

BATTLE BEGINS *against crop pests*



I can tell that we are all chomping at the bit to get outside and get at the spring work. A couple weeks ago folks were incorporating manure in the fields, which is a good indicator that winter is almost done. Of course it is snowing the day I am writing this but it will be gone soon. This spring will be like many others, full of possibilities and optimism. Lethbridge County will be gearing up the vegetation control program, so it won't be long before you come across the guys out spraying and mowing, make sure to keep a safe distance from them!

In this newsletter I have included information on our Brillion drill and plastic bagger. There is an article on leafy spurge, which is common throughout Lethbridge County. There are opportunities for bio control to deal with leafy spurge, if you are interested let us know. There is a great article on riparian management included. This is from the research that Ag Canada and Lethbridge County have been doing on riparian BMPs on the Lower Little Bow River for the last 10 years. There will be a shelterbelt workshop in Nobleford on April 7th please look at the information on page 6 if you are interested. As well I have mentioned a trip to Agritechnica in Germany for November, I am sure that this would be a great event; over 400,000 folks attend this every year. As our producers get out in

the fields I start to think about insects and crop disease. One of the best practices that we as producers can do is to sanitize the equipment we are using.

The objective of an equipment sanitation program is to prevent the introduction and/or to reduce the spread of diseases like Clubroot and Fusarium graminearum that decrease crop yield and quality. It is much easier to prevent the introduction of diseases or pests to a farm or field compared to trying to manage it after it has become established. Various types of farm equipment and machinery may come into contact with soil, seed and/or crop debris from a disease-infested field and therefore become contaminated. Some of the equipment will be difficult to clean because of its size, design and/or complexity. Keep in mind when cleaning with pressure washers that electronics may not be compatible with water, detergents and disinfectants, and compressed air may have to be used instead for cleaning. Check with equipment manufacturers to insure that the cleaning and disinfecting procedures you plan to use will not dam-

age sensitive equipment.

I know we do not have clubroot here yet. If producers remain vigilant and start to utilize a sanitation program between fields or between various seeded crops we may never see it. If we remain complacent, well I don't think it will take long for Mother Nature to do her best to move it down in our area. It really only takes one instance to set us back for a lifetime, so practice good sanitation. It is the same idea for Fusarium graminearum, basically we all need to establish sound sanitation programs to ensure we remain sustainable. There is more information on sanitation practices on the Alberta Agriculture website. The Fusarium graminearum Management Plan and the Alberta Clubroot Management Plan are great resources to help establish a sound sanitation plan.

Have a great year!

**For Strychnine enquires please phone the
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CFO Extension Specialists with Alberta Agriculture and Food (AF) provide technical expertise to livestock producers, consultants, municipalities, and other interested parties. CFO extension services ensure Alberta's livestock industry grows in a competitively and environmentally sustainable manner.

Working in cooperation with the Natural Resources Conservation Board (NRCB), Approval Officers and Inspectors, AF CFO Extension Specialists provide clients with information and tools to support the NRCB application process. They also provide clients information on the regulatory requirements of the Agricultural Operation Practices Act (AOPA) and other relevant legislation.

What services are available?

Extension services are available to anyone requiring information about the technical requirements and application process for existing, new and expanding CFOs in Alberta.

For producers and their consultants, additional services will be provided specific to the application process.

Extension staff assist clients with the following:

- Assist with determining if a permit is required.
- Understanding the application process and regulatory requirements.
- Collecting information to determine potential site risks and initial site evaluation.
- Providing information on management options to meet regulatory requirements and address potential site risks.
- Directing clients to information and tools to help complete the application process.

Referral service

CFO Extension Specialists can refer clients to people with other areas of expertise to help them make decisions about their operation.

How can services be accessed?

AF CFO Extension Specialists provide services across the province and are located in Morinville, Red Deer and Lethbridge.