



Living Lab — Central Prairies: Growing Innovative Solutions

For generations, ranchers and farmers have worked within prairie ecosystems to produce food and other important benefits. As they face growing climate and environmental concerns, many producers are eager to quantify, demonstrate and grow the benefits of their management practices.

Living Lab - Central Prairies (LL-CP) is part of a nationwide network of 14 living labs launched by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) in 2022. Participants in the project are co-developing and testing testing practices inspired by resilient prairie ecosystems, through collaboration with fellow producers, researchers, and other stakeholders to evaluate their potential to support profitability, soil health, biodiversity, climate mitigation and more.

“As ranchers in southern Saskatchewan, we’re looking at ways to manage our native grass and forage mixes in the best way possible,” says Erika Stewart, a producer involved with the project. “We’re hoping that ultimately, the data from the living lab project will produce metrics that will broaden that conversation about the benefits of cattle on the landscape.”

Producer participants in LL-CP have a strong appreciation for healthy prairie ecosystems, favouring innovative solutions that keep existing ecosystems intact, restore ecosystem function, or add prairie-like functions to other agricultural land uses.

“Native prairie in Saskatchewan has developed to be very efficient at cycling nutrients, storing carbon, and absorbing moisture to withstand harsh conditions. We want to learn from that,” states Adrienne Tastad, LL-CP Project Coordinator. “Through our living lab we are looking to identify the key features that help prairies do these things, and support producers to incorporate the strengths of the native landscape — biodiversity, perennality and beneficial grazing — into their operations.”

Participants in the project are working together to develop solutions that involve:

- Avoiding conversion of native and naturalized landscapes to other uses
- Managing grazing impacts by understanding how timing, intensity and rest affect both native and tame rangeland

- Promoting the use of perennial grassland plants to restore and enhance pasture and hayland
- Understanding the benefits of polycropping – the planting of diverse species blends in annual cropland – as livestock forage or fodder.

Living labs are about producers co-developing and testing innovative technologies and on-farm practices under real-world conditions. There are 30 farm and ranch operations, 40 researchers from seven different research orga-

nizations, and 10 other stakeholder groups currently participating. Together they are finding ways to apply the adaptive strategies found in nature to today’s agricultural systems.

In December 2024, LL-CP hosted its annual co-development meeting. It was an opportunity for participating agricultural producers, researchers, and other industry experts to learn from each other, share and reflect on progress to date, and to strategize for the year ahead. Participants had a lot to discuss about their experiences and early results on soils, biodiversity, and their bottom lines. They grappled with how to define and communicate about beneficial practices, articulated emerging questions, and left reenergized by their interactions with other participants.

It is through this process - and other formal and informal engagement throughout each year - that the project will co-develop practical, locally-appropriate “prairie-proven” management strategies that fellow producers can take up to support the long-term health of prairie agriculture.

LL-CP organizers are always looking to connect with prairie producers, to hear about their experiences and ideas for growing the benefits of agriculture in the prairie region. Follow the project at @prairielivinglab for more information, or connect online at www.prairielifinglab.com. Stay tuned for more interesting results and revelations!

This project is led by the South of the Divide Conservation Action Program Inc., and is funded primarily by AAFC, through the Agricultural Climate Solutions - Living Lab program. Additional funding is provided by the Beef Cattle Research Council, A&W Canada, and the Saskatchewan Cattle Association.

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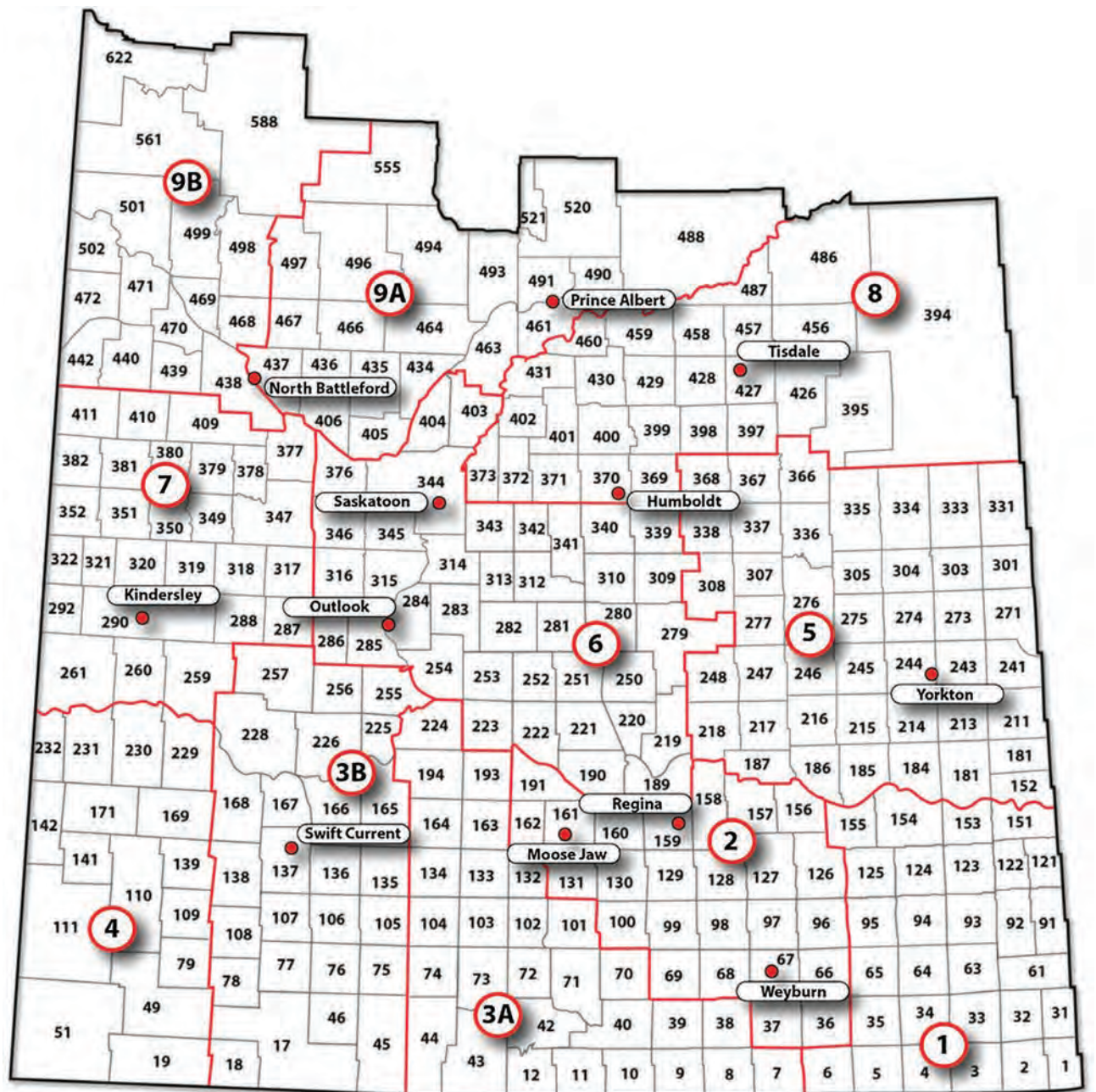
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Mental Health Matters

On the farm, balance is extremely important when dealing with stress. It impairs our ability to think, problem solve, and it distracts us while we manage our day-to-day tasks. Below is a list of resources you can utilize when times are tough, or when you are feeling overwhelmed.

Saskatchewan Farm Stress Line Call toll free: 1-800-667-4442 www.farmstressline.ca	The Canada Suicide Prevention Service (Available 24/7/365) Call: 1-833-456-4566 Text: 45645 https://www.crisisservicescanada.ca
SaskAgMatters Network www.saskagmatters.ca	Canadian Mental Health Association cmha.ca
Online Therapy Unit www.onlinetherapyuser.ca	Do More Agriculture Foundation www.domore.ag
Agricultural Health & Safety Network https://cchsa-ccssma.usask.ca/aghealth	Centre for Addiction and Mental Health https://www.camh.ca/
Free mental health resources available across provinces: Funded by United Way, Gov of Can https://sk.211.ca	

Introducing the New CEO



BY CHRISTINA BETKER
CEO, SASKATCHEWAN
CATTLE ASSOCIATION

February 2025 marked two big changes to the SCA. Chad Ross has stepped into the SCA Chair role, and I have taken over as the CEO from Grant McLellan. Although I have been with the SCA for nearly 10 years, in the Policy Manager role, many producers may not know me. So let me introduce myself.

My name is Christina Betker. I live in White City with my husband and two young boys. In my spare time I'm usually at a hockey rink somewhere cheering on my oldest. We are originally from Manitoba, but came to Saskatchewan in 2014 for my husband's job.

I have a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture, majoring in Animal Science, from the University of Saskatchewan and had the great pleasure of being classmates to the SCA's previous CEO, Ryder Lee.

Following the completion of my Master's Degree in Natural Resource Management, I made the leap of moving to Ottawa to work for a Manitoba Member of Parliament, who was the opposition critic for Agriculture. I also spent some time working at the US Em-

bassy in the Foreign Agricultural Service through the United States Department of Agriculture.

I was very fortunate to work for Chuck Strahl during his tenure as Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs, as his Director of Policy. I spent nearly 10 years in Ottawa, but the lure of the Prairies and my family drew me home.

I spent some time working in the private sector, as well as in the canola industry. When the opportunity came to work for the SCA, I jumped at the chance. There is something very special about the cattle industry that has always drawn me to it. It's hard to say if it's my admiration for those who give everything to ensure the health and welfare of their animals or the absolute genuineness of the producers themselves. I think it's all the above.

The industry has many challenges, including the impact of the carbon tax and other regulations that put unnecessary burdens on our producers, while at the same time putting them at a disadvantage to our trading partners, especially the United States.

The recently announced case of bovine tuberculosis also creates a sense of worry and frustration. As impacted producers go through the investigation and possible depopulation process, we will continue to advocate for them to ensure they know and understand why certain actions are taken by the CFIA, as well as lobbying for changes to the current compensation allowances and

seek additional support from both the provincial and federal governments.

Despite the challenges our industry faces, I think we have a wonderful story to tell and we at the SCA will continue to work with groups like Canada Beef, the Canadian Roundtable for Sustainable Beef, Ag in the Classroom and others to promote our industry, tell our story and let consumers know that beef is one of the best products they can include on their plates.

I'm truly honoured to take on the role of CEO. I have a wonderful office of co-workers and a great Board of Directors, and we will continue to work hard on your behalf. Please feel free to reach to any one of us with your concerns or thoughts so that we can try our best to address them.

As many are rolling into calving season, I wish you the best and I look forward to engaging with you throughout the year.

Introducing the New Chair



BY CHAD ROSS
CHAIR, SASKATCHEWAN
CATTLE ASSOCIATION

In the 2025 SCA Annual General Meeting, I was voted as the Chair of the Board. As a 4th generation rancher from Estevan, which started 1906, it is an honour to take on this responsibility. My wife Crystal and I run a VBP+ certified sustainable cow/calf, backgrounding operation utilizing summer and winter grazing strategies to minimize cost as well as crop rotations which integrate cattle. We have two daughters: Cassidy, who is working on her PHD at the University of Saskatchewan in Ruminant Nutrition, and Carlee, majoring in Bioneural Psychology with an English minor.

As I transition from Vice Chair to Chair, I would like to thank Keith Day for the seemingly endless hours and miles spent representing our industry. Keith's ability to navigate challenging situations is admirable. Your efforts are not unnoticed.

In addition to taking on the role of Chair of the SCA, I am also Past Chair of Saskatchewan Cattle Feeders Association, Past Chair of Canadian Beef Checkoff Agency, Vice Chair of Canada Beef, Past Chair of Es-

tevan Exhibition Association and a past 4-H Leader.

My goal in leading the SCA Board is to take a strategic approach to improving the entire beef industry in Saskatchewan, covering all sectors and all areas, and working with fellow beef and forage organizations for the common good. Saskatchewan is the breadbasket of North America, and there is no reason why we shouldn't be the envy in terms of beef production. That means expanding the value-added side of the industry to benefit our producers by reducing basis, increasing margins and increasing our viability and sustainability. We need to remove the regulatory barriers and increase incentives to bring a fully integrated industry to our province.

Our board recently concluded a strategic planning session in February to do just that. We had a very productive process to provide our organization direction and focus, so that we can do the best job possible to represent our check off paying producers. We intend to take a proactive rather than reactive approach to our business.

Saskatchewan has the ability to produce much more product than we can consume. That means that vibrant and solid trade relationships are not only important, but necessary. The SCA will work closely with government to reduce regulation and to create incentives for business locally, as well as design incentives for beef trade abroad.

We will do our best to communicate to you, our stakeholders, but also to communicate our message to consumers and fellow industry groups with the goal of enhancing awareness of our industry and production practices.

Ultimately, the profitability of our producers should be our number one priority. We are in exciting times in our industry. Supply and demand fundamentals could not be better. Our priorities need to be a viable, sustainable Saskatchewan beef industry through government relations, advocacy, research priorities, regulatory reduction, program enhancement, business incentive strategies, and development of our youth and the succession of the next generation of beef producers.

Rings of Honour Inductees



BY SASKATCHEWAN
CATTLE ASSOCIATION

Jack Hextall, a respected cattle producer and industry leader, has been inducted into the Saskatchewan Cattle Association (SCA) Ring of Honour in recognition of his outstanding contributions to the beef industry at local, provincial, and national levels.

Hextall and his wife, Kim, operate Hextall Livestock, a sixth-generation ranch near Grenfell, Saskatchewan. In addition to producing high-quality cattle, Hextall has devoted countless hours to advancing the industry through leadership roles on various boards and committees.

Hextall's board involvement began with Pipestone Feeders Ltd., where he served as president throughout the conceptualization, construction, and initial operation of the feedlot. His leadership extended to the Saskatchewan Stock Growers Association (SSGA) and the original Saskatchewan Beef Industry Committee (SBIC). On a national scale, he served as a Saskatchewan director for the Canadian Cattle Association and played an active role in the Quality Starts Here/Verified Beef Production (QSH/VBP) program.

His contributions were not limited to industry organizations. Hextall was also a member of the provincial government's Agricultural Development Fund (ADF), demonstrating his commitment to research and innovation in agriculture. In 2009, he became Chair of the SCA's interim board and was instrumental in establishing the association as a vital voice for Saskatchewan's cattle producers.

Hextall's influence extended beyond provincial borders as well. He represented Saskatchewan on the Canada Beef Export Federation (CBEF) and was a key figure in the development and restructuring of Canada Beef, where he also served as chair. His leadership in this role led to significant organizational changes, including the hiring of Melinda Germain, a pivotal moment for Canada Beef and the Checkoff Agency.

Throughout his career, Hextall has been deeply engaged in advocacy and industry representation. He attended meetings in all ten SCA districts, visited eight of Canada's ten provinces for provincial and national discussions, and participated in trade missions to the United States, China, Vietnam, Korea, and Japan. His dedication to "cowboy politics" and industry development has left a lasting impact on the beef sector.

While Hextall has since scaled back his board involvement, his influence continues to be felt within the industry. His role in the establishment of the SCA and his unwavering dedication to Saskatchewan's and Canada's beef industry make him a truly deserving recipient of this honour.



The Saskatchewan Cattle Association proudly recognizes Jack Hextall's legacy with the prestigious Ring of Honour, a testament to his lifelong commitment to the success and sustainability of the beef industry.

Dr. John McKinnon, a distinguished researcher, professor, and advocate for the beef industry, has been recognized for his outstanding contributions to cattle nutrition and research. Throughout his career, Dr. McKinnon has played a pivotal role in advancing the science of beef production, mentoring future leaders, and strengthening the connection between research and industry practices.

Dr. McKinnon dedicated his career to the University of Saskatchewan, where he served as a researcher, professor, and the Saskatchewan Beef Industry Chair. His research focused on the nutritional and environmental factors that influence the growth and carcass quality of feeder cattle, as well as the nutrition of breeding herds. He was a pioneer in assessing the feed value of by-products such as wet distillers grain, grain screenings, and high-lipid feeds, helping producers optimize their feeding programs and reduce waste. Additionally, he was instrumental in the early use of real-time ultrasound technology to predict the carcass quality of both breeding and feedlot cattle—an innovation that has had lasting benefits for the beef industry.

Beyond the laboratory and classroom, Dr. McKinnon was a prolific writer, publishing numerous scientific papers and contributing regular articles to *Canadian Cattlemen* – The Beef Magazine. His insights provided producers with valuable knowledge, helping them improve efficiency and sustainability in their operations.

Dr. McKinnon's impact extends far beyond his research. He mentored countless agriculture students and young researchers, many of whom have gone on to make significant contributions to the beef industry and research community. His passion for education and knowledge-sharing was evident in his commitment to engaging with feedlot operators and cow-calf producers. He frequently spoke at industry events across Saskatchewan and Western Canada, ensuring that producers had direct access to the latest research and best practices.

Even after retiring from the University of Saskatchewan, Dr. McKinnon continued his dedication to the industry by pursuing private nutritional consulting. His expertise remained highly sought after, and he

continued to work closely with producers to improve herd management and cattle performance.

One of the many memories shared by those who worked with Dr. McKinnon highlights his deep enthusiasm for research and industry development. On a Feedlot Management School trip, he proudly pointed out the future site of the Livestock and Forage Centre of Excellence (LFCE), detailing its potential impact on the beef industry. Though he did not have the opportunity to conduct research there himself, his excitement for the facility was unmistakable, and today, the LFCE stands as a testament to the kind of research and innovation that Dr. McKinnon championed throughout his career.

Dr. John McKinnon's contributions to beef research, education, and industry outreach have left a lasting legacy. His work has shaped the way producers approach cattle nutrition, and his mentorship has ensured a strong future for agricultural research. On behalf of the entire beef industry, we extend our sincere gratitude and congratulations to Dr. McKinnon for his remarkable achievements and lasting impact.

Ryder Lee, born and raised in Saskatchewan, his journey took him from his home province to Ottawa, where he worked with the Canadian Cattle Association (CCA). Fortunately for Saskatchewan's cattle producers, Lee returned to his roots nearly a decade ago when he took the helm at the SCA during a period of significant transition. At that time, the organization was relocating its office from Saskatoon to Regina, a move that required strong leadership and vision.

With the support of his dedicated staff and the SCA Board of Directors, Lee successfully guided the organization through this transition. Under his leadership, the SCA has earned a heightened level of prominence and respect in the agricultural sector.

While his achievements are impressive, it is Lee's approach that has set him apart. Known for his exceptional interpersonal skills, Lee has built strong relationships with the Minister of Agriculture and ministry staff, external organizations supported by the SCA, and Saskatchewan's cattle producers. Lee has also been a passionate advocate for youth in agriculture, recognizing their vital role as future industry leaders.



Beef Industry Conference

This year the SBIC was held in Saskatoon Jan 28-30th and it was well attended by producers, government and industry.

The Honourable Daryl Harrison, Minister of Agriculture brought greetings from the province and announced \$6.9 million in cost shared funding between the provincial and federal governments, for a total of \$7.2 million (which includes matching industry dollars) to support 30 livestock and forage related research projects. SCA has provided funding to several of these projects.

Sarah Klopatek was the opening keynote speaker and provided a roundup of what the slaughterhouse capacity will be in the coming years and spoke to Presi-

dent Trump's policies.

Reynold Bergen talked about the Canadian Cow Calf survey and noted areas where our producers have improved. For those areas in which we could see better productivity, a panel with John Campbell, Riki Wilson, and Catherine Seidle joined him on stage to dig into the details.

In the afternoon, Saskatchewan researchers reviewed recent research on animal welfare, upcoming new forages forage varieties, and prescribed burns, among other topics.

The following day, as disease investigations are occurring in our province, Stephanie Smith, the Saskatchewan Chief Veterinary officer and Allison Dany-

luk Ross, an investigator from the CFIA discussed that process.

Tom Wolf, from Agrimetrix Research & Training, noted some considerations for spraying crops with drones. Ryder Lee from CCA and Will Lowe from NCFCA followed up with updates from each organization before Kevin Grier closed the conference, discussing the cattle markets.

The banquet featured the inaugural Ring of Honour, celebrating those who have contributed to the success of SCA. We honour Dr. John McKinnon, Jack Hextall and Ryder Lee.

See you January 20-23rd, 2026 in Saskatoon.

Annual General Meeting

The SCA Annual General Meeting followed the close of the SBIC. We thanked outgoing Past Chair and Board members Arnold Balicki, Pat Hayes, Duane Thompson and outgoing CEO Grant McLellan for all they have done on behalf of SCA.

Resolutions from the fall district meetings were also addressed, as well as two from the floor. A resolution regarding an increase to the provincial portion of check off by \$0.75. Another requested a name change from the Saskatchewan Cattle Association to the Saskatchewan Cattle Association. Both were passed by



a majority of those in attendance.

Following the AGM, the SCA held a short board meeting to elect the SCA executive. Chad Ross has been elected Chair, Joleen Shea has been elected Vice Chair, Kyle Hebert has been elected Finance Chair, and Wade Beck has been elected Member at Large.

Governance and Strategic Planning

The SCA Board of Directors got right to work following the SBIC. We held a governance and a strategy planning session to provide direction for the board and ensuring priorities for the industry are being met.



Beef and Forage Research Forum



Good research means good connections. Our industry is not a simple system. Producers not only raise beef, but they use cattle to harvest forages. They keep their cattle healthy not only by using vaccines, but also through management practices and the best quality feed they can find. And it all needs to be affordable. To do this, the research we fund needs to account for all of these intricacies.

The 9th Beef and Forage Research Forum occurred on February 26th in Marquis Hall at the University of Saskatchewan. Over 100 producers, re-

searchers, and research funders (such as members of the Government of Saskatchewan) attended to learn and provide feedback on upcoming research projects. It afforded attendees the opportunity to meet researchers from beyond their own department, with the potential to set up in depth projects that provide more meaningful results to producers.

Topics of potential projects included water filtration systems, woody encroachment, ergo detection, and ideal mineral supplementation.

This is one of several opportunities the SCA plans to host in 2025 in order to connect researchers with each other, and with producers to create effective research projects for the Beef and Forage industry.



AGM Resolutions from District Meetings

The following resolutions were passed at the SCA district meetings held fall of 2024. The district meetings provide a chance for producers to hear from SCA and provide input. The resolutions below have been reviewed by the Governance Committee and resolutions brought forward from the floor at the Annual General Meeting on Thursday, January 30th at the Saskatoon Inn and Conference Centre, Saskatoon, SK. As was stated at the district meetings, motion supporters are encouraged to be at the annual meeting to speak to their resolutions. At the AGM, resolutions can also be brought forward from the floor and from the Board for the consideration of the attendees.

Check off

District 1:

That SCA continue with the .75 check off increase for August 2025.

District 7:

That SCA increase the provincial portion of the levy to .75 for August 1, 2025.

Carried – Chad Ross / Kyle Hebert

District 4:

Whereas increases in check off are going to come in the future.

Be it resolved that all increases in the future should go to the regional meetings for review.

Carried – Randy Stokke / Ryan Beierbach

District 3B:

SCA amend their policy to perform a review of the amount of provincial checkoff a minimum of every five years, so that a proposal for any change to checkoff can be proactively taken to producers prior to an AGM where an increase to checkoff may be discussed.

No Seconder – motion dies

Industry Partnership Opportunities

District 2:

That SCA along with other industry partners work with Saskatchewan Trade Export Program (STEP) to increase the presence of the Saskatchewan cattle industry around the world.

Carried – Wade Beck / Cyle Stewart

District 1:

That SCA work with various parties, including LSS and ABP, and the provincial government to explore the baseline requirements for on farm ranch safety protocols in the province of SK.

Amended: That SCA investigate baseline requirements for on farm ranch safety protocols in the province of Sask.

Amendment carried – Kyle Hebert / Duane Thompson

Carried – Kyle Hebert / Jolene Shea

SCA Name Change

District 3B

Whereas there has been discussion on a potential name change for the Saskatchewan Cattlemen's Association, Be it resolved that the Saskatchewan Cattlemen's Association maintain its name as is.

District 4:

Whereas there has been discussion on a potential name change for the Saskatchewan Cattlemen's Association, Be it resolved that the Saskatchewan Cattlemen's Association maintain its name as is.

District 6:

Whereas the name Saskatchewan Association causes consternation and wastes time in meetings with elected officials, And whereas the discussion about a name change wastes time of staff and board members, Be it resolved that the SCA change it's name to the Saskatchewan Cattle Association.

Carried – Joleen Shea / Christine Strube

Animal Health & Welfare

District 5:

Be it resolved that due to increased aerial spraying, that the SCA work to develop a set of acceptable guidelines to be shared with the Aerial Applicators Association to ensure conscientious work around animals, forages, yard sites, and habitat in the vicinity of their applications

Carried – Duanr Thompson / Levi Hull

Pest Control

District 7

Whereas many producers across Saskatchewan continue to face crop and pasture damage from pests such as moles, voles, and gophers; and Whereas effective tools such as Strychnine have been prohibited for these

applications; Be it resolved that the Saskatchewan Cattlemen's Association lobby the provincial government to build a program for the control and compensation for rodent and pest population management for producers.

Carried – Joleen Shea / Ryan Beierbach

From the Floor / Traceability

District 8:

That the SCA lobbying appropriate parties to develop a tag system that will ensure traceability in a reasonable time frame as ownership changes in order to control outbreaks of a disease and provide more carcass and health scores for the producers on cattle operations.

Carried – Leon Lueke / Kyle Hebert

Water Management

Whereas water is an important resource in the often dry landscape of southern SK.

Whereas unauthorized, excessive, and poorly designed drainage works by individual landowners can cause significant damage to downstream land owners, including contaminating livestock water sources with pesticides, phosphate, sodium, sulphates, algae and toxic algae blooms, etc.

Whereas livestock producers depend on sufficient and good quality water supplies.

Whereas the WSA policy for enforcement for drainage violations relies on a complaint-based system that can pit neighbour against neighbour and costs \$1000 to file a complaint.

Therefore, be it resolved that SCA lobby the provincial gvt and the WSA to re-evaluate the proposed Agricultural Water Stewardship Policy to ensure that it does not result in an economic and competitive disadvantage to livestock producers, including allocating the necessary staff resources with a mandate to carry out enforcement policies.

Carried – Ryan Beierbach / Ralph Corcoran

Role Of Vet Techs

Whereas the Alberta is providing additional education for vet techs to gather more education on pregnancy checking, and alleviating the workload of their veterinarians. Be it resolved that the SCA to lobby the SVMA to revisit or open up the veterinary act of 1987 to expand the role of veterinary technicians to address the veterinarian shortage in rural settings

Carried – Mindy Hockley / Adrienne Hanson

Make Your Herd Records Work For You



**BY BEEF CATTLE
RESEARCH COUNCIL**

In beef production, genetics play a critical role in both management and profitability. Regardless of the size of your operation or whether you are a commercial or purebred breeder, keeping records is an important part of managing your herd genetics.

“Without accurate records you have no way of knowing whether or not your herd is improving or if you are simply going in circles,” explains Karin Schmid, Beef Production and Extension Lead with Alberta Beef Producers.

Today, producers are flooded with information as genetic tools and prediction accuracies are continuously improving. With all this information, it can be overwhelming to turn knowledge into breeding decisions that meet specific operational goals.

How can genetic selection help me achieve my farm goals? Which breeding system is right for my operation? What records do I keep?

Collecting, maintaining and analyzing records takes

a commitment, but the payoff is worth it.

It’s not enough to know which data to collect, you have to know how to use it. To assist producers with this process, the Beef Cattle Research Council (BCRC), in partnership with the Canadian Beef Breeds Council, Alberta Beef Producers, Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture, Maritime Beef Test Station and the University of Guelph launched a free Records for Tracking Genetic Improvements email course in February 2024. A new updated version was recently released in November 2024.

“This course provides a template that helps to ensure that the selection choices you make today will result in measurable progress for your herd in the future. The course helps you to identify the most critical records for your particular situation, taking some of the guesswork out of it,” Schmid explains.

Consisting of seven modules, the course covers topics including criteria for selecting breeding goals and breeding programs, understanding EPDs and heritability, using genetic records to inform culling decisions and how to use records to select replacement heifers.

A comprehensive course workbook provides guidance towards the practical application of concepts and information discussed. Those enrolled are also encouraged to input their own farm data through exercises

outlined in each module, culminating in a guide on how to transform their herd data into information to help meet on-farm goals.

“No matter the level producers are at with genetic selection, this course provides value in goal setting and monitoring your decision-making successes,” says Sandy Russell, Chief Executive Officer of the Canadian Beef Breeds Council, “the true value is in how the course guides producers in a very methodical approach to tracking genetic improvements within their herd while still being flexible to the variable needs of beef producers.”

Busy schedule? Don’t feel like you have the time to commit to this course? No problem! The course is designed to be “work at your own pace”. In addition, you get to pick the frequency you wish to receive the course emails - once a day for seven days, two-times per week for four weeks or one email per week for seven weeks.

The old adage “knowledge is power” rings true when it comes to tracking genetic advancements in a beef herd. Understanding the starting point of your herd will allow you to track improvements over time and positively impact your bottom line. Register for the free e-course at www.BeefResearch.ca/genetics-course.

Updates to the Verified Beef Program



**BY VERIFIED BEEF
PRODUCTION PLUS**

The Saskatchewan Verified Beef board held their AGM on January 28. There was a great turnout of industry representative and producers in attendance. Chair Karla Hicks said, “I was blown away by the attendance and support received at the AGM and it was so exciting to see many new faces.”

At the AGM an election was held for two director at large positions: Andy Hofer was re-elected for a second term and Mike Millar was elected to serve for his first term.

“By being on the board, I want to be able to make a contribution to VBP+ in this province by helping to bring more producers into the program. If the process can be examined and understand what the stumbling blocks might be to preventing new producers entering the program we can help to address those to make a change and a difference to beef farmers and ranchers in this province,” said Millar.

The board is composed of Director-at-Large positions and representative positions and at the AGM it was announced the Saskatchewan Cattle Association re-appointed Joleen Shea, Saskatchewan Stock Growers Association re-appointed Barry Wasko, and the Ministry of Agriculture re-appointed Fonda Froats (ex-officio position) all for two year terms.

VBP+ is an industry program that is funded and overseen by the BCRC (Beef Cattle Research Council).

VBP+ is a voluntary, producer-managed program that supports the adoption of beneficial management practices related to animal care, biosecurity, environmental stewardship and on-farm food safety practices throughout the Canadian beef value chain through training and certification.

The VBP+ program allows Canadian beef producers in all sectors to prove to consumers, retailers and industry stakeholders that their operations adhere to the highest standards. Alongside providing training and certification to the VBP+ standard, VBP+ also delivers certification to the Sustainable Beef Production Standard offered by the Canadian Roundtable for Sustainable Beef (CRSB).

“I feel like the value of the Verified Beef Production program is that my operation is able to check one more box proving we are doing our very best to provide a world class protein that is not only nutritious, but safe and raised in an environmentally sustainable manner,” said Chair Karla Hicks.

There are financial incentives producers can receive from becoming certified through the program. The Government of Saskatchewan is offering the Animal Health and Biosecurity Program to encourage adoption and certification to best management practices relate to animal health and biosecurity. Under this program Saskatchewan beef producers can access funding for 50 per cent of eligible expenses and equipment purchases.

- Trained producers (producer who have completed the VBP+ training) are eligible to receive up to \$2,500
- Certified producers (producers who have completed the on farm certification visit) are eligible for another \$12,500 for a total of up to \$15,000.

Eligible expenses include:

- VBP+ certification fees
- Squeeze chute
- Calving/maternity pen
- Vaccine cooler
- Calving cameras

The next potential financial incentive to being certified to the Sustainable Beef Production Standard is from Farm Credit Canada and the Sustainability Incentive Program. This program is an annual application program for certified producers who are FCC customers with term loan. Incentive payments are calculated as a portion of your FCC lending with a maximum of \$2000 per year. Producers can reapply annually throughout the life of the program.

Producers may also receive, depending on cattle movement through the supply chain, Cargill’s Qualifying Cattle Credit, which is Cargill’s implementation of the CRSB’s Certified Sustainable Beef Framework. Facilities can qualify for a credit of \$20 per head for cattle that are born on and move through operations certified to the CSBF and slaughtered at Cargill High River or Cargill Guelph.

Cattle must be age verified meaning a birth date event must have been created for that animal and move-in events must be created for movements between certified operations. Hicks encourages producers to look into the VBP+ program to become certified because the process is “not onerous and if you are keeping basic records, if you care about land use, and ensuring food safety, you can be compensated for the things you may already be doing on your operation.” If you have any questions about the program please contact Erika Stewart at sk@verifiedbeef.ca

Advances in Cattle Production Over Six Generations



BY LEEANN MINOGUE
WRITER, EDITOR AND
PLAYWRIGHT

Saskatchewan Cattle Association supports Canadian Food Focus, a national organization administered by Farm & Food Care Saskatchewan, to engage consumers' interest and trust in Canadian food and farming. Find out more and watch the accompanying video by visiting canadianfoodfocus.org.

Ken Colborn, a fourth-generation farmer, says his great-grandfather's decision to settle in an area with relatively light soil probably saved their farm. In 1910, William Colborn chose his homestead near Delisle, Saskatchewan, because he liked the trees and the creek in the area. It's a nice spot, but not all the Colborn land is well suited to growing crops. As a result, Ken says, "we had to go into the beef business." Today, the Colborns have built up a healthy cattle operation alongside their grain and egg production businesses.

Ken's brother Ron was a teenager when his father and uncle first purchased a herd of cows from a neighbouring farmer. The brothers were looking for a way to make use of their hay land and a creek bottom that didn't produce grain. Once they bought their first 30 cows, Ron says, "it was just a matter of growing the herd."

The Colborns believe investment in high-quality cattle genetics has been the key to their success in the

industry. In 2004, they started buying replacement heifers, female cattle new their herd that have not yet had a calf. These heifers were a cross of Red Angus and Red Simmental cattle breeds. When they crossed these heifers with Charolais bulls, the resulting calves were even and tan colored, and were able to put on weight quickly.

Grains and oilseed yields are typically lower on lighter land. The Colborns use their lighter land to grow silage for their cattle herd. They plant barley as early in the spring as possible, then chop the plants for silage in June or July, when the barley is still green and made up of 65 percent moisture. They let it ferment over the summer and fall and feed it to the cattle through the winter and spring. "Once it's

Ron attributes their calves' high feed conversion rate to hybrid vigor. "We've never looked back," Ron says.

in there and it's cooked," says Jeff (Ron's son), referring to the fermenting process "it's kind of like candy for the cows."

Sustainability is always top of mind for the Colborns, in all aspects of their business. That includes soil health and environmental sustainability, as well as economic sustainability. "Sometimes people view farming and ranching as more of a lifestyle. It still needs to be operated as a business," says Jeff's cousin Shawn Colborn.

Investing in technology like new cattle genetics and alternative grazing practices have been key factors in



the Colborn farm's longevity. However, there is one area where visitors to the farm won't see the latest farm machinery. The Colborns prefer to handle their cattle herd with horses rather than ATVs or other vehicles.

In some parts of their pasture, Jeff says, the bush is too thick to get through with an ATV. There would be no way to chase a bull out of the trees. Shawn says the cattle are less stressed when they're handled by people on horseback rather than noisy machines. Jeff grew up learning to ride horses and rope, and he's always imagined he would teach his kids, the sixth-generation of Colborn farmers, to do the same. "There's no better way to go out and spend the day with cows than on the back of a horse."

Leeann Minogue is a writer, editor, and playwright in southeast Saskatchewan. Along with her husband and son, Leeann is part of a family grain farm that grows canola, lentils, peas, wheat and durum. She loves reading, traveling, and having a flexible schedule so she can fit everything in.

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Matt Sween, UC Davis Animal Science Dept.

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Maximize Your Farm's Potential



BY SCIC

SASKATCHEWAN
CROP INSURANCE
CORPORATION

Every day, you face a variety of challenges and risks to keep your operation running. We know timely on-farm decisions are your first and best line of defense against threats. When the factors beyond your control cause financial instability for your farm, the Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation (SCIC) is here to help. The AgriStability Program is designed to step in and support you when you need it most, help bridge the gap on your farm and keep your operation moving forward.

Are you worried about any of the following risks:

- Production loss
- Increased costs
- Income loss
- Market volatility

Many risks can impact the success of a farm operation, but not all risks are the same. Some risks may impact one aspect of the business, while others may affect multiple areas. AgriStability operates under a model which considers the combination of risks and their impact on the overall profitability of the farm.

In addition to protecting against production loss

and input cost increases, AgriStability also safeguards against risks related to storage and market declines. Have you experienced any of the following?

- Downgrading of grain:
 - Spoiled grain from heating in the bin
 - Insect and/or wildlife damage
 - Temporary field storage

These are just some of the circumstances covered by AgriStability, through the whole-farm approach, providing risk protection even after harvest.

When the bottom line of a livestock operation is threatened, AgriStability responds just as it does for grain and oilseed operations. Consider the revenue and expense portion of your operation – have you experienced any of the following?

- Feed shortages
- Additional veterinary expenses
- The need to transport animals elsewhere for feeding
- Herd reductions due to disease outbreaks or other health issues

The additional expense to manage these situations are allowable, under the AgriStability Program. When the costs accumulate and lead to a reduced margin, significantly impacting your farm's profitability, AgriStability is there to provide support.

AgriStability is a whole farm income program that considers the revenue and expenses across all aspects of the operation. This helps determine whether a farm can access a benefit. Even if your farm reduces risks by

running multiple lines of business, AgriStability may still provide a benefit. When mixed farms generate benefits from AgriStability, it usually means a portion of their business has experienced some sort of hardship. The impact of this hardship on the farm's margin is significant enough to generate benefits.

At SCIC we understand no two farms are the same. While there may be similarities in land bases or crops grown, you make personalized decisions that are best for you and your farm. Some of these decisions include:

- Nutrient management
- Timing of calving
- Feed programs
- Crop varieties

The individualized nature of AgriStability allows the program to respond to risks on your farm, ensuring personalized support rather than a one size fits all approach.

The deadline to submit 2024 AgriStability Program forms, without penalty, is now June 30, 2025. Applications received after the June 30 deadline are subject to a \$500 per month penalty. Applications must be received by September 30, 2025. This change aligns AgriStability form submission with your tax filing.

Enrolling in AgriStability is as simple as calling the SCIC AgriStability Call Centre at 1-866-270-8450 and requesting a new participant package. The deadline to enrol in the 2025 AgriStability Program Year is April 30, 2025. To learn more, visit scic.ca/agristability.



Update Your Premises ID Account

Stay ahead of emergencies — keep your contact information up-to-date and ensure all poultry and livestock are listed on your account.

saskatchewan.ca/livestock

Saskatchewan!

Bovine Tuberculosis in Canada: What Producers Need to Know

BY WENDY WILKINS,
DVM PHD



MINISTRY OF
AGRICULTURE

Bovine tuberculosis (bTB) isn't something most producers think about every day. Canada has done a solid job keeping it under control, but every now and then, a case pops up, reminding us why surveillance and traceability matter. If you're in the cattle business, you need to know how this disease spreads, what to do if you're caught up in an investigation, and why good record-keeping can save you a whole lot of headaches.

But let's not forget the human side of all this. Disease outbreaks and CFIA investigations can be stressful—on your bottom line, your herd, and your mental well-being. This article covers what you need to know to protect your herd and yourself.

Bovine tuberculosis is caused by *Mycobacterium*

Canada has worked hard to earn and keep its bTB-free status, and that's not something we can now afford to lose. The reason is simple: trade.

Our export partners expect us to stay on top of bTB. If Canada lets cases go unchecked, it could lead to trade restrictions, hurting *not just the affected farms, but the entire beef industry.*

Surveillance programs—like routine checks at slaughterhouses and on-farm testing—help catch cases before they spread. If bTB is detected, CFIA steps in fast, quarantining affected herds and testing all animals that could have been exposed.

Yes, it's frustrating. No one wants to deal with a quarantine, testing, or worst case, herd depopulation. *But stamping out bTB when it's found is the price we pay to keep the disease from taking hold again.* The alternative—letting it spread—would be far worse.

Without control measures, bTB spreads unchecked, leading to increased cattle deaths, reduced milk and meat production, and significant economic losses.

Globally, over 50 million cattle are infected, causing approximately \$3 billion in annual losses.

In some African regions, infection rates reach up to 50%, severely impacting productivity. Attempting to “live with” bTB isn't viable; the disease's toll on herd health and profitability is too great. Proactive surveillance and eradication are essential to protect livestock and livelihoods.

If a case of bTB is found in Canada, traceability is what keeps the investigation focused and efficient. Good records help CFIA quickly determine which herds are at risk and which ones

can be left alone.

The 2016 Alberta outbreak is a perfect example. Some producers had detailed records of every animal movement, which helped CFIA rule out parts of their herd from depopulation. Others weren't so lucky, and without solid records, more cattle were assumed to be at risk than necessary.

In short, *good traceability can mean the difference between losing a few animals or your whole herd.*

If CFIA ever knocks on your door about a bTB case, they'll ask for specific records. Here's what you need to have ready:

- Animal movement records – Any purchases, sales, or movements of cattle in or out of your herd in the last five years.
- Premises Identification (PID) number – Make sure your farm is registered and updated.
- Herd contact history – Did your cattle graze on community pastures? Share fence lines with other herds? Buy or sell breeding stock?
- Health records – Past TB tests, veterinary visits, disease history, vaccination records.

- Animal identification – CCIA tags must be up to date. If animals were moved, where did they go and when?

Even if you never deal with a TB case, keeping these records up to date is just good business.

No one wants to think about disease investigations, but the reality is good records help in all sorts of situations—not just for bTB but for everything from market access to herd management.

- Use an electronic record-keeping system – Even a simple spreadsheet helps keep things organized.
- Keep PID numbers up to date – CFIA and industry rely on them to track disease cases.
- Report all cattle movements – This helps investigations move quickly and prevents unnecessary quarantines.
- Be diligent about CCIA tags – Proper tagging and records make it easy to trace an animal's history.
- Document all vet visits and health events – If something looks suspicious down the road, you'll have proof of what happened.

Let's be real: dealing with a bTB investigation is stressful. The uncertainty, financial strain, and emotional toll of watching your herd go through testing—or worse, depopulation—can weigh heavily on any producer.

But you don't have to go through it alone. There are real supports available for farmers who need them:

- *Farm Stress Line (Saskatchewan)*: Call 1-800-667-4442 anytime, day or night. Online message and email support are also available.
- *National Farmer Wellness Network*: A Canada-wide support line for producers at 1-866-FARMS01 (1-866-327-6701).
- *Sask Ag Matters*: Offers six free hours of counseling per person per year for producers, their families, and ag workers.

If you're feeling overwhelmed, *reaching out isn't a sign of weakness—it's a sign of strength.* Your farm, your family, and your community need you to be okay, and there are people ready to help.

Bovine tuberculosis isn't going away anytime soon, but Canada has the tools to keep it under control. Surveillance, traceability, and rapid response are what protect the beef industry, and every producer has a role to play.

Keeping good records can save your herd in an investigation. Supporting each other—mentally and emotionally—is just as important as keeping our cattle healthy.

If there's one takeaway here, it's this: *Don't wait until there's a problem to get your records in order. And don't wait until you're struggling to reach out for help.*



bovis, a sneaky little bacteria related to human tuberculosis. It primarily affects cattle but can also infect wildlife, domestic animals, and in rare cases, humans. It spreads through respiratory droplets, contaminated feed or water, and unpasteurized milk.

The tricky part? Infected animals can carry the disease for years before showing symptoms—if they ever do. When symptoms do appear, they might include:

- Persistent coughing
- Weight loss and poor body condition
- Enlarged lymph nodes

Diagnosing bTB is no simple task. The main tools are skin tests, blood tests, and post-mortem exams, but none of them are perfect. Sometimes, an animal will test positive but have no visible signs of disease. Other times, a truly infected animal won't be caught right away. That's why the CFIA uses multiple tests and a risk-based approach to track it down.

One hundred years ago, bTB was widespread in Canada, threatening both animal and human health. A national control program was put in place, and by 1985 the country was declared bTB-free at the national level.

Practical Tools to Protect Canadian Livestock from Foot and Mouth Disease



BY DANA PARKER
SASKATCHEWAN
CROP INSURANCE
CORPORATION

Beef producers feel the responsibility of keeping their herds and those in contact with their cattle safe, and they appreciate practical tools that support their disease prevention practices. When it comes to BIOSECURITY practices on beef cattle operations, limiting hazards and appropriately responding with good management are key in disease prevention. These practices ultimately protect the herd and the Canadian livestock industry from the animal health and economic impacts of foreign animal diseases, including FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE (FMD).

To increase awareness of available tools for farmers and ranchers, a collaborative effort between the BCRC and Animal Health Canada (AHC) is currently underway ensuring that prevention and emergency response resources are being tailored specifically to the needs of Canadian beef producers.

FMD is a highly infectious virus that has serious consequences for the beef industry and populations of beef cattle and other cloven-hoofed animals worldwide, including severe economic and animal health impacts. Canada currently has an FMD-free without vaccination trade status and maintaining this status is the responsibility of all sectors within the industry.

Everyday Biosecurity Practices That Protect Cattle

Daily habits go a long way to reduce or prevent the spread of disease. Understanding the everyday risks of introducing disease to a beef cattle herd helps protect the animals and the people who care for them.

It is helpful to consider POTENTIAL WAYS DISEASE COULD ENTER YOUR HERD, including:

- shared fencelines,
- buying replacement heifers or bulls,
- borrowing trailers or other equipment,
- outsourcing farm work or
- hosting visitors from another farm or other countries.

Implementing BIOSECURITY STRATEGIES that work on your farm can stop disease from entering, spreading and leaving your herd:

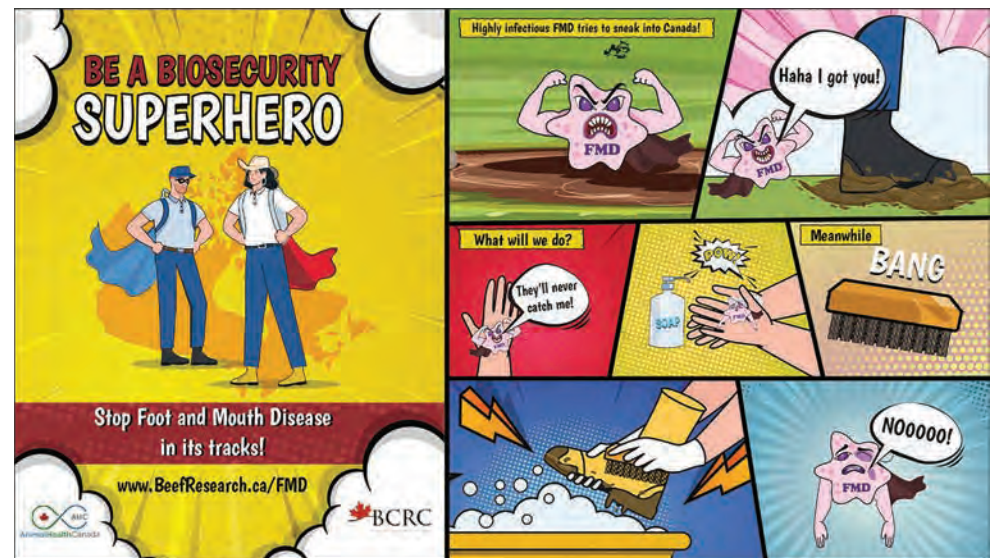
- CLEANING AND DISINFECTING PROTOCOLS
- Good management techniques, including vaccination protocols and animal husbandry to keep animals at a low risk of infection
- Good hygiene practices, including working with animals with the least exposure to pathogens to the animals with the greatest exposure to pathogens

- Quarantine protocols for animals leaving or entering the operation
- Hygiene protocols for people, animals and equipment leaving or entering the premises

On a broader scale, the biosecurity measures you implement are essential to keeping the Canadian Livestock industry thriving and free of REPORTABLE DISEASES AND TRADE-LIMITING DISEASES including FMD.

The following are key messages on FMD detection and spread:

- FMD is not a public health concern, nor is it a food safety issue. FMD is not related to “Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease” common in children.
- The CLINICAL SIGNS OF FMD include anorexia, depression, fever, lameness, reduced milk output, salivation, blisters and lesions on the mouth, teats and feet.



- FMD can cause abortion and sudden death in neonates.
- Foot and Mouth Disease can be spread by direct contact, in the air and on fomites.
- Recognizing FMD early and preventing the movement of infected animals is critical.

Here are key messages Canadian beef producers need to know to prepare and respond to FMD:

- If you have a suspicion that FMD may have entered your herd, take immediate action. Stop all movement of animals and people on your operation and phone your veterinarian.
- Veterinarians are aware of the reporting process and will notify the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA).
- Thinking ahead and preparing an ON-FARM BIOSECURITY PREPAREDNESS PLAN in the event of an outbreak is good practice.
- KEEP GOOD RECORDS.

Travel to countries that have active outbreaks poses a risk to those returning to Canadian farms, so it is important to train all farm personnel on the importance of biosecurity and the SPECIFIC MEASURES TO FOLLOW AFTER TRAVEL. If international visitors will be on your farm, have a plan in place to prevent possible infection:

- Wear disposable boot covers.
- Prevent direct contact with cattle.
- Vehicles should be washed and disinfected prior to coming on-farm.

The main objective of this collaborative project between the BCRC and Animal Health Canada is to keep FMD out of the country and to empower producers to be able to recognize it quickly in the event that it did enter Canada. The resources created highlight the need for good biosecurity and travel protocols to help travelers, farmers and agricultural workers understand their responsibility in keeping Canada's beef industry safe by being aware of the symptoms and signs of infection of foot and mouth disease and the importance of reporting suspected cases immediately to ensure a rapid response. For more information and to access all of the resources created including posters, webinars for producers and veterinarians and topical webpages on biosecurity and FMD, visit www.beefresearch.ca/fmd.

FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE IN CATTLE
Spot the Signs, Stop the Spread
If you suspect FMD on your farm, call your veterinarian immediately!

BCRC
BEEF CATTLE RESEARCH COUNCIL
BeefResearch.ca/FMD

Animal Health Canada
Photos courtesy of National Centre for Foreign Animal Disease (Canada), Animal Health Australia and Mark Stevens

Good Decisions Help Protect Good Returns



BY JASON POLLOCK

CEO, LIVESTOCK SERVICES OF
SASKATCHEWAN

As I sit here looking out my frosty window at a blanket of snow, I can't help but think about what is just around the corner in the production cycle. Some of you are already in the thick of it and some are already done. Most of you won't be too concerned yet about that next crop of calves hitting the ground until grass starts to emerge from the snowbanks, and the days get long enough to check some fence after supper.

Once the calves are all here it is time for my favorite time of the year, branding season, or as my one neighbor calls it 'pie season'. Over the winter months, I have the opportunity to travel to industry meetings, listen, learn and catch up with everyone there as well as get the chance to talk at the podium once in awhile. Invariably, the topic of brands comes up as well as inspection regulations before, during and after the sessions.

One item that came up recently as an important conversation point was succession planning and brands. Most of you will be aware that the regulations no longer offer a lifetime brand. If you have a personal lifetime brand it will be grandfathered into the new regulations and remain active as long as you want it to or remain living, so you have nothing to worry about if you already have one. If you have a corporate lifetime brand, that has a 20-year expiration date so that will remain in place until that time.

In this particular conversation, we were discussing his practice of using his personal lifetime brand on cat-

tle that were now owned by the operating company he had set up for succession planning and tax planning purposes. The regulations state that we (LSS) will redirect payment to the brand (holder) if ownership is in doubt or a clearance cannot be obtained. This is why most creditors have finance brands.

If, however, the brand owner signs the manifest then they are essentially directing the funds with the authority of their signature. This works well, until it doesn't. In this case, if the brand owner were to pass away suddenly and not able to sign the manifest, the funds would be directed to their estate. This can work fine for the operation depending on the situation. It can also go very badly as there are times when those left to operate the ranch don't agree on the way things should be done now that dear old dad or mom has passed on. Money that needs to go to the operation may be held up in the estate and put the operation at risk. It was a consideration that this producer hadn't contemplated before so we had a good discussion about what options he might consider.

He asked about transferring the brand to add his wife and kids and putting multiple names on the brand. This can work of course but the regulations stipulate that all brand holders need to sign the manifest unless payment is intended to go to all the registrants. As much as we like to think we are invincible and our personal relationships and marriages will last, the unfortunate reality is, they don't always.

Some of the most common complaint files our inspectors have cross their desks are related to the breakdown of family or civil relationships. Physically getting signatures or even agreement can be cumbersome and impractical, especially if things have gone sideways in

any fashion. He didn't like this option, which is good because while it seems like a simple solution it is seldom practical. He then asked about transferring the brand to the corporation they set up.

This is a better idea as the operating corporation is the entity that typically needs the proceeds from sales to flow so it can continue to cashflow. Not everyone has a corporation set up (nor should they) so this topic is worth considering if you currently own a lifetime brand or are in the process of transitioning your operation from one generation to the next.

There are about a million and one things to take care of during a transition, and I recommend giving some thought to the brand transfer so that there is no unnecessary administrative hurdles or risk to the operation when the lifetime brand holder eases into retirement or passes away. There is no question that a brand is the best way to protect your ownership interests. How the brand is registered and to who is an important consideration.

In addition to this, I have had many discussions about the regulatory changes that have come since July. As a producer it isn't easy keeping up with everything even when the cold puts us at our desk or on the couch a little more than other times of the year. In the remainder of this space, I thought it would be helpful to provide the following summary of changes to the regulations and manifest requirements (see chart).

Feel free to reach out to me, your local inspector or district manager for more information on any of these changes. Hopefully this brief summary of the old and new was helpful and if you would like the full updated regulations, they are available by searching for The Animal Production Act online at www.saskatchewan.ca.

OLD	NEW	CHANGE
Multiple existing acts	Animal Production Act	LSS activity under Parts 3-Licenses, 4- Inspections, and 5- Identifiers
Multiple existing regulations	Animal Production Regulations	LSS activity under Parts 8- Inspection and Transportation, 9- Animal Identifiers, and 14- Livestock Dealers
Records	Records	Updated language allows for digital platforms for a record to be held or available
Regs- purebred exemption	Removal of concept of identifying purebred livestock	All livestock subject to inspection now treated equally under the regulation
No security declaration	Security declaration on manifest	The intention is to provide protection to a purchaser related to a failure by a seller to declare security interests. Delayed coming into force to January 2025
No premise ID recording equipment	Mandatory source and destination premise ID recording	Delayed coming into force to January 2025
Exemption from transport permit requirement for non-dealer purchasers	Removal of exemption for post inspection transport requires all livestock transported post inspection to be identified on an inspection certificate	Treats all transporters and livestock equally post inspection, meaning LSS generated certificates will allow for linking purchase and movement for all livestock leaving an inspection event. Improves our ability greatly to clear downstream sales for sellers.
Annual/ lifetime horse permits	Annual Certificates	Now 365-day from purchase for either equine or bovine
Livestock dealer bonds	Livestock dealer bonds	Minimum coverage requirement raised from \$40,000 to \$50,000
Lifetime brands	4-year personal and 20-year corp entity brands	Lifetime personal and 4-year corp entity brands discontinued. LSS currently working with ministry to review the request to offer renewals to all entities as 4-year terms
Fee tables attached to regulations	No change but discussion re options for change continue	Speaks to the various pieces affected by a fee increase request and would allow for proper segregation of services as they relate to fees

Beef Producers United Against Tarrifs



BY NATHAN PHINNEY
PRESIDENT, CANADIAN
CATTLE ASSOCIATION

Despite the entire country and Canadian cattle industry coming together, as I write this the uncertainty continues about whether the US will impose tariffs on Canada, if tariffs will include agriculture in general and live cattle, genetics and beef specifically, with added confusion over the implementation date. CCA continues to embrace every opportunity to advocate on behalf of Canadian beef producers through virtual and in-person meetings and taking the opportunity to appear and be heard on radio and television news broadcasts and in newspaper and magazine articles.

If we can find anything to be positive about in this situation, it is that the Canadian beef industry was prepared to react and speak with one collective voice. This one voice approach is helped by the National Beef Strategy and the cooperation of all the groups involved. The Canadian Beef Advisors launched the third updated 2025–30 strategy at the end of January. The strategy positions the Canadian Beef Industry for greater profitability, growth and being a high-quality beef product of choice in the world. Our industry is diverse and made of many parts. The way we have worked together since the first Strategy was launched in 2015 has been a big factor in our ability to impact policy. I encourage you

to visit www.beefstrategy.com to learn more about the strategy.

Besides possible tariffs, CCA is speaking up for Canadian cattle producers in a number of other areas as well. Although Parliament is prorogued, we continue to work on your behalf, advocating to increase the business risk management program limit for feedlots along with cost-shared premiums and higher coverage levels for price insurance.

Technical barriers to trade with China, the United Kingdom and European Union continue, and we are committed to helping achieve the best deal for Canada and Canadian cattle. Consultation has been ongoing on Bill C-59 that makes it easier for the Commissioner of Competition to take enforcement action against “greenwashing” or misleading environmental claims. Along with numerous other industries, we look forward to clarity on these regulations. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is conducting consultation regarding cell cultured products such as lab-grown foods. We have been asked to provide input on how to differentiate meat from cell-cultured meat-alternative products.

We are also prepared for a federal election. Once an election is called, we will share a document on our website that outlines the contributions our industry makes to the Canadian economy and our priorities for decision makers.

One of our priorities is biosecurity. The case of Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) detected in water buffalo in

Germany warrants heightened awareness by Canadian producers and travellers. In Canada, FMD is a reportable disease under the Health of Animals Act and all suspected cases must be reported to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA). International travellers are required to declare to the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) when you have visited a farm internationally or will be returning to a farm in Canada and to refrain from contact with livestock for the prescribed time. CCA works with the beef industry and with CFIA and Animal Health Canada to ensure that CBSA staff are appropriately screening travellers by advocating for ongoing CBSA training and reiterating the importance of the screening questions at every opportunity.

The *Health of Animals Act* grants CFIA the right to order the destruction of animals as part of maintaining Canada’s herd health. This Act is usually enforced as a method of disease control when there are no alternatives. Producers whose animals are destroyed under this Act receive set compensation rates that are currently under review. A recent positive case of TB discovered in a packing plant and the trace out of that case has highlighted the need to update these values. CCA has been pushing for the compensation that CFIA offers to producers who have their animals ordered destroyed to better reflect the market.

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Bringing Beef Education to Saskatchewan Classrooms: A Partnership that Inspires



BY CHANDRA GUSIKOSKI
COMMUNICATIONS
MANAGER, AGRICULTURE IN
THE CLASSROOM SK

Agriculture in the Classroom Saskatchewan's (AITC-SK) mission is to connect youth and agriculture, inspiring students to care for and contribute to the agriculture industry. A key component of this effort is educating the next generation about the beef industry. The partnership with the Saskatchewan Cattle Association (SCA) has been pivotal in telling Saskatchewan's beef story, bringing dynamic and engaging educational experiences to students across the province.

An exciting collaboration between AITC-SK and SCA is the Beef Education Display, featuring the innovative Cow Dome. This mobile learning exhibit travels to agricultural exhibitions and events throughout Saskatchewan, including Canadian Western Agribition, helping students and the public better understand the critical role of cattle ranching in Saskatchewan's agricultural landscape. Inside the Cow Dome, they experience a 360-degree video that transports them directly to the heart of a cattle operation.

This summer, AITC-SK played a key role in developing a new 360 video, enhancing the immersive experience and ensuring the content remains fresh and relevant.

AITC-SK's commitment to beef education extends beyond the Cow Dome. In 2024, eight Food Farms were hosted around the province, reaching over 1,300 elementary students. These half-day events allow students to rotate through interactive stations, each highlighting an agricultural topic, including farm safety, livestock, water management, and more. At the beef station, students get to see a cow up close and learn about beef nutrition, sustainability, and the role of livestock in agriculture.

Three thinkAG Career Expos were held, engaging over 750 high school students in a half-day of hands-on learning. At these events, students discover the diversity of careers in agriculture through interactive stations hosted by industry professionals. Stations highlighting beef provide valuable insights into beef production and career opportunities within the industry.

These student-focused experiences are crucial in helping the next generation understand where their food comes from, fostering informed consumers and potential future agricultural professionals.

In August, AITC-SK hosted the Teacher Agriculture Expedition, offering educators an immersive opportunity to learn firsthand about Saskatchewan's agricultur-

al industry. During this 3-day tour, teachers visited a beef operation, gaining a deeper understanding of how cattle are cared for and their important significance on the environment.

By experiencing the industry up close, teachers are better equipped to bring accurate and meaningful agricultural education into their classrooms.

AITC-SK's work is making a difference, but there is more to be done. To all beef producers across Saskatchewan: your involvement is crucial. Consider supporting AITC-SK by hosting a farm tour, volunteering, or making a charitable donation. Your firsthand knowledge and experiences provide invaluable insights that resonate with students, helping them make meaningful connections between the food on their plates and the people who produce it.

None of this would be possible without the generous support of the Saskatchewan Cattle Association. As a long-standing sponsor, their commitment to agricultural education allows AITC-SK to continue providing impactful learning experiences. Together, we are paving the way for a brighter future, one where people are informed, inspired, and appreciative of the agricultural industry in Saskatchewan. AITC-SK looks forward to continuing to share this progress with you. Learn more by visiting www.aitc.sk.ca.

Canadian Cattle Young Leaders Applications Now Open!



**BY CANADIAN
CATTLE YOUNG
LEADERS**

The Canadian Cattle Young Leaders (CYL) program is now accepting applications for the 2025-2026 program year!

The program welcomes young people ages 18-35 from across Canada, involved in various aspects of the beef supply chain. Through mentorship, networking, and travel, the Canadian CYL Program acts as an industry succession planning tool to equip 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 established by the Canadian Cattle Association in 2010, the program has seen over 200 CYL graduates.

Each year, 24 semi-finalists are selected from an impressive pool of applicants from across the country and invited to the annual CYL Selections event where they are judged in roundtable discussions centered around

timely industry topics. From this event, 16 program participants are chosen to participate in the program and paired with a hand-picked industry leader for a nine-month mentorship in the participants specified area of interest in the beef industry. Participants also receive \$3,000 to use towards learning opportunities of their choosing. Along with industry networking opportunities, participants often form strong relationships within their peer group in the program who are equally passionate about the success of the Canadian beef industry and serve as meaningful contacts and friendships for years to come.

If you are a young person looking to take your career in the beef industry to the next level, or you know of a young industry leader who would excel in this program, please visit our website at www.canadiancattleyoungleaders.com to learn more and apply.

Applications for the 2025-2026 program year are open from January 6, 2025, to March 31, 2025, at 11:59 pm MT.

**Applications
Now Open!**

Application deadline March 31, 2025
www.canadiancattleyoungleaders.ca

Canadian Roundtable for Sustainable Beef Supports Beef Value Chain



**BY CANADIAN
ROUNDTABLE FOR
SUSTAINABLE BEEF**

The Canadian Roundtable for Sustainable Beef (CRSB) was created with the vision of creating a collaborative space for players in all aspects of the beef value chain and beyond to work together on sustainability. With a mission of advancing, measuring and communicating continual progress in the sustainability of the Canadian beef value chain, CRSB celebrated its tenth anniversary in 2024, reflecting on many important milestones achieved in those 10 years.

Key milestones include two National Beef Sustainability Assessment and Strategies, providing sustainability performance metrics for the whole beef value chain, and the creation of a voluntary third party beef sustainability certification program, known as CRSB Certified.

At the most recent Saskatchewan Beef Industry Conference, the CRSB held a Council meeting followed a “Listening Session” – an opportunity for CRSB Directors and staff to connect, ask questions, network, and receive feedback, especially the producer community, on CRSB’s direction and priorities.

Some of the feedback included challenges and opportunities related to the CRSB Certified program, the value of the CRSB to the Canadian beef industry, and its ability to bring stakeholders together on common values. The CRSB’s National Beef Sustainability Assessment was highlighted as an important tool for the industry to measure and communicate about its sustainability performance using credible, science-based metrics.

The CRSB Certified program was created to recognize the sustainable practices across the Canadian beef value chain and to provide credible assurances for the production, processing and sourcing of beef through certified supply chains in Canada. The program is centred around outcome-based standards for beef production and primary processing with indicators aligned with the five principles of sustainable beef, including natural resources, people and the community, animal health and welfare, food (safety and quality) and efficiency and innovation. This outcome-based model allows for flexibility in how the indicators are met, taking into account different production systems, climates, geography and more.

Certification is achieved through an initial on-farm verification, on a 5-year cycle by third party certification bodies: Verified Beef Production Plus, Ontario Corn Fed Beef Quality Assurance (for Ontario feedlot operations), and Where Food Comes From. Producers can select the certification body of their choice; on the prairies, certification by Verified Beef is by far the most common, and all levels of beef production operations are certified to both standards (CRSB and VBP+) through a single streamlined process.

Over the past several years, CRSB’s retail and food service partners have embraced the program, and are throwing their support behind Canada’s farmers and ranchers who have made the investment to become certified through sourcing CRSB Certified beef. Supply chain partners such as Cargill and supporting members like Farm Credit Canada are further recognizing the investments producers are making through financial incentives. CRSB continues to work with our members to create practical tools and solutions to support producers.

The unique part of the CRSB Certified program is linking cattle and beef production from CRSB Certified birth farms and ranches, through all stages of the supply chain, culminating in a CRSB Certified claim for the consumer.

Supporting CRSB claims and facilitating sourcing of CRSB Certified beef through a certified supply chain requires a chain of custody (traceability) system. This system carries requirements of participants across the chain, which all contribute to the credibility of the system.

Since 2022, the Canadian Cattle Identification Agency (CCIA) has been the sole live cattle chain of custody tracking system for the CRSB Certified program (excluding Quebec), bringing the information into a single system. CCIA has also added a CRSB Certified qualifying cattle search tool in the CLTS, where the “CRSB Certified” status of an animal’s indicator (RFID tag), as they move through the supply chain.

Producers can make the most of their CRSB certification by giving their cattle the chance to qualify for

CRSB Certified supply chain through the following:

Become CRSB Certified and maintain certification.

Consent to sharing data with CCIA for the purposes of chain of custody tracking. This is done by the Certification Body at the time of certification, and consent can be added/changed at any time by contacting the Certification Body. For producers certified by VBP+, call (587-328-5980) or email info@verifiedbeef.ca. If you have already provided consent, your contact information will appear under the “CRSB Client Information” section of your CLTS account; if you haven’t, this section will not be visible.

What information is shared? The Certification Body will share the following information for the purposes of chain of custody tracking with CCIA: name, email, mailing address, CLTS account ID, CRSB certificate number, certification date, certification status change or de-certification date, and audit type.

Submit cattle birth dates. Submit birth dates into your CLTS account for the cattle born and tagged on your operation since becoming certified. Animals born on the operation within 6 months (up to 6 months prior) of certification date are eligible.

Submit move-in events. Move-in events must be submitted to the CLTS each time eligible cattle move to a new operation. Qualifying animals moved-in from another CRSB Certified operation within 6 months of CRSB Certification date are eligible.

These steps are essential not only for cattle to qualify for CRSB Certified supply chains but may also be linked to receiving financial benefits from supply chain partners.

Flexible financing that fits your farm

Add an Advance Payments Program cash advance from CCGA to your farm’s financial toolkit.

A cash advance supports your farm’s operating needs with working capital financing designed for farmers like you. Put an advance to work in whatever way works best. Save with a blend of interest-free and low-interest financing.

Applications for cash advances are now available. Call our experienced team at 1.866.745.2256 or visit ccga.ca

CCGA
CANADIAN CANOLA
GROWERS ASSOCIATION



Agriculture and
Agri-Food Canada
Advance Payments
Program

Agriculture et
Agroalimentaire Canada
Programme de
paiements anticipés



Discover
Cash Advance



Not Your Momma's Meatloaf

Recipe provided by Belton Johnson

For more recipes visit: <https://www.saskbeef.com/recipes>

Ingredients

- 1 cup crushed cheezits or bread crumbs
- 1 onion chopped
- 2 lbs lean hamburger
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp pepper
- 1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tbsp Dijon mustard
- 1 tbsp tomato paste
- 2 tsp minced garlic
- 1 tsp garlic powder

Sauce:

- 1/2 cup ketchup
- 2 tbsp brown sugar
- 1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Spray a large loaf pan with nonstick spray.
2. Place all of the meatloaf ingredients in a large bowl
3. Mix with spoons or hands until fully combined.
4. Shape into a loaf and place into a well-greased loaf pan
5. Combine the ingredients for the sauce in a small saucepan and bring to a boil and simmer for 2 to 3 minutes.
6. Pour the sauce over the meatloaf.
7. Place pan in the oven and bake for 45 minutes to 1 hour or until meatloaf reaches 160 degrees
8. Remove from the oven and let it rest a bit before slicing.

Keys to Success:

- Don't OVER work the meat. When mixing it together be gentle and only work it until it's mixed together
- This is a version of meatloaf you can totally mix and match your own flair!!! Add cheese or chopped up bacon!!!
- Don't OVER think it... Meatloaf is supposed to be simple! The Simplest recipes are the BEST!!!
- Use your favorite LOCAL BBQ sauce instead of this sauce for an extra spin on it!
- Leftover meatloaf is the BOMB!!! Let it cool and slice it into thick slices and fry them up quickly on the stove for fried meatloaf sandwiches!!