

The Pasturelands Issue

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ON THE COVER

From wild rose to red clover, prairie grasses to coniferous forests, our pastures don't just provide forage for livestock. They are a home to wildlife, a refuge for recreation and an inspiration for sustainable businesses. This issue's front cover concept is an ode to pastures, to livestock and to land managers across the province, and it is the first in a series of spotlights on the beef industry.

Highlights from the Chair

WITH MELANIE WOWK



This is my last column as Chair, ABP. It's hard to believe. The past two years have gone by in a flash and what a ride it has been.

Sometimes we surprise ourselves with what we can accomplish in times of challenge, and during the past two years at ABP in my role as Chair and as an organization, this rings especially true. The drought proved that. We forged ahead with a plan of action as to how we were going to bring meaningful help and support to producers. We worked together as a team that involved ABP staff, Executive and Board in the relentless pursuit of developing a plan, and we made it happen.

One of our biggest achievements as an organization over the last 24 months is the relationships we have made with the government and our push for the beef industry and for agriculture in general. I believe that the turning point for government relations for ABP and our industry as a whole, which also happened during the drought, was when we had Premier Kenney and several government officials, including key MLAs, meet with ABP and visit impacted beef operations in Alberta. To me, that was a turning point for our organization and industry. To have the Premier spend a day with us really emphasized the importance of agriculture in this province. And that's something I'd really like to see continue.

Of course, there are factors that we continue to face in the beef industry that remain out of our control beyond the weather. Issues like the glaring price discrepancy between steers and heifer calves, especially this past fall run, or the prices of beef in the grocery store. The profits seen at the packer level simply aren't flowing back to producers. It is extremely difficult to figure out solutions for these issues.

For those still on the fence [about running for a role within ABP], I highly encourage you to consider stepping up and helping share your insights, expertise and leadership.

We are such a market-driven commodity, and that is a challenging position. Regardless, I encourage all producers to start raising their expectations – we need to get paid for what we are producing.

So many producers are hanging on by a thread – mentally and financially – and we need each and every one of us to remain in this industry. The hard situations we have faced and some of the conversations I had with producers across the province kept me up at night during my term, and sometimes still do. How are we going to get past the next hurdle? For many, that might be the final breaking point, and that does not bode well for the future of our industry.

However, all adversities considered, when it comes to our future, I am encouraged. I am thrilled to see producers from across the province coming forward to fill delegate and executive roles. For those still on the fence, I highly encourage you to consider stepping up and helping share your insights, expertise and leadership.

My experience as Chair has played a significant role in my personal and professional development. In fact, my biggest surprise in this experience is discovering what I could accomplish. I've always been shy and introverted, and this role really pushed me to improve my public speaking, to be more forceful about what I believe in and be confident in leadership. I really did surprise myself. I didn't grow up in the beef industry and I didn't grow up in agriculture. So for me to be in this type of position was often very surreal. I hold a great deal of gratitude for all of the support I received.

I leave the position and organization in very good hands with a team of talented staff and the guidance of Brad Dubeau – an exceptional leader who is a connected and passionate advocate for the industry, and each and every producer behind it.

We need to continue to spell out our message about all of the good things we do in agriculture. We need to keep going forward with that message. In the words of our past ABP Vice Chair, Jason Hale – "It is not what you say, but how you say it." And, I think we're learning how to say





things better, and I think that's what we really need to do to elevate our industry of agriculture through good times and bad.

This has been the experience of a lifetime for me. I never imagined that I would become Chair when I ran as a delegate seven years ago. I just knew that I loved the beef industry and I wanted to help move it forward.

I would like to thank you for your trust in me and the support that I have received that has helped me throughout this journey and, although I have reached the final destination as Chair, ABP, when it comes to my passion for our beef industry – the journey continues.

Thank you, Melanie



WESTERN CANADIAN Feed Testing & Ration Balancing Survey

Commercial cow-calf online survey

Qs about winter feeding and feed quality
assessment

15-20 minutes to complete Honourarium provided.

Findings will be used to guide research & extension

SURVEY FUNDED BY





https://surveys.insightrix.com/feedtestingsurvey



Survey administered by insightrix

Principal Investigators: Kathy Larson (Usask) and Emma Stephens (AAFC-Lethbridge)

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Taking Inventory of Canada's Grasslands

BY PIPER WHELAN

Google the total amount of grasslands in Canada, and you'll find vague, differing numbers.

While agriculture and conservation groups agree on the necessity of protecting Canada's grasslands, efforts to do so are hindered by not having a precise accounting of these lands. The creation of the National Grassland Inventory Project, led by the Canadian Forage and Grassland Association (CFGA), aims to fill in the blanks.

"For public entities that are building programs and policies, if they don't have an accurate record of gains or losses, it's hard for them to forecast what kind of programs they might need to make sure that we maintain forages on the landscape," said CFGA Executive Director Cedric MacLeod.

"It really comes down to something that can inform that program and policy development somewhat in real time without having to rely on the ag census data that comes out every five years."

With partners from agriculture groups and non-governmental organizations on board, the goal is to develop an inventory of all native and tame grasslands in Canada, with the major grassland types identified. The national inventory would be used to regularly track changes in grasslands, including monitoring where and why grasslands are lost, and to better "inform grassland policy, decision-making and risk assessment across Canada going forward," according to the CFGA website.

The national inventory will also allow for a more accurate assessment of factors such as carbon sequestration, wildlife habitat and biodiversity. These measures can be used to support "the work the beef sector does nationally and provincially to promote...the positive environmental impacts it's having on the landscape," MacLeod explains.

"We hear a lot about those things but they're somewhat abstract if we don't have an accurate forage inventory. It's like we're missing one of the numbers in the equation."

Learn more about the mapping process and the next steps for this project by checking out the extended article at https://abpdaily.com/innovation-technology/taking-inventory-of-canadas-grasslands

Photo by Piper Whelan

2023 ABP Annual General Meeting

March 1, 2023, 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Red Deer Resort and Casino

- · Updates from ABP Directors and Staff
- · Resolutions for 2023-2024
- Elections for ABP Directors, CCA Board Members, BCRC Representatives

For more information and to register: bit.ly/3ktumxU





The Productivity [+]s of Winter Grazing

BY ROBIN GALEY

Winter grazing has productivity pluses, including reduced costs for feed and labour and improved soil fertility. We spoke to three grazing experts to collect some research data and pro tips that will help you maximize the pluses of winter grazing.

According to the Western Canadian Cow Calf Survey, a high percentage of beef producers have already integrated winter grazing into their operations, and for good reason. "When it's done well, winter grazing is cheaper than feeding conventionally with hay or silage," says Vern Baron, research scientist, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada at Lacombe. Baron has been working in forage production and grazing for nearly 30 years.

"If you're feeding hay in a yard or feedlot, you have to harvest, haul, and feed with equipment. All of that costs more each day than having cows graze in the field," Baron says.

Photo by Bart Lardner

The biggest savings occur through reduced labour, feed and fuel costs, but there is also an upside on the backend – no manure to haul, and improved soil fertility. "People sometimes find they can actually increase the size of their herd by going into these practices," says Baron.

"The number one way to reduce the cost of production is to let animals feed themselves," agrees Edward Bork, professor in the faculty of Agricultural, Life and Environmental Science, University of Alberta.

Bork has just completed a comprehensive on-farm study in the prairie provinces using adaptive multi-paddock (AMP) grazing. AMP grazing is a form of rotational grazing that involves managing where, when and how often animals graze in a given location. Producers using AMP grazing were found to extend the grazing season longer in both the spring and fall.

"When producers use cross fencing to create smaller pastures, they get better control over the length of the grazing period, and also force animals to harvest forage more uniformly. As a result, they get improved use of what's there, and because they are moving their animals often, you get an extended rest period that helps plant regrowth," Bork explains.



Grazing management is art and science – the science uses the best available information, and the art is figuring out what's going to work on your climate, soil, vegetation and cattle.

Edward Bork, professor in the faculty of Agricultural, Life and Environmental Science, University of Alberta

The study data suggests an increase in plant biomass production, despite higher utilization levels. "The take-home conclusion of the AMP grazing study is that how you let animals graze on forage has an impact on pasture performance. By using high-density grazing events with a long recovery period, we see an increase in the amount of biomass produced, a faster rate of water infiltration and a trend toward storing more carbon in the top layer of soil," says Bork.

Rotational forage grazing is one way to diversify winter feeding opportunities. Some other options include stockpiled grass, swath grazing and bale grazing. In every case, field grazing supports improved soil fertility, explains Bart Lardner, professor in the Department of Animal and Poultry Science, University of Saskatchewan.

Compared to pen feeding, field grazing results in far better nutrient distribution. "Nitrogen is a very mobile nutrient. If we feed in pens, by the time we clean them out weeks or months later, we've lost a lot through runoff, volatilization and gassing off. What we're spreading on the field is 50 per cent or less than what was deposited when those cattle were being fed in that space and time," Lardner explains.

In fact, research has shown a two- to three-fold increase in biomass where cows grazed compared to where manure was spread with equipment. Lardner adds, "Beef cows are great recyclers, consuming low-quality, high-fibre forages, while depositing fertilizer on the land through manure and urine."

There are many pluses, but there are also risks associated with winter grazing. The weather is never predictable and harvest levels aren't reliable. Water and wind shelter must be available. The protection against loss is to have two or three feeding options in your back pocket. All sources agree: make sure you have a plan B.

Finally, be sure animals get adequate nutrient and energy intake from whatever winter feeding system you use, especially later in the gestation period. "You can get away with lower quality [feed] early in gestation, but the energy requirement really increases during later gestation.

There's no mathematical formula that will help you here, but you have to have enough feed for your cows,"

Baron concludes.

The Best Tool to Manage Crops in 2023? Your Shadow.

OPTIMAL NUTRITION FOR YOUR CATTLE STARTS FROM THE GROUND UP

Producers are constantly looking for ways to manage and improve the outputs from their operation, and that can include cereal crops for feeding purposes.

Rory Cranston, North America Technical Development Manager for Cereals and Pulses at Bayer, has three tips for producers to get the most out of their cereal feed crops.

1. KNOW YOUR FIELD(S) AND HISTORY

The most effective way to get the most out of your field, according to Cranston, is to know what is in the field and where it is at. Keeping detailed records on seeding and application histories, by using a program like FieldView™ to track your decisions year-over-year, allows you to establish a strong field management system that employs integrated pest management strategies to reduce, in particular, the risk of weed resistance in the field. Awareness of where patches of weeds are prevalent, or have increased in population, also ensures that you are able to be proactive when it comes to controlling weeds of concern.

Foxtail species, for example, cause detrimental effects to both cereal crops and in livestock production. It reproduces through vast quantities of air-dispersed seeds, easily carried by the wind from nearby areas.

The chief concern for many is how they can continue to battle weeds of concern that have an annual presence. Working with a Bayer Territory Sales Manager can be an easy way to establish a lasting expert relationship, and comprehensive strategy, that ensures a great yield in 2023 that won't limit your ability to get a great yield in 2024, or beyond.

Rory Cranston,
North America Technical Development
Manager for Cereals and Pulses, Bayer

The stiff, sharp awns of foxtail barley create a hazard for livestock, as they can become lodged in their digestive system, giving rise to infection, reduced feed intake and loss of gain. Managing foxtail species through Integrated Pest Management strategies is key to reducing populations long term.

2. CHOOSE CROP PROTECTION PRODUCTS STRATEGICALLY

Bayer offers a comprehensive crop protection portfolio that is well-suited to mixed farming operations.

With easy-to-use formulations and wide windows of application, Cirray™ herbicide and TilMOR™ fungicide, are strong tools for cattle producers to consider use of in producing high-quality feed grains. As a wheat and barley herbicide, Cirray provides top control of competitive grass weeds in-crop. Quality of the feed grain is a high priority for cattle producers in addition to yield. TilMOR yields excellent results as a fungicide on silage and grain crops – applied from flag leaf up to head emergence and flowering stages, to comprehensively protect cereal crops from leaf, stem and head diseases.

Simplifying the tools used to manage the field gives you more time to focus elsewhere. With effective yet flexible herbicide and fungicide tools that can be used across your cereal crops, it's easier than ever to increase yield potential and crop performance.

Untreated wheat – Uncontrolled wild oat and green foxtail between wheat rows



Treated - Cirray + Infinity® herbicide



When not controlled, competitive grass weeds can impact feed quality, reducing feed efficacy and rate of gain of livestock.

Source: Bayer Crop Science Internal Trials (Innisfail, AB, 2012). Your results may vary according to agronomic, environmental and pest pressure variables.

3. GET YOUR TIMING RIGHT

Ultimately, the best thing to put on your field, aside from quality crop protection tools like Cirray and TilMOR, is your shadow. Getting your boots on the ground in the field so you know the stage of the crop and what its needs are is the best practice to maximize yield potential and performance.

TOP THREE TIMING TIPS

Cranston recommends that producers consider three things when determining timing:

1. Scouting fields regularly to determine where the weeds are

What can you do for early control? How can you reduce the competition for the crop?

2. Catching leaf diseases early

Are there spots developing low on the canopy?

3. Monitoring weather to determine the best time for crop protection applications

What timing provides the biggest benefit for the crop – eliminating early disease/pest pressure, or catching late-emerging disease/pests that will harm yield potential?

With the right field management strategy, producers have the best opportunity to increase the yield potential of their feed crops and provide cattle with the best nutrition, right from the start.

Producers are encouraged to talk to their local Bayer representative to learn more about the comprehensive crop protection portfolio for mixed farming operations or visit **CropScience.Bayer.ca**

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CANADIAN CATTLE ASSOCIATION

CCA Advocacy and Youth Efforts

ADVOCACY EFFORTS

Our advocacy efforts have recently focused on our animal health and care priorities. New regulations came into force on January 1, 2023 designed to further improve safety and address driver fatigue. These regulations mandate Electronic Logging Device (ELD) use by federally regulated carriers. This mandate works hand in hand with Hours of Service rules. An ELD automatically records a driver's driving time and duty status. No provisions have been made for the unique circumstances that may arise when transporting livestock.

Drivers hauling livestock cannot always pull over and go "off-duty" because of their live cargo. Facilities, weather and animal care concerns must all be considered. Drivers currently account for this in their logistical plan for off-duty time but challenges arise when unforeseen circumstances or emergencies cause drivers to max-out their on-duty time, in locations where unloading the cattle for feed, water and rest is not feasible. This could occur because of temperamental animals slowing loading, veterinary inspections slowing border crossings or weather and road conditions slowing transport speeds.

The CCA position is that both human and animal welfare must be considered in transport regulations. CCA is advocating along with numerous other national commodity and veterinary organizations. Our first goal is to secure recognition that animal welfare constitutes an emergency under Subsections 76(1) and (2) and thus would permit drivers to extend the driving time allowed to reach their destination.

The long-term proposed solution is harmonization with United States' regulations, which provide an exemption from livestock drivers' on-duty time within a 150-air mile radius from the origin and destination of their trip. This

exemption provides the flexibility needed to deliver live animals without compromising animal welfare and has not compromised driver or public safety.

YOUTH ON THE INTERNATIONAL STAGE

Our youth kicked off the year strong with an international visit to Denver, Colorado to attend the National Western Stock Show and take in various industry tours from January 11 – 14, 2023.

The goal of this experience was for our next generation of leaders to better understand how cooperation and collaboration between the U.S. and Canada support and maintain our integrated supply chain and learn about common issues of importance to Canadian and American beef producers.

The group was made up of four representatives from Canadian Cattle Young Leaders (CYL) and two representatives from the Canadian Cattle Youth Council.

Tours included visiting the JBS Greeley facility to learn about meat processing, Five Rivers Cattle Feeding Kuner Lot, Leachman Cattle of Colorado and Colorado State University. Our young leaders also built connections with various U.S. industry stakeholders through meetings and networking events with the National Cattlemen's Beef Association, Colorado Cattlemen's Association, the Consulate General of Canada in Denver, the Colorado Department of Agriculture and Colorado Farm Bureau Young Farmers and Ranchers.

A special thanks goes out to the Consulate General of Canada in Denver for their efforts in coordinating an interesting program for our young leaders and providing funding to support their travels.

FROM THE GOVERNMENT RELATIONS DESK:

Checking in with ABP

BY MARK LYSENG

Throughout 2022, our producers' interests remained at the forefront of our government relations efforts. The year was filled with unique challenges, new focus areas and some milestone wins.



As the new year begins, we're bringing important lessons into 2023. The 2021 drought and the burden of high input costs has led to a focus on upgrading the business risk management suite. With the Canadian Agricultural Partnership (CAP) up for renewal, we'll continue discussions to promote equality and a level playing field for cow-calf producers. We see an opportunity for producers to stabilize their costs. This will be a major priority in 2023. Other sectors benefit from utilizing these programs – it's time cow-calf producers had similar access.

2023 will be big for Alberta politics! We have a new set of mandate letters that provide opportunities for the beef industry to address major concerns. We'll also navigate producers' policy priorities leading up to the spring election. We're dedicated to ensuring that governments acknowledge our producers' environmental stewardship and facilitate balanced discussions and policies around producer benefits.

As the election draws closer, we'll share our policy priorities with all parties to foster open dialogue and create the best possible outcomes for our producers. Our objectives are to always represent producers' economic and environmental benefits and to effectively communicate major difficulties.

At ABP, we work to serve you. Our priorities come from the grassroots up. We encourage you to bring forward resolutions to our March AGM. If there are policy priorities that need attention, especially going into this election cycle, please consider attending the AGM or submitting your resolutions through our website.

Wishing you all a wonderful start to this new year ahead. And, don't forget to vote in the spring!

Starting Off on the Right Hoof

BY DR. MELISSA MOGGY,
ALBERTA FARM ANIMAL CARE



IN 2014, I ASKED COW-CALF
PRODUCERS IF THEY THOUGHT
HARD CALVINGS (I.E., DYSTOCIA)
WERE PAINFUL, AND THE
MAJORITY AGREED. OVER THE
YEARS, THE USE OF PAIN
CONTROL FOR HARD CALVINGS,
FOR THE COW AND THE CALF,
HAS INCREASED.

Calves that experience hard calvings are known to have decreased viability, taking longer to stand, walk and nurse, which negatively affects colostrum intake, health, and growth. Cow-calf producers participating in the 2017 Western Canadian Cow-Calf Survey reported that of the calves that died in the first 24 hours, 21 per cent were from a difficult cow calving and 37 per cent from a difficult heifer calving.

It isn't always easy to determine if the calf is in pain. Sometimes it's obvious, like broken bones, a swollen head or a listless calf. But other times, it's subtle. This is why we recommend scoring your calf's vitality when born, especially after a hard calving. The VIGOR scoring system stands for Visual appearance, Initiation of movement, General responsiveness, Oxygenation and Rates. The lower the VIGOR score, the less vigorous the calf and the more likely they need some sort of intervention. You can work with your vet to set values on when and how to treat your calves based on the VIGOR score.

VIGOR SCORE	3	2	1	0
VISUAL APPEARANCE				
Meconium staining	Normal: no staining	Slight: around anal/ tail head area	Moderate: extending over body	Severe: completely covered
Tongue/head	Normal: no swelling, tongue not protruding	Tongue protruding but not swollen	Tongue protruding and swollen	Head and tongue swollen, tongue protruding
INITIATION OF MOVEMENT				
Calf movement	Standing/walking	Attempts to stand	Sternal	On side, no effort to rise
Taken within:	0 – 30 min	30 min – 1.5 hr	1.5 – 3 hr	> 3 hr
GENERAL RESPONSIVENESS				
Suckling reflex on finger	Strong	Medium	Weak	No response
Head shake in response to straw inserted in nostril	Shakes head vigorously	Moves head away	Twitches or flinches	No response
Tongue pinch	Actively withdraws tongue	Attempts to withdraw	Twitches tongue	No response
Eye blinking in response to touching eyeball	-	Actively blinks and closes eye	Slow to blink	No response
OXYGENATION				
Mucus membrane colour	Bright pink	Light pink	Brick red	White/blue
RATES				
Heart rate	-	80 – 100 bpm	> 100 bpm	< 80 bpm
Respiration rate*	-	Normal	Slow	Fast

^{*}Normal respiration rate is approximately 24 – 36 breaths per minute Adapted from University of Guelph: Calf Vitality Score Sheet and Murray, C. (2014). Characteristics, risk factors and management programs for vitality of newborn dairy calves.

A nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID) is a great tool to decrease pain by addressing inflammation. Studies have reported that meloxicam improved calf vitality, suckle reflex, colostrum intake and higher ADG in their first week.

However, other studies didn't find any significant results with treatment. These differences could be because of differing study designs. In the end, like how you may take an Advil for a sprained knee, it won't hurt to try and treat the pain.





An Outlook for 2023

BY RYAN COPITHORNE

The wise King Solomon suggested "There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity..." The Byrds song "Turn! Turn! Turn!" in the 1960s famously alluded to Solomon's words as a way to draw attention to switching mindsets from focusing on war to focusing on peace.

Within Solomon's verses are also the phrases: "a time to plant, and a time to uproot" and "a time to tear down and a time to build." The question we should ask ourselves at the start of this new year is what do we need to "uproot" and "tear down" in order to "plant" and "build?"

The cattle market looks poised for a multi-year rally based on supply fundamentals, but few seem prepared to take advantage of it. In order to take next steps, sometimes we need to uproot, tear down old mindsets and roadblocks and capture the new winds rattling our sails.

Here are six themes for the upcoming year to assist in processing what we should "tear down" and "uproot" and what we should "plant" and "build."

THEME 1: WE ARE IN A BULL MARKET FOR CATTLE - BUILD

The last seven years have been a slog for cattle prices. A major seven-year bottoming formation in cattle prices. This year broke ground into a new trading range. The futures market is pulling us higher, driven by decreasing cow herd inventories amid relatively strong beef demand and exports out of both the U.S. and Canada.

As prices grind higher, we may look back at 2022 and ask why we didn't load up on more of those \$1,200 heifer calves or \$1,200 bred cows. The range highs for this new trading zone price \$2,000 calves, likely \$3,500 bred cattle, 8 weight steers at \$2,800 and fat steers at \$3,500 using current dollar and futures prices. If prices rise this year, it will be expensive to expand later. The time to "build" numbers is now.

Feeder Future Prices 1995 to Today





175.550 (Jan 2023)

THEME 2: WITH GOOD PRICES COMES MORE RISK

As the price to sell cattle rises, unfortunately, so will the cost to purchase or own cattle. The trading range we are moving into is a very wide range (nearly \$900 per head range high-to-low for an 850 lb steer). Riding the risk may be one of the things you consider "uprooting." It will be critical to manage when you buy and sell, and have a risk management plan as markets could be volatile. Cattle prices are rising amid an era of potential recessions, rising interest rates, wars and rumours of wars. Be careful to lock in good forward prices when and where possible. The road higher will be rocky.

Cattle Going Back to the 1970s



THEME 3: THE SCRAMBLE FOR "REAL THINGS"

The world population just hit 8 billion people last fall. Commodity prices relative to other asset classes are at the lowest levels in more than 50 years. The last time commodities were near this cheap was the start of the great commodity rallies of the 1970s and the early 2000s.

Cattle are a commodity, as are grains. In these cycles, the world begins to de-prioritize things like stocks, bonds, technology, crypto and other hype items of the recent past, and focus on "real things" that hurt if you drop them on your foot, like food, energy and materials. Interest rates generally rise in these environments. What that means is cattle demand and prices may rise, but so will input prices, so we will have to manage our requirement for inputs.

The "planting" and "building" will be building your herds ahead of the rally. The "uprooting" and "tearing down" will be cutting your need for inputs and interest rate sensitive items.

Find ways to let cows feed themselves where possible. Reduce debt levels by cutting equipment and overheads. Find ways to use cover crops and cattle to reduce fertilizer usage. Own appreciating assets, not depreciating ones. Simplify systems to reduce labour costs. Keep cattle on ranches longer to cut transportation and sales transaction costs. Own more yearlings and less cows as a drought proof, etc.

One last point: these commodity cycles don't go up in straight lines! There will be setbacks in prices along the way. Use these setbacks to stock up on inputs or expand your herd.

THEME 4: PACKER LEVERAGE

US packing capacity has been chronically restricted relative to fed cattle numbers in the United States since 2015. That trend is ending. New packing space is being made available in the US. 8-10,000 head/day of new packing space is coming online in the next few years while cattle inventories are dropping.

Excess packing capacity in Canada has brought cattle north in the last 7 years at an astounding rate. That too will reverse as capacity opens in the US. Feedlots and packers in Canada will be challenged to find inventory to keep full. Producers could now have leverage to demand higher prices and possibly more options owning product through to retail. Uproot old mindsets of being price takers and consider what made-in-Alberta solutions ranchers can plant or build with this new leverage.

THEME 5: CARBON

The unspoken reality is that grasslands in Canada sink enough carbon each year to exceed Canada's 2030 carbon reduction goals of somewhere near 227 million MTs. Statscan 2021 farmland survey shows 12 million acres of tame or seeded pasture and 34 million acres of natural pasture on farms in Canada. If this is sinking likely at least a tonne of carbon a year, that is 46 million tonnes of carbon sunk by pasture and haylands on farms in Canada per year. It would take fewer than five years to offset Canada's carbon reduction plan with on-farm grasslands alone should we measure and recognize it.

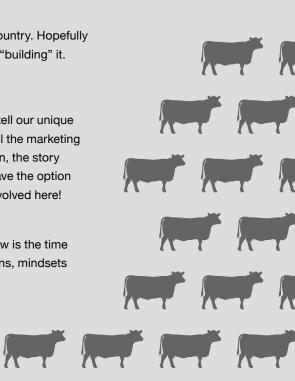
At \$50/tonne carbon, Canada's on-farm grassland carbon sink is worth likely at least \$2.3 billion dollars. Sinking four tonnes per acre of carbon at \$50/tonne with improved pastures could add \$200/acre of carbon value to the soil through management. Are we as an industry doing everything we can to ensure **ranchers** will capture this value in order to preserve grasslands in Canada? What other ecosystem services are we providing as well?

One thing we don't want to do is "uproot" or "tear down" our grasslands in this country. Hopefully we can find a solution to compensate and incentivize ranchers for "planting" and "building" it.

THEME 6: TELL OUR STORY

Lastly, on the theme of "building" and "planting", are there new ways this year to tell our unique beef production story? In order for ranchers to tell their story, they need to control the marketing and messaging through to the consumer. If ranchers have no access to this option, the story will not be told properly. Let's focus this year on more solutions for ranchers to have the option to own more product and messaging through to retail. Get the next generation involved here! We need their voice!

All the best this year. Ride the bull market, don't get bucked off and remember now is the time to build and plant ahead of the rush while uprooting and tearing down old traditions, mindsets or hindrances that may be holding us back from this future.





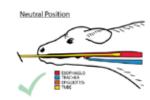


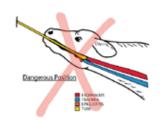
CALF 911:

Tube (Esophageal) Feeding

Position

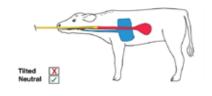
- Restrain the calf in a corner to maintain head control.
- Place the head in a neutral position.





Placement

- Gently advance the tube. If there's resistance, pull it out and start again.
- Palpate the calf's neck. When the tube is in the correct position, you will feel two tube-like structures (trachea and esophagus).



Remember

- It's important to feed slowly. It can take up to three minutes for the stomach to fill.
- Sensure the fluids are body temperature (38°C/100°F).
- Before pulling the tube, kink and pull in one swift motion to ensure no fluid is inhaled.
- To ensure pathogens are not introduced to the herd, use separate feeders for sick and healthy animals.
- Clean the equipment thoroughly.



Scan to watch a 4-minute video.

For more information visit BeefResearch.ca



Writing a Legacy of Sustainable Ranching

REVISITING THE 2015 ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP AWARD RECIPIENT, BAR S RANCH

BY PIPER WHELAN

Every beef operation in Alberta has a story worth telling. When the Chattaway family of Bar S Ranch shares their story, it speaks to four generations of ranchers protecting the land that sustains their cattle and livelihood.

This dedication earned the ranch, located west of Nanton, Alberta and run by Clay Chattaway and his sons Morgan and Scott, the 2015 Environmental Stewardship Award (ESA).

"Sustainability to us is being able to carry on what we've always done and being able to add more," said Morgan after the family received the provincial award.

The ESA program celebrates beef producers who stand out for their commitment to environmental stewardship. Presented annually by ABP, nominees are assessed on their sustainability practices in areas such as animal welfare, water quality, land management, wildlife and stewardship-related leadership activities.

Situated at the headwaters of Mosquito Creek in the picturesque Porcupine Hills, the Bar S Ranch is a cow-calf and yearling operation comprised of about 20,000 acres of deeded and lease land.

"My grandfather came in 1900 and ranched about five miles north, and in 1919 he bought a good part of what's known as the Bar S today," said Clay, who took over running the ranch from his parents in the 1970s.

"The best part about ranching is the family aspect and watching subsequent generations come in. The whole family is part of the management team."

Together, the Chattaways give their best to this ranch. The foundation of their sustainability practices, as Clay described in 2015, is "to leave the land in better shape than we received it, and we received it in pretty good shape."

FINDING SUCCESS WITH TRIED-AND-TRUE PRACTICES

The Chattaways manage their operation with careful attention to the natural resources available, working to get the most from the land while enhancing it.

"Our stewardship goals are just managing the grass in a way that our cattle improve, in a way that the grass improves and in a way that our streams stay healthy," said Morgan, noting that they've used most of their sustainability practices for decades.

With their location in the foothills and an elevation range of 1,000 feet across the ranch, their cattle graze in the high country during the warmer seasons, returning to lower ground in winter. Shares in the Waldron Ranch Grazing Co-op supplement their pastureland. Their rotational grazing system, with cattle moved every three to four days, allows the herd to graze year-round, with feeding generally only needed prior to calving. To better fit this approach, the Chattaways moved their calving season to May about two decades ago, missing the worst of the spring blizzards and taking advantage of the amount of grass available to meet nutritional requirements.

Their use of electric fencing supports rotational grazing, creating three times the number of paddocks on the Bar S than prior to implementing this system. Their cattle are split into five herds, with about 15 paddocks allotted to each herd. This provides more than enough recovery time for the grass and the opportunity to graze some paddocks a few times throughout the year. It also leaves sufficient forage and cover for the wildlife found on the ranch, which includes deer, moose, elk, wolves, black bears, grizzly bears and cougars.

For simple, year-round access to clean water, the Chattaways have used gravity fed watering systems to develop springs around the ranch, which run continuously and won't freeze in cold temperatures.

Clay Chattaway and son Morgan (pictured in 2015) are the third and fourth generation to run their family's ranch west of Nanton, AB.



Receiving the ESA for the values that are steeped into their ranch's history was a special honour for this family, who are writing the future by sharing these practices with the next generation.

"Winning the stewardship award feels good, and it's nice to be recognized by your peers," said Morgan.

"The best part about living here and working here is you get to spend time with your family, you get to be outdoors and you get to work with cattle and with wildlife."

NOMINATIONS FOR THE 2023 ESA ARE NOW OPEN!

You could be the next producer to share your sustainability story through the ESA program. The deadline for nominations is February 28, 2023 at 11:59 p.m.





GAME LAUNCHES INTO ALBERTA CLASSROOMS









Conserving Canada's **Wetlands**





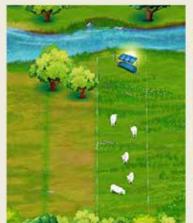




Public and Stakeholder Engagement Launches Online Grazing Simulation Game for Students

Public and Stakeholder Engagement, along with funding and in-kind partners, are excited to announce the launch of The Guardians Grazing Game, an online grazing simulation designed for students in grades 7–10. Participants learn how cattle benefit carbon sequestration and wildlife habitat through rotational grazing in both

native grasslands and tame pastures. By moving cattle at the right time, and leaving enough grass behind, players earn carbon points and attract numerous species of wildlife to their land. The game is set to launch in Alberta classrooms in March 2023 through partnerships with both Ag for Life and Inside Education.



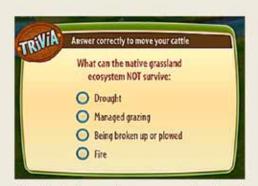
Players learn the importance of restricting cattle from riparian areas with off-stream watering



Paddock conditions advise which areas are ready for grazing



Temporary fencing and off-stream waterer move with cattle



Students learn key concepts about native grasslands and the role of grazers by answering questions



Moving cattle at the right time results in earning wildlife like the Burrowing Owl or Swift Fox



Out and About with Alberta Beef Producers

BY TAYLOR KALBFLEISCH ABP Marketing Assistant

BULLS, BREDS AND CALVES...OH MY!!

The fall auction mart tour continued into December. I attended a variety of sales from bred females, regular pre-sorts and even a few dispersals. It was a pleasure to reconnect with a few producers after the two-year hiatus. Such visits provided insightful perspective from a producer's lens on some of the issues that our industry is currently facing.

Some of the locations we visited were:

BRED STOCK SALES

Medicine Hat Feeding Co.

Medicine Hat, AB November 24, 2022

Foothills Auctioneers

Stavely, AB November 24, 2022

Picture Butte Auction

Picture Butte, AB December 3, 2022

Perlich Bros. Auction Market

Lethbridge, AB December 3, 2022

Calgary Stockyards

Strathmore, AB December 7, 2022

Vold, Jones & Vold Auction

Ponoka, AB December 9, 2022

Thorsby Stockyards

Thorsby, AB December 10, 2022

Olds Auction Mart

Olds, AB December 13, 2022

GORDON TURNER FARMS & GUESTS BRED HEIFER SALE

Southern Alberta Livestock Exchange

Fort Macleod, AB November 30, 2022

THE BRITISH CONNECTION BULL SALE

Balog Auctions

Lethbridge, AB December 3, 2022

OLSON DISPERSAL

Vold, Jones & Vold Auction

Rimbey, AB December 9, 2022

66 RANCH 9TH ANNUAL FALL BULL SALE

Bow Slope Shipping Association

Brooks, AB December 14, 2022

DAINE'S RANCH ANGUS DISPERSAL SALE

Innisfail Auction Mart

Innisfail, AB December 16, 2022

REGULAR PRE-SORT SALE

Stettler Auctions

Stettler, AB

December 20, 2022

I hope to see some familiar faces at upcoming events. Until then, I wish all the best to those who are calving this season.

Plan for Growing Season with New Pasture 101 Program

BY KARIN SCHMID

ALBERTA BEEF PRODUCERS (ABP) AND THE BEEF CATTLE RESEARCH COUNCIL (BCRC) ARE PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THE LAUNCH OF PASTURE 101, A PROJECT INITIATED BY THE ALBERTA BEEF, FORAGE AND GRAZING CENTRE.

FORAGE/BEEF INNOVATION FOR THE NEXT GENERATION

The Alberta Beef, Forage and Grazing Centre (ABFGC) was a five-year agreement (2015-2020) between Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Alberta Agriculture and Forestry and Alberta Beef Producers. It arose from producer interest in bringing together research and extension delivery in beef and forage systems. It was supported with capacity from both governments and an operational budget provided by ABP.

The ABFGC worked on several initiatives over the term of the agreement including multiple researcher projects, the rancher/researcher pilot (later expanded by the applied research and forage associations), tools for evaluating feed test results and evaluating economic value of feeds based on nutrient content, field days and other learning opportunities, and of course, Pasture 101.

THE 101 OF PASTURE 101

Pasture 101 is a handy, online version of a five-pound binder you might be sent home with from a pasture school.

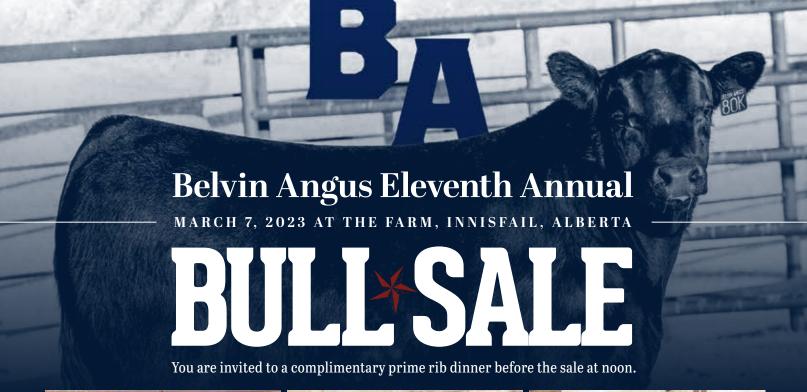
The content is organized into modules, with information ranging from selecting forage species and establishing perennial pastures to extended grazing systems and managing pasture soils. Each module is outfitted with quizzes to increase knowledge retention, and many of the modules feature toolkits with helpful worksheets, calculators and extra resources if you want to dig deeper.

COLLABORATION

Informed by producer and expert input,
Pasture 101 was developed through the ABFGC.
Recognizing the close linkages with existing
BCRC content, BCRC graciously agreed to host
Pasture 101 on behalf of the ABFGC.



As you plan for the growing season ahead, take some time to explore Pasture 101.





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Belvin Kahuna 2067

SIRE SITZ MAJOR 707F DAM BELVIN GEORGINA 123'15



Belvin Vegas 2060

SIRE BALDRIDGE VEGAS G082 DAM BELVIN ERROLINE 17'19



Belvin Kid Rock 2080

SIRE LT WARDEN 8316
DAM BELVIN LADY BLOSSOM 102'12



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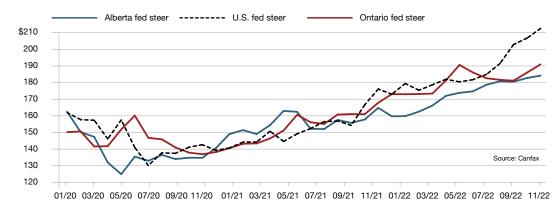


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Cdn\$ per cwt



Canfax Cattle Market Update

CME DRIVES FED PRICES HIGHER, CARCASS QUALITY HIGHER

The CME live cattle futures market climbed steadily in the last half of 2022. Combined with the weakening Canadian dollar, Alberta fed cattle prices re-visited late 2014 levels, right before the 2015 price surge. Alberta fed steers averaged \$184/cwt live in December, 15 per cent higher than January. On average, fed steer prices rose 1.3 per cent per month.

Alberta and Saskatchewan cattle on feed numbers in July 2022 were 5 per cent higher than July 2021. From August to December, the number of cattle on feed averaged 5 per cent lower than year-ago levels. These larger first-half numbers have kept western cattle at a discount to U.S. fed cattle for the entire second half as cattle placed on feed in July are only now leaving feedlots. Using lift time as a metric for how current packers are taking delivery of fed cattle, Alberta packers extended the time between purchase and delivery in the fourth quarter, whereas Ontario shortened the time between purchase and delivery in December. This hand-to-mouth supply that Ontario packers face has pushed Ontario fed cattle to a \$7/cwt premium over Alberta fed cattle in December, compared to less than a \$1/cwt premium in October.

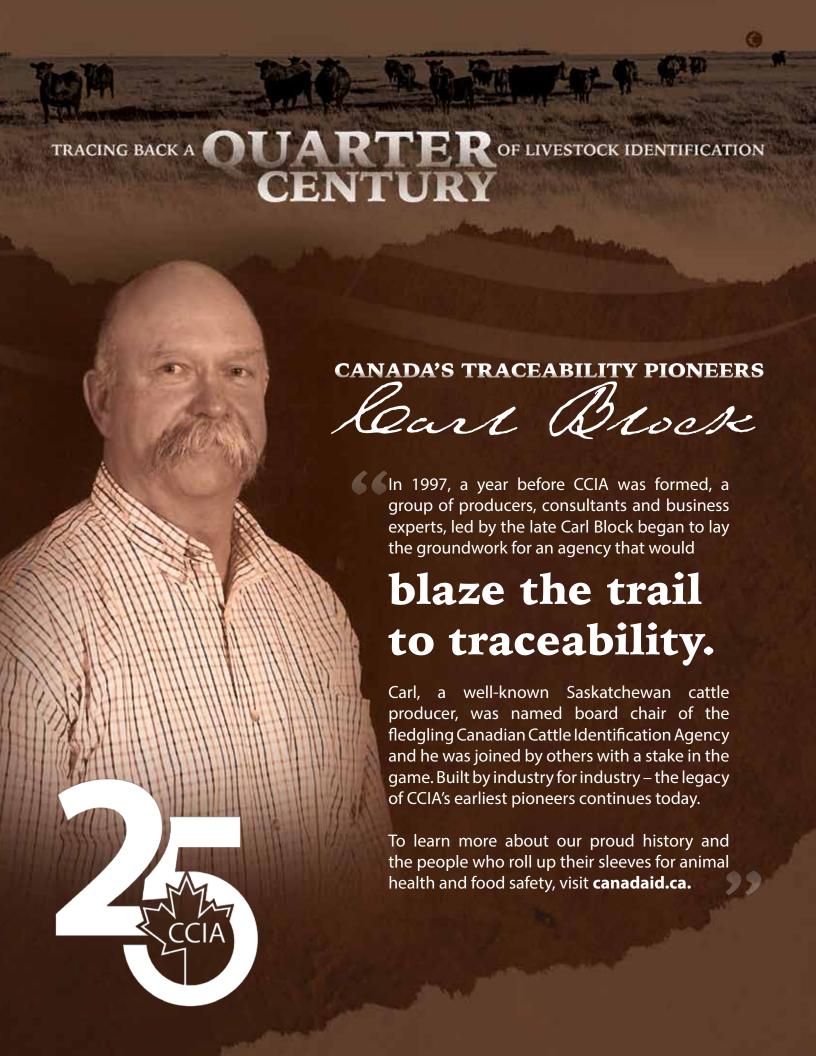
The Alberta to Nebraska cash basis averaged -\$26/cwt in the fourth quarter of 2022, the weakest quarterly average since the second quarter of 2005. The five-year historical cash basis for Alberta is -\$4/cwt, and Ontario's

basis in 2020 and 2021 is -\$3/cwt in the fourth quarter. Canadian steer carcass weights averaged 960 lbs in the fourth quarter, 17 lbs heavier than last year and almost 30 lbs heavier than the five-year average. Large carcass weights left the leverage with the packer, a contributing factor to the weaker basis levels. The weak basis encouraged fed cattle to go south with exports up 1 per cent in October and 3 per cent in November.

Heavier carcasses contribute to larger beef production as well as typically supporting grading quality. Western steer carcass weights reached 980 lbs the last week of October. However, cold weather throughout the Prairies helped drop average carcass weights to 947 lbs by year-end.

In the fourth quarter, all thirteen weeks saw 75 per cent or more of all Grade A carcasses grade AAA or Prime, including one week at 80 per cent. During the same period in 2021, there were only six weeks at 75 per cent or more carcasses graded AAA or better. In 2022, 75 per cent graded AAA or Prime up from 71.5 per cent the prior year. In 2022, the increase in quality grading added 89.1 million pounds or 5 per cent to the supply chain. Stable to higher prices suggest continued strong demand for quality beef.

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



CELEBRATING 25 YEARS

Canada's Traceability Pioneers

"The core objective of the Canadian Cattlemen's Association (CCA) National Cattle Identification program is to create a system whereby every bovine animal sold by its original owner, and leaving its herd of origin, bears a unique identification number. That unique identification number will remain with that animal until it is slaughtered and after slaughter will serve to identify the carcass and its products and will be maintained as an identifying number until 60 days post slaughter."

Source: Summary of Key Findings and Future Directions, by Charles Gracey, Proceedings of the May 7, 1997, National Identification and Information Workshop, Calgary, Alberta

THE DEVELOPMENT OF ID NUMBERS

At the time, the dairy sector already had a system of numbering that predated computers and required a lot of data management for things like breed, birth date and gender that were not necessarily relevant to trace back. After looking at that, it was decided to assign a random number that was quite simply the next in the series. The next important factor would be to reserve blocks of numbers that may be unique to an identifiable group.

This concept of a registry – to give out and record numbers – would be key to the success of the program, and several different options were discussed including expanding Ontario's registry at the time, the existing brand inspection registry or having producers register their animals in the appropriate breed registries. But there were potential issues with overlap between registries and it was unclear how a coordinated approach could be facilitated. So, a working group was struck up to explore appropriate protocol and standards, to ensure an affordable, reliable, low-complexity system.





CANADIAN CATTLE IDENTIFICATION AGENCY WAS FORMED

The first Annual General Meeting was held on March 5, 1998, during which Carl Block was acclaimed as Chairman and Blair Vold as Vice-Chairman. Some highlights include this recommendation from the Technical Committee, which was carried:

"To best meet the requirements at both the producer and packer level, a basic system consisting of a metal or plastic tag inscribed with a unique identification standardized number, bar code and logo (maple leaf in a circle) identifying authenticity, is recommended. This system will offer the flexibility to administer additional options for identification providing the criteria of the national ID system are attained."

Also recommended was a nine-digit tag numbering system, starting with the country code and consistent with International Organization for Standardization (ISO) standards – elements of which are still in place today. Tag trials were also discussed to test retention, readability, reliability and the overall quality of the product.

ABP Monthly Minute

In-person producer meetings are a wrap for 2023! Thanks to everyone who has taken part thus far. Your engagement is valuable. Didn't know or couldn't make it to a meeting? You still have a chance to join us for the virtual producer meeting, February 16. Go to abpdaily.com to learn more.

Resolutions that move forward from these Producer Meetings will be considered at our Annual General Meeting, on March 1 in Red Deer. Join us for the opportunity to hear about the work at ABP, and to connect with fellow beef producers, ABP delegates and staff and industry representatives.

And as a reminder, our Environmental Stewardship Award is open to nominations. Help us celebrate the beef industry and the great stewards of our province by submitting a nomination today!

THE GOVERNMENT DESK

Through producer engagement and collaboration with organizations across Canada and North America, ABP is working to find solutions for producer programs specifically related to wildlife conflict, including long-term risk management programs.

In other provinces and outside Canada, there are very effective programs that help cow-calf producers stabilize their income without impacting the market. ABP is determining how these programs could be augmented to help Alberta farmers weather the recent severe increases in input costs.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Stay up to date on upcoming industry events and info sessions by checking out **abpdaily.com/events/**

THE PRODUCTION DESK

Each year, the ABP Research Committee allocates a small amount of research funding for projects received through the Agriculture Funding Consortium research call.

Committee members review the projects for relevance and impact to the beef industry, fit with beef industry priority outcomes and merit (the projects are also reviewed by experts in the same field for technical soundness).

ABP committed \$75,000 to the following five projects with a total value of \$4,089,318:

- Development of an effective multivalent vaccine to prevent and control infectious footrot in cattle Dr. Jose Perez-Casal, VIDO – \$15,000
- Maternal nutrition, winter feeding, and calf immune fitness in beef cattle

Nilusha Malmuthuge, AAFC - \$15,000

 Characterization of abiotic stress tolerant alfalfa genotypes for beef and dairy production in a changing climate

Stacy Singer, AAFC - \$15,000

- Alternatives to antimicrobials: immunomodulation by mycobacterial cell surface biomolecules to protect against infections in beef and dairy calves Jeffrey Chen, U of S – \$15,000
- Development of a mucosal vaccine against the bovine respiratory pathogen Mannheimia haemolytica
 Trevor Alexander, AAFC – \$15,000.

The Research Committee also approved \$2,000 per year over the next three years to support a revitalization of the silage regional variety trials held across the province every year.

Summaries of research projects supported by provincial check-off dollars are available at albertabeef.org, and don't forget to check out beefresearch.ca for work supported by national check-off!

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ABP ZONE MAP





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