Forage/Cattle Living Lab Research Project Coordinator
Contracted Position: *$35,000-$40,000 annually*

BC's Living Lab is a producer-led program focused on reducing greenhouse gas emissions and strengthening the climate resiliency of our nation's food systems. The Forage and Cattle Project is investigating Extended Grazing Season and Winter-Feeding Strategies. Additional details on the project are outlined in the appended overview document. BC's overall Living Lab project is co-led by the Investment Agriculture Foundation and the BC Agriculture Council. The Cattle and Forage project is co-led by the BC Cattlemen's Association and the BC Forage Council.

Desired Experience and Education:

- Minimum of a Bachelor Degree, preference of a Master Degree in a related field.
- Experience in managing or supporting agriculture-related research and/or extension projects. Preference for experience in the livestock and forage sector.
- Professional Designation not required, but considered an asset.

Skills Required:

- The coordinator will require a strong understanding of both in-field research (both replicated research and demonstration research) and the forage-livestock sector.
- Must be willing to travel.
- Highly organized with administrative experience.
- Self-motivated .
- Skilled in MSOffice suite (Excel, Word, PowerPoint), online programs (e.g. Google Drive, Canva, AirTable, MailChimp, WordPress, etc.).
- Basic social media, photography and video editing skills are an asset.
- Ability to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences (producers, research community, provincial funding agencies).

Duties Include:

- Liaising with University research leads, Agriculture and Agri-food Canada researchers and staff members, industry partners and with farm cooperators to ensure logistics are fully addressed;
    - This includes regular check-ins with each producer cooperator throughout the life cycle of the project;
- Facilitating discussions on data collection efforts;
- Coordinating and supporting delivery of extension activities;
    - Implementing and updating (as needed) a 5-year extension plan;
    - Collaborating with partners to leverage existing networks and social media platforms to reach and inform target audiences and the public;
    - Coordinating and managing workshops;

    - Evaluation of events, tracking event outcomes, and conducting follow up with attendees;
    - Assisting with development of and managing a project communications hub;
    - Synthesizing and translating research results (with support of research team and farm partners), and developing extension materials;
- Managing all reports as needed, including project overview documentation, annual reports, etc.
- Support research site selection and preparation.
- Securing supplies and coordinating field trial installation.
- Collaborating with teams to troubleshoot issues as they arise (e.g. related to research design, research infrastructure etc.).
- Preparing communications materials and going through established approval processes with funders (this may include factsheets, case studies, blogposts, and/or targeted articles).
- Tracking project performance metrics per funder and partner requirements and evaluation plans.
- Maintaining complete project files and documentation.
- Coordinating and facilitating research committee meetings.
- Participating in other meetings and workshops coordinated by project partners as needed.
- Preparing a detailed annual work plan each year.
- Launching, promoting and overseeing producer adoption surveys and ensuring a high level of participation.

Term of Contract:

May 2023 - March 2027, intended to be renewed annually based on performance and desire.

Remuneration:

This is a contract-based position, with remuneration of $35,000-$40,000 annually based on experience.

If you are interested in this position, please provide a cover letter and resume to:

livinglabs@bcforagecouncil.com
(250) 564-4115 loc 2233

Agriculture Climate Solutions – Living Labs
Cattle and Forage Joint Project

Identified Beneficial Management Practices

The BMPs to be explored in this project include:

1. Annual and/or Alternative Forage Cover Crops for Fall-Winter Grazing
2. Standing Crop (e.g. Corn) for Winter Grazing
3. Fall Cover Crop for Extended Fall or Spring Grazing
4. Bale Grazing (Stand-alone or in conjunction with other practices)

There are several knowledge gaps and barriers of adoption to these practices, and uncertainties of the potential benefit (or drawback) to these practices. Much of the previous work undertaken on these BMPs has been in the prairie provinces and their efficacy in British Columbia ecosystems has not been fully assessed. British Columbia is a diverse province and BMPs developed within specific regions may not be applicable across different regions with significantly different soils, climatic regimes, and growing season conditions, indicating the need for regionally specific research and development of regionally specific BMPS.

Moreover, from a cattle industry perspective, the need to assess the economics and costs/benefits of extended grazing season management and winter-feeding strategies are significant. Winter feeding costs can be the highest variable cost to a cattle operation and subject to major fluctuation from climate change driven weather events such as drought, fire, and flooding.

Annual and/or Alternative Forage Cover Crops for Fall-Winter Grazing

This BMP refers to the potential to seed annual (alternative) forage crops or cover crops to extend fall grazing potential. Specifically of interest is the use of cover crops specifically for fall grazing and/or cover crops planted as a relay crop (e.g. seeding cover crop after harvest of annual forage crop). There has been substantial renewed interest in cover crops throughout the agricultural community. However, “cover crops” is a broad topic, with many different crops and species to consider, as well as various ways to incorporate them into a forage system.

Standing Crop for Winter Grazing

A ‘Standing Crop’ refers to a cereal or other annual crop that has been sown and grown as a normal crop then held as a fodder bank for grazing later in the year. It may be coupled with other feed (e.g. may add bales or other supplements) that is brought to the field to address nutritional demands of the livestock. The BMP of seeding a standing (annual) crop for winter grazing allows producers to either extend their grazing season or adopt a new winter feed strategy, while reducing the GHG emissions related to crop harvest, processing, and storage.

Fall Cover Crops for Extended Fall or Spring Grazing

Seeding winter varieties of annual cereal crops can provide additional windows for fall and/or spring grazing for producers, and along with the possibility of a crop to harvest (green feed and/or silage). The

BMP may also provide co-benefits for producers, such as splitting nutrient applications, adjust seeding timing in response to changing spring conditions. There are new advances in breeding winter varieties that have not been trialed for performance in BC.

Bale Grazing

Bale grazing is a winter-feeding strategy of allowing cattle to graze bales in a field. This can be accomplished either by harvesting the field and leaving the baled hay in the field rather than moving it into storage, or harvest or purchased bales are moved into a field for winter grazing. The practice can be used on its own, or in conjunction with other BMPs. There are questions of effectiveness, layout, and economics.

Broad Research Design and Locations

There are two "Mother" research sites, which would explore all treatments/BMPs. These sites are located near Prince George (UNBC) and Kamloops (TRU). Additional "Daughter" research sites will be located on additional farms throughout the regions, to be installed in 2024. Around the Prince George site, daughter sites throughout the Highway 16 Corridor and Cariboo would be considered; around the Kamloops site, daughter sites in the Thompson-Nicola, Okanagan, Boundary, and Kootenays would be considered. The "Daughter" sites would be asked to select up to two BMPs to trial at their location.

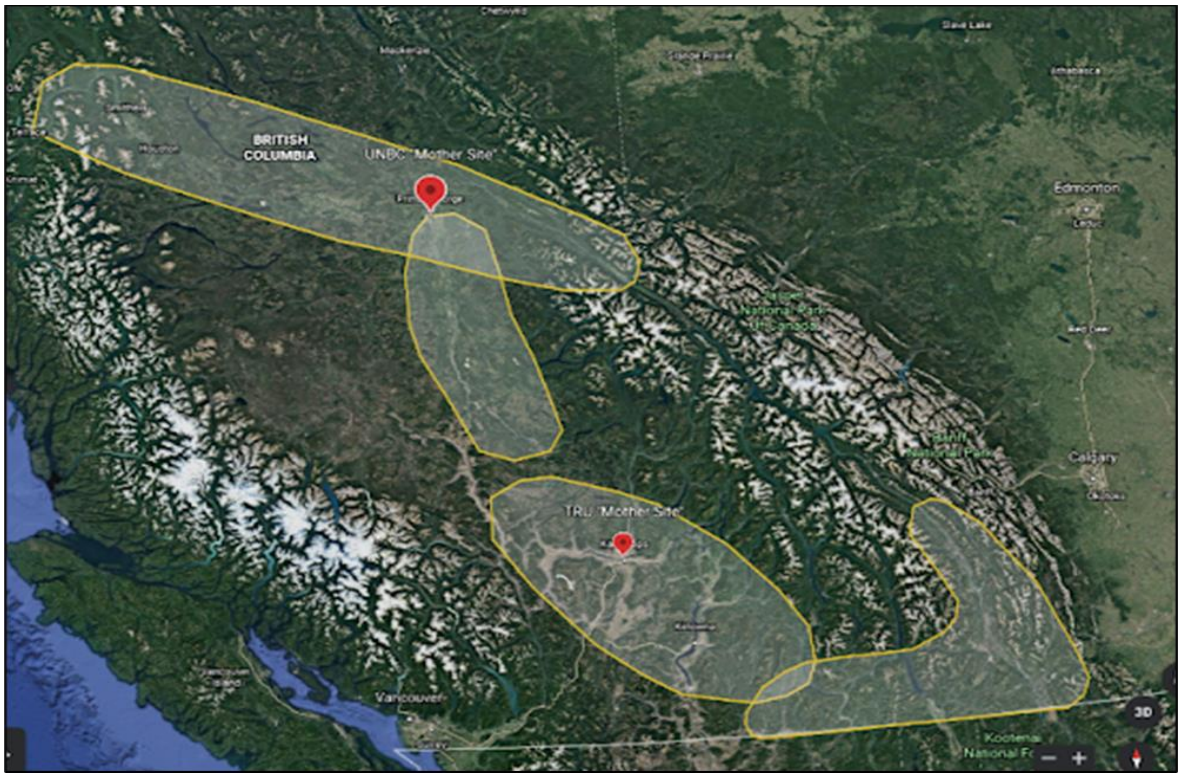
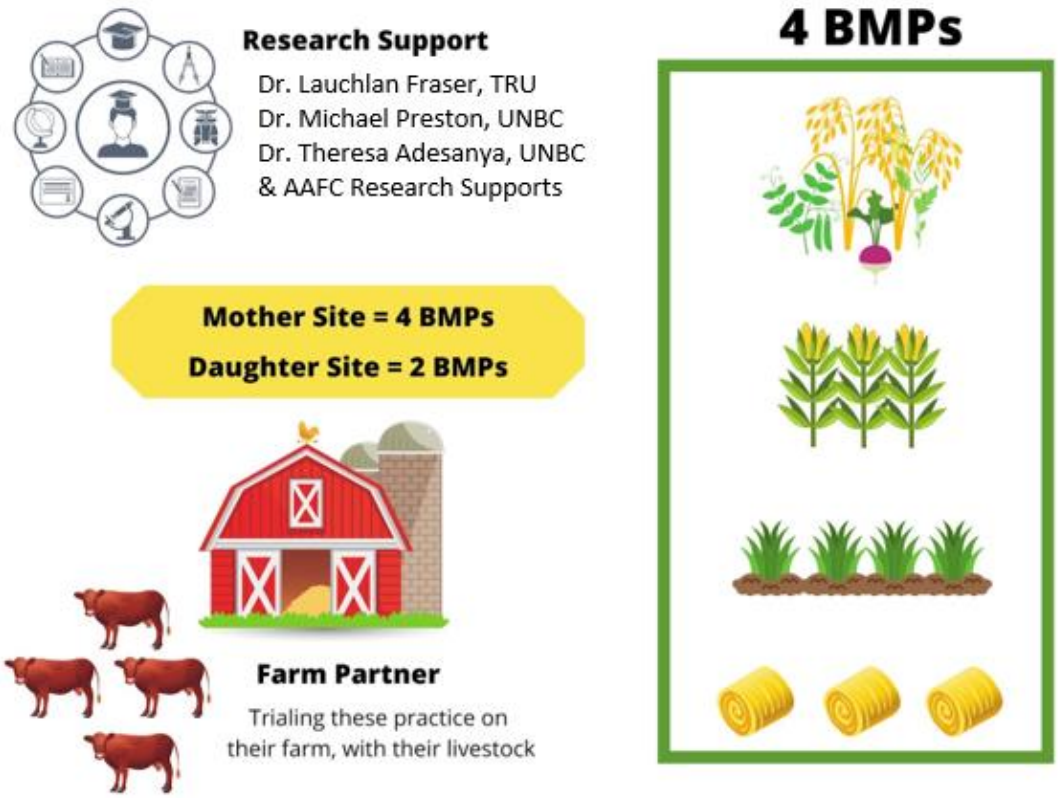


Figure 1. Mother site locations and daughter site regions.

The intent of using a Mother-Daughter research design, is to allow more intensive, controlled measurements to be taken at the “Mother Sites” where there are more supports and resources available to the farm cooperators.



Barriers to Adoption

With the climate challenges farmers are currently facing, the topic of extended grazing and winter-feeding strategies impact’s producers’ bottom line and will resonate with the majority of BC livestock producers. Based on the extreme weather events and feed shortage of the last few years, producers are open to discussing and exploring these different systems, and keen to see how they work in their respective regions.

When analyzing BMPs, we need to be pragmatic in knowing where these BMPs are best suited. We need to assess the difference between regions and growing conditions in order to identify where we know a BMP will just not work, compared to a situation where producers are not yet set up to ensure success of the BMP. Selecting appropriate BMPs will increase the potential for adoption and impact.

Regarding barriers to adoption, producers outlined concerns including understanding the forage quality implications and how it relates to ration requirements, and whether the practices have better economic returns compared to the existing system in place. These practices cannot cost more than conventional practices and if an economic benefit can be established, then the rate of adoption is expected to accelerate.