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I was deeply saddened to hear of Alex Scott's passing. Alex was a gentle, kind and truly wise man who will be sorely missed as a friend, mentor and as the voice of reason and peace making. Alex and his family have been pivotal in developing and maintaining the Organic Producers Association of Manitoba, and I have benefited greatly from his time on my steering committee.

Research

- ✓ The green manure trial is moving into its second year, the testing of a common crop following different green manure treatments. At Eastend, Brenda McCuaig seeded spring wheat. Weed count were higher in mowed than cultivated treatments. Nitrogen values increased substantially in all treatments except the 4010 field peas. At Tisdale the crop is not yet seeded, as the field is too wet. Soil tests have not been analyzed.
- ✓ We are having some difficulty with the harrowing study due to rain. We have arranged 2 sites with 3 treatments and 4 reps. One of these has been treated, and at this point, one has not. We also had 4 sites with 3 treatments and 2 reps. Only of these has been treated. We will proceed with this test at these or other sites if we are in time for correct crop/weed stages, but this may not be the case.
- ✓ We have worked on two producer led projects. Denis Brodnar is interested in perennial grain crops. I am trying to source these for a demonstration project, seeded in late summer. So far we have been promised a perennial rye from Lethbridge. Jennifer worked with Harvey Burr on a test of alfalfa pellets as a fertilizer in hemp. Logistics problems with the pellets led us to cancel the test.
- ✓ We are preparing final reports for the Manitoba projects on cover crops and nutrient inputs. These should be available shortly.
- ✓ We have collaborative research projects in Lethbridge, Brooks and Edmonton. At Lethbridge, we are providing support to a project that is examining ways of managing sweet clover, including tillage, mowing. I visited with Bob Blackshaw and Jim Moyer, and went out to the field to look at the sweet clover coming up (and this was April 10). At Brooks we are working supporting a project with Chris Neeser on essential oils to improve post harvest storage of potatoes. This will commence after harvest this fall. At Edmonton we are working with Dean Spaner and his students on cereal breeding and agronomy. I sit on Heather Mason's and Allison Nelson's advisory committees.

Extension, Networking, Service

- ✓ Together with Alberta Agriculture, we hosted workshops in Lethbridge and Grande Prairie on "Creating strategic relationships - telling a powerful story". These events helped producers clarify and share their organic stories. (An additional event in Leduc was held in March).
- ✓ Planning for Organic Connections is well underway. We have confirmed plenary speakers, and arranged session topics. We have a plan for session speakers, and are working at confirming our choices. You can

News from OACC Prairie Office, April to June, 2006

view our agenda at www.organicconnections.ca . We have also developed a promotional card in time for the summer field days. A brochure with more detailed information will follow in mid August.

- ✓ I sit on the OCIA Research and Education board. We awarded our scholarship to Shauna MacKinnon of U Guelph. We named 2 honourable mentions, Frederic Theriault of McGill and Allison Jack from Cornell. Last year's competition was won by Jackie Pridham of U Manitoba. Considering this is an international scholarship with solid representation in the states, young Canadian researchers have a very impressive presence. OCIA RnE is also working on a memorial research award for Kirby McCuaig, who was an exceptional farmer and research collaborator.
- ✓ I wrote Western Producer articles on how to set up an experiment on your farm, on no-till organic and on perennial cropping
- ✓ Jennifer is supporting the SoL - Saskatchewan Organic Livestock group. They are organizing to promote and educate consumers and producers of organic livestock and develop a network and database of producers with cow/calf operations, those backgrounding, finishing and marketing.
- ✓ Schedule of Field Days (please add more as you are aware):

Date	Group	Location	Contact
June 23	Vegetable Growers	Craven, SK	Joan Merrill
June 24	SoL	Moose Jaw, SK	Dayton Funk
July 8	OCIA SK#2	Blaine Lake, SK	Barb Willick
July 9	OCIA SK#4	Lemberg, SK	Willie Oddie
July 12	OCIA SK#5	Delisle, SK	Jim Robbins
July 13	Irrigation	Outlook, SK	
July 17	AOPA	AB	Cathy
July 19	SE Holistic Management	Sunnybrae, SK	Blain Hjertaas
July 22	OCIA SK#8	Lisieux, SK	Debbie Miller
Aug 5	SOPA	Raymore, SK	Harvey Burr
Aug 8,9	TriHealthyForum	Banff, AB	Keri Sharpe

Other

- ✓ Lorraine Beaudette is doing a learning needs assessment among organic farmers; she identifies field days and conferences as the main ways producers want to learn. We discussed the sort of information OACC provides.
- ✓ Administration functions such as performance appraisals, budgeting, accounting, also take time. I also sit on the organic extension committee.