



The art of grazing



Would you agree that grazing is an art?

A grazers information session was held at the Lakedell Agricultural Society on March 7, 2025 where 41 farmers heard Steve Kenyon of Greener Pastures Ranching Ltd. talk about improving soil health through grazing.

Advanced grazing has many names, for example, adaptive multi-paddock (AMP) or intensive rotational grazing. Regardless of the name, advanced grazing focuses on principles that require producers to use smaller paddocks and adapt rotations based on forage availability, seasonal conditions and adequate rest between grazing periods. Since conditions change within each season and between different years, no two grazing seasons are alike. That is where the finesse, or art, comes into play.

Steve talked about the GRASS principles of advanced grazing.

GRASS stands for:

- G** – graze period
- R** – rest period
- A** – animal impact
- S** – stock density
- S** – soil armour

Many benefits to the soil, environment and farm/ranch can occur when advanced grazing is practiced; however, there can be financial barriers to practicing advanced grazing. In part, that's why there are funding streams to assist with the infrastructure needed to create more paddocks and deliver water to them (refer to the On Farm Climate Action Fund programs for more information).

Where to start? Online!

- ▶ RealAgriculture has a YouTube video of Steve Kenyon discussing GRASS principles. Visit www.youtube.com and search GRASS principles.
- ▶ The Canadian Forage and Grassland Association has developed a free, advanced grazing systems learning resource www.canadianfga.ca

Looking for a grazing mentor?

Connect with a mentor in your area by emailing Sonja@areca.ab.ca or visit areca.ca for information.

Agricultural workshops

Topics of interest

Leduc County is looking for your feedback on what types of programs we can offer to help inform and educate our farmers and producers.

Are you interested in sustainable farming practices? Local food initiatives? Weed and pest control? We'd love to know!

Visit www.yoursayeduccounty.com to have your say.

Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership

The Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership (S-CAP) supports farmers and ranchers with cost-shared grant programs. Subscribe to S-CAP program updates at alberta.ca/sustainable-cap to stay in the know.

- ▶ **On-Farm Efficiency program (OEFP)** – scheduled to re-open in April.
Note: application forms and funding list will be updated on the website at re-opening, so be sure to review for eligible and in-eligible projects and more at alberta.ca/on-farm-efficiency-program
- ▶ **Water program** – supports new water source development and special incentive projects.
- ▶ **The Resilient Agricultural Landscape program (RALP)** – the final application intake opened for this popular program Feb. 3, 2025 and was fully subscribed in just over three weeks.

All program details and contact information can be found at alberta.ca/sustainable-cap just know some programs require a current Alberta Environmental Farm Plan (approved within the last 10 years).

- ▶ **Alberta VBP+ Incentive Program**
 - ▶ Available to VBP+ trained or audited producers and with different funding streams for each.
 - ▶ Wide range of improvements supported, including VBP+ initial audits or recertification audits.

Visit abpdaily.com/alberta-vbplusplus-incentive to learn more.

On Farm Climate Action Fund

- ▶ **Results Driven Agricultural Research (RDAR)**
 - ▶ Expected to re-open in April 2025
 - ▶ Focuses on nitrogen management, cover cropping and rotational grazing practices

Learn more at rdar.ca/funding-opportunities/ofcaf

- ▶ **Canadian Forage and Grasslands Association (CFGa)**
 - ▶ Next application intake April 1 to 30, 2025
 - ▶ Focus on rotational grazing and pasture improvement

Learn more at canadianfga.ca/en/projects/ofcaf-funding

- ▶ **Canada Organic Trade Association and EcoCert Canada**
 - ▶ COTA has partnered with EcoCert on the On-Farm Climate Action Fund to present a specific project to help organic farmers implement beneficial management practices (BMP).

Visit canada-organic.ca to learn more.

Weed Workshop

WHEN: WEDNESDAY, APRIL 23 OR MAY 14, 2025

TIME: 7PM - 9PM

LOCATION: BUCK LAKE COMMUNITY HALL

The County of Wetaskiwin along with Clearwater County are co-hosting two Weed Workshops. Attendees can choose either date to learn about the region's top 10 weeds, along with effective control methods and potential herbicide options. Attendees will also be able to purchase herbicides for weed control from Clearwater County at a discounted rate.

✉ smajek@county10.ca

☎ 780-361-6226



Did you know Leduc County and Wetaskiwin County have a sustainable agriculture coordinator?

Serving the Leduc and Wetaskiwin region, Kim is here to assist you on your path to agricultural resilience.

- ▶ Trained Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) technician to help local producers with the process.
- ▶ Connects farmers to grant opportunities like the S-CAP and can assist with the application process.
- ▶ The first point of contact for ALUS Wetaskiwin – Leduc.

Learn more by visiting their websites or email Kim at kimb@leduc-county.com



Wetaskiwin County is one of six supported by CAFLA

The Central Alberta Forage and Livestock Association (CAFLA) is rooted in the legacy of the Grey Wooded (a group of cattle producers in west central Alberta who established the Grey Wooded Forage Association in 1984 to improve grazing practices). CAFLA serves members across the following Counties: Clearwater, Mountain View, Red Deer, Lacombe, Ponoka and Wetaskiwin.

CAFLA's mission is to offer knowledge,

tools and resources that support and strengthen the farming and ranching community.

CAFLA offers essential resources on sustainable forage production, soil health, pasture management and forage variety selection.

Through various workshops, field days and hands-on demonstrations, they help producers adopt beneficial management practices to improve productivity, sustainability and

forage quality. Services include soil and forage sampling packages to provide farmers and ranchers with the information needed to make informed decisions.

CAFLA also supports Central Alberta's livestock producers with educational materials on feeding, nutrition, animal health and sustainable grazing.

Contact CAFLA for more information at **403-844-2645** or **general@cafla-ab.ca**



PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE OF YOUR FARM

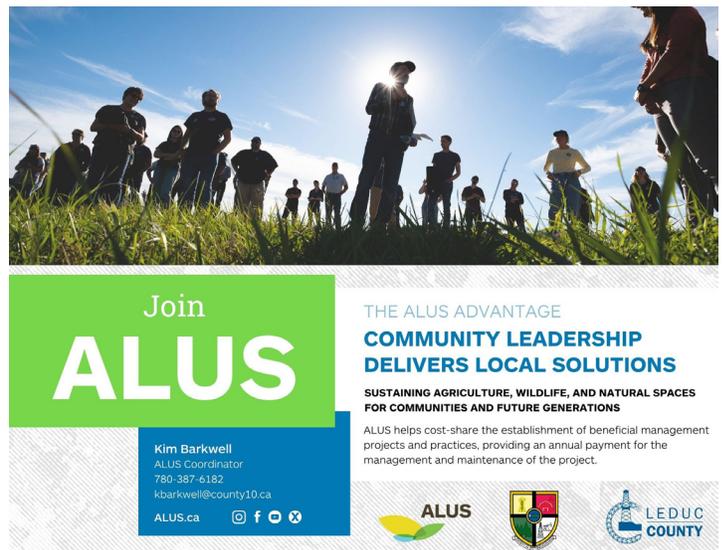
The Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) WebBook, is an online educational system that guides producers step by step to build their EFP. The system is conveniently laid out with online resources at each step to give you all the information you need to make decisions about your farm.

Once your plan is complete, submitting it to your technician to review is as simple as clicking a button. When your plan has been approved the online system will provide you with a checklist of everything you wish to do. Then when you have accomplished some or all of your goals, you can update your plan in minutes, making the renewal process seamless and easy.

Alberta EFP ENVIRONMENTAL FARM PLAN

ARECA INITIATIVE

WWW.ALBERTA.EFP.COM



Join **ALUS**

THE ALUS ADVANTAGE
COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP DELIVERS LOCAL SOLUTIONS

SUSTAINING AGRICULTURE, WILDLIFE, AND NATURAL SPACES FOR COMMUNITIES AND FUTURE GENERATIONS

ALUS helps cost-share the establishment of beneficial management projects and practices, providing an annual payment for the management and maintenance of the project.

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ALUS

LEDUC COUNTY

Farming Forward

Farming Forward Association serves seven municipalities, including Leduc County.

A local collective of producers believed their operations, and those of their neighbours, would benefit from a grassroots initiative aimed at supporting one another and solving problems faced by farmers. They founded West-Central Forage Association in 1978 and for over 45 years have worked together to help make Alberta's agriculture sector world-class. In 2023, the association recognized the need to modernize their image, renew focus and face the challenging demands of agriculture as it is today; therefore, they re-launched as Farming Forward in 2023 with a renewed purpose.

Farming Forward Association is a producer-led, non-profit organization dedicated to driving innovation, sustainability and profitability in the agricultural sector by bridging the gap between research, practice and community. Through applied research, innovative trials and impactful extension services, they facilitate learning to adopt new approaches, improve operations and ensure long-term sustainability.

They connect producers with the tools, insights and networks needed to make informed decisions on farms today and into the future. At the heart of their work is a strong commitment to building a vibrant, collaborative community of producers. They bring together innovators, trailblazers and dedicated individuals to share ideas, explore opportunities and tackle challenges head on. Farming Forward Association is more than an organization — it's a movement to advance agriculture in Alberta.

To join their membership, contact them at **780-785-2222** or **info@farmingforward.ca**
Visit **www.farmingforward.ca** to read more.



Intercropping

Simply put, intercropping is growing two or more crops together at the same time, in the same field. This is an ancient practice still common in developing countries; however, there has been more interest in intercropping on the prairies and interestingly, the Resilient Agriculture Landscape Program (RALP) has supported it.

Why intercrop? There can be a variety of benefits:

- ▶ Over yielding compared to a single crop
 - ▶ Crops can complement each other
 - ▶ Diversified crops mitigate weather, pest and disease risk
 - ▶ Common result but not universal
- ▶ Reduced input costs
 - ▶ Complementary nitrogen use between legume and non-legume crops
- ▶ Reduced disease or insect pressure
- ▶ Reduced lodging, improved harvestability
- ▶ Weed suppression
- ▶ Rotation and soil health benefits – increased diversity

Through a Rural Routes to Climate Solutions webinar, Dr. Eric Bremer talks about intercropping and answers questions such as which crops to use – your “winning” crop and picking a second one to support it. He also dives in on how to seed, seeding rates, weed control and harvest. Visit www.youtube.com/watch?v=pm_kH9jfapo for more.

While there are barriers to intercropping, none are complete roadblocks. A limiting factor is seed separation after harvest, but a common approach is to sort on farm before storing. Intercropping is farmer driven and highlights farmer creativity, so if you want to try it in your operation, talk to your agronomist and farmers doing it in your area.

Kim's corner - a great story

Canada's Agriculture Day was February 11, 2025, and the idea behind it is to acknowledge those that bring food to our table and the contributions of agriculture to our nation!

To recognize Canada's Agriculture Day this year, both Leduc County and Wetaskiwin County staff created a fun fact sheet highlighting food and farming in their regions and shared it with interested grade four classrooms. Combined, there were over 1700 packages distributed to students in 40 schools throughout the region! Teacher survey responses were few but positive. Staff were proud to showcase the importance of agriculture in our rural municipalities.

“Agriculture has been a constant in my life – from growing up on a small mixed farm, a post-secondary degree in agricultural sciences to working for agri-business, raising hogs and coordinating the sustainable agriculture program. Agriculture has supported me and my family, and I love every bit of it. One of the best parts is connecting with our community – the hard-working farmers that put food on our tables.” – Kim B.

Stay connected

Leduc County

Sign up for Ag Matters, Leduc County's monthly agricultural e-newsletter that offers tips, articles and other important information at www.leduc-county.com/agriculture.

County of Wetaskiwin

Receive email and text message updates from the County of Wetaskiwin about agricultural services including mowing, spraying, the ALUS program, weeds, pest control and more.

Sign-up at www.county.wetaskiwin.ab.ca/notify and enter your email address. Then scroll down to News Flashes and select the letter (email) or phone (text) icon next to Agricultural to subscribe.

For assistance contact **780-361-6220**.

Contact us

Find many answers to your questions and more information at the County websites.

- ▶ County of Wetaskiwin No. 10: www.county.wetaskiwin.ab.ca
- ▶ Leduc County: www.leduc-county.com

Should you have any questions or wish to bring any matter to the attention of your Agricultural Service Board, please contact your county's Agricultural Services Department.

- ▶ County of Wetaskiwin No. 10 Agricultural Services: **780-361-6226**
- ▶ Leduc County Agricultural Services: **780-955-4593**

