

Intensive Livestock Working Group

Background

Submitted by Ron Axelson

The Intensive Livestock Working Group (ILWG) was formed in 1997 when the livestock/poultry industry (comprised of eight commodity groups) recognized they were being impacted by many of the same issues and that by working together they would maximize the use of scarce resources and increase industry's capacity to mitigate common challenges.

The ILWG is a unique partnership in that it is not a legal entity and does not have a formal administrative structure. It functions within a set of guiding principles built on a collaboration with its eight contributing organizations sharing, at their cost, the responsibilities of providing infrastructure requirements, such as support services, financial oversight, meeting facilities, etc.

Mandate

The ILWG serves as a forum for the sharing of information, development of common positions and exploring actions or issues of interest to livestock/poultry producers. The ILWG is seen as an industry coordination mechanism. The issues and/or policies of focus for the ILWG are of a nature that have the potential to impact confined feeding operations and/or provide direction for the livestock-poultry industry in Alberta.

Structure and Membership

The group consists of members representing livestock and poultry organizations including, but not limited to:

- Alberta Beef Producers
- Alberta Cattle Feeders
- Alberta Pork
- Alberta Milk
- Alberta Chicken
- Alberta Turkey
- Egg Farmers of Alberta
- Alberta Hatching Egg

Member organizations provide the expertise and time commitment of senior management and one producer member to the administration and strategy development of the ILWG.

Decision Making

The ILWG operates on a consensus basis and works cooperatively to develop common positions and joint messages on issues facing the industry. The ILWG has no policy setting function and it must be underscored that each ILWG member organization speaks for itself on policy issues.

Meetings

On Common Ground: Messages from the Agri-Environmental Partnership of Alberta – Issue #22



The ILWG meets face-to-face three to four times a year and by conference call on an as-needed basis.

Meetings of the ILWG are hosted by member organizations at their cost on a rotational basis.

For more information contact Ron Axelson

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AFFIRM: Decision Support Tool for 4R Nutrient Stewardship

Submitted by Alberta Agriculture and Forestry

The Alberta Farm Fertilizer Information and Recommendation Manager (AFFIRM) was originally created to be a downloadable application as a decision support software to aid farmers in making nutrient management decisions. The soon to be released updated version of AFFIRM (version 3.0) will now be a web-based application on the GoA server.

The enhancements of AFFIRM to 4R (Right Source @ Right Rate, Right Time, and Right Place) were based on extensive Alberta-based nutrient stewardship research. AFFIRM incorporates various fertilizer and manure sources with management options (timing and placement) that includes economics to help determine optimum nutrient rates for application under different moisture conditions. Optimizing agronomic and economic benefits can assist in minimizing the environmental footprint of crop production in Alberta.

AFFIRM is designed to assist farmers in making efficient nutrient management decisions specific to their farm conditions and operations. Nutrient management scenarios in AFFIRM match decisions made by experts, and can help farmers look at their own management practices for improving their economic returns. This extension tool can also be used by researchers, students, industry agents, consultants and extension specialists. AFFIRM will also support the compliance needed by farmers for the Nitrous Oxide Emission Reduction Protocol (NERP) of the Alberta Carbon Offset Market.

Funding to update AFFIRM came from the GoA Information Management Technology fund, plus the Alberta Agriculture and Forestry capital fund, operational funds from the Environmental Stewardship Branch (ESB) and the Growing Forward 2 Research Opportunities and Innovation Fund. Watch for announcement of AFFIRM (version 3.0) on the Environmental Stewardship page or you can contact the following ESB staff for more information. For the existing AFFIRM (version 2.0) program ([https://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$department/softdown.nsf/main?openform&type=AFFIRM&page=information](https://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/softdown.nsf/main?openform&type=AFFIRM&page=information))

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