

REPORT

Project: CORD 9050
November 27, 2007

Project Title: Promotion of the Environmental Benefits of Forage Production and Utilization

Principal Researcher

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Executive Summary

The production of forages offers many potential environmental benefits such as nitrogen fixation, improved soil structure, reduced soil erosion, rehabilitation of disturbed soils and carbon sequestration. Certain forage crops also have potential for use directly as a feedstock for biofuel production. Growers have been unable to access information on these subjects efficiently via the internet because the sources have not been catalogued in a single reference site. Although the web pages of the Ontario Forage Council have included links to information related to many aspects of forage production and utilization there were relatively few links to documents related to the environmental benefits of producing and utilizing forages. This project was undertaken to close this gap and enhance the transfer of technology related to the use of forages to enhance the environment.

A search of numerous North American websites, maintained by government agencies, universities, non-governmental environmental organizations or agricultural businesses was conducted to identify documents related to the environmental benefits of forages and the use of forages in the treatment of environmental problems. These documents were reviewed to ascertain their relevance and usefulness to Ontario forage growers. Over 135 documents, housed on 25 websites, were identified.

Links to selected documents were compiled into a list indexed into the following subtopics: General Information (related to environmental benefits of forages), Soil Quality and Soil Fertility, Forages for Erosion Control, Cover Crops, Grassed Waterways and Filter Strips, Streambank Management, Forages and Wildlife, Global Warming and Carbon Sequestration, Bio-fuels from Forages and Other (non-conventional) Environmental Uses for Forages. The list is being posted on the website of the Ontario Forage along with links to 25 Environmental Organizations providing information related to agriculture and the environment.

Milestones

Completion of internet search, review of documents and compilation of selected links –
October 31, 2007

Project Expenditures

A full accounting of the project's financial status is attached. Also attached are all supporting invoices for this project for which we are seeking reimbursed in compliance with our contract.

Completion Date: October 31, 2007

Communication Plan

News releases will be issued to the agricultural press to promote the use of this new resource.

The website is also being promoted in the newsletter of the Ontario Forage Council which reaches approximately 10,000 producers and agri-businesses Spring 2008.