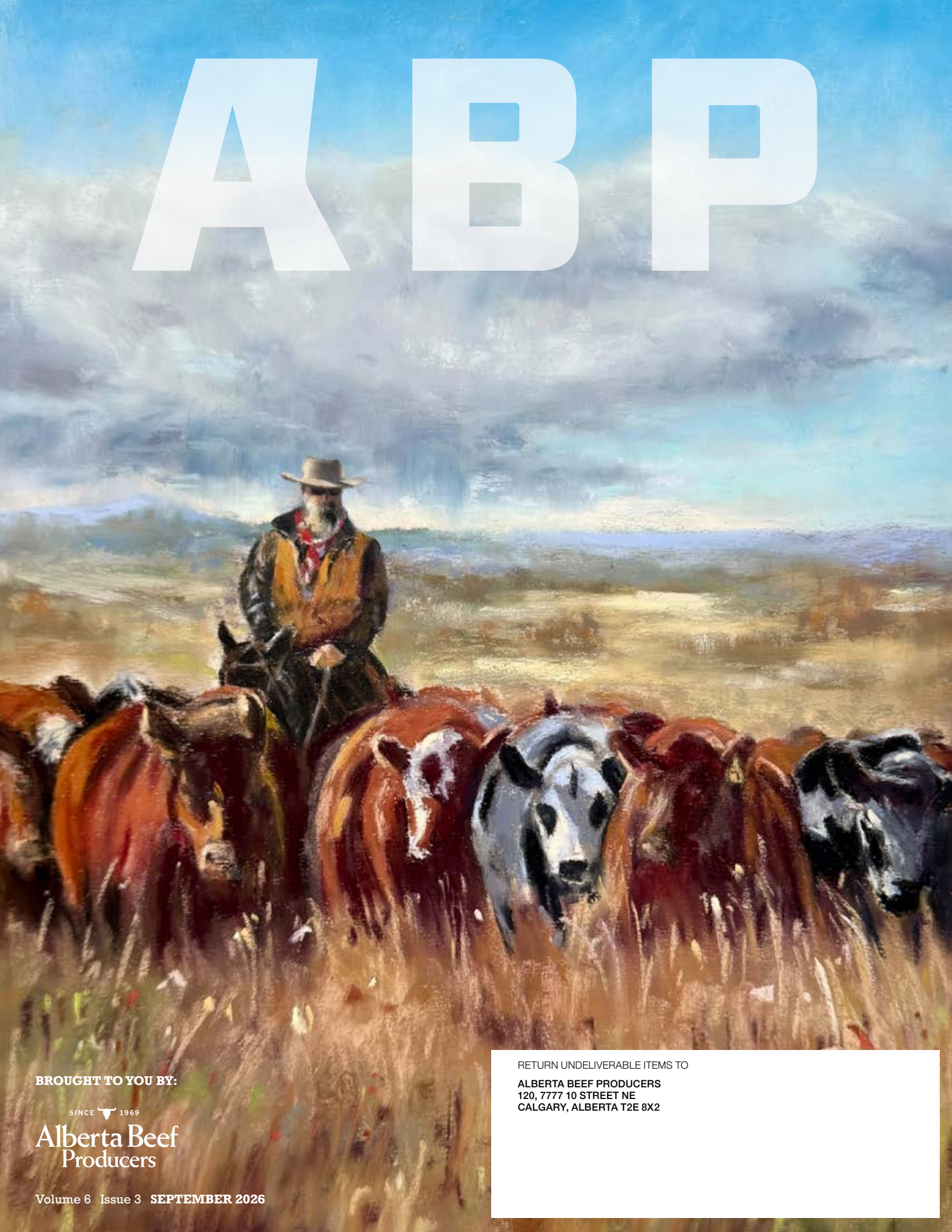


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Volume 6 Issue 3 SEPTEMBER 2026

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2026

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Northeast Zone

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\$10 for supper

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Published by:

Brad Dubeau,
Alberta Beef Producers

Editor
Katie Songer

Creative
Tracy Irving

Front Cover Illustration
Lynda Baxter

Copy Editing
Redpoint Media Group

Writing
Kate Ayers
Brad Brinkworth
Cailey Church
Emma Cross
Debra Murphy
Kristine Flaim
Dianne Finstad
Tyler Fulton
Robin Galey
Craig Guthrie
Jamie Kerr
Lindsye Murffin
Cale Place
Karin Schmid
Katie Songer
Gina Teel
Sam Vriend

Printing
DATA Group

CONTACT

Advertising Opportunities
Devyn Inch
devyni@albertabeef.org

Editorial
Katie Songer
katies@albertabeef.org

Publisher
Brad Dubeau
bradd@albertabeef.org

Subscription/Contact Information Updates
Kathy Jardine
kathyj@albertabeef.org

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ON THE COVER

This issue's cover is an original pastel illustration by Lynda Baxter, based on the photo shown at left by Holly Nicoll.

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#AllForTheBeef

WITH BRAD DUBEAU



This past summer has been a very busy one for your Alberta Beef Producers on a number of fronts.

Utilizing ABP directors and delegates, our organization gave feedback on the Beef Code of Conduct, participated in the Interprovincial Trade and Unmet Slaughter Capacity consultations, and reviewed the proposed updates to the Enhanced Feed Ban.

Through the recent traceability conversation, producers told us to do a better job to make them aware of these types of consultations. So we used both our own tools and external outlets to try to reach as many producers as possible with information on how to give their input. ABP invested \$20,000 in other print and digital publications to make individual producers aware consultations were taking place and ensure they had the opportunity to have their say on them.

The Beef Code of Practice builds consumer confidence in our product by reinforcing the industry's commitment to treating animals right. While the Code is voluntary, it contains guidelines for producers to follow. Producers are generally already following these guidelines, and the latest version didn't have big changes, but there were some areas we felt needed attention.

The Interprovincial Trade consultations are a good first step in addressing unrealized processor capacity interprovincially from the federal and provincial governments, along with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency. ABP chair Doug Roxburgh believes it's important to identify underutilized capacity in order to develop an approach for meeting access demand without impacting exports.

The updates to Canada's Enhanced Feed Ban include changes to the management of specified risk material (SRM) that reflect Canada's negligible BSE risk status and current scientific understanding. The goal is to harmonize our regulations with those in the U.S.—something we've been seeking for years.

ABP has also been extremely active with several working groups. There's the Eastern Slopes Coal Development Working Group, the provincial groups working on the CCA situation, plus the Traceability Working Group. It's not typical to have so many groups active all at once, and it's been a huge strain on our resources. We've invested significantly in these efforts in the last two fiscal years.

You can read more about these working groups elsewhere in this issue, but we'll give a brief overview of what each group has been doing here.

The ABP Coal Mining Policy Working Group has worked with other organizations on a policy for industrial development which could be applied to other areas of the province as well. You can see the policy on page 61.

After several meetings with all of the provinces and then the CCA, the Provincial Working Group brought forward its recommendations, which were approved in principle at the March CCA Annual General Meeting, considered by the CCA and the Provincial Member Council, and further revised. The CCA board approved the bylaw changes at the Semi-Annual Meeting in Manitoba last month. See page 60 for a summary of the new bylaws, which will be reviewed with producers at the ABP meetings this fall. The process has gone very well, with the provinces all having an opportunity to find what works for everyone. It's not perfect, but the changes represent a huge step forward in all the areas of concern ABP had when we announced our withdrawal from CCA.

For the Traceability Working Group, we brought together beef producers and elected ABP delegates with differing opinions about the traceability conversation over the course of the summer. Also on the group are representatives of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency and Alberta's Chief Provincial Veterinarian office, along with the Alberta Veterinary Medical Association, the Alberta Cattle Feeders' Association, Western Stock Growers' Association, Alberta Auction Markets Association, and Livestock Identification Services. The group identified issues in the current system, as well as with the proposed changes, working to identify solutions that would make traceability an acceptable, valuable tool producers can embrace. Check page 60 for an update on the group's progress.

All of this work was in addition to the regular activities ABP is involved in—marketing, beef production and extension, government relations, wildlife issues, and stakeholder relations. We continue to use ABP print and digital tools to keep producers informed—with so much going on, I encourage you to check them regularly to stay up to date.

One summer highlight was a very successful Stampede Summit. Premier Danielle Smith attended, along with provincial Agriculture and Irrigation Minister Tara Sawyer, as well as Federal Agriculture and Agri-Food Minister Heath MacDonald, plus federal and provincial politicians of all parties, in addition to a great turnout from industry. It is becoming a very valuable opportunity for government and cattle people to come together to discuss how to make this industry more successful in the long term.

At the Summit, ABP also hosted and toured representatives from seven U.S. states for some amazing conversations on challenges faced by both countries. Attendees recognized the ongoing importance of working together, and the Americans encouraged ABP to continue these important discussions. These cross-border relationships have been developed by attending the NCBA annual meeting, and the seven states in Calgary pledged to help us as we expand the reach of our Summit talks both across the U.S. and Canada for grassroots policy development.

I'm excited to welcome our new Government Relations and Policy Manager to the ABP Team, Mikayla Janssen.

Looking ahead, just a reminder that we listened to extensive producer feedback and have moved our ABP Producer Meetings back to the fall. They'll be taking place this September and October, with the AGM at the beginning of December, at the Red Deer Resort and Casino. Watch your mailboxes for more information, or go to ABPDaily.com or albertabeef.org. The AGM will also be available online again.

It's been an extremely interesting year as we navigate these conversations, especially with our southern neighbours. ABP has been very active in an ever-increasing number of issues. We are encouraged to see a significant decrease in refund requests and are hoping that's in direct correlation to the value producers are seeing from the organization. We've put a lot of investment into increasing our skills and programming at ABP over the last two years to meet the challenges ahead of us. 🍷

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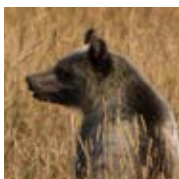
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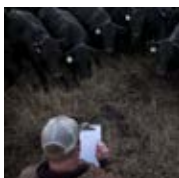
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2026 ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP AWARD WINNERS

Stewardship Runs Deep for the Walton Family

BY BRAD BRINKWORTH



Watch ABP's feature on
this year's ESA recipients
on YouTube.



“We’re just ordinary people doing what we love and what feels right. To be recognized—I can’t describe what that means to us.”

In Alberta’s Special Area No. 2, about 40 minutes east of Drumheller, where drought and wind have shaped generations of ranching families, lush pasture isn’t something visitors expect to see. Yet across the Walton family’s ranch near Homestead Coulee, decades-old re-grassed fields are flourishing, native prairie stands healthy, and wildlife is abundant.

For Ron and Kim Walton and their family, that’s no accident.

For more than a century, the Walton family has managed this stretch of prairie, guided by an unspoken understanding that caring for the land and ranching are inseparable. Healthy grass, reliable water, thriving wildlife, and productive cattle are all part of the same system.

That long-term commitment has earned the Waltons the 2026 Alberta Beef Producers Environmental Stewardship Award (ESA), recognizing their outstanding contributions to environmental stewardship and sustainable cattle production.

Yet if you ask Ron about stewardship, he doesn’t talk about awards, programs or environmental initiatives. Instead, he talks about doing what feels right.

“We had confidence in what we were doing. We just didn’t have a name for it,” he says.

The Walton family’s long-running Simmental herd is managed with the same focus on balance that guides the ranch as a whole—healthy cattle, healthy grasslands, and a sustainable future for both.

Photo credit: Seven D Media





Ron and Kim Walton joined by son Tyler, daughter-in-law Dezarae, and two of their grandsons. Together with daughters Ashley and Kelly, their children, and family members near and far, they represent the generations of family that continue to shape the Walton legacy. Photo credit: Seven D Media

GENERATIONS OF GRIT

The Walton family settled in the Homestead Coulee community in 1911.

In 1938, the Special Areas Board was formed to oversee and conserve millions of acres abandoned by farmers and ranchers after the hardship of the 1930s, when prolonged drought and early farming techniques stripped the land of topsoil and drove many families out. The Waltons stayed, adapting soil conservation practices and carrying those instincts forward for nearly a century.

“The Walton family used their grit, determination and soil conservation skills they learned over generations to survive the era of the Dirty Thirties and continue to live by those principles today,” says Jesse Williams, Agricultural Fieldman for Special Area No. 2, who has worked with the family on water infrastructure, re-grassing permits, and through 4-H.

“At the heart of their farm’s legacy is a devotion to responsible dryland agricultural practices including minimum tillage farming, responsible native pasture grazing, water development and a keen eye for preventing soil degradation in the sensitive, drought-prone brown soil zone.”

Each year the family reworks about 100 acres of old cultivated “throwback” land, fencing and re-grassing it before rotating it back into pasture use on a three-year cycle.

“When you stop and look back, it’s something to think about,” says Ron, “our family has built this operation over the span of 115 years.”

The ranch currently supports approximately 300 cow-calf pairs and more than 100 yearling heifers across roughly 8,800 acres of owned and leased land. As the family looks ahead, son Tyler and daughter-in-law Dezarae are taking on increasing responsibility, helping carry the operation and its stewardship values into the next generation.

WATER DEVELOPMENT & PASTURE MANAGEMENT

Water development is one of the defining stewardship investments for the Waltons.

As grazing management became central to the operation, the Walton family invested in an interconnected network of wells, underground pipelines, reservoirs and watering tanks designed to encourage even grazing across the landscape through healthier pastures and strategically placed watering sources.

One project Ron still speaks about with pride is the re-grassing of a half-section around an old granary site, where he drilled a well and ran a free-flow line into a tire tank—turning a long-abandoned field back into productive, watered pasture.

The ranch now has approximately 13 miles of underground pipeline supplying 28 watering tanks across the ranch, with 10 dugouts providing supplemental water.

NATIVE AND RE-GRASSED PRAIRIE, PROTECTED

Pastures the Waltons re-grassed decades ago have matured into dense stands of crested wheatgrass.

The family keeps six full sections closed to hunting, creating a refuge that has transformed wildlife on the land. Ron has watched the shift over a lifetime.

Brown Headed Cowbirds perch along a pasture fence, where healthy grasslands provide habitat for a variety of wildlife. Photo credit: Seven D Media



Strategically placed water sources encourage even grazing throughout the ranch. Photo credit: Seven D Media

“When I was growing up, it was rare to see some species—like sharp-tailed grouse and Hungarian partridge. The first deer we’d seen was in the early 1960s,” he says. “In the last few years, we’ve seen flocks of 20 to 40 grouse and partridge, mule and white-tailed deer, moose and even elk. It’s quite a feeling to see the animals in the barren prairies, and to watch them watering at the water tanks.”

Touring the ranch today in late spring, it’s common to spot antelope, mule deer does in pre-fawning groups, and sharp-tailed hens flushing ahead of the truck.

“The environment that we’re caretakers of—if it’s healthy, if everything in nature is working—it’s a chain,” Ron says. “The system is complete.”

CALVING & SEASONAL MANAGEMENT

Calving practices reflect the same patient, deliberate approach.

Calving starts in mid-March in tight quarters, with pairs moving into a series of pens once calves have successfully bonded with and are nursing from their mothers.

By mid-April, pairs move out onto tame grass fields bordered by caragana shelterbelts, fenced with the bottom wire raised high enough for calves to slip

Long before environmental stewardship was recognized through awards and formal programs, the Waltons were simply ranching the way they believed in.

underneath for shelter during storms—while keeping cows from following them in and damaging the brush.

By early June, cattle are sorted into breeding groups and moved to summer pasture. By late October, calves are weaned, steers sold, and heifers brought home to start the cycle again.

A TEST OF RESILIENCE

Several years ago, the Walton family faced one of its greatest challenges when Ron was seriously injured in an accident northwest of Hanna and airlifted by STARS Air Ambulance to Edmonton.



He spent three months recovering while Kim made a weekly drive to be with him. The experience accelerated the transition to the next generation.

During Ron's recovery, the family and community stepped forward without missing a beat.

"Ernest is my legs," Ron says of his grandson with a smile. "He has to do all the stuff that I can't do, and he never complains. [His sister], Abby, she's getting to help out too. And Tyler and Dezaræ are taking over the operation of the place."

GENERATIONS OF STEWARDSHIP

For a family that has spent 115 years quietly doing the right thing by the land—even without having a name for it—the ESA recognition carries a particular weight.

Long before environmental stewardship was recognized through awards and formal programs, the Waltons were simply ranching the way they believed in. For Ron, that remains the most surprising part of receiving the award.

"We're just ordinary people doing what we love and what feels right," he says. "To be recognized—I can't describe what it means to us." 🍷

Photo credit: Peakline Films



Meet Some of ABP's Newest Staff Members

ALBERTA BEEF PRODUCERS IS EXCITED TO INTRODUCE SOME NEW FACES TO OUR TEAM. PLEASE JOIN US IN WELCOMING MIKAYLA AND DEVYN!



MIKAYLA JANSSEN **Government Relations and Policy Manager**

Alberta Beef Producers is pleased to announce that Mikayla Janssen will be joining the team as Government Relations and Policy Manager, effective October 19, 2026.

Janssen is a graduate of the University of Victoria, where she earned a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science. She has served as a Ministerial Assistant, Policy Advisor, and, most recently, Chief of Staff in several ministry offices, including Alberta's Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation. Through these roles, Janssen has developed extensive experience in public policy, government relations, and advocacy strategy.

As Government Relations and Policy Manager, Janssen will strengthen ABP's relationships and communications with elected officials and senior government staff. She will play a key role in ensuring the interests of cattle and beef producers are considered in legislative, regulatory, and policy decisions that affect the industry.

ABP's advocacy efforts are guided by producer-approved policy positions outlined in the Policy Manual, available on albertabeef.org. While this work spans a range of topics, some

of ABP's current priorities and areas of focus for Janssen will include:

- Continuing the work to strengthen risk management programming for cattle producers, including through consultations on the Next Policy Framework.
- Advocating for practical, low-burden water reporting requirements as part of the evolution of the Water Act.
- Working with Canadian and U.S. partners to reinforce the importance of a stable, integrated North American cattle and beef market.

Janssen will also lead ABP's engagement in events that support government relations, including overseeing the planning and execution of the annual Alberta Beef Industry Stampede Summit.

Please join us in welcoming Mikayla Janssen to the ABP team. We look forward to the expertise and leadership she will bring in advancing the interests of Alberta's cattle producers. 🍷



DEVYN INCH

Advertising Sales Representative

Devyn Inch is an agriculture professional based in Cochrane with a passion for livestock, technology, and the people who make the beef industry what it is. Growing up around ranching and horses in Alberta, he brings hands-on experience in beef production, feedlot operations, livestock technology, and agricultural education. Inch holds a Bachelor of Agriculture Technology and a Diploma in Animal Science Technology, Beef Major, from Lakeland College.

Through his previous experience working with producers and agricultural businesses, Inch has developed an understanding of the beef industry and the importance of building meaningful relationships between producers and the companies who support them.

As Advertising Sales Representative, Inch will be responsible for:

- Coordinating advertising sales for ABP's quarterly print publication and ABPDaily.com.
- Working with clients to develop creative and effective advertising solutions.
- Supporting clients through the ad design process and coordinating with the ABP team to ensure advertisements are delivered effectively.
- Building and maintaining relationships with advertising partners across Alberta's agriculture and beef industries.

ABP welcomes Inch to the organization and looks forward to the role he will play in connecting producers and industry partners across Alberta. 🍷



Photo Credit: Kailey Wirsta, K-Cow Ranch

Ranchers Lead With Authenticity

**ALBERTA OPEN FARM DAYS BRIDGES
THE PRODUCER-CONSUMER GAP**

BY KATE AYERS





Every third weekend in August, people from all over Alberta can bring their burning questions to food producers across the province.

Above photos:
Open Farm Days at Hahn Meat Market.
Photo credit: Lauren Hennig
of ELSIE.ayche Photography.

Above right:
Open Farm Days at Charlotte Lake Farms.
Photo supplied by the Bonneau family.

Alberta Open Farm Days is a free two-day event for families to learn about agriculture and food production. With nearly 150 host farms, visitors can meet and chat directly with farmers, ranchers, and culinary partners. Over the weekend, many producers run tours and deliver hands-on experiences to show people where their food comes from and how it's produced.

On Aug. 15 and 16 this summer, Alberta Open Farm Days celebrated its 14th edition, and beef producers ensured the sector was well represented. We talked to participating beef producers, who shared their experiences and tips for ranchers considering taking part in the future.

OPEN FARM DAYS PREP

Host producers put in a lot of work behind the scenes to make sure the weekend goes as smoothly as possible. Fortunately, Open Farm Days landed on one of the few sunny weekends this summer, and visitors were eager to see the cattle and learn about beef production.

Bob Hahn at Hahn Angus Meat Market in Sherwood Park hosted on Saturday and Sunday, showing visitors brisket preparation, carrying out farm tours, and displaying working dogs in action. Bob owns a purebred Angus operation. Since COVID-19, he has ramped up direct-to-consumer sales with a brick-and-mortar meat shop.

“Last year we sold 42 animals through the meat shop. Meat sales are actually outpacing the purebred sales at this point,” Bob says. “This growing trend of people wanting to buy from their local farmer is certainly not going away. I would guess that last year our sales increased 30 per cent. I’m probably in line for raising that another 20 per cent over last year.”

Hosting Open Farm Days the last two years has helped raise Bob’s meat sales as people see and learn about his operation. Visitors who buy products during the event often become repeat customers, he says.

At Bonnyville’s Charlotte Lake Farms, Leona and Guy Bonneau have hosted Open Farm Days visitors since 2019. The third-generation farmers, who celebrate 115 years on the land this year, provide pasture tours. Visitors learned how the family manage their cattle with rotational grazing and why this management practice is an important part of caring for both the animals and the land. The Bonneaus also shared how they decide when it’s time to move the herd and when a pasture is ready to be grazed again, as well as how weather impacts the grass and the daily forage needs of the cattle.

“People asked lots of great questions about what we do and were interested in the reality of how a real farm works.”

Janice and Kevin Wirsta of K-Cow Ranch in Elk Point have been a part of Alberta Open Farm Days since its inception. Visitors toured the farm and learned about the family’s purebred Hereford, Charolais, and Black Angus cattle, as well as what it takes to raise high-quality livestock.

Kasko Cattle Co. hosted nearly 100 visitors as part of a tour facilitated by the Coaldale and District Agricultural Society. Ryan Kasko and his family, who run the multi-generational feeder and irrigated crop operation, showed visitors cattle care, feeding, and handling.

BRIDGING THE GAP

One of Open Farm Days’ objectives is learning—providing opportunities for the generations removed from the farm to see primary production firsthand and hear the stories and lessons of the farmers and ranchers who grow their food. Host producers emphasize the learning piece to help consumers appreciate the work and expense that goes into raising high-quality beef.

“They need to get to know us as well as how we do it, how our operation runs, how we raise our animals, and how we process and all the details,” Leona says. “Anybody can say they’re selling farm-to-table beef, but everyone does it differently, and so the end result will be different.”

Through their direct beef sales and Open Farm Days, the Bonneaus can address those information gaps.

“We realized that people know nothing about where their food comes from,” Guy says. “Even though we’re supposedly just selling, we have to do a lot of educating.”

At Hahn Angus Meat Market, visitors gained insight into production costs.

“We actually showed the feeding of the animals in a bunk. They were totally intrigued that farmers actually use nutritionists to create a food source and how important all that stuff is,” Bob Hahn says. “There were lots of questions, but they basically were shocked about how much is involved and what’s involved in growing beef. They’re kind of gobsmacked at the costs involved in running an operation.”

The Wirstas also highlighted the cost of the equipment and how it helps them run their ranch. The family showed visitors their cattle stock trailer, v-rake, tractors, round baler, 14-bale hauler, self-propelled discbine, and combine.

“We explained how much fuel each one of these pieces of equipment can burn in a day,” Kevin says, “and some of the costs associated with it. For instance, for the baler, one belt is just shy of \$2,300 and there are eight belts on there.”



The family also showed visitors the crop fields and cattle handling yard.

“We explained to them how we utilize that corn and what it does in terms of enabling our ranch to succeed on fewer acres because of more tonnage,” Kevin says. “We had a pen of bulls and then we had some show cattle. We talked about each breed and then we went into our handling facilities where I explained how we vaccinate and where we vaccinate and how easy it is when you have the right equipment.”

The producers appreciated the visitors’ curiosity, their questions, and the opportunity to have informed discussions rather than trying to navigate online discourse.

“We just always like welcoming people to our farm and I would say that there was really good engagement. People asked lots of great questions about what we do and were interested in the reality of how a real farm works,” Ryan Kasko says. “Generally, people were impressed with how clean and organized our farm is. Often, people have a perception of what a large farm might be like, and then when they come, they think, ‘Oh, this actually looks pretty good.’”

At Kasko Cattle Co., visitors saw the different types of cattle feed and walked down the alleyways where cattle were being fed.

“We explained the process of bringing cattle in from across Western Canada and other parts of North America and looked at some of the technology we have around feeding,” Ryan says. “We were in our handling facilities and discussed how cattle are vaccinated. And we had a cattle liner on site. You see them driving down the road, but not a lot of people have been inside a cattle liner, so I think especially the kids liked that part of it.”

Overall, the on-farm firsthand experiences help share agriculture’s story.

“Sharing the farm with the community and the local people really is something that is important for bridging those gaps between them and the farmers,” Leona Bonneau says.

Ryan agrees.

“It’s important that we are open to having people come on our farm and be able to explain what we do in an open way and allow people to see real farm production,” he says.

In total, the four operations we talked to hosted over 600 visitors and shared their passion for and knowledge of beef production.

Above: Kasko Cattle Co. as part of the Coaldale & District Agricultural Society Open Farm Days Tour. Photo supplied by Coaldale District Agricultural Society.

AUTHENTICITY OVER PERFECTION

While producers may wait for the “perfect” time to host Open Farm Days, this year’s hosts urge interested producers to get involved. They encourage producers to show their operation as it is and focus on raising agricultural awareness through storytelling.

“There’s no special recipe. It’s being yourself and representing the best possible farming operation you might have,” Kevin Wirsta says. “The number one key point to the whole Open Farm Days is educating the urban people to understand the process that we go through to bring valuable and safe food to their plates.”

Indeed, visitors appreciate seeing a working farm, including its imperfections.

“It’s kind of like how everybody wants a clean house to have company over,” Leona says. “But your farm doesn’t have to be perfect for people to come out. And people really don’t care. They’re there to see you and visit.”

When planning for Open Farm Days, producers should lean heavily into their operation’s history, values, and best management practices.

“We had one piece called ‘Ask the Farmer Anything,’ and it was a lively session,” says Bob Hahn. “We had people asking everything about organics, environment, animal health, withdrawal periods for drugs, food safety, all those questions that we hoped participants would ask. It’s a really good way to demonstrate that we do know what we’re talking about and that we do care—all producers do. I encourage people to talk about this stuff and go out of your way to tell your story.”

Open Farm Days require some legwork, and producers will need to dedicate time to prepare and host over the weekend, but the extra effort is worth it.

For example, at Charlotte Lake Farms, the Bonneaus set up a boot-wash station, satellite images of their pastures, picnic tables, garbage cans, porta-potties, and signage. They also ensure they have a presentation ready for guests and that their herd is calm enough for visitors to safely view it when they pull wagons into the pasture.

“We’ve been doing this for several years, so the cows are used to it now,” Guy says. “We’ve always made sure



Learning about forage production at K-Cow Ranch. Photo credit: Kailey Wirsta

that we have a nice quiet herd so we can park right in the middle of the herd, and I can get out and talk.”

RANCHERS, VISITORS APPRECIATE OPPORTUNITY TO CONNECT

After the tractors are turned off and the pasture gates have closed, producers and visitors alike express their gratitude for each taking the time to connect and learn.

“My favourite part is after the tour because we hang around and they get to come and talk to us and then they get to ask their burning questions. We try and answer everything as truthfully and honestly as we can,” Guy says. “The kids come and shake your hands and thank you because they’ve never been so close to a cow. They always thank us for opening our farm for them.”

Some visitors even follow up with a phone call to say thank you and purchase beef products.

“They were very grateful and thankful, absolutely,” Kevin says.

At the end of the two days, stories are shared and friendships are made.

“I always find it very, very rewarding. That’s why we keep doing this,” Guy says. “As long as somebody learned something about your farm or about agriculture, that’s what it’s all about.”

Producers who are interested in participating in Alberta Open Farm Days next year can visit albertaopenfarmdays.ca for host registration details and resources. 🍷



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of the BC Interior



A once in a generation assemblage of deeded ranchland across the Cariboo, Lillooet and Thompson regions.



DIAMOND S RANCH PAVILION, BC

Set above the Fraser River in the historic ranching community of Pavilion, Diamond S Ranch is an exceptional 13,546.62± acre cattle operation built to support up to 1,000 cow-calf pairs. The ranch features 832± irrigated acres, extensive Crown range with 2,496 AUMs, 17 water licences, and a warm Fraser River microclimate that provides excellent forage production and a long grazing season. Well-equipped for large-scale ranching, the property includes multiple homes, bunkhouses, heated shops, equipment storage, horse facilities, corrals, and extensive livestock infrastructure. Diamond S Ranch is a rare opportunity to acquire one of British Columbia's premier large-scale cattle operations. **\$32,995,000**



MOON AND MEADOW VIEW RANCH - WILLIAMS LAKE, BC

Own a piece of British Columbia's ranching history. Moon and Meadow View Ranch comprise 6,424± acres of productive hayland, pasture, native range, timber and irrigated meadows west of Williams Lake. Supporting up to 1,000-pairs, this cattle operation includes 728± irrigated acres, two Crown grazing licences providing 5,909 AUMs and 38 water licences. **\$22,950,000**



FRASER RIVER RANCH WILLIAMS LAKE, BC

Fraser River Ranch is a premier 7,963.70± acre cattle operation located northwest of Williams Lake, supporting up to 1,000 cow-calf pairs. The ranch features 608 irrigated acres, an approximately 90,000-acre Crown grazing range with 3,149 AUMs, 18 water licences, and two Crown land leases. **\$22,950,000**



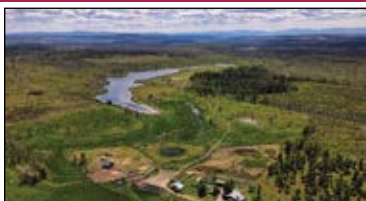
FISCHER RANCH AND CACHE CREEK NATURAL BEEF

Encompassing 1,399.46± acres near Cache Creek, including approximately 680 irrigated acres along the fertile Bonaparte River. Productive soils, a warm climate, greenhouses, cold storage, processing facilities and extensive irrigation support a diversified hay, produce and livestock operation, complemented by multiple residences, shops and cattle facilities. **\$19,995,000**



105 MILE RANCH 105 MILE HOUSE, BC

11,397± acres of grassland, pasture, timber and numerous lakes. Historically supporting 3,500± acres of hay production, the property offers extensive grazing with multiple Highway 97 access points. Corrals, a load-out chute, an older mobile home, and available well water, hydro and telephone service provide an excellent base for future ranch development. **\$23,500,000**



HOME RANCH 70 MILE HOUSE, BC

Home Ranch offers 1,086± acres approximately 20 miles east of 70 Mile House, including 239± acres of dryland hay and capacity to winter up to 1,800 calves. Improvements include two log homes, a workshop, hay shed, feedlot, corrals and load-out chutes, with well water, power and telephone service. **\$3,500,000**



BLUE RIDGE RANCH PAVILION, BC

Blue Ridge Ranch comprises 1,706.16± acres along the Fraser River, approximately 40 kilometres north of Lillooet. The ranch includes 470± irrigated hay acres supported by four center pivots and 11 water licences, with a well-maintained 2,000± sq. ft. Pan-Abode home, well water, hydro and internal gravel roads. **\$2,950,000**



OXBOW RANCH 70 MILE HOUSE, BC

Oxbow Ranch offers 480± acres approximately 25 miles east of 70 Mile House, including 102± acres of dryland hay with rolling hills, timber and mountain views. Improvements include a 1,500± sq. ft. log home, workshop, gated access, well water and solar power, with potential Crown range allocation subject to provincial approval. **\$1,150,000**



RED CREEK RANCH 70 MILE HOUSE, BC

Red Creek Ranch offers 520± acres south of Bridge Lake, including approximately 340 acres of hay and grazing land and 140± acres of dryland hay. Improvements include a residence, workshop, hay shed, newer corrals, load-out facilities, fencing, well water, power and telephone service. **\$1,150,000**



FLY CREEK RANCH 70 MILE HOUSE, BC

Fly Creek Ranch comprises 320± acres of fully fenced pasture near 70 Mile House, historically used for grazing, winter feeding and calving. Improvements include well water, livestock troughs and a small hay and equipment shelter. **\$850,000**



CANYON CREEK RANCH 70 MILE HOUSE, BC

Canyon Creek Ranch offers 160± acres approximately 20 miles east of 70 Mile House, with 22± acres of dryland hay, well water, power and telephone. Improvements include two log homes, three seasonal cabins and operational ranch outbuildings. **\$749,000**

Western Land Group

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Habitat Connectivity and Access Project

BY DIANNE FINSTAD



CREATING SUPPORT FOR WILDLIFE HABITAT COULD NET BENEFITS FOR SOUTHERN ALBERTA BEEF PRODUCERS, INCLUDING THROUGH FINANCIAL SUPPORT UNDER A PILOT PROJECT.

Just as humans do, wildlife relies on having places and spaces to move around. Even on the wide-open prairies, connecting routes like coulees are important thoroughways. They also serve as nesting and overwintering bases for many upland game birds and winter cover for deer and antelope. Early season willows that grow in these routes offer important spring habitat for pollinators. While shelter belts serving as moisture conservers and perennial grass cover between strips were common fifty years ago, they've become rarer with larger operations and equipment.

The Alberta Conservation Association (ACA) seeks to retain some of these corridors by working with landowners and a wide range of partners, including irrigation districts and municipalities, on some key projects already making a difference in improving those environments.

ACA Senior Biologist Brad Downey oversees the new Habitat Connectivity and Access Project, which he says brings together work that's been underway for a while under one umbrella.

"A lot of this is tied to connections through some of the more developed agricultural landscapes," explains Downey. "There are ribbons

of habitat found within them—riparian areas, the coulees, areas around reservoirs that still retain grasslands. Many of them are still grazed by cattle."

The conservation group was interested in collaborating with producers in southern Alberta to enhance and maintain habitat for a variety of species, from game birds to ungulates. But it also wants to develop relationships to pave the way for continued hunting access in these areas, which are often rich in wildlife.

Water quality has been another aspect of the habitat work being done.





West Ridge Aerial Wetland, part of the Milk River Ridge Initiative. Photo supplied.

“We already know even a small 100-acre riparian area can end up filtering the water from about 4,000 acres of land that goes down through it. It might seem like a small ribbon of habitat but it provides an important function for the downstream users when it filters through it. Maintaining that habitat is important for a lot of things.”

Downey points to the success of projects like the Milk River Ridge Reservoir Water Quality Stewardship Initiative, started 13 years ago. The reservoir was fenced off, and over 40,000 shrubs have been planted around it. Over 500 acres of previously cultivated land has been reseeded into permanent grass cover. Raymond High School students planted more than 2,000 willow stakes through the riparian areas. A nutrient settling pond was constructed to capture and filter runoff from a key drainage channel into the reservoir.

“If you walk around the Milk River Ridge Reservoir and see the restoration that has occurred, and how it’s being managed for habitat and water filtration, you’d be amazed at the shrubs, wildlife, and the growth that’s out there now,” says Downey. “It’s been a key project and one I know the County of Warner is very happy with and very proud about. I highly recommend going for a walk out there.”

ACA has also collaborated with the St. Mary River Irrigation District on a similar approach around many of its reservoirs and adjacent lands.

“We’ve decided now to look at expanding that effort, focusing on rewarding and recognizing some of those landowners that have those critical features on their landscapes, like coulees, and riparian corridors that you find in some of those cultivated areas,” says Downey.

Funding for incentive payments to landholders has become available this year through the new provincial Ecosystem Services Grant Program. The Corridor Initiative is just getting underway for the South Saskatchewan Watershed, with the pilot program focused on the Counties of Warner, Forty Mile, Cardston, and the south portion of Cypress County.

“We’re looking for landholders interested in working with us. We have a number of producers we already work with that we’re approaching,” explains Downey. “It’s open to others that have coulees or riparian habitats they might consider rolling into the program, and getting compensated for some of that work they have been doing to maintain those important systems on the landscape— the ecosystem services they provide.”

For example, the program could provide payments for idle zones for filtration in cropland areas, or for managed coulee grazing to retain cover for wildlife wintering habitat, or compensation for fencing off riparian areas.

But a new angle being explored involves using virtual fencing to protect coulee and riparian habitat without the need for additional permanent structures on the landscape.

“To me, that’s the future, to be honest,” offers Downey. “You’re putting up this wildlife-friendly fence to protect some of the habitat and for the water filtration. But also, it’s another barrier. If you can do all that work without having to put barriers up, and there are producers who are interested in using these virtual collars to do that, that’s great.”

One trial is already underway with a rancher near Irvine, on a section of a creek.

“They have the Gallagher collars on their cattle and use that as a virtual barrier. It’s the first year of trialling it, and I’ll be excited to hear about it.”

“We’re also trialling Halter collars through our Multisar project in the southeast corner,” Downey says. “I think there’s huge potential for virtual collars across the whole area of the province, to better manage cattle and habitat.”

For people interested in trying virtual fencing, having an organization like ACA see the value, and help provide some dollars, can encourage them to try it out.

“It will be interesting to see where this technology goes over the next five or 10 years, but it’s exciting to see people trying it, and what can be done,” adds Downey.

“In the end it’s all about stewardship, working with landholders, recognizing those on the ground, and looking at ways to further enhance and maintain the habitat.”

“Retaining habitat is critical not only for wildlife but also for your operation for the long road.” 🐾

If you have a habitat you think might be eligible for the Corridor Initiative, you can contact Brad.Downey@ab-conservation.com.



Top: A wildlife corridor in the County of Warner

Bottom: Planted trees, part of the Milk River Ridge Initiative.

Below: Ridge shrub planting for the Milk River Ridge Initiative.

Photos supplied.



Out and About with ABP



THIS SUMMER'S EVENTS ONCE AGAIN PROVIDED ABP WITH AN OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN RELATIONSHIPS AND SHOWCASE ALBERTA'S BEEF INDUSTRY WHILE ADVANCING CONVERSATIONS ABOUT TRADE, INNOVATION, ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP AND THE FUTURE OF CATTLE PRODUCTION.



PNWER: ABP Chair Doug Roxburgh speaks on the agriculture supply chain panel, along with Jennifer Riddle, Tidewater (left) and Minister Tara Sawyer, Government of Alberta (middle). Photo credit: PNWER



U.S. beef industry guests, welcomed as part of ABP's Cross-Border Livestock Talks initiative, included representatives from Colorado, Iowa, Montana, Nevada, North Dakota, Utah and Wyoming.



ABP hosted Federal Agriculture and Agri-Food Minister Heath MacDonald at Lazy J Cattle Company during Calgary Stampede. Photo credit: Seven D Media



The Cross Border Beef Talks initiative included a visit to Olds College of Agriculture & Technology. Photo credits: Seven D Media



Top: Chef Duncan Ly of Bar Chouette won the inaugural Taste of Stampede Culinary Cup. Bottom: Taste of Stampede paired Alberta's top chefs with homegrown commodities including world-class Alberta Beef.



Premier Danielle Smith addresses attendees at the fifth annual Alberta Beef Industry Stampede Summit, held July 6 at the Sam Centre. Photo credit top: Seven D Media. Photo credit bottom: Julian Springer, Government of Alberta



A key Summit highlight was the presentation of the 2026 Environmental Stewardship Award to the Walton family of Walton Land & Cattle. Photo credit: Julian Springer, Government of Alberta



Alberta Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation Tara Sawyer addresses producers, industry partners and guests at Stampede Summit. Photo credit: Seven D Media

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Reserve Grand Champion Steer, shown by Bryan Rasmuson



OH Ranch Branded Beef Grand Champion Steer, shown by Brooklynn Konyenbel



OH Ranch Branded Beef Reserve Champion Steer, shown by Reese Morison

Western Elite Bred Heifer Invitational



Grand Champion Heifer, Kay-R Winnie 2529, shown by Reid Hunter



Reserve Champion Heifer, SVY Elsa 550N, shown by Katie Kolenosky

International Youth Livestock Show



Supreme Champion Commercial Female, Reids Anara 257N, shown by Taylor Reid



Supreme Champion Purebred Female, Mader Violet 84M, shown by Hawkin Mader

RESULTS ARE IN:

Updates on Animal Health and Food Safety

SUBMITTED BY BEEF CATTLE RESEARCH COUNCIL

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Canadian Beef Cattle Check-Off dollars that beef producers allocate to research help fund a variety of studies—from keeping cattle healthy and improving pasture productivity to boosting feed efficiency and ensuring high-quality beef. This article is part of an ongoing series that highlights recent research results.

HOW IS ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE CHANGING IN CANADIAN FEEDLOT PATHOGENS?

Respiratory bacteria do not enjoy highway travel! To get useful antimicrobial resistance results, respiratory tract samples need to arrive at the lab the day after they are collected at the feedlot. This national surveillance study helps us understand how antimicrobial resistance in bacteria associated with bovine respiratory disease (BRD) is changing and what it means for keeping cattle healthy and treatments effective.

CAN WE IMPROVE CLEANING AT PACKING PLANTS WHILE USING LESS WATER AND ENERGY?

Researchers explored how current cleaning practices affect bacterial movement and biofilm formation, while testing new approaches to improve sanitation. They found that experimental enzyme-based formulations can break down fats at lower operating temperatures. This could help reduce hot water use and improve food safety if they can be made cost-effective.

CAN NEW TECHNOLOGIES HELP IMPROVE BEEF SAFETY AND EXTEND SHELF LIFE?

Researchers tested emerging sanitation approaches—including plasma-activated water and ultraviolet technologies—to control bacteria and biofilms in beef processing environments. With additional validation and scale-up under field conditions, these technologies may be promising strategies to combat food pathogens and improve sanitation.

WHAT CAN WE LEARN WHEN DIVING DEEP INTO LIVER ABSCESSSES?

Liver abscesses are not caused by a simple genetic trait or a single pathogen (this research team even discovered a new one involved). Instead, they develop through interactions between gut microbes and the animal, and likely develop later in the feeding period.

ARE WE MISSING PART OF THE PINK EYE PUZZLE?

Researchers found that the bacteria most commonly blamed for pink eye outbreaks were found in both healthy and infected eyes, suggesting that the disease may be more complex than often suspected. ▼

You can find all BCRC research fact sheets on BeefResearch.ca/research/research-summaries-fact-sheets/.



Photo credit: Sam Wirzba

Cows on Cropland

A SUCCESSFUL CASE STUDY

BY KRISTINE FLAIM, KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER AND ENGAGEMENT,
ALBERTA AGRISYSTEMS LIVING LAB

In Alberta, and indeed across the Prairies of Canada and beyond, there is often a distinction between arable land used to produce cash crops and non-arable land used for grazing livestock.



This has created complications on both sides of the equation. There is some debate about the merit of potentially bringing livestock back onto crop acres, though it is not without challenges. Here, we will showcase one unique pairing of a crop with a livestock producer and investigate the strengths and weaknesses of merging these two different land uses.

COOPERATIVE SUCCESS

Two Vermilion area producers have created a successful partnership that utilizes cattle as a management tool on annual cropland and meets the needs of their separate crop and cattle operations.

UNDERSTORY CROPS:

Species seeded at a lower density, with the intention of increasing species diversity, extending the photosynthetic and grazing season, natural weed suppression, and habitat for pollinators. E.g. subterranean clover, Italian rye, chicory, safflower.

The crop operation wanted to reduce the impact of crop production on soil health, which led them to investigate different beneficial management practices. Techniques included growing polycrops, intercropping using understory crop species with different root and nutrient characteristics, and including cattle grazing as part of the management strategy. This allowed for improved utilization of the understory crop species and created an additional market for the polycrops, while also returning nutrients in the form of manure and urine to the land.

The cattle operation wanted additional grazing opportunities without having to acquire more land and a local source of feed for their backgrounding operation. Knowing that cattle could be used as a tool but not wanting to take on the additional responsibilities of owning cattle, a partnership between neighbours was proposed. The two producers have been working together on this management system for roughly 10 years and have found it beneficial for both operations.

COULD CATTLE BE INCLUDED AS A TOOL FOR TRADITIONAL CROP MANAGEMENT?

Absolutely. For every crop production philosophy there are opportunities to create benefits with the inclusion of cattle.

LAND AND CROP MANAGEMENT

The priority of the change in management was to transition marginal or poorer-producing cropland from annual to perennial crops. Benefits of this type of practice include increased soil coverage to reduce erosion, potentially improved soil health metrics, the addition of natural nutrients to the land, and eased pressure on other grazing lands. Next, the priority was intercropping, followed by planting understory crops to expand the range and diversity of plant species in use. The advantages of this practice include improved soil health metrics, increased resilience of the cropland, some economic stability, increased biodiversity on the landscape, and pest management.

The crop species and mixtures are selected based on maturity date, mycorrhizal fungi associated with the crop species, crop rooting characteristics, and ease of separating crops at harvest or leaving a growing understory crop to maintain a living root in the soil. Deciding what crop species to plant lies mainly with the crop producer in this case, though there is a discussion between both managers to determine blends, values, and uses.

MYCORRHIZAL FUNGI:

These microscopic fungi form a symbiotic relationship with plant roots. They can create humic compounds, polysaccharides, and glycoproteins that bind soils and improve soil structure, among other benefits.

Species with low growth profiles that may be suitable under annuals include: Italian ryegrass, Persian clover, subterranean clover, sunflower, phacelia, millet, plantain, chicory, buckwheat, and flax.



Annual grazing paddock.
Photo supplied by Will Groeneveld.

Intercrop mixtures used and planned are pea-canola-spring wheat; faba bean-flax-oats; pea-barley-proso millet-buckwheat; winter wheat-pea; and many others, with an emphasis on planting species with a variety of rooting depths and structures to make the most of the active rooting zone in the soil. The producers don't use conventional soil tests; instead, they implement a different suite of at-home soil tests, including earthworm counts, infiltration rates, digging to look at worm tracks, and the presence of other insects.

GRAZING MANAGEMENT AND CATTLE FEEDING

A variety of grazing opportunities have been employed: swath grazing, grazing standing crop, grazing stubble and chaff piles, and bale grazing. If existing annual grazing resources are limited, space is made in the cropping operation to allow for earlier grazing. Reciprocally, the cattle operation carries a reserve of pasture to allow flexibility in the amount and availability of grazing crops and/or residue. Flexibility in grazing timelines is one of the biggest factors in success.

The class of grazing animals is adapted based on feed quality. Feed testing is used to determine if any supplemental grain, silage or pellets are needed. Once cattle are out on the field, they are monitored by both producers for their own reasons: the amount of grazing material remaining, which under-seeded plants have grown and in what quantity, and water availability.

WORDS OF ADVICE FROM ONE PRODUCER TO ANOTHER:

"This type of cooperative agreement is doable for people working together in good faith. If you must win at all costs, this likely won't work for you."

SETTING UP

Some of the cropping equipment was exchanged for haying equipment to allow the harvest of the perennial forages on fields that were not prepared for cattle, or to utilize the perennial forages for bale grazing on annual crop fields that are prepared for cattle.

Each half of the partnership needs to know the value of their opportunity costs.

Fencing, an obvious need for grazing, can be achieved through a variety of methods depending on level of risk tolerance and available tools. In this situation, the producers have opted for permanent perimeter fencing with temporary electric cross-fencing to create smaller pastures. Still, other producers have had success using only temporary electric fencing.

In the spring, summer, and fall, water is either hauled in or from dugouts, and snow is used as the primary water source in the winter. Winter water is supplemented with dugout water if the snowfall is inadequate. Most producers do not recommend relying on snow as a sole water source for livestock, but in some cases it can work.

The current funding opportunities for fencing and water systems have been instrumental in initiating the grazing cooperation. The producers have made use of different funding partnerships to implement their grazing on cropland system. One producer lives in a county with an ALUS agreement, so he makes use of that funding opportunity, while the other lives in a county without an ALUS agreement, so he makes use of OFCAF funding to offset implementation costs.

THE FINANCIAL ASPECT

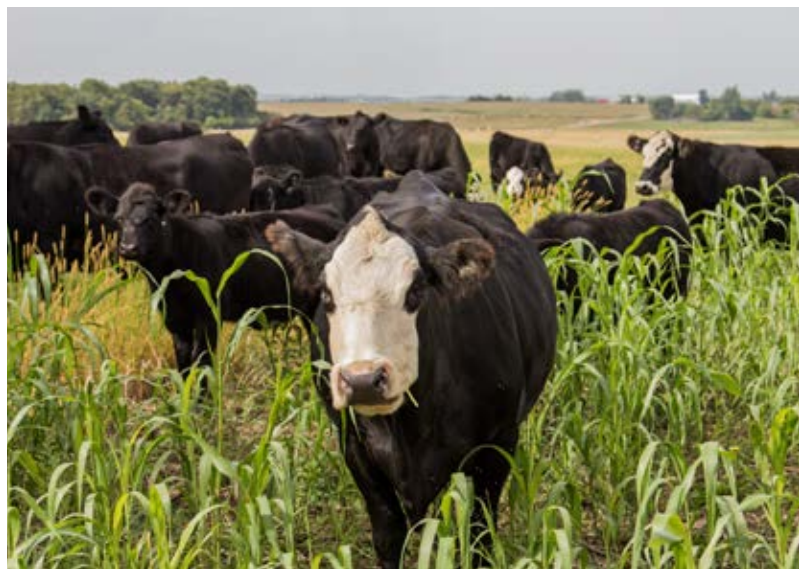
Every year the partners sit down and discuss rates, much of which is based on ensuring each other's costs are covered. Grazing or grain rates are negotiated for each different crop. Knowing the per-day feeding costs versus grazing costs, while being reflective of crop and supplemental feeding inputs, is the key to determining rates.

The producers developed a long-term view to calculate the cost/benefit, as cattle performance and crop goals don't always meet, and changed from looking at success as total yield or pounds to net revenue per acre and cow. On the cow side, the producer notes that his net revenue per cow has increased. Meanwhile, on the crop side, the producer notes that his net revenue is comparable to growing high-input crops, but his costs are lower, so the risk is also lower.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

One frequently mentioned issue is the potential for an increase in weeds due to livestock spreading seed through manure. These producers have noted that they do not see an increase in weeds with the cows on the land, with the mindset that what might be spreading was likely there in the first place. All supplemental feed sources are produced from the same land and are considered part of the system, except pellets, which are purchased and brought in. With multi-species crops, herbicide use is limited, but the producers have found that with the diversity of desirable species growing, and the reduction in nitrogen fertilizer they apply, the desirable species are very competitive and keep the weed species in check.

Another aspect of integrating cattle and cropland is how formal the shared land-use agreement should be. These agreements could range from formal contracts to handshake deals. With a less formal approach, it is very important that partners have a good dispute-resolution plan in place to resolve issues amicably. It is also important to inform your insurance company and to make sure your liability coverage is up to date. In this case, these producers do not have a written agreement in place, as they prefer to keep things between themselves with the flexibility that offers both parties. This might not work for everyone, and a producer should always follow the pathway that feels best for them and what they are comfortable with.



SUMMARY

Integrating livestock like cattle back onto cropland is not without challenges, but the benefits can outweigh the costs. This case study shows that such partnerships are possible and highlights some of the potential benefits and challenges. Start a conversation with your neighbours and explore the possibilities and benefits for both of you.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF THE COWS/ CROPS COMBO

SOME OF THE POSSIBLE BENEFITS (NOT EXHAUSTIVE) OF BRINGING LIVESTOCK BACK ONTO CROPLAND INCLUDE:

Improved nutrient cycling

- Livestock provide the direct addition of nitrogen-based fertilizer in the form of manure and urine through their normal grazing activities.

Extended grazing

- Bringing livestock onto crop acres to graze residue or stubble can extend the grazing season for cattle producers.

Alternative revenue source

- Depending on how the structure is set up, there is potential here for either producer to add a revenue stream to their operation.

SOME OF THE POSSIBLE CHALLENGES (NOT EXHAUSTIVE) OF BRINGING LIVESTOCK BACK ONTO CROPLAND INCLUDE:

Compaction of the soil in the field due to livestock trampling, especially in areas of heavy use

- Cattle are notoriously habit forming, and will walk the same pathways every day to water or shelter.

Introduction of weed species from livestock manure

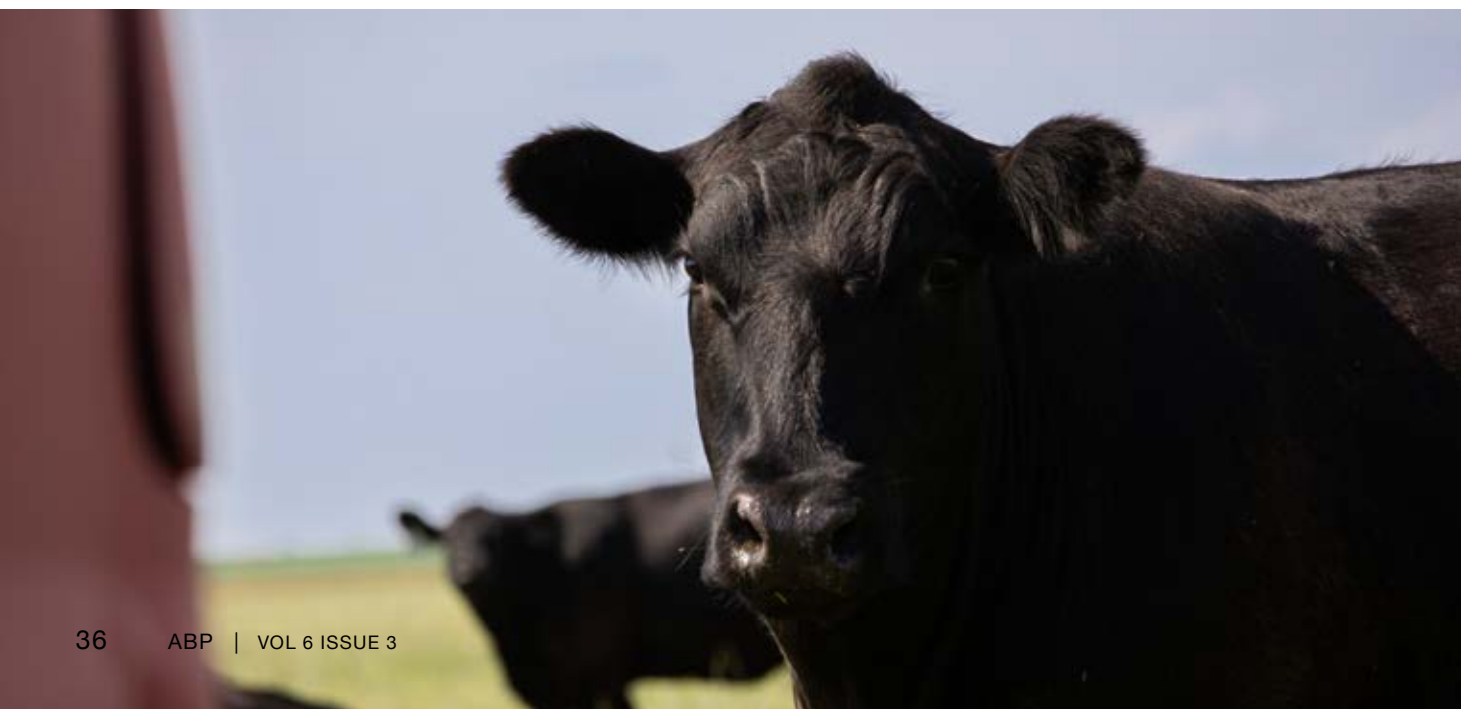
- Some weed seeds can survive for several days within the digestive system of a cow, and be spread in new areas as manure is passed.
- Anecdotal evidence, including from the producers featured in this article, suggests this is not as big a problem as it may seem.

Water and fencing

- Many acres of cropland are neither fenced nor have appropriate water sources for livestock. These issues need to be addressed before any livestock can be brought on-site.

Finding a partner

- Possibly the hardest part of any new venture is finding the right people to work with. ▼



Ranch Tour Experience



Photo credit: Holly Nicoll.



As part of the *Every Cut Makes the Cut* campaign, ABP offered consumers the chance to win the **Ultimate Alberta Culinary Experience**. Nearly 7,000 people entered through allwaysalbertabeef.ca.

Andrew Moore won the grand prize, which included a ranch tour, a steakhouse gift card, and 50 pounds of Alberta beef. Past Environmental Stewardship Award recipients, **John Smith and Laura Laing of Plateau Cattle Co.** hosted Andrew and his family for a horseback tour of the ranch.

The experience included a tenderloin dinner prepared by Chef Jeremy Ouellette of Saint Vincent in Calgary. Andrew also received a beef package from Brant Lake Wagyu and a gift certificate to The Keg. ▼



Balancing Land and Wildlife Management

BY SAM VRIEND

SINCE THE SETTLEMENT OF ALBERTA, BEEF PRODUCERS HAVE ALWAYS BEEN STEWARDS OF THE LAND AND WILDLIFE.



While the vast majority of producers take pride in the wildlife species found on the lands they manage, they also recognize that overabundance of some wildlife species can create issues that severely impact their bottom line and subsequent way of life. Our goal at ABP is to help minimize these impacts while allowing producers to enjoy and promote the persistence of all desirable wildlife on their lands.

In recent years, some of the most challenging wildlife issues impacting producers have resulted from increasing populations of predators and ungulates. ABP takes these issues very seriously and aims to address them through a multifaceted approach involving policy changes, improvements to wildlife damage mitigation and prevention programming, and increased access to resources for producers.

Resolutions passed by the ABP board and delegate body have been instrumental in providing direction on the path towards mitigating wildlife issues. This year, passed resolutions have focused on producers' ability to protect livestock from predators and on increasing control over the allocation of hunting licences for problem ungulates. In addition, ABP has passed a resolution calling for the return of the grizzly bear hunt.

UNGULATES

Earlier this year, ABP staff completed a jurisdictional scan of elk management across three provinces and five American states. This work has led to strong recommendations for improving elk management within Alberta, and will ultimately provide insight and direction for the establishment of ungulate programming and lobbying efforts targeting problem ungulates.

Another key priority is the quantification of wildlife damages that are largely unknown to wildlife managers, particularly damages that are not covered by current compensation programming. This winter, ABP will be

With an overwhelming abundance of information available online, finding the right resources for wildlife and land management can be challenging for anyone.

working in partnership with CANFAX to complete a study on wildlife-related costs borne by producers. This study will be targeting ungulate damages and seeks to quantify all ungulate damages, including damages to infrastructure and fencing. To complete this study, ABP will require producers' assistance through interviews and surveys. If you are a producer experiencing wildlife damages, please consider helping out with this important work.

Although Alberta currently has ungulate damage compensation programming, ABP is aware of its limitations, including but not limited to: lack of coverage for alternative feeding methods after October 31, lack of coverage for grazing lands, and lack of resources for feed protection projects. ABP will be engaging the Government of Alberta and AFSC with the goal of improving ungulate damage compensation, prevention, and mitigation programming.

PREDATORS

Increasing predator populations continue to be an issue for many producers, with grizzly bears causing conflicts in several regions of the province. ABP staff and the Wildlife Working Group have been taking a comprehensive approach to developing a strong case for lobbying in favour of ABP's grizzly bear resolutions. In addition, ABP staff have been meeting with partner

organizations to discuss the potential for alignment on overall goals and the grizzly bear lobbying process.

While grizzly bears are an issue for many producers operating in bear country, ABP recognizes that other predators can also pose a significant risk to operations. As a result, ABP is seeking to develop and implement a province-wide carnivore program with significant improvements to carnivore compensation, mitigation, and loss prevention. This program aims to borrow from B.C.'s Livestock Protection Program, and will include producer-led verification for losses, address current compensation issues, and provide increased funding for loss-prevention programming.

REPORTING PROBLEM WILDLIFE

Many producers have expressed frustrations with current wildlife management systems, where they have minimal input into wildlife management on their lands, particularly

for problem wildlife species. At ABP, we are addressing this issue through the creation of a tool that allows producers to quickly and efficiently report instances of problem wildlife. We aim to use producer reports of problem wildlife as evidence of wildlife issues, with the goal of improving local wildlife management for producers experiencing wildlife conflicts. Our goal is to have this problem wildlife reporting tool available by the spring.

PRODUCER RESOURCES

With an overwhelming abundance of information available online, finding the right resources for wildlife and land management can be challenging for anyone. At ABP, we are committed to making these resources more accessible for producers. We are developing an interactive online tool that producers can use to research resources for problem wildlife, stewardship, and best management practices. ▼



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November 1

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Incentivizing Sustainability through CRSB Certification

BY ANDREA WHITE,
DIRECTOR, MARKETING AND STAKEHOLDER RELATIONS, CRSB

Ranchers and farmers across Canada have cared for their livestock and land for generations. They work tirelessly every day to make operations more sustainable and profitable, building a solid foundation for future generations. Many players in the agri-food landscape are looking for ways to provide recognition for this commitment and Farm Credit Canada's (FCC) Sustainability Incentive is one example.

Since 2022, FCC has offered a Sustainability Incentive for beef producers who are certified through the Canadian Roundtable for Sustainable Beef's CRSB Certified™ program. FCC acknowledges and rewards those who have made the investment to become certified and encourages more beef producers to see the benefits of participating.

In 2025, FCC doubled down on its support, increasing the eligible annual payment from a maximum of \$2,000 to up to \$4,000 for CRSB Certified beef producers with eligible FCC lending. This resulted in a 22 per cent increase in incentive program participation across Canada (2025). Since 2022, FCC has distributed \$2.3 million to beef producers through the program.

The incentive program opened for the 2026 program year on June 1, 2026. Incentive payments are calculated as a portion of a customer's FCC lending, up to a maximum of \$4,000 in one year. Existing participants can re-apply annually throughout the life of the program, and FCC welcomes new applications any time. Today, FCC has expanded beyond the beef sector and offers the incentive in collaboration with several programs and sectors.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

- Must be CRSB Certified through a CRSB-approved Certification Body, including:



- Must be an FCC customer in good standing with a balance owing on eligible, existing FCC lending.



Having started with a partnership with the beef sector through the CRSB, FCC now offers the incentive in collaboration with several different programs and sectors.

The application is quick and easy. To verify eligibility, FCC requires contact information, an FCC customer number, a copy of the active operation's CRSB certificate and the name of the Certification Body that provided the certification.



The program is open for applications until Jan. 31, 2027, so anyone considering certification or scheduled for re-certification has time to take advantage. Apply today!



NEW! THE CRSB CERTIFIED PRODUCER INCENTIVE

In a continued effort to stack the benefits of CRSB certification, the CRSB also announced its own CRSB Certified Producer Incentive earlier this year. This new initiative recognizes and rewards beef producers who have taken the time and made the investment to become certified, and helps enable responsible beef sourcing through certified supply chains.

In its first year (2026), the incentive is \$400 for all eligible beef producers according to the criteria below.

To receive the incentive, a beef producer must:

1. Have become CRSB Certified and/or maintained their existing certification between January 1, 2025, and June 30, 2026, evidenced by a valid certificate from a CRSB-approved Certification Body.
2. Have completed all CRSB Certified Qualifying Cattle Requirements:
 - Consent to sharing your operation's contact and certification status through your certification body.
 - For cow/calf operations, submit cattle birth dates to the Canadian Livestock Tracking System (CLTS).
 - For any production operation after the birth farm or ranch, submit cattle move-ins to the CLTS every time cattle move to a new operation.

The incentive program will continue annually, and is funded by the CRSB's supply chain partners sourcing CRSB Certified beef.

Eligible producers are expected to see payments distributed by October 2026. At the time of publishing, you may have already received, or will soon receive payments.

Beginning next year, the total incentive amount available will depend on the amount of fees CRSB collects (\$0.03 per lb of CRSB Certified beef sold) during the preceding year. Available funds will be distributed evenly among all eligible CRSB Certified producers, and the value of the incentive will depend on the available supply and volume of CRSB Certified beef. This means that the more eligible CRSB Certified operations are participating in the program, the bigger the incentive will be for everyone.

"The CRSB Certified Producer Incentive is an important step for the program and serves as a thank you from the CRSB and its supply chain partners that the investments beef producers have made to become certified do not go unnoticed. Rewarding producers for their commitment to sustainable practices will continue to move our industry forward and enable us to communicate that to Canadians," said Ryan Beierbach, Past Chair of the CRSB and Saskatchewan rancher.

You are the foundation for connecting sustainability practices on Canadian farms and ranches with customers looking for credible, responsibly sourced beef. Keep your CRSB certification active, continue submitting birthdates or move-ins, and encourage your fellow producers to participate (whether they are certified and not yet sharing required cattle information, or not yet certified). Take advantage of future incentives and enable CRSB Certified supply chains to communicate the great work you do with Canadian consumers.

Contact us if you have any questions or want to check your eligibility.

For more information about CRSB certification, visit crsbcertified.ca. 🐮

Heart Health Matters in Beef Herd

BY ROBIN GALEY

THE INCIDENCE OF CONGESTIVE HEART FAILURE IS INCREASING IN BEEF CATTLE ACROSS NORTH AMERICA. HERE, WE CONSIDER THE CAUSES OF THIS GROWING PROBLEM AND THE TOOLS PRODUCERS CAN USE TO DETECT AND ADDRESS IT BEFORE CATTLE ENTER THE FEEDLOT.



Photo credit: Sam Wirzba

Bovine congestive heart failure (BCHF) is a growing problem in beef cattle worldwide. Also called brisket disease or high mountain disease, it can severely affect herds at higher elevations, and has now also become a significant cause of death in feedlot cattle at lower elevations. Estimates suggest mortality from BCHF has risen to above seven per cent in severely affected pens, with annual losses exceeding \$250,000 at a single operation.*

BCHF, and its precursor hypertension, is generally initiated by hypoxia—when the body is starved for oxygen. Dr. Timothy Holt, veterinarian and professor in livestock medicine at Colorado State University, explains: “At 2,000 metres, cattle become hypoxic because of the altitude. But in feedlots at lower elevation where we are starting to see this, the cattle become hypoxic for other reasons, such as increased body size and body fat.”

“If you can’t grade better than select, or if you are getting reports that your cattle are dying of heart failure in the feedlot, you have to really start looking at the genetic heritability of hypoxia.”

Increased body fat can result in fat being deposited in and around the heart as well as in the chest cavity, impeding normal breathing patterns, Holt says. “This results in a hypoxic state that can lead to heart failure.”

Holt has been actively researching pulmonary hypertension in cattle for decades, and has been using pulmonary arterial pressure (PAP) testing since the early '90s to assess risk. “Through our research to identify animals with high blood pressure in the early '80s, we were able to prove hypertension was a significant problem, and we realized it’s also a heritable problem.”

Here in Alberta, high altitude is not generally a cause of hypoxia, except in cases where cattle spend the summer grazing the eastern slopes of the Rockies. The most frequent causes here include genetic predisposition or obesity.



Photo credit: Alec Jacobson, photographed for State Magazine, Colorado State University.

OBESITY INCREASES THE RISK

The cattle industry is weight-driven. For generations, genetic selection has favoured growth rate and carcass merit, resulting in heavier carcasses with better marbling scores. Genetics supporting higher carcass weights enter the ranch through the bulls beef producers buy from seedstock producers.**

While breeding for bigger carcass weights can increase profitability, it also increases the risk of BCHF. “The bigger they are, the more prone they are to heart failure,” Holt says.

Bulls identified as genetically predisposed to the hypoxia that leads to BCHF, and their offspring, should only be bred at lower elevations.

According to the Beef Cattle Research Council, the average weight of Canadian feeder cattle increased from 945 pounds in 1960 to 1,450 pounds in 2024, a 53 per cent increase, and that number continues to rise.”

Any cattle genetically prone to hypoxia will be affected. “As they get bigger and bigger in the feedlot, they can’t maintain oxygen levels to maintain life, and that sends them into heart failure,” says Holt.

GENETIC PREDISPOSITION: ASSESS HERD HEART HEALTH

Producers who are questioning the cause of heart failure deaths or high altitude disease in their cattle on the ranch or at the feedlot should consider the genetics of the herd to see if they have inadvertently brought potential carriers.



Photo credit: Alec Jacobson

Producers who have identified a problem can review the catalogues where they buy semen or cattle, and look at expected progeny differences (EPDs) for PAP, advises Holt. “If they find out they are using bulls that have plus 1 or more for PAP-EPD, that’s something they should evaluate.”

Feedlot performance may also uncover a problem. “If you can’t grade better than select, or if you are getting reports that your cattle are dying of heart failure in the feedlot, you have to really start looking at the genetic heritability of hypoxia,” Holt says.

CARE FOR HEART AND LUNGS

Cattle are born with a very small pulmonary system compared to their weight.

“One of the biggest problems is cattle have a very small lung capacity for their size and, as we take their weight higher and higher, they are virtually outgrowing their cardiovascular space,” Holt says.

To keep cattle healthy, producers need to care for their pulmonary system. “The most important thing is to protect the health of the cows, and that means taking care of their heart and their lungs,” says Holt.

Holt recommends preventative measures such as a respiratory vaccination program and mineral supplementation. “Anything we can do to care for their pulmonary system is going to help,” Holt says.



Photo supplied.



Photo credit: Alec Jacobson

PAP TEST IDENTIFIES CATTLE AT-RISK

If a producer is experiencing a problem, working with a veterinarian who can perform the PAP test while the herd is grazing at higher elevation can help identify cattle experiencing hypertension in response to hypoxia, and therefore at risk of BCHF.

The PAP test measures lung blood flow resistance, and the score goes up whenever anything causes a decrease in the lung space. Veterinarians can take a training session on how to perform the PAP test.

“The PAP test identifies animals with hypertension, and they are considered to be at risk of the hypoxic cascade. However, it does not tell us whether they are at risk due to heritability or due to lung disease,” says Holt.

In either case, the PAP test needs to be done above 1,500 metres, ruling it out for most Alberta producers, except those who graze their herds in the mountains. An alternative is to use PAP-EPD information provided through the journals and catalogues that sell bull semen.

“If they can select animals with a negative EPD for PAP, that will help. Then they can also use some of the genetic markers as well—they are not 100 percent accurate, but neither is anything else we do,” suggests Holt.

Whether identified through PAP testing or by exploring PAP-EPD scores through breeder associations, bulls identified as genetically predisposed to the hypoxia that leads to BCHF, and their offspring, should only be bred at lower elevations, Holt suggests.

Your veterinarian may advise treating cattle identified as having hypertension with diuretics, limiting water and salt intake, antibiotics, oxygen therapy, and possibly thoracentesis, all performed in a climate-controlled environment.

The research and record-keeping involved in identifying at-risk cattle can be complicated and confusing. But for those ranchers experiencing problems with BCHF in the herd, they are a huge help. For those who are not, considering the ideal size of cattle to support profitability without overreaching the smaller pulmonary space of the breed is an important prevention strategy. 🍷

Sources: Dr. Timothy Holt, veterinarian and professor in livestock medicine at Colorado State U Timothy.Holt@ColoState.EDU; *Vander Ley, Brian and Heaton, Michael P. “Factsheet: Genetic risk factor testing for bovine congestive heart failure in feedlot cattle.” **Bergen, Dr Reynold. “Big Cows and Big Questions.” Beef Cattle Research Council. December 17, 2024 <https://www.beefresearch.ca/blog/big-cows-and-big-questions/>



Supporting Producers Through Accessible Financing

BY CRAIG GUTHRIE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, FEEDER ASSOCIATIONS OF ALBERTA

FOR MORE THAN HALF A CENTURY, THE FEEDER ASSOCIATIONS OF ALBERTA (FAA) HAVE PLAYED AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN PROVIDING ACCESSIBLE FINANCING TO LIVESTOCK PRODUCERS IN COMMUNITIES ACROSS THE PROVINCE.

Today, FAA is proud to support 45 local Feeder Associations as they continue to provide critical financial support to Alberta's agricultural industry. As partners in livestock financing, these associations have helped grow Alberta's livestock sector by making credit more accessible, flexible, and responsive to the needs of local producers.

As traditional agricultural financing becomes increasingly challenging, the Feeder Association model continues to demonstrate its value. A focus on accessibility, competitive value, and ease of approval has contributed to continued growth, with the past year ranking among the largest in the program's history. FAA lending represents approximately 20 per cent of the Alberta livestock financing market each year—a significant contribution to the agricultural economy.

One of the greatest strengths of the Feeder Association program is its local knowledge.

Our local associations understand the realities and challenges of raising livestock and have a deep understanding of the communities and producers they serve. That local connection allows Feeder Associations to support producers who may otherwise have limited access to financing or may not be able to secure credit on comparable terms.

This model has been supporting Alberta producers for generations.

The Feeder Association Loan Guarantee Program was first established by the province in 1936. Since then, approximately \$13 billion in financing has been provided to Alberta producers, helping them start, expand, and strengthen their operations.



EXPANDING ACCESS TO FINANCING

FAA has continued to build on the traditional feeder financing model by offering additional financial services designed to meet the evolving needs of agricultural producers.

We offer breeder cattle financing through Alberta Breeder Finance Inc. (ABFI) and cash advances on a variety of agricultural commodities through Western Cash Advance Program Inc. (WeCAP), our two in-house lending companies

Together, these two companies have put more than \$998 million into circulation over 13 years of operation. The growing use of these programs demonstrates their effectiveness in complementing traditional feeder financing and providing producers with additional tools to manage their financial needs.

FAA works closely with government agencies, industry organizations, financial partners, and Local Feeder Associations (LFA) to deliver a suite of programs supporting producers across the agricultural sector—from feeder and breeder operations to crop production.

Producers can take greater advantage of the WeCAP, whether against livestock or crops.

While the interest-free portion of the program remains particularly attractive, the interest-bearing component can also provide meaningful savings. With competitive rates and fees, WeCAP offers producers an alternative to higher-cost operating financing. Our knowledgeable staff are also available to guide producers through the application process and required documentation.

WeCAP can also provide an interest rebate on a portion of eligible existing Feeder Loans, with minimal administration required from producers. This further strengthens the value of the Feeder Loan program and results in real dollars being returned to producers.

Photo credit: ShowChampions



THE ROAD AHEAD

Alberta Breeder Finance Inc. (ABFI) continues to offer features that distinguish it within the breeder financing market. These advantages, combined with the strength of FAA and our LFA, have created a strong foundation for the program.

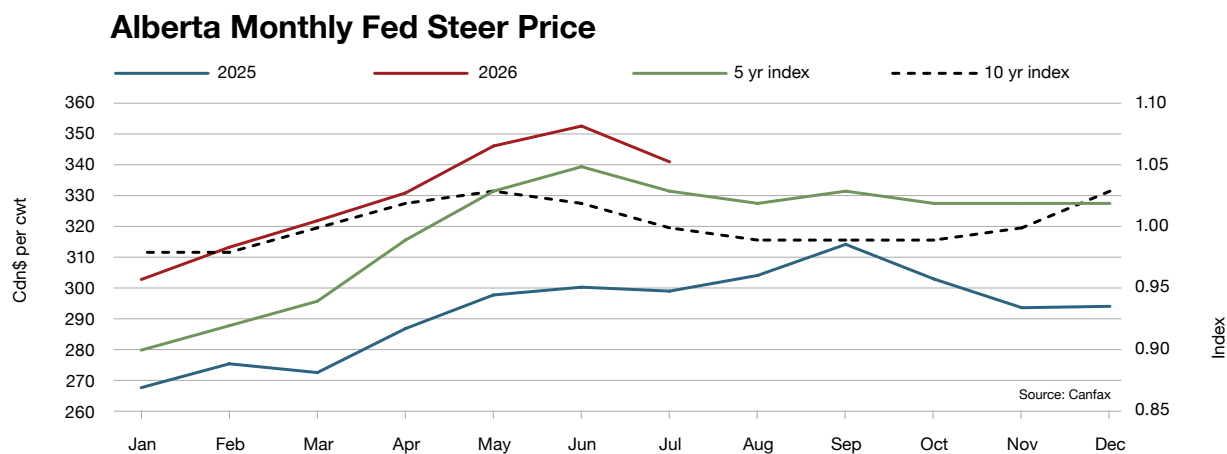
We are improving the ABFI online portal to make the experience more convenient for users while enhancing policies and processes to ensure the program delivers meaningful value to both producers and our LFA partners.

Looking ahead, FAA is committed to continuously improving the way we operate and the services we provide.

As the organization has grown, some practices that served us well in the past no longer meet the standards or scale we aspire to today. We see an opportunity to improve efficiencies, strengthen our financial products, and provide producers with a better experience through greater quality, responsiveness, and timeliness.

Our goal is not simply to maintain the programs that have served Alberta producers for generations, but to continue improving them so they remain relevant, competitive, and accessible for the producers of today and tomorrow.

We encourage producers to reach out to their local Feeder Association or to the FAA office. Our team is ready to help producers understand the financing options available to them and find solutions that support the success of their operations. ▼



Strong and Steady:

FED MARKET AND FEEDER MARKET UPDATES

BY JAMIESON KERR, MARKET ANALYST, CANFAX

There appeared to be little that could get in the way of the Alberta fed market in the second quarter of 2026.

Photo credit: Holly Nicoll



Fed steer prices averaged \$343 per cwt, up \$49 per cwt from last year. The market softened in July as leverage shifted back to the packer. Recent packing plant news includes the announced closure of the Tyson Foods plant in Joslin, Ill. and Tyson's intended sale of its Pasco, Wash., plant. These changes come on the heels of the scheduled closure of the JBS plant in Souderton, Pa. It should be noted that plant closures may not align with regional supplies, but are influenced by a plant's age and need for upgrades. The Cargill plant in Fort Morgan, Colo., is scheduled to come back online on September 7, following a three-month strike/lockout action.

The Alberta feeder market was mostly stable through the second quarter, hovering near the highs set during last year's fall run. Heavy 9-weight steers averaged \$466 per cwt, up \$95 per cwt from last year, adding \$900/head. Lighter 5-weight steer calves averaged \$710 per cwt, up \$169 per cwt from last year, with a similar increase per head. The market kicked off the second half of the year with a mixed tone in July. Lightweight calves under 500 lb found some tailwinds, while prices for feeders over 500 lb were steady to slightly softer.

Last year, the cash market used the forward delivery market as a launching pad toward higher prices, but that has not been the case so far this year. Yearling steers (9-999 lb) sold in March/May for May/June delivery were

at a \$3-11 per cwt premium to May/June cash prices. Forward delivery calf prices (5-599 lb) for October-December were at a \$14-24 per cwt premium to second quarter cash prices.

The western Canadian cull cow market has traditionally been seasonal, with stronger prices during the first half of the year to meet demand for ground beef and burger production for summer grilling. This year was no exception. Alberta D2 cows averaged \$249 per cwt in the second quarter, up \$24 per cwt from last year. The western Canadian cull cow market has been softer in July and August, again following seasonal trends, with D2 cow prices near \$245 per cwt.

Replacement bred females may have begun to turn a corner in the second quarter. Bred cows and heifers were up \$1,125-1,350/head from last year at \$5,575/head, but were down \$75-375/head from the first quarter of 2026. Cow-calf pairs averaged \$7,200 in the second quarter, up \$1,600/pair from last year, with a modest dip to just shy of \$7,000/head in July.

Canfax is funded by memberships. For ongoing market analysis and to become a Canfax member, visit canfax.ca. 

Photo credit: Holly Nicoll.

Research and Production Update

BY KARIN SCHMID



ABP's producer-led Research Committee is currently reviewing research proposals and associated technical reviews, with funding decisions expected before the end of 2026. Proposals are evaluated on scientific merit, alignment with the recently renewed Five-Year Canadian Beef Research and Knowledge Mobilization Strategy, and short-, medium-, or long-term sector benefits. Check out the research page on albertabeef.org for summaries of completed and in-progress projects.

Discussions continue regarding potential mechanisms to reduce the impacts of the AAFC research centre closures announced in January 2026. While a two-year agreement was reached with the University of Guelph to support two meat scientists located at Lacombe, there is no meat science program in Western Canada. Questions also remain about access to important long-term data sets, as well as the eventual divestiture of the land and facilities.

The Alberta AgriSystems Living Lab is wrapping up its final year, concluding in March of 2027. Living Lab is looking forward to sharing the results of this highly productive collaboration between producers and researchers over the next few months. Visit the Living Lab website at agrisystemsll.ca or Facebook page to find out more, or tune into our webinar series, which is starting October 21.



ABP, CCA, NCFA, ACFA, and Animal Health Canada completed three foot-and-mouth disease drills, progressing from a suspected U.S. case to confirmed Alberta cases. Lessons included stronger industry governance and response structures, integrated communications, and clearer expectations during an outbreak. The work also identified important policy questions requiring further exploration. Templates, role descriptions, information, and resources are being consolidated before drills resume in 2027.

The bovine tuberculosis investigations associated with cases discovered in 2024 and 2025 are close to completion, with no additional cases discovered to date. A handful of trace-out and proximity herds will be tested this fall. Producers with questions or concerns are encouraged to contact Karin directly. A second investigation debrief was held jointly with CFIA in September 2026 to discuss challenges and opportunities to improve the investigation processes.

While we were pleased to see the joint request from Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba for an Agri-Recovery assessment, we recognize that significant deficiencies remain in our business risk management tools to support business continuity and recovery from reportable disease events. ABP will continue to advocate for appropriate programs and tools to mitigate negative impacts on affected producers and the wider industry, both in the immediate term and into the future.

The Beef Code Committee is reviewing all the comments received, including those provided by ABP, for the update to the Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Beef Cattle. The revised Code is scheduled for release in the second quarter of 2027.

ABP recently submitted comments to two federal consultations regarding interprovincial trade of red meat and changes to the enhanced feed ban/specified risk materials regulations. ABP resolutions have indicated a desire to reduce the interprovincial trade barriers for red meat and offered several suggestions to improve the proposed programming while ensuring the high-quality and food safety standards our trading partners expect continue to be met. We look forward to revisions to the enhanced feed ban and the classification of specified risk materials that will harmonize Canada's approach with that used by the U.S. and more accurately reflect our negligible BSE risk status. 🍷



Expanded Reach for Canada Beef

BY GINA TEEL , DIRECTOR, STAKEHOLDER COMMUNICATIONS, CANADA BEEF

MARKET EXPANSION AND DIVERSIFICATION INITIATIVES REMAINED A HIGH PRIORITY FOR CANADA BEEF THIS SUMMER, WITH SEVERAL CANADIAN BEEF ACTIVATIONS TAKING PLACE IN NEW AND EMERGING HIGH-OPPORTUNITY MARKETS.

A collaboration with Napoleon Grills Europe was among the Canada Beef initiatives deployed to help reach new consumers, strengthen awareness, and create opportunities for Canadian beef in international markets.

The partnership between the two premium Canadian brands provided an effective platform to introduce and showcase Canadian beef to consumers, barbecue enthusiasts, and fans across Europe.

A key activation took place recently at the German BBQ Championships, where Canadian Beef Ambassador Christoph Grabowski hosted a Canadian beef workshop for visitors to the Napoleon pavilion. Attendees had the opportunity to learn more about Canadian beef quality and its versatility on the grill. This was supported by Canada Beef marketing and awareness-building materials that included information on the quality attributes of Canadian beef as well as the names and locations of retailers where consumers can purchase it in the European market.

Although Europe is a relatively small-volume export destination for Canadian beef, it is an important high-value market with opportunities to further develop demand for premium Canadian beef.

At WOFEX (World Food Expo) Manila in the Philippines (July 29 to Aug. 1), Canada Beef connected participants with Canadian beef suppliers and distributors, along with Canada Beef's local marketing team. Samples available at the booth let attendees experience the quality, tenderness, and exceptional flavour of Canadian beef.

In June, Canada Beef marked a strong first step in establishing Canadian beef's reputation and commercial footprint in Jordan. Canada Beef's Middle East office



Left and above: Canadian beef sliders marked the first commercial introduction of Canadian beef into the Jordanian market. Below: World Food Expo (WOFEX) Manila in the Philippines.



supported a market development mission to Jordan's capital, Amman, anchored by the Embassy of Canada's Canada Day Reception. Canadian beef sliders, the evening's flagship dish, marked the first commercial introduction of Canadian beef into the Jordanian market.

The mission included meetings with distributors across Jordan's retail and foodservice sectors to expand Canadian beef's market presence and position it as a new category in the country's foodservice industry.

Canadian beef was also featured at Canada Week at Cozmo, a popular grocery chain in Jordan. The activation took place at its 7th Circle location, in partnership with the Embassy of Canada and the Royal Academy of Culinary Arts. The three-day event brought Canadian beef directly to consumers through in-store tastings and live culinary demonstrations.

Diversification efforts will continue. In July, Canada Beef was pleased to receive up to \$3.7 million through the Agri-Marketing Program under the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership. The investment, announced by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada Minister Heath MacDonald at the Calgary Stampede, runs over two years (2026-2028).

The team was also pleased to reconnect with producers and industry stakeholders at the first biennial Canadian Beef Industry Conference (CBIC) in Winnipeg, MB. The August event and trade show provided Canada Beef with an ideal setting to share the quality work undertaken on behalf of Canadian beef producers to market and promote their product to consumers worldwide.

Canada Beef hosted an informative session at CBIC on the trending topic: The GLP-1 Effect: Weight Loss, Consumers, and the Future of Canadian Beef.

The session examined how the rise of GLP-1 medications is reshaping conversations around food, nutrition, and consumer eating habits. It also highlighted why nutrient-dense foods such as beef remain important in supporting overall health—The strategic implications of GLP-1 adoption for the beef industry were featured, along with resources like Canada Beef's new GLP-1 consumer education brochure, Healthy Eating on Weight Loss Medication, to help prioritize protein.

A second session showcased initiatives that communicate the Canadian Beef Advantage in a consumer-friendly way. The team demonstrated how strategic marketing and education efforts work together to keep Canadian beef top of mind with consumers.

Canada Beef's refreshed booth display provided an inviting setting for CBIC attendees to connect with the Canada Beef team and learn about the latest initiatives and resources underway across all portfolios. They could also take part in a national consumer contest to select the names of the Canadian Beef virtual assistants created to respond to consumer questions. Topics the chatbots were trained on included recommending recipes, cut selection, and cooking method support as well as nutritional information.



Canadian Beef virtual assistants.

Canada Beef's Annual Report 2025-2026 is available online in a variety of formats. Be sure to take a look at the work that supported the outstanding results for beef market share, per capita consumption, and retail beef demand in the domestic market, as well as the record export value achieved last fiscal year. ▼

As the marketing division of the Canadian Beef Cattle Research, Market Development and Promotion Agency, Canada Beef is the cattle producer-funded and run organization responsible for domestic and international beef, and veal market development. It has staff in Canada, Mexico, Japan, and Taiwan, and representation in Vietnam, the Philippines, Indonesia, South Korea, and the United Arab Emirates. In addition to National Check-Off and import levy funding, Canada Beef leverages cattle producer dollars with private market partner investments and government industry development funding to maximize the benefits of producer check-off investment.

The Next Generation:

NINE ALBERTA CANADIAN CATTLE YOUNG LEADER (CYL) SEMI-FINALISTS SELECTED FOR 2026-2027 CYL PROGRAM

BY CAILEY CHURCH, YOUTH LEADERSHIP COORDINATOR, CCA



THE CYL PROGRAM HOSTED ITS ANNUAL SELECTIONS COMPETITION ON AUGUST 18, 2026, IN WINNIPEG, MAN., ALONGSIDE THE CANADIAN BEEF INDUSTRY CONFERENCE. TWENTY-FOUR SEMIFINALISTS FROM ACROSS CANADA COMPETED FOR ONE OF 16 SPOTS IN THE UPCOMING PROGRAM YEAR.

On Monday, August 17, semifinalists were welcomed in Winnipeg with a networking reception to meet their fellow participants, CYL graduates, program partners, and industry leadership before the competition the next morning. The competition consisted of roundtable discussions on timely topics affecting the Canadian beef industry, including mental health, technology, leadership, succession, and trade. Participants were judged on their leadership, collaboration, and knowledge of the industry.

On September 1, 2026, finalists for the upcoming year were announced, with nine successful delegates from Alberta: Andria Carlyon (Dapp), Caith Cameron (Didsbury), Derek Friend (Rosalind), Jordyn Prior (Irma), Karin Roen (Oyen), Lauren Stefaniuk (Airdrie), Quinn Devine (Innisfree), Ralph Thrall IV (Lethbridge) and Sydney Fortier (Diamond Valley).

The CYL program is excited to welcome these individuals to the program for the year ahead! 🍷

The CYL Program pairs young Canadians aged 18 to 35 involved in various aspects of the beef supply chain together with an industry leader in their area of interest for a nine-month mentorship. Through mentorship, networking, and travel, the CYL Program acts as an industry succession-planning tool, equipping the next generation of leaders with the skills and tools they need to continue to drive the growth and profitability of the Canadian beef industry. Since its establishment by the Canadian Cattle Association in 2010, the program has had more than 220 CYL graduates. Program applications are available on our website, canadiancattleyoungleaders.ca, from early January to the end of March each year. For questions about the CYL Program, reach out to Cailey Church at churchc@cattle.ca.

The exceptional opportunities the CYL Program provides would not be possible without the generous support of Platinum Partners McDonald's Canada and Cargill, Foundation Partners MNP and Elanco, and Gold Partners Farm Credit Canada and RBC.

Ready for Fall with VBP+

BY CALE PLACE, VBP+ COORDINATOR

It was a pretty quiet summer on the VBP+ schedule, as most of our events take place during the shorter days of winter when more producers are available.



Photo credit: Holly Nicoll

That being said, the Cypress Farm and Ranch Show in Medicine Hat was a productive and well-attended trade show. The show has only been around for two years, but it is shaping up to be a great and well-timed event for the region. Cattle producers from all over southeastern Alberta and southwestern Saskatchewan came out to see what was on offer and, more importantly, to visit and talk about the cattle business.

Midsummer took us to Calgary for the ABP Summit at the Sam Centre during the Calgary Stampede. Once again, it was a great opportunity to have conversations with producers and hear what is happening across the industry. Through the fall, you'll be able to find the VBP+ booth and me at events such as the Olds Fall Classic, the Alberta Hereford Showcase, ABP Producer Meetings, Farmfair International, and the Western Canadian Conference on Soil Health and Grazing.

In the meantime, everyone will be looking forward to fall work, cows coming home, weaning, shipping, stocking, preg checking, and everything else that colder weather brings to mind. It is a busy time of year, but it can also be a good time to look around the farm or ranch and think about what could make next year a little easier.

One thing that can sometimes be overlooked during a long and productive summer is the handling equipment we have at home. VBP+ is still running the SCAP incentive, with a focus on animal care and biosecurity. Matching funds of up to \$2,500 are available to trained individuals, with up to \$5,000 available to certified operations. We have also recently opened applications to secondary operations certified under a primary operation.

These funds can be used for a wide range of projects around the farm or ranch. Projects could include improving handling systems with new chutes, squeezes, or alleyways, protecting feed and water systems with freestanding panels, or investing in herd management hardware and software such as tag readers and herd management programs.

The application process is simple and straightforward, so don't miss the chance to put some of those



Photo credit: Holly Nicoll

improvement ideas to work. If you have been thinking about upgrading equipment, improving biosecurity, or making animal handling safer and more efficient, now is a good time to start the conversation before winter gets too busy.

If you're interested in the SCAP incentive or want to find out if a project qualifies, reach out to abgrant@verifiedbeef.ca or calep@albertabeef.org. We're always happy to have a conversation and help producers figure out where VBP+ can fit into their operation. 🐾

Working Groups Update

TRACEABILITY WORKING GROUP

Following resolutions passed at the ABP Annual General Meeting in March, a Traceability Working Group (TWG) was established to examine the Canadian cattle traceability system. The group convened twice over the summer, facilitated by the Ag Advisory Council.

The TWG focused on a clear mandate: to identify ways to advance cattle traceability that are effective and impactful while remaining practical and cost-effective for producers. Members also emphasized that any future improvements must respect producer profitability and privacy while helping maintain the confidence of domestic and international customers and markets.

The group brought together a diverse cross-section of the cattle industry, representing a wide range of perspectives and experiences. Through discussions, members reached broad agreement that while Canada's current traceability system provides important benefits, it contains significant gaps that would limit the industry's ability to respond effectively to a foreign animal disease outbreak. In particular, the absence of comprehensive movement reporting was identified as a key weakness.

A central finding of the TWG was that addressing these gaps must be driven by industry rather than imposed through government mandates. Members emphasized that meaningful improvements are more likely to succeed when built on voluntary participation and supported by the use and enhancement of existing traceability tools and systems already familiar to producers.

As a result of its work, the TWG is issuing recommendations to the ABP Board of Directors. The primary recommendation is to pursue a traceability program that closes existing gaps in the system and strengthens the industry's ability to respond during animal health emergencies.

The suggested path forward focuses on increasing communication, education, and producer assistance, and on using existing traceability tools. The group recommends the development of a voluntary movement-reporting program designed to improve the quality and completeness of traceability information.

ABP's Board of Directors meets in September and will review the findings of the TWG.

PROVINCIAL WORKING GROUP

The Canadian Cattle Association's (CCA's) Board of Directors approved bylaw changes at the organization's Semi-Annual Meeting in August. The approved bylaw changes will take effect in the spring of 2027.

A key component of the new structure is the creation of a Provincial Members Council (PMC). The PMC will be made up of representatives from CCA's Provincial Members and will make decisions using a weighted voting system that reflects provincial cattle populations and retained marketings. Under the approved model, Alberta will hold 12 of the PMC's 32 weighted votes.

The PMC will play an important oversight role and will be responsible for approving the national funding and representation model, any future changes to Board seat allocations and provincial voting weights, and the appointment of an auditor, as well as approving the association's audited financial statements.

The bylaws also establish a revised Board of Directors structure. The Board will consist of 18 Directors appointed from the Provincial Members, including seven seats allocated to Alberta. The Board's primary responsibility will be to supervise and direct the business, activities, and affairs of the CCA, ensuring the organization remains focused on advancing the interests of Canada's cattle producers.

To support effective governance, the bylaws identify several core standing committees, including Governance, Finance, Audit, and Issue and Policy Committees. The Board will also have the flexibility to establish additional standing or ad hoc committees as needed to address emerging priorities and industry issues. The Governance, Finance, and Audit Committees will remain permanent components of the governance structure.

The approved bylaws also introduce a new approach to funding. National funding will be governed through a funding and representation model approved by the PMC and based on retained marketings. To ensure the model remains current and equitable, it will be reviewed every three years, or sooner if a Provincial Member's retained marketings increase or decrease by more than 10 per cent.

ABP will continue engaging producers on these changes and their implications for Alberta's representation at the national level. More information will be shared through upcoming Producer Meetings, and further discussion is expected at the ABP Annual General Meeting in December.

COAL WORKING GROUP

Following extensive discussion and review, the Coal Mining Policy Working Group brought forward a proposed policy on industrial development and mining for consideration by the ABP Board of Directors. The policy was approved at the July 28, 2026 Board Meeting and will guide ABP's advocacy on issues related to mining, resource development, agricultural land, and water protection.

The policy recognizes that beef producers rely on sustainable access to agricultural land and water as critical resources for beef production. It states that industrial development, including mining projects, should not interfere with the long-term economic sustainability of the beef industry and that property rights must be respected by all parties.

Under the approved policy, ABP will advocate for legislative, regulatory, and/or policy reform regarding industrial development and mining projects to ensure:

- a. Environmentally sensitive and high-value agricultural landscapes are recognized and protected within land-use designation and project approval decisions. Project approvals should consider the long-term agricultural, environmental, and non-monetary value of the land.
- b. Environmental Impact Assessments are required for all projects and are used to inform mitigation plans and approval decisions.
- c. Agricultural receptors and pathways are included in Conceptual Site Models, and impacts to agricultural land and water are mitigated.
- d. Preventative measures are implemented to protect agricultural water quality and quantity.
- e. Meaningful consultation occurs with nearby and materially impacted producers throughout the approval, operational, and reclamation processes.



- f. Transparent and consistent regulatory processes are followed without executive decisions overruling established regulatory review processes.
- g. Mitigation of impacts is prioritized, with compensation provided where impacts cannot be avoided.
- h. Government monitoring of agricultural land and water is conducted at regular and appropriate intervals, results are made publicly available, and cumulative effects on agricultural land use are considered.
- i. Reclamation requirements protect land and water resources related to beef production and restore land to be compatible with pre-disturbance agricultural land use.
- j. Liability, accountability, and financial assurance mechanisms, including bonding systems, are sufficient to ensure reclamation obligations are fulfilled and liability cannot be inappropriately transferred.

This policy provides ABP with a clear framework for advocating on behalf of beef producers when industrial development and mining projects are proposed on or near agricultural lands. It reflects the importance of protecting the resources that support beef production while ensuring producers' interests are considered throughout project planning, operation, and reclamation.

The next step will be incorporating the approved policy into ABPs Policy Manual, which will be updated and made available to members in both online and print formats.

WILDLIFE WORKING GROUP

The Wildlife Working Group (WWG) is dedicated to addressing wildlife issues impacting the greatest number of producers across the province. Group members have been meeting regularly to strategize ways of implementing resolutions passed earlier this year and in previous years. The group has reviewed an ABP study on elk management in various jurisdictions and created a list of implementable best practices from other jurisdictions with the hope of establishing these changes in Alberta, ultimately benefiting producers and reducing human-elk conflicts. Recommendations were presented to the ABP Board of Directors at their September meeting and approved for implementation.

The WWG has also dedicated significant time to addressing predator issues. Key discussions have included requirements for an overhaul of Alberta's predator compensation, mitigation, and prevention programming, and the case for lobbying in favour of the reinstatement of Alberta's grizzly bear hunt. Members have been discussing the methodologies used in the 2010 listing of the grizzly bear as "Threatened" under the Provincial Wildlife Act, and the evidence for grizzly bear population and range expansion. They have also been reviewing measures taken toward recovery, as outlined in the provincial 2020 Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan. The WWG brought forward several grizzly bear management recommendations to the ABP Board of Directors, all of which were approved.

Over the next few months, the WWG will prioritize improving problem wildlife programming, developing producer tools for reporting problem wildlife, and increasing producer access to wildlife-related resources. ▼





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Global Spotlight on Canadian Grasslands

SUBMITTED BY PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

North American Grazing Lands Congress shows international leaders the role of Canadian grasslands in food security, biodiversity, and climate resilience.

Ranchers, conservation organizations, social media content creators, and industry leaders joined federal government representatives and a delegation from the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, including the Director General, on a ranch tour in southern Alberta this July. The event celebrated the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists (IYRP). It offered guests from around the world the chance to see modern day pastoralism alive and well in Canada.

Hosted by Public and Stakeholder Engagement, a division of the Canadian Cattle Association (CCA), the southern Alberta tour was the first leg of the North American Grazing Lands Congress (NAGLC). The second portion was hosted in Utah by the U.S. Roundtable for Sustainable Beef. Both tours brought participants onto the landscape to see firsthand how ranchers are preserving ecosystems that support food production, wildlife habitat, biodiversity, carbon sequestration,



and rural communities. Sponsorship for the event was provided by Cargill, the Canadian Cattle Foundation, the Canadian Forage and Grasslands Association, and the Western Stock Growers Association.

Participants observed the cultural significance of grasslands to both Indigenous communities and ranching families in the area.

The tour began at UNESCO World Heritage Site Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump. Attendees learned about the evolution of North American grasslands with bison as a keystone grazing species and Indigenous peoples as stewards of the land. The tour then took guests to the South Porcupine Ranch, run by Bill and Nancy Newton and family, and the Waldron Ranch Grazing Co-operative, demonstrating both traditional principles and innovative techniques to care for grazing lands to ensure they are healthy and thriving.

Participants observed the cultural significance of grasslands to both Indigenous communities and ranching families in the area. Guests saw how grazing management has improved grassland health. They witnessed its benefits to biodiversity firsthand, seeing countless plant species and even spotting wildlife. Discussions also highlighted the increasing pressures threatening ranchers, including fluctuating economic and weather patterns and conversion of grassland ecosystems to other uses with higher financial incentives.

The NAGLC is part of a series of events that Public and Stakeholder Engagement is hosting across Canada. These events aim to raise awareness of the

importance of beef producers in Canada as vital stewards of grassland ecosystems during IYRP. Public and Stakeholder Engagement included event invites for social media influencers and media to help expand the reach of the messaging. A press release covering the tour has been picked up by 214 newspapers, online news sites, and other outlets, with a potential audience of 49.8 million.

“Canadian beef cattle farmers and ranchers are critical to preserving grassland ecosystems that house numerous species at risk, capture carbon, and support the production of high-quality protein in the form of beef,” said Tyler Fulton, President of the CCA. “The International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists reminds us that Canada’s beef producers are fulfilling a cultural, economic, and environmental role that these landscapes and our communities were built upon.”

“Ranchers have been long-term caretakers for grazing lands in North America,” said Dr. Samantha Werth, Executive Director of the U.S. Roundtable for Sustainable Beef. “Preserving these ecosystems and producing protein for our growing population offer a service to society that should be recognized and supported.”

The United Nations General Assembly declared IYRP to raise awareness of the economic, environmental, and social importance of rangelands and the people who steward them. In Canada, the initiative serves as a platform to educate the public, celebrate stewardship successes, and advance policies that support both ranchers and the landscapes they manage.

The event concluded with a call for continued collaboration among producers, governments, Indigenous communities, conservation organizations, and the public. This collaboration is essential to ensure North American beef producers are recognized and supported to continue preserving healthy, productive, and resilient grazing lands for future generations. ▼

HONOURING THOSE WHO BUILT THE WEST:

The Legacy of the Old Time Range Men's Dinner

BY LINDSYE MURFFIN

For nearly a century, the Old Time Range Men's Dinner has stood as one of Alberta's most cherished ranching traditions.

More than just an annual gathering, it is an opportunity to pause, reflect, and honour the people whose hard work, resilience, and stewardship helped build the cattle industry that exists today.

The tradition began 95 years ago when the CPR Palliser Hotel hosted a dinner recognizing the men who had been part of the open-range livestock industry before the turn of the 20th century. The invitation extended to ranchers from southern Alberta north to the Red Deer River and east to Moose Jaw, Sask. These individuals helped establish one of the most respected cattle industries in the world.

As the years passed, the dinner evolved, but its purpose remained the same: to recognize those whose contributions have left a lasting mark on the ranching community. When CPR's sponsorship concluded in 1994, the event shifted from honouring a generation collectively to recognizing specific individuals whose lives exemplified leadership, stewardship, integrity, and service to the industry.

The tradition took another important step forward in 2023 when the committee expanded its mandate to recognize women alongside men. While the name of the event remains unchanged in recognition of its history, the committee acknowledged what every ranching family has always known: ranching has never been a one-person job.

Women have always been indispensable partners in the success of ranches across the West. They have managed livestock, raised families, balanced books, operated machinery, led community organizations, and often built successful careers beyond the ranch gate while helping sustain family operations. Recognizing their contributions ensures the dinner reflects the true story of ranching—one built on teamwork, sacrifice, and shared commitment across generations.

Today, being recognized at the Old Time Range Men's Dinner is one of the highest honours in Alberta's ranching community. Recipients aren't awarded for a single accomplishment, but for a lifetime of dedication—to family, to the land, to the livestock industry, and to the communities that support it.

Perhaps the greatest strength of the Old Time Range Men's Dinner is that it connects generations. Young producers have the opportunity to hear firsthand stories about the people who shaped the industry, while seasoned ranchers are reminded that their own experiences are becoming part of Alberta's agricultural history. In an industry that is constantly changing, these stories provide perspective, inspiration, and a sense of continuity.

The dinner reminds us that ranching is about far more than producing cattle. It is about stewardship of the land, caring for livestock, supporting neighbours, raising families, and preserving a way of life that has sustained Alberta for generations.

The dinner reminds us that ranching is about far more than producing cattle.

As the livestock industry continues to evolve, traditions like the Old Time Range Men's Dinner become even more important. They remind us where we came from, celebrate those who paved the way, and inspire the next generation to carry those values forward.

The Old Time Range Men's Dinner is held annually on the Tuesday of Stampede. For information on the Old Time Range Men's Dinner and to get on the list to be notified for tickets, email rangemen@explornet.ca.

Lenore McLean at 83 years young, photographed just outside of High River.
Photo credit: Chris Gordaneer, Westside Studio.



2026 Old Time Range Men's Honourees

Photo credit: Chris Gordaneer, Westside Studio.



LENORE MCLEAN

A lifelong rancher and horsewoman, Lenore McLean represents generations of western heritage, resilience and community leadership. Her grandfather, James Garson Bews, was among the ranchers at the first Range Men's dinner in 1929. Lenore grew up deeply rooted in that legacy at the Y Cross Ranch near Longview.

While educated at strict convent boarding schools in winter, her heart belonged to ranch life—trailing cattle, calving, mastering horsemanship, and learning from her father Joe Bews. Mentored by legendary cowgirl Flores La Due, Lenore learned to balance skill, hospitality, and grace—ideals she carried throughout her life.

After marrying Roy McLean in 1959, she worked tirelessly alongside him, raising three sons while riding, roping, judging horses, and contributing fully to ranch operations. During drought and economic hardship, Lenore co-founded Highlandview Guest Ranch with her daughter-in-law, welcoming guests from around the world and becoming renowned for her hospitality. She has been a dedicated volunteer mentor and advocate for youth programs western heritage, and ranching women. Her many honours reflect a lifetime of service, grit, and stewardship of the land she calls home.



LEE MCLEAN

Lee McLean brings energy, innovation, and deep horsemanship knowledge to the next generation of western ranching. Raised riding ponies in B.C.'s Cariboo country, Lee's early independence and love of horses shaped a lifelong passion.

After marrying Mike McLean in 1983, she adapted to ranch life in southern Alberta, raising three children while guiding trail rides, cooking for guest ranch visitors, and teaching 4-H for over 20 years. She played a key role in developing Alberta's light horse 4-H program and later worked at the historic Bar U Ranch cookhouse serving visiting dignitaries.

Following a stroke at age 42, she chose a new path, founding Keystone Equine, a successful training, teaching, and horse sales operation. Today Lee is internationally recognized for her work in horsemanship and side saddle riding, serving as a clinician judge, author, and advocate for women's riding history.

On the ranch, Lee is deeply committed to regenerative land stewardship, improving native grass, managing water responsibly, and mentoring younger generations. With creativity, determination, and generosity, she continues to honour the future of western ranch life.

TODD SNODGRASS

Todd Robert Snodgrass was born and raised in High River, Alta. After graduating from high school, he earned an agricultural diploma from Lethbridge Community College and built a career rooted in ranching, horsemanship, and cattle work.

Todd's father Bob ran some cattle, where his interest first started. As a young teen, he worked for Ralph and Jaquie Nelson of High River, where his passion for horses, cattle, and the land continued to grow. He later began his first full-time cattle job with Western Feedlots, working cattle for Berle Hebbes. He spent much of his 20s working with cattle and horses for various outfits in the spring and summer before returning to ride for Western Feedlots each fall and winter.

Todd married Tricia Clarke in 1994, and together they raised two children, Tate and Kaylin. In 1995, the family moved to Two Hills, where he helped manage a growing cattle operation with Bern and Mike Kotelko at Highland Feeders until 2000. They then joined the OH Ranch near Longview, working for Doc Seaman and Bud Maynard. Todd became Manager of OH Ranch Ltd. in 2005. In 2011, Todd and Tricia joined Bruce and Dina Chernoff at Pekisko Creek Ranch & Cattle Company south of Longview, continuing their ranching journey at both Pekisko and Stump Lake Ranch & Cattle Co. in B.C.'s Nicola Valley.

The last 30 years of Todd's career have been built with Tricia's help and support. Without her, it would not have been possible.

From those early teenage years, the horses and cattle have been a constant in Todd's life, and for Todd, there will never be a better way to work cattle than from the back of a horse. 🐎



Perhaps the greatest strength of the Old Time Range Men's Dinner is that it connects generations.





Seeing Scurs?

Understanding Inheritance of Polled and Horned Genetics

BY EMMA CROSS

Beef producers have started to pay more attention to polled, horned, and scurred genetics in recent years as they use genetics to “skip” the dehorning step at branding time. Fortunately, this trait is relatively easy to breed for, but it requires understanding how it is inherited to plan for the desired result.

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

For seedstock producers, understanding horned, polled, and scurred genetic patterns is essential for breeding a calf crop that meets the desires of their customers. Some cow/calf producers seek out homozygous polled bulls, while others seek out polled bulls regardless of genotype, and others exclusively purchase horned bulls.

For operations that dehorn cattle, having polled calves can help them “skip a step” at branding time, saving time and reducing stress on calves. Later on down the beef supply chain, horns can make an impact on carcass quality if not removed. According to the 2018 National Beef Quality Audit, horns cost the beef industry approximately \$0.06/head across all animals at slaughter (not just the horned ones) due to the requirement for removing horns at the packing plant. Horns can also cause carcass bruising, which can lead to further economic loss.

Many producers still benefit from the genetic merit of horned cattle, while others seek out the trait for cattle to fend off predators. Each cow/calf producer has their own reasons for seeking out a particular phenotype, and understanding how the genetics work will allow them to make that happen.

Larger, horn-like scurs can cause the same carcass damage as true horns and also add to labour requirements at the packing plant. Producers may also have to remove scurs if they decide they are too large and are causing issues, or if they grow in a manner that risks tearing off due to their loose attachment compared to true horns. For these reasons, as well as cosmetics, most producers choose to try to avoid breeding cattle with scurs.

POLLED AND HORNED INHERITANCE

When looking at any trait influenced by genetics, producers need to think of two distinct concepts: the animal’s phenotype and genotype. The genotype is the genetic code for that attribute in the animal’s DNA (i.e. what genes the animal possesses for that trait). The phenotype is what a producer can actually see (i.e. coat colour, horned vs. polled).

Larger, horn-like scurs can cause the same carcass damage as true horns and also add to labour requirements at the packing plant.

Cattle have two copies of the portion of DNA which determines whether they are horned or polled. In each of these copies, they can have one of two versions of the genetic code, called alleles—the horned allele (“p”) or the polled allele (“P”). One of these alleles is inherited from the dam, while the other is from the sire. This is where the terms homozygous and heterozygous come in:

- **Homozygous** – two of the same alleles
(i.e. two horned or two polled)
- **Heterozygous** – two different alleles
(i.e. one horned and one polled)

Intuitively, a homozygous polled animal will be visibly polled and a homozygous horned animal will be visibly horned. For a heterozygous animal, the polled allele is dominant to the recessive horned allele, meaning that it masks the effects of the recessive allele. So, a heterozygous animal will look polled, but still carries a horned allele. Producers may recognize this pattern of recessive inheritance from other traits like black vs. red coat colour and several genetic disorders in cattle.

A breeding animal has a 50/50 chance of passing on either allele to their offspring. Homozygous polled cattle will always pass on a polled allele to mask a horned allele from the other parent.

Genotype (the genetic code)	Phenotype (what you see)
PP – 2 polled alleles	Polled animal
Pp – 1 polled allele + 1 horned allele	Polled animal
pp – 2 horned alleles	Horned animal

WHAT ABOUT SCURS?

Telling the difference between mature horned and polled animals is easy—they either have horns or they don't. When scurs come into play, things get a little more complicated. Scurs:

- Are made up of horn-like material
- Range in size and shape from flat and scab-like to large and horn-shaped
- Often “wiggle” with touch—but not always!
- May attach to the skull as animals age

Accurately identifying scurs requires genetic testing rather than solely visual assessment.

THE SCUR GENE

The presence of scurs is influenced by a separate gene that's in a different location than what's found in horned and polled. So, the scur gene has its own two alleles: one which causes the presence of scurs (“S”), and one which leads to no scurs (“s”).

Like the horned/polled gene, an animal will have two copies of the scur gene with some combination of these

two alleles. However, for this trait, the effects of the pair of alleles are also influenced by the animal's sex and the alleles they have for the horned/polled gene.

Rules for scurs:

- Horned animals (pp) will not show visible scurs
- Homozygous polled animals (PP) will not show visible scurs
- Animals heterozygous at the horned/polled gene (Pp) will have scurs only if:
 - For bulls: must have at least one scur allele (can be SS or Ss, but not ss)
 - For females: must have two scur alleles (must be SS, not Ss or ss)

Even cattle without visible scurs, such as horned cattle, carry alleles related to the scur trait. Thus, they can pass these on to their progeny, determining whether their offspring have scurs. However, visible scurs are a sure sign that an animal is heterozygous polled, so for breeders trying to breed straight polled cattle, scurs are often something to avoid.

Photo credit: Jenna Loveridge Photography



		Horned/Polled Genotype		
		Homozygous polled (PP)	Heterozygous polled (Pp)	Homozygous horned (pp)
Scur Genotype	Homozygous scurred (SS)	PP SS Smooth polled	Pp SS Scurred	pp SS Horned
	Heterozygous scurred (Ss)	PP Ss Smooth polled	Pp Ss Bulls – scurred Females – smooth polled	pp Ss Horned
	Homozygous non-scurred (ss)	PP ss Smooth polled	Pp ss Smooth polled	pp ss Horned

WHAT TO REMEMBER

Understanding the inheritance of the polled, horned, and scurred traits can be confusing at first. Here are a couple takeaways to remember when making breeding decisions:

1. If you want all polled calves with no horned calves:

- Remember that, if either parent is homozygous polled, all calves will be polled
 - Using polled bulls on your cow herd will result in no horned calves, but calves might still have scurs

2. If you want to avoid scurs:

- Any polled bulls without scurs will not pass on the scur trait
 - Male progeny still might have scurs if they inherit the scur allele from their dam
- Females can pass on scurs to their offspring, even if they do not have visible scurs
 - Cows can carry the scur allele with any genotype at the horned/polled gene ▼



Canadian Cattle Association Fall Update

SUBMITTED BY TYLER FULTON, PRESIDENT, CCA



Photo credit:
Manitoba Beef Producers

In April, CCA launched an aggressive campaign to raise awareness about trade negotiations between Canada and Mercosur that could see a massive increase in imports of Mercosur beef.

Mercosur is the Southern Common Market (called MERCOSUR for its Spanish initials). It is a South American economic and political trade bloc established in 1991 and comprises Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay.

Increased imports would incentivize beef production on the other side of the world, disincentivize cattle production and herd rebuilding in Canada, and would have no impact on the price of beef in Canada. At a time when the federal government is investing in food security, increased trade with Mercosur that would allow increased beef imports does not make sense. Thank you to everyone who visited cattle.ca/mercotur and supported our position. At the time of submitting this article, negotiations are ongoing, and the campaign continues.

In early June, the Traceability Task Force was announced; scan the QR code for details if you missed it. It is important to reiterate that CCA genuinely recognizes the importance

of traceability for the industry. We need to have readily analyzable data that allows a rapid and effective disease investigation. Our ability to contain and eliminate disease, and prove our return to a disease-free status, is what will re-open negotiations with trading partners in the event of an outbreak. We understand that an effective system is both simple to understand and easy to participate in.





Also in June, CCA and ABP jointly announced that we have reached an Interim Participation Agreement (scan the QR code for details).

The agreement follows CCA's agreement-in-principle to bylaw

reforms recommended by the Provincial Working Group, which includes representatives from each of CCA's provincial member organizations. The bylaw reforms will be presented again for approval at CCA's Semi-Annual Meeting in August. By the time you receive this magazine, more information will be available on the bylaw reforms and next steps.

CCA staff Mitchell Zoratti and Environment Committee Chair Karla Hicks, along with ABP General Manager Brad Dubeau, hosted Canada's Minister of Environment and Climate Change Julie Dabrusin and members of her team on a ranch tour in Alberta in July. It was encouraging to see the Minister and her team take genuine interest in learning more about ranching, conservation, and sustainability on the ground, as well as a willingness to explore opportunities for collaboration with Canada's beef industry.

We appreciate CCA's The Environmental Stewardship Award (TESA) 2023 national recipients, Doug, Linda, and Tim Wray, for hosting the group at Wray Ranch. The tour provided a firsthand look at stewardship in action. The group walked through fields of cover crops, legume-enhanced pastures, and a restored wetland supported through conservation partnerships. The day also sparked important conversations about the role working agricultural landscapes can play in delivering climate, biodiversity, water, soil, and conservation outcomes—and how governments can better support producers in delivering these benefits while remaining sustainable, resilient, and economically viable.

The Federal, Provincial, and Territorial Agriculture Ministers (FPT) met in July and released the Halifax Statement, bringing new and renewed interest to AgriStability and Livestock Price Insurance. Ministers aim to reach a decision on AgriStability changes for the 2027 program year. While the discussion arising from the meeting was largely positive, we believe that more needs to be done. My column in the September issue of *Canadian Cattlemen Magazine* takes a closer look at what was discussed and where improvements are still needed.

As we head into fall, feedback from the Beef Cattle Code of Practice Public Comment Period is being reviewed and assessed. Thank you to everyone who took time to participate and share input. This document, which describes how beef cattle are cared for and handled, is an important resource for producers, policymakers, the public, the value chain, and animal welfare and enforcement agencies looking to gauge industry standards for beef cattle production in Canada. The Code Committee is reviewing all feedback received, and we anticipate the new Code will be released in early 2027. If you did not participate in the comment period, the next Code review will begin five years after the new draft Code is released, likely in 2032.

Other issues we are working on this fall, include possible tariffs, potential trade agreements, discussions about the renewal of the Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement (CUSMA), and global policy decisions. We encourage you to attend a producer meeting in your area and watch for updates from ABP and CCA. 🐾

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Cover Photographer and Artist



HOLLY NICOLL @holly.nicoll

Holly Nicoll is a commercial agriculture and western lifestyle photographer based near Calgary, Alta. Raised on a mixed cattle operation west of the city, she developed an early appreciation for the people, animals, landscapes, and traditions that define rural life.

Before building her photography business, Nicoll spent more than 25 years working in agriculture sales and marketing within the crop production and animal nutrition sectors. That industry experience gives her a practical understanding of agriculture and allows her to photograph it with authenticity, respect, and an informed eye.

Today, Nicoll works with agribusinesses, agencies, agricultural organizations, ranchers, and brands to create imagery for commercial campaigns, publications, and visual storytelling. Her photographs capture the grit, beauty, and spirit of agriculture, inviting viewers not only to see the moment, but to feel connected to it. 🐾



LYNDA BAXTER @lynda_baxter_art

Lynda Baxter is an international artist and Master Pastelist residing in Alberta, Canada. She holds Associate Federation of Canadian Artists (AFCA) and Society of Canadian Artists (SCA) designations.

Lynda doesn't just paint cows, horses, or any other rural animal she purposely comes across;. She creates stories about them. Baxter captures glimpses of each animal's character, helping viewers see them differently, and even fall in love with their expressions.

Her paintings are designed to ignite emotion in the viewer, encouraging them to smile, look into the animals' eyes with more understanding, and see where they live. She wants people to see something when they look at her art—something they may not have thought about before.

Baxter's art depicts the rural lifestyle handed down through generations. 🐾



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ABP Delegate Bios

ELECTIONS WILL BE HELD IN SOUTHEAST, CENTRAL, AND SOUTHWEST ZONES. NOMINEES IN NORTHEAST AND NORTHWEST ZONES WILL BE ACCLAIMED EFFECTIVE THE ANNOUNCEMENT AT THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

NORTHEAST ZONE – ACCLAIMED

Zach Bourassa

Zach Bourassa is involved in his family's cow-calf operation in Venice, Alta., near Lac La Biche. Agriculture has been part of his family's history for five generations, and he is proud to carry on that tradition.

Outside the farm, Bourassa works in the energy industry and volunteers in several community leadership roles. He looks forward to learning from fellow producers, building connections within the industry, and contributing to a strong future for Alberta's beef sector.

Josie Pashulka

Josie Pashulka operates a cow-calf operation near Derwent in the County of Two Hills, Alta. The operation includes 400 purebred Simmental, Black Angus, and Maine-Anjou cows, along with a commercial cow herd.

In addition to cattle production, the family operates a grain farm, growing wheat, barley, and canola, while also planting grazing and silage corn.

Pashulka has a strong interest in artificial insemination and embryo transfer and actively incorporates both into the operation. She also teaches those skills at Lakeland College.

Her operation has participated in the Verified Beef Production Plus (VBP+) program since its early days and was among the first producers to become involved.

Kailey Wirsta

Kailey Wirsta and her family own and operate K-Cow Ranch, a 300-head purebred cow-calf operation raising Hereford, Charolais, and Black Angus cattle.

Through her experience in cattle management and breeding, Wirsta focuses on producing high-quality genetics for both commercial and purebred markets.

In addition to ranching, she serves as Chair of the Stoney Lake Community Association, where she helps manage social media and community engagement efforts. Wirsta is passionate about the future of Alberta's beef industry and looks forward to advocating for producers and supporting sustainable growth within the sector.

Miles Wowk

Miles Wowk and his family operate a commercial cow-calf operation in Alberta's northeast zone. He grew up in the beef industry and was actively involved in 4-H for 10 years, experiences that helped shape his passion for agriculture and the cattle sector.

For the past six years, Wowk has served as an Alberta representative with the CCA and currently chairs the Animal Health and Care Committee. He believes a strong producer voice is essential to moving the industry forward and is committed to helping build a sustainable future for the next generation of ranchers.

NORTHWEST ZONE – ACCLAIMED

Becky Kimble

Becky Kimble is a fifth-generation cow-calf producer in the Grande Prairie area and has been involved in her family's operation her entire life.

The cattle industry is extremely important to her, and she is committed to helping ensure future generations can continue ranching in Alberta. Kimble is proud to see her nephews carrying on the family ranch and hopes they can do so for many years to come.

In addition to cattle production, Kimble raises APHA and AQHA horses and serves as a State Director for the American Paint Horse Association. She looks forward to working with fellow producers and supporting a strong future for Alberta's beef industry.

Dyanna Marquardt

Dyanna Marquardt calls Big Lakes County home, where she and her young family operate both commercial and purebred cattle operations.

Balancing family life with ranching, Marquardt is passionate about supporting her community, stewarding the land responsibly, and helping ensure a strong future for agriculture for generations to come.

Jess Verstappen

Jess Verstappen is a cow-calf producer in the Big Lakes County area, where she and her family operate purebred and commercial Red and Black Angus cattle.

Through her involvement in 4-H and her agribusiness education at Lakeland College, Verstappen has gained experience in many areas of the beef industry. She is passionate about agriculture, land stewardship, and supporting a strong future for the cattle sector, and looks forward to bringing that perspective to ABP.

Photo Credit: Seven D Media

Jamie White

Jamie White is a third-generation farmer from Teepee Creek, where he was born and raised. His children represent the fourth generation of farmers on the family's land.

On his father's side, White's grandfather brought the first registered Shorthorn cattle to the Teepee Creek area from England in 1920. On his mother's side, his grandfather brought the first registered Black Angus cattle to the area via the Edson Trail in 1918.

Today, White and his son raise Salers-Angus cross cattle and run approximately 100 cow-calf pairs. A longtime supporter of the agricultural community, White was a 4-H member and, later, a 4-H leader. He also served on the Teepee Creek Stampede Association Board of Directors. In 2025, White and his wife Debbie were honoured as Wagon Masters by the Teepee Creek Stampede Association in recognition of their years of dedication and service.

White currently volunteers at the Teepee Creek Museum and serves as President of the Peace Country Racing Association, an organization he helped establish in 2010. He is seeking to serve as an ABP delegate to help ensure local beef producers' voices and concerns are represented.



CENTRAL ZONE – ELECTION

Connor Allen

Connor Allen operates a 120-head cow-calf operation in central Alberta and is actively involved in the day-to-day management of the farm. Following in the footsteps of his father and grandfather, he has been around cattle his entire life.

The herd is homegrown and raised on pasture during the summer months. In winter, the cattle are fed silage produced on the farm along with hay sourced from neighbouring producers. Allen hopes to serve as an ABP delegate to help identify solutions that support a strong and profitable beef sector.

Phil Hamar

Phil Hamar is the owner and operator of Lazy H Ranch, a family-owned cattle operation established in 1929. As a fourth-generation rancher, he continues a legacy spanning nearly a century, combining time-tested ranching practices with modern approaches to cattle production.

Under his leadership, Lazy H Ranch specializes in developing high-performance heifers through its custom backgrounding program, helping set producers up for breeding success. Committed to agriculture and the ranching way of life, Hamar is focused on supporting a strong and sustainable future for Alberta's cattle industry while preserving the values that have guided the ranch for generations.

Paxton Homeak

Paxton Homeak is a fourth-generation beef producer who lives near Glenevis, Alta. Agriculture has been an important part of his life, and he is passionate about carrying on his family's legacy while contributing to the future of the beef industry.

He hopes to gain a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing producers while bringing the perspective of a young producer to the table. Homeak is committed to keeping young producers informed, engaged, and connected.

Brenda Rosadiuk

Brenda Rosadiuk, along with her husband, two sons, and their families, operates a cow-calf operation approximately one hour west of Edmonton.

During her four-year term as an ABP delegate, Rosadiuk served on the Audit and Governance committees. For the past two years, she also served as a Director and, most recently, held the role of Finance Chair on the Board of Directors Executive.

Throughout her time as a delegate, she has gained valuable insight and experience while helping navigate issues such as the proposed withdrawal from the CCA, tariff threats, and traceability. Rosadiuk believes ABP's presence at both the provincial and federal levels is essential to ensuring producers' voices are heard and their interests represented.

Jason Smith

Jason Smith is a first-generation rancher who operates alongside his wife, Melissa, in the Eckville area. He began raising whitetail deer in 2000 and has since transitioned to cattle and bison production. Throughout his career, Smith has served on a number of boards and industry organizations, including Safari Club International and the Alberta Whitetail and Mule Deer Association. He is committed to supporting Alberta's cattle industry and looks forward to working with ABP to help strengthen the sector for producers across the province.

Kirk Wildman

Kirk Wildman's family has been ranching in Alberta since homesteading west of Innisfail in 1887. The current operation near Sangudo has been in place since 1974 and raises purebred Red and Black Angus cattle. In 2027, the operation will mark its 48th annual bull sale.

Wildman has served on numerous cattle and community-based boards and foundations and currently serves as a Director of his local natural gas co-op. Since March, he has been involved with ABP's Research Committee and Traceability Working Groups and would welcome the opportunity to continue contributing to those portfolios.

SOUTHEAST ZONE – ELECTION

Dylan Biggs

Dylan Biggs and his wife Colleen, along with their four daughters, began direct marketing beef to consumers through TK Ranch in 1995.

Today, they operate a provincially inspected abattoir on the ranch and a beef processing facility in Lyalta. Since 1995, Biggs has delivered livestock handling clinics across Canada and the U.S. and remains committed to supporting the long-term success of family-based cow-calf operations in Alberta.

Kent Holowath

Kent Holowath, along with his wife Jill and their three adult children, operates a grain and cow-calf operation near Rumsey, Alta.

The family runs a commercial Black Angus herd and a backgrounding operation, and is actively involved in all aspects of the business. Holowath currently serves as Chair of the Palliser Grazing Club and the Big Valley Feeder Association, and values opportunities to support local initiatives and strengthen Alberta's cattle industry.

Craig Lehr

Craig Lehr was born and raised on his family's farm, Short Grass Ranches, near Medicine Hat. After attending Olds College, he returned to the operation, where he and his wife Nicole are raising the fourth generation of the family alongside their two children.

Short Grass Ranches includes a cow-calf operation, a backgrounding feedlot, and both irrigated and dryland farming enterprises. Lehr currently serves as Chair of ABP's Research Committee, vice-chair of the Governance Committee, and as one of Alberta's representatives on the CCA.

Wacey Manning

Wacey Manning grew up on a cow-calf operation near Cadogan, Alta. Three years ago, he and his family relocated to the Sounding Lake area, where they live and work on the GW Murray Ranch.

Manning is also an active member of the Highway 13 Cattlemen's Club. As the parent of two young children, he is passionate about the future of the beef industry and creating opportunities for the next generation of producers.

Lance Neilson

Lance Neilson and his wife Karyn operate a family cattle operation in Stettler County that includes both cow-calf and backgrounding enterprises, with a focus on raising quality replacement heifers.

Agriculture has always been a family effort, and they raised their four children on the farm. Neilson is seeking to serve as an ABP delegate to represent working cattle producers and help ensure their perspectives are heard.

Ryan Slenders

Ryan Slenders operates a 2,500-head backgrounding feedlot in Newell County and works alongside his father on a mixed farming operation.

He is actively involved in his community, serving as the local fire chief and supporting his children's activities. During his first two years as an ABP delegate, Slenders has participated in discussions surrounding CCA matters and traceability, and he looks forward to continuing his committee work and representing producers.

SOUTHWEST ZONE – ELECTION

Adeleen Bolduc

Adeleen Bolduc is a fifth-generation Alberta rancher who grew up immersed in feedlot production and has been actively involved in the beef industry throughout her life.

Today, she and her husband Mat raise purebred and commercial Black Angus cattle in southern Alberta alongside their three children. Bolduc holds a Bachelor of Science from the University of Calgary and serves on both the Canadian Cattle Youth Council and the Canadian Beef Check-Off Agency.

Andrea Croll

Andrea Croll, along with her husband Jeff and their three children operate a mixed farm near Sylvan Lake.

Dedicated to youth growth and involvement in the agriculture industry, Andrea brings a unique perspective from the lifestyle of the small family farm.

Brianna Elliot

Brianna Elliot is a cow-calf producer in Mountain View County raising Angus cross cattle. She grew up on her family's purebred Black Angus operation in British Columbia and has built her career in Alberta's beef industry.

She works in applied livestock and forage research, leading producer-focused projects in grazing management, pasture productivity, and livestock technology. Elliot also serves as a Director with the Western Stock Growers' Association and hopes to bring both producer and research perspectives to ABP.

Lee Irvine

Lee Irvine lives northwest of Cochrane, Alta., with his wife and two sons, where they operate a grass backgrounding and cattle brokering business.

Through roles in agri-finance, animal pharmaceuticals, and cattle brokering, Irvine has gained experience working with a wide range of production systems across Alberta and internationally. He holds a degree in Animal Science and Agribusiness from the University of Saskatchewan, serves as a Beef Specialist with ATB Financial, and brokers cattle through TEAM Auction Sales. He is committed to using his experience and market knowledge to represent producers and support a financially sustainable cattle industry.

Ashley Perepelkin

Ashley Perepelkin and her family operate a mixed grain and Simmental cow-calf operation near Condor, Alta.

A graduate of the Canadian Cattle Young Leaders program and a UFA delegate, Perepelkin is passionate about advocating for producers and strengthening connections between agriculture and consumers. She also owns PF Tallow, a value-added business focused on beef tallow products.

Jordan Staudinger

Jordan Staudinger is a fourth-generation cow-calf producer who farms with his wife and children near Benalto in Red Deer County. He has a long history of volunteering in Central Alberta, including service with Ski Patrol and the local Fire Department, as well as on church, constituency association, and Rural Crime Watch boards. Staudinger is committed to learning, building connections, and contributing to strong rural communities. He looks forward to helping support Alberta's cattle industry and ensuring opportunities remain available for current and future generations of producers.

ABP is a producer-led organization, and the dedication and hard work of passionate people is what keeps us moving forward as an industry. Thanks to past, present, and future delegates for your contributions. ▼

ABP Zones and Delegates

NORTHEAST ZONE

Aydon Almberg

BOARD MEMBER

PHONE 780-209-0211

EMAIL almbergaydon@gmail.com

Jay Hager

BOARD MEMBER

PHONE 780-753-4375

EMAIL 07jaybar@gmail.com

George L'Heureux

PHONE 780-689-8036

EMAIL georgelheureux1@gmail.com

Josie Pashulka

PHONE 780-787-0077

EMAIL kenpashulka@hotmail.com

Charlotte Wasylik

PHONE 639-840-1252

EMAIL Charlottewasylik1@gmail.com

Kailey Wirsta

PHONE 780-614-5255

EMAIL kwirsta2@gmail.com

Miles Wowk

BOARD MEMBER

PHONE 780-210-2501

EMAIL wowkmiles@gmail.com

SOUTHEAST ZONE

Clayton Andrew

PHONE 403-435-2555

EMAIL clayton.andrew93@gmail.com

Kent Holowath

VICE CHAIR

PHONE 403-820-6352

EMAIL holowath@telusplanet.net

Craig Lehr

PHONE 403-581-7242

EMAIL craiglehrsgr@gmail.com

Brad Mappin

BOARD MEMBER

PHONE 403-740-6547

EMAIL bradmappin@gmail.com

Wacey Manning

PHONE 780-753-4578

EMAIL wacey.manning@hotmail.com

Ryan Slenders

PHONE 403-363-7906

EMAIL ryan.slenders@gmail.com

SOUTHWEST ZONE

Cole Barten

PHONE 403-393-6968

EMAIL colebarten@gmail.com

Jim Bowhay

PHONE 403-994-0517

EMAIL jnbowhay@gmail.com

Layne Burton

PHONE 403-682-7545

EMAIL layne.e.burton@gmail.com

Lee Irvine

BOARD MEMBER

PHONE 403-671-4878

EMAIL lee@irvinefamily.ca

Graham Overguard

PHONE 403-638-9459

EMAIL overguardgraham@hotmail.com

Dorothy Thengs

BOARD MEMBER

PHONE 587-444-0118

EMAIL dthengs@hotmail.com

NORTHWEST ZONE

Bernie Doerksen

BOARD MEMBER

PHONE 780-841-1769

EMAIL raffi.resort@gmail.com

Robert Driedger

PHONE 780-841-7825

EMAIL twilightfarms@gmail.com

Becky Kimble

PHONE 780-832-5496

EMAIL rafter2b@yahoo.com

Dyanna Marquardt

PHONE 780-536-6046

EMAIL marquardtranches@gmail.com

Jolene McDermott

PHONE 780-219-5375

EMAIL Jcoates357@gmail.com

Jess Verstappen

PHONE 780-523-0187

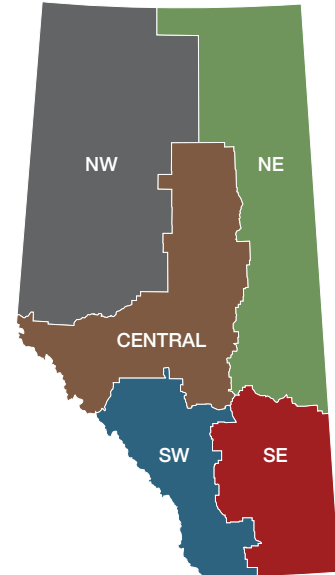
EMAIL jessverstappen@hotmail.com

Jamie White

PHONE 780-814-0972

EMAIL mudmiget@hotmail.com

ABP ZONE MAP



CENTRAL ZONE

Jake Boychuk

PHONE 587-784-9317

EMAIL jboychuk97@gmail.com

Phil Hamar

BOARD MEMBER

PHONE 780-515-1482

EMAIL philhamar@gmail.com

Colin Rice

PHONE 403-318-2464

EMAIL colinrice@gmail.com

Brenda Rosadiuk

FINANCE CHAIR

PHONE 780-542-1186

EMAIL rosran4@gmail.com

Doug Roxburgh

BOARD CHAIR

PHONE 403-588-5534

EMAIL doug.roxburgh@bullseyefeeds.ca

Karen Shaw

BOARD MEMBER

PHONE 780-233-8697

EMAIL shaw.karen.ab@gmail.com

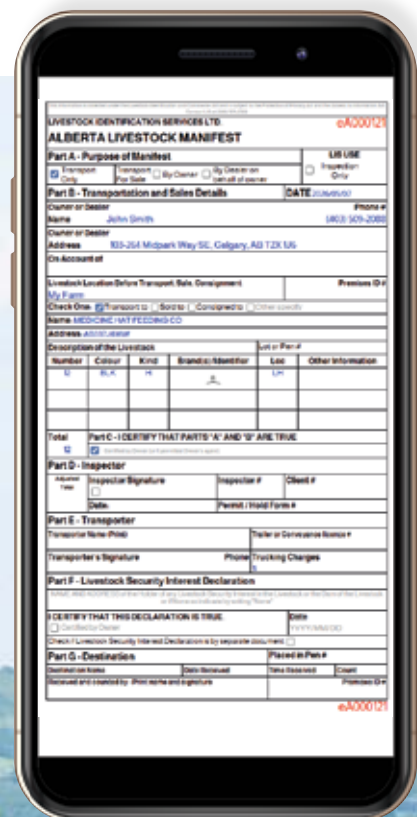
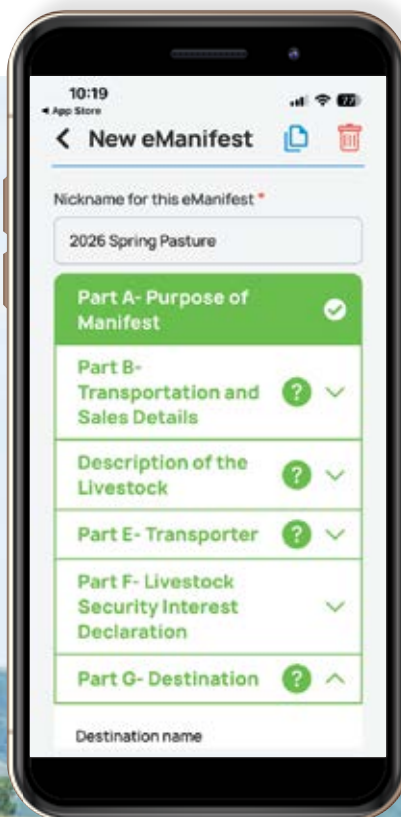
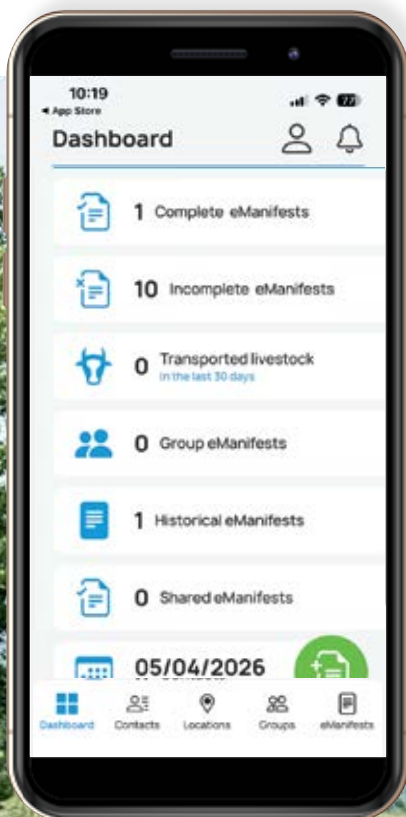
Kirk Wildman

PHONE 780-305-1661

EMAIL towawcattle@gmail.com

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