising capital.

Annual Summer Tour

Cattle, Pastures, Hay Production
Saturday June 17, 1995
Groundbirch and Progress Districts

Mark your calendar now and plan to join us for our information gathering expedition on June 17th as a member of our cattle, pasture and hay production tour.



We have lined up some outstanding farms and ranches to visit on this tour. You can expect to view good cattle handling facilities, good livestock watering systems and the following breeds of cattle: Charolais, Simmental, Angus, Hereford and Gelbveih plus some outstanding pasture and haying programs.

We expect to have a good representation of haying equipment and tractors on display (or being demonstrated) from the major machinery dealers in the Dawson Creek area.

8:45 - 10:45 **Carl and Sylvia Rose** and Family, Groundbirch including a discussion of pasture management in Groundbirch Community Pastures plus **Registration** with coffee and goodies;

11:00 - 11:45 Forage varietal plots **Odden Ranch**, Groundbirch

12:15 - 14:15 **Big Bear Angus Ranch**, John and Joyce Cooper, Progress

Lunch Break

14:40 - 17:40 **Benwyn Farms**, The Bill and Doug Bentley Families, Progress

18:00 - 21:00 **Hogberg Ranch**, The Ralf and Glenn Hogberg Families, Progress Tour Windup with **Beef Barbeque**.

A **Forage Bus** originating in Fort St. John at Ernie Fuhrs, The Honey Place, Mile 42 Alaska Highway and stopping in Dawson Creek also, will be available for those who preregister early at their local BCMAFF office in Fort St. John or Dawson Creek.

There will be a modest charge for adults attending the summer tour.

Contact the Director closest to you for further information on our summer tour.

Directors 1995 Peace River Forage Association of British Columbia

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