

CountryTalk

FALL 2017



Mark your calendars!

Here are a few of the upcoming events in Strathcona County this fall.



Deville Community Market

Every Tuesday | 4 p.m. - 8 p.m.
Deville/North Cooking Lake Hall

Fall Open House

September 24, 2017 | 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Strathcona Wilderness Centre

Halloween Dance

October 28, 2017 | 6 p.m. - Midnight
Brookville Community Hall

Celebration of Lights

November 18, 2017 | 3 p.m. - 5 p.m.
Community Centre

Christmas in the Heartland

November 25 and 26, 2017
Various locations in northern Strathcona County

Christmas in the Country

December 2, 2017
Various locations in southern Strathcona County

Visit the Strathcona County events calendar for more events and info!

www.strathcona.ca/calendar

Hull family wins 2017 Northlands Farm Family Award

The Hull family settled on a piece of land in northeast Strathcona County in the early 1960s. Today, the third generation of Hulls are living on the same piece of land and continuing their passion for agriculture and community.

Nominated by a member of the Josephburg Agricultural Society as a kind, generous and hardworking family, the Hulls currently take care of nearly 2,000 acres of cropland, maintain 550 acres of pasture and grazing land, and care for about 100 head of cattle. When the family isn't pitching in during seeding, harvest or calving, they spend time together at the hockey rink or camping.

The Hull family continues to try to improve their farming practices, including mixing up their rotations using some unconventional crops including flax, faba beans and this year, soy beans. They also swath graze their cattle, being one of the first in our community to grow corn for this purpose, in order to help with soil conservation and improve their calving practices.

Keith and Liana are the proud parents of two daughters, Jazlyn and Morgan, ages 21 and 17. Jazlyn is currently enrolled at Lakeland College in Vermillion, where she is making her mark as the President of the college Apiculture (beekeeping)

Club. Morgan will graduate high school this year. Both girls have been actively involved in competitive hockey, community events and the local 4H beef club. Keith's mother Joyce is still very active on the farm. The Hulls credit their success to the help of their extended family and friends. Further, Keith is also a standing Vice President of the Josephburg Agricultural Society, where he has been actively involved in the success of events such as the Josephburg Country Classic beef show.

It is apparent that this humble family believes in being involved and giving back to their community. Their generosity of spirit, their interest in progressive agriculture and their love for their neighbours is a great credit to Strathcona County.

Northlands recognizes a hardworking farm family in Strathcona County every other year with this award. Strathcona County also recognizes achievements in Agriculture with our Pride of Strathcona Awards annually.

If you would like to nominate a family or individual for these awards, please contact Transportation and Agriculture Services at 780-417-7100.



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Porcupines

The Porcupine is one of the most recognizable animals that call Strathcona County home.

These prickly but passive critters have distinct barbed quills on their back, sides and tail, hidden under long guard hairs. When scared, they will turn and fan out the guard hairs on their back and tail to expose their quills. Contrary to popular belief, the quills cannot be shot. To become imbedded, contact must be made. As a self-defence mechanism, quills have a topical antibiotic so fortunately, contact with quills will not necessarily lead to an infection.

Although porcupines may look clumsy and awkward on the ground, they are excellent climbers and spend most of their time feeding in trees on berries, leaves, twigs and tree bark.

Unfortunately, this can result in extensive damage to trees which becomes apparent at this time of year as the leaves fall. Like all rodents, a porcupine's teeth are constantly growing and it must always be chewing to grind its teeth down.

Protect your property

Some precautions you can take to protect your trees and shrubs include: wrapping the base of a tree in sheet metal or aluminum flashing at least 30" tall; or spraying skoot or thiram-based repellants on ornamental plants or trees to make the bark and leaves taste bitter and inedible.

To protect larger areas such as orchards and gardens, use page wire fencing coupled with an electric wire. The electric wire must be placed roughly 45 cm above the ground. Another alternative is to remove the porcupine using a cage trap or wooden box trap; salt is the preferred bait.

Further information

Transportation and Agriculture Services
780-417-7100
www.strathcona.ca/wildlife

Did You Know?

- Porcupines can have up to 30,000 quills.
- A baby porcupine is called a porcupette.
- Porcupines are the second largest rodent in Alberta (beavers are the largest).
- Porcupine hair is popular among fly fisherman.



Demand and interest for community gardens is growing!

Community gardens are often associated with urban areas. However, community gardens in rural communities can also benefit their residents in many ways. They become a place for neighbours to meet neighbours, provide beautification to a community hall, and create recreation and learning opportunities for all ages.

In Strathcona County, three rural communities – Whitecroft, Colchester and Antler Lake are among the first to establish community gardens at their halls.

In 2016, Whitecroft Community League was the first to put together a community garden plan. It was a group effort, with one neighbour donating a large container to store water on-site (with a stand built by a volunteer) and another neighbour developing the community garden guidelines and assigning garden plots. The community garden has ten raised beds: nine for individual use and one managed collectively for root vegetable donations to the Strathcona Food Bank.

Following Whitecroft's lead, Antler Lake/Uncas and Colchester community leagues established community gardens at their halls. Antler Lake's garden

“The garden is a pleasant addition to the community league and enjoyed by all who visit.”

- Deb Fredrick
Whitecroft Community Garden member

has seven beds; Colchester's has five. Colchester's garden is maintained by both the child day camps and the community league and has added colour, life and vibrancy to the hall.

Both community gardens have a pollinator plot, filled with flowers that attract diverse pollinators like bees and butterflies.

If you live in a rural community and would like to learn more about Strathcona County's program to support community gardens, please call 780-417-7100 or inquire online at www.strathcona.ca/countyconnect.

Crabapple Jam

Do you have a crabapple tree that's bursting with fruit, but have no idea what to do with it all? Try this delicious jam recipe!

- 3 cups quartered unpeeled crabapples (about 4 cups/1L whole fruit)
- 1 1/2 cups of water
- 1 cinnamon stick (about 4 inches long)
- 4 cups sliced blue or purple plums (about 8 large or 16 small plums)
- 5 cups granulated sugar
- 1/4 cup dry red or white wine (can substitute in grape juice)

Place crabapples, water and cinnamon stick in a very large stainless steel or enamel saucepan. Bring to a boil over high heat, cover, reduce heat and boil gently for 10 minutes or until fruit is soft. Remove from heat and discard cinnamon stick. Press crabapples through a sieve; discard solids.

Return crabapple pulp to saucepan. Add plums, sugar and wine. Bring to a full boil and boil rapidly, uncovered, until mixture will form a gel, about 20 minutes, stirring frequently. Remove from heat.

Ladle into hot jars and process for 10 minutes.

Makes approximately 6 cups of jam (1.5L). Enjoy!





Poster Contest

In the spring of 2017, the Agricultural Service Board held its annual poster contest for grades 3, 4 and 5 students from the Elk Island School District. Art was chosen for the creative representation of the theme "150 Years to Love Canadian Agriculture", in honour of Canada's 150 Birthday.

A record number of over 450 posters were received. The contest winners were each presented a cheque by Council at the June 13 Priorities Committee Meeting.

The Agricultural Service Board would like to thank all the students who entered the contest.

Urban Agriculture Strategy receives Award of Merit

Strathcona County's Urban Agriculture Strategy received an Award of Merit from the Alberta Professional Planners Institute. The award was accepted on July 18, 2017 at the Alberta Professional Planners Institute/ Canadian Institute of Planners Conference held in Calgary, Alberta.

The Urban Agriculture Strategy was developed with Intelligent Futures and Community Food Lab.

Urban agriculture includes growing fruits, herbs, and vegetables and raising animals in urban areas. It's a growing trend in North America as communities look for ways to increase food security. It supports local, alternate choices to the traditional food system and allows communities to grow specialty food.

Visit www.strathcona.ca/urbanag to learn more.



Grade 3 Winners

- 1st Place - Sophia Gaite
Madonna Catholic School
- 2nd Place - Candence Warawa
Jean Vanier School
- 3rd Place - Dulara Welikala
Pine Street Elementary

Grade 4 Winners

- 1st Place - Eden Hardy
Westboro Elementary
- 2nd Place - Tristan Frank Petras
Lakeland Ridge School
- 3rd Place - Julia Hesson
Westboro Elementary

Grade 5 Winners

- 1st Place - Hailey Cheng
Pine Street Elementary
- 2nd Place - Alessa Polmo
Wes Hosford Elementary
- 3rd Place - Emily Williams
Wes Hosford Elementary

Apple Maggot

Apple Maggot is the larva of a fly (Rhagoletis pomonella) that has been laid in apples, as well as some other fruits, and feed on the pulp of the fruit to mature.

The larva stage is the only stage of the life cycle that is damaging to the fruit. Once the larva has matured and the apple has fallen it will burrow into the ground and overwinter as pupa until it emerges in late spring as a fly.



This is a problem because of the extensive damage caused to the fruit. Identifying the damage is not always easy to spot prior to cutting the fruit open. It will show on the outside skin as a pin prick and dimple or browned tunnels just under the skin. Once cut open, the fruit will show browning and often visible tunnelling.

What can you do?

To help prevent adult larvae from burrowing into the ground, it is important to pick up fallen apples as soon as they fall and place in a tightly sealed compostable bag and put in the green bin.

Apple maggot traps can be hung to capture and reduce the breeding population of flies. The traps are typically imitation red apples with a sticky coating. The scent and color attracts the adult flies and they become stuck on contact. Monitor these traps and replace when they become full. These traps should be hung following the final blooms and just prior to fruit production. The traps can also be used to monitor the insect numbers even if you do not currently see signs of this pest.

Further information

Transportation and Agriculture Services
780-417-7100

Preventing vole damage

Fall is the best time to prevent overwinter vole damage.

Before snowfall, follow these tips to avoid providing a winter playground for voles and reduce or prevent the unsightly mess they leave behind.

- Cut grass short to remove a winter food source
- Trim shrub limbs near the base to avoid providing cover near the ground
- Remove plant debris and leaves
- Remove fallen fruit and bird seed
- Protect the base of new or small trees with plastic tree guards



Further information

Transportation and Agriculture Services
780-417-7100
www.strathcona.ca/wildlife



Jimsonweed

Jimsonweed (*Datura stramonium*), commonly known as Devil's Trumpet, is federally classified as a Class 1 weed (prohibited noxious) under the Weed Seeds Order of the Canadian Seeds Act.

Jimsonweed is a unique-looking plant with dark purple stems, and deep green leaves that have coarsely toothed edges. Flowers are trumpet-shaped and can be white to purple in colour. The prickly seedpod is large and round. It can tower over canola plants so is noticeable in a field when harvesting.

To monitor and control the spread of this noxious weed, please report it online at www.strathcona.ca/countyconnect or call 780-417-7100.

- Harvest is an easy time to identify this extremely invasive and damaging plant.
- If you find any, you should remove it immediately and follow these steps:
- Wear gloves and long sleeves when hand pulling
 - Double bag the plants and take to the landfill
 - Do not compost or burn the plant as this releases the toxins
 - Do not bale canola stubble for feed in fields where Jimsonweed has been found as it is toxic to livestock



Hunting in Strathcona County

2017 hunting season:
September 1 to December 7

Know the rules and regulations that are in place before you plan your hunt. The 2017 Alberta Guide to Hunting Regulations is now available. For locations of hunting licence issuers, please visit the Government of Alberta website at www.albertaregulations.ca or call 1-877-944-0313.

Alberta Fish and Wildlife, Edmonton District, is responsible for wildlife management and enforcement of Alberta's Wildlife Act.

Further information

Transportation and Agriculture Services
780-417-7100 www.strathcona.ca/hunting

Alberta Fish and Wildlife, Edmonton District Office
780-427-3574

24-hour numbers

Strathcona County RCMP 780-467-7741
Report-a-Poacher 1-800-642-3800

Who will represent YOU?

Make a plan to vote for your:

- Mayor
- Councillor
- School Trustee

Election Day is Monday, October 16.

Or you can choose to vote during **Advance Voting**

- First two weeks in October at many locations

Or apply to vote by **Special Ballot**

Visit www.strathcona.ca/election
Your source for all Election 2017 information!

Election Office
Phone: 780-400-2017

Watch for your "Where to Vote" card

- In your mail at the end of September
- Provides official candidates, Election Day voting stations, Advance Voting details
- Use the online "Where to Vote" application now available to find your voting station

VOTE
OCT 16
ELECTION 2017



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News for rural residents provided by
Strathcona County's Agricultural Service Board



The Agricultural Service Board (ASB) acts as an advisory body to Council on agriculture matters, while promoting and developing agriculture policies and programs to meet the needs of residents and the municipality.

Further information

Agricultural Service Board
Carol Maier, Chair

Transportation and Agriculture Services
Joel Gould, Manager, Agriculture Services
780-417-7100

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