



The Minnesota Cattleman

The Official Newspaper of the Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association



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Governor's buffer proposal

The current debate over the Governor's buffer proposal has generated a great deal of interest. While details are still unclear, it is clear that the Governor's proposal would curtail county flexibility, likely forcing counties to increase enforcement of Minnesota DNR's shoreland rule along rivers, streams and lakes and greatly expand the current buffer requirement along ditches.

The debate is largely based on water quality and wildlife habitat. The following information is provided to help answer questions that have emerged.

And a reminder—the debate should not divide Minnesotans over the goal of protecting and preserving water resources, we can all share that objective.

Some frequently asked questions

Is it well documented that buffers will reduce agricultural pollution?

Buffer science clearly shows that where there is direct surface runoff from fields to streams, sediment and phosphorus delivery to streams and rivers will be reduced. The science does not clearly show that 50 feet is the right buffer width in all cases. Buffer effectiveness and buffer width requirements are affected by many factors, including slopes, soil types and watershed size. Buffers along constructed drainage ditches with a berm between the field and the ditch provide little benefit once the buffer extends past the crown of the berm, unless the areas is also



Buffer strip example located in SW Minnesota

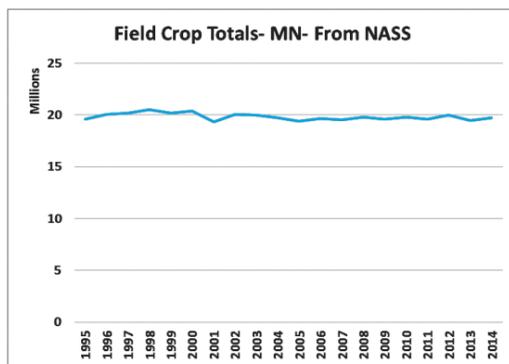


subject to periodic high water that breaches even the berm. Buffers are very ineffective in removing nitrate nitrogen from tile water because tile lines bypass the buffer areas. Reducing nitrates in tile drainage water begins with proper nitrogen management in the field, and can be aided by practices such as routing tiles to wetlands, which are very efficient at removing nitrates.

Are farmers dramatically increasing cropland acres?

Data on total acreage planted to crops in MN, from the USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (all in millions of acres)

1995- 19.6	2002- 20.0	2009- 19.6
1996- 20.1	2003- 20.0	2010- 19.8
1997- 20.2	2004- 19.7	2011- 19.6
1998- 20.5	2005- 19.4	2012- 20.0
1999- 20.2	2006- 19.7	2013- 19.5
2000- 20.4	2007- 19.6	2014- 19.7
2001- 19.4	2008- 19.8	



These acreage figures include alfalfa and other hay. In 2014, MN farmers harvested 1.9 million acres of hay and about grazed another 2.5 million acres of pastureland, perennial crops that help reduce soil erosion. Many of these hay and pasture acres are already serving as buffers and supporting beef and dairy production, which helps create an efficient nutrient re-cycling system.

Are we dramatically losing wildlife habitat due to expiring CRP contracts?

CRP is a land rental program, not a land purchase program. When contracts expire, it is my experience that most farmland owners desire to put their land back into the program. This is not always possible because over time the eligibility requirements and rules have changed in an effort to better target CRP to areas providing greater environmental benefits, to increase the efficiency of program resources, such that some lands in the program during early years are no longer eligible.

The current farm bill also reduced the national CRP acreage cap from 32 million acres to 24 acres, which means that acreage will likely remain at approximately current levels during the current farm bill.

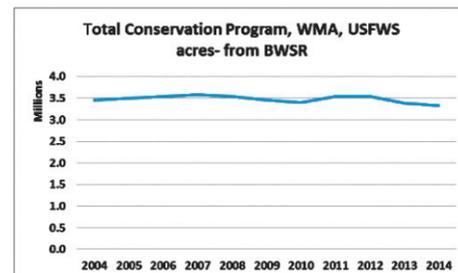
It is also important to note that many acres previously in CRP are now enrolled in other conservation program and continue to provide wildlife habitat.

From BWSR Conservation Lands Summary-total of Federal Farm Program acres plus USFWS Easements and DNR WMAs (Wildlife Management Areas). (in million acres)

2004- 3.5	2008- 3.5	2012-3.5
2005- 3.5	2009- 3.5	2013-3.4
2006- 3.5	2010- 3.4	2014-3.3
2007- 3.6	2011-3.5	

Continuous Sign-up CRP is a special subset of the CRP that is primarily focused on water quality areas, including filter and buffer strips. Data from BWSR and FSA show increasing acreage in CCRP, even while CRP has been reduced overall. (acres in thousands)

2001- 144	2006-280	2011- 335
2002- 195	2007-292	2012- 386
2003- 237	2008-299	2013- 393
2004- 250	2009- 303	2014- 416
2005-262	2010- 309	2015-549



How much change has there been in urban development?

According to the University of Minnesota, the state's urban area increased from 2.2 million acres in 1990 to 3.2 million acres in 2000. Meanwhile, land in farms is declining. According to the MDA, total land in farms fell from 27.5 million acres to 26.9 million acres between 2002 and 2007.

A quick math question- about 27 million acres in farms and about 22.5 million acres of crops and pasture? Why the difference?

Farms provide a lot of habitat! The 4.5 million acres in question includes farmsteads, but also includes more than a million acres of CRP, along with nearly 3 million acres of wetlands, unharvested grasslands and wooded areas.

Is agriculture totally unregulated?

Minnesota farmers are subject to numerous

NEWS - TIME SENSITIVE MATERIAL

Hutchinson set to be the location for 2015 Summer Beef Tour, July 20 & 21st

Each year, a community is chosen to showcase experienced cattle producers with a family history of producing high quality beef, raised with integrity; as well as other agricultural highlights of their community. We are very excited to announce that Hutchinson, MN has been chosen as the location for the 2015 MSCA Summer Beef Tour & Trade Show. Roughly 700-900 cattlemen & women, cattle industry professionals and community members from across the state attend this exciting tour and trade show annually! Attendees of the Summer Tour and Trade Show look forward to 100+ agriculture related business that feature new products and services available to cattlemen locally and throughout the state at one of the summers premier cattle focused trade shows.

The Beef Tour and Trade Show will be July 21st. This year's tour begins in Hutchinson, located on Hwy 7, just west of the Twin Cities. The trade show and tour headquarters will be located in the beautiful and spacious McLeod County Fairgrounds. The event will start on July 20th with a MSCA Quarterly Business Meeting, followed by a special networking event and PAC fundraiser in the afternoon followed by supper.

Hutchinson . . . continued on page 16

Buffer . . . continued on page 16

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Hello, It's almost April, I hope calving is going well. And for others the machinery is out of the sheds and getting ready. Good luck.

The past three months have been busy for MSCA with wolves, dietary guidelines, buffer strips and many other issues as well,

Our quarterly meeting was well attended. It was nice to have Congressmen Collin Peterson and Mr. John Hart from the Grand Rapids USFWS office there, it was nice for them to hear the concerns of our members while in the room together.

We just returned home from DC. It was a very productive trip. Ashley did a great job on babysitting me and the schedule was full. I think we made some progress with everyone we met with, some more than others. It's always interesting how big our state it really is, from wolf to water to trade and everything in between. They are all important. If anyone has any question or comments on any topic that is important to you, our leadership team would gladly hear them and pass the word on. The next couple months are going to be busier than they probably should be for the team, mostly because of the buffer strips conversation

I sure do appreciate every ones support so far. The team has been great for support as well. We are going to do our best to elevate this organization.



TIM NOLTE
President, Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association

The word sustainability can mean something different to each of us. For me it comes down to two things, environmental sustainability and generational sustainability for our farm. As farmers, we take great pride in taking care of the land. It is in our very nature to ensure that the resources that help us make a living off the land are in better condition tomorrow than they are today. As we see added pressure through regulation and special interest groups, it is critical that we are doing the 'right thing' on our farms every day. It is also critical that we share the measures that we have taken to protect the environment with consumers, regulators and our elected officials. Environmental sustainability is essential for the future prosperity of our farms.

The second area of sustainability is ensuring there is opportunity for the next generation of farmers and ranchers. As a father of two and a grandfather of four I work every day to improve our farm to ensure there is opportunity for my kids and grandkids. Whether it is embracing technology or diversifying to add value each farm should put serious thought into what opportunities will be available for the next generation. Take the opportunity to teach the skills necessary to weather the good times and bad.

Don't forget to take time for family and appreciate all the blessings that surround each of us every day. We have been blessed with wonderful weather this spring and calving has gone well on our farm. I hope that each of your springs has been equally productive. As we look forward to warmer weather, don't forget to plan on attending the 2015 Summer Tour in the Hutchinson area.



DICK PESEK
Chairman, Feeder Council

Spring is in the air which is a busy time for the Minnesota Cattlewomen! Cattlewomen will begin participating in the "Read Into My World Program." This year the association will be reading either "Farming, We Live it, We Love It" by the Chaney Girls and "Levi's Lost Calf" by Amanda Radke. After each presentation, the cattlemen leaves the book for the classroom or school library which students can read in the future.



SARAH COLOMBE
President, Minnesota CattleWomen

The winter season of meetings and seminars seemed almost endless when looking at it in December. We have made it through most of the meetings. It has been very interesting traveling the state and talking with producers from Rochester to Lancaster. The neat part of the state we live in is the diversity from one area to another, and how the challenges are as different as the areas of the state.

We traveled with the U of MN Beef Extension Team to 7 of the cow/calf days held across the state. We really enjoyed meeting all the producers at these meetings. The different concerns or problems that all of you shared with me have been shared in one form or another with all of our leadership. This is exactly what we need to hear as the leadership team so we can represent you as the producers the best way we possibly can.

Once again the day for Cattlemen at the Capitol proved to be nasty weather. Thank you to all who braved it and attended. We met with many elected and appointed leaders in the state and discussed the current issues that affect our operations on a day to day basis. I hear the same comments year after year by the leadership in St. Paul, we need to tell them our story or they have no idea how legislation affects us. Please consider joining us next time for Cattlemen at the Capitol.

The wolf, dietary guidelines, and grass buffer initiative have been at the forefront all winter. We have had representation at every meeting so that we can stay on top of these issues and take action when needed. We now need to wait on our elected officials to hopefully make the correct decisions as these issues move through their legislative process.

Please have a safe spring season.



GRANT BREITKREUTZ
Chairman, Cow-Calf Council

Are you Beef Quality Assurance Certified? Beef Quality Assurance is a national program that provides guidelines for beef cattle production. The BQA Certification modules were created in partnership with Dr. Dan Thomson and a team at the Beef Cattle Institute at Kansas State University. This team has developed online interactive modules to educate and certify producers and their staff on best practices for cattle production. There are specific modules customized for cow calf, stocker, feedlot, and dairy operations. Why should I be certified? This program is important because it provides training which raises consumer confidence. Other benefits is because producers increase profitability and improve management processes. Did you know you can receive this training for free? Boehringer Inelgheim Vetmedica. To access this opportunity go to this link: http://www.bivetmedica.com/species/cattle/training_programs.html. Don't delay! This offer is good till April 15!

Minnesota CattleWomen Association have a Facebook page and a website! Check out current happenings at <http://minnesotacattlewomenassociation.weebly.com/>. Until next time always remember, Beef. It's What's for Dinner!

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Executive Director Notes

Greetings from the MSCA office! As the “meeting” season winds down, I would like to express a big thank-you to all of our board members and regional directors who put on many miles to attend and represent this organization throughout the winter.



MSCA Executive Director, Ashley Kohls with Greg Peterson of the Peterson Farm Brothers

The last few months have been a series of exciting firsts for me. I attend my first MSCA Cattlemen at the Capitol event in St. Paul as well as my first trip to Washington D.C. A common theme I heard on both trips is the desire for our elected officials to hear from their constituents. These men and women are voted into office by you and want to hear your input and feedback on projects they are working on. Both trips were great experiences and I look forward to growing our partnerships with our elected officials as well as state and federal agencies. While this year was not my first trip to the National Cattle Industry Convention and NCBA trade show, it was my first experience attending as both a cattle producer and affiliate staff. I look forward to many more “firsts” as I continue into my first year as your executive director.

MSCA members, executive board members, regional directors and I are continuing to focus on many issues facing our industry both within our state and nationally. Wolves continue to be the primary focus of our conversations. We are making progress, with the most recent victory being the allocation of funding for the derivative wolf control program through the USFWS office in Grand Rapids. This is a great example of how continued communications and partnerships with our delegation in St. Paul and D.C. have paid off. Next, we recently issued a call to action email for MSCA members to submit comments on the 2015 Dietary Guidelines committee report. This is an easy and effective way to voice your opinion and make a difference. Finally, the most recent item of interest is the governor’s 50 foot buffer strip proposal. Many people across our state are divided when it comes to the issue of water quality and how to improve or maintain it. My hope is that all parties at the table can come to a realization that there is a middle ground when it comes to this issue. Water quality is everyone’s issue and a one size fits all approach is rarely the answer to any problem.

Before signing off, we are excited to announce that we have booked The Peterson Farm Brothers of Asseria, Kansas as our spotlight speakers for the 2015 Minnesota Cattle Industry and Trade Show! As always, please don’t hesitate to call or email any of us with questions or concerns you may have! Stay safe this spring as you finish your calving season and proceed into the planting season.

Minnesota Beef Alliance Members

Thanks to the following businesses that have already joined the Minnesota Beef Alliance in 2015. If you are interested in learning more about the alliance, contact the MSCA office at 612-618-6619 or visit www.mnsca.org.

Prime Level

Minnesota Corn Growers Association
Purina Animal Nutrition
Carlson Wholesale, Inc.
American Foods Group
The Minnesota Beef Council
Wulf Cattle

Choice

Central Livestock Association
Zoetis
Summit Livestock Facilities

Select

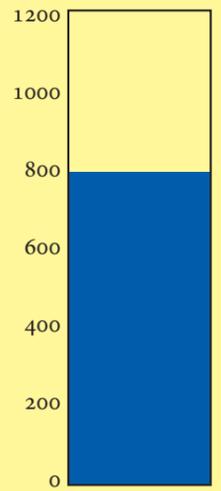
Varied Industries Corporation (Vi-Cor)
Huvepharma
Artex Manufacturing
Select Sires

Don’t Forget to Renew Your Membership!

The MSCA saw many successes in terms of our priority issues ranging from wolf management, expanded grazing access on conservation lands, reasonable animal identification requirements, opening up CRP and other conservation lands for emergency haying and grazing and improving the environmental permitting process. As we continue into 2015, the MSCA will be focused on many of the same issues, but we will also be closely monitoring many other issues affecting Minnesota cattlemen.

Be sure to send in your membership renewal as soon as you can so we can continue having cattlemen working for cattlemen! (See membership form on back page)

MSCA Membership Goal



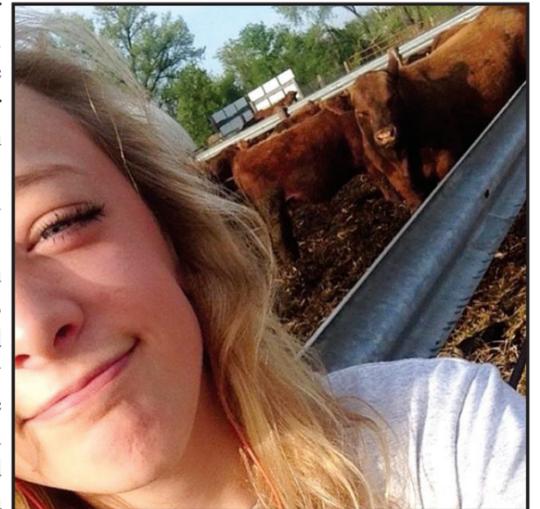
MSCA Membership Recruitment and Benefits

The MSCA relies heavily on a grassroots process of local cattlemen’s associations and volunteer leaders to recruit and retain members. The MSCA looks to reward recruiters with the following benefits.

Recruiter incentives are as follows: 3 members: complimentary registration to state convention; 5 members: two complimentary registrations to state convention; 10 members: two complimentary registrations to state convention and a \$100 gift card; 20 members: two complimentary registrations to state conventions, \$200 gift card and a plaque; 25 members: two complimentary registrations to state convention, \$200 gift card, plaque and two nights stay at state convention.

Jr Association News – Karlie’s Kolumn

I’m Karlie Breikreutz, a beef ambassador for the Redwood Area Cattlemen’s Association, and the Vice-Chairman of the Minnesota State Cattlemen’s Junior Association. I’m the daughter of Grant and Dawn Breikreutz. We farm and run a cow/calf operation northwest of Redwood Falls. I have my own small herd and also finished small groups of cattle and direct marketed them.



As a beef ambassador for our local association I’ve worked at many county fairs across Redwood, Renville, and Brown counties, and have participated in numerous parades during my three years as an ambassador. At the annual State Cattlemen’s convention this past December in Hinckley, I worked with the executive board and other members of the State Association to start a state-level Junior Association. I was then voted to be the Vice-Chairman.

In February I attended Cattlemen at the Capital along with many other cattlemen from across the state. During our visit we met a representative from the Minnesota Department of Ag, and also watched President Tim Nolte, and Cow/Calf Chairman Grant Breikreutz testify before the House Ag Committee about grazing public lands and the wolf problems. We met with the commissioner of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, where current and future issues relating to cattle were discussed. We also met with various legislators from our local area.

On March 10th I worked with the Midwest and the MN State Cattlemen’s Associations to host Ag in the Classroom in Granite Falls. Four ambassadors, including myself, taught almost 400 fourth graders about the bi-products of cattle, the different cuts of meat, and the various breeds of cattle. It was a very neat experience for us as ambassadors, and very educational for a lot of fourth graders.

Until next time. . . Happy Spring!

Upcoming Events/Important Dates

July 20-21: MSCA Summer Tour, Hutchinson, MN

Dec. 3-5: MSCA Annual Convention & Trade Show, Hinckley, MN

July 20th: MSCA Quarterly Board and Business meeting, McLeod County Fair Grounds

July 8th: 11th - Charolais Jr. Nationals – Minnesota State Fair Grounds

October 15th-18th: Minnesota Beef Expo, Minnesota State Fair Grounds

Have an upcoming event? Email it to mnsca@mnsca.org




MINNESOTA BEEF COUNCIL

Mission: To enhance opportunities for growth and success in the beef industry.









Digital Advertising

The Minnesota Beef Council just wrapped up a Google/Bing search advertising promotion campaign. This campaign was to help build beef demand when beef sales decline from our top selling summer grilling months. The results were very impressive!

The final results are:

- 22,000 page views for “Beef It’s What’s for Dinner” (BIWFD) recipes
- 52,000 views of BIWFD videos
- 39% of page views came from a mobile device or tablet
- Keywords included: ease, nutrition and taste

An advertising campaign with Pandora internet radio has wrapped up and we are awaiting results. Look for those results in an upcoming update. Another campaign being run on Google/Bing will be kicking off in May.

Minneapolis Food & Wine Show



Pictured from left to right Chef Jessica Becker, Chef Instructor with the Arts Institutes International, Chef Jessica Minczeski, Royalee Rhoads, Director of Industry Relations with the Minnesota Beef Council, Karin Schaefer, Executive Director with the Minnesota Beef Council and Kaye Strohbahn, Director of Marketing with the Minnesota Beef Council.

The MBC exhibited at the Minneapolis Food & Wine Show on March 7 & 8 at Target Field. We partnered with the Minneapolis Arts Institute Culinary Program to develop a customized rub recipe for the Sirloin Tri-Tip Steak. We received rave reviews about the samples and answered questions from attendees about recipes, cuts and cooking methods. Nearly 5,000 attendees were at the show over the two days.

Media Coverage

On January 3, MBC assisted KARE 11 with a story on the potential changes to the dietary guidelines for 2015. U of M professor of food nutrition, Dr. Joanne Slavin was sourced for the interview along with Karin Schaefer, Executive Director of MBC. Overall, the story was fairly positive in beef’s concerns regarding these potential changes.

MBC Board Meeting

The April 2015 Minnesota Beef Council Board of Directors Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 7 at the Minnesota Beef Council Office at 5469 Hwy 12 in Maple Plain.

Beef Ambassador Training Recap

On February 16th, the Minnesota Beef Council teamed up with the Minnesota Cattlewomen’s Association to offer training in Beef Quality Assurance, Social Media and Educational Classroom presentations to the Minnesota Beef Ambassador Team and the Minnesota Junior Cattlemen’s Association. The Minnesota Beef Ambassador Program provides an opportunity for youth ages 13-19 to educate consumers and students about beef nutrition, food safety and stewardship practices of beef farmers and ranchers.

Beef University

On January 16, MBC hosted Beef University in partnership with the University of Minnesota Beef Team. We had nearly 60 participants for this all day function. Those individuals came from several culinary programs, foodservice and retail sectors. MBC shared that demand for beef is the highest in years! Consumers want beef and they are willing to spend more for beef. Beef supplies will continue to be tight for the next couple years. However, because demand for beef is strong, this sends a signal to America’s beef farmers and ranchers to increase the beef supply by rebuilding their herds. Surveys were taken of all individuals who attended the event and we plan to review those to determine how we can improve the program in the future.



Pictured left to right are Carissa Nath, Meat Scientist with Agriculture Research Utilization Institute and Ryan Cox, University of Minnesota Meat Science Team during Beef University.

Twin Cities Live

The Minnesota Beef Council has recently teamed up with Twin Cities Live to air monthly TV segments about Beef in 2015. The March segment aired on March 18th at 3pm on KSTP Channel 5. Thank you to Brian and Marytina Lawrence of Princeton, MN for allowing us to come out and film the March segment at their farm. Be sure to watch this segment by going onto the Twin Cities Live website (twincitieslive.com), Show Archive and then scroll down to the week of March 16 and click on the segment From Farm to Table.

Rev it Up! Beef Checkoff Challenge

Care-to-Share: Are you ready to spread the word about the beef checkoff return on investment and how it impacts your beef farm or rancher? Thanks to a generous sponsorship from Yamaha, the Cattlemen’s Beef Board is giving you the opportunity to share your checkoff return on investment story for a chance to win weekly prizes and a Grand Prize of a Yamaha Viking EPS 4x4 loaded with accessories a value of over \$21,000! To participate, just “like” and watch for contest details on the My Beef Checkoff Facebook Page. Begin telling your story!

Go Red for Women Event

On January 27th, the Minnesota Beef Council Team partnered with the American Heart Association for their Go Red for Women event, which raises awareness of Heart Disease among women. This year we shared with over 700 women how eating lean beef fits into a healthy diet and lifestyle. Additionally, thanks to our partnership with Medtronics we were able to bring in Laura Hagen, Senior Director of Culinary at the National Cattlemen's Beef Association to be our featured speaker during our workshop, which discussed how to prepare quick and easy lean beef meals in under thirty minutes. Lastly, we had the honor of impacting our future health professionals about beef by having five Dietetic and Nutrition students from the University of Minnesota, St. Kate's and Minnesota State University join our team in a day of awareness and education.



The Minnesota Beef Council Staff is joined by Laura Hagen, National Cattlemen's Beef Association Culinary Team (second row far right) and Dietetic students from St. Kate's, University of Minnesota and Minnesota State University.

Rhoads Hired as MBC Director of Industry Relations!

The Minnesota Beef Council is pleased to welcome Royalee Rhoads as our new Director of Industry Relations effective March 13, 2015. Royalee holds a bachelor's degree in Apparel & Textile Marketing from Kansas State University. She also attended Fort Hays State University where she studied Animal Science. Additionally, Royalee brings experience in beef promotion, education and outreach efforts through her involvement in both the Minnesota State Cattlewomen and the American National Cattlewomen.



Her most recent work experience as a Store Communication Specialist with Christopher & Banks has enabled her to continue to inform, educate and collaborate with others in the field to ensure the team works together and has the tools needed to drive product and promotional efforts.

In her new role as Director of Industry Relations, Royalee will be responsible for delivering beef promotion and education strategies to the foodservice and retail channels, industry partners, producers and consumers. She will also be responsible for communicating with Minnesota cattle producers about the beef checkoff and how they can deliver the beef message on a local level, through MBC's Local Producer Promotion Program. Royalee will also act as a liaison with state and national groups, conduct educational programs, deliver beef promotional information through various channels and assist with development of business to business relationships.

Beef Quality Assurance Training

Thanks to a partnership with Boehringer Ingelheim Vetmedica, Inc., your beef checkoff-funded Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) program is offering free online BQA Certification for approximately two months. This opportunity is open to all beef and dairy farmers and ranchers, veterinarians, allied partners, agricultural friends, and students until April 15, 2015.



To take advantage of the free online BQA program, visit www.BIVI-BQA.com for the online modules, click on Beef Quality Assurance and Beef Cattle Care or one of the other eighteen categories available (Comprehensive Beef Quality Assurance-recommended), register and enter code: BIVIBQA for your payment method. After all videos within a specific category have been observed with quizzes passed successfully, you will become BQA certified! For questions or more information on registration, contact Ashley Kohls, Beef Quality Assurance Consultant via email at mnbeefbqa@mnbeef.org or via phone at 612-618-6619.



Interactive Butcher Counter

Have you ever been asked "What are the best cuts to grill, roast, broil, etc.?" Get all your beef cut questions answered at the Interactive Butcher Counter. This is a great resource to share with consumers. It is as simple as going onto the Beef It's What's for Dinner website (www.beefitswhatsfordinner.com) and clicking on the Butcher Counter which brings up the Interactive Butcher Counter. You have three options: Explore the Cuts, Guide me to the Right Cut or Find this cut for me.

Explore the Cuts:

Let's you explore the cuts in each of these 4 categories.

Options:

- Ground Beef
- Steaks
- Roasts & Ribs
- Prepared Cuts

Once you choose an option, it will show you all the cuts in that category. Click on the cut and it gives the recommended cooking method, nutritional information and more recipes.

Guide me to the Right Cut:

Asks you to tell us what you want out of your cut? It has multiple options:

I'm looking for:

Options:

- Economical
- BBQ-worthy
- Fork Tender
- Large
- Lean
- Pre-sliced
- Restaurant/quality impressive
- Steak
- Unique & New
- Well Marbled

Cut that I can:

Options:

- Grill
- Skillet Cook
- Roast
- Stir-fry
- Broil
- Skillet to Oven Cook

Once you put in your options then it will give you the best cut. Click on the cut and gives the recommended cooking method, nutritional information and more recipes.

Find this cut for me

Enter the cut and it will take to all the options that have that cut. For example enter Ribeye and the Ribeye Roast, Ribeye Boast Bone it and Steak come up.

This option once you click on the cut gives the recommended cooking method, nutritional information and a link for more recipes.

Upcoming Events:

- April 21 – University of Minnesota Agriculture Awareness Day
- May is Beef Month!
- May 15 – Twin Cities Burger Battle
- May 16 & 17 – Minnesota Grillfest

Roundtable on sustainable American beef created; diverse participant list covers farm-to-fork

Multi-Stakeholder U.S. Roundtable for Sustainable Beef Launched, Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association listed as founding member.

In early March, a group of U.S. beef value chain participants including producers, processors, retailers, foodservice operators, packers, allied industry and non-governmental organizations announced the launch of the U.S. Roundtable for Sustainable Beef (USRSB). The multi-stakeholder roundtable will identify sustainability indicators, establish verification methodologies, and generate field project data to test and confirm sustainability concepts for use throughout the United States. The USRSB adopts an approach whereby social, economic and environmental considerations are balanced to achieve sustainable outcomes.

"Research tells us American consumers are increasingly interested in the social, economic and environmental impacts of the beef they purchase," said Nicole Johnson-Hoffman, vice president of Cargill Value Added Meats and interim chair of USRSB. "For the first time, the entire U.S. beef value chain, including representatives who raise cattle and produce, market and sell beef, in addition to representatives from the NGO community and allied businesses, are coming together to establish metrics and criteria that will be used to benchmark the present and help measure improvements in the sustainability of American beef going forward."

USRSB's mission is to advance, support and communicate continuous improvement in U.S. beef sustainability through leadership, innovation, multi-stakeholder engagement and collaboration. Utilizing the definition for sustainable beef recently released by the Global Roundtable for Sustainable Beef (GRSB), the USRSB will develop sustainability indicators relevant to the various beef systems in the United States, as well as a means to verify sustainable progress in a transparent manner that can be shared. Similar to GRSB, the USRSB will not mandate standards or verify the performance of individual beef value chain participants.

"Today's announcement from the United States regarding the formation of a U.S. Roundtable for Sustainable Beef is welcome news to GRSB and our membership," stated Cameron Bruett, head of Corporate Affairs and Sustainability at JBS USA and president of the Global Roundtable for Sustainable Beef. "The United States is a world leader in beef production and will play a key role in meeting the global challenge of feeding the world in a sustainable manner that allows future generations to thrive. With the establishments of regional multi-stakeholder beef sustainability roundtables in Brazil, Canada, Mexico, Colombia and now, the United States, it is clear that the international commitment to sustainable beef enjoys tremendous momentum."

The USRSB is being directed by an interim board of directors that includes representatives from Cargill, Beef Marketing Group, Texas Cattle Feeders Association, Micro Technologies, Merck Animal Health, JBS USA, McDonald's, Walmart, World Wildlife Fund, The Nature Conservancy, Noble Foundation and the King Ranch® Institute for Ranch Management. Participation will be open to individual producers, producer associations, processors, retailers, foodservice operators, allied industry and civil society. "By 2050, more than 9 billion people will consume twice as much food as we do today," said Nancy Labbe, senior program officer, World Wildlife Fund. "We are excited to be part of this important step toward balancing social, economic and environmental demands to feed a growing world while conserving natural resources, reducing waste and preserving biodiversity."

Currently, the USRSB has 43 founding members. They include: Adams Land and Cattle, LLC; AgriBeef Co.; Alabama Cattlemen's Association; Beef Cattle Institute, Kansas State University; Beef Marketing Group; Cargill Meat Solutions Corporation; Certified Angus Beef; Colorado Cattlemen's Association; Costco Wholesale Corporation; Dow AgroSciences LLC; Elanco Animal Health; Florida Cattlemen's Association; FPL Food LLC; Global Food Traceability Center; Golden State Foods; Holistic Management International; JBS USA; Kansas Livestock Association; K-COE ISOM; King Ranch® Institute for Ranch Management; Lopez Foods; McDonald's Corporation; Merck Animal Health; Micro Technologies; **Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association**; Missouri Cattlemen's Association; National Beef Packing Co. LLC; National Cattlemen's Beef Association; National Livestock Producers Association; Nebraska Cattlemen's Association; Oregon Cattlemen's Association; Simplot Livestock Company; Sustainable Rangelands Roundtable; Texas A&M AgriLife Research; Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association; The National Grazing Lands Coalition; Texas Cattle Feeders Association; The Nature Conservancy; The Samuel Roberts Noble Foundation; Tyson Foods, Inc.; Walmart; World Wildlife Fund; and Zoetis.

Membership will be open to additional founding members until June 1, 2015.

"American cattlemen and women are proud of our efforts to provide safe, affordable and sustainable beef on the plates of millions of American and global consumers every day," said John Butler, chief executive officer of the Beef Marketing Group, a cattle marketing cooperative located in Kansas and Nebraska. "We stand ready to collaborate in this effort of continuous improvement across the social, economic and environmental aspects of beef production. Working together with members of the U.S. beef value chain, American producers are eager to add the next chapter to our long-standing heritage of stewardship and great-tasting beef."

Learn more at usrsb.org. For additional information, please contact Nikki Richardson at nrichardson@beef.org or 303-850-3357.



Quarterly Meeting Update

The Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association had their first quarterly business meeting of 2015 on March 7th. A big thank-you to Mitch Barthel and the crew at the Perham Stockyards for allowing us to hold our meeting at their facilities. We were pleased to have Congressman Collin Peterson join us during our meeting to give an update of the progress made to legislatively delist the grey wolf from the endangered species act. Below are highlights of topics discussed during the meeting.

Cow Calf report: Grant B. went to all of the Cow calf days with good turn outs at all of them.

Feeder report: Dick P. said that feeder days were well attended. Northern States Beef Conference was also well attended. Mentioned Farmfest in August with its success around locals helping & American Foods donation of meat. Conference will be held on Dec. 3 -5, 2015 at Hinckley.

Carol Hoge gave the MCWA report. Sara Colombe is new president. Had about 7 members attend the National Convention, with Penny Zimmerman elected as ANCW vice-president. They were involved with MSCA at the Farm Bureau Foundation Leadership Conference. Royalee Rhoads took over the job of Director of Industry relations at the MBC. Read into my world and AG in the classrooms' are all being held. Plans are to host another Mom's Day with MBC and Schiefelbein Farms.

Regional Reports:

- #1 – Dan Anderson attending meetings with the elk and wolf problems being the top topics.
- #2/3 – Gary Sampson telling that their farm tour will be held the 3 week of Sept. The scale yard is working and also attending meetings.
- #5 – Dar Giess had their meeting with great turn out.
- #6 – Keith Carlson attended C/C days in Mora but it should be moved to a better facility. Their next local meeting will be sponsored at Cassidy's in Hinckley, March 17. They are getting into the classrooms demonstrating ag.
- #7 – Krist W. area was discussing the new Buffer Strip law if it will go into effect.
- #8 – Tom Helfter said they had a good turnout at C/C days. Working on getting more membership.
- #9 – Fritz Nibbe said they had almost 200 people at their local meeting.

MBC report was given by Lori Beckel. They are doing a beef advertising promotional campaign. Hosted a Beef University in partnership with U of M on foodservice. Partnered with The American Heart Association (Go Red for Women). Beef Ambassador & BQA training. Royalee Rhoads hired as new Director of Industry Relations.

U of M report was given by Dr. Eric Mousel. Had one of the better turnouts for the Northern States Beef conference. C/C days were good especially with a member of the MSCA going along to all of them. Beef industry conference will be held in Deerwood, MN. June 4 – 5. It will include speakers. They will help at Farmfest. They will replace the # 2 position at Grand Rapids.

Mike Stevens from the FSA of Wadena County also gave a little talk about USDA and what is happening there. He told everyone to keep track on damage to your crops including calves from the cold temperatures, could be some programs coming out.

Rep. Collin Peterson was there also giving a talk on what is happening at the national level. (Wolf, fund trappers, Farm bill, Cool, and Dietary guidelines).

John Hart from the DNR gave a little talk on the trapping of wolves. To run the office and the trapping of wolves it costs around \$37,000 a month. This doesn't include pay outs for the farmers. As of now there is no money budgeted for complete running of the program.



Congressman Collin Peterson joins MSCA members to discuss grey wolves.

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2015 Session Update – Twelfth Week (MARCH 23 - 29)

Bruce Kleven

The 2015 legislative session has passed the halfway point, but much of the budget-setting work remains. The first policy committee deadline passed last Friday and the second policy committee deadline passed this Friday. With few exceptions, policy committees will not meet again this session. Lawmakers have left St. Paul for the Easter break and will resume their work at noon on Tuesday, April 7. The finance committee deadline is Friday, April 24, which means that all budget bills must be assembled and passed out of finance committees by that date. The session must end at midnight on Monday, May 18.

House Republican Budget. House Republicans released their proposed budget on Tuesday. The House package totals approximately \$40 billion for the next two years, which is nearly \$3 billion lower than Governor Dayton's proposed budget. Part of the package includes \$2 billion worth of unspecified tax relief (not refunds). The House Ways and Means Committee adopted the targets on Tuesday night. While Democrats and the media point to how much lower the Republican budget is than the Governor's, what they fail to mention is that the House budget is \$2 billion higher than the \$38 billion, all-DFL budget adopted two years ago. The net effect is that Republicans are not proposing to actually cut the budget but rather they are proposing to slow the rate of growth. Still, some conservatives are upset they are spending too much.

Senate DFL Budget. Senate Democrats released their budget proposal on Friday. They are proposing to spend approximately \$42.7 billion, which is \$250 million lower than Governor Dayton but \$2.75 billion higher than the House. The Senate proposal sets up a good possibility for a compromise by mid-May. The biggest discrepancy with the House is in the area of health and human services – the Senate wants to increase spending in that area by \$341 million but the House wants to cut more than \$1 billion. The second discrepancy is in the area of transportation funding – the House wants to redirect \$600 million from the

general fund, while the Senate and the Governor want to raise taxes to cover that amount. Finally, the Senate wants to increase the reserve fund using \$250 million of the projected surplus and the House has proposed \$100 million. Dayton proposed \$0 for the reserve but said he is open to saving some of the surplus.

House Republican Transportation Funding. House Republicans unveiled their proposed transportation funding plan on Monday and it totals \$7 billion over the next 10 years, without tax increases, compared to the \$11 billion over 10 years proposed by the Governor and the Senate DFL. Specifically, the House would raise \$3 billion by redirecting the current sales tax collected on auto parts, vehicle rentals, and leasing. Another \$2.3 billion would be in the form of bonding, \$1.2 billion in MnDOT efficiency savings, and \$228 million from the projected surplus. Governor Dayton and Senate Democrats have proposed raising \$5.8 billion by increasing the gas tax and license tab fees, \$2.8 billion through a half cent sales tax increase in the metro area, \$2 billion in bonding, and \$120 million from the general fund. It should also be noted that Republicans propose to spend little on transit – probably because only one House Republican represents a district inside the 494/694 beltway. Meanwhile, a Star Tribune/Minnesota poll released last week showed that 52% of those surveyed are against a gas tax hike – primarily in rural areas, because they drive more – especially in light of the projected budget surplus. In the event the gas tax is raised, 66% of those surveyed believe it should be a fixed amount rather than a fluctuating amount tied to the pump price.

Senate Ag Committee. The Senate Ag Committee met on Wednesday to assemble and pass SF-1459 (Sparks), the omnibus ag policy bill for 2015. The bill contains provisions regarding higher loan program limits, technical changes to fertilizer and pesticide laws, seed dealer exemptions, and expanded food safety authority. The bill passed and was referred to the Senate floor.

House Ag Policy Committee. The House Ag Policy Committee met on Wednesday and heard HF-812 (Bly), a bill modifying the beginning farmer loan program administered by the Rural Finance Authority by providing income tax credits to beginning farmers. The bill passed and was referred to the House Tax Committee. The Committee also heard HF-1904 (Anderson, P.), a bill providing \$1.5 million for grants to install biofuel pumps. The bill passed and was referred to the House Ag Finance Committee.

Senate Environment and Ag Finance Committee. The Senate Environment and Ag Finance Committee met on Wednesday and heard SF-1158 (Sparks), a bill modifying provisions relating to soil and water conservation districts by clarifying that county levies for those districts may be levied as special taxing districts levies. The bill also provides \$11 million per year for grants to soil and water conservation districts. The bill was laid over for possible inclusion in the omnibus finance bill. The Committee also heard SF-1515 (Marty), a bill modifying the Wetland Conservation Act by establishing a stakeholder group to develop recommendations to restore high-value wetlands and establish an in-lieu fee program. The bill was laid over for possible inclusion in the omnibus finance bill.

House Ag Finance Committee. The House Ag Finance Committee met on Tuesday and Thursday and heard the following bills. Each one was heard and was laid over for possible inclusion in the omnibus ag finance bill:

- HF-1613 (Swedzinski), a bill providing \$1 million for the noxious weed grant program.
- HF-1377 (Pierson), a bill providing \$3 million to Second Harvest Heartland for the purchase of milk for food banks.
- HF-1906 (McNamara), a bill providing funding to enforce labeling and advertising provisions related to pollinator-friendly plants sold by nurseries.
- HF-536 (Hamilton), a bill creating an advanced

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biofuels, chemical, and biomass production incentive program.

- HF-1451 (Miller), a bill requiring a study of livestock growth or decline in Minnesota and surrounding states.
- HF-1079 (Applebaum), a bill establishing a one-stop farmer regulatory assistance program.

Senate Environment Policy Committee. The Senate Environment Policy Committee met on Tuesday and Thursday and heard the following bills:

- SF-1433 (Scalze), a bill amending state soil and water conservation policy by providing for comprehensive watershed management. The bill passed and was referred to the Senate Ag and Environment Finance Committee.
- SF-1754 (Scalze), a bill enacting the funding recommendations of the Clean Water Council. The bill passed and was referred to the Senate Ag and Environment Finance Committee.
- HF-517 (Saxhaug), a bill creating an advanced biofuels, chemical, and biomass production incentive program. The bill passed and was referred to the Senate Ag and Environment Finance Committee.

House Environment Finance/Policy Committee. The House Environment Finance/Policy Committee met on Wednesday and heard HF-1327 (Torkelson), a bill modifying provisions relating to soil and water conservation districts by clarifying that county levies for those districts may be levied as special taxing districts levies. The bill also provides \$11 million per year for grants to soil and water conservation districts. The bill was laid over for possible inclusion in the omnibus finance bill. The Committee also heard HF-1161 (Fabian), a bill allowing truck wash facilities to be operated as part of a feedlot permit. This bill was also laid over for possible inclusion in the omnibus finance bill.

Agritourism Liability Limits. A bill providing immunity for on-farm agritourism activities was passed by the full Senate on Monday by a vote of 63-0. Due to the inherently dangerous nature of performing farm work, SF-152 (Schmit) provides

lawsuit protection for recreational, entertainment, or educational activities that take place on a farm. The House companion, HF-216 (Anderson, P.), is on the House floor awaiting final action.

50-Foot Buffer Bill. There was no activity on HF-1534 (Torkelson) and SF-1537 (Marty), Governor Dayton's 50-foot buffer bill, last week. In addition, the bill failed to meet the policy committee deadline in either body so technically the bill is dead for the year. However, because the buffer bill is an initiative proposed by the Governor, failure to meet the deadlines does not necessarily mean the issue is over for the year.

Roadside Mowing. SF-1852 (Pederson, J.), a bill changing roadside mowing laws, was heard on Monday in the Senate Transportation Committee. Specifically, the bill delays mowing on all federal and state highways until after August 1 of each year. The bill also requires a permit for haying and implements a misdemeanor penalty for violations. The bill was laid over for possible inclusion in the omnibus transportation policy bill. On Friday, the Committee assembled the omnibus transportation policy bill and included the mowing restrictions in SF-1647 (Dibble).

Truck Weights. Last week there was activity in two House and Senate Committees on the truck weight bill, HF-620 (McNamara) and SF-309 (Jensen). The House bill was heard for the second time in the House Transportation Policy and Finance Committee on Wednesday (the bill had previously been heard and was laid over on Monday, February 23). At the hearing, bill author Denny McNamara (R-Hastings) offered an amendment that would give the bill a more specific application to a list of qualified products rather than apply to all types of freight. The reason for scoping the bill down to a list of qualifying products was to alleviate some members' concerns about the diversion of freight from interstates, thereby picking up additional votes in the Committee. The list of qualifying products in the amendment includes:

- 1) Raw and unprocessed agricultural products (current law);
- 2) Livestock and poultry feed, seed, fertilizer, potash, and agricultural lime; and

3) Highway and building construction materials.

The House Transportation Policy and Finance Committee is expected to include this language in its version of the omnibus transportation finance bill. In the Senate, the bill had not been given a hearing in the Senate Transportation Committee prior to the policy committee deadlines outlined above. On Friday, bill author Vicki Jensen (D-Owatonna) offered the same amendment to the Senate transportation policy bill. Due to fiscal concerns, she withdrew her amendment on Friday but pledged to re-offer the amendment when the Senate Committee assembles its version of the omnibus transportation finance bill after the Easter/Passover break.

Introduction of Bills. The following bills of interest to agriculture were introduced during the twelfth week. Any of these bills can be found at <http://www.leg.state.mn.us/> by clicking "Search House Bills" or by clicking "Search Senate Bills", under the "Bill Search & Status" heading, and then entering the bill number:

- SF 1925 Eken - Requires legislative approval of certain agency rules
- SF 1993 Sparks - Provides funding for the Ag Research Education and Tech Board
- SF 1994 Jensen - Provides \$50,000 for promotion of locally grown food
- HF 2058 Petersburg
- SF 2004 Koenen - Provides a property tax credit on a house, garage, and one acre
- HF 2077 Draskowski
- HF 2122 Kiel - Provides a school property tax credit on bare farmland
- SF 1995 Dahle



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Hats on the Hill

MSCA heads to D.C. on behalf of Minnesota cattle producers.

Tim Nolte, John Chute & Ashley Kohls attended the NCBA legislative conference on March 24th – 26th in Washington, D.C. The group had a jam packed trip and was able to meet both senators and their staff as well as all 8 of the congressional offices. Items discussed included Wolves, the endangered species act, 2015 dietary guidelines, trade and immigration. The group also had the opportunity to discuss key issues with government agencies. This was an ideal opportunity to bring Minnesota specific concerns, including the livestock indemnity fund, water quality regulations and antibiotic residue, to the table. It was an honor to represent cattle producers of Minnesota and discuss issues that are important our members.



MSCA Members with Senator Klobuchar



MSCA Members with Senator Franken



MSCA Members discussing the endangered species act with Congressmen Nolan



MSCA Members with Congressmen Emmer



MSCA Members with Congressman Walz



MSCA members with Congressmen Collin Peterson



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Special Feeder Sales:
10:30 a.m. - Second Wednesday of the month

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Wednesday:
10 a.m. - Market Cows, Fed Cattle, Feeder Cattle, Hogs, Sheep & Goats

Special Feeder Sales:
10 a.m. - Designated Wednesdays

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4 p.m. - Baby Calves

Tuesday:
8 a.m. - Sheep, Goats & Feeder Pigs

Wednesday:
9 a.m. - Hog Auction
Noon - Market Cows/Bulls & Fed Cattle

Special Dairy Sales:
Noon - Second & fourth Tuesdays

Special Feeder Sales:
10 a.m. - Designated Thursdays

Hay & Bedding Auctions:
10 a.m. - First & third Saturdays

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April 16

Looking Forward: What Does the Cattle Market Have in Store for 2015?

By Brett Crosby, Custom Ag Solutions

The USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) cattle inventory report for January 2015 confirms that beef herd expansion is underway. The number of beef cows that have calved increased over 600,000 head in 2014 to 29.7 million head. The increase in beef cow numbers is the largest since 1994 and the second largest increase in over 30 years. The herd expansion was impressive by any measure, but especially remarkable given the cost of replacement animals and the smaller number of replacement females available compared to 1994, when there were 34.6 million beef cows in the U.S. While increased herd numbers have been expected by many, the new inventory statistics and rapid growth leave many producers wondering what this means for cattle prices going forward.

While a 600,000 head increase is sizeable, the U.S. beef cow herd is still small by historical measures and has decreased by over 3.9 million since 1996. Nearly half of that decrease, 1.7 million head, came in 2012 and 2013 alone, when a drought ravaged the Southwest and forced massive herd liquidations. Even if cattle numbers continue to increase at the 2014 rate, it will take several years just to get the U.S. herd back to the size it was only four years ago. Clearly, total per capita beef supply in the US will remain at historically low levels for several years while the U.S. population continues to grow, resulting in per capita beef supply and beef prices remaining at or near their current levels.

While the current herd expansion suggests that calf prices likely hit their high water mark in the fall of 2014, prices should remain strong in 2015. The 2015 calf crop is likely to be 10 to 15 percent higher than 2014, but calf supplies will likely remain tight while producers retain inordinately large numbers of heifers during this expansion phase. As a result, deferred feeder cattle futures suggest calf prices holding very close to the levels seen

last fall. Of course, there is still a long time between now and the fall, and corn prices and winter wheat conditions this fall will play a large part in determining calf prices late in the year.

Feed cost and forage availability aren't the only sources of uncertainty for this year's calf prices. Exports have been incredibly strong and a strengthening economy has also supported domestic beef demand. Therefore, a U.S. recession or a global economic slowdown could have a substantial adverse impact on cattle prices. With the U.S. beef herd expanding and a strong dollar and soft oil prices indicating global economic uncertainty, there is more downside risk for cattle prices than upside potential.

With increased downside market risk, this is a good year to consider carefully managing price risk. Forward contracts, futures, options, and RMA's Livestock Risk Protection (LRP) insurance are all worth considering. If fundamentals hold steady, the calf market is expected to remain strong, so producers should consider a risk management strategy that limits or softens unexpected downside market moves. Also, because a repeat of 2014's explosive upside move is unlikely, 2015 is probably a good year to consider early forward contracts at current price levels.

Despite national herd expansion, the next several years should remain profitable for cow/calf producers. Beef demand domestically and abroad is strong, and heifer retention that is fueling expansion will help offset the effects of larger calf crops in the coming years. With prices still near historic highs, however, a price risk management strategy should be employed to protect against downside movements triggered by high feed costs or macroeconomic issues. For 2015, the old adage "Nobody ever went broke locking in a profit" is a good one to remember.

Custom Ag Solutions (CAS) is a USDA/RMA education partner that works to promote risk management tools, including Federal crop insurance programs such as the Livestock Risk Protection (LRP) program.

CAS neither sells nor services crop insurance policies. For a list of crop insurance agents, please visit www.USDA.RMA.gov/tools/agent.html. For more information, visit the RMA website at www.USDA.RMA.gov.

Complete Your Green Star Farms Initiative Self- Evaluation before Spring Planting

Spring is right around the corner, and soon the busy planting season will begin. Unfortunately, the threat of additional water regulations impacting agriculture continues to increase. Everything from the Governor's proposal of a fifty-foot buffer requirement along all waters, the EPA proposed expansion of Clean Water Act rules, or state agencies proclaiming that farmers aren't doing enough to protect water quality; we in agriculture can't afford to ignore this and hope it goes away. Now is a critical time to take action, before you get too busy with spring work, and before new regulations gain a foothold.

There is a safe, easy, confidential way you can help demonstrate that farmers are committed to being good stewards of our water and soil resources. The Green Star Farms Initiative is an on-line self-evaluation tool designed for farmers and ranchers to critically evaluate their own conservation efforts without any government agency involvement. Your participation is important, because our critics will use lack of participation as leverage to push for further regulation. The evaluation may also help you identify areas you would like to improve, and will help you do so on your own, unless you choose to seek outside assistance.

We need your help. All you need is internet access, an email address and about twenty minutes and you



Greenstar . . . continued on page 16

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2015 Dietary Guidelines

The 2015 Dietary Guidelines comments period is open until May 8th.

Meat is a fundamental part of the American diet. There is more than three decades of sound science that supports the positive role of protein and lean meat in healthful dietary pattern. Lean meat is a nutrient-dense food source, providing high levels of essential nutrients with fewer calories than other sources. The committee who developed the recommendations for the 2015 dietary guidelines has contradicted itself on numerous occasions, excluding evidence from its review library and making recommendations with no scientific evidence to support them. While this should be an evidence-based process and the final Guidelines should reflect the totality of the science, key science was not considered as part of this allegedly open and transparent process. The Dietary Guidelines matter. Even though the average consumer may not be aware of them, they are used to set policies for government feeding programs like school lunch, hospitals, daycares facilities, the military and set the tone for nutrition advice from health professionals Americans are already eating red meat at levels that are consistent with the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. The fact is that the protein foods group is the ONLY category are consuming within the recommended amounts in the 2010 Dietary Guidelines that Americans.

It's time to use your voice and tell your story!

There are 2 easy ways to submit comments.

1. Go to www.beefusa.org and click on the "Submit Comments Now" button.
2. Go to www.regulations.gov or www.health.gov. This will take you directly to the comments page where you can search for the comments section for the guidelines.

MN Cattle On Feed Report from USDA

Cattle and calves on feed for slaughter market in Minnesota for all feedlots with a capacity greater than 1,000 head totaled 145,000 head on March 1, 2015, according to the USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service – Cattle on Feed report. This is up 3 percent from last month and up 8 percent from last year.

Placements during February totaled 18,000 head, up 6 percent from last month and up 64 percent from last year. Marketings for February were 13,000 head, up 8 percent from both last month and last year. Other disappearance totaled 1,000 head.

Cattle and calves on feed for slaughter market in the United States for feedlots with capacity of 1,000 or more head totaled 10.7 million head on March 1, 2015. The inventory was 1 percent below March 1, 2014.

Placements in feedlots during February totaled 1.52 million, 8 percent below 2014. Net placements were 1.46 million head. During February, placements of cattle and calves weighing less than 600 pounds were 330,000, 600-699 pounds were 270,000, 700-799 pounds were 388,000, and 800 pounds and greater were 535,000.

Marketings of fed cattle during February totaled 1.52 million, 2 percent below 2014. February marketings are the lowest since the series began in 1996.

Other disappearance totaled 62,000 during February, 13 percent below 2014.

Cattle on Feed, Number on Feed, Placements, Marketings, and Other Disappearance by Month, 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots – Selected States and United States: 2014-2015

[Cattle and calves on feed are animals for slaughter market being fed a ration of grain or other concentrates and are expected to produce a carcass that will grade select or better.]

State	Cattle on Feed March 1			Placements during February			Marketings during February			February Disappearance other than Slaughter ¹		
	2014 (1,000 head)	2015 (1,000 head)	'15 as % of '14 (percent)	2014 (1,000 head)	2015 (1,000 head)	'15 as % of '14 (percent)	2014 (1,000 head)	2015 (1,000 head)	'15 as % of '14 (percent)	2014 (1,000 head)	2015 (1,000 head)	'15 as % of '14 (percent)
Arizona	272	243	89	28	19	68	27	19	70	1	4	400
California	500	440	88	38	50	132	55	43	78	3	7	233
Colorado	920	870	95	135	130	96	155	145	94	10	5	50
Idaho	205	230	112	37	31	84	41	29	71	1	2	200
Iowa	670	660	99	86	85	99	74	74	100	2	1	50
Kansas	2,060	2,080	101	335	355	106	315	355	113	10	10	100
Minnesota.....	134	145	108	11	18	164	12	13	108	1	1	100
Nebraska	2,470	2,490	101	430	390	91	375	385	103	15	15	100
Oklahoma	270	275	102	43	42	98	36	30	83	2	2	100
South Dakota ...	220	235	107	39	41	105	36	35	97	3	1	33
Texas	2,470	2,450	99	410	285	70	360	315	88	20	10	50
Washington	200	215	108	38	43	113	36	36	100	2	2	100
Other States ...	325	325	100	28	34	121	27	37	137	1	2	200
United States ...	10,716	10,658	99	1,658	1,523	92	1,549	1,516	98	71	62	87

¹Includes death loss, movement from feedlots to pasture, and shipments to other feedlots for further feeding.



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Update on MSCA's wolf delisting efforts

1. Wolf Legislative Delisting Process -

A. There are currently 2 bills in the House of Representatives in D.C. to legislatively de-list the wolf in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan and Wyoming. Minnesota has good representation of support from our Congressmen. Please continue to reach out to your representative and ask them for their support on HR 843 & HR 884. MSCA is staying in close contact with the co-signers of the bills to keep tabs on their process.

i. H.F. 843 – Western Great Lakes Wolf Management Act

1. Co-signers: Rep. John Kline & Rep. Collin Peterson

ii. H.F. 884 – To direct the Secretary of the Interior to reissue final rules relating to listing of the gray wolf in the Western Great Lakes and Wyoming under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, and for other purposes.

1. Co-signers: Rep. Collin Peterson, Rep. Tom Emmer, Rep. John Kline, Rep. Timothy Walz, Rep. Richard Nolan

B. There have been 4 groups who have filed an intent to appeal or an actual appeal to the Dec. 19th court ruling. 1. US Coalition of Hunters, 2. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 3. The state of Michigan and 4. The State of Wisconsin. Minnesota was not an original intervener in the case and cannot file an appeal. BUT, we were invited to a meeting with Attorney General Swanson in February where she announced that she will be filing an “Amicus Brief” or friend of the court document along with the appeal of another state or group to show support of the appeal.

Recently the National Wildlife Federation announced they are working to pass a resolution for their organization to support the legislative delisting of the grey wolf in MN, WI and MI. This is an unprecedented move by this organization and will give the two previously listed bills more traction, as well as gain more support from legislators who were previously on the fence about supporting a legislative delisting.

C. MSCA, Collin Peterson, Amy Klobuchar, Tom Emmer, John Kline, Rick Nolan, Time Walz and Al Franken all signed on to letters or sent letters to The U.S. Secretary of Agriculture,

Wolf. . . continued on page 16

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Independent, Third-Party Feedlot Audits – The Wave of the Future?

By: Jennifer Garreau – Feedlot Magazine

A growing number of beef consumers are looking for something more than just flavor and value, they want to know that the beef they are feeding their children is safe, wholesome and humanely raised. In order to meet consumer demands Rob Eirich, University of Nebraska Extension Educator and Nebraska Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) Director believes processors, feedlots and producers should be prepared to see independent, third-party audits that are currently optional become more important and possibly mandatory in the future.

“An audit is the official examination that verifies something,” said Eirich at

the Beef Feedlot Roundtable Meeting in Bridgeport, Neb. “We shouldn’t feel threatened by that. If we are doing everything we are supposed to, the audit just verifies that we are producing the product we say we are.”

“We want the auditors to verify we are using the best care and management of the animals we produce. Consumers continue to want more information about how their food is produced. They want to know how and where their beef is raised. They want to know it is wholesome and safe, and that they are getting a quality beef product,” he said.

Who are these consumers? McDonalds recently announced that by 2016, all of the beef they serve will come from sustainable producers.

Tyson Foods has also required all of their suppliers to have third-party audits. WalMart, JBS and Cargill are considering implementing similar policies.

Audits evaluate if processors are obtaining their beef from a verifiable, reliable source and if feedlots and producers are using the 2009 revised BQA best management practices adapted from The Cattle Industry’s Guidelines for the Care and Handling of Cattle.

Feedlots can schedule audits in advance and usually have two weeks prior notice and are given a list of required documentation. The guidelines state that audits should only be scheduled under normal operating

conditions and not during extreme weather or during disease outbreaks.

“When they come, they will want a daily schedule to see first-hand how the cattle are handled. They will want to watch how the cattle are loaded and unloaded and how they are processed. They will count how many fall and how many times the hot shot is used,” said Eirich.

The audit focuses on three main areas – animals, records and documentation of standard operating procedures and facilities and equipment. Auditors will look for animal abuse and neglect, withdrawal and residue avoidance, written protocols and documentation, facility maintenance, feed and water access and cleanliness, chutes and chute operation, stocking rate and space and for the amount of dry area available in pens.

An auditor will watch staff process one hundred head of cattle looking for excessive use of electric prods, cattle stumbling, tripping, jumping or falling out of the chute, cattle vocalization in the chute and how many cattle are miscaught in the chute.

Eirich said one of the most important things feedlots can do to prepare for an audit is to have standard operating procedures written down and on hand. Written protocols and documentation are required for employee training, pen maintenance, care of downers, euthanasia procedures, disease prevention, biosecurity standards, animal disposal, procedures for receiving, storing and handling of medications, broken needle procedures, verification of a veterinarian client relationship, feed delivery records, feed quality standards, medicated feed and supplement procedures, an emergency action plan, and shipping, receiving and processing procedures.

A feedyard cannot fail the audit. Scoring occurs in three categories – “acceptable” meaning that an operation meets guidelines, “needs improvement” meaning that action is required to correct problems and “unacceptable” meaning that immediate corrections must be made.

“It is a goal of the audits to help define the best management practices and educate suppliers in producing a high quality beef product for consumers. Eventually, unannounced audits will occur so they know producers are following the standard operating procedures on a daily basis,” said Eirich. “For producers this is part of product integrity which shows their commitment to produce a wholesome, safe and a quality beef product each and every time for consumers.”

The BQA Assessment Guides for feedlots, stockers and cow-calf operations can be found on the BQA website at www.bqa.org.



2015 MSCA Summer Beef Tour & Trade Show Hosted by

Minnesota State Cattlemen’s Association

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July 21, 2015 @ Mcleod County Fairgrounds, Hutchinson, MN

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- Meal sponsor
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- Full page ad in tour catalog
- Four tour participant registrations

Choice Sponsor \$1,000

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- Bus sponsor (promotion time on bus)
- Trade show booth (@ tour stop)
- Half page ad in tour catalog
- Four tour participant registrations

Select Sponsor \$650

- Sponsor recognition in tour program
- Trade show booth (@ tour stop)
- Half page ad in tour catalog
- Two tour participant registrations

Bus Sponsor \$650

- Sponsor recognition in tour program
- Bus sponsor (promotion time on bus)
- Sponsor designation on bus
- Quarter page ad in tour catalog
- Two tour participant registrations

Deluxe Trade Show Booth \$550

- 10’ x 20”
- Two 8’ tables
- Two participant registrations

Standard Trade Show Booth \$300

- 10’ x 10”
- One 8’ table
- One participant registration

Outdoor Trade Show Booth \$300

- 10’ x 40”
- One participant registration

Ads in tour catalog

- Full page (7.625” x 10”) _____ \$400
- Half page (7.625” x 4.9”) _____ \$250
- Quarter page (3.75” x 4.9”) _____ \$150
- Eighth page (3.75” x 2.25”) _____ \$75

Premium pages in tour catalog

- Back cover (full page) _____ \$500
- Inside front cover (full page) _____ \$450
- Inside back cover (full page) _____ \$450
- Center spread (2 full pages) _____ \$950
- Full page adjacent to tour stop _____ \$400

Note: A PDF file is required for ads in the catalog. Email all ads to mscasummertour2015@hotmail.com by May 1, 2015. Ads can be designed in house if desired, just send info and pictures to same email.

Tour participant registration

- Before June 15, 2015 _____ \$25 x () = _____
- After June 15, 2015 _____ \$35 x () = _____
- Student price _____ \$20 x () = _____
- Additional lunch ticket _____ \$10 x () = _____
- Additional supper ticket _____ \$15 x () = _____

\$ _____ **Total payment enclosed**

Contact information:

Name: _____

Company: _____

Additional names part of registration:

2) _____ 3) _____

4) _____ 5) _____

Address: _____

City, state, zip: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Email: _____

Send completed form and payment (make checks payable) to:

Minnesota State Cattlemen’s Association or MSCA
23722 230th St.
Hutchinson, MN 55350

Buffer... continued from page 1

regulations. Here is a partial list:

Feedlots- from the MPCA website:

The MPCA regulates the collection, transportation, storage, processing and disposal of animal manure and livestock processing activities, and provides assistance to counties and the livestock industry. The rules apply to all aspects of livestock production areas including the location, design, construction, operation and management of feedlots, feed storage, stormwater runoff and manure handling facilities.- read more at <http://www.pca.state.mn.us/index.php/topics/feedlots/index.html>

Feedlot operators are also subject to local government regulations.

Pesticides- from the DMA website:

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) regulates the use, application, storage, sale, handling and disposal of agricultural chemicals. This includes fertilizers and products to control weeds, insects, fungi, rodents and other pests. Pesticides must be registered with both the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the state of Minnesota. The MDA Pesticide and Fertilizer Management Division (PFMD) conducts routine inspections and performs investigations about pesticide use complaints. – read more at <http://www.mda.state.mn.us/chemicals/pesticides/complaints.aspx>

Wetlands and Drainage- from the BWSR website:

Since 1985, the Wetland Conservation provision of the federal farm bills (Swampbuster) requires all agricultural producers to protect the wetlands on the farms they own or operate in order to be eligible for USDA farm program benefits.

The Minnesota Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) is a state law that regulates activities that result in the draining, filling, or excavating of wetlands in Minnesota, including those on agricultural land. -read more at http://bwsr.state.mn.us/wetlands/Wetlands_on_Ag_Land.pdf

The Bottom Line:

Water quality is a top priority of Minnesota farmers. Minnesota farmers work diligently to provide crop and livestock products on which we all depend and reduce environmental impacts. The false choice of clean water or farms is, in my view, unreasonable—society requires both, and the farming community is doing its part to contribute now and continues to strive to do even better.

Hutchinson... continued from page 1

Registration will begin at 6:15 am through 8:30 am, with the first tour bus leaving at 7:00 am and every 15 minutes after that. A continental breakfast will be available before the tour. This year's tour will have an additional emphasis on education with each stop having an opportunity to learn about a specific program or technology specific to that farm. Tentative tour stops will include Schiefelebein Farms, Kimball; Landwher Dairy, Watkins; Terry & Matt Schaefer, Cokato; Polzin Cattle/Polzin Embryo Center, Litchfield and Cashwise Foods, meat cutting & meat department tour.

The tour registration fee is \$25 before June 15th and \$35 after June 15th. The student price is \$20. An additional lunch ticket is \$10 and an additional dinner ticket is \$15. Sent payment to Ashley Kohls, 23722 230th St., Hutchinson, MN 55350.

An MSCA board of directors meeting, MSCA PAC golf scramble and a picnic will be held on Monday, July 20th just outside of Hutchinson.

For more information contact Ashley Kohls: 612-618-6619 or mscasummertour2015@hotmail.com.

Greenstar... continued from page 12

can help stop these additional regulations. You already know everything you need to complete the self-evaluation- after all, who knows your farm better than you? It is easy, confidential, no government agency involved, and no further action is required regardless of how you answer the questions. Individual farm data will never be presented – only the averages of those participating.

Go to <https://greenstarfarms.org/> and click on "getting started". If you need any assistance, contact Jeremy Geske at 612-756-1200 or jeremy@mawrc.org.



MSCA Members and Minnesota Cattle Industry members at the 2015 National Cattle Industry Convention and NCBA Trade Show.



Minnesota was well represented at the 2015 Cattle Industry Convention and NCBA Trade Show. More than 7,000 cattlemen and women from across the country attend the 2015 Cattle Industry Convention and National Cattlemen's Beef Association Trade Show in San Antonio, Texas. MSCA had representation on both the policy and federation committees.

Sign Up a New Member Today - Help MSCA Grow!

Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association/National Cattlemen's Beef Association

MSCA/NCBA Partnered Membership Application Form

Name _____ Phone _____ Email _____

MN State Cattlemen's Association Dues \$50
Junior Dues \$25

Local Cattleman Association Dues (Optional)
Local = _____ (Local Dues →) _____

NCBA Membership Dues (Optional)
 (Select the appropriate classification and add to MN State Cattlemen dues)
 1-100 Head = \$100
 101-250 Head = \$200
 251--500 Head = \$300
 501-1000 Head = \$400 + Fair Share
 1001 - 1500 Head = \$550 + Fair Share (NCBA Dues →) _____
 1501 Head & Up = \$750 + Fair Share
 Fair Share is \$0.25 per stock cow & \$0.125 per stocker/feeder
 Individual Supporting Member (non-cattle owner) = \$100
 Student Membership = \$50

Total Dues Enclosed This Membership _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Type Ops: Feeder Cow-Calf Seedstock Stocker Dairy Associate

Method of Payment: Check Credit Card Invoice Me
 Credit Card Type: Master Card Visa Discover

Card # _____

Expiration Date ____/____/____ Signature _____

Make Checks Payable to: "MSCA" (No Cash Please)

Return Form & Payment To: MSCA Treasurer
23722 230th Street • Hutchinson, MN 55350

Recruited By: _____

Questions Call: ☎ (320) 634-6722 or email: ✉ mnsca@mnsca.org