



The Soil Probe

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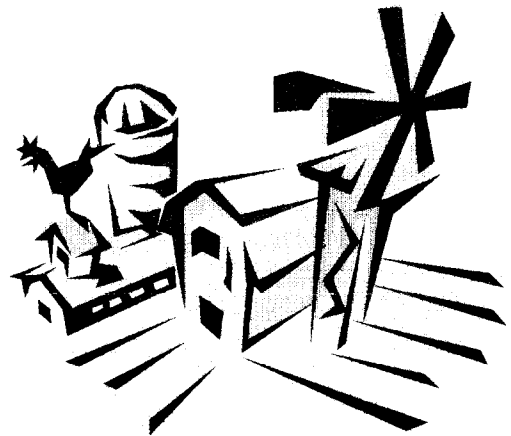
Abbotsford Soil Conservation Association

Presidents Message

The education and interaction between farmers and non-farmers is a key component of our objectives at the Abbotsford Soil Conservation Association. We need to get the mes-

"We need to get the message out regarding the enhancement of proper farm management practices..."

sage out regarding the enhancement of proper farm management practices in the Abbotsford area, whether it is soil erosion, wind erosion, turf farming, soil compaction, etc.



story reflects the driving force behind the direction of our conservation association.

(Continued on page 2)

For our first newsletter, I would like to start out with a story that has two sides to it. This

Membership Drive is on!!

The Abbotsford Soil Conservation Association is looking for members and sponsors.

We are welcoming new members for \$20.00 per year. Membership includes a quarterly newsletter and recognition of new members

in the next newsletter.

We are also welcoming sponsors. Sponsorship packages can be obtained by calling ASCA secretary, Bruce Fatkin at 604-864-6433.

What's Inside...

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State-of-the-Basin Conference

It's time to take stock at the Fraser Basin Council's first State-of-the-Basin Conference to be held on November 20 and 21 at the Best Western Richmond Inn in Richmond, B.C. This two-day Conference will assess current progress on sustainability of the Fraser Basin and seek input from various interests on additional initiatives that must be taken to enhance our present efforts.

The Conference will be of interest to Basin residents who realize that economically strong communities flourish in healthy environments that reflect sound social principles. Many of the Council's initiatives will be featured including nutrient management, gravel extraction, and flood hazard management.

A stimulating format is planned that will balance speakers and respondents with many opportunities for delegate input. Speakers and respondents will be from private and public sectors. The speakers will be Coro Strandberg, VanCity Savings Credit Union, George Weyerhauser, Weyhauser International, Mike Harcourt, Sustainable Research Institute, UBC, and Mike Healy, Institute for Resources and the Environment, UBC. There will be formal responses from three perspectives: economic, environmental, social, from a variety

of people including Bob Simpson, Weldwood of Canada, John Les, Mayor of Chilliwack, and Diane Bailey, Katzie Band.

The Fraser Basin Council is Canada's first independent, non-government organization focussing on social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainability of the Fraser Basin which covers 25% of BC's land, supports 67% of BC's population, and contributes 80% of BC's GDP and 10% of Canada's GNP.

Register early as registration is limited to only 200 delegates to ensure significant participation. Also, early registration (before September 14, 1998) will save money as it is only \$150 for both the Conference and an Awards Dinner at which individuals and organizations will be honoured for their outstanding contribution. Otherwise, the costs are \$175 for the Conference and \$50 for the Awards Dinner. The deadline for registration is September 30, 1998. Registration cost includes two continental breakfasts, two working lunches, registration materials and post-conference proceedings.

For more information, please contact Brad Whittaker at 795-2818.

Presidents Message Cont'

(Continued from page 1)

Our youngest son of 10 years was bugging my wife to drive our smallest tractor. He wanted to demonstrate that he was at least as good as his older brothers. Relentless nagging can sometimes be successful, and to get rid of it, she gave in. For the purpose of the work being done, a small stretch of roadway in our rural Sumas Prairie area had to be crossed in order to go from one field to the next. As it happened, an unmarked police car came by and out stepped the officer. Our son was so scared he jumped into the ditch and ran to his mom to be saved. She encountered a friendly man who remarked with humor that most likely the boy had been on the tractor since he was 6 years old, but that it looked to him that he was too young to drive on the road.

The officer told my wife that he was cruising our rural area, not to chase small boys, but because a complaint had come in that there were too many tractors on the road! This was in May, during the busiest time of year for farmers, seeding time.

While our association strives to encourage proper farm management practices, we also realize the need to educate the public who do not understand what it takes for us to put food on their table. I hope that we can achieve these goals and provide a useful service to all in the process.

Peter Reus is a farmer in the Sumas Prairie in the City of Abbotsford. His farm, Van Eekelen Enterprises, grows belgian endive for local markets in the Lower Mainland of BC.

News

Vandals Strike

Vandals have damaged 10 trees on the windbreak on Marion Road. Approximately \$1,500 damage was done.

The trees, red maples, were planted in the spring of 1997.

The windbreak was planted on the west side of Marion Road, with the ditch moved into the field. This allows for minimal impact on the field while maximizing the protection from outflow winds which pass through the region in the winter.

These trees also provide esthetical value, enhancing the neighborhood and the image of agriculture. They will be replaced with new trees in the fall.

Enforcement increased on coloured fuel

The Ministry of Finance is stepping up enforcement on the use of coloured fuel in farm vehicles. Under current laws, it is not good enough to have an A-plate. The appropriate emblem is required to be on the vehicle. Fines of up to \$350 can result if the emblem is not in place.

For more information on obtaining the required emblem, call the Ministry of Finance at 250-387-0635.

ASCA at Agrifair



Connie Jongsma of Abbotsford receives her set of Premium Garden Tools from ASCA project coordinator, Bruce Fatkin. Connie's was the first correct answer drawn at the ASCA booth at Agrifair.

If you were at the Abbotsford Agrifair July 30 through August 3, you may have seen the Abbotsford Soil Conservation Association booth and entered our draw for a set of Buckerfields Premium Garden Tools. Many thanks to Buckerfields for their generous donation. The prize was awarded to Connie Jongsma of Abbotsford. Connie's was the first correct answer drawn following Agrifair.

Our booth was a pictorial essay on ASCA activities. We enjoyed meeting so many of our neighbors and talking to you about conservation issues. Many people were aware of our past soil conservation groups, and more had specific stories that relate to our

work.

These events allow us to extend our work to the general public. We feel that education in soil conservation doesn't just stop at the farm level. We all need to understand what it takes to produce sustainable food products. The general public plays an important role in the food production system as they are the final consumer.

The most obvious point that was made to us at Agrifair was that most people have concerns about the health of the environment and are welcoming the efforts of the ASCA and its partners. If you missed us at Agrifair, come and see us at the Country Fair in Mt. Lehman September 19. See you there.

Odds and Ends

Library of Soil Conservation Events compiled

The ASCA is in the process of compiling relevant materials from the past conservation programs. The files from the Sumas Prairie Soil Conservation Group, the Matsqui/Langley Soil Conservation Group and the Dairy Producers' Conservation Group will all be compiled and located at the Ministry of Agriculture and Food in Abbotsford.

These files will be available for the use of researchers and the general public. As thousands of taxpayers dollars were spent developing these past projects, it only makes sense to us that the materials be made available into the future.

Permanent Cover Crop site moved

A demonstration site of the former uplands soil conservation site has been moved. Permanent cover crops in tree nurseries has been demonstrated at Kato's Nurseries for the past five years. Tenure of the land has been released by Kato's and so a new site will be established soon. Look to the next issue of The Soil Probe for more details on a new location.



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Come on in and have a coffee with us.

The Soil Probe is a regular, quarterly publication of the Abbotsford Soil Conservation Association, a non-profit society registered in the Province of British Columbia. Key issues the group will be addressing are the following:

- Soil Conservation and Soil Conservation Practices
- Storm Water Management
- Riparian and Fisheries Issues
- Education

The ASCA looks to take a cooperative approach to solutions regarding these issues, focusing on land stewardship, while keeping in mind that farming is a business that must generate a profit to survive. We plan to ride on the success of the past groups, moving soil conservation and sustainable agriculture into the new millenium.

We are seeking new members and sponsorship partners. If you or your company would like to be a part of soil conservation in the City of Abbotsford, call today: 604-856-6433.

Directed by Farmers for Farmers

ASCA Directors

President: Peter Reus, Van Eekelen Enterprises
 Vice President: Terry Feser, L4T Farm
 Secretary: Bruce Fatkin, Fatkin Nursery
 Treasurer: Bruce Wisbey, Wisbey Farms
 Director-at-large: Len Smit, Kato's Nursery

Technical Advisors

Geoff Hughes-Games, Soil Specialist, Ministry of Agriculture and Food
 David Melnychuk, Manager, Resource Programs, Ministry of Agriculture and Food
 Frank Wright, Superintendent, Dyking and Drainage, City of Abbotsford

Contact the ASCA at:

38900 No. 4 Road
 Abbotsford, BC
 V3G 2G2
 604-856-6433

THE SOIL PROBE

Odds and Ends Continued...

Employment Contract Available

Just as we are getting our new program started, private industry has swept one of our project coordinators away from us. Jeremy Carter, Lowlands Coordinator, and editor of The Soil Probe, has recently joined Transform Compost Systems Ltd. Jeremy vacates his contract, effective immediately, and so we are searching for a replacement.

Candidates should possess excellent communication skills, and hold a degree or diploma in agriculture, focusing on soil science.

Knowledge of farming operations, including experience with farm equipment is considered an asset. The candidate must have a high degree of initiative and be able to work independently and in a team setting. Resumes can be faxed to 852-4090.




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