

Progress Report

2021-2022



Canadian Forage and Grassland Association
Association Canadienne pour les Plantes Fourragères



A Message from the Chairman of the Board of Directors

Chris Martin

As CFGA/ACPF continues its growth trajectory, the stability provided by the board through good governance and leadership has helped to guide the organization to new opportunities.

"Focusing on the strategic vision of the forage industry will maintain the resilience of this diversified industry and allow us to pursue new opportunities in the future."

- Chris Martin

In 2021-2022, governance and leadership within the organization have taken centre stage. The board participated in processes that affect the strategic direction, governance, and human resources capacity of the CFGA/ACPF. These additional contributions by the board will undoubtedly maintain a foundation for the future of the organization.

In 2021, we were pleased to announce that Germain Lefebvre received the CFGA Leadership award. With 50+ years of dedication to the forage industry as a professional agrologist, Lefebvre has contributed in Quebec and at a national level to elevate the role that forages provide the agriculture industry.

Message from the Executive Director **Cedric MacLeod**

Managing a collaborative culture at the CFGA/ACPF is critical for the ongoing success of the organization. Building the skills of our industry will be critical moving forward.

"Technology has been at the forefront of the CFGA/ACPF to enhance our processes, reduce workload where possible and increase collaboration."

- Cedric MacLeod

With so many opportunities presenting themselves for the CFGA/ACPF, building a network of collaborators is critical to getting this important work done. The industry not only needs to manage risk well but look to the horizon of future trends for long-term impact.

With collaboration in mind the CFGA/ACPF is also focussed on ensuring that language does not become a barrier. Our bilingual conference has taught us that knowledge sharing across the country is critical to build success as an organization and an industry.

Board of Directors

Ray Robertson, Past Chairman – Ontario Forage Council

Chris Martin, Chairman – North American Exporters

Eric Boot, Vice-Chairman – International Exporters

Serena Black – British Columbia Forage Council

Annie Claessens – Quebec Forage Council

Gerrit Damsteegt – Dairy Farmers of Canada

Brian Walker – New Brunswick Soil and Crop Association

CFG/ACPF Committees

Conference Committee - Cedric MacLeod (Chair)

Executive Committee - Chris Martin (Chair)

Export Committee - Chris Martin and Eric Boot (Co-Chairs)

Finance Committee - Eric Boot (Chair)

Research Committee - Richard Tingskou (Chair)

CFGGA/ACPF Mandates

Vision: Canadian Forage and Grassland Association/ Association of Canadienne pour les Plantes Fourragères will be the recognized leader in forages and grassland opportunities nationally and internationally.

Mission: CFGGA/ACPF will work cooperatively with affiliated partners to develop the forage and grassland industry through knowledge transfer, research and supporting market opportunities in Canada and abroad.

Market Development

Strengthen the viability of forage as a value-added or commodity product for off-farm sales.

Research

Support research relevant to the Canadian forage industry and position the Canadian forage industry on the world stage.

Advocacy

Build awareness of the benefits of the forage and the grasslands sector in Canada as a critical component of the Canadian agriculture industry.

Education

Improve the understanding of production principles in the Canadian climate for the forage industry and those that benefit from ecological goods and services.

Leadership and Governance

Develop a board culture where strategic visioning is paramount.

Strategic Activities



Canadian Forage and Grassland Association
Association Canadienne pour les Plantes Fourragères



Strategic Planning

In May 2021, the CFGA/ACPF board underwent a strategic planning review using the Checkland soft systems analysis model. The board and member organizations were consulted to identify strategic areas for the organization to focus on in the next five years. A group consultation was done in August with a draft plan finalized in November. The board approved this plan in December 2021.

Objectives

To identify the various industry challenges and the best use of resources for the organization to manage risk and amplify the opportunities in the forage and grassland sector in Canada.

2021-2022 Outcomes

The strategic plan has provided a direction that builds upon past work yet maintains continuity with the foundation of the organization. CFGA/ACPF has begun to implement the objectives at both the board and operational levels.

Learning

Governance and leadership became a priority for the strategic goals so that the organization can take advantage of strategic knowledge from across the sector. While this priority was being pursued previously, highlighting it, will formalize this work more.

Next Steps

The board in 2022-2023 will be setting priorities for the next four years to identify the policies and processes required to support the forage sector across Canada.

Communications Strategy

The CFGA/ACPF developed a communications strategy in 2021 to ensure that the organization would be able to grow with an expanding stakeholder base and portfolio of projects. The communications strategy includes an audit, updated goals and strategic use of communications resources. As part of this process, a brand use guidelines document was also created.

Objectives

The communications planning process was aimed to develop a strategy to respond efficiently to the needs of the organization's stakeholders and identify key metrics by which to measure success.

2021-2022 Outcomes

CFGA/ACPF is working to develop systems to implement the strategies outlined in the strategic plan. Using technology is one way that CFGA/ACPF will develop consistent communications with all relevant stakeholders.

Learning

The CFGA/ACPF is well-placed within the industry. The organization crosses many sectors and stakeholder groups. Creating channels for receiving feedback will be crucial so that the organization may respond to the wide range of needs for this industry.

Next Steps

With the development of the new CFGA/ACPF Strategic plan, a small review will be done with this document to ensure that it aligns closely with the organization's overall objectives. New programming will also be accounted for in this plan.

Human Resources Analysis

A Human Resources Analysis process was pursued by the CFGA/ACPF starting in August 2021 and completed in December 2021. The board, member organizations and contractors were consulted to determine the human resource needs of the organization.

Objectives

The purpose of the process was threefold; to review CFGA governance processes, to review the job performance of the Executive Director and to assess human resource needs for CFGA/ACPF moving forward.

2021-2022 Outcomes

The report provided a significant number of recommendations which can provide consistency across projects and ensure the CFGA/ACPF continues its leadership role in agriculture.

Learning

Board governance training and onboarding of new roles into the operational side of the organization will be important to maintain the current level of success the organization has seen.

Next Steps

The board is reviewing the recommendations of the report and will be overseeing the implementation of these recommendations over the next 4 years.

Systems Planning

The CFGA/ACPF has tremendous opportunity to enhance the functionality of existing software which will maximize managerial processes, including use of time and monitoring budgets to expenses as well as improving knowledge transfer processes.

Objectives

In February 2022, CFGA initiated a systems planning project to establish an overall operational process for integrating collaborative software for an online workspace.

2021-2022 Outcomes

This process has helped to develop an understanding of CFGA's current business and system processes through an operational lens.

Learning

Identifying areas where technology can be used to streamline contractors' workloads and provide timely reports can help the organization scale it's capacity and reduce risk.

Next Steps

There is an opportunity for continued learning and development within CFGA. In the next year, each project will be integrating the use of these collaborative online tools to increase the effective use of resources.

Export

The CFGA/ACPF receives funding to support its export initiatives from the Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's AgriMarketing Program (AMP), which aims to increase and diversify exports to international markets and seize domestic market opportunities.



Objectives

To strengthen its relationship with its export members and potential new members and to assist with initiatives that support hay and forage export and domestic market opportunities.

2021-2022 Outcomes

The CFGA/ACPF created promotional materials in English, French, Arabic and Mandarin. The organization hosted a booth at World Dairy Expo. Began organizing a trade mission with representatives from Al Dahra.

Learning

CFGA export members began receiving quarterly updates on the Canadian and world forage markets from the Hoyt Report, the authority covering forage markets and prices in the Western United States which includes number and value reports of Canadian forage exports.

Next Steps

The CFGA/ACPF is hosting representatives from Al Dahra in May for a five-day trade mission with stops in Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia. In September, the CFGA/ACPF will return to the World Dairy Expo in September 2022.

Program Activities



Canadian Forage and Grassland Association
Association Canadienne pour les Plantes Fourragères



2021 Conference

The CFGA/ACPF held its 12th annual conference Dec. 14 to 16 in partnership with the Conseil québécois des plantes fourragères (CQPF). The three-day virtual event, with the theme Forage Landscape Synergies, was funded through the Program Innov'Action agroalimentaire, under the Canadian Partnership for Agriculture, an agreement between the governments of Canada and Quebec, and the generous support of the CFGA/ACPF's conference sponsors and annual partners.

Objectives

To host an interactive, bilingual event that showcased the forage sector in Quebec and opened a window to forage and landscape management innovation from Quebec, across Canada and the United States.

2021-2022 Outcomes

More than 200 people from across the country focused on sustainability and ways to enrich the contribution of Canadian grasslands. The event was delivered with simultaneous translation for French and English.

Learning

Participants learned about exciting and cutting-edge forage happenings in Quebec as well as valuable information and inspiration for forage producers across the country.

Next Steps

Planning is now underway for the 13th annual conference, which will take place virtually from Nov. 29 to Dec. 2. The theme for the 2022 event is Cross-Pollination: Co-Creating Ideas in the Forage Industry.

Advanced Grazing Systems

This entry-level program is designed as a learning framework to support the adoption of the rotational grazing systems to help improve production, profitability, carbon sequestration, drought resilience, biodiversity and soil health. This program was initiated with the support of Farmers for Climate Solutions.

Objectives

The objectives of the program are to build a network of mentors who are well-versed in rotational grazing across Canada from which farmers can access information and training.

2021-2022 Outcomes

The initial curriculum has been developed and a group of mentors was trained in March. In addition, CFGA/ACPF is developing a learning management system where mentors and farmers can connect on-demand.

Learning

Working with a steering committee, much of this program was initially developed in collaboration with forage experts across Canada.

Their guidance has helped to shape the program in a significant way.

Next Steps

In 2022-2023, CFGA/ACPF will train mentors and support them as they train farmers across the country. At the close of the season, CFGA/ACPF will review and update curriculum as areas of improvement are highlighted.

Alfalfa Management Research

Alfalfa is a key forage crop producers rely on to capture and fix carbon, return nutrients to the soil and improve soil health. It is an important ingredient that feeds many other agriculture sectors in Canada.

Objectives

CFGA has two alfalfa management projects underway that will provide forage producers with valuable diagnostic and decision-support tools to help alfalfa crops thrive.

Tool 1

The first tool will improve yield and forage nutritive value from alfalfa fields using artificial intelligence; identify potential agronomic, climatic and soil-related factors affecting alfalfa yield; and predict potential yield and nutritive value loss.

Tool 2

The second tool will assess and improve alfalfa winter survival rates and persistency; predict and assess winter survival; identify the factors and field zones leading to poor alfalfa winter survival and provide predictions of the impact of alternative management practices.

Canada Grassland Protocol

Adopted in 2019 by the U.S.-based Climate Action Reserve (CAR), the CFGA/ACPF's Canada Grassland Protocol Project (CGPP) provides a standardized approach to quantifying, monitoring and verifying the greenhouse gas (GHG) reductions saved when landowners choose to retain grasslands at risk of conversion to other land uses that significantly disturb the soil.

Objectives

The objective is to test the Canada Grassland Protocol to provide ongoing financial incentives to landowners so that grasslands being converted to annual cropping systems may be avoided, thereby preserving carbon stores in the soil.

2021-2022 Outcomes

Methods, processes, costs, agreements and contracts of the protocol have been determined for the pilot project. Over 6,000 acres in Alberta have been secured as part of the pilot project.

Learning

Consistent and sufficient communications have helped this project progress. A collaborative approach with many stakeholders has allowed this program to receive critical feedback.

Next Steps

The CFGA/ACPF will continue to refine the process with the goal of developing this opportunity in a compliance market to increase the opportunities for revenue for the landowner and opportunities for grassland conservation.

Grassland Inventory Project

There is active interest across organizations in the successful completion of the National Grassland Inventory. Collaborating with a wide variety of stakeholders ensures that a cohesive classification system can help to improve in the areas of research and extension.

Objectives

The overall objective of the National Grassland Inventory Project is to complete grasslands classification and ecoregional distribution across Canada as well as to characterize carbon sequestration functions of native grassland types.

2021-2022 Outcomes

To date, a National Grassland Inventory Workplan was created for 2022 to 2024, integrating stakeholder and technical activities over the next two years.

Learning

The Grassland Inventory Project has provided a synthesis of the temperate grassland types across Canada, with provincial distribution information that allows individual provinces to select the types in their jurisdiction

Next Steps

Finalizing a work plan for the project will happen in the upcoming year. Following this, the work plan will be implemented as well as continued engagement with stakeholders.

Habitat and Biodiversity Assessment Tool (HBAT)

The Habitat and Biodiversity Assessment Tool has the potential to help bridge the gap between ag producers and conservationists.



Objectives

With financial support from Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC), the CFGA Nature Fund Project addresses the agriculture priority sector identified under the Pan-Canadian Approach to Transforming Species at Risk Conservation in Canada.

2021-2022 Outcomes

The centerpiece of the project is the Habitat and Biodiversity Assessment Tool (HBAT), for land managers to use for habitat and biodiversity assessment to gain a basic understanding of important habitats and biodiversity at their land location.

Learning

2021-2022 saw great strides taken in this project with tool development, including a review of beneficial management practices (BMPs), and beta testing of tools for Nova Scotia, Manitoba and Saskatchewan.

Next Steps

With initial testing complete in Manitoba, Nova Scotia and Saskatchewan, CFGA/ACPF will look to launch the full tool in the fall of 2022. B.C., Ontario and New Brunswick tools will be developed over the 2022-2023 year.

On-Farm Climate Action Fund

The On-Farm Climate Action Fund is a federal program that distributes funds to farmers to help implement rotational grazing practices that will assist in mitigating greenhouse gas emissions.



Objectives

Beginning in September 2021, CFGA/ACPF pursued an application with the federal government to access funding to implement rotational grazing across Canada.

2021-2022 Outcomes

In February 2022 it was announced that CFGA/ACPF was successful in their application in Alberta, British Columbia, Quebec and Saskatchewan. Currently, CFGA/ACPF is working partners on the ground to assist in the implementation of the program.

Learning

CFGA/ACPF is leveraging the work done on the Advanced Grazing Systems program to build a robust extension effort to support the operations of the program.

CFGA/ACPF is carefully designing a policy and application system to accommodate the applicants.

Next Steps

The CFGA/ACPF is working with other recipients to align programs where needed to ensure consistency for the Canadian producer. Building and communicating the processes will be critical to the successful uptake of the program.

Acknowledgements

We recognize our members for their dedication to research, education and working across provincial borders to strengthen the Canadian forage industry.



We thank our sponsors for their continued support of the CFGA/ACPF. Their investment in the forage and grassland industry helps to build a strong future in the sector.



Contact

466 Street 1B6, Wilmot Alley,
Fredericton, NB
(506) 260-0872

www.canadianfga.ca
<https://www.facebook.com/canadianfga>
https://twitter.com/CFGF_ACPF