

Working with Your Neighbour to Alleviate Natural Disaster Losses

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Establishing a Stubble/Crop Grazing Agreement

As farmers and ranchers in parts of Ontario, the prairie provinces, and British Columbia face severe drought and fire conditions, the Canadian Cattlemen's Association (CCA) highly encourages beef producers and grain farming neighbours to work together to find creative solutions. Stubble grazing or grazing crops unsuitable for harvest can serve as a much-needed extra feed source for cattle producers, while creating additional cash flow for grain farmers willing to rent their acres for grazing purposes.

Considerations for a Successful Partnership

- Communication is key for success.
 - Throughout the process, make sure to maintain clear, consistent, and transparent communication between parties to avoid confusion or disagreements.
- Collect and record all relevant contact information for both parties.
 - This is useful for communicating about terms of the agreement and in case of an urgent incident (ex. cattle getting out).
- Crop producers, contact your provincial crop insurance representative beforehand.
 - Some contracts may make switching to alternative use a challenge. Work with your contract broker/insurance agent to understand your options.
 - Depending on your region, certain steps are necessary for designating a crop for alternative use to make a crop insurance claim (ex. a crop adjuster may need to assess the crop before grazing).
- Discuss spray dates, determine when the crop is safe to graze, and record withdrawal dates.
 - Delay the start of grazing until sufficient time has passed since spraying and avoid shipping animals under withdrawal.
 - Consult this VBP+ [fact sheet](#) to learn more about safe to graze and withdrawal dates.
- Cattle producers, contact your veterinarian or nutritionist for advice on supplementation.
 - Ensure that nutritional requirements of cattle are met when grazing new feedstuffs.
 - Develop an appropriate plan to supplement deficient nutrients.
- Determine the duration of the grazing period.
 - Discuss how start and end dates will be communicated.
 - For example, will the landowner call the cattle producer when the crop is off and stubble ready for grazing? How flexible will the end date of the grazing period be?
- Agree upon a stocking density.
 - This value can be as simple as the number of pairs that will be on the land for the entire agreed upon grazing period.
 - Consider making this value flexible to allow for greater plant stress due to dry conditions.
- If supplements such as pellets need to be offered, consider existing infrastructure.
 - Discuss methods of feeding such as bringing in troughs or feeding on the ground, and who covers the cost of introducing feeding equipment.
- Discuss water sources currently available on the land.
 - If no water is available, consider how you will provide water to cattle and how the cost of doing so

- will impact your negotiated price for grazing.
 - Agree upon who pays for and thus owns any watering system upgrades or addition.
 - Consider implications to water licensing if additional volume needs to be drawn from water bodies.
- Assess the current fencing infrastructure.
 - Decide who is responsible for putting in fencing if it is needed (usually the cattle producer).
 - Consider the type of fencing (electric fencing lowers cost and can be easily removed at the end of the grazing period).
- Negotiate a price for grazing.
 - Use this [calculator](#) to help determine an appropriate price for rental.
 - Consider the cost of additional inputs that are the burden of one party. For example, the price could be discounted to account for the cattle producer’s fencing labour and cost of materials.
 - This will also vary by region.
 - Discuss allowances for increased rental rates if grazing costs surge in the area, including a potential cap.
- Check regularly for updates on government support programs such as AgriRecovery.
 - Stay tuned to CCA social media accounts, Action News, provincial association sites, and government sites to stay up to date on opportunities for financial support for drought relief.

Resources

- Your veterinarian and nutritionist
 - Working with these experts can help you determine when it is safe for cattle to graze, withdrawal times, how to supplement cattle appropriately, and if a grazing opportunity is appropriate for your herd.
- [Beef Cattle Research Council](#)
 - Watch this [webinar](#) to get answers to your drought-related feed and water questions.
 - Click [here](#) to read about the benefits of grazing cattle on neighbouring farmland.
 - For drought management resources, click [here](#).
 - Find information on alternative feeds [here](#).
 - Click [here](#) for a calculator to evaluate feed test results from alternative feeds. Note that this feed calculator does not include information on sulfate and nitrate contents, which often become elevated during drought – make sure to consult your veterinarian and nutritionist on this.
 - Check out this [article](#) to find more information about testing stock water.
- Your regional crop insurance provider
 - Your crop insurance provider will help you navigate making a claim when switching your crop to alternative use.
 - BC: [Government of BC](#)
 - Alberta: [AFSC](#)
 - Saskatchewan: [SCIC](#)
 - Manitoba: [MASC](#)
 - Ontario: [Agricorp](#)
- Association websites
 - [CCA](#), [BCCA](#), [ABP](#), [SCA](#), [MBP](#), and [BFO](#) have information regarding government support programs, provincial resources, and more.