

UNIVERSITY NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – Sept. 22, 2011

501-121 Research Drive
Saskatoon SK S7N 1K2 Canada
Telephone: (306) 966-6607
Facsimile: (306) 966-6815
Email: communications@usask.ca
Website: www.usask.ca/mediaroom

U of S led organic forage and livestock capacity report now available

The Western Canadian Feed Innovation Network (WCFIN) at the University of Saskatchewan and the Saskatchewan Forage Council (SFC) are pleased to release their report entitled: *The Western Canadian Organic Beef and Forage Industry: Current Market Conditions and Trends for the Future*.

The report examines the current status of the organic beef and forage industries in Western Canada, as well as determining potential future areas of growth. The authors of this study contacted organic industry associations, government extension specialists and organic farmers to determine the size, location, potential and obstacles for the industries.

Key findings in the report include:

- The organic beef and forage sectors across the West are roughly matched in capacity.
- The majority of organic livestock producers are self-sufficient in organic forage production.
- There is some organic forage production by organic producers who do not raise livestock, but rather include forages in organic crop rotations.
- Growth of organic dairies in Western Canada as well as the USA, and exports of organic pellets to the European Union are areas of potential expansion, however the size of the organic beef market has slightly decreased over time.
- If these markets do expand, both the organic beef as well as organic forage industries have the capacity to expand to meet potential demand.

“Stakeholders within the organic forage and beef sectors appear to be cautiously optimistic about growth potential,” says Janice Bruynooghe, SFC Executive Director. “The advantage is that Saskatchewan is uniquely positioned to capitalize on future opportunities that may exist. Our province has a vast forage resource and our producers are well positioned to meet any future demand that may occur.”

“There are quite a few organic organizations throughout Canada,” adds Colleen Christensen, Executive Director, U of S Feeds Innovation Institute. “This made pulling together the statistics for this report a bit of a challenge. The Western Canadian Feed Innovation Network is focused on tightening the connections between our feed value chains in Western Canada. This report is a good step toward ensuring strong communication of the strengths and obstacles which exist in these two sectors.”

The Western Canadian Organic Beef and Forage Industry: Current Market Conditions and Trends for the Future report is located at <http://www.wcfin.ca/FeedResources/WhitePapers.aspx> and www.saskforage.ca.

About the WCFIN

The Western Canadian Feed Innovation Network mandate is to be the facilitators of the Feed Value Chain in Western Canada. WCFIN exists to encourage collaboration, find connections and maximize the feed resources that exist in Western Canada. WCFIN is a research facilitation service developed by the Feeds Innovation Institute, a commercialization entity located within the College of Agriculture and Bioresources at the University of Saskatchewan.

About the SFC

With a mandate to enhance the province's forage and grassland industry, the Saskatchewan Forage Council (SFC) strives to partner with all sectors of the industry. Formed in 1988, SFC objectives are focused on the development and dissemination of information related to the production and utilization of all forage resources, prioritization of forage research, and collaboration with governments and all stakeholders to develop and implement effective policies and programs as they relate to forage production and marketing.

-30-

For more information, contact:

Colleen Christensen, PhD, PAg
Executive Director
Feeds Innovation Institute
University of Saskatchewan
(306) 966-4154
colleen.christensen@usask.ca

Janice Bruynooghe, MSc, PAg
Executive Director
Saskatchewan Forage Council
(306) 867-8126
jbruynooghe@saskforage.ca