

Agri-Environment Bulletin

March/April 2013

A newsletter from Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives

Assessing Our Readiness to Adapt to Extremes in Weather

Global forecasts by the world's top scientists predict increased frequency of heavy rains, floods, heat waves and droughts worldwide. To ensure Manitobans have the most current tools to assess and deal with extremes, Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural initiatives (MAFRI) was part of a recent pilot assessment project with the International Institute for Sustainable Development.

The pilot tested the institute's Adaptive Design and Assessment Policy Tool (ADAPTtool) on several of Manitoba's policies and programs, including: AgriRecovery Program, Community Pastures Program, Ag Weather Program, Environmental Farm Action Program, Agricultural Sustainability Initiative, Provincial Planning Regulation (Policy Area 3, Agriculture) and our GO Teams. The pilot test asked a series of 15 questions that assess the ability of programs and policies to help stakeholders adapt to a particular stress – in this case, drought and excess moisture.



While the programs scored high in most of the important criteria of supporting adaptation needs, MAFRI's GO Teams and Agricultural Sustainability Initiative ranked highest in the testing. This is largely because of the broad mandates of both these programs, allowing them to support many of the adaptation needs that were identified through the project. The GO Teams program ranked very high because of its extension networks, which support people in self-organization and networking, and also because it is structured to allow decentralized decision making.

The pilot also notes some areas that may benefit from more detailed advance planning to ensure programs and services are sustained over extended periods of drought or excess moisture. For a copy of the pilot program report, [click here](#).



What agri-environmental news is important to you?
Email agrienv@gov.mb.ca with your ideas and suggestions for future articles.

Better Nutrient Stewardship...Brought to You by the Letter R

In the alphabet of future nutrient management, the four Rs will be most prominent:

- right source
- right rate
- right time
- right place

The Manitoba government, Canadian Fertilizer Institute and Keystone Agricultural Producers have recently signed the *4R Nutrient Stewardship* memorandum of understanding (MOU) that formalizes a joint commitment to support agriculture production and environmental protection by improving the way fertilizers are used.

The 4R Nutrient Stewardship System will help ensure that nutrients are applied using the right source, at the right rate, at the right time and in the right place. This will be done through the adoption of beneficial management practices (BMPs) by producers to gain economic, social and environmental sustainability. It recognizes that BMPs must be customized to fit each farm's unique climate, soil, crops and operations.



New initiatives will be funded by the Canadian Fertilizer Institute over the next three years. Activities may include the development of training materials and programs; field extension events and trials; and efforts to refine nutrient uptake and removal values for Western Canadian crops.

Who Are They?

Can you name these 4R cheerleaders?



Answer: Dana Hill, Laura Grzenda, Maria Riekman, Brittany Dyck

Important Dates

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| March 5 | <u>Dauphin Ag Society "Farm Outlook 2013"</u> |
| March 12 & 13 | Soil Fertility Workshops in Morris |
| March 19 | Glenboro Ag Day |
| March 20 | <u>Manitoba Eco-Network Water Caucus "Keeping Water on the Land"</u> |