

ABP



**2022 Environmental
Stewardship
Award Honouree
and Sustainable
Antimicrobial Usage**

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Volume 2 Issue 2 APRIL 2022

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Ag Plastics

Read more on
pages 14-17

ESA Winner

Read more on
pages 26-29



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ON THE COVER

Spring is a time to gather and
celebrate with friends and
family. What better way to
wow your guests than with the
show stopping tomahawk. In
this issue, learn more about
this classic cut, prepared two
different ways.



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OPINION


For the Common Good of the Cattle Industry

I feel compelled to write in response to Will Verboven comments in the January 2022 edition of **Alberta Beef Magazine**.

Verboven accurately states the history of ABP since its inception in the late 60s. When created, our industry looked much different from current times. Cattle feeding in Alberta was done on a much smaller scale, commonly on the operations that calved the cows. Today's industry is two generations removed from the founding of our ABP. In the current realm, cattle feeders and cow calf operators often lack contact with and understanding of the other sector. There is truth in the cow operator sometimes knows little about what happens with the calves after dropped at the market. Just as guilty is the cattle feeder who thinks calves come from a telephone; all he needs to do is make a call and the animals show up in the feed yard receiving area. The separation of the cattle sectors – cow calf and cattle feeders – has led to current ABP disfunction. Coupled with a refundable check-off, status quo is clearly impossible.

Verboven is promoting a separate check-off organization for the cattle feeding sector, while ABP continues to represent the cow calf side. I have grave concerns that this structure would provide two well-funded organizations with the means to be in perpetual conflict. There are very few issues in the cattle business where the

cow calf sector and cattle feeders have inherent conflict. If slaughter value is maximized, and total production costs minimized, both sectors will benefit. The health of the other sector is all important to both sides. Without a healthy cow calf business, feed yards are out of business when there are no calves to buy. Without cattle feeders there are no buyers at weaning. We are not each other's enemies; we are reliant on one another.

The solution is yet another rework of ABP structure. Check-off becomes non-refundable once again. Half the board is elected by operations that birth calves. Half the board is elected by operations that add value to cattle. Outfits that do both choose which side of the board their votes will elect. Cattle feeders could no longer claim they do not have influence at the ABP board that is equitable to their check-off paid. As cattle feeders are much smaller in numbers than cow calf operators, this structure does mean that a small group of people will elect half the board. I realize that this is not pure democracy and expect marketing council would need to make changes to accommodate this structure within the law. Transitioning to this structure is no easy feat. ABP and ACFA will lose identities of us and them. We will all be at the same table for the common good of the entire cattle business. 

Brent Heidecker, Alberta rancher

#AllForTheBeef

WITH BRAD DUBEAU

Spring has returned to Alberta and with it brings the promise of new life and brighter days. I hope that as you are reading this, you feel the same way.

Since the January issue of ABP, we continue to be very busy working for, with and on behalf of producers.

The ABP Annual General Meeting (AGM) was held in early March, and it was the first face to face meeting of delegates since December 2019. It was wonderful for everyone to finally meet in person, and for the new delegates to get to know each other. We've been grateful for the opportunity to meet digitally these past two years, but it provides limited opportunity to socialize and connect – something our industry thrives on.

We are still seeking delegates in the Northwest and Central areas of Alberta, so if you live in those areas and are interested in getting involved, I encourage you to please contact the ABP office or a delegate in your zone.

There were some important resolutions carried during our AGM, and I'd like to share details of those with you here.

First, the conversation continues around carbon sequestration and offsets, and ABP is actively participating. Our goal is to support the development of protocols that will ensure Alberta beef producers benefit, financially and otherwise, from their sound management of grassland ecosystems. There continues to be concerns around easement length and dollars

returned and we will continue to advocate for Alberta beef producers in these important conversations.

Second, we discussed concerns around managing problem grizzly bears in rural communities, particularly in Southwestern Alberta. ABP resolved to lobby the government to provide livestock producers and landowners with damage permits, allowing them to kill a dangerous grizzly without being charged. There is a precedent for this allowance in the way we currently deal with problem coyotes. A permit would only be issued after a producer confirmed livestock kills or property damage. The outcome has yet to be determined, but we will ensure the government is aware of the problem and lend our support to other organizations tackling this issue head on.

Third, ABP resolved to work with other beef organizations to lobby for the removal of interprovincial trade barriers between the four Western provinces. Federally inspected hook space is limited and often cost-prohibitive for regional packers, making them unable to service niche markets. At the same time, interprovincial trade regulations prevent regional packers from reaching urban customers in neighbouring jurisdictions. This has been an issue for a long time. Change won't happen overnight but opening trade across provincial borders is something we intend to explore.

We are still seeking delegates in the Northwest and Central areas of Alberta. I encourage you to please contact the ABP office or a delegate in your zone.



A fourth resolution was not carried, but important to note. The board discussed the possibility of fully funding the Canadian Cattlemen's Association (CCA) after July 1st, 2023, when the current agreement is complete. However, the resolution was defeated. The delegate body backed the board's motion to move to one quarter of retained marketings. Retained marketings is the amount of dollars generated by the \$2 service charge less refunds when the current agreement is complete. We will, however, be fully funding the CCA until the end of the current agreement.

The delegate body recognizes the important work CCA does, and we know the funding reduction will be challenging. We hope to have a fully funded Alberta beef industry again in the future. To support this goal, the board struck a working group and tasked them with reviewing ABP's plan. We will also meet with other member associations to research all options in hopes of returning to full funding in the future. This will require significant dedication on the part of everyone involved. We are committed to the process of reevaluating what is required to ensure the organizations representing beef producers in Alberta and across Canada are funded to the best of our ability.

A major issue that was raised at the AGM relates to producer data collection. After consulting with producers at the zone meetings, the delegate body voted for a commission regulation amendment allowing ABP to capture producer names and contact information.

The main purpose of this data collection is to support administration of the ABP plan and ensure we can make all Alberta beef producers aware of what is happening

at ABP. No producer's contact information would ever be made available outside the organization. We are now connecting with all producers who marketed cattle in the past two years to collect information, and will continue to consult with auction markets, dealers, and processors as well. For more information please refer to page 25.

In fact, to our knowledge, ABP is the last commission *not* to know who the producers are that fund our beef industry. Other commissions already know who their producers are. We must complete this task in Alberta so we can join other commissions helping producers stay current about what's happening in the industry.

This magazine has provided a valuable tool for communication between ABP and the industry this past year, and I am pleased to report we confirmed at the AGM that the magazine will continue for another year.

By the time this issue is distributed, I hope additional moisture will have come to fill dugouts and relieve the areas of the province needing it most. With that said, we are continuing to monitor the drought situation, particularly in Southern Alberta, recognizing that some areas will likely go into summer this year very dry. If needed, we will work with the appropriate government officials and organizations to continue to seek and provide relief for producers who are affected.

Despite the challenges we continue to face, I've heard optimism expressed about the future, and I am determined to carry it. We should look forward with hope, to the promise of strong prices for our cattle across Alberta by the fall, amid tight supply. 🇨🇦

Editor



LINDSAY ROBERTS

Lindsay is the Marketing and Communications Manager at Alberta Beef Producers. She has an extensive background in agri-marketing, publication and brand development. Lindsay has a passion for creative storytelling and all things agriculture.

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Robin Galey fell into an agricultural communications career after falling off a horse in the Alberta foothills over 25 years ago. She has been cheerfully writing and editing agricultural communications from her home office in Calgary ever since. She seldom rides horses.



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Laura Laing is a public relations and marketing and communications specialist and consultant, who specializes in agriculture. In addition to her full-time role as Owner and President of L.L Communications, Laura is also a cattle producer along with her husband, West of Nanton, AB.



CRAIG LESTER

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Lori Loree grew up on an Angus and Charolais ranch near Lloydminster. She's now a full-time photographer, operating Loree Photography in Nanton, AB.



MARY MACARTHUR

Mary MacArthur has spent her life in agriculture talking to farmers around the world. When Mary isn't writing about agriculture, or taking photos, she spends her time running and hiking.

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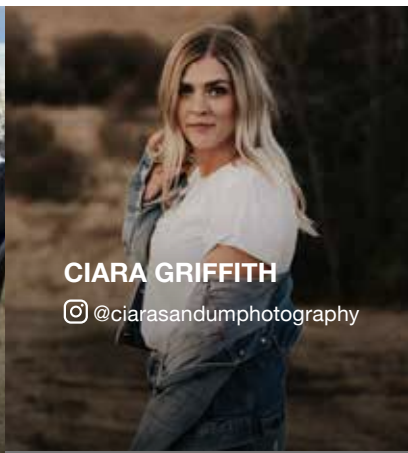
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BUSINESS TOOLS

Giving Cows and Calves Support after a Hard Calving

Highlights from the Chair

WITH MELANIE WOWK

If ever there was a time when we needed to come together as an industry, it's now. We are stronger together, and we will need to be now to overcome the significant challenges we continue to face.



Coming together is just what we did for the ABP Annual General Meeting (AGM) in early March. The turnout was good, and the new delegates enjoyed spending time together and getting to know each other. It was great to have people step in to fill the delegate openings in the Southern zones. Unfortunately, we still have openings in the Northwest and Central Alberta. Consolidation over the past 30 years means producers are more spread out, and there are fewer of us raising more cattle. Engaging with producers in remote locations like the Northwest and Central Alberta is logistically difficult, but I continue to hope a few more producers will step forward to fill the remaining vacancies to support this goal. If you would like to get involved, please be sure to contact us.

Connecting when we are far apart is difficult, but we can be grateful for the ways our producer organization helps make it happen. New technologies allowed us to continue connecting digitally during the pandemic. New ABP communications tools are keeping producers more informed and as in-person meetings become more frequent, producer engagement will increase as more face-to-face connections are made. I know we are all looking forward to that.

The issues we're grappling with now in our industry are difficult to face, but you don't face them alone. We are fortunate to have a strong producer organization like ABP, acting as a conduit to connect, represent or defend our industry.



The Canadian Pacific (CP) Railway labour dispute has created incredible concern for our industry and all of us who work within it. At press time, both parties have agreed to binding arbitration, however there are still issues that need to be resolved. The push is to have our federal government enforce a back to work order, possibly by classifying rail workers as an essential service. We have yet to see how this challenge will be overcome. It is my hope that as you read this, we have already found much needed resolve.


The rail dispute is a federal issue, but it highlights the need for ABP to act as a conduit, to bring awareness and change. Everyone in the beef industry can play a role now, sharing information with governments about the serious consequences a work stoppage has for our industry.

As a veterinarian and producer, I know how challenging it can be for any producer or feedlot operator unable to get feed whether through drought or shipping delays and supply chain issues. It's important to communicate to consumers and governments that this is much worse for us than simply losing money. This is an issue that impacts

the welfare of our cattle. We're out here caring for and looking these animals in the eye every single day, and it's extremely difficult to contemplate having no feed for them. Even if we find an alternative, given their differing stages of production, they will still face significant stress and health impacts from a forced feed change.

I strongly encourage you to write letters to your MP and MLA, letting them know the difficult position we're in, raising your voice to ensure our industry has been and continues to be heard. We're also throwing our full support behind the Canadian Cattlemen's Association and the National Cattle Feeders' Association in their efforts to persuade Ottawa to take immediate action. We're all in this together.

ABP continues its relentless pursuit to work hard to continue to create a vibrant and sustainable industry. Connection is what our beef industry has always thrived on. Now more than ever, our industry needs to reconnect, and stand together.

In the words of Helen Keller, "Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much." 

Checking in with Mark Lyseng

LEAD, GOVERNMENT RELATIONS & POLICY



Mark Lyseng, Government Relations & Policy Lead, is a fifth-generation cattle producer who continues to raise cattle on his family's operation near Armena, Alberta.

Since I joined ABP in November 2020, there has been a constant flurry of activity tackling an unprecedented number of issues. I am grateful for the learning experience but more candidly, we all keep hoping and expecting things to return to normal.

I work with politicians and other government staff to provide input on programs that benefit or support our beef industry – working on a wide swath of issues, from programs like AgriStability, to grazing leases, and from environment policy to business risk management. Additionally, as the staff support for the Issues Management Committee, resolutions come through me to action. Once the committee has decided that a particular issue is within ABP's scope, we work together to find solutions. Whether it's current issues like recreation on grazing leases or coal development, I work with the

committee to research the issue and develop options for the Board of Directors to decide ABP's direction to resolve it.


This past spring our priority resolutions at ABP included price discovery through the value chain, business risk management, import issues, packing plant closures and rail strikes – all critical interruptions that have detrimental impacts to the livelihood and welfare of cattle and our industry.

A growing concern that we are also working to address this spring, relates to packing plant shortages. At ABP, we're working on this issue from multiple angles. First, the question of price discrepancy for major packers, and then why there is a lack of medium size packers. On the flip side, even small producers are experiencing a surge in demand from consumers who want to buy beef directly from the farm or a local butcher. There are very few local butchers, and the ones we have are experiencing extremely high demand, with wait times as long as 36 months for a side of beef. One producer I recently spoke to said, "I'm literally breeding a cow now for a calf that I've already received an order for." That simply isn't sustainable for producers. We

need the resources to process our exceptional beef product and the returns that support the bottom line.

Business risk management and insurance continue to be issues of concern for our industry. Whether it is Livestock Price Insurance, AgriStability or wildlife damage insurance, there is much work to do going forward.

Despite the challenges and issues we continue to face, one major success we had in 2021 was the AgriRecovery drought relief program. Although we couldn't make it rain, we worked diligently with government and fellow producers, and as a result we were able to develop something beyond the typical AgriRecovery model and without the standard receipt-based payments. The result of the program brought producers \$340 million in cash advance relief, one of the largest drought payouts in the history of the program. For many producers, this program provided the means to retain their herds and helped alleviate a mass dispersal of our cow herd across the province.

ABP is a grassroots organization. Our "to-do" list comes from producers like you. To add to our to-do list, please join us at regional meetings or talk to a delegate. 

**Important Information for
Alberta Beef Producers**



Need a better way to manage used baler twine? Recycle it!

Cleanfarms operates the **Alberta Ag Plastic. Recycle It!** pilot program to help Alberta farmers improve sustainability by recycling baler twine and grain bags.

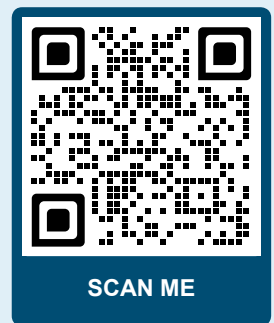
To recycle twine, get Cleanfarms recycling bags from collection sites and select County/MD offices and drop off full bags of used twine at a collection site at no charge.

Find recycling details and a collection site near you:

- For more about **Alberta Ag Plastic. Recycle It!** – go to **AlbertaAgPlastics.ca**
- To see what other ag materials Cleanfarms recycles, go to **Cleanfarms.ca**

Recycling for Twine and Grain Bags in Alberta

Permanent recycling programs for ag plastic are possible when companies that supply or import these products into a province take responsibility for establishing recycling programs. This is called extended producer (company) responsibility or "EPR." Learn more about permanent recycling for baler twine and grain bags in Alberta.



Cleanfarms.ca
info@cleanfarms.ca   @cleanfarms



The pilot project is led by the multi-stakeholder Agricultural Plastics Recycling Group; funds were granted by the Government of Alberta and are administered by Alberta Beef Producers.



What are you doing with your used twine and silage plastic?



Plastics are integral to most of our businesses, whether you are wrapping up bales or covering your silage pit. They are cheap, convenient, and resilient, which makes them useful but also difficult to get rid of.

In the past, the most common practice for dealing with used ag plastics was to burn it – a practice which is not legal, and is at odds with both our industry’s sustainability claims and our image as stewards of the land. Today, while some producers choose to stockpile or bury ag plastics on-farm, others are fortunate to have waste

commissions or municipalities that will accept it at landfills, and recycling is slowly becoming the solution for farmers across Canada. Saskatchewan and Manitoba have permanent recycling programs in place for grain bags, Manitoba added one for twine in 2021, and there is also momentum building in Alberta.



Photos courtesy of APRG.

Following resolutions made during ABP's producer meetings in 2016, looking for solutions to on-farm ag-plastic waste (and similar motions being made at other organizations like the Ag Service Boards, Rural Municipalities of Alberta and other commodity groups), the Agricultural Plastics Recycling Group (APRG) was formed.

One of the main outcomes of the APRG's work to date is the Alberta Ag-Plastic. Recycle-It! pilot, a 3-year recycling program funded by the Alberta Government, administered by ABP and operated by Cleanfarms. Its purpose is to study the costs, logistics and barriers to recycling grain bags and twine in Alberta. It began collection with 20 sites in 2020 and currently has 90 collection sites across the province.

To learn more about the Alberta Ag-Plastic. Recycle-It! pilot and to see if you have a collection site in your municipality, please visit cleanfarms.ca/alberta-ag-plastic-recycle-it-program-details.

Cleanfarms is also operating a separate pilot in Lethbridge County focused on silage plastic. They have partnered with feedlots and dairies to trial manual on-farm compactors to densify the silage plastic for transport.

This pilot looks very promising. Silage plastic is the same plastic as grain bags and the barriers to recycling it are just a matter of the clean collection and densification of the individual pieces. For more information on this pilot, reach out to Alberta Cattle Feeders Association, Alberta Milk or Cleanfarms.

As pilots are temporary programs, the APRG is also advocating for a transition to a permanent recycling program for twine and grain bags, with other ag plastics to be considered later. After studying numerous options, the APRG is recommending an Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) model.

'Producer' in this sense refers to the producers and/or first sellers of a product, who have the "extended responsibility" for collection and appropriate disposal of their products.

EPR legislation was just introduced in Alberta in the 2021 fall sitting. The first products to be brought into the regulation include household packaging, paper, plastics, and hazardous waste. The APRG is asking that ag plastics be considered for future inclusion, with grain bags and twine given priority, followed by other ag plastics.

While EPR is a simple idea (that industry manages both the sale and recycling of a product) there is a lot of flexibility in how industry designs and runs the program(s). But, no matter how it is designed, the cost of the program (in the end) will be paid by the users of the product, either included in the price of the product, or visibly shown as an Environmental Handling Fee at point of sale, as it is done in Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

There are a lot of questions farmers have about how EPR works, the costs involved and what to do with other plastics like netwrap. I have probably asked all the same questions during my time with the APRG. To assist in answering these questions, the APRG and Cleanfarms have created an FAQ document as well as the monthly Ag-Forward information newsletter series. The Ag-Forward series gives a concise background on ag plastics recycling and EPR, and will be focusing on a specific plastic in each of the upcoming months. These newsletters can be found at the websites listed at the end of this article.

Viewed in the larger context, it seems inevitable that recycling our agricultural plastics will become standard practice. Not only do our neighbouring prairie provinces already have permanent programs in place, but the Alberta government's Natural Gas Strategy includes the creation of a Circular Plastics Economy, establishing Alberta "as the Western North America Centre of Excellence for plastics diversion and recycling by 2030." Alberta is already home to two of the three grain bag recyclers in North America – Crowfoot Plastics near

[[A circular economy is one where the full value of a plastic product is used across multiple life cycles, not just used once and discarded into landfills or waterways.]]

alberta.ca/natural-gas-vision-and-strategy.aspx

Hussar and PolyAg Recycling in Bashaw, and there are Alberta entrepreneurs creating innovative products with recycled ag plastics.

A circular plastics economy requires a shift in thinking, from seeing used plastic as garbage to seeing it as a resource. I see no reason why Alberta can't become the leader in that field. And agriculture should be a part of it.

In the end, I don't think recycling will be the only solution. Better products like biodegradable netwrap, hemp twine, edible sheet plastic, and other technologies (some of which are also being worked on here in Alberta) will help in reducing our on-farm waste. But to encourage the development of new products and make them more cost competitive, it helps if we are paying the full cost for our plastics, including disposal. So, while yes, there is a cost associated with recycling programs, I would be ok with paying it if there is an environmentally responsible home for my used plastic when I am done with it.

And just maybe, in the near future, there will be a netwrap I won't have to bother trying to take off my frozen bales. 🍷

Assar Grinde is a cow-calf producer in Ponoka County, a former Director with the ABP and is ABP's representative on the Agricultural Plastics Recycling Group. He can be reached at agrinde@blindmanbeef.ca

The Agricultural Plastics Recycling Group (APRG) was formed in 2016 and comprises more than 20 organizations representing agricultural producers, retailers, manufacturers, municipalities, non-profits and others. The group oversees the Recycle-It! pilot and is committed to finding solutions to manage agricultural plastics. aprg.ca

Cleanfarms is an agricultural industry stewardship organization that contributes to a healthier environment and a sustainable future for Canadian agriculture by developing and operating programs across Canada specifically for farmers that collect used ag plastics for recycling, as well as other ag-related used and unwanted materials for recycling or safe disposal. cleanfarms.ca

Using Antimicrobials Sustainably

BY ROBIN GALEY

ANTIMICROBIAL USE IN BEEF CATTLE PRODUCTION GREATLY BENEFITS ANIMAL HEALTH. BUT, IT HAS COME UNDER SCRUTINY IN RECENT YEARS, DUE TO INCREASING INCIDENTS OF ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE. TO BRING YOU THE FULL STORY, WE SPOKE TO AN ANIMAL HEALTH SCIENTIST AND A FEEDLOT VETERINARIAN ABOUT THE BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF ANTIMICROBIAL USE, THE DEVELOPING RISK OF RESISTANCE, AND BEST PRACTICES TO ENSURE THESE IMPORTANT TOOLS BENEFIT ANIMAL HEALTH FOR GENERATIONS TO COME.

Antimicrobials (AMs) support human and animal health by inhibiting or destroying the growth of microorganisms. Their use in beef cattle production (particularly the use of antibiotics) supports animal health by preventing, treating and reducing the incidence of disease (particularly bovine respiratory disease, or BRD).

BRD causes mild to severe illness, spreads between animals, and has compounding negative effects on animal welfare in the feedlot environment. While AMs have benefited cattle health for many years, their use has occurred in conjunction with a concerning increase in the presence of antimicrobial resistance (AMR), an area of study for Canadian researchers since the early 1990s.

“When we first started studying this we found very low levels of resistance in many of the bacteria responsible for BRD,” explains Dr. Tim McAllister, Research Scientist, Ruminant Nutrition and Microbiology, Agriculture and Agri-food Canada. “Over the years we’ve seen an increase. We now find that bacteria resistant to tetracycline are pretty widespread, and in the last five to ten years we’ve also seen a huge increase in resistance to the macrolide family of antibiotics, which is the family many producers use to control the bacteria that cause BRD.”

Increasing AMR in animals might be a concern for human health if resistant bacteria cross species through the environment or by beef consumption. But there is good

news on that front. Significant research has been done, and findings indicate this transfer occurs only in very rare, isolated cases. “Our research suggests there is limited movement of resistance from beef cattle to humans,” McAllister says.

Unfortunately, however, increasing resistance is resulting in reduced effectiveness of many AMs for controlling infectious disease in cattle, and that poses a significant problem. “Within the feedlots, we are definitely seeing that many AMs are not as effective as they were when they first came out, which aligns with the idea that there is growing antimicrobial resistance within those bacterial populations,” McAllister says.

USE IS NOW MORE TIGHTLY CONTROLLED

As a result of growing concern about AMR, government regulations have changed. “Changes to legislation have resulted in the need for more oversight and regulatory compliance to use AMs in animal production,” explains Dr. Calvin Booker, Veterinarian and General Manager of Services and Research with Feedlot Health Management Services by TELUS Agriculture.

Producers who used to be able to purchase AMs over-the-counter through feed mills or agriculture supply stores can now only access them as prescribed by a veterinarian. This increases the importance of working with a veterinarian to manage animal health. “For most feedlots this hasn’t changed how they use AMs, because most were already working with veterinarians for helping to prevent, control and treat disease,” Booker says.

The increased oversight is more restrictive, frustrating some producers. But Booker suggests perhaps antimicrobial use (AMU) should have been under tighter control from the start. “From a veterinary perspective, this seems like a reasonable principle of AM stewardship. AMs are valuable tools to manage disease in animal and human populations, and we should have a fair degree of oversight in how they are used,” he says.

At present, most feedlot operators keep very accurate records about AMU. They know how much has been administered to which animals, and can use the data collected to assess effectiveness of treatments based on disease incidence following treatment.



Photo by TELUS Agriculture

Additionally, the National AMU and AMR feedlot surveillance program initiated in 2019 collects samples to look for AMR. Surveillance of both AMU and AMR will help researchers investigate associations between the two, and identify what factors are contributing to AMR development, spread and persistence.

“AMU surveillance involves documenting and measuring how AMs are prescribed and administered, and monitoring trends over time...AMR surveillance is the effort to provide representative estimates of AMR and monitor trends over time,” explains Sheryl Gow, Veterinary Epidemiologist with the Public Health Agency of Canada.

While it’s not possible to evaluate why and how much AMU is taking place, opportunities for modifications to reduce AMU may be identified through surveillance, says Gow. Further, “Research and surveillance together will provide a better understanding of the development, spread and persistence of AMR and will assist with identifying options for minimizing it,” she says.

THE NEED FOR ANTIMICROBIALS IN FEEDLOTS

Since beef cattle arrive at the feedlot from differing locations and in varying states of health, BRD is a particular concern in that environment. “Part of why AM use goes up in a feedlot is because we gather animals together from different geographic areas across Western Canada and even the US. They’re often mixed together, creating an opportunity for bacterial transmission, and experiencing stress from the move to a new environment,” says McAllister.

Feedlot operators assess animals carefully on arrival, identifying and categorizing their predicted risk of developing disease. Factors considered include: where they originated from; the degree of mixing with other animals; and whether they were vaccinated, weaned and preconditioned prior to transport.

“We do a fairly sophisticated health assessment based on the description of the animals coming into the feedlot, and then make a prediction about their level of risk of developing disease,” explains Booker. “There are animals at very high risk of developing BRD and others at extremely low risk. The animals at high risk receive an AM on arrival, because the clinical benefit is so profound.”

There are a variety of risk categories between very low and very high, and animals are treated with a category of AM based on assessment. McAllister notes: “The majority of animals coming into a feedlot are treated with some type of AM right now, because the predicted risk of disease is moderate to high.”

COW-CALF OPERATIONS PLAY A ROLE

When feedlots assess disease risk and consider the likelihood that resistant bacteria might be present, the origin of the cattle plays heavily. “If we follow animals back to their point of origin, and there was a high level of AM use in that cow-calf operation, they will probably have a high level of AMR when they enter the feedlot,” McAllister says.

This points to the importance of raising healthy calves from birth, supporting the development of healthy immune function through good nutrition. “We can’t downplay the importance of proper animal husbandry and good nutrition to minimize the need for AMs to prevent, treat and control bacterial disease. AMs are not a replacement for any of that,” says Booker.

Still, Booker notes, even with the best nutrition, disease prevention and management practices, “there will still be an outbreak of bacterial disease in some populations, and we still need to be able to control it with AMs to maintain animal health and welfare.”

Vaccinations also support animal health. “The most effective alternatives we have to AMs presently are the vaccines. Most feedlots really encourage producers to vaccinate to control disease,” says McAllister.

BEST PRACTICES FOR ANTIMICROBIAL STEWARDSHIP

Ensuring AMs will continue to be effective for many years to come depends on their strategic use in the present. “What we’ve found so far tells us we need to be careful and strategic about how we use AMs so they’re around for generations to come,” says Booker. “Good AM stewardship means beginning with assessment and treating based on the level of risk present.”

Booker and McAllister both describe the same formula for sustainable AM use: the right animals need to be given the

right AM at the right time at the right dose for the shortest duration possible to elicit the desired clinical outcome.

Determining which animals are the right ones to treat presents a challenge. “There are cases where an animal may succumb to the disease regardless of whether they receive the AM, and cases where an animal will survive either way. Then there is the group of animals that develop disease and overcome it because they receive the AM – that’s the population we want to treat. Identifying that population is quite a challenge, and that’s what beef cattle producers are facing,” McAllister says.

Even if the right animals are assessed for treatment, more challenges present themselves: identifying which bacteria are responsible for the disease and which AMs they might be resistant to. Getting test results currently takes a week. “We’re working on technologies that will reduce that down to about 24 hours, but that is still a long time for a producer who wants to identify a disease and respond, preferably within minutes of when the animal arrives at the feedlot,” says McAllister.

WORK WITH YOUR VETERINARIAN

Since producers in Canada now need a veterinary-client-patient relationship to access all medically important antimicrobials, it’s important to establish good relationships with veterinarians specializing in cattle production, who can provide insight and oversight to support effective, sustainable AMU.

“Working with a veterinarian is critical. When antimicrobials are necessary for animal health and welfare, veterinarians ensure that treatment is consistent with ‘the right drug for the right bug,’” Gow says.

Booker advises: “Producers should look at their engagement with a veterinarian not as a cost, but as an investment. They will help you determine the most effective disease prevention, control and treatment strategies from a holistic point of view, including the strategic use of AMs in specific populations.”

RESEARCH CONTINUES

Whenever an AM is used, some degree of resistance will invariably develop, notes McAllister: “AM use leads to AM resistance – that’s part of the natural microbial world.”

In fact, even in the absence of AM use, bacteria can be AMR. “In a pristine grassland that has never been in contact with manufactured AMs, we can still isolate antibiotic resistant bacteria in the soil,” McAllister says.

Honing our human understanding of the microbial world is an ongoing process, and research to support sustainable AM use is part of that. “If we want to continue to rely on these valuable tools in the future, we have to continue to focus on trying to refine, with data and clinical trials, how best to use them,” concludes Booker. 🇨🇦



Photo by TELUS Agriculture

Scott Guenthner's Journey from Rodeo to Rural

BY DIANNE FINSTAD

Heading for a warmer spot during the Alberta winter cold is what many make a regular journey. But Scott Guenthner chose to skip his usual winter hot spots this year, to stay at home on the ranch near Provost instead.



Why? Because the two-time Canadian Steer Wrestling Champion decided it was time. He's travelled the U.S. winter rodeo circuit steadily for nearly a decade, visiting places from Houston to Tucson, to compete and earn enough for a qualifying spot at the lucrative National Finals Rodeo in Las Vegas.

He achieved it for the fourth time in his career last December, but made it known that would be his last trip to the Super Bowl of rodeo. With his wife Becky and two young sons, plus plenty of work to go around on the family cow-calf operation, Guenthner was ready for a change.

"People ask me if I'm missing it and I'm like 'I'm not missing it one ounce'," says the 30-year-old. "I'm sitting here on the couch, watching the rodeos (on TV) with my kids. I'm just enjoying that part of not being on the road 24-7, and driving, and being away from home."

Guenthner made his winters worthwhile, cashing in at some of the big shows like Rodeo Austin, The American, Clovis, Prescott, San Angelo, and Jackson. But the winter rodeo circuit means staying south and on the road for long stretches.

The decision to forego the major U.S. competitions and focus only on Canadian rodeos became clear about a year ago, as he was winning the RAM National Circuit

Finals Rodeo in Kissimmee, FL. His son Quade, now 2, was getting old enough to figure out when Dad wasn't coming home for a while.

"It got to the point where he cried every time I talked to him on Facetime and didn't want to say goodbye. I love rodeoing, but the miles definitely did take a toll on me. I don't want to be the Dad that's not really ever there. I'd rather be at home with my family."

To top things off, Becky's due date for their second son was right during the NFR. Fortunately, he held off making his entrance until the rodeo was over. Guenthner was on the flight home, and 'there' via Facetime as Ridge appeared, just three minutes before the flight took off. It all reinforced his return to a ranch-focused career choice.

The Guenthners have an 1100 head Hereford-based cow-calf operation, with some Red Angus bulls on their heifers, around Sounding Lake in east-central Alberta. Calving in mid-April, they generally background their calves to sell in the early spring, and have some grain production for cattle feed, along with silage as well.

The operation includes Scott's father, Ken, as well as his two sisters and their husbands and families: Tanya and Evan Beaulieu, and Laurie and Dean Savage. Scott was conscious of the impact of his absence on his partners.

"I just came to the conclusion rodeo was a hobby, and it was fun, and I got to live a dream to go rodeo. But at the end of the day, it's family first, and I wanted to be with my family."

Ken Guenthner was also a professional steer wrestler, and the first to win a \$50,000 cheque at the Calgary Stampede in 1982. Scott doesn't remember his Dad competing, since he'd given up the road to be with his children while Scott was very young.

So while rodeo was in his blood, so was ranching.

"Ever since I was a young kid, I'd rather be calving cows or doing something on the ranch than going to school."

Guenthner did go on with a rodeo scholarship to Lakeland College in Vermilion, where he took Livestock Production and some Ag Business courses as well, before launching his Canadian pro rodeo career in 2012.

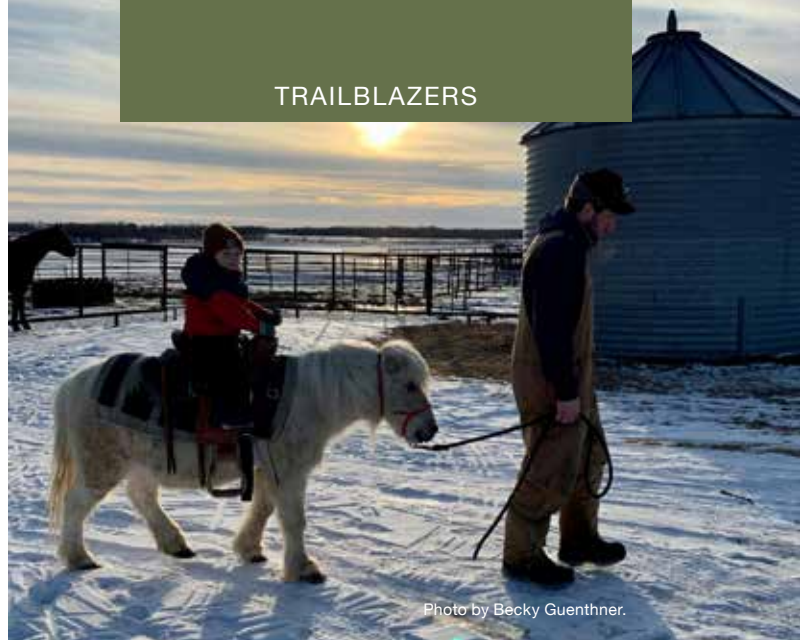


Photo by Becky Guenthner.


Guenthner is grateful he was able to make some money out of rodeo, since not everyone does. With his six appearances at the Canadian Finals Rodeo, plus the four NFRs, he made upwards of \$100,000 a year, thanks to sponsorships helping offset some expenses.

"It will definitely help in my ranching career, but I knew at the end of the day I wouldn't be able to make a living at rodeo. Sooner or later you start going the other way, when you get older and you don't win. I want my kids to have the same life I did, growing up on the ranch. I didn't want to be one of those unfortunately broke cowboys when I was done."

Guenthner will have some more time now to work on horses, both for the ranch and steer wrestling. He's got a couple to use this season at Canadian rodeos, and with the high prices for horses these days, considers investing in 'building' some rodeo prospects as well.

Guenthner knows ranch life isn't easy, especially as the family copes with the drought, and scarce grass. But it will be worth it to work through the challenges together.

"It's the lifestyle – very family oriented. You work with your kids, and I feel like you learn a lot of life skills just from being on the ranch, looking after animals, making sure things live. When you're six years old and bottle feeding a calf, it's a big deal and you learn responsibilities. It's a little more relaxed. Yes, you're married to the ranch, and can never really seem to leave for a holiday, but you're your own boss."

Scott Guenthner knows what it's like to hear the Las Vegas crowd roar for a great steer wrestling run, but he finds a good ranch day, moving cows on horseback, surrounded by family and friends, just as rewarding. 

INNOVATIVE AG SOLUTIONS



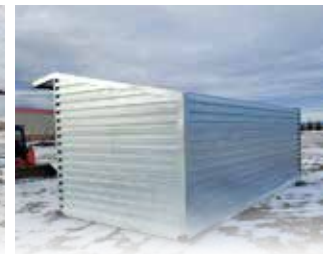
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Proposed Amendment to Commission Regulation to Improve Communications and Engagement

For years, Alberta Beef Producers (ABP) and Alberta producers have raised concerns about the accuracy of ABP's mailing list. ABP's inaccurate mailing list has hampered communication efforts and created logistical challenges for delegate elections, plebiscites, and meeting notices. With an accurate mailing list every producer would have the opportunity to be informed, to be heard, and to exercise their voting rights.

THE SOLUTION

To address this problem, the producers at the 2022 Producer Meetings and the delegates at the Annual General Meeting passed resolutions supporting amendments to the ABP Commission Regulation to allow ABP to obtain the names and contact information of Alberta beef producers.

WHAT CHANGES ARE BEING PROPOSED?

The proposed amendments will require beef cattle producers to register their names, addresses, and e-mail addresses (where available) with ABP. To facilitate producers registering with ABP, livestock dealers and purchasers who deduct and remit the check-off will provide ABP with the names, addresses, and (where available) the e-mail addresses of their Alberta sellers and consignors semi-annually in January and July.

ABP will collect the producers' names and contact information separate from the ABP check-off remittance. ABP will not receive any information related to the cattle sold or consigned to the purchasers or livestock dealers with the producers' names and contact information. ABP will not keep any record of the source of the producers' names and contact information.

HOW WILL PRODUCERS' NAMES AND CONTACT INFORMATION BE USED?

ABP will use producers' names and contact information to compile and constantly update their mailing list of Alberta beef cattle producers.


ABP will only use this mailing list for official ABP business: communications on matters of importance to the beef cattle industry; communications related to the business and activities of ABP, including delegate and director elections, producer meetings, commission meetings; and communications concerning the work of the Canadian Cattlemen's Association, the Beef Cattle Research Council, and the Canadian Beef Cattle Check-Off Agency and other industry groups.

Producers will have the option to opt-out of receiving information updates from ABP on a case-by-case basis. However, ABP will ensure producers receive information regarding annual producer meetings, delegate nominations and elections, producer plebiscites, and ABP business and operation.

WHAT IS THE CONSULTATION PROCESS FOR THESE CHANGES?

The proposed amendments to the ABP Commission Regulation were approved in draft form by ABP's Board of Directors and presented for initial consultation at ABP's zone producer meetings held in January and February 2022. The current draft amendments were approved by ABP's delegates at the Annual General Meeting held on March 2, 2022 in Red Deer.

A copy of the proposed amendments to the ABP Commission Regulation can be obtained using the "Contact Us" form at albertabeef.org.

Through this notice, ABP is seeking comments from Alberta beef cattle producers on the proposed amendments to the ABP Commission Regulation that are aimed at improving ABP's producer mailing list. 

HOW DO I PROVIDE COMMENTS?

You can submit comments by mail to ABP Head Office or by email to bradd@albertabeef.org by May 30, 2022.

**ABP 2022 ENVIRONMENTAL
STEWARDSHIP AWARD HONOURS**

Ribbon Creek Ranch

BY KATELYN LAVERDURE

SINCE 1992, ALBERTA BEEF PRODUCERS (ABP) HAS RECOGNIZED FARMS AND RANCHES ACROSS THE PROVINCE WHOSE NATURAL RESOURCE STEWARDSHIP PRACTICES CONTRIBUTE TO THE ENVIRONMENT AND ENHANCE PRODUCTIVITY AND PROFITABILITY. THIS YEAR, RIBBON CREEK RANCH, NEAR LINDEN, ALBERTA, HAS BEEN SELECTED AS THE RECIPIENT OF THE 2022 ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP AWARD (ESA).



“The judges were really impressed with all the work Jerry and his family have done with environmental sustainability so clearly at the forefront of how the ranch is managed,” says Chris Israelson, Chair of the judging committee and past ABP Director.

Ribbon Creek Ranch – 2022 ESA Recipient

“Grain, cow-calf, and yearlings. We background our calves in the winter and put them on grass in the summer. I work the cow-calf side with my wife [Dawn] and children. It’s a family farm. And I work with my dad on the grain farm side,” says Jerry when asked to describe Ribbon Creek Ranch.

It is easy to see that this family business has plenty of helping hands, including three daughters and three sons – the youngest of whom are five-year-old twins. Jerry and Dawn’s eldest daughter has recently ventured across country to become a teacher, and Jerry mentions, “there’s a big gap to fill without her. She was very involved with the cattle.”

Jerry Baerg and his family raise cattle on land that his grandfather purchased in 1972.

“My grandfather lived on the west side of Linden where my father grew up and farmed with him. He was a grain farmer, and my dad was a grain and chicken farmer.”

Initially the farm was 1,500 acres of mostly cultivated land that served primarily to grow grain and hay, with a small backgrounding operation. Jerry got involved in the early

[Jerry] transitioned the backgrounding operation into a progressive commercial cattle operation, sourcing genetics and seedstock from producers who were prioritizing environmental stewardship within their own farms and ranches.

2000s and brought with him a renewed focus on building a viable and sustainable family business.

He transitioned the backgrounding operation into a progressive commercial cattle operation, sourcing genetics and seedstock from producers who were prioritizing environmental stewardship within their own farms and ranches.

In 2013, Jerry started the cow herd.

“That part has been a lot of fun for me, building the herd on my own... I’ve always enjoyed cattle. It may be a little harder work, but I’ve always felt it was worth it. With a family growing up, it’s a nice occupation... there’s a lot of work we can do together like calving and sorting pairs. It feels like a family project.”



Through Growing Forward (now CAP) and Kneehill County, the farm developed a spring watering system in one of many steps to protect water sources.

At the same time as he started the cow herd, Jerry also purchased a second property in an area primarily comprised of rolling hills and native grasslands. Additional land was also rented to provide space for summer grazing, and to allow for prolonged rest periods in preparation for winter grazing.

“When we bought that small ranch out east, there were native pastures and large pastures from the previous owner. I thought, if I am going to make this pay, I am going to have to fence this and manage this grass.”

Through strong mentors from neighbours and the Foothills Forage and Grazing Association, Jerry learned how to handle the fragile land and hard grass.

“You have to treat it right. I slowly started fencing it with funding from the Canadian Agriculture Partnership (CAP). I fenced off riparian areas and creeks, along with surrounding lowlands to prevent erosion.”

Jerry uses electric fencing to create smaller paddocks for rotational grazing. He is also in the process of seeding cropland back to perennial grass to increase grazing capacity and support a growing cow herd.

In the winter, the cattle graze residue in the grain fields, which provides them with nutrient-rich feed. And Jerry’s experimenting with underseeding annual crops to clover to combine cash crops and still have feed for cattle.

“The cow-calf and the grain farm really complement each other. There’s a lot of value in the grain side that you can utilize for the cow-calf side,” says Jerry.

Through Growing Forward (now CAP) and Kneehill County, the farm developed a spring watering system in one of many steps to protect water sources.

“We started with the spring development at the bottom of the valley, and I realized we needed our water on the top of the hills. That’s when I decided to run a pipeline from well water in the yard.”

In the past, the lowlands would end up overgrazed with heavy deposits of organic matter, while the hilltops remained untouched and deprived of nutrients. To combat this challenge, Jerry utilized over 1.5 miles of above-ground pipe, and portable solar powered surge tanks to bring water to the top of the hills in six paddocks.

“This has drastically reduced traffic in the lowlands and concentrated grazing on the sides and tops of the hills, which has resulted in more evenly distributed nutrients throughout the grazing areas.

In the winter I use the portable solar watering system to run a wet well.”



Solar power is used to deliver water from these systems all throughout the two properties. The water sources and the grasslands are shared with numerous wildlife, including mule deer, white-tailed deer, pheasants, and more.

“I started getting interested in longer grazing periods. The Foothills Forage and Grazing Association has such a wealth of information. I was really enthused about longer grazing. It goes hand-in-hand with the regenerative part of [farming]. It is really important to me that my cows can be out on the land year-round and spreading nutrients to regenerate soil,” says Jerry.

“It is economic and regenerative, working in sync with nature.”

Jerry has made it a priority to maintain the integrity of the land and vows to never break any native ground. The move to year-round grazing was accomplished while also preserving over 320 acres of original native grassland.

He believes this success story will help ensure the sustainability and profitability of the operation for generations to come, even in spite of challenges like drought.

“We had a field day planned and everything was starting to get hot and dry. It is a difficult [time] for all of us ranchers.” When talking drought mitigation strategies, Jerry says he always has half of a year’s grazing on-hand. “I can’t only rely on this year’s growth.”

Why do an Environmental Farm Plan?

“[The technicians] who helped us with our [Environmental Farm Plan] told us it’s an awareness process. It has made me more aware and able to assess environment issues that come up. It opened up doors to access government loan programs such as Growing Forward and the Canadian Agricultural Partnership (CAP),” says Jerry Baerg, Ribbon Creek Ranch.

Jerry strives to provide for the land, and wildlife that call it home, and in return trusts that it will support his family for years to come. Jerry’s children have a strong interest in farming and ranching and aim to follow in his footsteps.

“To me I would say this is a great honour. This award isn’t about the biggest operation, it is about stewardship. That is what I am trying to do – take care of things and work together with nature. Me and my family are honoured. I feel really humbled.” 🏆

The award will be presented to Ribbon Creek Ranch later in the spring. Stay tuned for details.

A tomahawk axe with a dark, weathered head and a wooden handle, resting on a plaid cloth. To the right, a small bowl with a red and yellow rim contains a mound of white powder. The background is a dark, textured surface.

Let's Talk Tomahawk

WITH COREY MEYER

When it comes to the Tomahawk steak, we refer to it as the “showstopper.” For those of us who grew up watching cartoons, it’s the steak that Fred Flintstone ate. Its massive presentation on the bone makes the steak look primal – which is all part of its appeal. And of course, when prepared to perfection, it is delicious.



The short rib is best prepared braised low and slow, whereas the ribeye is something you can leave to a rare to medium rare based on your preference. Marinating the Tomahawk is ideal, as it will help break down the muscle fibres of the short rib side and then cook it low and slow with a quick finish on the grill to exploit that great steak flavour.

However prepared, perhaps the primal style trend of the cut is what is most enticing to our beef consumers. When my beef customers ask for something just a bit different but impressive at the dinner table, there is no doubt about it – the Tomahawk cut of beef fits the bill. 🍖

In the last two to three years, the Tomahawk cut has really taken off at the meat counter and in dine-in restaurants. Cut from the rib section, where we also cut the ribeye, rib steak, prime rib or standing rib roast, the Tomahawk is perfect for sharing with friends, or use the long bone handle to enjoy this luxury steak yourself... caveman style.

There are a few ways that the Tomahawk cut is offered. Some butchers will French the bone or take all the meat off the bone and leave just the ribeye on it. This resulting masterpiece resembles a 'handle,' and that resemblance is where its namesake originates – the Tomahawk axe.

Here at my shop, I prefer leaving the short rib meat on the bone as well. I like offering the Tomahawk cut in this style at my counter because it offers more meat with two different types of beef on the bone. However, cooking it can take some creativity in the kitchen or on the grill.



CONCERNED ABOUT TAG RETENTION?

WE ARE LISTENING

Photo courtesy of Canadian Gelbvieh Association



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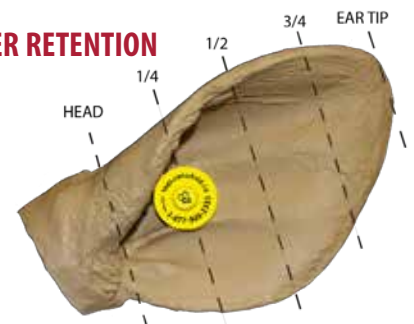


MORE RESEARCH = BETTER RETENTION

Tag retention is important to a successful traceability system and the Canadian Cattle Identification Agency (CCIA) has done our research. Ongoing tag testing trials, intensive research and direct producer feedback on their experiences have resulted in manufacturers improving their tag offerings. To learn more about CCIA's research activities visit <https://www.canadaid.ca/traceability/research/>

BEST PRACTICES = BETTER RETENTION

Better tag application practices mean better tag retention. Always use the manufacturer recommended applicator with the tag and follow placement guidelines.



Check out our new and improved tag offerings
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or contact us directly at info@canadaid.ca | 1-877-909-2333

To provide feedback on your tag experience, fill out and return the Approved Indicator Quality Control Form found at: https://www.canadaid.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Approved-Indicator-Quality-Control-Form_fillable-2021-11-19.pdf



Get on the wait list:

SUPPLY CHAIN ISSUES CAUSING TAG ORDER DELAYS

Supply chain issues are affecting many products, including livestock identification devices. Shortages of raw material and staff absenteeism at manufacturing plants are now creating some noticeable delays.

CDMV (CCIA's distributor) is receiving some shipments periodically, but as the busy calving season is upon us, demand is exceeding availability for some products.

It is important to remember to place your order on the CCIA Webstore even if your selected products show as "Back Order." By placing your order, you secure your priority in the queue, and it will be filled as soon as there is availability. Or you may want to consider another approved tag that is in stock right now. Consult the CCIA Tag catalogue for alternative options. The Tag Catalogue can be found on the CCIA website (canadaid.ca) under the menu tab, Tags & Technology. The direct link to the pdf is canadaid.ca/wp-content/uploads/Tag-and-Tag-Accessories-Catalogue.pdf

The tag supply situation has not improved to the level we anticipated. The extra inventory we put in place last fall to offset production interruptions has now been used. All manufacturers are struggling with accessing raw materials and manpower. However, enough supplies of approved beef tags are trickling in weekly to offer some options to maintain compliance if animals need to be transported at this time of year.



Also, please note to ensure fair distribution, some products are subject to a weekly purchase limitation for an undetermined period, effective immediately. Unfortunately, this is completely out of CCIA's control. The message remains the same as indicated in January, i.e., it is important to place orders even if products show as "Back Order." By placing an order, producers secure their spot in the queue and will be supplied as soon as there is availability." 🇨🇦

HERE TO HELP ALBERTA'S PRODUCERS:

AFSC Program Overview

Farming in Alberta can be unpredictable, but Agriculture Financial Services (AFSC) is committed to providing solutions to help Alberta's producers do what they do best – build, grow and succeed. We offer a range of lending and risk management options.

Lending

AFSC offers a dependable source of financing for Alberta farmers and agribusinesses through our Next Generation, Developing Producer, Alberta Producer, Revolving and Agribusiness loans. With competitive interest rates and flexible terms, AFSC's lending solutions are tailored to Alberta producers' growing operations.

AFSC helps clients with cash flow concerns, providing a variety of ways to support them. One way is to provide lending relief during tough times. Existing clients can discuss relief payment options with their Relationship Manager Lending.

Crop Insurance

AFSC's annual and perennial crop insurance programs offer producers protection from designated perils that lead to production loss.

AFSC offers production-based programs that cover annual and perennial crops. This insurance provides a

production guarantee based on the average of historical yields and coverage options selected. When production falls below the guarantee due to an insured peril, the shortfall will be paid.

AFSC's area-based programs annual insurance offerings – like the Silage Greenfeed program – provide protection for crops based on a chosen area over a specified time; they do not directly reflect what happens on your individual farm.

AgriStability

The AgriStability program offers coverage to protect farm income, based on all of a producer's commodities, against large margin decline that may threaten the viability of your farm. Removal of the Reference Margin Limit in 2021 makes AgriStability less complex and more responsive to all types of farming operations. It is anticipated that approximately half of participants will benefit from this change over time and their coverage could increase by up to 30 per cent.

Livestock Price Insurance

As a risk management tool, Livestock Price Insurance (LPI) essentially forecasts prices and offers coverage based on what markets expect cattle will be worth in the future. This coverage is settled against the overall average cash market; therefore, producers still need to do the best job they can to market their cattle.


LPI is not based on a producer's personal prices or production, and is an index-based program (uses standard weight and class of cattle to measure market performance). The indexing concept is important, as this standardized insurance product is what allows the program flexibility.

The program helps manage risks for cattle and hog producers throughout the various stages of production. Producers pay a premium to receive forward price coverage; if the market falls below the coverage price in the timeframe selected, the producer receives a payment.

Choosing the right cattle program – calf, feeder, fed – is very important.

- 'Calf' is designed for the cow-calf producer. Having a tool available to help protect against the 'unknowns' of the fall calf market and associated price volatility can assist with profitability.
- 'Feeder' insures feeder cattle using a forecasted future market driven price. The program is based on local markets and helps producers who background cattle better manage the risks in today's unpredictable cattle market.
- 'Fed' offers price insurance for finished cattle that are intended for slaughter and expected to grade A or better. This program takes the difficulty out of managing all three risks that producers face (price, currency and basis) and combines them into one product.

The basic mechanics of LPI are simple. The program establishes a coverage level for the client – meaning an insured price level. If the cash market moves up during the time of your policy, you sell the cattle for higher dollars into that market; the insurance doesn't pay because the market was stronger than your minimum when you bought the coverage.

If the cash market falls below your coverage, LPI pays the difference between the established settlement index and your coverage. This is intended to make up the difference between what you expected the market to be (your coverage level) and what the market actually was (the settlement index). 

To learn more about AFSC lending and risk management offerings, please see [AFSC.ca](https://www.afsc.ca), reach out using Live Chat on AFSC Connect or our website, call our Client Service Centre at 1.877.899.2372 or contact an AFSC branch office.

ABP would like to take the opportunity to thank the staff of AFSC for their hard work supporting producers through the 2021 drought. AFSC took their responsibility administering the funds from AgriRecovery very seriously, recognizing producers' need for immediate support. AFSC showed extraordinary commitment to ensuring that money was distributed as quickly as possible with the process that was provided.

Further, AFSC was quick to collaborate with producers to amend the MDI program to ensure it met producers' needs going forward. ABP appreciates the willingness of AFSC to work with producers to make the best programs available.



Taking a Closer Look at Johne's Disease

BY ROBIN GALEY



JOHNE'S DISEASE IS A SNEAKY, PRODUCTION-LIMITING DISEASE THAT DAMAGES HERD HEALTH. WE INTRODUCED JOHNE'S IN THE NOVEMBER 2021 ISSUE.

A new digital risk-reward calculator has been developed to help beef producers predict the future spread of Johne's in their herds, and compare costs and benefits of different management strategies.

As cattle herds grow and consolidate, the spread of Johne's disease continues to be a concern. Research shows that the percentage of herds in Western Canada with positive cases is increasing, and larger herds are at greater risk.

The main symptoms of Johne's include persistent diarrhea and weight loss. These symptoms appear in animals anywhere between two and 10 years of age, after it has likely spread to other animals. "Johne's is insidious, it can sneak up on producers, and it can skip generations before it shows itself clinically. Animals often don't show signs until they're five or six years old, and by then they've passed it on," explains veterinarian Dr. Roy Lewis.

Cows spread Johne's by shedding the bacteria in manure, often for months or even years before they become clinically ill. Adding to the complexity, infectious animals don't shed all the time, which means tests may produce false negative results.

New risk-reward calculator

Johne's has many negative effects on herd health: premature culling, replacement costs, loss of valuable genetics, reduced slaughter value, lost gain in calves, and increased costs for veterinarian care and testing.

To prevent increasing disease prevalence in the future, we should work to contain Johne's now, suggests Dr. Cheryl Waldner, Beef Cattle Research Council Research Chair from the Western College of Veterinary Medicine and cow-calf producer. "We do have an opportunity to contain it now, using good biosecurity together with testing and culling programs to reduce infections," she says.

To help producers and veterinarians navigate control options, Drs. Waldner and Leigh Rosengren, veterinarian and Saskatchewan producer, introduced the Johne's Risk-Reward Calculator in March 2022. This new digital tool is designed to help producers and veterinarians weigh the variables involved in deciding how to manage – and potentially eliminate – Johne's disease from the herd.

A producer fills in required information describing their herd and runs the model. The results describe the likely percentage of Johne's infected cows in their herd over time, and how culling and testing costs could be affected. The producer can then make selections to add blood and fecal testing with other control methods, and see how the number of Johne's cases changes.

"We can use the calculator to try different testing strategies, replacement scenarios and disease management options to see what could happen to case numbers, culling losses and replacement needs," Waldner explains.

Using a second, more advanced level of the calculator, producers and veterinarians can perform experiments

Disease stages: animals shedding bacteria spread Johne's disease

1 Healthy susceptible animal

2 Silently infected animals (shed bacteria)

3 Subclinical animals (shed bacteria)

4 Animals showing clinical disease (shed bacteria)

to measure and compare possible disease outcomes from intervention and testing, and compare costs and profitability factors among these options, explains Rosengren.

The Johne's Risk-Reward Calculator was populated with data from the Canadian Cow-Calf Surveillance Program (a project by the Beef Cattle Research Council), and the Saskatchewan Stock Growers Program.

"Several Saskatchewan beef producers with Johne's disease in their herds provided their data anonymously. Because of this, we better understand how the disease spreads in Canadian cow-calf herds, and we translated their experience to what we might expect in other herds," explains Waldner. "Real data from Western Canada has been critical to the development of this tool."

Preventing disease spread

There is no licensed vaccine for Johne's disease in Canada. The best way to control it is through prevention. Cows are most susceptible to contracting it in the first year of life, and about 30 per cent of calves from infected cows will end up infected.

Since Johne's is fecally transmitted, producers can help prevent spread by providing dry pasture or clean pen conditions during calving and afterward. Specific suggestions from Waldner include:

- providing shelters for calves separate from cows;
- moving cow-calf pairs to a clean nursery pasture after calving, or regularly move cows that haven't calved yet to a clean place during the calving season;
- using lots of bedding when calving in corrals and barns;


- calving in areas with good drainage, to keep udders clean and reduce the likelihood of calves drinking from contaminated puddles.

"The biggest tool we have at our disposal is good biosecurity," Waldner says. "This includes a number of management strategies focused on keeping Johne's out of your herd and, if it is present, preventing it from spreading. Practices we already use to reduce the risk of calf scours also help reduce transmission risks for Johne's disease."

Any mixing with other herds, whether through the purchase of new animals or use of community pastures, can increase the risk of Johne's disease. "If producers continue to use management tools like keeping cattle spread out more widely in pastures, watching manure handling, keeping things clean, and so on, they can help prevent transmission," says Lewis. "When we start to recognize it and eliminate it, I think the incidence can be kept very low."

Calculate the benefits

The calculator shows that, while there are many interesting approaches, there is no one best strategy. "You really need to think about your vision and goals for your herd. There is no simple answer, so as a health team we need to sit down with producers and accountants and look at the long-term plan," says Rosengren.

"Despite diagnostic costs, we can bring disease prevalence down with minimal or positive effects on profitability," Rosengren concludes. 

Producers can access the new tool and instructional videos through beefresearch.com.

SHARING PRIORITIES FOR THE 44TH PARLIAMENT: PART ONE

Canadian Agricultural Leaders sit down with Canada's Beef Sector Leaders

CANADIAN CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Actively engaging the Government of Canada on the priorities of the Canadian beef industry is a key focus of the Canadian Cattlemen's Association (CCA).

In early December 2021, Bob Lowe, CCA Past President, and Carley Henniger, President of the Young Cattlemen's Council (YCC), had the unique opportunity to interview the Federal Agriculture Minister, Marie-Claude Bibeau, the Conservative Agriculture Critic, John Barlow, and the NDP Agriculture Critic, Alistair MacGregor, to find out how their parties' priorities support and align with the Canadian beef sector. We encourage you to follow along in this three-part series. Note, the responses were transcribed and have been shortened for length. If you are interested in watching full interviews, please visit the Canadian Cattlemen's Association's YouTube channel, which also houses the French interview with Bloc Quebecois Agriculture Critic, Yves Perron.

In Part One of the series, we will explore the following topics: priorities for the 44th Parliament and the role of the beef sector in Canada's economic recovery.

What are your party's agriculture priorities for the 44th Parliament?

MINISTER BIBEAU: Agriculture is extremely important in the relaunch of our economy and our food security as well. Everything related to sustainable agriculture is top priority and labour is also a big issue for the sector. We have started negotiating with provincial counterparts for the next policy framework, improving BRM (Business Risk Management), continuing investing in a more sustainable agriculture and making sure that our agriculture is competitive because one goes with the other.

JOHN BARLOW, MP: A big focus for us is going to be educating, reaching out to our colleagues across the floor and ensuring they realize the role beef producers play in our conservation efforts. I think [beef producers] are the front line of conservation. I don't think agriculture is a part of the problem. I think you are part of that solution.

Getting the government to understand that is a role that we have to play in educating our colleagues throughout the House of Commons, exactly what cattle producers and ranch families have been doing. You set your own targets when it comes to the environment, so I think we should enable you and give you the resources to reach those targets on your own.

ALISTAIR MACGREGOR, MP: I would really like to place agriculture at the centre of the environmental and climate change debate that we're having. I have heard repeatedly from farmers that they are on the front lines of climate change. For too long we have been looking at punitive measures with respect to agriculture on how we will solve climate change. We know that many farms still rely on fossil fuels and we don't yet have commercially viable alternatives. Agriculture can play an important role in sequestering carbon. I'm a big believer in promoting healthy soil conservation and illustrating to the broader public that through various agricultural techniques, whether how we plant crops or allow cattle to graze in the beautiful grasslands, we have a real potential here to make agriculture one of our greatest tools in fighting climate change.

What is your party's plan to include the beef sector in Canada's economic recovery, including trade and market access opportunities? How will your party help address some of the current trade imbalances and challenges we face?

MINISTER BIBEAU: We want to be sure that we have a sustainable agriculture that is competitive. It really goes together.


Our government is committed to opening new markets. We have signed a good number of free trade agreements and we are continuing to negotiate more agreements. It is important that we open opportunities for you. Signing an agreement is one thing, and then we have to work together to make sure we really get into the markets. It is important to diversify our markets and be sensitive to what the consumers' needs and what their requests

are. We will continue to work together to continue in this direction because last year was very good in terms of opening new markets and increasing our exports.

JOHN BARLOW: There are key roles that agriculture can play. As we go through the pandemic, food security is top of mind for everyone so there obviously is a role for agriculture to play. For the beef sector specifically, BRMs will be a large part of that. We want to look at the livestock price insurance program, make it permanent and include Atlantic Canada so that is something we can rely on. We can also look at the livestock tax deferral program that should be based on region and more inclusion of beef producers themselves on making those decisions, like the crop side.

There are great opportunities for the beef sector in Asia. We need to address an agreement with the United Kingdom, whether bringing them into CPTPP, which might be the easiest and best access, because we've seen CETA isn't working and we have a massive trade deficit.

ALISTAIR MACGREGOR: I think the beef sector is an incredibly important part of the economy. Our agriculture committee in the previous parliament took a close look at Canada's processing capacity and made a number of recommendations for how Ottawa can make strategic investments through tools like the local food infrastructure fund. Having resiliency in the system and making sure we have back-ups to future problems that might exist will not only help beef producers weather future storms but I think it will allow producers to recover in a much faster way and take advantage of the opportunities that are out there.

It is really hard to peer into a crystal ball with all the [trade] challenges we see around the world. There is always a strong case to be made for more diversification. We should be beefing up our staffing in Canadian embassies overseas and making sure we understand the local markets and find new export markets. That will help us weather future storms. Building those personal relationships are a huge part of successful negotiations. 

Giving Cows and Calves Support After a Hard Calving

BY DR. MELISSA MOGGY, BSCAG, DVM, MSC



Dystocia, otherwise known as a hard calving, is a stressful and painful event for both a cow and her calf. To decrease the risk of dystocia, producers can maintain the cow's body condition score between 3 and 3.5 and breed for smaller birth weights. However, there is no way to eliminate that risk. Who hasn't had a calf presented in an abnormal position or backwards? So, we prepare ourselves for when that does happen.

Cows that have experienced severe dystocia may have trouble becoming pregnant again and produce less milk. In addition, calves, depending on the severity of the dystocia, may take longer to stand, walk, and


nurse, resulting in decreased calf viability. The longer it takes for a newborn calf to stand and nurse, the less likely they will be able to ingest adequate colostrum in its first 24 hours of life. Without adequate colostrum intake, there is a higher chance that the calf will become sick and die.

In preparation for calving, farmers can ensure the calving area is well bedded, clean and dry. A source of good colostrum, either fresh, frozen or powdered, should be guaranteed for the calving season. Farmers should also be prepared to administer treatments if the calves get sick. Pain control is another tool that farmers are starting to add to their calving toolbox. It is also a good idea to speak with your veterinarian to develop a plan on when you will intervene during calving, what you should do when intervening, and when to call the vet for help.

As with other practices that cause pain, beef farmers have the option to use non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) to lessen their cattle's pain. However, farmers must keep in mind that not all NSAIDs are

the same. Flunixin meglumine (i.e. Banamine) is not recommended for dystocia as there is a higher risk of retained fetal membranes. However, Meloxicam and Ketoprofen have not been reported to have that risk.

Cows treated with Meloxicam after dystocia have been reported to return to the feed bunk faster and spend more time there. Similarly, calves treated with Meloxicam after dystocia have been reported to have improved vigour, suckle reflex, milk intake, and higher weight gain during their first week of life.

In a recent study at the University of Calgary, calves that had a difficult birth were given either an NSAID or a placebo, and the farmers were not told what the calves received. Farmers in the study reported that they could tell which calves got the pain control because they looked brighter and were faster to mother up. While research on the use of pain control for dystocia is still relatively new, there is no arguing that dystocia is a painful event and that pain control can help our animals recover and give our calves a better chance starting out. 



Cows that have experienced severe dystocia may have trouble becoming pregnant again and produce less milk.




Developing a Strong Vaccination Program

BY CRAIG LESTER

A good vaccination program for your calves is vital in protecting the health of your animals and ensuring your bottom line when it comes time to sell them.



A robust disease prevention plan for your calves starts long before they are born.

 @ciarasandumphotography

Kent Fenton is a veterinarian with Feedlot Health Management Services powered by TELUS Agriculture. “Calves can probably go through more stress of all sorts and still be relatively healthy on the other end if they are vaccinated properly,” Fenton says.

THINK AHEAD

A good vaccination program for your calves begins long before they are born. Fenton says you need to make sure all your cows are adequately vaccinated to mitigate the number of viruses circulating when they are born. The more herd immunity you have, the better the calves will be protected when they come into the world.

He recommends all your cows get vaccinated against clostridial diseases such as Blackleg, first and foremost; secondly, for respiratory diseases such as pneumonia using modified live and killed vaccines. Both clostridial and respiratory vaccines can be given to cows in the fall.

Some vaccines aim to protect the calf from diarrhea or scours and can be given to a pregnant cow a month or two before calving. Fenton says several vaccines can be administered before breeding in the spring. This is where talking with your veterinarian, who knows your herd, is the best plan.

That plan should include taking time to think about where the pregnant cows are spending their time and what they are in contact with.

He says making sure the cows give birth in a dry place is crucial. “The main point is we want to prevent manure from going in the calf’s mouth and from going in the calf’s navel for the first few weeks.” Fenton says that’s the common way viruses and bacteria such as diarrhea and scours get introduced into these calves.

These conversations with your vet should also include a complete vaccination plan for the entire year.

VACCINE TIMING

In a good program, injections are almost always administered proactively, which means you must keep a close eye on your calendar for upcoming events where the calves could get stressed. Events such as weaning, mixing pairs, and even bad weather can create that stress and leave them susceptible to diseases. The calves will be better protected if the vaccines are administered and given time to work before these planned events. He says vaccines are typically given in the spring. Producers should pay attention to the label on the vaccines and contact their vet if they have any questions.


WHAT’S HAPPENING ON THE GROUND

On the disease front, Fenton says the 2022 calving season looks the same as any other year. Typically, it is a farm-by-farm situation pointing to the fact that there may be more scours in some herds or more cold calves depending on the weather or how wet it is in these locations.

If the location is wet, there could be more pneumonia in some herds and calves one to three months of age. “It’s about different risk factors on these different farms, and each farm has to manage it differently.” Fenton notes that the recent swings from warm to cold weather have introduced challenges such as the animals getting too cold, but they are manageable.

TIMING AND PREVENTION IS KEY

It is critical to remember that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. A robust disease prevention plan for your calves starts long before they are born.

It’s about setting out a vaccination program for your entire herd that spans the whole year and includes a vet that knows your herd well. It also goes beyond vaccinations; it is about knowing where cows are spending their time and who and what they are in contact with. 

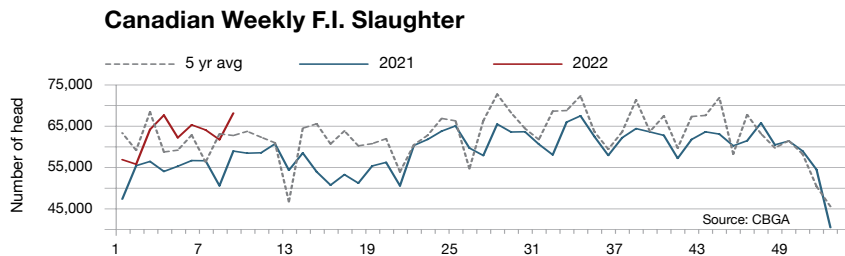


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Canfax Cattle Market Update

BY BRENNA GRANT, ANALYST CANFAX

STRONG DEMAND SUPPORTING CATTLE PRICES WHILE FEED GRAINS PRESSURE COST OF PRODUCTION

Ample fed supplies have continued to move through the system with strong slaughter levels in the first quarter. Strong domestic and international demand has kept fed prices above last year's levels and the five-year average. Although cash fed prices have not been high enough for feedlots to be profitable, fed prices are in-line with 2017 and 2018 levels. The nearby live cattle futures have been under pressure, dropping from US\$144/cwt on Feb 23, the day before Russia's invasion of Ukraine, to a low of US\$135/cwt on March 10 before rebounding to \$140/cwt by March 15. US\$133.70/cwt was the support seen in October 2021 for the live cattle market. Alberta fed steer prices have been 5-8% stronger than last year and 3-5% stronger than the five-year average.

The feed grain market has experienced several challenges this spring. Following the drought last summer, resulting in reliance on imported feed, trucker mandates, the Ukraine conflict and potential strike at CP Rail, are all contributing to the volatility in the markets. The feeder futures were pressured lower from mid-February to mid-March.


With US corn trading above US\$7/bushel, it has a direct influence on the value of feeder cattle. The nearby feeder cattle futures dropped from US\$162.75/cwt on Feb 23 to US\$151.50/cwt on March 10 and rebounded to \$156/cwt by March 15. US\$154/cwt is the support seen in November 2021 for the feeder market, making the current prices a potential to push through that resistance. Alberta 550 lb steer prices are tracking closely with 2021 over February and March with a seasonal increase. While

7-800 lb feeders have rallied above year ago, with heavy weights 900+ lbs are 10 cents per pound over last year.

The strong futures market is offsetting some of the high grain prices. Projected prices for 850 lb feeders in August and September are CDN\$225-230/cwt. This is up from last year's \$192-194/cwt, but could be tempered by a weaker basis. Alberta price insurance for calves top coverage for September and October was \$232/cwt in mid-March, and \$228/cwt for November. This compares to cash prices of \$207-224/cwt last fall.

Alberta cow prices at 94 cents per pound mid-March are 9% above year ago and the strongest for this time of year since 2017. Alberta cow prices are closing the gap with stronger prices seen in Ontario and the US, which are being supported by strong trim prices and reduced imports of manufacturing beef. Cow slaughter is up 6% YTD with all of the increase coming from the East (+26%) while the west is steady with year ago levels, which actually drops the West down out of liquidation levels of slaughter for the moment. Cow exports in January were steady with year ago.

All eyes are on the weather this spring as timely rains will make all the difference. The spring forecast is for the possibility of moisture pockets in the prairie provinces, mostly in the northern sections where temperatures are likely to be cooler than average according to Makens Weather. Feed costs are expected to remain high as crop production in 2022 is forecast to be challenged in the US and China by weather. Strong demand, while supporting the futures market, is struggling to keep up with inflation on input costs like feed grains.

For ongoing market analysis and to become a Canfax member, visit: www.canfax.ca 

THE COST OF Success(ion)

BY CRAIG LESTER

Read Part One 'In the Genetics: Family is Key in the Bolduc Succession Plan' in the January Issue of ABP Magazine.

SITTING DOWN AT THE TABLE AND HASHING OUT A SUCCESSION PLAN IS NOT EASY. IT IS ALSO NEVER DONE IN ONE SITTING.

Instead, it is an ongoing conversation that should span a lifetime, or at least as long as the farm operation is running. Many financial planners and coaches agree you should have a box of tissues with you because there may be some very tough conversations to be had.

Elaine Froese is a farmer, certified coach and author, who has been helping farm families work together in harmony for over 30 years in their everyday operations and with their transition plans. She strives to help these families communicate and understand each other better. Froese says the most important tool a family can have when walking through a succession plan is the ability to communicate and listen.

What are the next steps when you have everyone at the table?

Froese says the first thing is to ascertain everyone's willingness to be at the discussion.

On a scale from 1 to 10, if one person is a ten and another is a two, then it is not going to work. The important thing here is to engage with the person that is a two and find out why they feel that way; see what

can be done to get them to a place where they are ready to have a conversation. Having a farm family relationship coach can assist with that.

Froese says if everyone is on the same page, the next important thing to do is to have a financial planner who can go through everything.

She urges people not to wait until age 70 to work on this step – the younger you are when you get a planner, the better you will position yourself when it comes time to pass the farm operation on to the next generation.

Before heading into this conversation, you need to think about your intent and then discuss it with all of the parties involved to find out what their intent is. Where do the founders see the farm going? If the vision is to keep the farm intact, what does that mean for everyone?

If that is the plan, it's important to know that it will not be divided up like a pie. This means figuring out how the business will be passed along to the children who are staying on with the operation and how to compensate the children who decide to have careers off the farm.

Froese says the first step in this process is to make sure the ones passing on the farm are taken care of through their retirement and final years.

“Go to a financial planner and be sure that you're good till you're 102.” Froese says in her experience, the parents don't think of themselves as much as they should. After you are looked after, determine what the ownership of the farm business is going to look like after it is passed along. Again, this is where a financial planner, accountant and lawyer can help in making that a reality.

Non-farming children

If the farm business is remaining intact and being passed along to farming children, what tools are available to compensate non-farming children?

Froese says the most commonly used are cash and insurance.

She has heard of situations where land has been passed on to the non-farming children on the condition that there is a strong long-term rental agreement for farming children. This is a conversation Froese says you should have with your financial planner. They can look at your situation and help assess what options will work best.

Transparency

Financial transparency should be an everyday practice with the next generation. “Share the balance sheet, show them the cash flow and how tight the margins are,” Froese says.

The more everyone understands how it all works, the more likely the conversation will yield results because everyone can come from the same base knowledge.

What if it fails?

Remember, if someone is at a “2” on their willingness to talk, and no amount of conversations or meetings with financial planners is changing that, it will alter your succession plans and you must be ready to pivot.

Froese has seen several situations with different families over the years.

In one case, she says the farmer building the succession plan decided that they didn’t want to pass the farm along to the next generation. So, the farmer planned with his financial planner and they moved forward with selling the farm.

In another instance, one of the farming children and their spouse decided they couldn’t work with one of the siblings, so they decided to leave the farm and start their own operation. Froese says this turned out to be a huge relief for them moving forward.

It all came down to every family member determining their “intent,” moving forward, and then working from there.



Gentle reminders


Remember, the best tools to have at the table as you work through the succession plan with your family is the ability to communicate and listen.

Parents – or the people passing the farm along – need to ensure their needs are taken care of through their retirement and final years.

Transparency is key if everyone at the table is to have an equal stake as you work together.

Determine if the intent is to keep the farm intact. If it is, determine how the income streams will look and how the ownership will look once the business is passed along. Then determine how the non-farming children may be compensated if you decide to go that route.

And finally, if it doesn’t feel suitable to everyone involved, then the people passing on the farm can look at other options, or the next generation can look at other opportunities outside the farm.

However, none of this can be determined if people don’t sit down and talk about these issues. The more discussions and the earlier, the easier it is for everyone to decide what works for them and what doesn’t. 



Hit Peak Carcass Quality with Q-Sort

BY DIANNE FINSTAD

High feed costs and shortages mean feedlot owners face a tighter squeeze than ever. Helping them maximize their feed dollars by hitting the optimal market moment for their cattle is the goal of a genetic tool with an economic twist.

A program called Q-Sort from Saskatoon-based Quantum Genetix provides data in a simplified form to reduce over or underfeeding, by linking feed program data with genetic predictors on carcass capability to come up with the optimum time to market a pen.

Quantum has been offering genomics services to the beef business since 2003, when it came up with a DNA test to identify genetic mutations impacting feed intake, which can have measurable benefits for carcass growth and composition. While there are implications for all aspects

of the beef production cycle, Q-sort is tailored for feedlot operators and has undergone some reshaping, with its new approach introduced just recently.

“We’ve taken it into a whole new ballgame,” says Kirsty McCormack, Technical Sales Manager for Quantum Genetix.

After numerous feedlot trials with major cattle feeders across North America on more than 120,000 head of cattle, Q-sort has been finetuned and modified to feedlot realities. It syncs with current feeding software and combines it with the genetic data, incorporates pricing fluctuations, as well as packer premiums and discounts, to come up with an easy-to-read assessment of whether there’s money being left on the table or it’s go time.

“Last year the biggest things feeders were asking themselves were: ‘when should I be selling these cattle? Are they getting too heavy? Should I be looking at the live market? What are my options, and what is the most profitable marketing opportunity for my cattle?’” says McCormack, who worked in the Australian beef industry before coming to Canada.

“We know scientifically which animals will perform better on feed. Through genomic testing, we know the ratio of each pen so we see what their genetic performance will be. Coupled with all the research data we’ve done on carcass capabilities, we can accurately evaluate how the carcass is growing under the hide. So it’s like having a huge carcass calculator in the background to determine the feeding margin of your operation.”

While the original theory for maximizing genetic potential in the feedlot was for sorting the animals into pens according to carcass development type; in the real world that wasn’t as workable. Feedlot operators already had their own pen sorting systems; by sex, producer of origin, or other factors. Once those pens are set, there wasn’t much of an appetite for resorting them several weeks later.

“In reality, managing animals on a pen level has been more accessible,” says McCormack.

Q-sort also has a built-in pen show list, so if trucks are booked in, the pens can be ranked for which ones are

ready, showing the feeding margin value left, along with the ideal price they should be asking – since Canfax daily market data are also incorporated.

The program has also expanded to be able to do a comparison between the carcass price, and the live market one with shrink, taking into account hedges, fixed delivery dates or contracts.


“It’s how far can you push that animal before you get into the discount space and too heavy on the hook, but are still making money. It’s looking at what is the accumulated margin under the hide, and how much money is left in that animal to reach optimal hot carcass weight.”

“The biggest pain point we found in industry when you talk to feedlot managers is how do you know when to ship your cattle?” says McCormack. “They’ll say ‘they look right,’ ‘they’ve gone across the scale,’ but really in terms of all the data they collect, it’s still very much a cultural and need-based decision. ‘They’ve been in the lot the longest,’ ‘they ‘look’ the most finished, so we’ll ship them.’ In reality you may have 40 animals left in that pen that have another \$200 left before their peak carcass quality.”

Average weight of the pen is another ‘readiness’ measurement, but that can still result in feedback sheets with some at AAA Prime, the optimum finish, but other discounts and ‘straggler’ diminishing overall returns.

McCormack explains Q-sort doesn’t add a lot of extra work or inputting of information (if a feedlot program is being used). When cattle are initially processed, it’s just a matter of collecting an extra tissue tag sample, and submitting it to Quantum. With the feeding program incorporated, the genetic data and economic comparisons are uploaded right into the app, and it’s then accessible to the producer.

“That’s the main point – it has to be simple. Within three clicks you can achieve this comparison scenario,” McCormack adds, noting that with a cost of three dollars per head, if you can feed the animal for one day less than planned, Q-sort pays for itself.

“It’s all about using genomics to enhance your operation,” says McCormack. 

Collaboration and Consultation for a More Engaged ABP

BY LINDSAY ROBERTS AND KATELYN LAVERDURE

LAST YEAR, THROUGH FEEDBACK AND CONSULTATION WITH PRODUCERS, ABP TOOK ON THE CHALLENGE OF REVAMPING HOW WE COMMUNICATE AND ENGAGE WITH PRODUCERS. OVER THE PAST 12 MONTHS, THE ABP COMMUNICATIONS PORTFOLIO HAS TAKEN ON A PROGRESSIVE TRANSFORMATION, ALONGSIDE THE ONBOARDING OF SOME NEW TEAM MEMBERS TO ENSURE THE NEW PLATFORMS' SUCCESS.

The strength of ABP, as an organization, lies within the brands we've built. The producer brand, the consumer facing brand, and most recently, the ABP brand held for abpdaily.com and ABP magazine. This foundation is where we've built our magazine and digital channels, introduced the new podcast, and refreshed our presence at events and the consumer campaign. All of these channels support the work done by the team to encourage producer and consumer engagement with the industry.

Last year was a benchmarking year. With the introduction of new assets, it allowed us to see what did and didn't work.

The initial intent behind the magazine was to re-engage with our producer audience. In discontinuing other communication initiatives that had run their course, the magazine was able to grab attention and drive interest in the digital platforms as they were introduced. We've seen

significant traffic to abpdaily.com, averaging over 4,000 weekly visitors. Impressive initial download numbers on the first four episodes of The Bovine podcast – over 700 to-date. There's even been an uptick in subscribers to our refreshed monthly e-mail newsletter, with a 27 per cent increase in audience size.

The feedback we've received on the magazine and podcast has shown us that we are reaching producers in a meaningful way, with information they want to consume. Armed with that data and feedback, we'll be able to make informed decisions that will guide our strategy for the next year.

With the proposed regulation amendments (see page 25) regarding collecting accurate producer contact information, which the delegates supported at the AGM in March, we now have the ability to personalize and be more strategic in our communications efforts with producers.

Going forward, the goal is to continue to push the envelope when it comes to cross-platform content and content extension opportunities. What you read in the magazine, might also be available in video form on abpdaily.com and you can listen in on an interview with a subject matter expert on our podcast. This cross-platform collaboration allows us to communicate with producers when and where they want to receive information, while encouraging increased engagement.

One of the major investments in 2021 was the development of the ABP Daily app. While early adoption of the app lags our original goals, differentiating the app from the mobile form of the website is a priority for early 2022. App updates include account creation and the ability to save, share and favourite articles and categories – creating a personalized news experience on your mobile devices.

Implementing a seamless digital experience for the magazine will be another priority. While the majority of feedback on the magazine has been positive, we have listened to a share of producers who believe the platform is antiquated and out of touch. While we have proven the need for a hard copy medium that delivers stories and discussions producers care about, to remain progressive we plan to further integrate the channels by offering a digital magazine. This, in conjunction with the amendment to our contact list, will enable producers to have a choice in how they receive the magazine.

CONSUMER CAMPAIGN AND SOCIAL MEDIA

In addition to high visibility media placements online, through television and static billboards, we have harnessed the power of social media influencers to create content that speaks to our target consumer demographic. In 2020, ABP launched a new website and “Flavour of Alberta” brand campaign with strong initial results. This foundation was leveraged in 2021 to expand the reach of ABP’s consumer messaging. These influencer partnerships continue to generate positive awareness and provide an opportunity to drive consumer connection with producers in Alberta.

Social media is a mainstay in our communications efforts, and while ever-changing algorithms cause some engagement challenges, we have had success creating meaningful connection with both producers and consumers. Twitter remains our top-performing platform with a 28-day average of almost 60,000 impressions. Our Facebook post reach averages close to 14,000 and we’re seeing strong growth in our LinkedIn impressions. With the launch of a new Instagram account ([@loveABbeef](https://www.instagram.com/loveABbeef)), our numbers will continue to trend upwards as we regain the following that was lost when our last account was closed. As an organization, we’ve had an interesting year. And as a refreshed communications team, we’ve had a year of re-building and growth. While these successes came at the cost of other programs overseen by ABP, we knew this was needed to revitalize producer engagement with the organization, and consumer engagement with Alberta’s beef industry. 🍖





Calf 911:

BCRC VIDEO SERIES PROVIDES PRACTICAL APPROACH TO NEWBORN CALF MANAGEMENT

BY ELIZABETH R. HOMEROSKY, DVM, MSC., DABVP

From the Beef Production and Extension Desk:

Management of newborn calves is essential to beef production. Calf illness and death can greatly impact profitability, so giving the calves the best start possible is key to keeping calves healthy and productive until sale day. The Calf 911 video series provides several handy tips to help producers get calves started the right way.

Alberta Beef Producers works collaboratively on extension resources and tools with many organizations, including BCRC. These partnerships ensure that helpful information reaches as many producers as possible.

Karin Schmid
Lead, Beef Production and Extension

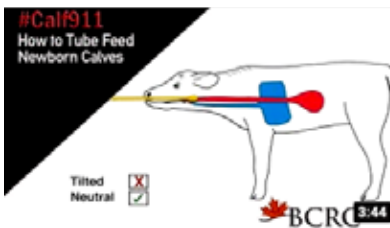
It is hard to believe it's that time of year again! Hopefully these few months feel more like "tagging season" than "calving season." However, if things don't go quite as planned, the Beef Cattle Research Council (BCRC) has put together some fantastic resources to help you improve the outcome for any compromised calf that hits the ground.

The videos in BCRC's Calf 911 series focus on the high-risk time period immediately following birth. Here are some practical tips to help ensure your calves get the best start possible.

1. Calves should be placed upright in sternal recumbency immediately following birth to allow both sides of the lungs to fully inflate. Although a common practice, hanging calves upside down is not recommended. Weight from the intestines puts pressure on the chest, making it more difficult for them to breathe. Furthermore, the fluid often seen draining from suspended calves typically originates from the stomach, not the lungs.



How to handle colostrum so newborn calves thrive



How to tube feed newborn calves (esophageal feeding)



How to (and not to) resuscitate newborn calves

2. Resuscitation techniques proven to help stimulate breathing include rubbing the calf vigorously over the chest, poking the nostrils with a piece of straw, pouring cold water over the head or squirting it in the ears, and firmly pinching the nose. Stimulating the nose between the nostrils sends a signal to the respiratory centre in the brain to initiate deeper, more rhythmic breathing.

3. Remember the 2x4 rule. Calves consuming 2 litres of colostrum by 4 hours after birth are more likely to acquire optimal levels of passive immunity required to help protect them from disease during the first few months of life. Calves born with a weak or non-rhythmic suckle reflex are unlikely to nurse on their own and often require assistance.

4. When feeding colostrum from the dam isn't possible, there are only two acceptable alternatives: fresh or frozen colostrum from another beef cow in your own herd or a freeze-dried commercial colostrum product. Use a hot water bath to thaw frozen colostrum as heating in a microwave will damage the proteins. Dairy colostrum is often quite dilute and should be avoided, due to lower levels of immunoglobulins. Be certain to steer clear of colostrum from other herds due to biosecurity concerns.

5. Various freeze-dried commercial colostrum products are NOT created equal, and you typically get what you pay for. Make sure you purchase a replacer product with over 100 grams of immunoglobulins and reconstitute according to the label. Colostrum supplement products with only 50 to 60 grams of immunoglobulins are intended as a "top up" and will not provide your calf with sufficient immunity.

6. Regardless of colostrum source, bottle feeding is preferred over tubing. An active suckle reflex ensures colostrum is shunted to the last compartment of the

calf's stomach. This aids in more efficient absorption of immunoglobulins as well as reduces the risk of colostrum getting into the lungs. Not to mention, it is often less stressful for both you and the calf.

7. Calves requiring tubing should be positioned with their head in a comfortable neutral position, not pointed upward. Gently pass the esophageal tube feeder over tongue toward the back of the mouth until the calf swallows the tube. Check that you can feel the end of the tube about halfway down the neck separately from the trachea to ensure you're not tubing into the lungs. Warm the colostrum to body temperature (38°C/100°F), and slowly empty the bag or container before kinking the tube and removing the feeder.

8. Maintain separate bottles and esophageal feeders for sick and healthy calves to help prevent disease transmission. It is recommended you have one set designated for newborns requiring colostrum, one set for healthy calves being supplemented with milk replacer, and one set for sick calves being fed milk replacer or electrolyte solution. All equipment should be thoroughly cleaned and dried between each use.

Check out the Beef Cattle Research Council website to watch all four videos in the Calf 911 series (youtube.com/hashtag/calf911) for some more practical tips and fantastic demonstrations. Many thanks to Alberta Beef Producers for graciously providing the funding for this project and other valuable resources. With that being said, may all your cows calve unassisted, may their uteruses remain in their original position, and may their calves all suck on their own. It's amazing to think grass turn-out is only a few short months away! Now, back to tagging. 🇩🇪

The A-D-Es of Vitamin Supplementation in Weaning Calves

BY ROBIN GALEY

RUMINANT NUTRITIONIST LYNNE GIRARDIN PROVIDES SUPPLEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS TO SUPPORT HEALTH IN WEANING CALVES.



Lynne Girardin

Getting calves off to a healthy start depends on a combination of factors, including good genetics, a healthy heifer, and ample, high quality colostrum. “A healthy cow means healthy milk, and healthy milk means a healthy calf,” suggests Lynne Girardin, ruminant nutritionist with BeefSmart.

But even calves that get off to a great start face challenges during the weaning period. “Weaning itself produces high stress for calves, and they are often undergoing vaccination protocols at that time, and possibly being moved to a feedlot. All these factors contribute to increased stress,” Girardin says.

Supplements are a good strategy to support nutrition and a responsive immune system during the stressful weaning period, and beyond. “We see benefits across Canada in calf growth and performance from supplementing year round,” says Girardin.

STARTING SOLIDS

When calves begin weaning, it’s crucial to get them on feed quickly, and ensure their intake meets their requirements. Girardin says expected dry matter intake for a newly weaned calf (between 300 and 500 pounds) is nine to 15 pounds. If intake is half that, which is common in stressed calves, disease issues may follow, and growth and performance will begin to lag.

Although it’s not essential to successful weaning, Girardin recommends creep feeding – providing calves with a grain-based supplement prior to weaning – to create an overlapping period during which they still have access to the cow. “It’s crucial to get newly-weaned calves to eat as quickly as possible, so presenting them with a feed they’re already familiar with can help.”

FOCUS ON FAT-SOLUBLE VITAMINS

Right from the start, healthy calves need a mineral and vitamin premix to supplement nutrition in their daily ration, and fat-soluble vitamins A, D and E are key. Says Girardin: “Vitamins A and E are essential to improve immune function and support growth, and they are not produced naturally in the animal. Vitamin D supports healthy immune function, and calves produce some through exposure to sunlight, but this may not be adequate to meet the animal’s requirements.”

Providing calves with sufficient levels of vitamins A, D, and E is especially important during stressful periods, says Girardin, and will elevate immune response to vaccinations.

Supplementing water-soluble vitamins B and C is less important, because the rumen produces enough of these, generally. But if calves lack the essential fat-soluble vitamins A, D and E during their growth period? “It will definitely impede calf performance through lowered average daily gain,” says Girardin.

Table 1. Fat-Soluble Vitamin Requirements for Growing Calves (Dry Matter)*

Vitamin A	2200 IU/kg
Vitamin D	270 IU/kg
Vitamin E (weaned calves)	15-60 IU/kg
Vitamin E (finishing diet)	100 IU/kg

*NRC recommendations
Minimum requirements for a growing calf in the final diet on a dry matter basis.

FORAGE FEEDING SUGGESTIONS

One way to ensure grass-fed animals get better nutrition is by rejuvenating pastures. “If you have vigorous pastures containing a diverse variety of forages, they will supply more of the necessary nutrition. While this won’t eliminate the need for supplementation, it can make it more efficient,” says Girardin.

For most of the year, cattle do not get enough vitamin A or E through feed. Girardin explains: “Vitamin A is present in leafy green forages. As soon as those feeds are stored, they dry out and the fat-soluble vitamin content quickly decreases through oxidation, rendering them unavailable.”

In a dry year like 2021, forages dry out early, creating the need to supplement earlier. “Many cow herds lacked vitamins for longer than usual. That can really affect the cow’s immune function and quality of milk, and therefore the calf’s immune function,” Girardin explains.

Vitamins A, D and E are stored in the fat and liver for two to three months. In a normal year, producers might be able to wait to supplement in November or December. However 2021 was so dry that grass matured in many areas by mid-July, pushing the need for supplementation back to earlier in the fall or winter feeding period.

PAIRED NUTRIENTS SUPPORT CALF HEALTH

Fat-soluble vitamins interact with other nutrients and minerals in the body to support health, and understanding these interactions is important, suggests Girardin. Vitamin E supports selenium absorption, so if a calf is deficient in vitamin E for long periods, no matter how much selenium is present in the diet, it might not be readily absorbed. If zinc is deficient, either because it isn’t present at accurate levels or in the correct form, vitamin A absorption may be lower.




Photo by Tara Davidson, Lonesome Dove Ranch

There is also a relationship between vitamin D and calcium absorption. “Animals housed outside produce some vitamin D through sunlight exposure, but it also plays an important role in bone growth and long-term health through calcium and phosphorus absorption. So if vitamin D is lacking, we see bone growth issues through lack of calcium absorption,” explains Girardin.

Additionally, most B vitamins (thiamine in particular) are produced by microbes in the rumen. On a high grain diet, or when sulfur supplementation is high (such as in corn distillers or canola straw), there can be some tie up in thiamine, increasing incidents of polio. Some producers may see a benefit to supplementing thiamine in these cases, suggests Girardin.

CHOOSE THE RIGHT PROGRAM

To evaluate a vitamin supplementation program, check the level of vitamins and minerals present to ensure your animals won’t either over- or under-consume any nutritional components. Finally, ensure you follow a supplementation program balanced for a cow’s requirements at the right stage of development. 

Getting the Right Message to Consumers with On-line Beef Advocacy Course

BY MARY MACARTHUR

NIKKI OLSON IS CONFIDENT TALKING ABOUT CATTLE AND THEIR BENEFITS WITH OTHER CATTLE PRODUCERS, BUT THE FARM RAISED AGRONOMIST WAS UNSURE ABOUT THE BEST WAY TO TALK ABOUT LIVESTOCK TO CITY FOLKS.

To ensure she had the best messages and tools to talk to consumers, Olson enrolled in the Beef Advocacy Canada program, a three-hour, on-line learning program that helps empower producers to become beef advocates.

“We can all talk to [our peers] really well, but we have struggled to reach those outside our typical network,” says Olson. “I thought taking the Beef Advocacy course would make me feel more confident to tell our farm story on social media. It gives me a better and more confident conversation with outside users and individuals when they have questions.” With two small children at home, Olson stepped back from her agronomy business, took a more active role on the family’s beef farm, and started a company focused on sewing children’s clothing. It is through the sewing company she realized many of her customers were eager to learn more about agriculture.

She noticed whenever she posted farm photos on her Willow and Wheat sewing Facebook and Instagram accounts, the mostly city-based customers wanted to know more about the farm. Some wanted to buy farm-raised meats, another wanted to take her son on a combine ride, and another wanted to know about the livestock medication used on the farm.



Nikki Olson

With Olson’s newfound knowledge from the Beef Advocacy Canada course, she talked about the importance of medicine for animals, withdrawal times, animal welfare and codes of practice.

“To be able to confidently respond and say we only give medications when necessary, made me feel good,” says Olson. “I have always been outspoken and enjoyed public speaking, but I wanted to feel a bit more confident with my engagement with people who aren’t in the industry.”

It's just these kinds of connections and discussion the Beef Advocacy Canada on-line course was designed for, says Lynsay Beavers, Stakeholder Engagement Specialist with the Canadian Cattlemen's Association, who redesigned the course from an earlier version.

"The great news is consumer research has shown that when consumers are exposed to positive messages about Canadian beef production, increases in knowledge and awareness translate into more positive perceptions," says Beavers.

The on-line course uses videos, short quizzes, drag and drop and matching segments, infographics and photos to teach the most important beef-related questions from consumers and the best responses on how beef producers can become beef advocates.

"It is an interactive platform that promotes a good experience for people to do at their own pace," says Beavers, who wanted to ensure an enjoyable and educational experience with the redesigned website.


Olson worked her way through the program in the evening when her children were in bed.

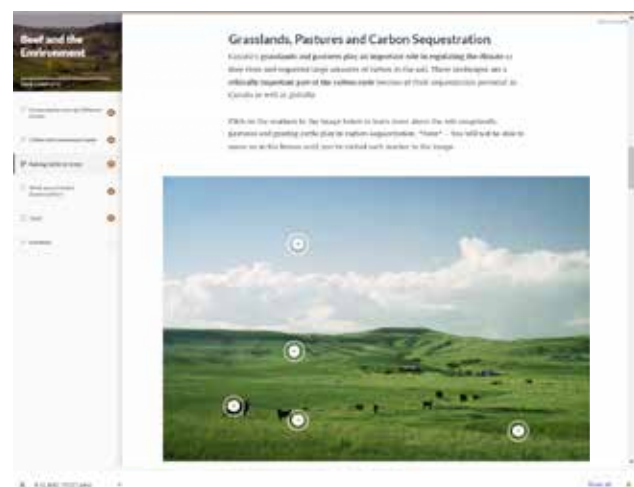
"Webinars can be so dry," says Olson. "As a mom with very little sleep, I had no issues staying awake, staying engaged, listening to it, answering the questions. It kept everything upbeat and interesting," adds Olson, a finalist in the Cattlemen's Young Leaders Mentorship Program. The on-line course is mandatory for all CYL candidates and recommended for other beef organizations.

The course isn't limited to people familiar with the beef industry. Beaver says the course has excellent information for college and university students, VBP+ members or anyone wanting to increase their knowledge of the beef industry. Some food service companies have encouraged their staff to take the course to be able to answer questions from restaurant owners and their staff.

The Beef Advocacy Canada program consists of five courses and corresponding lessons: The Canadian Beef

Community, Production Practices and Animal Welfare, Beef and the Environment, All About the Beef on Your Plate, and Beef Advocacy.

People aren't sure about where to turn to for credible information about food and farming. Studies have shown, consumers trust farmers, ranchers and others in the beef industry. The course helps those trusted sources have the tools to talk to the consumers. 





The Simple Secrets of the Tomahawk

WITH MEL CHMILAR JR.

The robust, rich, buttery flavour of the Tomahawk steak lends itself to the most discerning of palates.

It's a cut that not only looks good on the grill, but it's one that you can share with guests no matter the occasion. Whether it's a winter gathering around the kitchen table or an outdoor summer BBQ, the tomahawk is a perfect cut to prepare.

Mel Chmilar with Dark Side of the Grill shows us his perfect way to prepare a tomahawk with little fuss, and all flavour. He always suggests working with a butcher you come to know, trust and feel comfortable asking questions of.

"From there it's always a home run," says Chmilar. "Look for a steak with a decent-sized bone on it, marbling of course, and not a massive spinalis in the middle."

If you have time, Chmilar recommends a 24-hour dry brine with black truffle sea salt. “Salt both sides and put it on a baking tray on a rack in your fridge. After a day, the meat is nicely tacky and dry on the outside. Then when it hits the grill, you get the sear marks and the moisture on the outside and it collects a nice bit of smoke.”

“I love when the meat talks for itself, where all you need is some heavy salt flakes to finish it off,” adds Chmilar.

He suggests not cooking a Tomahawk very long. “I like to cook it reverse seared. You want that fat rendered out and you want it to caramelize over the live fire to finish it off. That’s the magic of cooking this cut.”

Chmilar recommends an internal temperature of 127 degrees to 130 degrees when you take the Tomahawk off the grill, resting for five to 10 minutes if you want the finished product on the rare side. Cook until 135 degrees if you are looking for a medium finish.

When it comes to fueling your fire, it comes down to the right kind of tree.

“If you can find South American charcoal, it’s fantastic,” says Chmilar. “They use eucalyptus trees, and it burns amazingly. Even flavours like whiskey or hickory leaves are awesome.”

For side dishes to complement the Tomahawk flavours perfectly, Chmilar suggests mashed potatoes made with garlic butter and horseradish.

“The horseradish plays off well with the Tomahawk unbelievably. If you are using a cast-iron skillet, you can do mushrooms with gravy, mixed with a little red wine, or a white cream sauce,” adding, “or grab some baby potatoes and throw them onto the skillet with some onions, garlic, and olive oil and you get that crunchy coat on them.”

Chmilar, who has won countless awards for his grilling techniques, reiterates that simple is always best.

“I always tell people to spend your money on your beef, spend your money on your salt and spend your money on your fuel,” adding “It comes through in the finished product.” 🔻



Out and about with Alberta Beef Producers



BY MEGAN MCLEOD,
Field Specialist ABP



It has been a busy few months out and about with Alberta Beef Producers. I was able to attend a number of bull congresses, bull sales, our producer meetings and our AGM in Red Deer. While the Bull Congresses were perhaps smaller than they have been in previous years, the quality of the cattle on display remains high. Here are the highlights from those we attended:

LLOYDMINSTER CATTLEMEN'S CALL BULL CONGRESS JANUARY 14-15, 2022

An exciting new event held by the Lloydminster Exhibition saw great support by local operations and sponsors. We cannot wait to see how the committee continues to grow and expand the event in the coming years.

CRE CANADIAN BULL CONGRESS JANUARY 20-21, 2022

CRE put on yet another successful bull congress this January. This well-established event saw great attendance this year after a short covid-related hiatus. Many breeds were well-represented and there was great optimism for the coming bull sale season. It was also great to see so many youth out with their 4-H and jackpot projects competing in the junior show component!

STETTLER AG SOCIETY'S HEARTLAND CATTLEMEN'S CLASSIC JANUARY 28-30, 2022

The Heartland Cattlemen's Classic was perhaps the largest of the bull congresses we attended and was very well-received. The committee put on a great event and both the bull congress and junior show events saw great participation and representation across breeds.

I anticipated that there would be some concern moving into bull sale season around how many bulls were going to be needed across the province. Producers were being more frugal with their dollars due to this past year's drought and the uncertainty that comes with the spring. Based on the sales I attended and the reports received, there was still a great need for good genetics and an air of optimism that we are going to get the moisture we need this spring and through the summer. If you remain skeptical about the resiliency of our industry, take a look at the numbers:

CUDLOBE FARMS

Breed: Angus
Bulls sold: 140
Average: \$6,123

MC QUANTOCK

Breed: Black Angus, Red Angus, Charolais, Hereford, Red Angus-Simmi, Red Angus-Gelbvieh, Hereford-Simmi, Black Angus-Simmi
Bulls sold: 400
Averages: Super Baldies – \$7,428, Red Angus – \$6,219, Super Guppies – \$5,578, H2's – \$5,583, Horned Herefords – \$4,211, Black Super Baldies – \$6,201, Black Angus – \$5,602, Charolais – \$5,883

LAZY S RANCH

Breed: Black Angus, Red Angus, Simmental, Red Angus-Simmi, Black Angus-Simmi
Bulls sold: 194
Average: Black Angus – \$6,772, Red Angus – \$5,150, Black Beefmaker – \$5,194, Red Beefmaker – \$5,321, Black Simmental – \$7,955, Red Simmental – \$7,471, Overall Sale average – \$6,825

HILL 70 QUANTOCK RANCH

Breed: Black Angus, Charolais, Black Angus-Simmi, Hereford, Red Angus, Red Angus-Simmi
Bulls sold: 367
Average: \$5,920

ANCHOR D SIMMENTALS LTD.

Breed: Simmental, Charolais
Bulls sold: 98
Average: \$7,645

RAWES RANCHES

Breed: Charolais
Bulls sold: 197
Average: \$7,571

MCLEOD LIVESTOCK & TRIPLE M FARMS

Breed: Charolais
Bulls sold: 45
Average: \$10,233

RANCIER FARMS & MAXWELL SIMMENTALS

Breed: Red, Black, Percentage & Fleckvieh Simmental, Angus
Bulls sold: 106
Average: \$13,035

WRANGLER CHAROLAIS

Breed: Charolais
Bulls sold: 42
Average: \$5,442

CLEARWATER SIMMENTALS, WOLFE'S FLECKVIEH, SOUTHPAW CATTLE COMPANY, GARDNER LIVESTOCK, GB FARMS, KRUGER FARMS (The Event Bull Sale)

Breed: Red, Black, Percentage & Fleckvieh Simmental
Bulls sold: 47
Average: \$5,951

DOUBLE BAR D FARMS

Breed: Red, Black, Percentage & Fleckvieh Simmental, Angus
Bulls sold: 132
Average: \$7,960

D&N LIVESTOCK

Breed: Angus
Bulls sold: 57
Average: \$6,734

Our advertisers had a great set of sales this year and we appreciate the opportunity to work with such a lovely group of cattle operations. As we continue to find new and better ways to market cattle, we look forward to working with new and repeat advertisers through the magazine and online platform. I will be on the road visiting events, auctions, field days and more, so be sure to say hello, ask questions or provide feedback the next time you see me in person. Or give me a call at any time! I hope for everyone that the moisture is plentiful, and the grass is green as we move into spring. I wish everyone a very successful calving and breeding season! 🐮



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for all
seasons**



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AGM Resolutions Overview

THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTIONS WERE BROUGHT FORWARD AT THE 2022 ABP PRODUCER MEETINGS HELD THROUGHOUT JANUARY AND FEBRUARY. DELEGATES MET IN-PERSON FOR THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING IN MARCH, WHERE THEY HEARD FROM MEMBERS OF THE ABP EXECUTIVE AND STAFF, AND THE CANADIAN CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION (CCA).

 @barxphoto



In support of ABP's move to strengthen our producer outreach and engagement, delegates passed a motion to make regulation changes that will improve our ability to collect contact information. More on this regulation change is available on page 25.

Delegates elected six new directors to the ABP board, seven CCA board members, including two non-delegate positions, and one BCRC representative. At the board

meeting subsequent to the AGM, directors re-elected Dr. Melanie Wowk as Chair, Jason Hale as Vice Chair, and Brodie Haugan as Finance Chair.

Outcomes for the resolutions that were debated and voted upon at the AGM are listed below. Some resolutions from the Producer Meetings have yet to be discussed and will be voted on at the board level.

Alberta Beef Producers 2021-2022 Resolutions

1. NORTHEAST

"Be it resolved ABP lobby the government to see that ranchers get a more equitable portion of revenue through all sectors."

Defeated

2. NORTHEAST

"Be it resolved RFID tracking scans are used to manage incoming cattle at sales, scanning information should correspond to sale weight and pricing."

Defeated

3. NORTHEAST

"Be it resolved ABP will work towards tax incentives for beef producers to invest in sustainable technology."

Defeated

4. NORTHEAST

"Be it resolved ABP request CCA to investigate the opportunity to use CCIA reserve funds and/or tag revenue to fund the FMD vaccine bank and/or a voluntary cease movement fund."

Carried: Securing adequate funding for FMD vaccine bank in progress through efforts led by CCA and Animal Health Canada.

5. NORTHEAST

Whereas: ABP is a member of CCA, and CCA works with ABP on important files for the profitability and sustainability of our industry.

"Be it resolved ABP continue to fund CCA at the full assessment reflecting Alberta's percentage of the Canadian Industry."

Defeated

6. NORTHEAST

Whereas: There is a lengthy process involved with our system, requiring ABP to lobby the government before any action is taken. There should be a faster system, similar to that of the USA, where the system is automatically triggered and aid is given in a much more timely fashion. Additional leasing, subleasing, forestry grazing and more should be included as part of this plan.

"Be it resolved ABP lobby the Government of Alberta to develop an emergency or disaster compensation plan that is automatically triggered when counties declare an agricultural emergency (or state of agriculture emergency or disaster)."

Carried: ABP is constantly working with AFSC and others to improve the BRM suite. This will be directed to the Issues Management Committee for consideration.

7. NORTHEAST

“Be it resolved Alberta Beef Producers support mechanisms where producers can financially or otherwise benefit from their management of grasslands and ecosystems.”

Carried: This is an ongoing focus and a policy statement has gone to the board for approval. ABP will continue to support mechanisms that make sense for producers.

8. SOUTHWEST

Whereas: Canada has achieved negligible risk status for BSE, and some of the regulatory burden associated with BSE may no longer serve a meaningful purpose for risk management. This may include SRM regulations in Canada that other negligible risk countries do not have in place. Other examples include livestock owners’ need for an SRM Transporter Permit to transport dead animals, or removal of deadstock tags by the rendering company, etc.

“Be it resolved ABP encourage the removal of all SRM regulations that no longer serve meaningful risk management purposes.”

Carried: This is in progress with work being led by CCA.

9. SOUTHWEST

Whereas: Problematic and dangerous bears create issues in rural communities. The Alberta government currently allows landowners to deal with cougars without charges being laid, and the bear situation should be handled in the same manner.

“Be it resolved ABP lobby the Alberta government to provide livestock producers and landowners with damage permits, allowing them to kill a problem grizzly bear. This permit would be issued to producers who have a confirmed livestock kill, constant property damage (e.g. silage bags, grain bins, buildings), or personal safety in yard.”

Carried: Ongoing and will be directed to the Issues Management Committee. ABP supports the efforts of Waterton Biosphere.

10. SOUTHWEST

Whereas: Federally inspected hook space is limited and often cost prohibitive for regional packers, making them unavailable to service niche markets. Interprovincial trade regulations prevent regional packers from reaching urban customers in neighboring jurisdictions.

“Be it resolved ABP work with other provincial beef organizations to identify and lobby for the removal of all barriers to interprovincial trade between the four (4) western provinces, so beef can trade freely between jurisdictions.”

Carried: ABP needs further information on where provinces differ and align. Will re-assess once competitiveness study results are released.

11. SOUTHEAST

Whereas: ABP and CCA are experiencing serious funding challenges in Alberta. The concept of a one-time, non-refundable check-off has long been discussed in relation to the Alberta Beef Check-off.

“Be it resolved ABP establish a plan to be funded by a one-time, non-refundable check-off payable at slaughter and export.”

Defeated

12. SOUTHEAST

Whereas: Meat products destined for the United States are getting inspected at federal processing facilities and then re-inspected when crossing the border.

“Be it resolved ABP lobby provincial and federal governments, along with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), to allow export inspection for product shipped to the U.S. to take place at the federally inspected processing facilities, eliminating the need for re-inspection at border crossings.”

Carried: This is a major objective of the Canadian Meat Council and ABP supports their efforts.

ABP Zones and Delegates

ABP ZONE REGIONAL LISTINGS

SOUTHEAST ZONE

comprises those lands that are located within the following areas:

- (a) Cypress County;
- (b) County of Forty Mile No. 8;
- (c) County of Warner No. 5;
- (d) Municipal District of Taber;
- (e) County of Newell;
- (f) Vulcan County;
- (g) Wheatland County;
- (h) Kneehill County;
- (i) Starland County;
- (j) Town of Drumheller;
- (k) County of Stettler No. 6;
- (l) County of Paintearth No. 18;
- (m) Special Area No. 2;
- (n) Special Area No. 3;
- (o) Special Area No. 4;
- (p) Municipal District of Acadia No. 34;
- (q) any city, town, or village that is encompassed by the land described in clauses (a) to (p).

SOUTHWEST ZONE

comprises those lands that are located within the following areas:

- (a) Cardston County;
- (b) Improvement District No. 4 (Waterton);
- (c) Municipal District of Pincher Creek No. 9;
- (d) Municipality of Crownsnest Pass;
- (e) Municipal District of Willow Creek No. 26;
- (f) Lethbridge County;
- (g) Municipal District of Ranchland No. 66;
- (h) Foothills County;
- (i) City of Calgary;
- (j) Kananaskis Improvement District;
- (k) Rocky View County;
- (l) Municipal District of Bighorn No. 8;
- (m) Improvement District No. 9 (Banff);
- (n) Mountain View County;
- (o) Clearwater County;
- (p) Red Deer County;
- (q) any city, town, or village that is encompassed by the land described in clauses (a) to (p).

CENTRAL ZONE

comprises those lands that are located within the following areas:

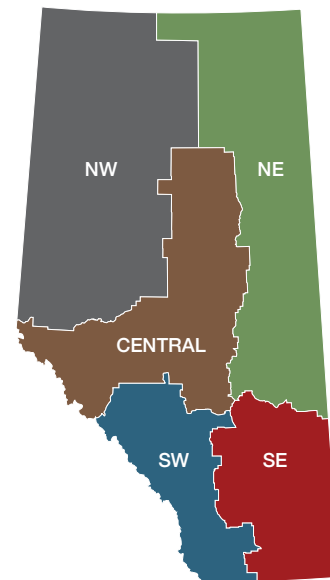
- (a) Lacombe County;
- (b) Ponoka County;
- (c) County of Wetaskiwin No. 10;
- (d) Leduc County;
- (e) Strathcona County;
- (f) Improvement District No. 13 (Elk Island);
- (g) City of Edmonton;
- (h) Sturgeon County;
- (i) Thorhild County;
- (j) Athabasca County;
- (k) Municipal District of Opportunity No. 17;
- (l) Municipal District of Lesser Slave River No. 124;
- (m) Woodlands County;
- (n) Westlock County;
- (o) County of Barrhead No. 11;
- (p) Lac Ste. Anne County;
- (q) Parkland County;
- (r) Brazeau County;
- (s) Yellowhead County;
- (t) Improvement District No. 12 (Jasper National Park);
- (u) Municipality of Jasper;
- (v) Improvement District No. 25 (Willmore Wilderness);
- (w) any city, town, or village that is encompassed by the land described in clauses (a) to (v).

NORTHWEST ZONE

comprises those lands that are located within the following areas:

- (a) County of Grande Prairie No. 1;
- (b) Municipal District of Greenview No. 16;
- (c) Big Lakes County;
- (d) Municipal District of Smoky River No. 130;
- (e) Birch Hills County;
- (f) Municipal District of Spirit River No. 133;
- (g) Saddle Hills County;
- (h) Municipal District of Fairview No. 136;
- (i) Municipal District of Peace No. 135;
- (j) Northern Sunrise County;
- (k) County of Northern Lights;
- (l) Clear Hills County;
- (m) Mackenzie County;
- (n) any city, town, or village that is encompassed by the land described in clauses (a) to (m).

ABP ZONE MAP



NORTHEAST ZONE

comprises those lands that are located within the following areas:

- (a) Camrose County;
- (b) Flagstaff County;
- (c) Municipal District of Provost No. 52;
- (d) Municipal District of Wainwright No. 61;
- (e) Beaver County;
- (f) Lamont County;
- (g) County of Minburn No. 27;
- (h) County of Vermilion River;
- (i) County of Two Hills No. 21;
- (j) Smoky Lake County;
- (k) County of St. Paul No. 19;
- (l) Municipal District of Bonnyville No. 87;
- (m) Lac La Biche County;
- (n) Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo;
- (o) Improvement District No. 24 (Wood Buffalo);
- (p) Improvement District No. 349;
- (q) any city, town, or village that is encompassed by the land described in clauses (a) to (p).

ABP WOULD LIKE TO WELCOME OUR NEW DELEGATES AND DIRECTORS, AND THANK OUTGOING REPRESENTATIVES FOR YOUR TIME AND COMMITMENT TO THE ALBERTA BEEF INDUSTRY.

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Rocky View County

Introducing Agriculture's Buddy Up Persona

We've given our buddies help with processing cattle, or picked up parts for them because we were in town anyway, but how often do we take the time to ask how they're *really* doing?

Last year the Centre for Suicide Prevention added a character to their ever-growing list of personas.

This is Clay.

Clay was developed with input from Alberta Beef Producers, the Do More Agriculture Foundation, and Canadian Mental Health Association Alberta's Rural Mental Health Project, as part of CSP's Buddy Up campaign.

Buddy Up is a men's suicide prevention communications campaign: "a call to action to men, by men." The campaign provides an opportunity to learn about men's suicide, including risk factors and protective factors, warning signs, and prevention.

Clay's farm isn't doing well, and he says he hasn't been able to finish his daily jobs. He's not going to the coffee shop or texting friends anymore. If you have a friend like Clay, step up and offer your support.


Here's how you can help someone like Clay:

Pay attention – Watch for signs that your buddy may not be doing well.

Start a conversation – In a comfortable setting, mention what you've noticed.

Keep it going – Ask questions and listen to what your buddy says.

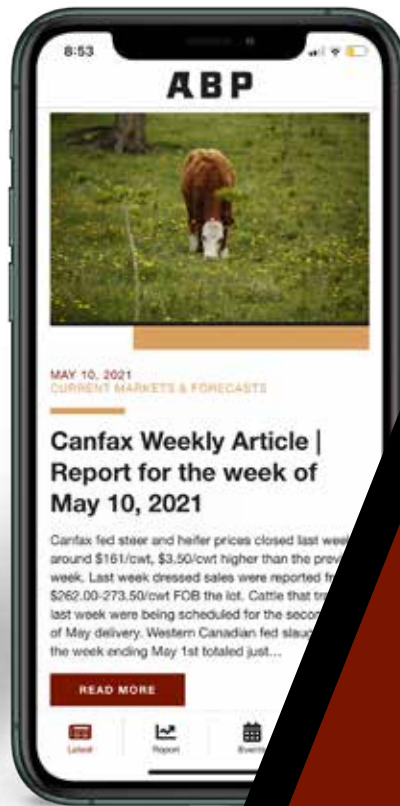
Stick to your role – Encourage your buddy to reach out to others, call Canada Suicide Prevention Service together, or phone 911. And after the talk, check in often.

For more information on Buddy Up, and how you can help raise awareness around men's suicide and how it is preventable, head to buddyup.ca. 

If you know someone who is thinking about suicide, or if you're thinking about suicide, call your local crisis line. In Canada, call 1-833-456-4566.

If you or someone else is in immediate danger, call 9-1-1.





KEEP UP TO DATE ON ALL THINGS ABP

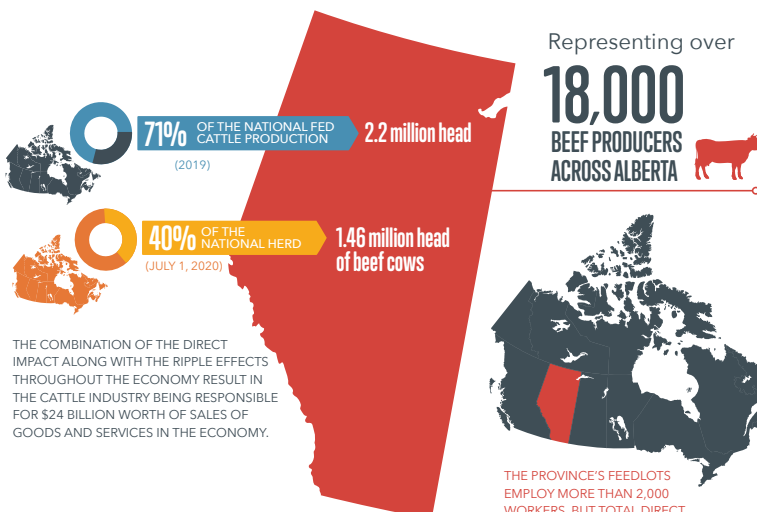
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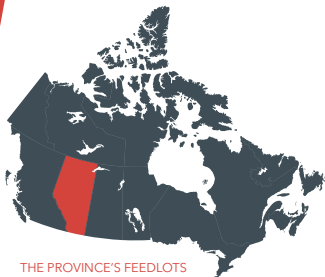


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