Battle River Research Group

www.battleriverresearch.com

OVER THE FENCELINE

Winter 2026

Source: Kabir Makan

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Battle River Research Group

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Source : Kabir Makan

Vision

Improving sustainability through innovation in agriculture

Mission

To perform high-quality producer-driven research & knowledge transfer for the advancement of all agriculture stakeholders

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Battle River Research Group gratefully acknowledges the base funding provided by Results Driven Agriculture Research (RDAR). This foundational support enables BRRG to carry out applied research, knowledge transfer, and producer-focused innovation across East Central Alberta. RDAR's investment is critical to advancing sustainable, science-based agriculture in our region.

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MANAGER'S NOTE

Dr. Ahsan Rajper
Manager & Crop Specialist

As we begin 2026, I would like to take a moment to reflect on the past growing season and share what lies ahead for the Battle River Research Group.

The 2025 growing season demonstrated the importance of applied research conducted under real world conditions. Weather variability across our region played a significant role in crop performance and trial outcomes, reinforcing the need for resilient agronomic practices and site specific management strategies. Through these conditions, BRRG continued to work to generate practical, locally relevant research that supports both short term decision making and long term sustainability.

Throughout the year, BRRG remained focused on delivering strong applied research and extension programs across east central Alberta. Our research team, supported by dedicated summer technicians, worked to establish, manage, and harvest trials while ensuring high quality data collection. These efforts were complemented by a robust extension program that included field days, workshops, and webinars. These events provided valuable opportunities for producers to engage directly with research results, ask questions, and share their own experiences. This ongoing exchange of knowledge remains a cornerstone of BRRG's mandate.

Looking ahead to 2026, BRRG will continue to expand and refine its research programming to address key agronomic challenges facing producers in the region. Planned research activities include trials focused on herbicide efficacy, fertility management, soil health and soil amendment strategies, forage and pasture systems, and drought management. These projects are designed to evaluate both established and emerging practices under local conditions, helping producers make informed decisions based on unbiased data. New equipment and growing collaborations with partners will further enhance our ability to conduct innovative and meaningful research in the coming season.

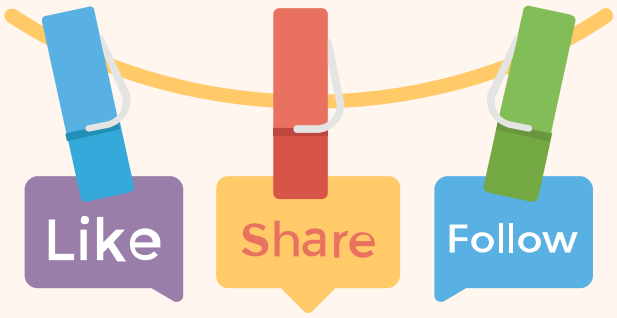
In addition to field based research, BRRG remains committed to strengthening its extension and knowledge transfer efforts. On behalf of the Battle River Research Group, I would like to sincerely thank our producers, partners, participating counties, and funders for their continued support and trust. Your engagement and collaboration make our work possible and ensure that BRRG remains a valuable resource for the agricultural community. We look forward to another productive year of research, learning, and collaboration in 2026.

Catch Up on Missed & Upcoming Webinars, Seminars

For those who missed any of these enriching events, Battle River Research Group offers the opportunity to catch up on their website here or our YouTube channel.

Stay connected with Battle River Research Group on Twitter: Battle River Research Group
@BRRG_Ag for updates and information about upcoming events.

With a year filled with growth, learning, and community spirit, Alberta's farming community is thriving, and the Battle River Research Group is at the forefront of this growth, continuously enriching the lives of farmers and promoting sustainable agriculture. Here's to a year of growth, learning, and continued success!



SCAN ME

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SCAN ME

ZOOM WEBINAR
INTEGRATING POULTRY AND OTHER LIVESTOCK INTO REGENERATIVE FARMING SYSTEMS

Joel Salatin

Joel Salatin – Farmer, author, and speaker, Joel co-owns Polyface Farm in Virginia, featured in Food Inc. and The Omnivore's Dilemma. He raises pastured poultry, pork, and cattle using regenerative methods, writes extensively on grass farming, and inspires audiences worldwide with practical, passionate insights on sustainable farming.

Topics Covered:

- **Pastured poultry management and production systems**
- **Integrating chickens with cattle and other livestock for soil health**
- **Small flock exemptions and navigating Canadian poultry regulations**
- **Direct marketing and on-farm sales opportunities for non-quota producers**
- **Building diversified and resilient farm enterprises through livestock integration**

FEBRUARY 4 3 PM MDT

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BEAVER COUNTY

COUNTY OF STETTLER NO.6

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COUNTY OF PAINTEARTH No 18

MD61 WAINWRIGHT

WHAT HAPPENS TO SEED QUALITY AFTER IT LEAVES THE LAB

An article from the team at 20/20 Seed Labs Inc.

Why Test Results Are a Starting Point and Not a Finish Line.

Once seed testing is completed in the lab, its test results represent a snapshot in time. While the data provides confidence for decision-making, seed quality can continue to change during handling, storage, and conditioning.

Seed testing provides a clear, controlled measurement of quality and health at a specific point in time. What happens next depends on how that seed is handled, stored, transported, and managed until it reaches the soil. It's equally important to understand what can influence seed quality after testing as understanding the results themselves.

Laboratory testing answers four critical questions. Is the seed viable? How strong is its vigour? Are seed-borne pathogens present? What is its physical and physiological condition? Once the seed leaves controlled storage conditions, it re-enters a dynamic and ever-changing environment.

Temperature fluctuations, humidity, mechanical handling, time, and storage conditions all begin to influence quality; sometimes gradually and sometimes quickly. This doesn't make test results less valuable; it makes the context of the results more important.

When it comes to handling and movement of seed, augers, conveyors, bagging systems, seed treaters, transport between locations, each movement has the potential to introduce mechanical damage. Cracks, splits, and internal fractures are not always visible, but they can significantly impact vigour and emergence. Seed that tests well at the lab can still underperform if it experiences stress between testing and planting, this is where gentle handling and team awareness of seed condition are essential parts of protecting quality, especially for crops more sensitive to damage such as pulses.

Seed is a living system, and even under good conditions in storage, quality naturally declines over time. Temperature, moisture, airflow, and length of storage all influence rate of deterioration, disease development, loss of vigour, risk of heating or spoilage accelerating the decline of the seeds performance. Testing early and revisiting results closer to planting when conditions or timelines change can be an important risk management step.

The time between testing and planting also matters; seed tested shortly after harvest and planted months later has lived a very different life than seed tested closer to seeding. The changes may seem subtle, but in marginal conditions small differences in vigour or health can influence stand establishment and uniformity.

In season, diagnostics provide an additional source of insight, and once the seed is planted, lab results don't disappear. Early season diagnostics help answer new questions when it comes to matching emergence expectations, patterns that support handling or storage stress, and at what point is disease or nutrient stress showing up. These observations help connect what was known in the lab to what is unfolding in the field and close the loop between prediction and performance.

Taking time to understand what happens after seed leaves the lab will help ensure test results are used appropriately as a foundation for decision making rather than a guarantee of performance. Seed quality is shaped by a system that works together and includes testing, storage and logistics, handling and treatment, environmental exposure and most importantly time.

The most effective use of seed testing is not to file results away, but to treat them as a reference point that informs ongoing decisions. When results are paired with good handling practices, thoughtful storage, and seasonal diagnostics, they become part of a system, one that supports consistency, learning, and better outcomes over time. Seed quality doesn't end at the lab's door; this is where the next chapter begins.

At 20/20 Seed Labs, we see seed testing as one part of a much larger system that continues long after results are reported. Our role is to help ensure those results are understood in context and revisited when conditions change and connected back to what's happening in storage, handling, and in the field.
When questions arise along the way, we're here to help interpret what the data is telling you and how it fits into the next decision.

References

Prepared by 20/20 Seed Labs Inc.

https://2020seedlabs.ca/what-happens-to-seed-quality-after-it-leaves-the-lab/

ENVIRONMENT FARM PLAN WORKSHOP

The Alberta Environmental Farm Plan covers an entire farm using a self-assessment tool to help producers identify their on-farm environmental risks. At the completion of the program, the farmer has an itemized list of adjustments that can be made in their operation. The EFP is a useful tool for analyzing a farming operation and guiding changes as time and resources allow. Having a completed EFP Certificate is a pre-requisite for many grants and funding available to producers.

Before attending the workshop, ensure the following:

- **Create an EFP account if you don't have one already at www.albertaefp.com.**
- **Kindly bring a laptop or tablet to facilitate working on the EFP.**

FEBRUARY 11 10 AM LUNCH PROVIDED
RYLEY COMMUNITY HALL
(5103 49 ST, RYLEY, AB T0B 4A0)

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SCAN ME

ZOOM WEBINAR
CARBON SEQUESTRATION IN PRAIRIE FARMS

Dr. Preston Sorenson

Preston Sorenson is a Research Associate at the University of Saskatchewan, focusing on predictive soil mapping in the Canadian Prairies. He holds a B.Sc. in Land Use and Environmental Studies (U of S), and an M.Sc. and Ph.D. in Soil Science (U of A). His work uses machine learning and modelling to improve soil property maps, understand soil dynamics, and forecast soil carbon changes. Preston is a registered member of the Saskatchewan Institute of Agrologists.

Topics Covered:

- **Factors that influence soil organic carbon (SOC)**
- **Methods for measuring SOC in the field and lab**
- **Predicting future SOC stocks using models and data**
- **Realistic strategies for increasing SOC and tracking changes over time**

FEBRUARY 18 10 AM MDT

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BEAVER COUNTY

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MD61 WAINWRIGHT

An article from the team at 20/20 Seed Labs Inc.

Why Integrated Diagnostics Matter All Year Long

In farming, most decisions are made long before the planter enters the field, and long after the crop has emerged. Yet too often, diagnostics are treated as a one-time checkpoint rather than a continuous tool that informs decisions throughout the growing season.

Taking an integrated approach to seed, soil, and plant tissue testing helps close the gaps between planning, execution, and outcomes. This can help to shift diagnostics from a reactive step to a proactive framework and one that supports better decisions, earlier interventions, and more predictable results.

It's not just about testing more for the sake of testing. It's about asking the right questions at the right time, using the right tools, and understanding how each layer of information builds on the next. Diagnostics are the most powerful when they are connected.

Each diagnostic tool from seed testing to soil analysis, and plant tissue testing can provide valuable insight on its own. But their real strength lies in how they work together.

Seed testing helps answer foundational questions around viability, vigour, and health before risk is introduced into the field.

Soil testing provides more context for nutrient availability, pH, salinity, and seed-borne pathogens that influence emergence and early growth.
Plant tissue testing helps explain mid-season performance, in season disease affecting crop growth, nutrient uptake, and emerging stress that may not yet be visible.

Timing matters, integrated diagnostics are most effective when aligned with seasonal decision points such as pre-plant, early season and in crop, as well as pre- and post-harvest. When considering pre-plant planning, germination, vigour, seed health, and thousand kernel weight results support informed decisions around seeding rates, seed treatments, and field placement. When it's early season and in-crop, plant tissue testing helps validate early assumptions and identify developing stress where adjustments may still be possible.

End of season diagnostics help close the loop and strengthen planning for the following year. Following harvest and before winter storage, it is important to assess seed performance through pre-storage testing, including germination, vigour, thousand kernel weight, and disease load. These results provide a baseline for post-storage comparison and help determine seed suitability for planting, as well as whether seed treatment may be effective in mitigating risk associated with a given seed lot.

Farming rarely offers clear answers; diagnostics provide options, and earlier insight will create more choices allowing for better risk management. Reducing risk isn't all about certainty; it's about your options. Adopting a year-round mindset enables you to build a system that supports year-over-year planning, and continuous improvement where lessons learned are passed down from generation to generation. When diagnostics are viewed as connected tools rather than isolated events, they become a key part of a production strategy helping you to maximize all investments made into labour, machines, acreage and more.

At 20/20 Seed Labs Inc., we believe good decisions start with understanding what your seed is telling you. Through science-based testing, practical insight, and ongoing conversations with our clients, we aim to turn data into knowledge that is useful, relevant, and actionable. If you would like to explore what your results mean for your operation, we're always happy to continue the discussion.

References

Prepared by 20/20 Seed Labs Inc.

https://2020seedlabs.ca/from-seed-to-stand-and-beyond/

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SCAN ME

CROP PRODUCTION AND MARKET

Neil Blue

Kelly Turkington

Sarah Foster

Yamily Zavala

Topics Covered in Workshop

- *Crop Markets ... what's happening ?*
- *Healthy Fields, Prosperous Yields: Integrated Disease Solutions in Cereals and Canola*
- *Understanding germination, vigour, and disease testing results*
- *Why seed testing is critical after tough growing and harvest years*
- *How seed quality impacts seeding rates and stand establishment*
- *Practical steps before seeding to avoid costly problems*
- *Measuring What Matters: Using Soil Health Indicators to Improve Crop Performance*

FEBRUARY 26 10 AM LUNCH PROVIDED

STETTLER AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Event	Date	Click On the Link to Register
Zoom Webinar on integrating poultry and other livestock into regenerative farming systems	4th February 3 PM MDT	https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_WlRurxLCQ3yIKuXEGXj-nQ
Environment Farm Plan Ryley Workshop	11th February 10 AM MDT	https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/ev/reg/kuzkjmc
Zoom webinar by 20/20 Seed labs Inc. on A Prescription for a Grower's Success	11th February 10:30 AM MDT	https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/a-prescription-for-a-growers-success-webinar-tickets-1978635632440?utm-campaign=social&utm-content=attendeeshare&utm-medium=discovery&utm-term=listing&utm-source=cp&aff=ebdsshcopyurl
Zoom webinar on Carbon Sequestration in Prairie Farms	18th February 10 AM MDT	https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_qKI3-kaCSW6Sz4mFskF6sw
Crop Production and Market workshop	26th February 10 AM MDT	https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/ev/reg/bmxaa2w
Environment Farm Plan Stettler Workshop	3rd March 10 AM MDT	https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/ev/reg/fcqt36t

ENVIRONMENT FARM PLAN WORKSHOP

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MARCH 3 10 AM LUNCH PROVIDED

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