

# FORAGE FIRST

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## Forage Association Celebrates 25 Years



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### Inserts: (for renewing members)

Forage Facts, Friends of Forage, Info of Interest  
 2017 /18 Membership Renewal Notice

### Inserts: (for non members)

2017 /18 Membership Renewal Notice

Visit us at [www.peaceforage.bc.ca](http://www.peaceforage.bc.ca)

# Exceptional Equine

by Carolyn Derfler

Sam Dilworth is a busy wife to Mark, mom to son, Dakota, and daughter, Devyn, and entrepreneur. They just recently become Peace River Forage Association members and have been attending forage events ever since. Sam has nothing but praise for the mentorship meetings this winter, stating, "I love the mentorship program!". She has been amazed at the learning in each session and that people are so willing to share their knowledge! Before joining she knew little about growing forage or the importance of soil health. So she has found the information at events invaluable and is anxious to put her new knowledge to work this spring, by trying to increase the forage growth for her eight horses on their two-acre pasture.

Mark comes from a ranching background and still helps Bob & Maxine Dilworth with their cattle business. He and Sam operate Iddy Biddy Farm raising horses and hay. Mark enjoys adapting things to make them work better for their needs. For example, he developed an arena groomer for behind the quad.

Sam grew up in the mining town of Tumbler Ridge. As a young girl she developed a love for horses and became involved in the local saddle club. All her time as a young teenager was spent around horses and she credits her time spent with them to the fact that she was so busy and focused on them that she didn't have time to get into trouble or even realize just what trouble so many kids were involved in.

The love that Sam developed for horses during her adolescence has become a passion that makes her excited to go to work every day! Sam has been barrel racing, training horses, teaching riding lessons, running horse clinics and summer horse camps for children for many years.

Recently she happened to come across a business called "Equine Connection" out of Calgary, Alberta. A business that provides Equine Assisted Learning (EAL) to individuals, families, organizations and corporate groups, as well as, EAL certification. Sam became so intrigued with the program that she took the certification to be an EAL facilitator and is now running her own business, "Exceptional Equine", along with Brianne Hingley who also has her certification.

EAL is a program where participants work through a variety of specifically designed exercises that teach life skills and encourages self confidence to individuals or teams through interactions with horses. A program that teaches people to develop these skills not by riding horses, but by having to complete different tasks with them.



Sam Dilworth reading Doodlebop's non-verbal communications (*above*). Brianne Hingley & Sam preparing the students for their teamwork time with the horses (*below*).



Horses are the teachers in the EAL program. In the wild, horses are herd animals, as well as, prey animals. Therefore they are very aware of their surroundings, are able to react quickly and need a leader that they trust and respect. An understanding of safety around horses and building a relationship between the horse and human team are the first priorities. Once established, the horse thinks that the humans are their herd and are happy to follow them. Horses are used as teachers in this program as they are non judgmental, honest and quickly respond to confusion and frustration. They show their feelings through their body language and the participants must quickly learn what the horses non-verbal cues mean and adjust their own feelings and behavior so they can work successfully together as a team. Just like humans, each horse has its own personality and therefore has its own method of teaching and participants soon begin to notice these differences. The facilitators follow the team through the exercises and also watch for the horse's non-verbal communication in order to help to explain and guide the participants.

During the debriefing portion of each class, the skills learned through the horses are then related back to our relationships with humans and how they can be used in our daily interactions with them, whether it be a personal, peer or work relationship.

Sam and Brianne have been running pilot programs in Dawson Creek this winter to hone their skills and help get the word out about EAL. To add to the excitement of their EAL program is the fact that they have just teamed up with School District #59 to run some classes for students from the high school. They are both extremely excited about this new relationship and are already seeing some amazing learning happening in the students.

Not only does Sam find this program fascinating and rewarding, but she feels it will allow her to continue to work with horses as she gets older. Horses have become such a huge passion in her life that she just can't ever see herself actually retiring!

For more info: Sam @ 250.784.4764  
or [www.exceptionalequine.ca](http://www.exceptionalequine.ca)



# PFRA: Celebrating 25 Years

*by Darryl Kroeker*

Several of our members were in a discussion earlier this spring and the topic of factsheets and newsletters came up. I asked the question, how far back do our newsletters go? The reply was, back to the beginning of the PRFA in 1992. Now, 1992 doesn't seem that long ago to a fellow with my hair colour but my mental abacus kicked in and realized that's 25 years ago! The Peace River Forage Association has been active for a quarter of a century!

I went to the archives and found the inaugural Forage First newsletter published in August 1992. Under the Editorial, I was struck by the comment, "This extremely dry year, perhaps the driest in recorded history..." and thought of how many successful national and international resource organizations were started similarly, their roots going back to the drought years of the 1930s. These include the Society for Range Management, The Wildlife Society, the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration, Ducks Unlimited, and the Soil and Water Conservation Society, to name a few. Most of these groups are still around and I expect the history of the PRFA will be just as long!

The board of directors in 1992 adopted a diversified approach to increasing producers' net profits by improving members' understanding in several areas. These included:

- ◇ Intensive forage production.
- ◇ Successful use of crop rotations.
- ◇ Holistic resource management.
- ◇ Newest and most efficient harvest methods.
- ◇ Forage as a valued commodity.
- ◇ Variety trials and seeding techniques.
- ◇ Innovative winter livestock feeding systems.
- ◇ State of the art grazing management and pasture rotation programs.
- ◇ Maximizing proper soil conservation techniques.
- ◇ The politics of food production.



Len Donaldson, Walter Fritsche Sr., Arnold Bennett & Glenn Hogberg at an early strategic planning meeting in 2001.

Ernie Nimitz organized the original group of forage enthusiasts in 1992



Along the way, I think there have been some pleasant surprises. How many of us realized that managing the microbes and ecology in the soil is critically important to the production above the ground? That there can be more to handling manure than simply bucketing it out of the corrals? Who among us envisioned the number of young summer students that would work on the association's projects, to be mentored and trained by scientists, agricultural producers, industry employees, agrologists, and biologists? These young people have become leaders in their own right, continuing to provide returns to our forage industry as a result of that initial investment.



Ben Hansen, Julie Robinson, Horst David, & Heather Fossum.

Have you noticed who the presenters are at the workshops and tours? More often than not, it's our own producers who are sharing their knowledge and experience through presentations, field tours and participation on panels. The PRFA is growing its own expertise. Through our programs, we are recognized among the leaders in the industry. As a result, our participation and input has been requested in the development of provincial and national workshops and conferences on strategy and policy development.

In that first issue of Forage First from August 1992, Ernie Nimitz wrote an article on their experiences after 5½ years using electric fences. It should come as no surprise that we returned recently to the Nimitz ranch to hear about further improvements to their grass management using more electric fences! The issues facing the forage industry 25 years ago are just as relevant today. The membership of the PRFA is strong and continues to grow. I encourage each of you to share your copies of Forage First and Forage Facts with your neighbours and invite them to be part of this exciting and innovative group called the Peace River Forage Association through the next 25 years.

# Ranching Profitably & Mentorship Project

by Talon Gauthier & Julie Robinson



Heather Fossum, Tara Holmes & Sam Dilworth at a session with...



Julie Robinson, Fred Schneider & Kristina Schweitzer.

Mentorship of new and/or young members has always been a core value for directors of the Peace River Forage Association of BC. This winter the association offered members the opportunity to participate in a mentorship project called Ranching Profitably in the Peace Region. This project offered several different sessions throughout January to March 2017; all intended to bring mentees and mentors together to learn from each other on several different topics. The sessions offered are laid out in the table below with the topics covered each day.

Date	Topics Covered	Location
Jan 13	Startup meeting to determine session topics	Tower Lake Hall
Feb 1	Soil health, forage production, and cost/benefit analysis of implementing new management	Tower Lake Hall
Feb 3	Holistic management introduction and cost of production	Tower Lake Hall
Feb 14	Winter feeding and water system tour	South Peace Farms
Feb 16	Sheep production, marketing, and cost of production	Tower Lake Hall
Feb 28	Grazing management	Tower Lake Hall
Mar 14	Succession planning	Tower Lake Hall

This project offered mentors and mentees the opportunity to attend as many or as few sessions as they were interested in or able to attend. Sessions were primarily only a half a day long and held at the Tower Lake Hall, a central Peace Region location. The participants really wanted to hear from local experts on topics such as succession planning, grazing management, soil health and costs of production. Some expertise was sought outside of the region on holistic management and succession planning (Kelly Sidoryk, a professional certified educator with Holistic Management International).

The mentors and mentees are a keen group who hope to keep meeting and learning from each other down the road. There were many positive comments about how this project enabled networking and connections to be made between farming operations. Whether they were new to farming or been doing it for years, everyone brought something to the table and shared with each other.

Thank you to all the enthusiastic mentors and mentees as well as those experts that we utilized near and far.

We also want to thank our funding partners who helped make this mentorship opportunity possible:  
BC Ministry of Agriculture Mentorship & Leadership Program,  
Peace River Agriculture Development Fund

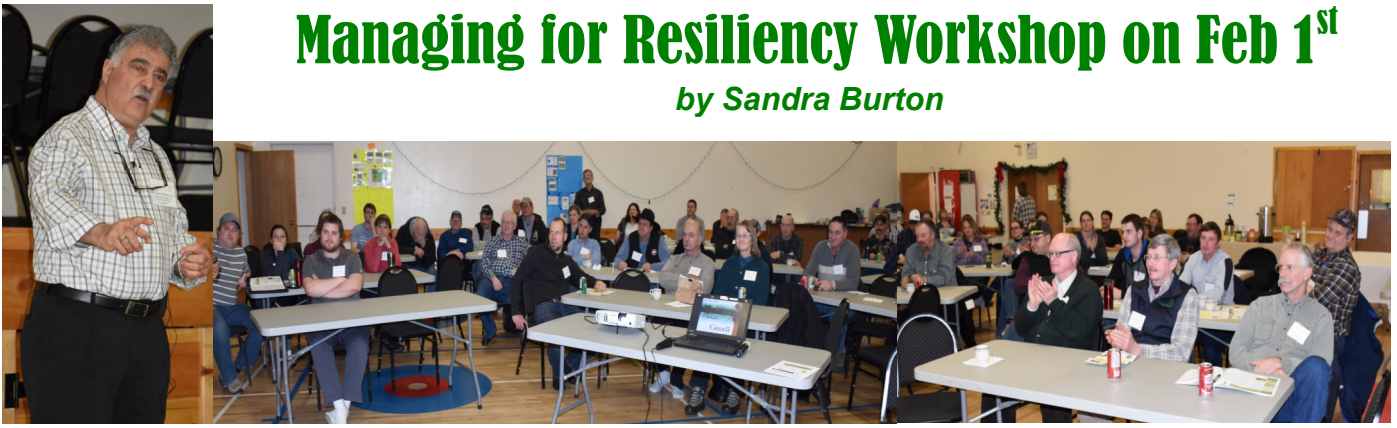
## Mentorship Participants

Andrew & Brian Clarke
Brette Madden & Craig Fossum
Tara Holmes & Ben Harrington
Fred Schneider
Kristina Schweitzer
Heather Fossum
Bill Wilson
Jackie Thiessen
Talon & Marty Gauthier
Mark & Sam Dilworth
Sandra Burton
Lori Vickers
Kendrew Family
Sarah & Steve Rainey
Marissa Kemp
Andy Tschetter
Kari Bondaroff
Peter Bailey
Glenn Hogberg
Perry Spitzer



# Managing for Resiliency Workshop on Feb 1<sup>st</sup>

by Sandra Burton



Dr. Yousef Papadopoulos shared 30 years of forage research with haying & grazing systems for both sheep & cattle operations.



Kelly Sidoryk & George Geldart enjoying the other speakers while they wait for their turn to present their 2 different approaches to economic analysis.

Over 60 people came out to Tower Lake Community Hall on February 1<sup>st</sup> to learn from the keynote speakers and the day's activities. There were many new faces and new producers attending this event.

We kicked off the day with **Dr. Yousef Papadopoulos** from Nova Scotia. His first talk was about the potential of new forage genetics for grazing systems and he showed impressive performance from AC Bruce and AC Langville. Yousef's second talk was about maximizing production of birdsfoot trefoil in beef and sheep operations.

In her talk called "Dirt and Dollars", **Kelly Sidoryk** introduced us to some big picture aspects of holistic grazing management and putting dollar values on soil health. Kelly stayed on for a few days after this workshop to facilitate other financial planning and mentorship discussions.

Following a coffee break with home made cinnamon buns (thank you Shirley Smithard & your catering crew!), we broke into 4 smaller groups to rotate around stations. Each group had a case study that they hoped to get the station masters to focus on for a part of their time together.

**Bill McGill** and **Ron Buchanan** led small group discussions at their station about soil health. With each of the 4 groups and their case studies, they shared the results from testing with the soil quality field kit. Bill talked about each soil health indicator, how it was measured and how it was rated as **good**, **fair** and **poor**. Ron brought in the practical rancher's viewpoint on how he would use his soil health reports to manage on farm nutrients. This duo was so enthusiastic about this topic that they earned the nickname of the "Soil Evangelists".



The "Soil Evangelists" ...  
Bill McGill and Ron Buchanan.



Matthias Loeseken defers a question to Rod Strasky to answer about using this tool in field input decisions.

**Matthias Loeseken** and **Rod Strasky** shared some of the enhanced drone imagery relevant for each case study. Matthias gave a great introduction on how to translate the colors on the maps into clues about photosynthesis and crop response. Rod talked about the usefulness of this tool in planning where to focus inputs or where not too, if it didn't make economic sense. They also shared information from a new BCGPA project involving yield & pest monitoring.



Participants enjoyed small group, hands-on discussions of what we learned from the enhanced drone imagery produced by Matthias (Blackbird Environmental) for the Innovative Management for Resiliency project.

## Managing for Resiliency Workshop *continued*



**Ben Harrington** shares the day's learning about the Ron Buchanan case study.



**Mike McConnell** talked about their group's findings about the Kim Strasky case study.



The Honorable Judges (Ron Buchanan, Bill McGill, Rod Strasky & Mathias Loeseken) collaborate to pick a winner.

Lively legume discussions were facilitated by **Lori Vickers**, **Keith Carroll** and **Andrew Clarke**. Yousef joined in some of these interactive smaller group discussions as did other producers, such as **Gordon Lazinchuk** and **Mike McConnell** with their experiences with birdsfoot trefoil or other alternative legumes.

**Julie Robinson** and **George Geldart** led each of the groups in some rambunctious exercises of how to sort expenses into fixed or variable. George clarified concepts of profit vs gross margin vs contribution margin and showed the cost / benefit analysis for each case study. Julie then integrated some of the soil quality improvements into some economic contributions to the cooperator's bottom line.

At the end of the day, each group assembled the puzzle pieces for their case study that they had been collecting from each station. Each designated a spokesperson to tell us what they had learned.

Since there were bonus marks for creativity and humour, we had quite a bit of fun with this portion of the day. Most people enjoyed how we used a variety of interactive formats to stimulate interaction amongst the workshop participants.

Next two of our case study cooperators teamed up with their station partners to act as our **Honorable Judges** and choose the winning group who then qualified for some prizes. Everyone left with "good value" information and a few chuckles.



**Herman Klassen** helps **Aaron MacKay** present the findings of the Rod Strasky case study.



**Craig Fossum** & **Brett Madden** & integrating the puzzle pieces for the Karen Buchanan case study.



Matthias Loeseken assists Sandra Burton in presenting the judges' decision about the winning group.

**Thank you to our Funding Partners for helping to make this event happen. See page 11**

**Julie Robinson** was thanked by **Darryl Kroeker** for her 10 years as the BC Ministry of Agriculture Advisor to the Peace River Forage Association. During that time Julie was tireless in her efforts to further the forage industry. She helped the association through several important transitions, events, projects and multiple initiatives.

Julie now works with Blackbird Environmental, out of Fort St. John. She hopes to continue the collaborative synergy with our Association in the future on projects, activities and on our learning journeys together.



Julie Robinson receiving her gift from Darryl Kroeker.



# Sheep Production Meeting

by Andy Tschetter

February 16, 2017. Tower Lake – A wet and cold day dawns in the South Peace and although a scant morning sun manages to pierce a few silvery rays through the encroaching sheets of fog that roll in – the region is soon engulfed in dense London style mist, but the drab symphonic ebb and flow of the day's elemental languor is only a delight for this shepherd for whom this is home. Home to the Peace with her mighty river, her silvery moons, blue skies, and the wind fiddling endlessly on the telephone lines.

Converged upon Tower Lake Community Hall, the gray of the day isn't lost to the cheery din of a robust contingent of local sheep farmers gathered courtesy of the Peace River Forage Association. Moderated by Julie Robinson, P.Ag, liaison with the PRFA, a roundtable discussion ensues over what potential entrant to the industry and meeting attendee, Heather Fossum of Pouce Coupe might expect with having the first flock of sheep on the farm...

In sharing his experiences commanding a growing flock of over 500 ewes on his mixed farm north of Cecil Lake, producer Ben Harrington points out that the late winter, early lambing can be achieved with modest facilities such as sheds, windbreaks, or tarped pens. As long as the animals have adequate bedding and are out of the wind, and under cover, the ewes who are lambing should be fine, although extra diligence be shown to ensure the newborns are nursing; given the cold – all shepherds agreeing that a lamb with colostrum in its belly is a happy lamb! Soil and plant health is key for the Harrington's for whom intensive grazing, RFID tracking software, and a consistent worming program has been beneficial in improving flock health and performance.

Water was touched on briefly, some producers noting their sheep doing well with snow as a winter water source when fresh water isn't available.

Included in the day's roster of shepherds was Peter Bailey of Farmington, who at 82, commands a flock of (in his words "All spare kinds," ASK sheep) and a purebred herd of Red Angus cattle. Bailey recommends Pat Coleby's book 'Natural Sheep Care' for producers interested in the natural approach to animal husbandry. Thanks for your humor and insight Peter, I enjoy our talks immensely!

Dr. Perry Spitzer of North Peace Veterinary Clinic in Fort St. John took some time off his busy afternoon schedule to highlight common diseases in sheep. Touching on Orf and Footrot as well as abortion viruses such as Q-fever and Zoonotic Abortion, delving into the importance of farm biosecurity. Himself a producer, Dr. Spitzer raises British style purebred Suffolk sheep.



Flock of sheep at pine Haven Hutterite Colony, Alberta. Photo supplied by Andy Tschetter.

Marissa Kemp, formerly of South Africa, keeps a large flock of Dorper ewes in the lovely Sunrise Valley. Along with husband, Marinus, the Kemps came to Canada in 2002 and started with sheep in 2007. Making a 360 degrees change from farming papaya, tomatoes, chillies, and sweet peppers in South Africa to sheep and cattle. Marisa says, "We love it here, but we miss the weather some days – where we lived in SA we never got much frost. Canada and Canadians have been good to us!"

For Keith Carroll, stalwart shepherd and longtime industry supporter, 40 years of raising sheep in South Dawson Creek has certainly come with a few economic and industry changes. Keith remembers the 1991 founding meeting of the BC Sheep Federation and it's first AGM in Kamloops on November 30, 1991, where the Federation's constitution and bylaws were hammered out and the first officers were appointed!

Producer, Kari Bondaroff, P.Ag., is manager of the Peace River Regional District's Invasive Plant Program. She is working in collaboration with the Peace River Forage Association on integrated weed management with livestock in the region. An interesting concept on teaching sheep to eat Canada thistle, stinging nettle, and sow thistle was outlined by Lori Vickers, Regional Agrologist for the Ministry of Agriculture. Starting in 2015 on Tess Davidson's farm in Cecil Lake, sheep were taught to eat the highly nutritious Canada thistle and were eating the protein rich plant by day five. In an integrated approach to try and discourage the growth of the weeds, desirable seeds were tossed in areas with 'harvested' thistle to increase competition and enhance biological activity leading to a significant reduction in the thistles by the end of the first year! To learn more visit the PRFA website at [www.peaceforage.bc.ca](http://www.peaceforage.bc.ca). As well, a book by Kathy Voth, 'Cows Eat Weeds' serves as a good informational account on ruminants as weed managers.

A mighty river that everyone knows,  
Throughout the northland the Peace River flows,  
It's raging waters and the brassy foam  
Keeps calling me my Peace River home.

# Ovine Winter Lunch

by Andy Tschetter

January 13, 2017

It was a treat to spot this flock of Canadian Arcott ewes and lambs on their winter feeding rounds while on a tour of Pine Haven Hutterite Colony north of Red Deer in Alberta's Wetaskiwin County where I stayed to visit friends. The sheep were munching away on an alfalfa and grass mixture, which as my host, Mark Hofer tells me, is a cut at pre-bloom stage, or ideally when sugar reading is at its highest, then dried to 20% moisture, baled usually from 12 to 24 hours after cutting and wrapped completely air tight.



Ewes and lambs feeding at Pine Haven Hutterite Colony north of Red Deer.

The finished product is a soft leafy mass of nutrient dense forage. It almost looked as though the sheep were on green grass in the dead of winter! Mark points out that this winter feed strategy has contributed to better weight gain and the overall health of the sheep who aren't fed any grain. The Colony butchers and processes lamb at their on-site provincially inspected slaughter facility, where they also process beef and pork. Lamb is available seasonally through 'The Meat Shop' website. [info@phmeatshop.ca](mailto:info@phmeatshop.ca)

## View From Mountainveve Acres

by Andy Tschetter

Todd and Kari Bondaroff make sheep production look easy on their picturesque hill farm in Arras, BC, a 15km drive from south of Dawson Creek. I popped by one balmy winter afternoon for an ovine viewing (a warning to readers, this shepherd is prone to showing up at sheep farms for general viewing and discussing the merits of apple cider vinegar, Wendell Berry, and local marketing).

Shepherdess, Kari Bondaroff, kindly organizes a summons of her small flock of commercial ewes wielding a bucket of oats. Before one could say 'apple cider vinegar', a group of heavily pregnant, thick meat ewes, who at first glance look like they could qualify as All Canadian Sheep Classic Show Champions, suddenly materialize around the corner of a bright red, New England-style barn. Leading the charge is 6-year old 'Mary', a Suffolk cross who, according to Bondaroff, was raised from a bottle baby to become Mountainveve Acres most productive and all round best ewe. Affectionately known as the 'Fetcher', Mary is always out front and in command as per the wishes of Bondaroff who says, "Mary is amazing!" She's one ewe that can successfully raise triplets to full weight and size. She has had triplets four consecutive years, one of which quads were born, whose birth weights were all over 12 pounds.



Kari Bondaroff's ewe, Blackberry and her lamb (*above*). Rut the goat enjoying her hay on a beautiful spring day (*right*).

Since introducing sheep in 2002, Mountainveve Acres has been adept at the local marketability of lamb both for meat sales and selling breeding stock. "This year my ewe lambs have all been spoken for and they haven't even been born yet," says Bondaroff. The ewes were due to start lambing the start of February, and in speaking with Kari, all of them have successfully produced healthy lambs. Bondaroff strives for a balance in breeding ratios and easy lambing to shorter, medium framed uniformity, but opts for heavy front ends and nice long backs in the ewes. "I aim for a dress out percentage of 60% or better," says Bondaroff.



An adorable family of Boer goats bids me farewell as I leave...they appear as the ewes cease their milling from an oat induced clamor, to enamor us with their characteristic caprine personalities. Courtesy of Harmony Boer Goats of Cecil Lake, they are good natured, making the heart of this shepherd glad! Hmmmmm.....boer goats???



# Starting the Succession Planning Process

By Kelly Sidoryk

"It is the best of times, it is the worst of times," was a quote on families working together from the Last Alaskan Frontier tv program. If you have seen this show you will be aware of the trials and tribulations experienced by these families as they homestead in the far north. Most of us who are trying to work together won't be quite as extreme as the Kilcher families, however there are likely similarities.

In the next ten years much of the farmland in North America is going to change hands. In 2014 the average age of the Canadian farm operator was 54. Many operations are going to go through some type of transition, be it good or bad. But there are some steps we can take to ensure the process falls more towards the "good" side of things.

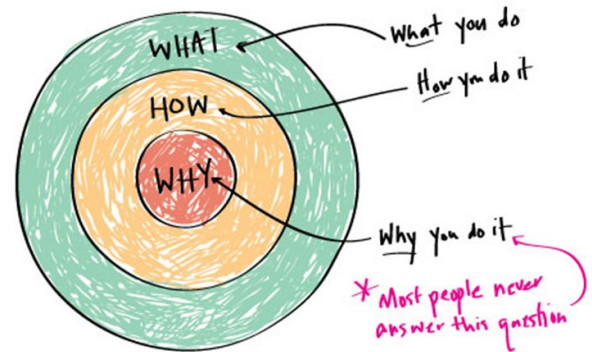
The most important and perhaps difficult is actually beginning the conversation. This has to happen before we involve accountants, lawyers and financial planners. Having a neutral third party to facilitate and lead the discussion can be extremely helpful. This type of conversation is not something those of us in agriculture are used to having. It takes practice and guidance.

The process we go through in Holistic Management of setting a shared values based three part goal that includes quality of life, production and long range vision has proved to be an extremely helpful part of the process.

Stephen Covey in 7 Habits of Highly Effective Families says, "Good families, even great families are off track 90% of the time. The key is they have a sense of destination."

Dr. John Fast, author of the Family Business Doctor, says the common vision helps unite the family around a goal that is larger than the family; functions to inspire the family during difficult times and motivates family members; provides the family with a set of core principles and guidelines to follow; informs the individual growth and development of the next generation and provides a change model for both individual growth and business development.

Simon Sinek, author of Start With Why, believes that all excellent leaders and organizations begin with "Why you do what you do." He explains that we must go deeper than the outer circles of how and what we do. This idea adds great depth to the succession planning piece by digging into the why and sharing it with each other.



The Golden Circle, Simon Sinek  
Illustration by Alice Ratterree

There are amazing opportunities and benefits that come with working in a family business but there can also be immense difficulties and challenges.

"Just because we are related and love each other, does not mean we have to work together." So let that notion go.

A vital link of developing the common vision is communicating it effectively. Jamyang Khventse recently wrote, "We think we have successful communication with others. In fact, we only have successful miscommunication without being aware of it."

## Effective communication is made up of many things:

1. **Listen** - to mindfully listen means to wait patiently for the other person to finish before we speak and keeping our mind focussed on the speaker
2. **Practise non-judgement** - there are always two sides to the story and neither one of them is necessarily right or wrong, only different perceptions.
3. **Show understanding** - responding with "I understand or I see what you mean." At the end of the day we all want to be understood. You can demonstrate you understand someone by relaying their feelings to them in your own words.
4. **Put yourself in their shoes** - try to imagine yourself in the experience of the other person.
5. Be totally there – you all know what this means in the age of tech and business.
6. **The first response should not be personal** - it needs to relate to the speaker.
7. **Let go of the results** - it is not a competition.

# Starting the Succession Planning Process *continued*

by Kelly Sidoryk

Another important component for those families that are going to continue to work together as part of the transition is asking what the roles and responsibilities are going to be?

How are we going to make decisions? How are we going to monitor how we are doing? What is the level of independence and interdependence that is needed? It is important for the younger generation to have achieved a degree of independence before members can all come together in an interdependent way. But each family will be unique in how they define and answer these questions.

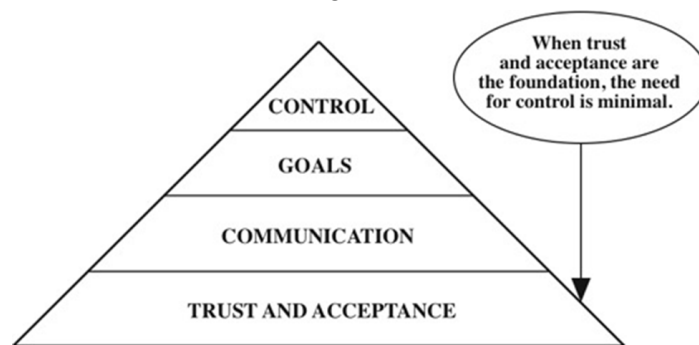
In one family the question was - would you like a percentage of the herd or do you want to own your own animals? The answer was that there needed to be at least some independent ownership. Of course a level of complexity to keep track is added but that was the consensus of the group.

Another family decided on a percentage of the whole operation. Another strategy was to leave the transition/estate plan up to the kids. They brought it back once to the parents and were sent back for further revisions until the final draft was accepted.

One elderly farmer was actually feeling like he had failed as his desire had been to leave one quarter to each kid and he did not quite reach that.

For another family their first objective was to provide each kid with a separate acreage on which to build a house. Once that was achieved and vocalized the balance of allocation was easier as all the kids felt they had been treated "fairly" at the outset.

The communication piece is a critical component to how well a family can navigate through the process. A strong foundation of trust and acceptance is needed to provide the base from which to work. Effective communication follows, production towards a common goal and then a small amount of control. Many families and organizations are actually upside down with little trust and acceptance thus the need for major control. Plus if there is any type of disruption further up the triangle the whole thing topples over as it is only balancing on a point. See the illustration of Gibbs triangle (*below*).



David Irvine, the leadership navigator, has worked with many families and organizations. He stresses **the importance of assessing the family vision.**

- ◇ Do we spend time together as a family?
- ◇ Do we talk and listen to each other frequently?
- ◇ Do we respect differences and encourage interests outside the family?
- ◇ Do we communicate directly and honestly and avoid gossip?
- ◇ Can we handle conflict in direct, non-hurtful ways?
- ◇ How frequently do we express appreciation for each other and demonstrate that we care?
- ◇ Can we have fun together as a family?
- ◇ Even when we disagree, is there respect and good will among family members?
- ◇ Is the loyalty between next generation couples as strong or stronger than that between parents and children?



Happy Grazing Cattle.  
Photo by Kelly Sidoryk

These questions can be of great help as the first pieces of the puzzle are put together. It is so important to remember development of the transition plan is a process. It will take time, money and a commitment by the family members to navigate through all the steps and mis-steps. And it will evolve as the circumstances change. But the rewards will far outweigh the challenges.



# Thank You To Our Friends of Forage & Funding Partners



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**Thank You to Our Partners for the  
Managing for Soil Health & Resiliency Workshop**



**Managing for Soil Health Workshop & Innovative Management for Resiliency Project are supported through:**  
The Farm Adaptation Innovators Fund managed and delivered by the BC Agriculture & Food Climate Action Initiative & the BC Business Knowledge Fund, through the Investment Agriculture Foundation, with funding provided by the governments of Canada & British Columbia through *Growing Forward 2*, a federal-provincial territorial initiative.



Climate Action Initiative  
BC AGRICULTURE & FOOD



# Events in the BC Peace

Peace River Forage Association  
of British Columbia



## Summer Tour From Sheep & Soils to Buffalo & Bromegrass On Thursday, June 15, 2017

- 7:30 - 8:00 am **Meet at Taylor**  
**Coffee, Registration & Meet Your Group**
- 8:00 am sharp Bus leaves for Cecil Lake area  
**Plan for day, introduce Kyle, 25 years contest**
- 8:45 - 10:40 am **Sheep & dogs as weed managers, a live demo**  
*(Tess & Howard Davidson)*  
**Coffee Break at Sheep Wagon**  
**Good dog demo**  
*(Carol Nelson)*
- 10:40 - 11:00 Travel to Goodlow area
- 11:00 - 12 noon **Buffalo to bromegrass fields**  
*(Walter & Dolores Enns & family)*
- 12:00 - 1:00 pm **Lunch Break at Goodlow Rec Park**
- 1:00 - 2:00 pm Travel to Doig area
- 2:00 - 3:00 pm **Sheep grazing systems and soil quality**  
*(Tara Holmes & Ben Harrington)*
- 3:00 - 3:30 pm **Coffee Break**
- 3:30 - 4:00 pm Travel to Milligan Creek area
- 4:00 - 5:00 pm **Building soil on marginal land**  
*(Rob Larson)*
- 5:00 pm **Bar BQ Supper**
- 7:00 pm Load bus to return to Taylor, BC

**Cost: \$40 members \$75 member couples**  
**\$50 non members**  
*Includes bus ride & 2 meals*



Tess' weed managers in action



Rob's soil builders on marginal land

### Pasture Walk & AGM of the Peace River Forage Association

**Friday Sept 22, 2017**

**Meet at 1:30 pm**  
**Community Hall**  
**Location TBA**

#### Afternoon includes:

**Pasture walk &**  
**Demos from Projects**  
**Guest Speakers**

**Hot Supper & AGM**  
**to follow**

**Cost: No charge for paid**  
**up members**

**Space may be limited for both events so pre-registration is strongly encouraged!**  
**call 250.789.6885 or email [coordinator@peaceforage.bc.ca](mailto:coordinator@peaceforage.bc.ca)**

These events are part of two new projects: Improving Productivity & Profitability of Forages & Integrated Management of Weeds Using Livestock. These projects are partially supported through: Peace River Agriculture Development Fund (PRAD) & Investment Agriculture Foundation of BC (IAF).