

The Municipal Agricultural Connection



Attention Municipal Ratepayers

M.D. of Wainwright Stands To Lose 10 Million Dollars

The M.D. of Wainwright No. 61 is extremely concerned with and opposed to the changes to the assessment model for regulated properties such as wells and pipelines that was announced recently. This adjustment will affect the linear assessment within the M.D. of Wainwright. We have been told this is to enhance industry's competitiveness. The M.D. of Wainwright is in support of industry in the area, but this change in assessment will jeopardize Rural Alberta.

The assessment model is the method the province gives municipalities to raise revenues through taxation. Based on the potential changes presented by the province, the M.D. of Wainwright is poised to lose between \$9,453,925 and \$6,979,777, or between 30% and 22% of our total tax revenue. To offset this loss the M.D. of Wainwright could be required to increase the residential tax rate by between 290% and 393% and increase the non-residential tax rate by between 37.4% and 58.4%. Raising tax rates to off-set the impacts of the assessment model change will have the effect of simply transferring taxes from industry to other businesses and residents. This draconian change to the assessment model will force municipalities to enact a reduction in service levels and intermunicipal collaboration agreements, as the above increases are not realistic for our ratepayers. These changes will impact not only our municipality, but the entire region.

In addition, municipalities requisition amounts for schools and senior housing using the assessment model. Those rates will also need to be adjusted going forward to offset the revenues lost, or those services will be reduced.

There is no guarantee that the tax savings experienced will be put back into the local economy, as a majority of the benefit will profit global companies and their shareholders, not M.D. of Wainwright residents. This is in direct contrast to what a municipality does, which is work hard to keep dollars in our community.

The M.D. of Wainwright is giving you all this information in hopes you will be able to help us save Rural Alberta. Once this legislation is passed, we are heading down a path that will result in the decay of a viable Rural Alberta. We have been told we have until the middle of August to voice our displeasure.

For more information please contact the M.D. office at 780-842-4454 or visit our website at www.mdwainwright.ca where council member contacts and staff contacts are posted.

Sincerely,
Municipal District of Wainwright No.61 Council

Clubroot Update



Clubroot is declared a pest in Alberta under the *Agricultural Pest's Act*. Pest inspectors may be appointed by the local municipality or by the Minister of Agriculture. Agricultural Fieldmen are pest inspectors under the *Agricultural Pest's Act*. Agricultural Fieldman James Schwindt and Assistant Agricultural Fieldman Tanis Ponath will be conducting clubroot inspections for the M.D of Wainwright this August. The survey will start around the end of August and will go until completed. Approximately 2 fields per township are randomly selected and plants are surveyed at the field entrance.

Typically field entrances and areas of the a field with more soil moisture see the most severe infestations. The accumulated precipitation from April 1, 2020 - July 11, 2020 as recorded at the 4 weather stations across the M.D. are as follows: Albert Hall 8.31", Giltedge Hall 8.26", Edgerton 8.63", Ribstone 8.15" and Wainwright CFB Airfield 21 7.5". Producers should be actively scouting fields to look for signs of clubroot since we have had a wetter season so far. Infection at the seedling stage can result in wilting, stunting and yellowing symptoms by the late rosette to early podding stage, while premature ripening or death can be observed in canola or mustard plants nearing maturity. Plants infected at later growth stages may not show wilting, stunting or yellowing but may still ripen prematurely, and seeds may shrivel, thus reducing yield and quality. Clubroot symptoms can also look like drought, nutrient deficiencies or other diseases. To distinguish between diseases, inspect the roots, the club-like structures are unique to clubroot.

Hybridization nodules can occasionally be seen on canola roots and can be confused with clubroot galls. These nodules are more spherical and firmer compared to clubroot galls and do not decay. Exposure to phenoxy herbicides can also result in swelling on lower stems and roots of canola. However, these malformations usually lack the large size and lobed appearance of clubroot galls.

Clubroot is mainly spread through soil infested with resting spores. Infested soil can be carried from field to field by farm machinery, especially tillage equipment and can also be moved by wind and water erosion. Seed of various crops as well as hay and straw can also become contaminated with resting spores via dust or earth tag when they are grown in clubroot infested fields. The longevity of these resting spores is a key reason why clubroot is known as such a serious disease. Research has shown that spores can survive in the soil for up to 20 years. However, new research has shown that some resting spores appear to become inactive or non-viable after a 2 year break from a host crop. This will also be dependant on how serious the initial infection is, if you initially have a infection of 1 billion resting spores per 1 gram of soil you are still going to have a high amount of spores even after a 2 year break. This is why it is important to implement best management practices to prevent severe infections. Plant clubroot resistant varieties when growing canola in areas where the disease is established. Alternate growing clubroot resistant varieties with different sources of resistance when they become available. Have a crop rotation of at least a 2 year break from canola however, longer is better. Control weeds such as volunteer canola and cruciferous weeds. Practice good sanitation (cleaning and disinfection) of machinery and equipment to restrict the movement of potentially contaminated soil.

If you have any questions or would like more information regarding clubroot please call James or Tanis at 780-842-4454.



Figure 2. Very severe clubroot on canola.



Figure 3. Severe clubroot galls or "clubs" on canola root.



Figure 4. Moderately infected canola root.



Figure 6. Decayed clubroot galls and whitish stem appearance.



Figure 5. Patchy, premature ripening.

ASB Update

Our weed inspectors are very busy inspecting roadsides for prohibited noxious and noxious weeds. If you come across a suspicious plant, either on our roadsides or in your field, stop into the main office and either James or Tanis can identify it for you. We encourage you to report any weed sightings to James, Tanis, or one of our weed inspectors.

Division 1&2: Ray Enstrom: 780-842-8461

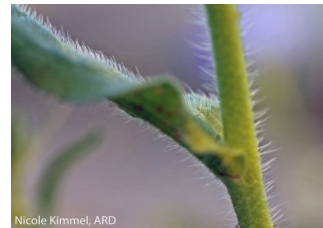
Division 3,4 & 5: Laine Maron: 780-842-8579

Division 5, 6 & 7: Dennis Fuder: 780-842-7060

This year we have had increased reports of Dames Rocket and Blue Weed. Dames Rocket is a biennial or short lived perennial native to Europe and SW Asia. It is a member of the mustard family and is a prolific seed producer. Introduced as an ornamental, it has spread throughout North America. It prefers moderately moist soils and does best in moist wooded areas. Stems grow anywhere between 0.5m—1m tall and there can be several stems per plant. Leaves are alternate and lanced shaped and have hairs on both sides of the leaves. Flowers can be white, pink or purple. Flowers are in clusters at the top of the stems with four petals.



Blueweed is also a biennial or short lived perennial native to Eurasia. Blueweed produces by seed and can produce up to 2800 seeds per plant that remain viable for several years in the soil. The invasive weed does very well in a variety of soil types but does not tolerate shade. Stems are covered in short stiff hairs and can grow between 30-80 cm tall. Stems are also covered in dark flecks which is an easy identifiable feature. Leaves are lance shaped and become smaller as you go up the stem. All leaves are covered with stiff hairs and their undersides often have dark flecks. Flower buds are reddish-purple and become bright blue upon opening. Flowers are fused at the base. Blueweed has a well established taproot can be 2 or more feet long.



Black henbane is a noxious weed that has been found in neighbouring municipalities. We want landowners to keep an eye out for this weed so populations do not establish in the M.D. of Wainwright. Black henbane is an annual or biennial plant that reproduces by seed only. Native to the Mediterranean all parts of this plant are poisonous to humans and animals when ingested. Black henbane will grow in a variety of soil textures and pH but does require well drained soil. Stems are upright, very thick and can grow to 1 m or taller. Leaves are alternate, up to 15 cm wide and 20 cm or more long. Leaves have a heavy foul scent. Flowers are pale yellow with deep purple veins and throats. Flowers also have a strong unpleasant odor.



Biological Control Work in the M.D.

This year the M.D. had the opportunity to collaborate on some biological control research being conducted in the province.

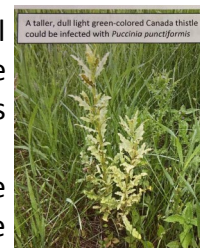
This year we did a release of *Rhinus pilosa*, a weevil native to Serbia that shows promise in yellow toadflax control in Canada. Yellow toadflax is a problem in the M.D. of Wainwright with many established populations across the M.D. It spreads aggressively by both seed and rhizomes. A single plant can produce up to 30,000 seeds and generate hundreds of shoots from buds located along the horizontally growing roots. *Rhinusa pilosa* was found in Eastern Europe in the early 2000s. The weevil has been approved for use in Canada since 2014. Between 2014-2018 there was 57 releases across Canada in a variety of environmental conditions. Successful establishment on yellow toadflax has been confirmed on most sites. It is very specific to yellow toadflax and is capable of significant damage to the host. The weevils cause damage by producing large tumor-like growths on the stem. The galls act as "houses" for the developing *Rhinusa pilosa* larvae. The growth of the gall and the developing larvae together hijack nutrients normally used by the toadflax for growth and reproduction. Tanis will continue to monitor the release site in the M.D. for the next couple of years.



We also collected samples for a geographical survey of white colour disease that affects Canada thistle. White colour disease is caused by a bacterial infection that results in bleaching of the shoot chlorophyll in Canada thistle.

We are still on the look out for samples of rust fungus, a potential biological control agents for Canada thistle. The rust fungus affects Canada thistle through a systemic infection that kills the whole thistle plant including its deep, creeping, horizontal root system.

Biological control is another management tool that can be utilized alongside herbicides. It can take time for populations to establish large enough to have an impact on established weed populations.



A taller, dull light green-colored Canada thistle could be infected with *Puccinia punctiformis*

The underside of a *P. punctiformis*-infected Canada thistle leaf producing teliospores.

Fusarium headblight was recently removed from the Pest Nuisance Control Regulation of the *Agricultural Pests Act*. In response to the deregulation of Fusarium headblight, Let's Manage It! was created as a farmer's guide to mitigating and managing Fusarium headblight in Alberta. Visit managefhb.ca for more information.



**COMING
JULY 31!**

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