

The Municipal Agricultural Connection



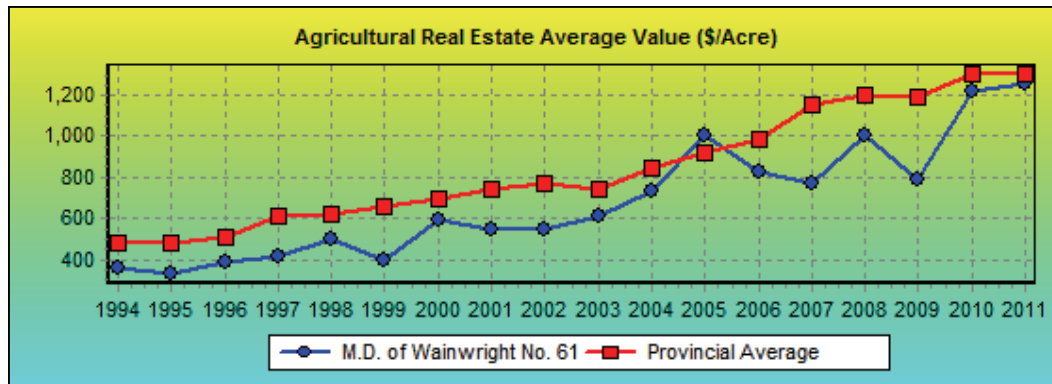
Newest addition to Aimee's family, black stud colt!
 Have an interesting municipal topic you want discussed in the Newsletter?
Assistant Agricultural Fieldman
Aimee Wonsik, asb@mdwainwright.ca



Partners in Rural Conservation
www.mdwainwright.ca



LOCAL AGRICULTURAL LAND VALUES, CASH RENT, HARD FEELINGS



According to a new Farm Credit Canada (FCC) Farmland Values Report, the average value of farmland in Alberta increased by 4.5% during the second half of 2011. In the two previous six-month reporting periods, farmland values increased by 4.0% and 1.5%, respectively. Farmland values have been rising in the province since 1993. What does this say for 2012??

FCC appraisers estimate market value using recent comparable sales. These sales must be arm's-length transactions. Once sales are selected, they are reviewed, analyzed and adjusted to the benchmark properties. Land prices vary significantly between regions and provinces. That's why FCC measures provincial land value trends on a percentage basis. Reporting on the percentage change in value versus the average price per acre provides a more consistent national approach. Strong agricultural commodity prices, along with increased oilfield activity, appeared to spur confidence in the economy, with land prices either holding their value or increasing. Land continues to be generally considered to be a sound investment. Large agricultural producers are competing for good cultivated farmland, fuelling demand and pushing prices upward. Cultivated lands continue to be in high demand, while marginal land suitable for hay and cattle production is also seeing increases.

Here in the M.D. of Wainwright estimated agricultural real estate average value of dollars for 2011 was **\$1472.44 PER ACRE**. (see above chart which can be found on ropintheweb.ca by searching land values for specific counties ,or [http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/sdd1607?opendocument](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/sdd1607?opendocument)).
 The value, acreage and number of lands transfers

since 1994 are sorted by the C.L.I. class of the real estate transferred. (The C.L.I. class is the Canada Land Inventory rating system, providing an agricultural indication capability of the land based on a quarter section, into 7 different classes. The majority of M.D. of Wainwright is Class 4.)

- Class 1** - Soils with no significant limitations in use for crops.
- Class 2** - Soils with moderate limitations that restricts the range of crops or require moderate conservation practices.
- Class 3** - Soils with moderately severe limitations that restricts the range of crops or require special conservation practices.
- Class 4** - Soils with severe limitations that restricts the range of crops or require special conservation practices or both.
- Class 5** - Soils that are unsuitable for annual cultivation These soils could be improved for the production of perennial forages or pasture.
- Class 6** - Soils that have some natural grazing potential but where improvement practices are not feasible.
- Other** - Soils that have no capability for arable culture or permanent pasture, soils that are organic and frequently found in the wooded regions of the province and soils that could not be assigned a C.L.I. class because of a lack of a suitable map.

In 2011, Average Value \$ per Acre in the M.D. of Wainwright was: CLI1- n/a, CLI2- \$1285.36, CLI3- \$1232.98, **CLI4- \$1472.44**, CLI5- \$587.74, CLI6- \$823.80, Other- n/a. Average \$1256.47
Also in 2011, Average Acres Transferred in the M.D. of Wainwright was: CLI1- n/a, CLI2- 797,

CLI3- 1174, **CLI4- 1578**, CLI5- 153, CLI6- 540, Other- n/a. Total 4242 acres.

There is a much bigger point to be made here. Agriculture and it's capital are playing catch-up in an increasingly demand-rich and supply scarce world. Land is being "real" priced on investment speculation rather than production speculation. If you are a seller, be careful to avoid sellers regret, from pricing land at fair market values without considering the saying "they are not making more land". If you are wanting to buy more land, you are going to have to stop kicking tires, and seriously consider what may seem "cheap" in the not too distant future.

Cash land rentals in the central region of Alberta for 2011 can be found online as well: [http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/inf13803](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/inf13803)

For cropland, the range of rent price was \$24-75/acre, with \$40-60/acre being the most common with an average of \$47.86 per acre.

For private pasture rent the range of price was \$20-30/AUM or \$21.35-24/hd/mo.

Keep in mind these ranges are recorded for the central region, and not specifically to M.D. Wainwright municipal boundary lines.

If you are in a land rental agreement, being cognitive of land values and worth may prove to be more beneficial in the end when land does come up for sale. And overall, unless your name is on the tax roll, there sometimes is not much you can do when land changes hands (and not into your own). Clauses of first-in-right may fall on deaf ears when dollars are talking. AW

SPRING CLEAN-UP!

Clear Lake Fabyan Greenshields Ascot Heights Ascot Estates Silver Willow Banjo Estates

The M.D. of Wainwright Public Works Department will be picking up Spring Clean-Up materials for a 2 week period beginning May 7th to May 17th, 2012. For more information please contact Karen at the M.D. main office, 780-842-4454.

Hamlets of Fabyan, Greenshields, Clear Lake and Area, Ascot Heights, Ascot Estates, Silver Willow and Banjo Estates.

Unacceptable materials would be appliances, furniture, construction materials, metal, hazardous waster, household and yard chemicals and paint. (These materials can be taken to the Wainwright Waste-to-Energy Facility; see back page).

Fabyan & Greenshields

Pick up days will be Monday and Thursday each week. Schedule of May 7, 10, 14, 17-2012. Municipal employees will collect material properly packaged in clear plastic bags placed out in front of your house. Dark or coloured bags will not be picked up.



Clear plastic bags with grass clippings and tree trimmings.

grass clippings and tree trimmings.

Clear Lake and Area

A garbage roll-off bin will be supplied, and placed at the Clear Lake main beach areas for one week period over the long weekend in May; from Wednesday, May 16 to Wednesday, May 23, 2012. This provides the opportunity to dispose of yard cleanup materials and household materials that are not hazardous.



Ascot Heights, Ascot Estates, Silver Willow and Banjo Estates

A garbage roll off bin will be supplied, and placed at the Ascot Heights garbage compound for a one week period over the long weekend in May; from Wednesday, May 16 to Wednesday, May 23, 2012. This provides the opportunity to dispose of yard cleanup materials and household materials that are not



SURPRISE!! DIRT MOUNDS IN LAWN!

You may have noticed some "surprise" dirt mounds in your lawn, more than likely from a rodent named Pocket Gopher.

Pocket gophers, commonly called moles however are not moles, are problems in pastures and haylands in Alberta. They also eat garden crops and kill woody plants and shrubs by feeding on the roots (keep this in mind if you are establishing a shelterbelt.)

Pocket gophers tend to feed above ground in late spring and early summer when stems and leaves are most nutritious. As the nutritional quality declines, pocket gophers return to feeding below ground on roots, which usually coincides with haying season. Dirt mounds significantly aggravate farmers by leaving dirt mounds that require slower speeds for farm machinery to operate over, wear and tear on farm machinery and also reduce desirable vegetation. For acreage owners, havoc is raised when trying to landscape and maintain yardsites.

One pocket gopher can make up to 50 dirt mounds in one year through it's burrowing activity. Unlike Richardson Ground Squirrels (commonly called gophers) that hibernate



through the winter, Pocket Gophers are active throughout the winter, burrowing and feeding under the snow. Females have one litter of 4-6 young per year during late May or June.

Control of pocket gopher populations should be started when populations are

at the lowest by using traps as an effective control method. Traps can be purchased at your local hardware store, and are economical and easy to operate. They are also a good option to consider instead of using pesticide, if you have farm animals (horses, yard dogs etc.) that may be within the same vicinity. This limits accidental poison exposure and also environmental off-target poisonings.



Trap is easy to set up, check, and reuse.

The lack of snow cover and mild winter is showing signs on our trees...

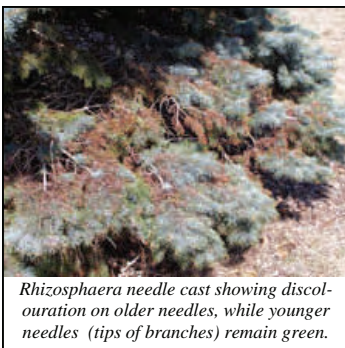
Distinguishing Disease from Winter Injury on Spruce

Throughout the M.D. of Wainwright, purplish brown to rusty brown needles can be seen on spruce trees. A variety of problems can result in needle discoloration in spruces including insects, disease, and problems associated with environmental conditions. **This time of year two common problems are Rhizosphaera needle cast and winter injury.**



Lower branches of Colorado blue spruce being affected by Rhizosphaera needle cast.

Rhizosphaera needle cast is caused by a fungal pathogen. Winter injury is the result of environmental conditions. It is important to be able to distinguish between these two problems, since very different action is required to maintain tree health depending on the cause of the problem.



Rhizosphaera needle cast showing discoloration on older needles, while younger needles (tips of branches) remain green.

Rhizosphaera needle cast is caused by the fungi *Rhizosphaera kalkhoffii* and is most commonly seen on Colorado

blue spruce, which are highly susceptible to the disease. White spruce and Norway spruce have greater resistance to the disease but can become infected when stressed. (With the drought conditions we are experiencing Rhizosphaera needle cast is showing up in a wide variety of spruce trees, especially in 2011 around the M.D.) **Trees suffering from Rhizosphaera needle cast can be recognized by browning of the older needles closer to the trunk.** The older needles

are located at the base of the branch closest to the trunk, while the new needles grow from the tip of the branch. (Diseased spruce trees often have branches with green needles at the tip of the branch and brown needles towards the base.) In addition, the branches closest to the ground tend to be more severely infected, because humidity is highest there. Later in the summer the discoloured needles may fall off. If a spruce tree has been suffering from Rhizosphaera needle cast for several years, it may appear sparse and have dead branches at its base. The fungal pathogen of Rhizosphaera needle cast can be seen on infected spruce needles. Use a hand lens to closely examine discoloured needles. Tiny black pimple like spore producing structures can be seen arising from the stomates, or air holes in the needle.

Spruce trees suffering from winter injury often have needle discoloration on the needles at the tips of the branches. Frequently this damage occurs on the south or west side of the tree due to excess wind and sun warmth on those sides. In some cases winter injury is observed on trees receiving reflective light from a nearby building or car. The discoloured needles often appear bleached or faded, with the tip of the needle most severely discoloured. Winter injury can occur under several conditions. Needles can be



The needles at the tips of the branch are affected by winter injury or also called desiccation/ drying out.

killed by cold temperatures, desiccated by the wind, or bleached by the sun. If a spruce tree did not have time to harden off properly in the fall (too much fertilizer) or is not fully adapted to Wainwright winters, complete browning of all needles may be observed. If the problem is clearly winter injury, not much can be done for the tree at this point, other than extra TLC. Luckily light winter injury rarely kills the buds of the tree and as weather warms and spring rains, new growth resumes improving the overall color of the tree. Make a note to water trees throughout the summer to prevent drought stress and help the tree harden off next fall. In very exposed areas, spruces can be protected from future winter injury with a simple burlap barrier to block the wind and sun.

If the problem is clearly Rhizosphaera needle cast, management strategies should be implemented to protect this year's needles from infection. When new needles are half the length of mature needles, spray the tree with a fungicide whose active ingredient is Chlorothalonil. *Completely read the label and follow all instructions when using a fungicide.* Apply the fungicide once more at the interval recommended on the fungicide label (typically 3-4 weeks later). These two sprays will protect the needles from infection. In addition several cultural practices will help to reduce the risk of future problems with Rhizosphaera needle cast. When plant-

ing new spruce trees choose Norway spruce or white spruce instead of Colorado blue spruce because they are more resistant to the disease (however white spruce may not be as drought resistant.) Reduce moisture on spruce needles by controlling weeds around the base of the tree and redirecting lawn sprinklers to avoid wetting the needles. Reduce stress on spruce trees by mulching the soil around the tree and providing trees with water during periods of drought. Avoid planting new spruce trees near old infected spruce trees.



New spruce seedling benefiting from a dead poplar, protection from south west winds.

It's time!

The recycling roundup is on!

Turn over to learn more!!

Pull out your garden hose, and give your trees a much appreciated drink!

Spring Clean Up Waste Disposal Coupon FOR RESIDENTIAL ONLY

This coupon entitles the holder to ONE FREE DUMP LOAD, up to a 3/4 ton truckload at the Wainwright Regional Waste to Energy Facility and Landfill Site.

Valid Only May 14-19 and 22-26, 2012

Coupon must be presented upon arrival and has no cash value. M.D. of Wainwright residents only.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Proof of residency may be requested. Refrigerators, deep freezers, air conditioners, toxic and hazardous material will not be accepted. Please sort your wastes to facilitate disposal.

WAINWRIGHT REGIONAL WASTE TO ENERGY FACILITY

1201-4 Ave South Wainwright

Regular Business Hours
780-842-4051

Monday to Friday
8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Saturday
8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.



**CUT THIS COUPON
OUT AND USE IT!!**

**M.D. OF
WAINWRIGHT
RURAL
RESIDENTS!**

DISPOSAL

To facilitate disposal, wastes should be sorted into the following categories:

- Tires
- Burnables (lumber)
- Compostables (leaves etc.)
- Metals
- Clean Concrete
- Tree Branches

E-WASTE

You can dispose of the following electronics at no cost:

- Televisions
- Computers including monitor, keyboard, mouse, cables and speakers
- Printers and printer/scanner/fax combination

RECYCLABLES

We now accept Glass, Metals & Plastics

For further information contact the Wainwright Regional Waste to Energy Facility at 842-4051

Your unwanted computers, TVs and old paint aren't doing any good hanging around, but they will if you recycle them.

Bring your old computers, TVs and paint to:

**The Hazardous Round-up at
Wainwright Regional
Waste to Energy**

1201 - 4 Avenue South

Saturday

May 5 - 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

**For more information
contact 780-842-4051**

CUSTOMER
APPRECIATION
FREE BBQ
LUNCH
Provided by
GM Pearson
Bio-Medical Waste

BBQ



Visit www.albertarecycling.ca or call 1.888.999.8762 for more information on electronics and paint recycling in your area.



**LET'S PROTECT OUR LANDFILL
SPACE AND KEEP OUR COMMUNITY
TOXIC FREE**