Recover and Reset: Insights from a Tough Year

BROUGHT TO YOU BY:





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ON THE COVER
The ABP November Issue showcases a classic Alberta beef roast. A staple found in the ovens across the province as we head into cooler temperatures and holiday gatherings.





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#AllForTheBeef

WITH BRAD DUBEAU



Connection plays an integral role in our industry, and here at ABP we are no different. This past year our focus has been on communication and connection. Connecting and communicating with producers for

reengagement with our organization. Connecting with industry organizations and communicating with government tirelessly, on the dire drought situation facing producers.

The support programs that were put in place this year were a result of working together with Alberta Cattle Feeders' Association, Western Stock Growers' Association, and the Alberta Grazing Leaseholders

Association. This joint effort to help develop programs to alleviate some of the pressure on producers severely impacted by drought, was successful in bringing funding relief, but it does not mean we have taken our eye off the ball. We are not out of the woods yet. Although the Alberta and Federal government support alleviated some of the pressure for producers this fall, it did not solve the problem completely. It did, however, give producers time to make critical decisions.

At the time of writing this column, it is still drastically dry throughout the western provinces, and we are already looking at what we need to do in the new year, depending on where the drought is going. Proactive conversations are already taking place about this issue. At ABP, we will be working towards better support programs that trigger much more quickly for producers. We are working towards and strongly encouraging the government to put together programs that trigger more efficiently and pay out faster.



The significant efforts of our team weren't solely focused on drought this year though. In fact, our talented team was in the relentless pursuit of bringing new communication tools designed to connect and provide insights to producers, like the new ABP App, ABP Magazine and ABPDaily.com. These efforts are bringing relevant insights, engaging producers, and realizing a stronger connection to our organization.

It is our hope that producers will also connect and engage more with us moving forward as well. We encourage producers to participate in the critical conversation around the fiscal discussion at ABP. Every voice matters. Without producer engagement we are jeopardizing the industry and our ability to respond to issues that have an extreme negative impact – whether at the provincial or national level.

We know that connecting in person over the past year has been difficult due to the pandemic and we recognize that virtual versus face-to-face does matter. So, we are eager and excited to be back out and in-person with producers on a more regular basis as restrictions allow. We are looking forward to that day just as much as I know you are – whether it be at auction markets, purebred and commercial events or industry meetings. Whatever our fiscal situation allows, we are going to engage with you.

What we did learn from this past year though, was the value of virtual meeting options for producers. In some cases, we had participation from a greater outreach of producers who otherwise would not be able to attend in person. With that in mind, we will ensure that virtual options will remain.

As 2021 comes to a close and I look ahead for our industry, I suspect that we may see a continued decrease in the mother cow herd, as producers face difficult decisions to disperse percentages of their herd to get through with less or limited feed during the winter months. Fortunately, we don't see that percentage as high as it was formerly projected.

I feel very strongly that better days are ahead for the cow-calf industry and the cow-calf sector. With tightening supplies, we should see that leverage back to the cow-calf and the feeding sector because the demand for beef continues to be exceptionally strong.

Until then, I encourage you to connect with us at ABP. Together, through communication and connection, we will continue to build an even more resilient and world-class beef industry.



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INSPIRATION

The Moon's Gift

RSVP:

Invitation to a Longer Table with Beef at the Centre of the Plate

BY BRENDA LEE SCHOEPP

At the heart of every beef operation is her people. Those passionate and committed persons who strive to produce the best possible food. Behind the hard-working cow calf, yearling, backgrounding and cattle-feeding operators, are families and teams of employees, scientists, farmers, veterinarians and a multitude of service providers. Like most things in life, they are in integrated partnerships that are woven into the final product.

It takes a community of individuals with different values to raise and sell beef.

Everyone comes from a place of core values and beliefs making each farm, ranch and feed yard uniquely different. Some find their passion in the preservation of water, grasslands and increasing carbon sequestration, others in the advancement of genomics or product research, while the neighbouring farm looks to add value by cutting, curing or presenting beef differently. Each individually contributes to the best in beef while being connected. The soil nurtures the grass and grain that feeds the beef animal while the science and health behind both contribute to humane production and a safe product that performs well on the rail, on the shelf and on the plate.

However, it does not always go smoothly and the past two years have presented their own set of challenges. There was a tremendous amount of bend in the beef production, feeding and processing industries and though the system did not break, it did become transparent. We "saw" the packing plant employee, the clogging at port, the delay

in digitized systems, the fed cattle waiting in pens, the impact of food waste, the dry pastures, food insecurity and empty retail shelves. One of the outcomes of these events was an appreciation of beef in a very complex food system.

To ensure beef remains available in such a complex system, the business of beef must continue to grow in the incubators of the prairies, paddocks and pens where creative thought and new ideas are nurtured by innovators and early adaptors that stretch the imagination and our comfort zone. They will spark the future and are key to attracting investment, labour and new entrants for they know how to align with the values of those they need in partnerships. It is through them and the relationships that they bring to the industry that we appreciate the diversity of markets and the complexity of the business of beef.

It takes a community of individuals with different values to raise and sell beef. Keeping beef centre of plate does not require changing the plate – it requires a longer table that invites diversity and presents a cross cultural product which is relatable.

In other words, the future in the beef industry is not about doing the same things better. The future of the beef industry rests in understanding it as an integrated system and in the capacity to form new relationships, to embrace technology, non-traditional markets, and a wide variety of stakeholders at each stage in the value chain.

The value chain – where worth is added and shared from the product at each stage – depends on the recognition of those connections. And while we look to research or retail to bridge production and sales of beef, the outcome could be determined by another element altogether.

The award-winning film Guardians of the Grasslands, has impacted consumer perception of the role of cattle as regenerative contributors in a frail

environment and influenced federal policy in a shorter period of time than research or

advertising ever has.

Keeping beef centre of plate does not require changing the plate – it requires a longer table that invites diversity and presents a cross cultural product which is relatable while also having attributes of being transportable, storable, easy to prepare and reflects the evolving environment and tastes of people. Understanding and developing can be channelled through science and technology or by directly connecting on shared values – such as the environment.

Beef is not produced nor processed as it once was – nor can it be sold or presented as it was in the past century, decade or quarter. Ever evolving human and animal health, environmental welfare and product demand keeps the industry exciting and challenged.

Through it all in the past couple of years creative, imaginative, resilient producers, processors, cattle feeders, farmers, families and communities worked and wrangled their way through the challenges. Businesses and food systems were re-built on open communication and ever-present accountability. Many owners throughout the chain upskilled along with their teams, building comradery and advancing the business of beef. Shared personal, family and business values and vision linked teams together for a common cause.

It's a good time to be in the business of beef. A time for aspirational leadership where the beef industry listens with intent to their families and to those outside the fence line who seek to be part of the solution. This is the time because the stakeholders in the beef industry are deeply connected through technology and the positive uptake by national media on agriculture has been historic. As the story continues to be shared, the supportive voices of the future may sound from ambassadors from any element of society and anywhere in the global village.

The intersection of self, family, community, environment, teams, partners, business, society, science and consumers all circle back to beef at the centre of plate. New partnerships and relationships, business models and research in the beef industry need to reflect the values of a variety of stakeholders. Building a longer table based on environmental, economic, societal and cultural cornerstones will continue to provide beef as a food of choice and to honour the heart of the industry – her people.

Looking to a Post-Drought Spring

BY DEBRA MURPHY

As you walk across a drought-stricken perennial forage stand, you'll hear the crunch of dry grass, and see the cracking of soils, eager for more rain. There may be enough grass to inspire hope, to catch snow, and to offer a quick start to next year's grazing season. Or, there may not.

Perhaps this year, amidst the onslaught of drought stresses, the herd grazed longer or harder than is typical.

"In a drought year, you're always kind of behind,"

Dr. Vern Baron empathizes, as he reflects on the droughts of the Canadian prairies. "We are behind because we are hoping for rain and if it comes we are in good shape, but if it doesn't we have grazed beyond the capacity to recover or regrow before we have weaned or reduced the stocking rate."

Dr. Baron is a research scientist for Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. He knows drought, and the toll it takes on people, plants, and planning. But he also knows to look for silver linings.

And maybe one of those is right beneath our feet. Beneath the crunch of the pained grass – a healthy, living system that stands ready to support its (and our) recovery.

SOILS STANDING AT ATTENTION

"Our soils are quite resilient to drought, and healthy soil actually does have quite a good bounce-back. The microbes will just sit there and wait for moisture," says Dr. Francis Larney, of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, adding that nutrient mobility is also minimal during dry years.

To weather more drought, Larney suggests increasing organic matter and water-holding capacity, where possible. Apply manure or compost, and adopt or continue no-till practices.

"If we get into a drought cycle, and we get a few years of low yields in a row, we're going to open ourselves up to maybe some wind erosion problems, unfortunately."

To help reduce the risk of wind erosion, land managers can consider adding perennials or cover crops to annual rotation. And maybe, give thanks to existing shelter belts.

PASTURE SPECIES IN RECOVERY

As for the perennial grasses already in the rotation, we'll have to cut them some slack. And consider how heavily they were grazed leading up to winter.

"If you're going to graze late in the fall, don't expect to go on it early in the spring," says Baron, who advises considering your operation, its specific species and paddocks, and your definition of success.

"If success to you is to have a rapidly growing, vigorous forage stand in late April through May, then you have to have large, dense, healthy tillers...coming up the following spring. And usually, to get that you have to have...some tillers there that are a good size in the fall."

In formulating rotational grazing situations with high stocking rates, Baron prefers to see about four to six inches worth of growth before opening the gates to grazing. In Central Alberta, in an average year, that may mean waiting until around June 1, and perhaps longer post-drought, or post-overgrazing.

"You've got to think about – what is success for you," says Baron. "In a drought year, your expectation has to be less."

Dr. Vern Baron admits there's no perfect solution to drought planning and management, but offers some recommendations:

GRAZING PLANNING IDEAS

- Give forage crops ample time to recover.
- Think of soil moisture as a budget, and let it replenish.
- Know where you're at in terms of production capacity.
- Moderate your stocking rate.
- Include species that withstand higher temperatures in your forage mixture.
- · Look for species that will rebound after drought.

- Devote some land to alternative pastures of annuals.
 (Winter cereals might be harvested, or used as emergency crops for spring grazing or greenfeed.)
- Monitor pastures and crops, as well as the condition of your livestock.
- Incorporate stockpiled grazing into your fall plan.

See more articles on spring planning on abpdaily.com.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE CHAIR

We Want to Hear from You

BY MELANIE WOWK, CHAIR, ABP



As I sit down to write this column and share current highlights with you as the Chair of ABP, it has me thinking a great deal about what Alberta beef producers need to know is happening within our organization. But perhaps what I feel is just as important, is the fact that we need to hear from you – the beef producers of Alberta.

At our recent Town Hall this fall, we announced that our check-off dollars refund rate was up again this year. The refund is currently sitting at 46%. We have hit a crucial intersection this year and as a result, will be forced to make significant cuts. We realize that the majority of producers in Alberta support ABP and that it is just a small number of large refunders that are affecting us; however, for our continued success as an organization, it is imperative that we fully understand the level of support from producers.

Our organization is really hoping and depending on producers to come out in good numbers to our upcoming January and February meetings in 2022, to discuss the issue of refunds, along with the other challenges and opportunities facing our industry and organization. We need to hear how producers want ABP to go forward.

Our fall producer meetings are moving to January and February of 2022, to better align with the ABP AGM, which is now scheduled alongside other industry AGMs, at the Alberta Beef Industry Conference. Our producer meetings provide the opportunity for Alberta beef producers to engage with their zone and provide direction to the ABP delegates and Board of Directors

as to where they wish to see check-off dollars allocated, as well as present and discuss other issues or concerns. These are times of crucial decisions for ABP, and we are asking all Alberta beef producers to engage and participate.

In regard to organizational highlights this fall, ABP has been busy working towards developing exceptional producer meetings in the upcoming months and we are eager to see the initiatives that will result from them. We are also working diligently on programs and initiatives designed to support Alberta beef producers.

What the drought crisis has given us is a spotlight into current programs and emergency relief initiatives. We now see the realization of where they fall short or where we need to improve, and most of all, that they work when they are needed. We would like to see an AgriRecovery program that works more quickly with a permanent setup that is triggered more efficiently and effectively. The current program has us behind the eight ball, with full payouts not being realized until March or April of next year. For a majority of producers, this simply doesn't meet the demands of payments that occur long before.

We are also working on what our asks will be for the Canadian Agricultural Partnership (CAP) program, which will develop and bring better risk management tools, especially for the cow-calf producer. The CAP initiative comes to a close in 2023, and ABP is hopeful that we will have meaningful input prior to its conclusion and potential renewal.

We are discussing calf insurance too, as we feel something drastic needs to be done. The current model isn't affordable for producers, and it quite simply doesn't work. Low participation in the program is a reflection of that fact. We are working on recommendations and solutions in an effort to help change that.

I have received numerous calls from producers with concerns about moisture insurance recently as well. Seeking improvements for this program has been on our radar at ABP long before this past summer. We have been working with Agriculture Financial Services Corporation (AFSC) to have it changed to a fair, consistent, and easily understandable risk management program and we continue to do so. Currently, there are 26 options to choose from on the application forms. We are reviewing

this in hopes of making this a simpler, more concise and informed decision model for producers. We have also requested that AFSC include a heat index. I believe that requests like these will help us move forward with models that truly reflect the factors facing producers.

Another issue that has been simmering and now bubbling to the surface for quite some time is the price discovery with packing plants. It is top of mind for us at ABP and we know it is for all producers as well. It is more than apparent that we need to do something about closing the gap between the producer's income and the meat price in the stores – it's crucial to the sustainability of the industry for the cow-calf producer. Our efforts at ABP to provide input, or improvements to programs, initiatives, or concerns with the value chain for producers are critical to the sustainability of our industry. This is important work and conversations that we bring forward on behalf of our industry have the ability to make significant change.

As we put the wrap on 2021, I think the beef sector has shown its resiliency once again through another really tough year. At ABP, we pushed our staff to the limit, but our focused efforts on communications are really shining through. What I have heard from fellow Alberta beef producers is positive feedback regarding our communications efforts throughout the current drought crisis, saying that they knew what was going on and who they needed to contact and what they needed to do. This has everything to do with the leadership of our General Manager, Brad Dubeau, and the strength of talent on our team.

We have always been an industry that has relied on tenacity, resilience and a little hope and a prayer. Here is hoping that COVID is behind us, that prayers for moisture are answered in 2022, and that we can get back to simply focusing on what we do best – raising exceptional beef. The beef product that we supply to our consumers is the best in the world. I have always said this, and I am extremely proud of it and the beef producers that stand behind it.

I hope to see you at our meetings in January and February. For details please visit: https://abpdaily.com/checking-in-with-abp/abp-producer-meeting-schedule-tentatively-set

Beef Gives Back

BY LINDSAY ROBERTS

WHEN YOU PULL UP THE DRIVEWAY TO BOB HAHN'S FARM, HAHN CATTLE CO., YOU MIGHT THINK IT'S A TYPICAL ANGUS OPERATION. HOWEVER, TUCKED AWAY IN AN UNASSUMING QUONSET IS A CUSTOM BUILT STOREFRONT WITH DISPLAY FREEZERS AND A DRY-AGER THAT PREPARES HIGH-END QUALITY CUTS OF BEEF FOR LOCAL CONSUMERS.

Accountant by day, Angus producer by night, Edmonton producer Bob Hahn has been involved in the industry for decades. After taking over the family farm, Hahn's driving force has always been "How can I build a better cow?" But over the years it has evolved to "How can I build a better farm business?" and, more recently, "How does the farm make the greatest impact to my community?"

From genetics to hand feeding and finishing – every animal has had the utmost thought and care put into it. Now, one might think that a high-end feed and custom supplementation program dedicated to individual animals is expensive. How could it possibly be profitable?

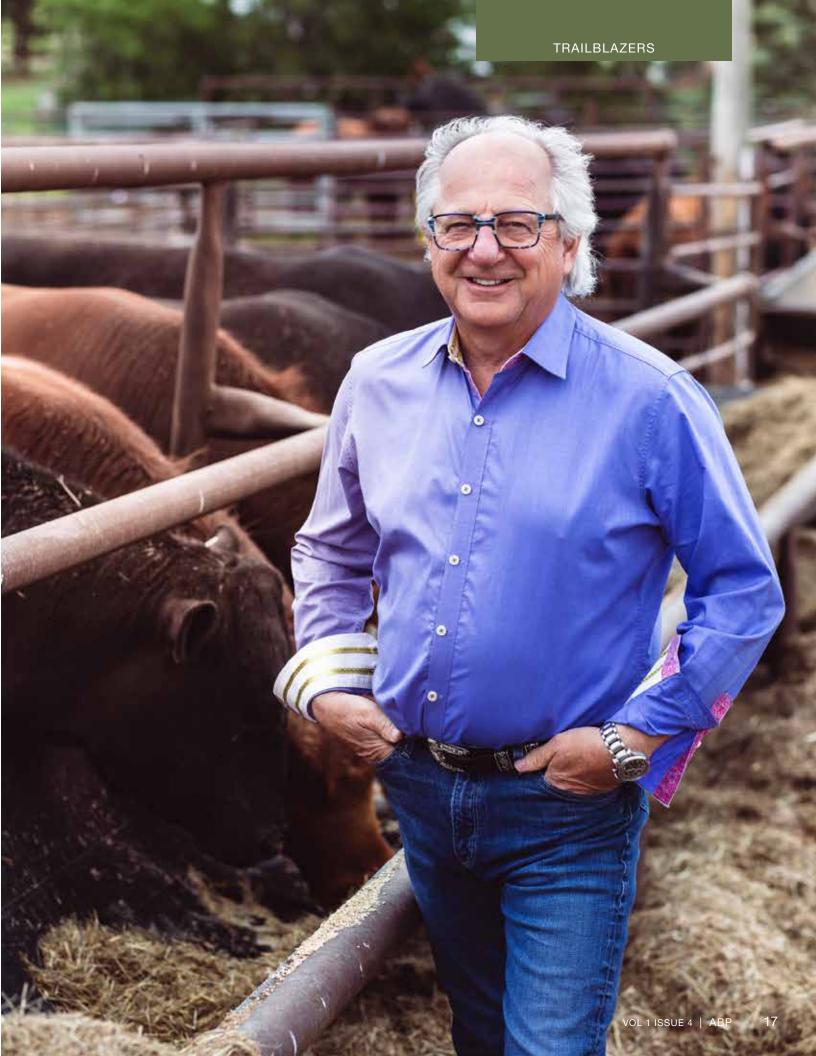
"My goal, years ago, was to figure out how to somehow, rather than just get commercial prices out of cattle, get three times that," Hahn shares. "While I decided to get out of the commercial game, the purebred game is also tough and doesn't get me that triple margin either."

That is where Hahn's background as a professional accountant kicks in. Why put in premium efforts in raising cattle only to receive commercial level prices in return?

Bob's operation flips the traditional model of selling cattle on its head. Leaving the commercial business and taking the premium mark-up for himself, Hahn has built a direct market business. He relies on long-standing relationships with local Edmonton abattoirs and a custom-built storefront to capitalize on the 'buy local' movement. He listens to customers and adjusts his products to meet their requests. Recently, this included producing aged cuts, beef jerky, and creating "gift boxes" that could be given to thank others or celebrate milestones.

"My goal is not to compete with the big chains – my target audience is those folks who want high quality and consistent products," says Hahn.

Just this year alone, Hahn has donated the equivalent of 920 meal portions of red meat to the Old Strathcona Youth Society (OSYS).





I've repositioned how I think about charitable donations and community giving.

While the striploins, T-bones and tenderloins fly off the shelves of Hahn's business, the round steaks and ground beef take a little longer to move. Instead of going to waste, Hahn donates these cuts to two charities near and dear to his heart.

"I've repositioned how I think about charitable donations and community giving. Rather than a monetary donation, I rethought my donations and now I am doing something very specific and giving to those who I think could use protein as a part of their program."

Just this year alone, Hahn has donated the equivalent of 920 meal portions of red meat to the Old Strathcona Youth Society (OSYS). Located on Edmonton's Whyte Avenue, the OSYS space is dedicated to providing purposeful

resources and creating a safe and supportive environment that fosters youth empowerment and development. In addition to the youth centre, Hahn has gifted over 840 meal portions of red meat to the Jellinek Society; a recovery house with a mission to provide recovery support to men with early drug or alcohol addiction.

Shannon Proano, an outreach worker with OSYS said, "Red meat is something that our youth often don't get because they can't afford it, or other programs cannot provide it. Typical hampers include a lot of staple items, which are often full of carbs or sugar, and not necessarily very nutritious. Our youth are very happy when their hampers include two servings of either ground or stewed beef, and we usually provide them with other staples so they can make a hearty meal. Having access to red meat gives them more food variety, which encourages them to learn how to cook new things that are also a lot more nutritious."

The challenge for every producer is to continue to adapt their operation to be profitable and meet the customers' changing preferences. So that leaves the question, "What's next at Hahn Cattle Co.?" The innovation continues with marketing of beef parts that often go to waste and welcoming more people from the city to come and visit a working farm. "The biggest win for our industry is the "farm experience" – city folks who want to understand where food comes from and just to see a cow", laughs Hahn.

Building a successful beef business allows Hahn to give back to his community through providing an authentic experience and providing protein to those who need it most.



Beef in the dry-ager at Hahn Cattle Co. Photo credit Bob Hahn.

M.C. Quantock



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The Art of the Roast

WITH COREY THE BUTCHER

As we hunker down for colder weather and the winter months ahead, I am preparing for a shift in demand at the meat counter. Typically, I see a lower volume of walk-in consumers as compared to the summer months, but they are buying in larger quantities – more freezer packs, less beef aimed for the BBQ, more demand for comfort and savoury foods and a return of demand for the Alberta beef roast.

Many of my customers looking to buy roasts bring a lot of questions, some apprehension as well, especially when it comes to cooking or preparation. They do not want to ruin a good roast.

For generations before us, the art and understanding of cooking the perfect roast was common. Roasts were weekly debuted at the family dinner table. Now, as a result of today's fast paced lifestyle, there are fewer at the family dinner table. Roasts have become more of a special occasion selection, but they don't have to be.

From budget to timing to preparation, roasts are as diverse as the many cuts they come in. From sirloin tip to prime rib roasts, to round, chuck or blade roasts, the options at the dinner table and ways to cook them, from slow cooker to the roasting pan – there's a beef roast to suit each and every customer that walks in our doors at

Acme Meats. In some cases, too, I am seeing a rise in a return to the roast – a growing pandemic trend as our consumers are returning to the staple and relishing in more at home meal preparation.

The biggest portion of what is produced in the beef animal goes to roast product. As a butcher, I dedicate a lot of time to cutting the various roast cuts, but even more than mastering the cuts of beef is the art of tying these roasts. We tie roasts to give the roast a uniform shape, allowing it to cook more evenly. Perhaps too, tying roasts has become more commonly a lost art. It was one of the first things that I learned in my schooling to become a butcher. At Acme Meats, we are in our 100th year of family business, and I feel that we are one of the only remaining shops that knows how to tie bone-in roasts. There are so many types of butcher knots. My dad was a butcher, and his knot was completely foreign to me.

I could not replicate his knot and when he looked at my knots, he said the same thing. Everyone has their own technique of their own tie. Not unlike beef producers, I suspect, who have their favourite knots, or unique methods to tying.

For my customers seeking an easy and savoury meal, I highly recommend the chuck roast. The chuck comes from the muscle between the neck and shoulder blade of the beef animal. What I like most about this cut is that it is really easy. Simply put it in a slow cooker or crock pot with some moisture – like bone broth, or red wine or even simply water – and let the excellent flavour of the beef shine through. Put it on high for 6-8 hours and it will shred apart. Savoury and simple.

The Art of Cooking an Exceptional Roast

For oven roasts like the prime rib cut or sirloin roasts, the most common question is, "how long do I cook it?" That answer is a little more difficult as every oven can be different both in temperature and hot spots. My rule of thumb is to rely on a good thermometer. For beef I follow this guideline for internal temperature readings:

Rare: 125° F Medium: 145° F

Medium Rare: 135° F Medium Well: 150° F

I recommend for roasts like round or hip, to not cook past medium as they are a leaner roast and will toughen up more quickly. Whereas the ones that do have more marbling or fat content like prime rib roasts or sirloin, are more fibrous so you can cook them longer, slower, lower, and they will deliciously fall apart.

Before cooking a roast, it is important to allow the meat to first meet room temperature before putting into the oven and even more important is to let the roast rest outside of the oven, once it has reached your desired temperature. This is key to a good roast that you plan to carve. Letting it rest for 15-20 minutes and covering it with foil, helps to maintain the roast's own juices. The roast will firm up as well, making it easier to carve.

For me, as a butcher, I am proud of the exceptional Alberta Beef product that I serve my customers. I enjoy the engagement and questions that they bring to the beef counter. What has been really exciting for me and perhaps the biggest surprise this past year is the intense interest they have shown in ABP magazine. I provide copies here at the store and they fly off the shelves. As soon as it is in, it is out. It is such a visually beautiful magazine and the beef product on the cover to them is relatable. Even though this magazine is designed for producers, my customers are genuinely interested in learning about where their food comes from, the producers who stand behind it, and the issues and opportunities they face.







Top Trends over 10 Years

LOOKING THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD OF A VET TRUCK

BY ELIZABETH R. HOMEROSKY, DVM, MSC., DABVP Partner Veterinarian, Veterinary Agri-Health Services

At Veterinary Agri-Health Services, we start every fall run with the notion, "It's going to be interesting!" With drought plaguing the prairies and \$9 barley, this year is guaranteed to exceed expectations. Nevertheless, calves are steadily making their way into the yards and many of us are excited for the long-awaited organized chaos that is upon us.

As ambulatory veterinarians, we spend the majority of our fall days peering through our windshield, albeit often cracked. However, it's important to occasionally stop and take some time to peek in the rear-view mirror. Here's our perspective on 10 trends we've seen over the past decade:

ALIGNING WITH MOTHER NATURE FOR HEALTHIER CALVES

Each year, our cow herds continue to experience consolidation and calving season start dates continue to be pushed back. These true spring-calving herds align more closely with "mother nature," thereby lowering maintenance requirements and overwintering costs for our gestating cows. The resulting spring- and summerborn calves are healthier than ever with very few requiring assistance at birth.

IMPLEMENTING MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Implementation of management strategies such as the Sandhills Calving System have helped eliminate scour outbreaks in many of the herds we work with. As cow vets, we now spend far more time talking about prevention compared to treatment.

ENHANCING VACCINATION PROTOCOLS AND PRECONDITIONING PROGRAMS

Including the use of intranasal products, enhanced programs have helped reduce the incidence of calfhood infectious diseases. Along those lines, there has been a decrease in the percentage of calves born persistently infected with BVD; a trend that benefits our entire industry.



CLOSING THE GAPS AT THE FEEDLOT

On the feedlot side, the gap between age, size, and health status in fall-placed and winter-placed calves continues to narrow. We've made tremendous strides in understanding and improving feed efficiency and are finishing cattle at heavier endpoints than ever before.

ADOPTING TELEMEDICINE

There are concerns regarding the sustainability of our industry as fewer and fewer veterinary students are interested in careers in food animal production. However, our reach is extending further than ever with the rapid recent adoption of "veterinary telemedicine."

BECOMING MORE DATA DRIVEN

Speaking of technology, our industry is collecting more data than ever before, far more than we know what to do with at the moment. Information is real-time and has the potential to move up and down the value chain, although implementing this technology and using it to its full potential is still in the works. A good-news story for us all, thanks to proper animal identification and data collection, is achievement of BSE negligible status for Canada by the OIE, which has the potential to remove trade barriers and increase market competitiveness.

5 LEADING RESEARCH AND SURVEILLANCE



Antimicrobial resistance is a growing concern; however, Canada is leading the charge in surveillance and research in an effort to better understand this complex issue. Emerging diseases that have now become mainstream in our feedlots include digital dermatitis and genetic-associated congestive heart failure. We're finishing more black-hided cattle than ever before and within the past several years have seen an influx of Holsteins and dairy crosses into our feedlots, hailing from our neighbour to the south.

BOVINE RESPIRATORY DISEASE REMAINS

A RISK FACTOR

Despite our health advances on the cow-calf side, incidence of bovine respiratory disease in the feedlot remains stagnant. High degrees of commingling at the point of sale and on-arrival at the feedlot, along with prolonged pen fill times, continue to be predominating risk factors.

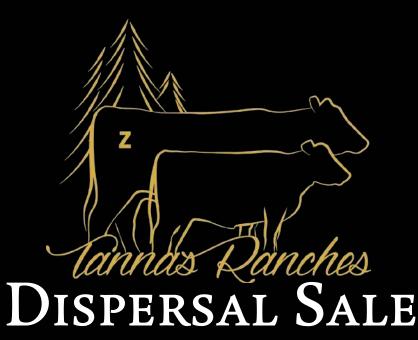
SPECIALIZING VETERINARY MEDICINE

Similar to the field of human medicine, veterinarians are becoming more specialized and the "James Herriots" of the world are slowly disappearing. Our practices are shifting from traditional "firefighter" models to consulting models to match the progressive nature of the clients we serve.

GOING VIRTUAL AT THE AUCTIONS

Many of our producers have also turned to virtual platforms. With each passing fall, we see a higher proportion of animals walking across our screens compared to walking through the auction barns.

As many of our ranchers, feedlot owners and managers, and veterinarians alike approach a generation turnover it's important to remember the wise words from Maya Angelo, "You can't really know where you're going, until you know where you have been." Here's to a happy, healthy, and prosperous 2022 for all those in the Alberta beef industry and maybe a shiny new windshield for a select few.



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Consumers Have No Beef with Feeding Food Waste to Cattle

BY CRAIG LESTER

CONSUMERS REALLY DO EAT UP THE IDEA OF CATTLE CONSUMING FOOD WASTE.

A recent survey showed that consumers across the country seemed to warm up to the idea of Canadian beef production practices a when they were related to a challenge they undertake in their homes everyday.

The survey, conducted by the Canadian Cattlemen's Association's (CCA) Public and Stakeholder Engagement team (PSE), investigated the perception of livestock eating food by-products by showing first-hand examples of cattle being fed.

The survey included 88 people from across the country, who largely live in urban and suburban settings.

Most that took part had limited knowledge about beef production and held neutral to negative leanings about beef production practices in Canada.

However, when they were presented with videos and social media posts showing first-hand the large-scale efforts farmers take to combat greenhouse gas emissions by having cattle eat things like discarded fruits and vegetables, their opinions shifted to a more positive outlook.

In one example, Bear Trap Feeders owner and CCA President, Bob Lowe, tours viewers through his feedlot in a video where he showcases the use of food that doesn't make it to the grocery store. The food includes fruit and vegetables, which they feed cattle through a partnership with wholesaler, Thomas Fresh, out of Calgary. The video struck a chord with most respondents.

"We're combatting food waste while raising beef. I like the mounds of produce there. It really shows the impact of the amount of food waste being salvaged," one participant said. CCA Public and Stakeholder Manager, Amie Peck, says the connection between feedlot and food waste became a lot clearer and more relevant to folks.

"They can relate it to how they are reducing food waste at home. Farmers and ranchers are doing the same thing on a large scale," Peck said during a presentation to stakeholders.

One participant says they were surprised that farmers feed animals food that would normally end up going to waste.

"It really improves my opinion of the farming practices," they said.

It's clear in this survey that consumers by and large trust farmers. Where their trust declines is with the industry in general. By showing collaboration between farmers and the agri-food supply chain on an issue everyone relates to, such as reducing food waste, it helped raise the opinions of many survey participants.

Just over 75 per cent of the participants preferred the statement about feedlots being an integral part of reducing food waste because cattle can eat food like stale bread or over-ripe vegetables that aren't suitable for people. Compared to about one-quarter who preferred feedlots decrease the number of resources like land, water and feed used, which helps lower greenhouse gas emissions.

The difference? Relatability.

Overall, the major take-away from the survey is that connecting cattle to food waste is seen as positive by consumers and improves their impressions about the industry and its efforts to reduce environmental impact and give people a lot of food for thought.

Ensure Next Gen Success with Proper Heifer Nutrition

BY ROBIN GALEY

SUPPORTING BRED HEIFER NUTRITION PRESENTS UNIQUE CHALLENGES. HOW CAN PRODUCERS ENSURE BRED HEIFERS GET HIGH HEALTH SCORES, BREED AND REBREED SUCCESSFULLY GOING INTO WINTER AFTER A DRY YEAR? WE SPOKE TO RUMINANT NUTRITIONIST LYNNE GIRARDIN TO COLLECT SOME HELPFUL ADVICE.



Lynne Girardin

When it comes to bred heifers, meeting nutritional requirements throughout gestation and beyond is primary. "We want a live calf, but we also want a healthy heifer who is able to rebreed, so we need to meet nutritional requirements both

pre- and post-calving," says Lynne Girardin, an independent consultant with BeefSmart, who works with producers to support animal nutrition.

Good nutrition meets the heifer's need for energy and protein, plus vitamins and minerals. It starts with

consideration of the heifer's body condition scores and a test of the nutritional quality of available forages and grains. "When it comes to the bred heifer going into calving, we look for a body condition score of 2.5 to 3 on a 5-point scale. Getting that score is a direct reflection of pre-calving nutrition, but it also supports rebreeding success," says Girardin.

Bred heifers are in a physiologically challenging time, still growing out their own frame, while also growing a fetus. Feeding plans need to consider both. "During this important time, we don't want to limit energy, protein, vitamins or minerals," says Girardin.



Nevertheless, drought and economics play a part, especially in a year like 2021. Many grain byproducts will be fed this winter, which presents benefits and other factors to consider. For example, supplementing with wheat cracks or oat hulls can increase nutritional quality, but beware of problems such as varying levels of minerals and common toxins (like ergot), which can still be a problem in a dry year.

Limited feed shifts the question

This season, limited feed supplies and diminishing profits have changed the question from what is ideal nutritionally to what is acceptable, given short supply. "There is such limited feed supply across the prairies and northern states. The biggest question I hear right now is: 'We have x number of bales and we have to feed them through to green grass next spring, so how many animals can we keep?'" says Girardin.

A nutritionist can help producers do the math to refine winter feeding plans and ensure every animal is fed. "In a year like this one, we have to focus on protein and energy, because it will be lacking in our forages, and we'll be using lower energy forages, like wheat or barley straw," Girardin says.

Girardin suggests testing everything to ensure you've checked the essential boxes: "One beautiful advantage is we have an animal we can offer multiple types of feed. We can meet their protein and energy needs with almost all the byproducts and forages out there, we just have to know what we're feeding."

Consider minerals and vitamins too, she adds: "It's very important not to forget these. Producers need to look not just at quantity but also at quality. Either deficiency or excess can lead to suboptimal reproduction of the bred heifer."

In bred heifers, vitamin deficiency is one to watch out for. "Vitamin A, for example, plays an important role in embryo development, so it's important to supplement throughout calving, and especially through this winter, when the drought has exacerbated the problem by extending the period when vitamins are lacking in forages," says Girardin.

Seeking cost efficiency

Drought makes cost efficiency a higher priority. One strategy that can help is to ensure you don't overfeed, increasing costs unnecessarily. "Using what you have on hand supports cost efficiency, but when there is a lack of quantity, quality becomes important, so look at the quality and supplement where you need to. Don't just do what you've always done," Girardin advises.

Another cost-saving strategy is looking at actual vitamin and mineral needs versus using a costly premix that contains more than you need. "If you can save five to 25 cents per head per day just based on your mineral premix, that may really make or break things this winter," says Girardin.

Neighbours helping neighbours

Girardin laments with producers the challenges many are facing. "Some were hit with drought and then hailed out. They literally have no feed, and can't find any either. The genetic pool of these herds takes years to build, and producers have pride in what they have. It's terrible to have to practically give the animals away or sell them at a lower price because you don't have enough feed," Girardin says.

One helpful alternative may be asking neighbouring grain farmers for help. Using the limited value left in hailed out or drought stricken fields as animal feed can make a difference, feeding the animals, and building community.

"It's great to see neighbours helping each other. Beef producers can subsidize some of what is needed on the crop side, and be grateful for the opportunity to use stubble or whatever is left of a drought stricken crop to maintain their herd," says Girardin.

Bottom line requirements

In difficult times, it helps knowing there are multiple ways to meet bred heifer nutritional requirements, and Girardin encourages producers to spend some time penciling it out with a nutritionist to make best use of what is available.

"I never say there is only one way to feed cows or raise heifers. All we have to do is meet their requirements. Being creative, we can do so in a way that reduces cost, uses what is available, and supplements only where necessary," she concludes.

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UNITED NATIONS FOOD SYSTEMS SUMMIT:

The Canadian Beef Perspective

CANADIAN CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Canada's beef industry has an impressive and unique story to tell for its leadership in sustainability. The recent United Nations Food Systems Summit (UNFSS) provided an excellent global platform to amplify the beef cattle sector's positive contributions towards the environment and healthy, sustainable diets. The UNFSS was a historic event aimed at driving solutions-orientated discussions and creating tangible goals to address issues such as hunger, climate change and food waste. The UNFSS included a pre-summit portion in the months leading up to the official event held in New York on September 23, 2021; the first Summit of its kind held by the United Nations in over 25 years.

The Canadian Cattlemen's Association (CCA) became involved through numerous engagements and pre-summit dialogues to build positive conversations surrounding the red meat industry, as plant-based diets continue to be incorrectly positioned as a climate change solution. The CCA also partnered with other sectors within Canada's diverse agriculture industry to raise a united voice and was instrumental in encouraging increased engagement in the UNFSS from global livestock organizations.

At the end of April, the CCA, together with the Nature Conservancy of Canada, hosted an independent dialogue series exploring the topic of "Grazing Livestock: Building Sustainable Protein Supply Chains." The event brought together a diverse set of stakeholders who were challenged to answer what's next to build a more sustainable food system, what's missing and where to look for improvements. The insight gathered from the sessions were formally submitted to the United Nations in advance of the Summit.

In September ahead of the UNFSS, the CCA, along with 21 other Canadian agri-food production leaders, also released a multi-stakeholder statement to celebrate Canada's achievements and commit to continue to advance the nation's leadership role in the production of safe, sustainable and nutritious food.

The CCA received a positive response from government officials and stakeholders on its leadership throughout the leadup to the UNFSS for the beef sector's solutions-orientated and collaborative approach.

During the UNFSS, 218 multi-stakeholder led commitments to action and coalitions were founded. The 2030 Beef Industry Goals were registered as a commitment, demonstrating positive and clear messaging about the process to continually improve practices. The CCA was very pleased to hear the livestock industry highlighted in a speech from Canada's leadership at the UNFSS, and appreciates the Government's recognition of the industry's work in sustainability.

The speech given by H.E. Alexandra Bugailiskis, Canada's Permanent Representative to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), stated, "Canadian livestock producers are global leaders in sustainable production of protein with one of the lowest greenhouse gas emission profiles. Through sustainability assurance programs, Canada's producers are demonstrating their commitment to further lowering their environmental footprint and making strong socio-economic contributions."

The CCA will continue to build momentum on these important conversations. While a lot of work remains on sharing the good news story of Canada's beef industry, the CCA is pleased to see the small shift towards a more positive narrative surrounding the livestock industry on the world stage and looks forward to continuing to engage in these conversations on a domestic and international level.



Photo by Laura Laing

BY DIANNE FINSTAD

Auction markets are where buyers and sellers meet in the cattle business. They remain relevant and busy, and, this year, are on the frontlines of drought's impact on producers.

Fears exist about another wide scale reduction in the Alberta cow herd because of the hardships caused by the lack of rain. While it hasn't fully materialized to date, dry conditions have left their mark.

"I don't think we'll see really heavy movement because we're dealing with a smaller herd," says Ian Goodbrand, owner of **Dryland Cattle Trading** in Veteran. "Just like I don't think we'll see heavier movement than normal on the calves, because they just aren't there. We're seeing earlier movement, but not heavier movement."

Goodbrand describes the drought of '21 as 'legendary' in eastern Alberta, and his perspective comes from family roots in the country dating back to 1909.



In the months of May, June and July, every second call I got were people wanting to disperse their cows.

"It was one for the record books for sure," he comments.

But drought is not a stranger to the region, and experienced ranchers stockpile both feed and grass whenever they can, for years such as these.

The same is true in southern Alberta, but longtime auctioneer and **Balog Auction Services** owner, Bob Balog, knows a lack of water was driving some cows to town earlier. But he has seen the alarm level come down.

"In the months of May, June and July, every second call I got were people wanting to disperse their cows," says Balog. "A lot of things have changed, surprisingly enough. There's been a little bit of optimism, a tiny bit of rain, and some government payments."

"We're not going to get as many complete cow dispersals as we are going to get reduction programs. We may see from 20-50% of some cow herds come to town."

The central area of the province got off easier when it came to the severity of the drought, according to Duane Daines, one of the co-owners of the Innisfail Auction Market.

"There was a real concern in late July and early August. People were asking us early when we were having our first presort sales, so we've had a few," says Daines. "But in this area, we got some timely rains, and the pastures came back a little bit, so it wasn't such a panic."

"I thought we were going to have a huge September with guys just having to sell their cattle, but that didn't really happen."

The northern part of the province seems to be where the drought has hit especially hard. And this, just after a year or two with too much moisture.

"In one year, we went from everybody having lots of hay, to no hay," explains Yancy Crosier, the Chief Business Development Officer for **VJV Auctions**. "I would say that's the only saving grace for a lot of our producers this year is that they did have a little bit of carryover."

"But if this happens again next year, it will be catastrophic."

As in the south, water issues surfaced with some northern ranchers having to move water by pipe up to five miles.

Crosier estimates five per cent of the cows in the region have already been sold, keeping markets in places like Beaverlodge open, in a season when they're normally shut down.

"I think what we saw is a lot of the younger generation farmers trying to weather the storm through this. What we did see the biggest reduction in is the elder age rancher who traditionally every year says 'oh, one more year and then I'm going to get out' – well, this year they got out. Everything came to town."

Community pastures were affected, which meant yearlings being pulled out earlier to be sold. That made the math on grasser cattle tough, with a much shorter time for gains.

"Traditionally here in the north we have a lot of guys that usually background cattle. There's nobody backgrounding any cattle this year because nobody has any extra feed," adds Crosier, who expects pen space to become an issue as feedlots absorb the lighter stock that came early.

"We're really nervous as a company because traditionally we have a lot of backgrounded cattle to sell. I don't know what we're going to sell up here from January through to May."

"We started selling calves in the middle of July," says Balog, "and we've sold a lot of calves early that should've not been coming to town until now."

"So marketing has maybe gotten a little bit different. There's a lot more use of forward contracting and of futures contacts." Balog also notes eastern buyers were active and aggressive buying the earlier fall calves in his area, while local feedlots were focused more on yearlings.

When it comes to marketing cows or bred heifers, the mantra remains – the top end will always sell.

"I think it will be fine on the real good quality breeding stock, the younger cows and heifers," says Daines. "It's not going to be a runaway, but I don't really talk doom and gloom either. It's an opportunity to get your cow herd a lot younger."

However, the marketers admit they expect many of the herd reduction cows could wind up in the meat market. If it's any comfort, Goodbrand's view is that cows have been trimmed from Canadian herds for six months now, but prices have stayed strong. Exports south are increasing, and with an Australian herd rebuild underway, he sees the North American demand for cow meat being higher.

"There's not that downward price pressure because we've got to substitute the grind coming from the oceanic beef."

"Now is the time producers need to start looking at any other value add opportunities," comments Crosier. "Is it the verified beef program, is it EU certified, or CRSB? What is it that gives you the extra cent or two per hundredweight on your cattle? Now's the time to squeeze it out."

AND THEN THERE'S COVID....

While COVID restrictions did make business difficult for auction markets, as an essential service, they carried on with their sales. Many already had a presence in the online space, so weren't really scrambling to get there.

Bob Balog lays claim to being the first in Canada to offer video sales, back in 1991 (beating VJV by one week, he grins, in their bragging rights race) by delivering video cassettes directly to feedlots. Technology has come a long way since then, and with bigger herds and feedlots wanting to take cattle directly, Balog had seen a renewed enthusiasm for video sales even before COVID.

"Is the video going away? No chance – it's here forever," states Balog. "If anything, COVID's pushed it more to that area."

"VJV was ahead of the curve when it came to the online system," remarks Yancy Crosier. "With our northern markets, we don't have a lot of buyers that travel up here anymore. So when COVID hit, as a company we were like, whew, glad we did that."

And the marketers agree – the stands are really about the sellers.

"People really want to watch their calves sell, so we spent some money and invested in technology so that watching the sale was much better and much easier," explains lan Goodbrand. "There were less and less people watching the sale in the stands all the time, and that was happening already. This just accelerated it."

Innisfail Auction Market had video capability for bull sales pre-COVID, and did use the tool more during the height of restrictions, but Daines says their buyers still like to see the cattle live. He does anticipate some use of the online bidding option for a few more of this fall's female sales. Also his Uncle Danny Daines likes to promote their sales on Instagram!

Opening the bidding to a wider audience has benefited some sales, especially horse auctions. And it's meant less miles for some on the buying end.

"With the bigger feedlots, they've got enough stuff going on, they can tune in and sit right at their desk at home and still give orders, take phone calls and bid on the cattle all at the same time," adds Balog.

But it does change the auction atmosphere, admits Crosier, who now sells to tens he can see, instead of hundreds.

"It's a bit different environment for us auctioneers but we still try to make it fun for everybody, as we talk through the cameras to producers. They are watching from home."

"As long as we sell them by auction, we still figure that's the most fair way to get the price," emphasizes Balog.



November 12

1:00 PM

Charolais Show & Divine Divas Divine Divas: \$15,000 Pair of Heifer Calves Jackpot

November 13

11:00 AM

Bull Pen Show & Commercial Cattlemen's Day

4:00 PM

Alberta Supreme Show of Champions

CONTACT:

Stephen Cholak: 780-485-7865 | sscholak@shaw.ca

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7:00 PM

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December 11

9:30 AM

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10:00 AM

Alberta Select Pen of 3 Bull Show

12:00 PM

Alberta Select \$10,000 Pick Of The Barn

1:30 PM

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CONTACT:

Luke Marshall: 403-877-7017 | luke@futurefarms.ca Tyler Bullick: 403-501-0660 | tylerbullick2014@gmail.com Stephen Cholak: 780-485-7865 | sscholak@shaw.ca

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Cold Stress:

WHAT TO KNOW GOING INTO THIS WINTER

BY DR. MELISSA MOGGY, ALBERTA FARM ANIMAL CARE



What is cold stress?

All mammals need to maintain their internal body temperatures, averaging 38°C in cattle. However, they don't need to use extra energy to maintain normal body temperatures when the environmental conditions are within a "thermoneutral zone." The thermoneutral zone is defined as the range of ambient temperatures without regulatory changes in metabolic heat production or evaporative heat loss.

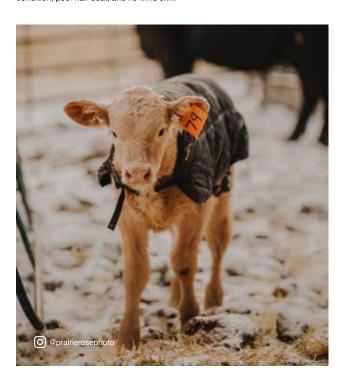
When environmental temperatures drop below this zone, their bodies becomes stressed (hence the term cold stress). So, their body will increase its metabolic rate to maintain average temperatures. If the animal cannot maintain its body temperature, it will experience hypothermia. If severe enough, the animal will need medical intervention.

Below are estimates of lower critical temperatures for beef cattle. Keep in mind that these estimates do not consider various factors that may impact an animal's threshold (e.g., condition of the animal and wind chill).

ESTIMATES OF LOWER CRITICAL TEMPERATURES FOR BEEF CATTLE IN DIFFERENT SEASONS*

| Season | Lower Critical Temperature |
|--------------|----------------------------|
| Summer | 15°C |
| Fall | 7°C |
| Early winter | 0°C |
| Late winter | -8°C |

*Assuming that the animal is not susceptible to cold stress due to age, disease, poor condition, poor hair coat, and no wind chill.



Why may cold stress be more of a concern this year?

Most of the beef cattle raised in Canada acclimate to winter quickly. Very young, old, and ill animals are more susceptible to cold stress, especially those without good fat coverage.

This is why we recommend that cattle should be in good condition going into winter (i.e., Body Condition Score of 3). However, this may be a challenge for beef producers due to the recent drought and feed shortages.

What are the signs of cold stress in beef cattle?

In beef cattle, the following are signs of cold stress:

- · Calves won't suckle a bottle or fingers
- Depression, fatigue, unwillingness to move, and going down
- Fresh frostbite
- Low body temperature (<35°C)
- Pale gums
- Shivering (but may stop if the condition becomes severe)
- · Skin or mouth is cold to the touch

What can farmers do to support their cattle?

The best thing farmers can do to support their cattle this winter is to assess their body condition before exposure to cold temperatures. This MUST be done by touching your animals, getting a true sense of how much fat coverage each animal has and then grouping your cattle as follows.

1. Cull animals These are the animals that are too thin, old, or sick to make it through the winter. With current feed shortages, we need to optimize the health of the animals we choose to keep and not stretch our feed too far. Cull your animals before their condition starts to deteriorate, and they become compromised or unfit for transport.

- 2. Thin and old animals These animals are not in such poor condition that they must be culled, and the producer is confident that they can improve their condition in time for winter. Routinely monitor for signs of cold stress.
- 3. Bred heifers and second calvers These animals are in good condition but still growing, so they need more nutritional support. Monitor closely for signs of cold stress when temperatures drop.
- 4. Mature animals in good condition These animals are in good condition and would typically fare well over winter. Monitor closely for signs of cold stress when temperatures drop.

If natural windbreaks (e.g., a tree line) are not available, man-made barriers can be used (e.g., snow fencing) to protect the animals from the wind. Bed your animals to keep them dry and off the cold ground.

A winter-feeding protocol is needed for the groups discussed above. Producers must also ensure that water is always available. Although snow can be a source of water for beef cattle, conditions need to be just right for them to rely on it as a source of water.

Finally, producers must monitor the weather closely throughout the winter to anticipate when their cattle will need extra support (e.g., supplementing high-energy feed) to combat cold stress.

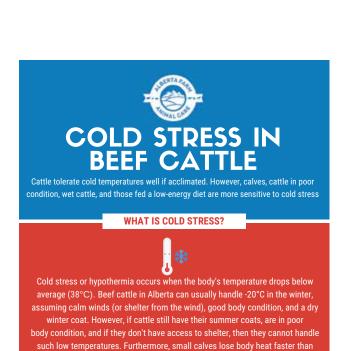
Where can you find more information?

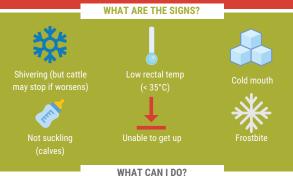
ALERT Line is an anonymous producer helping producer call line. If you have questions or concerns about animal welfare, including if you need support, call this number: 1-800-506-2273.

AFAC Website There is information for practically every livestock species raised in Alberta on the AFAC website, afac.ab.ca.

Agricultural Fieldmen Agricultural fieldmen develop, implement, and control programs set out by the Agricultural Service Board.

A directory of Agricultural Fieldmen is available at aaaf.ab.ca/aaaf-directory.





adults and cannot handle as low temperatures.







WWW.AFAC.AB.CA

Operation Taking the Extra Step to Protect Employees Against COVID-19

BY MEGAN MADDEN

Alberta Cattle Feeders' Association

It all started with a COVID-19 outbreak in March on VRP Farms in Picture Butte, Alberta.

"It was an extremely trying time," says Jolayne Farn, HR Manager of VRP. "Having 11 confirmed cases and 42 staff off work and quarantined showed us we never wanted to have to operate like that again. Even though we currently had strict control measures in place to help prevent COVID-19 from entering our facilities it still found us."

Farn says it affected everyone – from barn crew to pen riders to the management team – and the business saw significant impacts. "One lot had NO riders, four lots were out of commission, and ensuring the cattle were fed each day, we were totally off the market for a week – no shipping, no bringing animals in. The effects staggered all the way into the next month," Farn explains.

VRP Farms operates a number of feedlots and farms, a trucking division, and the Roto-Mix business. Their reach is far and contact tracing was a significant undertaking.

VRP recently brought in 11 workers through the Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program and are working with Calgary Catholic Immigration Society to obtain support on newcomers' settlement for social insurance numbers, bank accounts, mailing addresses, drivers' licenses, etc. This led to the idea of vaccinating everyone on site to reduce travel and logistics coordination.

"For the health and safety of our employees, our farm, and our community, we wanted everyone to get



The VRP farms on-site vaccination clinic.

vaccinated as soon as possible," says Farn, adding they vaccinated about 55 people on site. "We opened it up to neighbouring feedlots and farms as well, and it was great to see a couple of other operations join in on the day."

"We just want other producers to know that their foreign workers are as eligible as the Canadian workers and able to be protected as well."

AHS took the time to acknowledge Van Raay Farms: "They really did a tremendous job with their plans and collaborative discussions. What they had drafted, they could demonstrate with our discussions and our site visit. We really want to extend our appreciation for this company role-modelling a strong plan and creating a culture of COVID-19 safety amongst the competing and demanding work they do in the ag sector."



BRED FEMALE SALE

Saturday December 4th, 2021

1:00 PM MST ~ STAVELY, AB

Sale managed by:





225 RED HEIFERS



225 BLACK HEIFERS



50 SECOND CALVERS

500 Bred Females Sell





scrc Cedar Ridge 460F

 BW
 BW EPD
 CE EPD

 78 lbs
 -7.5
 8

50 Black MAX influence bred heifers A.I synchronized to calve January 10th. Guaranteed in calf to A.I only bred to SGFC Cedar Ridge 460F (Black Angus)

50 Black bred heifers guaranteed A.I only calving March 20th. A.I to SGFC Cedar Ridge 460F

50 Black bred heifers calving April 1st- A.I synchronized to SGFC Cedar Ridge 460F - 1 cleanup cycle



SGFC Monarch 06E

 BW
 BW EPD
 CE EPD

 71 lbs
 -7.2
 8

50 Red MAX influence bred heifers A.I synchronized to calve January 10th. Guaranteed in calf to A.I only bred to SGFC Monarch 06E (Red Angus)

50 Red bred heifers guaranteed A.I only- calving March 20th- A.I to SGFC Monarch 06E

50 Red bred heifers calving April 1st- A.I synchronized to SGFC Monarch 06E - 1 cleanup cycle



LT Venture 3198

 BW
 BW EPD
 CE EPD

 84 lbs
 -2.5
 8

50 Red bred heifers guaranteed A.I only calving March 20th BRED CHAOLAIS. A.I to LT Venture 3198

50 Black bred heifers guaranteed A.I only calving March 20th BRED CHAROLAIS. A.I to LT Venture 3198

30 Black bred heifers calving April 1st BRED CHAROLAIS - A.I synchronized to LT Venture 3198

30 Red bred heifers calving April 1st BRED CHAROLAIS- A.I synchronized to LT Venture 3198

Sale Contact

JARED SHERMAN 403.333.0499 JARED@SODERGLEN.COM Can't make it to the sale? Internet Bidding Available.

To view this sale visit www.dlms.ca, Fill out the registration form located under registration and sign-up for your free user account and select a username and password.

BIDDERS - To be approved as a bidder, Log in to dlms.ca and click BUYER APPROVAL tab, select the sale you are interested in bidding at and click sign up.

For more information Call DLMS Reps: Mark Shologan - 780-699-5082 or DLMS Purebred Team 780.991-3025





The IVIoon's Gift

Pliny the Elder, the first-century Roman naturalist, stated in his Natural History that the Moon "replenishes the earth; when she approaches it, she fills all bodies, while, when she recedes, she empties them."

The moon connects us, guides us. It presents a moment of rest and reflection. A chance to revel in our successes and look forth to the new phase we enter tomorrow.

Hitting Reset – Rancher Style

BY RYAN COPITHORNE

2021 has been an interesting year for ranchers to say the least. A pandemic year caused the world to appear crazy and in "lockdown" while, those of us in rural communities, were dumbfounded about what this means to us. Quite frankly, most ranchers just put their heads down and went to work doing what ranchers know best to do…work hard, buckle down, and make sure the food hits the table.

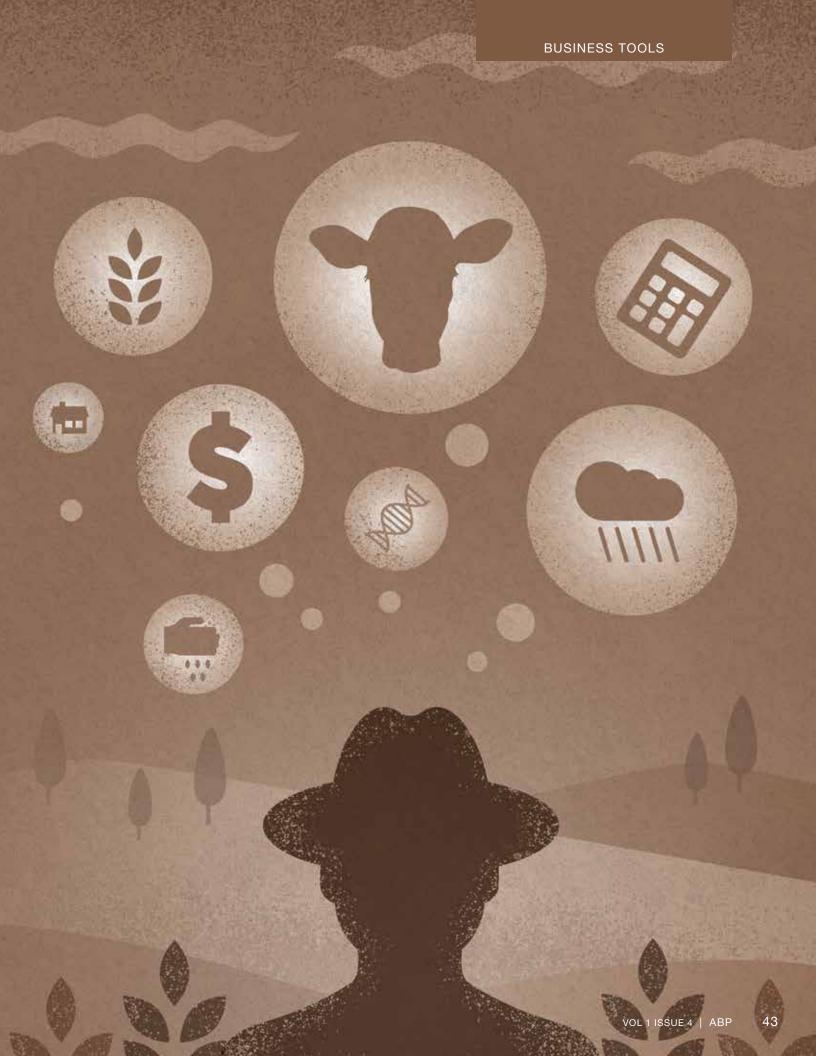
Then we get hit with a drought situation. Droughts are common and part of the business we operate in, but never easy. The good thing is ranchers and farmers in Western Canada are tough, resilient, and know how to deal with this type of thing. This year, the challenge was that the drought was widespread. North, South, East, and West hay and forage yields were percentages of normal, and grain yields were decimated by La Nina dry conditions, causing barley to rise from \$4/bu to over \$9/bu inside of a year.

So, this has happened, how do we now reposition our ranches and ourselves, refortify, and move on?

A few years ago, I decided to get my MBA to find ways to connect modern business with the good old ranch

education I had growing up. To tell you the truth, the MBA was a hill of beans compared to the "life-lessons" of spring storms at calving wiping out a portion of calf crops, or droughts cutting grazing capacities, or markets moving up and down over 20 per cent on any given year. An MBA doesn't prepare you for any of that. Ranchers are in the toughest business around and don't get near the respect for the ability to weather these kinds of challenges and stresses. I wonder how the CEOs of today's multinational corporations would make out in the economic storms our ranchers face every year battling weather and volatility of the commodity markets!

I was reminded recently of this life lesson from a book by the late great Sherm Ewing, a family friend, called "The Range"...



SOME ADVICE TO A YOUNG FELLOW

I say young man, I want to talk with you a minute. Get up and dust. Don't wait for something to turn up. Go at it and turn it up. Put the harness on and pull, no matter if the belly band chafes or the hames don't fit; pull, you'll soon get hardened to it. A collar spot here and there won't hurt long anyway. Don't try to begin where the old man left off. If you do, you'll quit where he began.

Get into the deal yourself, do as the old man did. If you cannot afford a thing, don't buy until you can. The old gentleman did that way, and that is how he got a credit.

A credit young fellow is worth more dollars than you can ever earn. No matter about money, get a credit and maintain it. It is the best asset anyone ever had.

Keep your appointments and be on time. Take time to think things out. Don't be stingy but be prudent. Don't get pessimistic. Shut your mouth and keep your eyes open. If a neighbour goes wrong, don't doubt the integrity of the neighbour over on the other corner.

Pessimism is a mountain that darkens the view. It is the obstruction to your vision, that makes it look so. Pull, and keep your faith in God and humanity. This world is just what we make it.

Opportunity is on all sides for the man who pulls steadily all the time, no matter what his station in life may be.

- by Anon

Isn't that a great piece of advice? Let's look at how else we can reset our focus.

Taking a lesson from that MBA, let's try to incorporate one of the tools we used as a way to rebuild from a very devastating year of drought and tight financial conditions. The old SWOT analysis.

SWOT stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. Take a piece of paper or a white board and draw four quadrants with each of those headings in each quadrant. This is one of the best things you can do in your operation. Think both macro (global implications) and

micro (related to your business, your family, and your local community) when building this matrix.

STRENGTHS

What are you uniquely designed to do? What do you do well? From an industry standpoint, cattle numbers are the lowest they have been since the 1980s. Demand for beef is at the highest level ever, and beef cutouts have never been higher than this year. Exports are 10% higher than pre-COVID levels. Consumers during COVID lockdowns learned how to cook, learned they liked beef, and were willing to spend an extra dollar on it, and our industry survived a whole year and a half of



restaurants being shut down. Isn't that something to celebrate? Our industry has many strengths.

Now write down your strengths. What are you uniquely good at? What about the other people involved in your operation? What are their strengths? What resources do you have on your ranch that will set you up for success? How can you take advantage of these strengths?

WEAKNESSES

What is holding you back from profitability? One of the problems I see in the industry is that we often rank ourselves by how many cows we own. Judging ourselves by the number of cows we own pushes us to maximization not optimization, as this drought has brought to our attention. In a drought, too many cows is dangerous. Bred cattle can be illiquid and often gravitate towards meat prices. Meanwhile yearlings are at attractive levels. Can you incorporate a mixture of yearlings along with your bred cattle, which are liquid and an easy way to increase or decrease numbers during dry or wet years?

How much debt do you have? Can you service your debt in an off year?

What about overheads? Do all your profits get eaten up in overhead expenses? Ranches from my experience are between \$.50/head/day and over \$2/head/day in overhead expenses, yet when we custom rent grass or custom feed we don't include overheads in our rates. This is where ranchers lose money and don't realize why, when they don't factor in overheads.

OPPORTUNITIES

This is the most important of the categories where we assess how our strengths can become business opportunities. What are trends we see in our urban friends or our local community that are demands not being filled? If we are doing the same as everyone else in our community, following trends, we are likely not filling the unfilled need of opportunity. Look for holes to fill!

We can't get better than the average pricing if we are producing industry average product. Sometimes we need to go against the grain of what the industry is producing or recommending! Produce something of quality, but different, and market it! We need to make a hand-built Ferrari, not a mass produced Ford Festiva if we want above average pricing.

Opportunity is on all sides for the [person] who pulls steadily all the time, no matter what his station in life may be.

THREATS

This is not where we let pessimism, fear or worry obstruct our goals and dreams. This is where we calculate which hurdles we will have to jump and how high those hurdles will be. Yes, we have Vegans, cow emission sniffers, alternative land uses infringing on our operations. This is where we compartmentalize these threats. Quantify their impact. Instead of losing sleep about the threats, let's identify them! Manage them! You will soon realize they are just a river to cross or a small challenge to overcome and not worth the stress we put on them in terms of losing sleep. Putting stresses on paper can often be a way to let these "threats" go and realize they are nothing more than speed bumps that can be managed. Success is not made in getting the highest prices every year, but in managing the losses in the down years. This is the biggest lesson of my career.

To my fellow cattlemen, it has been a tough year. I feel it in the people I talk to. We are feeling unappreciated and unloved sometimes. I encourage everyone to be sure you have a network of friends that you can laugh about the tough times with. This is how we get through tough times. Not too many people get to stare at open skies and wide-open fields the way ranchers do, so relish those moments with your family and friends and remember that the tough side of our business is only that, and doesn't shape us. "Opportunity is on all sides for the [person] who pulls steadily all the time, no matter what his station in life may be."

Reset and ranch on my friends.



Roasts Reimagined:

Get out of the Roast Rut with a BBQ Pitmaster

WHEN YOU HAVE NEARLY 65,000 FOLLOWERS ON INSTAGRAM WATCHING YOU WORK YOUR MAGIC ON THE BARBEQUE, YOU MUST BE DOING SOMETHING RIGHT.

BY LORI LOREE







Mel Chmilar Jr is an Alberta welder who began cooking for his buddies at the shop in Edmonton. It only exploded from there.

"When I was 18 or 19, the guys would come home from the rigs and they'd grab a case of beer and a bag of meat and show up at my place," laughed Chmilar. And because he was constantly cooking, he thought he'd begin posting his creations and preparation on social media for others.

This self-proclaimed welder, husband, father and pitmaster is always looking at improving his cooking skills and making cuts of beef an elevated experience. One of the ways Chmilar celebrates cooler weather is with a great roast.

A warm roast, cooking in the oven with a side of carrots and potatoes is a staple for most Albertans in the winter. However, it can get monotonous, so Chmilar has some suggestions for looking at the roast a little differently and using a grill.

PREPARATION

Take the roast out of the fridge (his favourite is a three to four-bone rib-eye) and let sit on the counter for an hour. Fire up the barbeque, "or even better, a charcoal barbeque," says Chmilar. "Fire it up to 300 or 325."

If he has friends over and wants a higher-end presentation, Chmilar will French the ends of the bones and expose them about an inch-and-a-half. "If you have some butcher's twine, you can wrap a few rings of that around to hold it in shape."

SEASONING

Chmilar prefers to let the meat do the talking. "I love a little bit of salt and pepper and then coat it completely in Montreal Steak Spice so that it creates a nice, hard crust." He also splashes olive oil over the roast.

GRILLING

Chmilar recommends grilling it over indirect heat, suggesting that the internal temperature of the meat should get to 120 to 125 degrees. "Then you are going to want to pull it off the grill and crank that barbeque to 400 or 450 degrees. Then cook indirectly until the meat hits 130 degrees and take it off and let rest for 15 minutes," adding, "you are going to have the perfect prime rib."

Chmilar recommends buying from your local butcher if possible. He's a big supporter of Alberta agriculture and the first person to champion Alberta Beef at competitions and on his social media.

Photos courtesy Mel Chmilar Jr









Tech Talk: Cool New Tools

Herd Management Goes Digital

DEVELOPING DIGITAL OPTIONS TO SUPPORT BEEF PRODUCERS HAS BEEN SLOW, BUT ALBERTA-BASED COMPANY FLOKK SYSTEMS IS TAKING A BOLD STEP FORWARD.



Flokk Systems' digital beef herd management and traceability system, now undergoing field testing, is receiving attention from producers and entrepreneurs alike.

"Flokk will provide cow/calf producers with the ease of use and functionality for their operations that grain and oilseed producers experience with their in-cab consoles," says Mark Olson, president of Flokk Systems.

Enhanced traceability is playing an important role in beef industry sustainability, market access, and disease outbreak management. Flokk applies built-for-purpose hardware and cloud services to digitize herd management, and seamlessly integrates enhanced traceability.

"Flokk brings an innovative approach to digital herd records and traceability reporting. We are delivering a solution that will integrate into everyday herd operations and operate as a stand-alone system in all kinds of weather," Olson says.

The system involves a handheld device, herd management software, and periodic internet access. The device contains sophisticated herd management software and an integrated RFID tag reader, allowing most operations to be completed single-handed.

Built for outdoor use, Flokk collects livestock data updates and traceability movements in the field. Producers later plug into a laptop or desktop to access and update records in a spreadsheet. Traceability data can also be sent through the cloud when an internet connection is available.

The herd management software included in the system allows producers to maintain records, collect vital information, and complete Canadian traceability reporting. It offers a variety of functions, from collecting and maintaining animal records to recording animal location, movement and dispersal. It can also record animal health conditions, pregnancy test results, vaccinations, medications and more.

The website Flokk.ca offers software updates, device configuration, backup and data sharing options. Producers can also use it for system training, data analysis and reporting.

Flokk was selected as a finalist in the "AgTech Meets BioTech" category of the 2021 Inventures Startup Pitch competition. It's an innovation event that brings together investors and entrepreneurs to launch creative ideas and offers a \$10,000 prize in each category.

Olson anticipates Flokk will be available for purchase in spring 2022 at a price comparable to other herd management systems. Learn more at: www.flokk.ca

Precision Ranching with BETSY

DIGITAL HAS REPLACED A LOT OF HANDWRITTEN RECORDS, BUT MOVE AWAY FROM THE TRUSTY, DOG-EARED, FIT-IN-YOUR-POCKET FARM SUPPLY STORE COW RECORD NOTEBOOK? WELL, IT LOOKS LIKE EVEN THAT 'SACRED COW' HAS GOT SOME STIFF COMPETITION...FROM BETSY.

BETSY, or 'Bovine Expert Tracking and Surveillance,' brings the same approach applied in precision farming to the ranching game.

"Betsy is an AI system - which is artificial intelligence, not the other Al," clarifies Mokah Shmigelsky, with a smile. The idea was sparked over a campfire coffee discussion with her prairie-based ranching cousins, as they wished for a technological way to help identify their animals. Shmigelsky and her husband Geoffrey called the company OneCup AI, on the premise the cattle herd could be monitored over one cup of coffee in the morning. They began by testing video footage of their family's ranch animals, discovering Al could differentiate and recognize Angus cattle on just their appearance, with 100 per cent accuracy.

So they developed OneCup, a patent-pending, vision-based 360 Live ID platform, which is effectively face recognition for animals, for tracking and surveillance. BETSY can identify beef and dairy cattle from almost any angle and at a considerable distance.

But if cameras are installed and working 24-7 on the ranch, why stop there? The Shmigelsky's used their tech background to look for other ways to maximize the data collection potential.

"We've been working with ranching partners ever since to find out what value BETSY could provide them that they maybe didn't have before."

Mokah explains BETSY first identifies the animals in your herd, then automatically begins to collect data on those animals – things like movement, health, and growth. The metrics you might want to know on your herd are all tied back to the individual animal and can be checked online. Data can be pulled up on a single animal, a group of animals or your entire herd to see what's going on, and for overall herd management.

Signals like lameness, coughing, nutrition intake, and growth rates are all observed, along with estrous



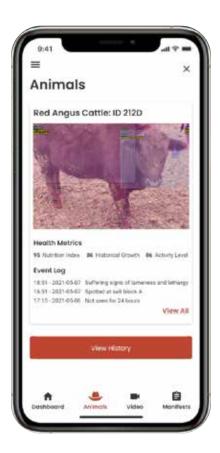












activity or calving. If an animal is missing for a day or two, then BETSY texts the user.

"Pretty much anything that you can see on your animals, BETSY also can see, and proactively notifies you of anything you want to know," says Shmigelsky.

With some first-hand familiarity with real ranchers and tech challenges, Shmigelsky knew their product had to be ready to use out of the box, with no complicated setup, and provide easy-to-find data. She describes their system as 'plug and play,' once the cameras are mounted, plus it uses low bandwidth to make it accessible even in areas with sketchy internet.

"The cameras are placed where the animals congregate, so at a watering station, salt lick or mineral block, where the cameras can see the animals one to two times a day. The wifi extension allows the cameras to be placed further away from the wifi, so we can get animals that aren't necessarily right next to the barnyard."

Only a little over a year into development, OneCup AI has 20 beta sites across Canada monitoring various livestock types, including sheep, hogs, bison, elk and horses. Research partners include both Lakeland and Olds Colleges. They've also got an early adopter program as they seek 100 cattle ranches to sign on with the BETSY system for a year. Interest has been high, but there are still some spots available for the program.

"We are developing our phenotype tracking as well right now," adds

Shmigelsky. "We are working with the Canadian Angus Association to develop automated scoring of teats and udders, as well as foot and claw. This will allow unbiased and automated scoring of phenotypes to optimize herd decisions. The phenotype tracking Als will be included in the BETSY system once they've been developed and tested, so early adopters will have that functionality as soon as it becomes available."

Developed in western Canada, there's been a lot of international interest in the system already.

"There is nothing like it in the market right now, and people are very excited about the potential."

For more information on BETSY, you can visit www.onecup.ai or call 1-866-BETSYAI.

Cudlobe Bull Sale

150+ Bulls

December 8, 2021
Stavely, Alberta

Real Bulls for Real Cowboys

~ Feedyard Profitability ~ ~ Quality Grado ~ ~ Conversion ~ ~ Mald ~

New Sale Site & Time

Come prior to Bull Sale to view bulls. in the Stayely Co followed by Prime Rib Supper

We will help you market your calves

Cudlobe Influence Feeder Sale

Early October

has generated a \$.10 premium for those utilizing our bulls as verified by



Cudlobe Commercial Helfer Sale

Early April 250 Top Quality Replacement Heifers

Canadals Leading Source of Carcass Cenetics













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CCIA

CANADIAN
CATTLE
IDENTIFICATION
AGENCY

WORKING TOWARDS TRACEABILITY TOGETHER

Led by representation from 15 livestock organizations from across Canada, the Canadian Cattle Identification Agency, CCIA, is the responsible administrator for beef cattle, bison, sheep and pending regulation cervids and goats in Canada (with some exemptions in Quebec).

WHAT'S NEW IN THE WEBSTORE

SHEARWELL RFID — An innovative steel wrap-around beef tag, the first of its kind. The microchip is overmolded in a plastic insert so readability and read range of the transponder are never compromised.

DESTRON DMR RFID — Upgraded version of the Destron

eTag. Improvements include a fully molded outer tag housing for better durability and water resistance and an enhanced locking mechanism for greater retention.

FOR ALL THINGS TRACEABILITY

canadaid.ca — your source for who we are and what we do.

clts.canadaid.ca — Canadian Livestock Tracking System (CLTS), is CCIA's database where essential traceability information is captured and serves as the first line of defence in the event of a traceback.

support.canadaid.ca — your "how to" destination. tags.canadaid.ca — tags and tag accessories when you need them, 24/7.

WE ARE ON THE MOVE

We have had a longstanding goal of owning our own building consisting of both office and warehouse space under one roof in Calgary. The CCIA Board's vision is now a reality offering the potential to increase our in-house services and become more self-reliant in order to better serve the industry as we move forward.

UHF NEW POSSIBILITIES

CCIA is exploring the introduction of Ultra-High Frequency (UHF) RFID tags into the existing system in a cost-efficient manner that augments the approved CCIA tag and supplies benefits of the technology to on-farm

data collection. Data integrity is enhanced, and data capture is more efficient by pairing an UHF tag number with a CCIA tag number and storing the cross reference in the CLTS.



To get to know us better and learn more about how we are working towards traceability together, visit www.canadaid.ca | info@canadaid.ca | 1-877-909-2333



THE RIPPLE EFFECT:

Keep Tag Data Up to Date

It's a tale as old as time: producers have a bag of extra tags lying around the barn "just in case" but when activated tags are only used every once in a while, and the data associated with that tag isn't updated properly, the impact is felt down the line, well after that cow has left the farm.

"Issues arise when feeder calves are inducted into a feedlot bearing a CCIA tag with the wrong date," says Casey Vander Ploeg, Vice-President of Alberta Cattle Feeders' Association (ACFA). "At next calving season, the tag is placed but is a year old. If this wrongly dated tag is not caught and corrected when the feeder is placed in the feedlot, then it carries that tag all the way to the processing plant. When the animal is scanned at the plant, the animal appears one year (or more) older than it actually is. Because tag reads typically trump a 'toothed' read or 'dentition' read, the cattle feeder is discounted heavily for that animal."

According to CCIA, there are some best practices to adopt when it comes to age verification:

- ☐ The farm of origin is the only account holder that can age verify an animal.
- ☐ If you are opting to age verify animals, you need to submit the event PRIOR to the animals leaving the Farm of Origin.
- Only age verify tags AFTER they have been applied to animals.
- Only age verify the tags that you use on animals. Do not enter birthdates for an entire package of tags if you have not used the whole package.
- ☐ If you are age verifying using a calving start date, ensure that all tags that you are entering were applied to animals that were born within 90 days of the calving start date.

- If you calve for longer than 90 days and wish to use a calving start date, you will need to keep track of what tags were applied to animals in each 90-day interval, and age verify separately.
- When you age verify your animals, double check that you have entered the correct year in the date of birth.

If you have age verified tags that have not been applied or age verified tags with incorrect information, learn how to deactivate the event and correct the information:

- By transaction when the whole group of tags is incorrect: support.canadaid.ca/clts/submitevents/deactivating-events/transaction/
- By tag: support.canadaid.ca/clts/ submit-events/deactivating-events/single-tag/
- By File Upload: support.canadaid.ca/clts/ submit-events/deactivating-events/file-upload/

After correcting tag information, check the transaction to ensure the updates completed successfully. If there are errors, CCIA likely needs to remove subsequent events for the deactivation to complete. Please call 1-877-909-2333 or email info@canadaid.ca

ALBERTA BEEF PRODUCERS

Repercussions of Check-off Refunds Reach Beyond ABP

This is part two of a three-part series. You can find part one in the September issue of ABP.

With the drastic cuts made to the 2021 budget, Alberta Beef Producers (ABP) is no longer able to support external organizations at levels we have in the past. Funding to three organizations working in key priority areas – which ABP has supported since their establishment – was reduced by half.

"Major cuts were made to groups we had funded and couldn't continue at that level any longer. We realize they depend on ABP for their budgets, but at the end of the day we can only do what we can do," says Dr. Melanie Wowk, ABP Chair.

"It isn't just money being taken away from ABP, but the industry as a whole and organizations that benefit the entire agriculture industry."

As a board, we want to ensure ABP's future. We want to make it as strategic and effective as we can, given the limited resources.

ABP was a founding partner of Cows and Fish in 1992, when the beef industry recognized the need to take a proactive role in addressing, what were at the time, emerging issues related to water quality and riparian management. Later, when Alberta's livestock industry saw a need for an arm's-length organization focused on animal welfare, ABP was instrumental in the development of Alberta Farm Animal Care (AFAC).

And, when the provincial government introduced a bill that brought on widespread change to labour legislation for farmers and ranchers, ABP joined nearly 30 agriculture stakeholder groups to form a producer-driven initiative – representing over 95 per cent of agriculture producers in Alberta.

"It's a big part of our operations budget and that support signals to other groups that there's value in the work AFAC is doing. ABP has been an important part of collaborative projects within the cattle industry," says Annemarie Pedersen, Executive Director, AFAC.

A portion of the financial support from ABP is earmarked for the AFAC Alert Line. These dedicated funds have allowed the program to grow into a trusted resource around the province for animal welfare concerns. AFAC's extension work provides producers with information and training on emerging issues and emergency preparedness, including its Emergency Livestock Handling Equipment Trailer program.

"ABP has been, and continues to be, a critical and valued supporter of AFAC. We partner with groups that are moving the needle forward on welfare – first and foremost," says Pedersen. "This change in funding will have significant impact on our bottom line, but not on how we work with ABP."

Industry funding is also important for access to government programs like the Canadian Agricultural Partnership (CAP), which requires matching financial commitments.

"[Cutting] support for AgSafe and other groups that are really important for ABP to be involved in, were hard decisions to make because they benefit a lot of

It isn't just money being taken away from ABP, but the industry as a whole and organizations that benefit the entire agriculture industry.

us as producers. When the resources aren't there, you have to be strategic in what you choose to do," says Fred Lozeman, ABP director and rancher from the Southwest Zone.

"As a board, we want to ensure ABP's future. We want to make it as strategic and effective as we can, given the limited resources."

ORGANIZATIONS WILL HAVE TO PIVOT

"AgSafe Alberta was a direct response from industry commodity groups to the implementation of Bill 6," says Jody Wacowich, Executive Director, AgSafe Alberta. "We still had [government funding] dollars going into this year, so it didn't seem as big of a bite this year. In upcoming years, we will feel it more significantly."

Seventy-five per cent of the AgSafe Alberta operating budget comes from the commodity groups, divided between crops and livestock. Except for ABP, all other commodity groups remain at the level of their initial funding commitment.

Wacowich's concern is that "it starts to create discussion amongst other commodity groups who are also looking at tighter budgets and do they reduce their funding? That would be a significant impairment to [AgSafe Alberta] helping farms and ranches with their safety programs."

That's a sentiment echoed by the other organizations. While ABP is committed to welfare and farm safety, decreases in funding could be perceived as a lack of need or trust in an organization. Consistent support from the beef sector conveys to producers that these groups are trusted partners, whose work is valued by their representative organization.

"I knew ABP was struggling to continue programs the way they'd been doing things because the check-off dollars weren't there. We've been happy that the support has continued as it has knowing that ABP's sustainability has been at risk," says Norine Ambrose, Executive Director, Cows and Fish.

Those dollars provided some flexibility for Cows and Fish to focus on core work with landowners across Alberta, which isn't always possible to do when utilizing grant funding tied to specific projects. Contributions to organizations like Cows and Fish show the public that ABP supports environmental stewardship in agriculture.

"This is important for us to be successful in the future. It isn't just about optics or social licence; it's about taking action. Even though funding has been reduced, ABP's support is really important to us," says Ambrose.

WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS

"[It will take time to] fully understand the ramifications of some of those cuts... we tried to make the best decisions based on our current situation," says Brodie Haugan, ABP Finance Chair. "There's been a slow bleed as ABP has tried to avoid making significant cuts... we're hoping that by making these decisions today we are setting up ABP for a stronger future."

The lack of industry funding is limiting our ability to maintain a leadership role in supporting work on riparian health, farm and ranch safety, and care and handling best practices. Both the executive and board members agree – ABP needs to increase revenue over the next few years, and put that money back into the industry.

The third and final part of this budget series will be in the January issue of the ABP magazine.



Cattlemen's Young Leaders Graduate Spotlight

BY JESSICA RADEAU Youth Leadership Coordinator, Canadian Cattlemen's Association

The Cattlemen's Young Leaders (CYL) Mentor Program is celebrating its 2019 and 2020 graduates. The graduates this year have proven to be a resilient group in finding creative ways to maximize opportunities through the program amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

The CYL Program, delivered through the Canadian Cattlemen's Association, was established in 2010, where young people across Canada ages 18-35 are matched with an industry leader for a nine-month mentorship

and participate in various industry events and learning opportunities. Thirty-one CYLs graduated the program this fall, of which 16 are from Alberta.



Iva Harberg (2020 CYL)
Cow-calf producer from Hays Lake, AB

FOCUS AREA:

Grazing Management & Soil Health

CYL MENTOR:

Dr. Kim Ominski, University of Manitoba Dept. of Animal Science Professor

Iva Harberg farms with her father, husband, and their two young children on a mixed farming operation in Central Alberta. This past year Harberg and her husband have officially been handed the reins to manage the cow-calf herd. Through the CYL Program, Harberg set out to expand her skills in the realm of grazing and soil health, with an interest to learn more about the environmental benefits of the agriculture industry and measuring its impact. Harberg was paired with Dr. Kim Ominski, who has established a research program improving the productivity and sustainability of beef cattle production in Western Canada.

Harberg and her mentor found creative ways to connect virtually and attend online industry events together that she points to as a program highlight.

"At the beginning of going to all those events, I would have thought I wouldn't have anything to contribute to the conversation with any of the other people at the events," Harberg said. "But now after going to a few and having conversations with some of Kim's colleagues and friends, I feel like I can have a confident conversation at a table with anybody there."

Harberg's future goals are to expand their herd numbers and work towards implementing a year-round grazing strategy.



Cameron Olson (2019 CYL) U of A PhD Student and cow-calf producer from Indus, AB

FOCUS AREA:

Feedlot Nutrition and Consulting

CYL MENTOR:

Dr. Matt May, Feedlot Health Management Services

Cameron Olson is from a small cow-calf operation Southeast of Calgary, AB, where they also finish about 20 calves for their farm to plate direct marketing beef sales. Olson is nearing completion of his PhD at the University of Alberta studying beef cattle reproductive genetics and its relationships with feed efficiency and feed intake in mature cows. Joining the CYL Program in the summer of 2019, Olson was among the group of 2019 CYLs who had their time in the program extended an extra year due to COVID-19 limiting opportunities.

Olson was match with Dr. Matt May with Feedlot Health Services to further explore the topic of feedlot nutrition and consulting. The mentorship connection opened the door for a part-time job opportunity at Feedlot Health Management Services, where he's been offered full time work consulting upon completing his PhD studies in December.

"CYL is probably the premier program that I know of for developing leaders in agriculture and specifically in the beef industry," Olson said. "I think it's a very important step to take if you're serious about being in the industry for the long-term."

Applications for the CYL Program are open from January through March each year at www.cattlemensyoungleaders.com.





Following the recent downgrade in Canada's BSE risk to negligible status, there is hope that the animal health sector will focus more attention on production-limiting diseases, like Johne's and Bovine Viral Diarrhea (BVD).

BVD becomes production-limiting because one sick animal, if it goes undetected, can negatively affect the health of the rest of the animals it comes in contact with.

Both Johne's and BVD present challenges for producers through detection, transmission, and production. We sat down with veterinarian Dr. Roy Lewis to gather some insights into how to spot these diseases and stop them from damaging herd health.

SILENT SPREAD OF BVD

BVD is an important production-limiting disease for producers to understand and watch out for. The multifaceted disease organism creates nagging and chronic health problems, explains Dr. Lewis, who has been a large animal veterinarian in Alberta for 40 years. It becomes evident in sick animals through mucosal disease (mouth ulcers), prolific diarrhea, and pneumonia. In pregnant heifers, BVD causes abortions or, worse, the birth of a persistently infected (PI) calf.

"PI calves are born with BVD and their bodies do not recognize it as foreign, so they produce it like it's their own and spew it into the environment, becoming super-spreaders," says Dr. Lewis.

A PI calf penned with others may appear to be doing okay, but will still spread the disease. "BVD becomes production-limiting because one sick animal, if it goes undetected, can negatively affect the health of the rest of the animals it comes in contact with," Dr. Lewis explains.

BVD is a serious concern in feedlots where animals arrive from many different locations, but it is less frequently diagnosed in Alberta, says Dr. Lewis. "In the wellmanaged herds in Western Canada we mostly have BVD under control, as long as we vaccinate properly for it."

To ensure BVD doesn't spread silently through your herd, vaccinate cows and calves following vet recommendations, as Dr. Lewis advises. Vaccination protects cows against abortions, prevents calves from being born persistently infected, and ensures undetected sick animals won't be sold into other environments where they continue to spread the disease.

JOHNE'S SNEAKS IN

Johne's is a "good news, bad news" story in Canada. The good news is that it has been well-culled from beef cattle, so it doesn't show up often at present. The bad news is that, by the time it does show up – usually in older cows – it will likely have been spread to other animals.

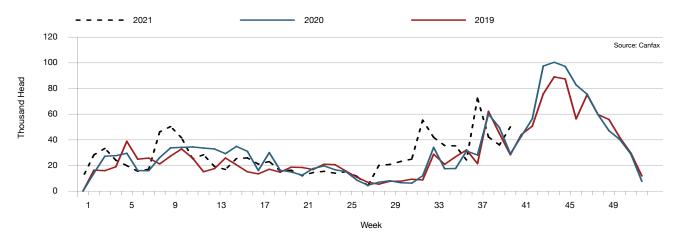
"Johne's is insidious; it can sneak up on producers, and it can skip generations before it shows itself clinically. Animals often don't show signs until they're five or six years old, and by then they've passed it on," Dr. Lewis says.

Signs of Johne's to watch for include weight loss and diarrhea. Diagnosis has been a challenge in the past, but that is less of an issue now, Dr. Lewis says. "The new PCR DNA test is effective for finding Johne's in cattle who are shedding the organisms. It usually won't miss the organisms if they're there."

The key for producers is to be aware of the sneaky nature of Johne's disease and keep an eye out for it. "If you have a cow that is getting thinner and thinner, with or without diarrhea, do check to see if it is Johne's. What you don't want is for a problem to smolder until suddenly you have an outbreak – then it becomes a disaster," Dr. Lewis says.

If you have Johne's, your herd veterinarian can help. "Don't panic. With systematic testing and culling and management changes regarding manure disposal and cleaning, it can systematically be either eliminated or kept in check," says Dr. Lewis.

Alberta Auction Mart Volumes



CANFAX CATTLE MARKET UPDATE

Fall Run Market Factors

BY BRIAN PERILLAT



Analyst Canfax

The dry weather this summer certainly impacted many producers' marketing and winter feeding plans, but there was also some welcome moisture relief earlier this fall that took pressure off cow culling and allowed for a bit more orderly fall run of calves. That said, fall offerings are

larger, as less producers are backgrounding their calves and they will send more heifers to town. Logistics become critical during the fall run and can impact calf prices from week to week as truck availability or the ability for feedlots to process all the incoming calves in a tight time-frame can reduce the demand for calves.

Despite the drought and record high feed grain costs this year, calf prices through to the time of this writing in early October, have been holding higher than last year and 2019, but are facing some fall pressure as they normally do heading deeper into October and possibly into November as well. Calf prices will be dependent on the volume of calves and feedlot demand. If fed prices can strengthen into the fourth quarter that would bode well for calves, but the live cattle futures for next summer will also be important to watch. There was a lot of optimism priced

into the market at the start of September, with August 2022 futures trading almost up to US\$135/cwt, over US\$10 higher than 2021. The market was softer through most of September with August futures bottoming around US\$127/cwt. By early October futures had recovered back to around US\$131/cwt. This kind of volatility could add risk to the calf market this fall. On the other hand, if futures continue to strengthen, it could result in an earlier fall low for calf prices. It's always critical to know what the trends are for fed prices, cattle futures and the Canadian dollar to set some price expectations for your calves or if deciding to possibly retain ownership. Strong demand and smaller cattle numbers to come are adding fuel to the cattle futures, but with drought causing more cows and heifers to go to market, and capacity constraints at the packing sector, it is difficult to predict just when or if cash cattle prices will hit the anticipated prices next year. Therefore, risk management is critical. When markets are volatile, and especially if futures markets are pricing in optimism well above current prices, price insurance may be a good and simple risk management tool to protect the equity in your cattle.

For more ongoing market information please visit www.canfax.ca



ABP's Election Process

ABP delegate nominations closed following our Semi-Annual Meeting at the end of October. An election in the Northeast Zone will be held in conjunction with the 2022 Producer Meetings, scheduled to run from January 24 to February 10, 2022. Producers have the option to attend their zone meeting or participate in a virtual town hall to engage with ABP representatives, debate issues and move resolutions. Our resolution process gives producers the opportunity to influence ABP policies, priorities, and activities.

THE 2022 PRODUCER MEETING SCHEDULE IS TENTATIVELY SET:

CENTRAL: Monday, January 24 - Stoney Plain

NORTHWEST: Wednesday, January 26 - Fairview

NORTHEAST: Thursday, January 27 – Vermilion

SOUTHEAST: Tuesday, February 8 - Brooks

SOUTHWEST: Wednesday, February 9 – High River

PRODUCER TOWN HALL:

Thursday, February 10 - Virtual

In addition to attending meetings, all eligible producers from the Northeast Zone can vote in the delegate election. Voting will be available at the meetings and through an online registration process. Once the election is open a link will be available to register and vote. Producers will be required to read the declaration form and confirm that they are eligible and able to vote in this election.

The Northeast Zone has four candidates running for the three delegate positions available in this election. Nominations submitted in the other zones will be acclaimed, with vacancies still available for appointment. The Central, Southeast and Southwest Zones can each appoint up to one delegate for a two-year term. The Northwest Zone can appoint up to two one-year delegates to fill a two-year term, and up to two two-year delegates.

The candidate information is available in the election backgrounder on pages 62-63.

Each eligible producer must choose only one method to cast their vote. An eligible producer is a cattle producer who has sold cattle and paid check-off in your own name or company name within the last two years. If a couple sells cattle under one name, it counts as one vote. If you sell cattle under one company, one representative is selected to vote on the company's behalf.

Producers are eligible to vote in one zone – either your zone of residence, or the zone in which you operate a business. If your business zone differs from your resident zone, you must vote in your business zone. If your business operates in multiple locations including your resident zone, that is your eligible zone. Please refer to the zone map and county listing to determine which zone you are eligible to vote.

Producer participation is strongly encouraged, in whichever format you choose, to support our democratic process. We look forward to bringing producers together to discuss the future of our industry.

ABP'S 2022 ELECTION

Candidate Backgrounder

CENTRAL CANDIDATES

ACCLAIMED

Martin Clausen, together with his wife and parents, run Hazel Bluff Angus near Westlock. Martin currently sits as the ABP representative on the Young Cattlemen's Council.

"I look forward to working with other delegates to move the beef industry in a positive direction, and to be a voice for young producers across the province."

Doug Roxburgh, is a purebred and commercial cow calf producer residing near Bentley. Doug, alongside his wife, run a first-generation cattle operation and background their calves, and market bulls and females, along with commercial bred heifers. Doug is a senior nutrition consultant who works with producers to develop year-round nutritional programs. Working as a primary producer and in the industry, Doug has deep ties with the beef sector.

"I feel it is important to be a voice for the cow calf producer and give back, to help strengthen the long-term viability of this industry."

The Central Zone can appoint up to one Delegate for a two-year term.

NORTHWEST CANDIDATES

ACCLAIMED

Bernie Doerksen, and his family, run a cow calf operation with commercial angus cross cows near La Crete.

"Our goal is to improve efficiencies and costs on the ranch in order to remain viable for the long-term. My personal interests include the local snowmobile club, and our family activities include figure skating, minor hockey, camping and fishing. My day job consists of public bookkeeping and accounting. I am looking forward to learning more about the provincial beef industry and sharing that information locally."

The Northwest Zone can appoint up to two one-year Delegates to fill a two-year term, and up to two two-year Delegates.

SOUTHEAST CANDIDATES

ACCLAIMED

Darren Bevans is General Manager of Deseret Ranches, a large cow-calf operation located near Raymond. He is a current ABP board member and chair of the ABP research committee.

"I am excited about the direction of ABP and all that has been accomplished for Alberta producers over the past year. I look forward to the opportunity to continue as a delegate and contribute within the organization."

Nanita Blomquist, and her family operate in the Big Valley area.

"I am excited to return to ABP and serve on behalf of producers in our area. I am a fourth-generation cattle producer, and raising the fifth generation who are already as excited about cattle as their parents. I am passionate about what we do as an industry and the product we produce. I want to ensure that this is promoted in our ever-changing marketplace, and that we continue to tell our story and stay in the forefront."

The Southeast Zone can appoint up to one Delegate for a two-year term.

SOUTHWEST CANDIDATES

ACCLAIMED

Kyle Lemmer, and his wife, reside east of Calgary in Rockyview County, where they run a cow calf operation.

"My wife and I both work off farm. I work in the oil and gas sector and my wife is a registered nurse. We run predominately black angus cattle with a focus on feed efficiency using minimal inputs. I am interested in becoming an ABP delegate so I can contribute to developing producer confidence in the industry, build new connections and relations, and educate others on the importance of the cattle industry and its impact on our society."

Sheila Hillmer and her family farm and ranch in Del Bonita, where her two sons are beginning the process of succession in the family business. She is an ABP director and serves as a Canadian Cattlemen's Association board member.

Sheila is a Key Account Manager with Elanco Canada, a global animal health company that has grown significantly in the past five years. She is based in southern Alberta where she works with corporate feedyards. She also spends a significant amount of time developing and executing Learning and Development both internally with Elanco and externally to customers. Currently, Sheila is in the process of getting certified in Coaching to further her Leadership and Development portfolio.

The Southwest Zone can appoint up to one Delegate for a two-year term.

NORTHEAST CANDIDATES

ELECTION

Kaylee Chizawsky, and her family run a cow calf operation near Vegreville.

"Our herd consists of 150 commercial cows, as well as 100 purebred Simmentals. In addition to the cow calf operation, we purchase, breed, and sell 250 replacement heifers each year. I graduated from the University of Alberta with a degree in Agriculture, majoring in Animal Science. Since graduating university, I have become increasingly involved in the family farm and buying my own cattle. Prior to my current employment with Trouw Nutrition, I was employed in the Canadian Food Inspection Agency's Animal Health Department. I believe this employment mix of both government and industry has given me a solid understanding of potential disconnects, as well as ways these gaps could be mitigated. I am in the process of completing my Professional Agrologist Certification and have graduated from the Cattlemen's Young Leaders (CYL), where I was a successful participant for the 2020 program year. Now that my official term as a CYL mentee has come to an end, I am looking forward to remaining active in the beef industry and providing the next generation's insight to our industry, while continuously learning from my peers."

Kyle Van de Veen, along with his wife and grandfather, farm just east of Lavoy, in Minburn County.

"We run cow calf pairs and have recently started backgrounding breeding heifers. I am interested in being a delegate to pass on my business experience and education to support producers in meeting strategic goals to increase, expand, and maintain their current operations."

Melanie Wowk along with her husband, two adult children and daughter-in-law, run a commercial cow calf herd in the County of Two Hills, near Beauvallon.

"If successful, this will be my seventh year as a delegate. I have served on the ABP board for six years, including three years on the Executive, and this past year as ABP Chair. I also sit as a member of the Alberta Farm Animal Care board.

I look forward to continuing to help serve the beef industry in Alberta."

Melissa Downing runs a cow calf operation near the hamlet of Metiskow. Her children are the fifth generation to live on the family farm.

"I have experience in various sectors of the beef industry including value chains, feedlot production, research, and online auction sales. I have been the Verified Beef Production Plus Coordinator in Alberta since 2016, keeping me connected with producers across the province. I also volunteer with our local 4-H Club and Agricultural Society, and am currently the vice chair for Results Driven Agriculture Research."



BY MARY MACARTHUR

Keeping track of livestock records doesn't need to be complicated.

A simple school binder is all Sue Giles uses to keep track of health records for their southern Alberta ranch and ensure it meets EU and VBP+ certification.

For three years, Giles has kept track of the health information for their almost 1,000-head Black Angus cow herd in a three-ring binder. It's a simple, effective way to manage the herd's health records and meet the record requirements for the Verified Beef Production Plus (VBP+) program and EU certification.

"We were already keeping track of treatments and withdrawals, but I just needed to put it on paper for the verified beef program," says Giles, of Brooks.

"It's a simple system. For me, it's easier if it's on paper."

The Verified Beef Production program was launched in 2003 as a way to increase food safety and therefore

consumer trust in beef. The original focus was strictly on-farm food safety – ensuring broken needles did not enter the food chain, and cattle were not sent to slaughter before withdrawal times were met.

In 2016, the program expanded to include wider production practices, with a recognition that consumers want to know more about how beef is raised. The expanded program is called VBP+ and includes environmental stewardship, animal care and biosecurity.

During the busy calving season family members text Giles any treatment information and she writes it in the binder.

"When things are busy, this book sits on the kitchen table. When someone texts me I can quickly go write it down."

For the Giles family, the decision to join the Verified Beef Program Plus was simple. The ranch was already keeping



records on vaccination for their EU certification and it was only a bit more work for added financial benefits.

"In my mind it is worth it for the little bit of extra paperwork because it is bringing a bidder to your herd. It ties into everything. We're mentally keeping track of it and I can put it all on paper."

For Giles, the benefits are clear, especially at sale time. Their 400 steers are sold through the Cudlobe Influence sale in October by Foothills Auction.

"It brought more bidders to the sale. The more bidders you have, the more competition you have for your cattle," she says.

There are more than 400 operations in Alberta that are audited through the VBP+ program, representing more than one million head of cattle. More than half of the feeding capacity in Alberta is part of the VBP+ program.

Feedlots are keen to buy the Giles cattle because the health records are clearly documented, she says.

"They know the vaccines the cattle are on, they know the health of these cattle coming in. If they want to know the treatment records, we have that. For them it is a benefit

Sue Giles, keeping records with her simple system to maintain their VBP+ certification





knowing the vaccine program – they know what to boost the cattle with when they come into the feedlot."

The Giles heifers are sold in the spring, and also attract buyers who want to add VBP+ animals into their herd.

Written on the livestock manifest of all the animals leaving the ranch is: "Cleared of all withdrawal dates."

Giles' binder is separated by a few tabs. In one section is information on age verification and RFID numbers. In another section Giles writes treatments and lists the withdrawal dates. In another section she lists the vaccinations and the dates they were given.

Semen tests and pregnancy tests are recorded in another section.

While individual tag numbers are written down for antibiotics, for most of the information, Giles records group records. If a group of 200 calves is vaccinated in one day, Giles records the number of animals and the treatment. This group vaccination record information satisfies the information for the program and doesn't overwhelm the rancher.

At the end of the day, their simple system adds a lot of value to the Giles family operation.

"It is a little bit of work, but you have all the records for food safety."

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;
- (I) 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).

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;
- (I) Clear Hills County;
- (m) Mackenzie County;
- (n) any city, town, or village that is encompassed by the land described in clauses (a) to (m).

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 Crowsnest 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;
- (I) 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;
- 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).

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;
- (I) 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 ZONE MAP



ABP ZONE DELEGATES

SOUTHEAST ZONE

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Feeding the Future

BY LINDSAY ROBERTS

CANADIAN BEEF INDUSTRY AWARD WINNER, DR. SURYA ACHARYA, SETS HIS SIGHTS ON SUSTAINABLE INNOVATIONS TO HELP TACKLE BEEF INDUSTRY CHALLENGES.

Every year the Beef Cattle Research Council recognizes a researcher or scientist whose work has contributed to advancements in the competitiveness and sustainability of the Canadian beef industry. This year, the BCRC awarded ABP nominee Dr. Surya Acharya with the 2021 Canadian Beef Industry Award for Outstanding Research and Innovation.

Over the course of his career, Acharya has trained numerous graduate students, authored over 180 peer-reviewed publications, written and contributed to multiple books, and produced over 25 commercially released varieties of perennial and native forages.

I want to ensure that the work that I do has an impact on solving problems that beef producers are facing not only in the present but will help prevent challenges in the future and ultimately, impact sustainability of the industry.

DR. ACHARYA'S TOP RESEARCH PRIORITIES

1. Eliminating Alfalfa Bloat

A seasoned producer knows that with proper management, grazing cattle on alfalfa is possible, but it comes with risk. Acharya is working to get to the bottom of the cause of alfalfa bloat, and ultimately breed forage legume varieties without that risk. This could allow more producers to take advantage of the nutritive value of alfalfa, something that may be especially important in years of drought.

2. Reducing Emissions at the Source

Another facet of Acharya's research is tackling greenhouse gas emissions at the source, by increasing the lipid content of forages grown for cattle. So far, Acharya's research using alfalfa and sainfoin has successfully increased the oil content of the plant by five per cent. This has the potential to decrease the emissions produced by the cattle grazing on these crops.

3. Seeding Crops into Existing Pastures

Changing a field over to a different crop slows productivity and is usually an arduous task. Acharya is currently working on developing genetically improved varieties that can be sown directly into existing pastures – tackling the challenge of productivity, especially during dry years, while also providing a cost-effective solution. With the results of productivity studies coming in from this year, Acharya says he hopes to have varieties that stand up to our harsh Alberta winter ready for market soon.

"None of my research would be possible without my collaborators. As a crop guy through and through, I wanted to make sure that I was working with producers and listening to them when it came to testing my research and gaining feedback on how the results could have a demonstrable impact."

With retirement on the horizon for Acharya, he hopes to look back on work that truly helped producers. Acharya also wants to ensure that his collaborators such as Drs. Tim McAllister, Alan Iwaasa, Bill Biligetu (to name a few) are recognized for their contributions.

It takes a community to push forward innovations like Acharya's, and these projects will help the industry thrive into the future.

The Influence of Communicating with Today's Consumer

BY LINDSAY ROBERTS

For Alberta Beef Producers, communicating beyond the farm gate to our beef consumer has always been top of mind. This is important when it comes to creating and maintaining demand for our beef of course, but also fostering understanding. An understanding of our industry, the world-class beef that we sustainably raise, and the producers that stand behind it.

The birth of social media has undoubtedly created great change in how we communicate. It doesn't come without its challenges of course, but I feel that it has created one of our greatest opportunities.



As we continue to create and deploy strategic beef consumer communications through social platforms, influencers are playing an integral role.

Our ABP consumer influencer campaign targets our key consumers – who make the purchase decisions whether in the grocery, restaurant, or direct retail.

Our influencers add third-party credibility and heightened profile to different segments of audiences. Followers engage on a heightened level of interaction as well.

This is why implementing a strategic influencer consumer campaign is leading great results and connections with our Alberta beef consumers, reaching thousands of consumers every month – with great engagement.

The great thing about social and digital media, is that we can distinctly measure our results. Results that we will be excited to share with you in the new year, as our annual social media consumer campaign comes to a close.

Currently, we have engaged five social media influencers, including

parents, foodies, fitness gurus, chefs, and butchers. Master Butcher Corey Meyer, who appears in our ABP Magazine, provides a unique perspective as he also connects directly across the counter with customers. When not carving or preparing meat, or serving his customers, Corey is crafting his art and educating his 10,000+ social media followers with inspiring and creative photos of Alberta beef. Corey caters to a following audience that includes fellow butchers, chefs, restaurants, and meat consumers.

Although the platforms in how we are communicating with our consumers are changing, one thing that hasn't, is the fact that our consumers still want to know how beef is raised and where it comes from.

Check out our social influencers at: @dishnthekitchen, @noshingwiththenolands, @mealplanaddict, @coreythebutcher and @merryabouttown.

Follow along as well with our influencer hashtags; #AllForTheBeef, #AlbertaBeef and #ABBeef. Better yet use these hashtags and share your story!

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Out and About with Alberta Beef Producers

BY MEGAN MCLEOD Field Specialist, ABP

As we move into the winter, we begin to refocus on a pivotal time for producers and what is happening in the fields, the feed yards, the auction marts, and at the exhibitions. Here's an update on where we've been for fall:

CANADIAN MENTAL HEALTH CLASSIC, EDMONTON, AB SEPTEMBER 2, 2021

More than ever, mental health is a vital and important topic in agriculture. Our Central Zone in particular was chosen to support this worthwhile event as a platinum sponsor, with Colin Campbell and myself attending the event on behalf of Alberta Beef Producers.

The event, which was supported by more than 80 organizations and companies, raised more than \$55,000 and will go a long way in supporting mental health initiatives in and around the Edmonton area.

OLDS FALL CLASSIC OCTOBER 1-3, 2021

In total, the show saw good turnout with 82 exhibitors, 287 head of cattle and 6 breed shows in total.

Agri-Recovery, feed shortages, and the outlook for this fall/winter were key topics of conversation among producers in attendance.

As we look to the month of November, the calendar is filled with events and opportunities to meet with producers:

LLOYDMINSTER STOCKADE ROUNDUP

Lloydminster Stockade Round-up is gearing up for another successful event. Running from November 2-6, 2021, we look forward to seeing a great representation for all major cattle breeds as the introductory November event leading into Farmfair International & Canadian Western Agribition.

THE ALBERTA HEREFORD SHOWCASE

An exciting new event from the Alberta Hereford Association, this show, sale and social is being held in conjunction with the Canadian Finals Rodeo.

This event will combine a junior prospect steer and heifer show,

the Hereford Genes Bull Event, the Genes of the Future Sale, as well as the Western National Hereford Show.

FARMFAIR INTERNATIONAL

Under new leadership, Farmfair looks to have a successful event following a one-year sabbatical due to COVID-19. We are excited to see how Explore Edmonton and the new Farmfair team will put their stamp on this signature event.

Alberta Beef Producers will be hosting a booth at the event with various delegates and myself present throughout the week. Be sure to stop by and have a coffee, on us!

I look forward to making many visits to various producer and auction market sales, including those featured as advertisers in this issue. As I am out and about at various functions, I would love nothing more than to have conversations with any producer who has feedback, questions, comments or inquiries for ABP.

Until then, I wish everyone the best as you continue through this fall and into the winter months.

Values Learned on Farms Lead to Success in Life

BY CRAIG LESTER

Waking up early to do farm chores before school, shovelling grain, watching their parents do the financial books, or seeing them running out in the middle of the night to pull a calf are all things kids who grow up on a farm see first-hand throughout their childhood.

For Sabrina McAllister, Janine Sekulic, Eric Dalke and Erin Tateson, their journeys in life took very different paths, but they all ended up in the same place because of the lessons they learned at a young age.

SABRINA MCALLISTER

"Farming is all creative." A conclusion Sabrina McAllister has made in her life journey, which has taken her from the farm near Red Deer to Calgary and back to a farm again.

"It's learning how to fix something; it's having multiple hats; it's knowing that there are certain things that are out of your control and solving problems creatively around those things," says McAllister.

Growing up on the family's seed farm, McAllister learned the importance of creative problem solving, entrepreneurial spirit, strong work ethic and great communication.

It was on that farm where she had the opportunity to learn 'a million things' first-hand from multiple generations that included her great grandfather, grandparents and parents.

Those lessons have helped her carve out a successful life as she journeyed through the marketing/PR agency world and eventually into her own co-owned business, Indelible Agency.

McAllister says watching her dad and uncle run Kaun Seed Farm for years instilled in her that good things would happen

if she worked hard,

networked and got in front of people. She made sure she was a sponge so she had the opportunity to learn everything she could when opportunities presented themselves.

It took that agriculture blend of work hard, nose down and having big goals.

When it came time for post-secondary school, McAllister packed her bags and headed to Calgary where she studied and built on her passion and knowledge for telling a good story. McAllister was also quick to return to the farm though, and loved spending time there.

As she ventured through several different jobs at agencies, she applied the lessons she learned on the farm – most notably to make sure she networked, got into as many meetings as possible and built connections.

Eventually it led to Quarter Section Creative, her first business.

"It took that agriculture blend of work hard, nose down and having big goals."

McAllister says the importance of good communication, a strong work ethic and creative problem

solving have helped her carve out the

success she enjoys today.

JANINE SEKULIC

The ability to bear down and get the job done right is a strength that Janine Sekulic attributes to growing up on a grain and beef farm in the Grande Prairie area.

It was on that farm where she had the opportunity to learn 'a million things' first-hand from multiple generations that included her great grandfather, grandparents and parents.

The National Director of Agriculture for BMO says she looked forward to leaving the farm the day she left for university in Edmonton; however, that didn't last long, as she quickly realized how much she missed it.

Sekulic has spent a lot of her career moving from one small community to the next, not ever thinking a city was a fit for her. That was until she was offered a great position with BMO in Calgary.

She says growing up in agriculture resulted in a deep appreciation for the work everyone involved in the industry does.



"I love the industry and I think growing up on the farm I developed an appreciation for what we do," Sekulic said.

She says going back to the farm from time to time allows her to recharge and reconnect.

Sekulic cites an example this fall when she went home and got put on a combine.

"It was such a great thing to have that connection with the land."

It's this time on the farm, that reminds her why she loves the job she has today working with producers.

ERIC DALKE

Eric Dalke knew his career path would involve agriculture from a young age.

As a teenager, the Calgary-based lawyer would spend his downtime while feeding cows in the family's feedlot in Morden, Manitoba, every morning with his nose in a book. He would load the feed truck his mom was driving and then read a few pages on anything non-fiction involving politics, legal, and biographies while he waited for her to return.

Dalke's love of politics took him from the farm to Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario.

The BSE crisis that rocked the beef sector galvanized his interest in world issues, trade and politics; a passion that eventually led him to Parliament Hill where he worked for Brian Pallister, an MP at the time.

He says Pallister had done some work in farm succession, which, when coupled with his farming background, made him realize how much of a natural fit it was for him.

Dalke then completed a law degree at the University of Calgary and now practises law with MLT Aikins, focusing on succession planning for farmers.

"It really is satisfying to give back to the ag community because you can serve the place you came from," Dalke said.

He says there is a close correlation between the law and ag and credits the lessons he learned on the farm for helping build his foundation of success.

ERIN TATESON

"The farming culture, which includes hard work, honesty, and integrity, is very important in the law."

It was a moment during an internship at AdFarm in Calgary where Erin Tateson realized agricultural marketing and communications was a natural fit.

"Agriculture in the big city, I'm home," recalls Tateson about the days following her graduation with a diploma in management from SAIT.

The people are really inspiring, motivating and resilient.

The now Marketing and Communications Manager for the Alberta Wheat and Barley Commissions wasn't where she thought she would land when she left the family cow-calf operation near Tilley in south-east Alberta. It was there where she learned the importance of hard work, resiliency and taking pride in your work.

"Farming is not for the faint of heart; farmers are very resilient. They're up against a lot of external factors."

It was the passion she saw in her family as they navigated the lifestyle of farming that showed her it was important to find something she was passionate about.

She admits though, agriculture was not on her radar when she left for SAIT to play basketball and study management.

Tateson says her love of story telling was what hooked her into her current role, adding the ag community has a really great story to tell.

"We're feeding the world, and so we really do impact every single person on the planet."

Tateson says one of the things that is so special about the industry is the people, a community she has been around her entire life.

"The people are really inspiring, motivating and resilient."

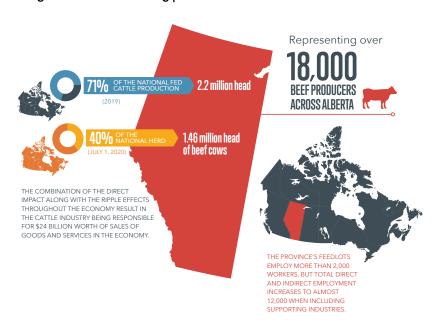
All four of them say the lessons learned on the farm have played a large part in their success, even if they didn't quite realize it when they were learning them at a young age.





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