

Local Food Systems Support Healthy Grasslands

ClimateWest 2025 Forum



BOX  **FARM**
REAL FOOD. RAISED RIGHT.



**FARMERS
FOR CLIMATE
SOLUTIONS**



ABOUT BOX H FARM

- 2/3 of acres native prairie
- Remaining is tame forage, mainly perennial
- Rolling hills and potholes
- Beef cattle: cow/calf and grass-finished beef direct sales



Farmers teaching farmers

- Best practices for cover cropping, rotational grazing and nitrogen management
- Workshops, field days, online resources
- Peer-to-peer learning



A quick definition



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On-farm resilience

On-farm resilience is the capacity of farms and ranches to withstand challenges like extreme weather, market shifts, and other disruptions.

Building on-farm resilience **involves implementing practices that can:**

- **Improve soil health**
- **Enhance biodiversity**
- **Reduce reliance on costly or tariff-prone inputs.**

Investing in on-farm resilience is a win-win for producers and government.



Pollinator strip at Willmar Farms Ltd. in Melfort, SK

RESILIENCE ON OUR FARM



- High stock-density, non-selective graze
- Lengthy recovery period
- Capture precipitation
- Build soil health
- Stockpiled forages as a buffer for years with poor growing conditions

RESILIENT LOCAL FOOD SYSTEMS SUPPORT HEALTHY GRASSLANDS

- Growing food vs a “commodity”
- Food security should include consumer choice
- Support for farming practices that build soil, plant and animal health



HOW THINGS ARE GOING

Challenges

- Evaluating how effective our land management is under harsh, dry conditions
- Selling food in times of price uncertainty and inflation
- Lack of local processing facilities

Successes

- Investment in infrastructure has allowed us to maintain our grazing rotation
- Building our farm's brand and connecting with customers who share our values
- Working with local businesses and renewed interest in local food

LINKING FARMERS AND CONSUMERS TO PROTECT THE LAND

- Native prairie is a dwindling resource that we can agree is worth protecting
- Connecting consumers to the products and grasslands means they place a value on it



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