



Successful Farm Tours

Last Week

July 30, 2007 (Saskatoon, SK) – The Provincial Council of Agriculture Development and Diversification Boards (PCAB) hosted two travelling field days last week to showcase Saskatchewan farms that are making environmental improvements. A bus of 36 participants took in the tour day in the Redberry Lake region last Wednesday and another 24 people took in the event in the Maidstone-St. Walburg area on Thursday, July 26.

The first tour was organized in cooperation with the Redberry Lake Watershed Agri-Environmental Group Plan. Participants were treated to a display of portable windbreaks and cattle shelters, a device to water cattle away from a natural spring, and extensive system of cross fencing to protect the riparian areas next to the North Saskatchewan River. “The investment in these improvements, through this program and from landowners themselves, is money well spent because every future generation will benefit from clean water,” says Lee Dolezal, whose property was home to the Blaine Lake Game Reserve for some of the first buffalo who came to Saskatchewan in the 1950s.

Also on this tour was a demonstration of the environmentally-friendly brush clearing equipment used by Maverick Construction that allowed participants to see how trees and brush could be mulched with minimal damage to the surrounding habitat. The tour took an unscheduled stop when the bus found a soft spot on the road leading down to Radouga Creek and participants were obliged to watch and cheer as a local producer used his tractor to pull the bus out of the mud.

A second tour took place the following day. “We were tired of starting tractors everyday to feed our cow herd. We needed a plan to cut back on our time, fuel, and machinery inputs,” said Joe Larre, one of the producers that hosted a stop near St. Walburg.

The Larre farm, one of six stops over the two days, showed other producers and interested guests how they installed an extensive system of cross-fencing to establish a winter feeding site for bale grazing and swath grazing. With their new wintering sites, the Larres cut down on the concentration of manure near the farmyard and reduced the potential for contaminating water sources. They also saved significant time, fuel and money in that the cattle were now spreading their own manure.

Participants on the Maidstone tour also got to see a retention pond for containment of corral runoff as well as a stop showing portable windbreaks and cattle shelters.

PCAB, the organization that delivers the Canada-Saskatchewan Environmental Farm Planning Program in the province, was pleased overall with the events. “PCAB would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to the six producers who allowed us to visit their farms,” says Tracy Wickstrom, PCAB’s Farm Stewardship Coordinator. “These producers, as well as others across the province, have invested their own time and finances to improve the environment we all share. Our hats off to you.”

More detail on each of the stops on the tours is available in the tour booklet on PCAB’s website: www.saskpcab.com.

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For more information:

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