



## 2023 Drought Resources for B.C. Livestock Producers

Prolonged periods of dry weather can cause forage damage and impact livestock water supplies. Below are some out-of-province resources that may assist livestock producers to plan and respond to drought.

As a livestock producer being affected by drought, focus on these 6 topics to start:

1. Feed Inventory
2. Feed Testing
3. Alternative Feeds
4. Water Testing
5. Culling
6. Early Weaning

For more detail: [Facing Drought? Six Things Beef Producers Can Focus On \(beefresearch.ca\)](https://beefresearch.ca)

- [Drought Management Strategies - BeefResearch.ca](https://beefresearch.ca): includes managing through a drought, forages and feeding, toxic plants and other toxin risks, water sources and economic factors.
- [Experts Respond to Drought Questions - BeefResearch.ca](https://beefresearch.ca): recorded webinar 2021 hosted by Beef Cattle Research Council with topics including feed testing, water testing, be aware of additive effects and interactions, take caution when feeding weeds and other considerations.
- [Producer Resources for Dry Conditions](https://beefresearch.ca) (Saskatchewan): webinars on various topics, including feeding, managing extensive grazing and grasshoppers.

### Forage, Pasture & Alternative Feeds

- [Feed Quality, Testing & Analysis for Beef Cattle - BeefResearch.ca](https://beefresearch.ca): feed testing information including obtaining feed samples, interpreting results and formulating rations.
- [Beef Cattle Research Council interactive calculators](https://beefresearch.ca): various tools for analysing feed test results, feed values, winter feed costs and impact of body condition on cow productivity.
- [Stock poisoning plants of Western Canada](https://beefresearch.ca): toxic or poisonous plants are more likely to be grazed during dry years.
- [Alternative Feeds - BeefResearch.ca](https://beefresearch.ca): with depleted forage and pasture resources, producers may look to feed alternatives.
- [Match Forage Supplies to Livestock Needs Calculator](https://beefresearch.ca) (Alberta): Software to estimate forage shortfalls or surpluses for different winter cattle feeding scenarios.
- [Drought and Supplementary Feed Calculator](https://beefresearch.ca) (Australia): free app available to download to assist sheep and cattle producers to develop feed rations during drought and dry seasons.
- [Range Management During A Drought](https://beefresearch.ca) (Alberta): how drought affects rangelands and impacts of grazing.
- [Economic impact of four strategies to manage feed shortages](https://beefresearch.ca) (Alberta)
- [Beef Cow Rations and Winter Feeding Guidelines](https://beefresearch.ca) (Saskatchewan)

## Water Quality

- [Agriculture and Agri-food Canada Livestock Water Quality Guide](#)
- [What's in your \(stock\) water? - BeefResearch.ca](#)
- Water Testing:
  - [Water Testing and Feed Contacts, Laboratories and Companies | Livestock and Water Quality | Government of Saskatchewan](#)
  - [Laboratories Approved by B.C. Provincial Health Officer for Drinking Water Microbiology Testing](#)
- Algae and water quality
  - [What are cyanobacteria \(blue-green algae\)? - Province of British Columbia \(gov.bc.ca\)](#): cyanobacteria (also known as blue-green algae) are naturally occurring bacteria that are common to freshwater ecosystems across B.C. When creating a bloom, there are several species capable of producing toxins that can be harmful to humans, domestic animals and livestock. In B.C., your local Health Authority will post advisories for blue-green algae (cyanobacteria) in water bodies used for drinking or for recreation.
  - [Algae Watch - Province of British Columbia \(gov.bc.ca\)](#): an educational program for Citizen science data gathering, helping people recognize and identify algae blooms in B.C. lakes.

## Cattle Resources

- [Drought-Related Resources for Cattle Producers - BeefResearch.ca](#): topics divided into general; feed value, options and quality; water; pregnancy detection; mycotoxins; body conditioning.
- [Beef Cow-Calf Operation Reduction Strategies](#) (Alberta): AgriProfit Technical Bulletin Economics & Competitiveness (2004).
- [Pregnancy Detection - BeefResearch.ca](#): Pregnancy detection (preg-checking) gives producers the opportunity to save the cost of overwintering open cows, especially in years when pasture conditions are poor, or feed is costly.
  - [The Economics of Preg-Checking \(Canfax\)](#) is another helpful factsheet.
- [Dry Season Management of a Beef Business](#) (Australia): guide to planning, managing and supplementary feeding; Appendix 1 includes feeding horses.

## Sheep Resources

- [Drought Feeding and Management of Sheep](#) (Australia): focus on chapters - feed management (how to supplement, when to supplement, how to choose a supplement - including cost/benefits for the flock) and stock containment (if you are trying to manage pastures for future productivity)
- [Sheep Feeds and Management Guidelines During Drought](#) (Colorado): how to supplement feed and compare costs between feeds based on components.