

AGRICULTURAL & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES MANAGER'S REPORT

AUGUST 13, 2018

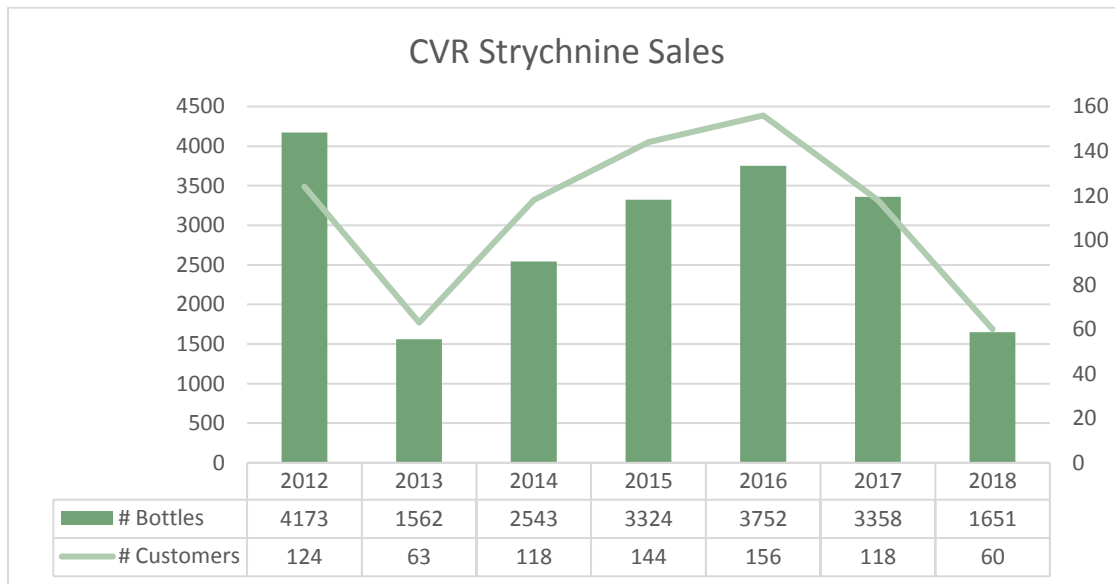
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ASB ACT

- Displayed Livestock Emergency Trailer at Vermilion Ag Society Fair July 26-28. Alberta Farm Animal Care had a booth at Fair as well, and trailer was displayed just outside of their booth. Ag & Env staff assisted Cows & Fish with their booth in the AgVenture trade show at the Vermilion Fair.

AGRICULTURAL PEST ACT

- Strychnine sales ended for 2018 on July 31, with a total of 1651 bottles sold to 60 farms.



- Health Canada is recommending cancellation of strychnine registration for Richardson Ground Squirrel control. The comment period continues until Sept. 27, 2018.
- 2018 Clubroot of canola field inspections have begun. Ratepayers were informed that field inspections would take place and the procedures used in the CVR spring and summer newsletters, the CVR Ag Department mail out, County Corner posting in area newspapers and newspaper ads placed in the Vermilion and Lloydminster newspapers in July. At least 200 fields will be surveyed. Alberta Agriculture requested canola stem samples from 10 fields – these samples will be completed during the CVR clubroot survey.
- Ag Department monitored 2 bertha armyworm trap locations this summer, reporting to Alberta Agriculture. Overall, most traps in the County indicated low populations, but one trap in the Dewberry area and a few in the MD of Wainwright and Beaver County had numbers high enough to recommend scouting susceptible canola fields.

- The Grasshopper survey was completed for the County, and numbers submitted to Alberta Agriculture. In most areas, very few grasshoppers were found again in 2018.

WEED CONTROL ACT

- Roadside blanket spraying began June 14 in Spray Area 3 and was essentially completed by August 2, except for two Hay Agreements covering 56 miles of roadside which need to be sprayed once the ratepayer finished haying.
- Contractor began roadside mowing July 16, and will mow all Class A, Class C, Class D1 and BTPS 2017 bus routes before the end of August. Mowing roadsides is done to improve visibility and safety from wildlife, protect CVR from liability, improve dissipation of dust, improve snow removal and reduce drifting, so focus for 2018 was on higher traffic roadsides.
- Spot spraying for noxious weeds has been and continues to be a main focus for Ag staff. To date we have:
 - Sprayed unsold lots in Blackfoot for chamomile June 14
 - Sprayed and/or pulled leafy spurge from two locations
 - Sprayed ox-eye daisy on Highway 41 for Alberta Transportation
 - Sprayed scentless chamomile on TWP 510 on July 10. Pulled plants near water bodies where could not spray and other locations along TWP 510.
 - Pulling chamomile where found in small patches
 - Sprayed toadflax patches on Hwy 619 and Hwy 16 for Alberta Transportation
- A Weed Notice was issued for Lot 136 in Kam's Industrial Park to control 5 acres of scentless chamomile. The owner pulled and bagged a small amount, but most remained. Following the Weed Notice deadline, Ag Staff mowed the majority of the lot, and pulled and bagged plants along the perimeter and soil berms where we could not mow. It is expected that chamomile will still be present on the lot in spring 2019, so it will be inspected as needed next year.
- Ag staff pulled and bagged common burdock from a CVR property and the adjoining private lot in Clandonald on August 10. We plan to spray the rosettes later in August.
- Received No-Spray Zone Agreements from 24 ratepayers. Staff did initial site assessment and posted No-Spray signs. No-spray zones were mapped on GIS to improve tracking.
- Received Hay Agreements from 8 ratepayers, resulting in about 60 miles of roadside haying.
- Approximately half of one No Spray/Hay Agreement area was accidentally sprayed on July 20. No haying or vegetation control had been completed by the ratepayer and No Spray sign was partially obscured by tall vegetation.
- Need to clarify expectations and requirements in the No Spray Zone Policy and Hay Agreement Policy to ensure that weed and vegetation management in these areas is being done to meet County legal and liability requirements and maintain road surface.

RAT CONTROL

- Spring rat inspections completed. Fall rat inspections will be completed before December 2018.

ENVIRONMENT

- Staff spent a day cleaning up smaller debris at McNabb Wildlife Sanctuary. A full site assessment is needed to determine safety risks on-site. Staff are working on a site management plan with Alberta Environment to address habitat loss, fire hazard and weed concerns at McNabb.

AG-ENVIRONMENTAL

- Ag staff spent two days rolling grain bag plastic at Vermilion to get enough bags into a condition so that it can be shipped. Staff also spent three days baling twine and net wrap.
- Grain bags are piling up at Vermilion. Asia has shut down imports of plastics for recycling, limiting our options for getting rid of grain bags. We have contacted 4 different companies in Canada and the United States, but they either cannot get import permits in a timely fashion, or only want clean, neat bags. Most likely option so far is to ship bags to a startup company in Saskatchewan, where they are accumulating plastic in anticipation of opening a plant. This will cost us about \$525/load to ship, but hopefully they will pay shipping and loading costs.
- County is planning the 2nd Wetland Explorer Day for Lindsay Evans Park on August 28.

WETLANDS

- Alberta Environment determined that as of July 12, 2018, the only options they would accept from the County for wetland replacement on Water Act Approvals were a confirmed and approved wetland restoration site or payment of in-lieu fees to Ducks Unlimited Canada. As we have been unable to gain agreement from both the landowner and AEP on 80% of our proposed wetland restoration projects (2 of 11 applications) and have no other acceptable restoration projects currently identified, restoration of a wetland is not an option for 2018.
- Requested 5 in-lieu wetland replacement agreements with Ducks Unlimited Canada for 2018 Road Construction/Maintenance projects, involving a total of 1.49 ha of D class wetlands for an estimated \$27 775 in in-lieu fees.

OTHER EVENTS

- Cover Crop & Soil Health Field Day – Aug. 16 – Kitscoty
- AWES and Cows & Fish Riparian Management Workshop - Sept. 21-22
- Form 7 Pest Control Officer Training – Oct. 16-17 – Edmonton
- AAAP In-Service Training – Dec. 3-7 – Calgary

- Provincial ASB Conference – Jan. 21-23, 2019 - Calgary