

Western Stock Growers' Association *Newsletter*

September 2019



DEBRIEF: WSGA SUMMER MEETING

This year the WSGA Summer Meeting was hosted by WSGA President Aaron Brower and his family at their ranch by Aden on July 31 and August 1.

The meeting was well attended including an international contingent with two Montana state senators joining us. It was great to have the perspective of our neighbours to the south to add to the discussion.

Dr. Kevin Keough, executive director of the Alberta Prion Research Institute, presented what is going on there with prion research including chronic wasting disease (CWD). The spread of CWD is starting to be seen along river valleys across Saskatchewan and stretching into Alberta. CWD cases in Alberta have doubled every year and since the prions are sloughed off in animal waste, it is very hard to contain. Scientists at the Alberta Prion Research Institute are conducting the largest CWD research project in the world. They are looking at developing a field test but the research has a ways to go on that.

We also had a presentation from Stefan Michalski from Lethbridge Biogas telling the (hard earned) success story of their leading edge thermal hydrolysis facility. The facility accepts liquid hog and dairy manure, food processing residues and animal by-products (packing plant by-products and other deadstock including SRM) and processes these to produce methane

which in turn is used for power generation. The plant currently produces enough megawatts to run a town the size of Fort Macleod. In addition, the leftover digestate can be used as a soil additive with some pretty impressive results for soil health without the leachability of manure.

The Summer Meeting also invites all other industry stakeholders so WSGA members can hear the work their industry groups are doing on their behalf. Several groups were available to present their current priorities and facilitate discussion around their initiatives.

Jan Tranberg and Ryan Kasko from Alberta Cattle Feeders Association updated on their current activities. These include working on labour issues, advocating for rural infrastructure, Bill 6 consultations, the new proposed transportation regulations and traceability proposal among other things. ACFA and ABP recently funded a competitiveness study on the beef industry in Alberta. The data heavy study is complete. It reports that we are only very slightly less competitive in a number of areas compared to the other jurisdictions studied. The problem with this is these little bits are cumulative and can add up to being significantly less competitive overall. The organizations are working on breaking the data down to a more palatable version and beef producers can look for that later in the fall.

Continued on page 2

DEBRIEF: WSGA SUMMER MEETING *continued from page 1*

Kyle Forbes from Alberta Grazing Leaseholders Association updated on their current recommendations and efforts. The government recently announced that grazing leases being found to be managed under exemplary stewardship will be awarded 20 year tenure upon renewal. Alberta Environment and Parks rangeland agrologists will be inspecting based on the criteria starting with grazing leases up for renewal in 2019. The official criteria details are expected to be released from the government later in the fall. AGLA is also working on finding a solution for the increasing recreational access conflicts. Leaseholders were reminded they can take a picture of the licence plate of users accessing against the regulation and call the Report A Poacher line for help. This conflict has been discussed with Jason Nixon, Minister of Environment and Parks, and AGLA is committed to working towards a solution. Copies of the Recreational Access Regulation are available on the AGLA website

www.albertagrazinglease.ca

Shawn McLean from Livestock Identification Services presented on what they are working on. LIS just hosted the International Livestock Identification Association conference at Spruce Meadows. It was a great success with organizations and ranchers from around the world coming together to talk traceability. LIS continues to develop the emanifest system and just received a grant from the government to look at the feasibility of LIS taking an even larger role in the traceability system based on the new proposed regulation changes in Canada. The idea is to ease the regulatory burden on the rancher as much as possible.

The best way to end a meeting like this is to go look at some grass. The second day was a tour the grassland management in the area. Discussion on management and regulatory constraints/concerns abounded and the scenery was breathtaking.



Summer business meeting



Catching shade at summer meeting



Starting grassland tour at the border



Gazing down to winter grazing land



Talking grass



L to R: Montana state senators Russ Tempel and Butch Gillespie, WSGA manager Lindsye Dunbar, governor Eileen McElroy, WSGA president Aaron Brower



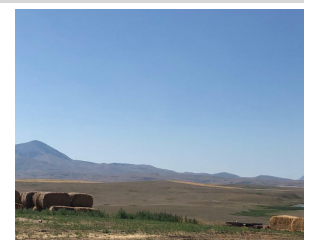
Old buffalo rub rock



A little witching



"Avoid penalty. Report to customs."



Big sky Alberta

JUSTICE MINISTER TO CONSULT ON RURAL CRIME

Justice Minister Doug Schweitzer has started a province wide rural crime consultation road show. The goal, as stated by the Minister is "to have a faster, fairer and more responsive justice system to meet concerns." The consultations started September 5 and will continue until September 30.

Here are the dates and locations:

- Thursday, Sept. 5—Bragg Creek and Springbank
- Friday, Sept. 6—Red Deer
- Tuesday, Sept. 10—Lacombe, Ponoka, Athabasca
- Wednesday, Sept. 11—Slave Lake and Fairview
- Thursday, Sept. 12—Grande Prairie and Whitecourt
- Monday, Sept. 16—Cheadle
- Tuesday, Sept. 17—Lethbridge and Coaldale
- Friday, Sept. 20—Airdrie, Drumheller
- Monday, Sept. 23—Drayton Valley
- Monday, Sept. 30—Okotoks, Raymond, Medicine Hat

For more information, contact your local MLA or check the government engagement website at alberta.ca/consultations.aspx

HISTORIC CHUCK STORM SADDLE TO BE AUCTIONED FOR CHARITY

This piece of history is coming up for auction September 13 at the Western Canadian Calf and Yearling Sale at the Lethbridge Lodge.

The Chuck Storm saddle was created initially as a fundraiser for the WSGA 1996 Great Centennial Cattle Drive. It was raffled off and the lucky winner was Welding Kolstad, WSGA President 1993-94.

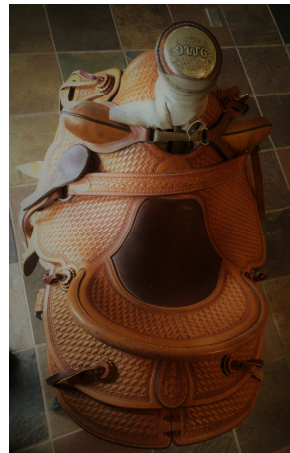
From July 20 to July 24 in 1996, 1500 people, 1700 horses, 2000 steers and over 100 wagons drove from Buffalo 60 miles south to Medicine Hat across CFB Suffield in celebration of 100 years of WSGA operation.

Welding was the head of the Cattle Drive security committee and brought the saddle on the drive.

He woke up one morning to realize the saddle had gone missing and raised the alarm on the theft. As the head of the security committee, he needed to track down the culprit. After some investigation, the perpetrator was found. As it turned out, Welding had loaned the saddle out but with all that was going on with the drive itself, that detail had slipped his mind. This story is now known as "The Great Cattle Drive Saddle Theft".

The saddle has been kindly donated back to the WSGA by Welding Kolstad's family. Proceeds from the auction of this saddle will be split between the Tom Baker Cancer Centre melanoma clinic and the James Hargrave Legacy Foundation.

The sale can be viewed online at www.DLMS.ca.



BUY JEWELRY AND BENEFIT THE JAMES HARGRAVE LEGACY FOUNDATION

Prairie and Plains is donating 15% of sales in September to the James Hargrave Legacy Foundation

Prairie and Plains is a jewelry line created by Nicole Viste featuring grasses and forbs native to the Northern Great Plains. These simple and timeless designs are perfect for Christmas or any fall gifts you have on your list. And shopping is easy - just go to the online store, add to cart, checkout and your beautiful jewelry will be shipped to you.



Shop the website at thebunkhouseonline.com/prairie-plains

UPCOMING EVENTS

Western Canadian Calf and Yearling Sale

September 13, 10:00 am, Signature Sandman Lethbridge Lodge

The large video sale also includes auctioning off the WSGA Centennial Saddle. Proceeds will be split with the Tom Baker Cancer Centre melanoma clinic and the James Hargrave Legacy Foundation. The sale can be viewed online at www.DLMS.ca.

Workshop: Soil Health—Bottom Line Benefits

September 23 and 24, Historic Reesor Ranch, Cypress Hills

Join agroecologist Nicole Masters for a surprising and revealing look at your most valuable asset...your soil. To register contact Nicole at 202-595-4752 or email info@integritysoils.com

The Stockman's Foundation Fall Roundup Annual Dinner and Auction

October 26, Cochrane Rancho House

Call 403-932-3782 or email library@smflibrary.ca for tickets.

Grasslands Conservation Market Symposium

November 19—20, Calgary, AB

The Grassland Conservation Market Symposium will bring together ranchers, farmers, conservation groups, developers and industry to identify opportunities for rewarding land owners and managers for conserving and managing healthy grassland ecosystems for ecosystem service and biodiversity benefits.

For more information go to: <https://ecoservicesnetwork.ca/blog/>

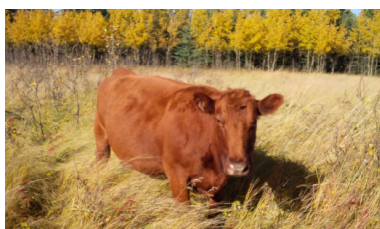
Western Canada Conference on Soil Health and Grazing

Theme: Our Future Is In The Soil

December 10, 11 and 12, Edmonton, AB

Last time this conference sold out before early bird pricing expired! Register early!

For more information and to register go to: www.absoilgrazing.com



Western Stock Growers' Association

Box 179, #14-900 Village Lane
Okotoks, AB T1S 1Z6

PH: 403-250-9121
E: office@wsga.ca