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Volume 4 Issue 4 **DECEMBER 2024**

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For more information visit **ABP Daily**, and for assistance with DLMS and livestream access, call Mark Shologan (780-699-5082) or the Purebred Team (780-991-3025).





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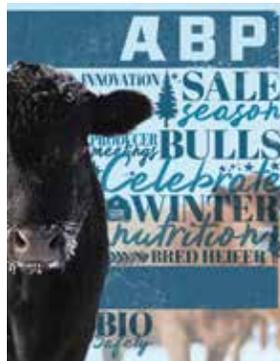
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ON THE COVER

Winter brings the chance to light the fire, reflect and restore. From bull power to bred heifers, it's the season of snow, winter feeding and hope for a bright future in 2025.

#AllForTheBeef

WITH BRAD DUBEAU



As 2024 draws to a close, I'm reflecting on what the year brought to our industry and organization.

It was wonderful to see moisture replenished this year. Although some areas were still short, at least more affordable and ample options for feed supplies were available. 2024 brought some of the strongest prices ever recorded on all classes of cattle. This good news, however, is tempered by a similar rise in costs, and despite the market boom, margins remain tight. I am cautiously optimistic these good prices will set the stage for a measured rebuild of herd numbers down the road.

For Alberta Beef Producers, 2024 was a successful year with our Stampede Summit, government relations and our efforts to promote the beef business. ABP has continued to be front and centre in advocating on behalf of producers.

We've worked hard to increase communications and visibility. A highlight was the production of our TV commercials, which focus on beef sustainability and nutrition. These ads aired during the Calgary Stampede broadcasts on Sportsnet, reaching audiences far beyond our borders with important messages about Alberta beef.

ABP Chair Brodie Haugan's time in leadership is also coming to a close, as he winds up a decade serving as an ABP delegate and a second term as chair of our board. He has done an amazing job. Brodie's priorities of elevating transparency around communications and bringing more beef voices to the table on key issues have made a lasting impact.

Looking ahead to 2025, one of the first activities for ABP will be our Producer Meetings. Held across the province, these meetings and your input are critical for our organization. The input gathered through resolutions helps us set direction, ensuring we address issues that are important to you.

I encourage you to attend a meeting in your area and sign up at your earliest opportunity. A nominal \$10 fee will be charged for supper at these meetings,

and by signing up, you will help us define attendance, allowing us to be as efficient as possible. Watch for further details on the specific dates and locations of the producer meetings on ABP Daily, on air with Cattle Country radio, on posters at your local auction mart, and – post permitting – in a flyer that will be arriving in your mailbox.

We are excited to hold our AGM in conjunction with the Alberta Beef Industry Conference (ABIC) events this year in Calgary. There will be plenty for producers to take in at the ABIC event. We are also making the annual meeting available online again through DLMS so that producers can watch and listen to the proceedings. Last year, we had 600 unique views online. It would be great to see that grow.

Hopefully, you have signed up for the ABP Monthly Minute. It's an important tool for updating you on the many issues we are active on. Your email address is required to receive it. Now is a good time to ensure your contact information with ABP is current and includes all active partners in your outfit.

In 2025, we will continue working with the Canadian Cattle Association and Alberta Cattle Feeders' Association on the Foot and Mouth Disease file. It remains a significant potential threat to the cattle industry, and having a response plan in place is as important as building a vaccine bank. Our staff is committed to developing a plan in conjunction with other agencies involved in the process.

Research remains an ongoing priority, and our Living Labs initiative helps drive progress on Best Management Practices. We look forward to seeing what comes from the five-year commitment. We are also engaged with our own research projects and with the Beef Cattle Research Council to develop tools that can make a practical, positive impact on beef operations in Alberta and across Canada. Research is definitely a long-range investment, but it remains a vital priority.

Marketing also remains a priority, from TV ads and digital technology to this magazine. Whether navigating recreation access, issues on private and public lands or building consumer awareness of how producers manage grassland landscapes, it's of the utmost importance to have a respected voice on the issues that impact you.

Improving Agri-Stability is another long-term project we continue to pursue in an effort to make the program more reactive in times of need. We also strive to see the program reflect the increased livestock values and higher production costs for the cow-calf and feedlot sectors. We have witnessed progress in government agencies' openness to ideas and collaboration on these adjustments.

These are complex programs, and there is a need to make sure they are fiscally responsible and responsive, which takes time. The same holds true for wildlife compensation issues, which are growing in volume, especially as more producers implement various winter grazing methods.

I want to remind producers that funding opportunities remain available for certain management improvements through the VBP Plus program, with more information on the website. I encourage all producers to take advantage of this program.

Perhaps 2025 will be the year you step forward to become an ABP delegate and become part of the work underway to build a strong, productive cattle industry. I encourage you to consider doing so. It's worth the effort.

On behalf of our team at ABP, I would like to take this opportunity to extend our appreciation to Lindsay Roberts. Lindsay fulfilled the role of Marketing and Communications Manager at ABP for the past four years. During this time, she embraced the newly created ABP magazine, developing it into the leading-edge publication that it is today. She also had a vision for a revived ABP marketing campaign, bringing the brand back to the forefront. It was a pleasure to work with Lindsay, and we wish her continued success in her new communications role and career in the crop production sector. I also want to extend my gratitude to Brodie, the Executive team and our board and delegates for their support, as well as big kudos to the ABP staff for their continued hard work and for going above and beyond in 2024. ▼

I wish you a very Merry Christmas. I hope this holiday season, you will take time to reflect, restore and relax with family and friends. May 2025 shine bright on our beef industry.



BROST PRODUCTION SALE JANUARY 30, 2025

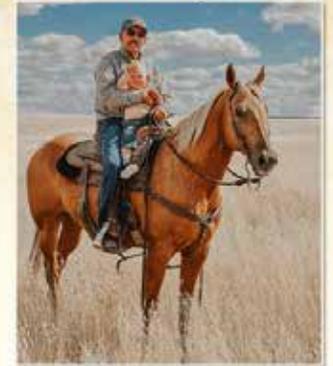
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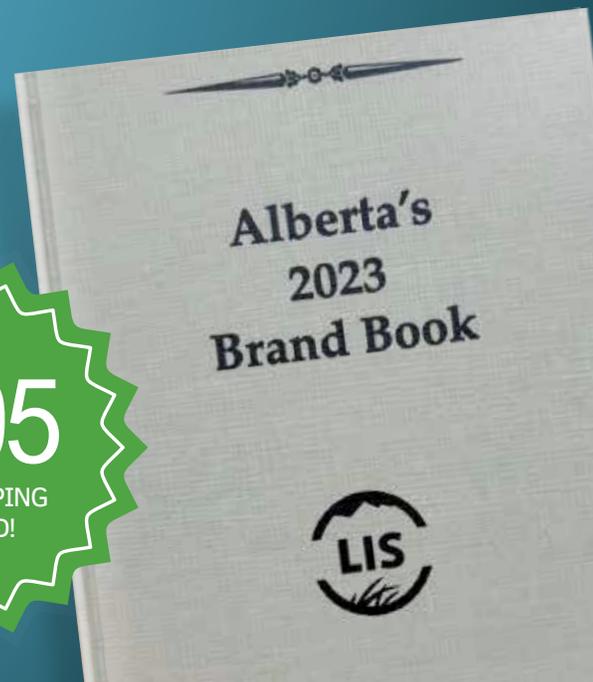
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Supporting Beef Producers

BY KALEY SEGBOER-EDGE

ALBERTA VERIFIED BEEF PRODUCTION PLUS

This summer, Alberta Beef Producers secured \$1.9 million in funding from the Sustainable Canadian Agriculture Partnership, significantly enhancing access to training and support for producers navigating the Verified Beef Production Plus (VBP+) program. This funding has enabled the launch of the Alberta Beef Producers Incentive for VBP+, which has already attracted more than 60 applications, with more than half receiving funding. Those who did not receive funding are being assisted by Alberta and National VBP staff in completing their applications.

More than 100 producers have participated in additional VBP+ training through the Canadian Cattle Learning Centre. Upon completion, they can apply for Stream 1 funding, which offers \$2,500 in rebates for projects focused on disease prevention, animal care and food safety.

KEY INFORMATION FOR PRODUCERS

- **Don't miss out on rebate opportunities:** Up to \$5,000 in rebates are available for VBP+-audited operations, and \$2,500 for those who have completed VBP+ training within the last ten years. For more details, visit abpdaily.com/alberta-vbplus-incentive/
- **CRSB-related incentives:** To participate in the implementation of the Certified Sustainable Beef Framework, VBP+-certified operations must ensure cattle are age verified and, if purchased, entered into the Canadian Livestock Tracking System (CLTS) by January 15, 2025. For inquiries, please contact the Canadian Livestock Tracking System at clts.canadaid.ca/CLTS/login.htm
- **FCC's sustainability incentive program:** Payments are calculated based on your lending with FCC. You can make one payment per year, up to \$2,000, and you can reapply annually throughout the program's duration at fcc-fac.ca/en/financing/agriculture/sustainability-incentive-program

STEWARDSHIP UPDATE

We are advancing the Predator Co-existence Project, which received board support in September. A wildlife working group has been established to address key issues and prioritize beef producers' concerns. This project focuses on prevention, mitigation and compensation strategies. Concurrently, we are developing a complementary Ungulate Management Project that outlines current challenges that producers face when managing ungulates on their land and maps out opportunities.

Our efforts also include collaboration with Government Relations to create research and communication plans that effectively engage stakeholders and build an understanding of the challenges ranchers and farmers face when living with these species. We are committed to ensuring that the perspectives and concerns of Alberta beef producers are represented in discussions with government departments and environmental groups. Our partnerships include initiatives like the Multiple Species at Risk Program by the Alberta Conservation Association, Cows and Fish and the North American Waterfowl Management Plan.

UPDATED HUNTING REGULATIONS

Recent changes to hunting regulations aim to enhance the management of growing ungulate populations, notably elk and white-tailed deer, which continue to be a challenge for producers across the province. Updates include the introduction of an antlerless elk hunting season in various Wildlife Management Units and an extended season in many areas. Additionally, a supplemental antlerless white-tailed deer license will be implemented in several Wildlife Management Units. For further details, including a map of Alberta's Wildlife Management Units, please see the Alberta Guide to Hunting Regulations at albertaregulations.ca/huntingregs or contact your local Fish and Game office. ▼

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THE ESSENTIAL ROLE OF BIOSECURITY IN CATTLE SALES

BY KALEY SEGBOER-EDGE



DURING A BUSY BULL SALE SEASON, IT'S IMPORTANT TO KEEP BIOSECURITY IN MIND. CATTLE SALES PRESENT A SIGNIFICANT OPPORTUNITY FOR SELLERS AND PURCHASERS ALIKE. HOWEVER, WITH THIS OPPORTUNITY COMES THE RESPONSIBILITY TO IMPLEMENT EFFECTIVE DISEASE PREVENTION STRATEGIES TO MINIMIZE RISKS AND POTENTIAL FINANCIAL LOSSES.

THE IMPORTANCE OF BIOSECURITY

While we often associate biosecurity with international travel and the prevention of foreign animal diseases like Foot and Mouth Disease – which could cost the Canadian cattle industry billions – there are pressing risks closer to home during cattle sale season. As producers invite buyers to their operations or travel to purchase replacements, they inadvertently expose their herds to diseases that could impact next year's calves and overall herd health. The financial implications of such outbreaks can be severe.

IMPLEMENTING PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

To safeguard against these risks, producers need to adopt straightforward biosecurity practices. These measures are essential for the immediate health of this year's calves and the long-term productivity of the entire herd.

Veterinary collaboration is the foundation to disease prevention, and producers are encouraged to work with their veterinarian to develop a comprehensive herd health plan, including vaccinations.



HYGIENE PRACTICES

During calving and sale season, it's vital to reinforce good hygiene practices among family and staff. This includes using separate footwear, changing clothes or wearing coveralls and regularly washing clothing. Frequent hand washing, especially after visiting other cattle facilities, is also essential.

RESOURCES FOR BIOSECURITY

Producers can access valuable resources from the Beef Cattle Research Council, which offers guidance on creating a biosecurity plan tailored to their operations. These resources provide protocols to prevent diseases from entering and spreading within herds. More information is available at BeefResearch.ca

CONSIDERATIONS FOR BUYERS AND SELLERS

When purchasing replacements, keep the following in mind:

Herd Health History: Always verify the health history of new purchases with previous owners.

Seclusion Pens: Establish seclusion pens for incoming cattle to prevent nose-to-nose contact for three to four weeks.

For sellers, consider these practices:

Public Facilities: If taking cattle to auction markets or public events, utilize seclusion pens for returning animals to avoid contact with your main herd.

On-Farm Sales: Limit visitor access to production areas and high-risk cattle. Maintain a log of all visitors, which can also serve as a marketing tool for future sales.

Traffic Management: Control the flow of guests during sales to minimize exposure and risk. Provide hand-sanitizing stations and boot washes with disinfectants like Virkon to minimize the risk of diseases like Bovine Rhinotracheitis (IBR), Bovine Viral Diarrhea (BVD), Johne's Disease and Neospora from entering your herd.

Biosecurity is not merely a precaution; it is a commitment to preserving the health and vitality of your herd and ensuring the future of the Canadian beef industry.

CONCLUSION

In the dynamic world of cattle sales, biosecurity is not merely a precaution; it is a commitment to preserving the health and vitality of your herd and ensuring the future of the Canadian beef industry. By adopting these straightforward practices, producers can seize the opportunities presented by cattle sales while safeguarding their operations against disease and financial loss. ▼





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AN UPDATE FROM THE

Alberta AgriSystems Living Lab



2024 WAS A BUSY AND PRODUCTIVE YEAR FOR THE ALBERTA AGRISYSTEMS LIVING LAB (AALL). WE NOW HAVE 33 CORE CROP AND LIVESTOCK PRODUCERS AND THREE INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES ADOPTING 47 BENEFICIAL MANAGEMENT PRACTICES (BMPs) ON THEIR FARMS AND RANCHES.

These include practices like inter/cover/poly cropping, adaptive multi-paddock grazing, legume overseeding, pasture rejuvenation, restoration of perennial cover, compost and fertilizer management and application, nitrification inhibitors, wetland restoration, soil amendments, extending grazing and precision farming and feeding.

On-farm measurements differ by site and BMP, but we continue to collect data around greenhouse gas emissions (GHG), crop and biomass yields, nitrogen budgets, soil metrics such as aggregate stability, carbon mineralization, soil texture, soil organic carbon, forage productivity and forage species diversity. Given the practical realities of on-farm research and the adaptive nature of the AALL, analysis of this type of data is challenging and ongoing.

We are pleased to release the long-awaited 2022 Baseline Adoption Rates Survey Report. The full report is posted on the AALL website. This survey gathered data from 312 respondents in Alberta and the Peace region of British Columbia to assess current rates of adoption of BMPs being tested on the AALL sites, as well as the level of execution of some of these practices. This report provides a foundation to examine how adoption of certain practices changes over time, as the survey will be repeated in late 2026. In addition, the socio-economic team has run core producer data through Holos to examine the effects of different practices on whole-farm GHG emissions, as well as developing several different types of scenarios. This, along with the cost of production data, will help to identify BMPs that create win-wins for producers, environmentally and economically.

The AALL hosted four field days this summer across the province with excellent attendance and is gearing up for several webinars over the coming months on topics like fertilizer, cover crops, soil amendments, pollinators, pasture cell design for rotational grazing and more! If you missed some of our previous webinars, they are recorded and posted on the AALL website, along with several more useful resources. Please visit agrisystemsll.ca to see what we've developed so far or to sign up for an upcoming event! 🇨🇦

The AALL couldn't help research meet reality without the tireless efforts of our research leads and teams from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and the Universities of Alberta, Saskatchewan and Guelph, the AALL contract staff, Nu Nenne Advisian Environmental, Canfax Research Services and of course the support from all our partners. We are looking forward to 2025 and beyond!

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Resolutions

RESOLUTIONS PLAY A CRUCIAL ROLE IN SHAPING THE FUTURE OF THE CATTLE INDUSTRY, DRIVING PROGRESS AND FOSTERING COLLABORATION.

Over the years, ABP has received numerous resolutions that have significantly impacted both producers and the broader industry.

For instance, in 2024, cattle producers in the Southwest Zone brought forward a resolution urging ABP to lobby the Government of Alberta to improve AFSC's Next Generation Loan program. After passing in the Southwest, this resolution was directed to the annual meeting of the delegates, where it passed a second time. As a result of the ABP's efforts arising from this resolution, by September 2024, the Government of Alberta announced changes to the program, including expanded eligibility, increased loan limits, lowered ownership requirements and extended interest-only payments.

This is just one example of how resolutions can lead to tangible changes. In the past, we have seen resolutions aimed at increasing strategic communications with producers and consumers, improving recognition for stewardship, and collaboration between cattle industry groups. These are among many topics that have guided the evolution of the organization.

Another example is a recurring theme from producers that we push for better Business Risk Management programming for Alberta's cattle industry. This work is beginning to show real progress. With strong support from Federal, Provincial and Territorial Ministers of Agriculture, these efforts are paving the way for a more resilient and prosperous cattle industry.

SO WHAT IS A RESOLUTION?

A resolution is a formal decision or expression of opinion proposed for approval by a group. In the context of ABP, resolutions are brought forward by eligible producers at annual Producer Meetings in January and February. Those that pass are then directed by the Resolutions Committee to the Annual General Meeting for consideration by the delegate body, or to the Board of Directors.

Resolutions can address a wide range of issues, from policy changes and strategic initiatives to specific actions the organization should take. They are powerful tools for guiding the direction of an organization, ensuring that the collective voice of cattle producers are heard, and concerns and ideas is formally recognized and addressed.

By their very structure, resolutions turn challenges into opportunities. A well-crafted resolution provides background on the challenges or issues being considered and a recommendation for specific action.

To maximize their potential, resolutions brought forward at Producer Meetings should:

- resonate with other beef producers,
- be specific/relevant to the beef industry, and
- align with the scope of the work done at Alberta Beef Producers. ▼

Eligible cattle producers are encouraged to develop resolutions to present at the upcoming Producer Meetings.

Voice your ideas

Resolutions have the power to inspire action and drive meaningful change. Consider presenting your ideas at Producer Meetings in January and February.

Interested in bringing forward an issue and opportunity in your zone?

Review the basics of preparing a resolution via ABP Daily.



Dollars and Sense of Winter Feeding

BY ROBIN GALEY

FOLLOWING A SEASON IN WHICH CATTLE PRICES AND GRASS PRODUCTION INCREASED SIGNIFICANTLY, NOW IS A GOOD TIME TO RECONSIDER THE ECONOMICS OF WINTER NUTRITION. WE ASKED A MARKET SPECIALIST AND A RUMINANT NUTRITIONIST FOR SOME DOLLARS AND SENSE ADVICE.



In retrospect, 2024 was a very different year for Alberta beef producers compared to 2023. On the plus side, both grass yields and market prices were up. Given the high costs of feed and input prices, developing a nutrition plan that prioritizes animal health and considers feasible feeding options is crucial.

“Currently, cattle prices are staying high, and feed is cheaper than in the last few years – especially grains. With \$4 to 5/lb calves likely next fall, it doesn’t pay to cut corners on feed,” suggests Ryan Copithorne, beef market consultant and owner of Cows in Control.

Ruminant nutritionist Breanna Sentes, with Beefsmart Consulting, concurs. “The drought years taught us there is money to be made when you are critical of your feedyard and fine-tune your strategy to make best use of feed,” she says.

MARKET PROVIDES MOTIVATION

One motivation for a thoughtful feeding strategy is higher demand leading to higher market prices. Auction marts traded behind normal this fall. Even cull cattle prices were strong, Copithorne notes. “We’re so short of cows, the packing plants have been hungry for culls all year,” he says.

Hungry auction marts are partly a result of too many tough years, which forced many ranches to reduce herd sizes, reducing supply. Copithorne adds, “I also think people are holding back cows and calves right now. With better conditions in terms of feed and prices, they’re better set up to background or keep cattle over the winter.”

He adds: “The economics to background or finish cattle are pretty tight right now, but the economics of breeding cattle are penciling well. That’s where there is potential for a good upside – raising calves and creating breeding animals.”



SENSIBLE FEEDING STRATEGIES

To ensure your feeding strategy for both backgrounding and bred cattle pays off, Sentes recommends feed testing. “If you don’t critically look at your feed stores and test them to see what they’re valued at nutritionally, you’re kind of shooting in the dark in terms of valuing a commodity,” she says.

Nutritional composition tests cost \$50 to \$100 a sample, but spread over the full herd, it’s a small price to pay for good insurance. “From a dollars standpoint, I think some people look at feed testing or nutritional advice as a big investment, but if you improve reproduction by even one or two percent, it quickly pays for itself,” says Sentes.

Additionally, growing conditions vary widely from year to year, meaning forage quality can be highly unpredictable. “In a drought year, you might have less volume but higher quality forages. In a wet year, the inverse is sometimes true – you may get a ton of volume, but really low-quality feed.”

The winter-feeding program should also account for animals that aren’t in good condition. “Drought can take a few years to catch up with you and may have lasting effects on reproduction and performance. Where cows really depleted their stores during these stressful years, we’re still playing catch-up. “Now is not the time to take your foot off the gas,” says Sentes.

To meet the needs of young cows that had a rough first summer or two of life, ensure you have adequate protein and energy. Fine-tuning your feeding strategy may be as simple as adding half a pound of canola meal to boost protein. “Depending on when the forage is harvested, we’re often low on protein, and that’s where a little canola meal or DDG goes a long way,” Sentes says.

The nutritional status of bred cows directly affects calves’ status and immune function, so don’t skimp. Says Sentes, “How well calves use vaccines and how well they grow is directly related to how well the cow has been fed in the last trimester of gestation.”

Minerals, though required in much smaller quantities than other feed ingredients, are important to maintaining animal health. “Producers tend to think they need to pay close attention to mineral nutrition during the breeding period, but it takes three or four months to make a real difference in mineral status, so I suggest focusing on that now,” says Sentes.

The good news is that producers have generally come a long way in terms of their nutrition knowledge. “The last few years have made producers more careful in what they’re doing, because the old way of throwing bales of hay out there was no longer feasible,” Sentes says.

ECONOMICS ARE STILL TIGHT

“Managing winter feed costs sensibly is important, given that it amounts to up to 70 percent of annual costs. While grass production was up this year, drought conditions continue to be something to keep an eye on,” says Copithorne.

No one can guess where markets will go next, but at three to four thousand dollars a head, bred cattle are currently very valuable. “There are a lot of dollars in the bred side of the cattle market. Every cow that produces a calf should make you money in the long run,” says Copithorne.

With that in mind, if extra feed is available this winter, Copithorne suggests using it on breeding stock to help create a solid return. “But also be sure to bank some feed if you can while the feed is cheaper,” he concludes. ▼



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NE ZONE | Jan. 21, 2025

Canalta Hotel, Lac La Biche

CT ZONE | Jan. 22, 2025

Barrhead Neighbourhood Inn, Barrhead

NE ZONE | Jan. 23, 2025

Pomeroy Inn & Suites, Vermilion

CT ZONE | Jan. 28, 2025

Best Western Premier, Leduc

SW ZONE | Jan. 29, 2025

Pomeroy Inn & Suites, Olds

SW ZONE | Jan. 30, 2025

Heritage Inn Hotel, High River

SW ZONE | Feb. 11, 2025

MA Catering & Reo Hall, Fort Macleod

SE ZONE | Feb. 12, 2025

Heritage Inn Hotel, Brooks

SE ZONE | Feb. 13, 2025

Canalta Hotel, Oyen

Please bring resolutions forward at a meeting in your zone or submit online by January 10, 2025.

Producers are welcome to attend any meeting, but will only be eligible to vote on resolutions brought forward from their own zone.



Registration

Tickets (\$10 for supper):

- Scan the QR code
- Visit abpdaily.store/producer-meetings
- Call us at 403-451-1174

Agenda

- 4:30 – 6:00 p.m. Producer Meeting
- 6:00 – 7:00 p.m. Supper
- 7:00 – 8:30 p.m. Producer Meeting
- 8:30 – 10:00 p.m. Social

Optimizing Your Bull Battery

UNDERSTANDING & UTILIZING EPDs

Expected progeny differences (EPDs) have existed in our beef industry for decades, providing estimates of an animal's genetic potential. They are a valuable tool that can be utilized to maximize investment and improve production and performance, but they are often misunderstood and overlooked.

When purchasing bulls, what you see is not always what you get. That is why utilizing EPDs to look more than skin deep is important. It's much like purchasing a new truck – you need to look under the hood.

Before entering a dealership, you evaluate what you will be using the truck for, or in this case, what your bull would contribute to your program. Breaking down the EPDs into three categories can narrow down your bull selection based on your criteria for improving or maintaining your program.

Take, for example, a light-duty half-ton truck. Generally, you would use the base model as your everyday commuter, something that is fuel-efficient and gets you from destination A to B. It's a unit that will have durability and endurance. When looking for a sire in that same capacity, birthweight (BW) and calving ease (CE) are two EPDs that would highlight some of these traits. A heavy-duty one-ton truck at the opposite end of the spectrum.



This truck would expect to have some performance and power to haul heavy loads, something with a little more “jam,” and would not be something you would expect to be as fuel efficient as your half-ton.

When going through your bull checklist remember that one animal will not contribute just one trait in a mating.

With a bull providing performance, you are more inclined to look at performance-based data such as weaning weight (WW), yearling weight (YW) and carcass data, such as ribeye area. The last category could be viewed as more of your “luxury models.” They may be in the middle, between functionality and performance models, but have traits that add a little more spice. These bulls will add more finesse to a program. In beef terms, this appears in traits that focus on the finer details of beef production, such as milk, docility, and hoof and claw EPDs.

When going through your bull checklist remember that one animal will not contribute just one trait in a mating. It is important to look at all EPDs and ensure your selection is based on the traits that will improve your program. Multiple traits are calculated within a breed average, so breeds are not compared against each other. Contemporary groups are utilized to eliminate calculation differences from external forces such as environment and herd management. It's also important to be aware that EPDs are the calculated averages for the expected

progeny, and data will be less accurate the younger the stock is.

Change will take time, and results will not happen overnight. Whether you are striving to improve birthweights, calving ease, maternal milk, carcass or other desirable traits, consider taking advantage of EPD

technology to best support your breeding requirements and strategy this bull sale season. ▼

For more information on understanding and utilizing Expected Progeny Differences (EPDs), please scan the Beef Cattle Research Council QR code below.

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Register for the BCRC's free e-course:
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BeefResearch.ca
/genetics-course

NEW LIVESTOCK WINTER WATER TECHNOLOGY

Ag Innovations Winner



BY DIANNE FINSTAD

A dreaded winter chore on any livestock operation is thawing out a frozen water bowl in the middle of a snowstorm. But what if you could help prevent that and save on power costs at the same time?



That's exactly what the Alberta-based electrical automation company Current Group has created in a new product called Open₂O, which launched this fall.

The concept garnered considerable interest in Red Deer in November when Current Group was one of five semi-finalists in the Agri-Trade Ag Innovations competition. In fact, Open₂O won both the Farmer's Choice award and the overall title from the judging panel, awarding the company a total of \$25,000.

"Open₂O is a product we created based on a need largely in the feedlot space, for beef producers. But it can go into other areas where you have horses or cow-calf operations," explains Current Group founder BJ Baerg.

The advanced electronic device automatically maintains a water bowl's temperature in cold environments.

Current Group, located in Linden and Three Hills, is primarily an electrical and automation design-build firm with a focus on agriculture operations. Baerg says the winter-time waste of power due to inefficient methods of controlling the temperature element under the water bowl drove their creation of this new product.

Typically, livestock water bowls are heated at a constant power level using a thermal couple with a bi-metal strip. Baerg says there is often a lot of adjustment lag time when a desired temperature is hit.

“We started testing and doing a bunch of prep work to figure out how we can make these water bowls only ‘on’ when necessary,” says Baerg.

Current Group created a small computer using different inputs to replace the thermal couple with a very accurate temperature sensor. The sensor analyzes the temperature every 30 seconds – the temperature of the water in the bowl, the ambient temperature and the temperature of the water supply line. The processor then determines whether the heater power should be on or off or how many of the next 30-second brackets it needs to be on.

“Basically, it maximizes the need for ‘on’ only as much as needed.”

Baerg says that means Open₂O can turn any livestock waterer into a ‘No Freeze Water Bowl’.

“The big idea is that, and we’ve proven this, there is a substantial power savings from the traditional method. Our little system is able to retrofit existing steel, plastic and concrete water troughs,” adds Baerg.

Current Group has shown up to fifty per cent in power cost savings from using the device.

In fact, Current Group has shown up to fifty per cent in power cost savings from using the device. The device also prevents the water from overheating, which is not good for animals either. There are also time and labour savings, as Open₂O enables an easier way to check waterers.

Because it is a ‘smart’ controller, farmers can log in from their phones to see if all water bowls are open, something that’s generally a daily visual chore for feedlot workers. Alarms can also be set if temperatures drop too



low. Baerg says that is a big plus for feedlots with multiple units, or producers with waterers in remote locations, or even if they are away from the home base. The system requires power-driven water bowls and cellphone reception. There is the option of setting up a LoRaWAN tower, which uses radio frequency to transmit data from multiple units back to the main brain.

Baerg’s system was tested on several feedlots, and the company is already installing it at other feed yards.

“Actually, it’s an interesting response,” notes Baerg. “Power savings matter a lot to some people. But another thing we do is have the option to install a water meter, so an operation can figure out how many gallons a minute their cattle are drinking, which some people are actually more interested in.”

Measuring water consumption per pen is a new data point for many, and work is already underway with local veterinarians to understand the animals’ health status as it relates to water consumption.

For more information:

currentgroup.ca/no-freeze-water-bowl/ ▼



'Tis the Season... to Check in on Mental Health

If the holiday season and planning for the year ahead seem exceptionally daunting, know that you are not alone. The holiday season and winter bring a unique set of additional stressors for producers that can significantly impact mental health.

While this time of year is often viewed as a period of celebration and family gatherings, it also poses challenges stemming from expectations of joy and togetherness, which can contrast sharply with personal struggles. Producers already coping with stress, anxiety or financial distress can find it difficult to meet these societal expectations, adding the weight of feelings of inadequacy or disappointment. This can exacerbate feelings of anxiety, depression and isolation, leading to heightened risks of mental health issues and even suicide.

The pressure of seasonal reflection as the year comes to a close, recognizing unmet goals or concerns about the future on the farm and ranch, can create an overwhelming sense of anxiety and hopelessness.

SILENT NIGHTS: MANAGING MENTAL HEALTH WHEN SEASONS CHANGE

The changing seasons can profoundly impact our mental health, too. Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) is a type of depression that typically occurs during late fall and winter. As daylight hours shorten and temperatures drop, many experience changes in mood, motivation and overall well-being. The root cause of SAD is believed to be a combination of biological, psychological and environmental factors. One significant factor is the reduced exposure to sunlight during the colder months, leading to a drop in serotonin levels. This neurotransmitter plays a critical role in regulating mood. Its deficiency can contribute to feelings of sadness and lethargy.

The decrease in sunlight can disrupt our internal biological clocks that govern sleep-wake cycles, too – exacerbating symptoms of depression. Those with SAD may experience a range of symptoms, including persistent feelings of sadness, irritability and anxiety. Physical symptoms may include fatigue, changes in appetite and difficulty concentrating. Some may find engaging in their usual activities challenging or withdraw from social interactions.

Unlike major depressive disorder, which can occur at any time, SAD is tied explicitly to seasonal changes, with symptoms typically improving during the spring and summer months. Many may dismiss their feelings as simply a “winter blues” phase. Still, it is important to differentiate between temporary mood fluctuations and a more severe condition that may require professional support.

Facing financial pressure, workload and time constraints, isolation and loneliness due to the remoteness of our work, it is no surprise that farming and ranching are considered two of the most stressful occupations, both physically and mentally. Although much good work continues to diminish the stigma surrounding mental health, it remains a barrier for many of us in agriculture from seeking help, further exacerbating feelings of isolation and distress. Symptoms of anxiety can manifest in various ways, including irritability, sleep disturbances and difficulty concentrating, all of which can hinder our ability to manage daily chores and responsibilities.

Take the time to get help. Check in with family, friends or neighbours you suspect might be struggling. It's the greatest gift you can give yourself, your family and your friends this season. ▼

Recognizing the link between mental health and productivity in farming is crucial. The repercussions of mental health struggles not only affect producers themselves but can ripple through our families and communities, creating a difficult-to-break cycle. Compassionate agriculture advocates and organizations are available.

If you or someone you know needs help, please reach out. There are many resources, some designed specifically for those of us in the demanding world of agriculture.

NATIONAL CRISIS LINE

If you are in crisis, please call 911 or visit your local emergency department. If you or someone you know is thinking of suicide, call or text 988.

AGTALK – THE DO MORE AGRICULTURE FOUNDATION

domore.ag/agtalk is a peer-to-peer support platform designed for individuals in the Canadian agriculture industry. The platform provides a safe and anonymous space to connect, share and receive support from peers who understand their unique experiences. With 24/7 clinical moderation, this platform ensures a secure environment for open discussions on mental health.

AGKNOW ALBERTA FARM MENTAL HEALTH NETWORK

agknow.ca offers resources, including a list of farm-informed counsellors.

ALBERTA WIDE – MENTAL HEALTH HELP LINE

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albertahealthservices.ca

CMHA RURAL DISTRESS LINE

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KIDS HELP PHONE:

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- Mac

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- We wean in November, bull calves are backgrounded in big groups till spring on a silage based growing ration.
- By spring our bulls are well grown out but not fleshy... just perfect to take advantage of our grass.
- Bulls are sorted by breed and size into groups of 30-50 bulls.
- Bulls go to our management intensive grazing paddocks from late May or June until late October.
- Water is provided by solar systems or surface piped fresh water.
- We move bulls to fresh grass every two days all summer long.
- The pasture is a good quality, everyday, it ensures they grow well all summer. A real bonus here is that they are used to a man on foot and constant checking.
- As summer progresses we supplement the bulls with a low energy, high protein pellet made specifically to our specs and made of pea and lentil hulls. No starch, high fibre with added minerals and vitamins. (about the nutrient content of good alfalfa hay)
- In late fall the bulls are brought to our bull lots and placed on our silage based bull development TMR (total mixed ration). This is ideal because every mouthful the bull takes he has the right proportion of all nutrients, no bingeing on just grain. No barley or coarse grain is fed, just our bull development pellets.
- Our rations and protocols have been developed over years of experience to bring you the best, most durable bulls possible.



How our cows are managed...

- We maintain a large cowherd managed under commercial conditions to minimize cost and time, every cow is a registered purebred.
- Cows calve in May and June on stock piled grass - we do not feed our cows during calving... they rustle!
- They are grass calved in groups of 200 or so checked by one man once per day to tag and weigh.
- No night checks, cameras or calving barns.
- **Calving is what our cows do... not what we do!** (with this system problems eliminate themselves).
- Cows are sorted (paired out on horseback to have a good look at feet, udders, milk etc.) in late June to our breeding pastures.
- Our pastures are spread over 150 miles so nearly every one goes on a liner going somewhere.
- We use all natural service... Bulls go out August 1 for 60 days.
- Calves are weaned starting mid October to mid November group by group.
- Cows are left on grazing for as long as possible into fall.
- Cows move home and are wintered on standing corn in groups of 200 per quarter controlled with electric fence. Our objective is 200 cow/days per acre, they lick snow for water.
- Our cows go from the calving pastures to summer grazing and breeding, make a short stop at the home ranch for weaning, then on to the standing corn. **Corn to grass, grass to corn and on it goes, with no supplement feeding and no hauling feed or manure. I just believe that as soon as you put machinery or diesel fuel between a cow's mouth and what she eats, it does nothing but cost money.**



Why our Sight Unseen is so successful, so easy and used by more customers every year

"our sale is not online so our sight unseen is a perfect option"

"There were five bulls that came off the trailer. I picked the one I liked best in my head, not knowing which one was mine. Once they sorted them the one I picked ended up in my trailer. Thanks a lot. You guys got me the bull I would have picked myself and you did it sight unseen." -C. Tonneson, AB

"We bought two hereford bulls sight unseen. The whole process of getting such good quality bulls was absolutely painless, right from the first conversation to delivery. The bulls were everything we expected and more. Easy fleshing they maintained their weight through breeding" - G&S Clark, AB

"The Sight Unseen Purchase Program you offer, coupled with a rock solid reputation, unquestioned convenience and a large battery of quality, affordable sale bulls has again made bull buying from your ranch a pleasure." - J. Comrie, MB



Mac & Pat

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- We guarantee your complete satisfaction. While we seldom deliver an unsatisfactory bull, it is entirely your choice to accept him on arrival...SIMPLY PUT - YOU MUST LIKE HIM WHEN DELIVERED OR WE TAKE HIM HOME NO PROBLEM.
- When you have viewed the bull book, the DVD and the photos, you and I will make a short list of your choices and discuss your budget.
- We will absolutely never bid on or buy a bull that you and I have not carefully pre-selected as being suitable.
- Most important...**WE DON'T WANT YOU TO PAY FOR THE BULL UNTIL YOU HAVE SEEN HIM YOURSELF** in the flesh at your ranch. Then and only then do you make settlement.
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Canadian Cattle Youth Council Delegate Highlight:

Brayden Schmidt

BY SARAH MACDONALD,
CANADIAN CATTLE
ASSOCIATION INTERN



A recent graduate from the Canadian Cattle Young Leaders (CYL) Program, cattle producer and industry professional Brayden Schmidt is ready for his newest role in the Canadian beef industry – Alberta delegate on the Canadian Cattle Youth Council.

The Canadian Cattle Youth Council, a subsidiary of the Canadian Cattle Association (CCA), welcomes young beef producers from across Canada between the ages of 18-40. The vision of the Youth Council is to cultivate leadership by exposing youth delegates to industry policy development, while providing opportunities to gain leadership experience and bring fresh ideas to the CCA and Canadian beef cattle industry.

Schmidt was selected by Alberta Beef Producers Board Members from a pool of outstanding young applicants. ABP is a supporting partner of the Youth Council, which helps to fund Schmidt's participation in council activities including CCA's AGM in Ottawa, and CCA's Semi-Annual Meeting held at the Canadian Beef Industry Conference (CBIC) in August.

Born and raised in southern Saskatchewan, Schmidt now resides in Didsbury, Alberta with his wife Andie and young family, working together on her family's farm Westway Farms – a diverse operation with cow-calf, feedlot and grain commodities. Schmidt also works as a beef nutrition consultant with Bullseye Feeds.

Schmidt obtained his Agribusiness Diploma at the University of Saskatchewan, followed by a Bachelor of Applied Science in Agribusiness at Olds College. A recent graduate of the CYL program, Schmidt was mentored by TJ Larson of Larson Custom Feeders in Fort McLeod, AB, where he expanded his knowledge of business development and risk mitigation.

“The CYL program really challenges you to learn in a different format or learn from colleagues that you might not have access to on a day-to-day basis,” says Schmidt.

This experience he says has helped him prepare for his term as the Alberta Delegate on the Canadian Cattle Youth Council.

According to Schmidt his focus during his time on the Youth Council is to be intentional and maximize the opportunities. “One of the things I'm most excited about is being able to continue to learn about the industry and gain more insight, and then to communicate all that information to help other people learn as well.”

Schmidt's term on the Youth Council officially began at its AGM, during the Canadian Beef Industry Conference held in August. This is also where Schmidt, along with others finishing their mentorship, celebrated their CYL program graduation.

“I'm very thankful that I had the CYL Program to offer me greater involvement in the industry and grateful for the opportunity to sit on the Youth Council as the Alberta delegate,” says Schmidt.

The Canadian Cattle Youth Council would like to thank outgoing Alberta delegate Kaylee Chizawsky for her time on the Youth Council and wishes Schmidt the best of luck as he embarks on his new role.



For more information about the Canadian Cattle Youth Council, visit canadiancattleyouthcouncil.ca

For information on the Canadian Cattle Young Leaders, visit canadiancattleyoungleaders.ca 🐾

The opportunities provided to the next generation of beef farmers and ranchers through the Canadian Cattle Youth Council would not be possible without the generous support of our Program Platinum Partner, New Holland, and provincial associations; BC Cattlemen's Association, Alberta Beef Producers, Saskatchewan Cattlemen's Association, Manitoba Beef Producers, Beef Farmers of Ontario, Les Producteurs de bovins du Québec, New Brunswick Cattle Producers, Prince Edward Island Cattle Producers, Nova Scotia Cattle Producers and the Canadian Cattle Association.



Crown Grazing Leases: The History Runs Deep

PART 1

THE CURRENT FORM OF THE ALBERTA GRAZING LEASE DATES BACK TO 1881. SHORTLY THEREAFTER THE *DOMINION LANDS ACT* AND DOMINION ORDER IN COUNCIL, NO. 803, VESTED STRONG TENURE RIGHTS IN THE HOLDERS OF CROWN GRAZING LEASES TO STIMULATE INVESTMENT IN THE CATTLE INDUSTRY AND PROMOTE ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP OF THE GRASS RESOURCES. SO, THERE WERE REALLY TWO PRESSURES TO DEVELOP A SYSTEM: 1) TO STIMULATE THE CATTLE INDUSTRY AND 2) TO PROMOTE STEWARDSHIP OF THE GRASSLANDS.

In the early 1880s, the Canadian government was under pressure to honour its commitments to Indigenous peoples under Treaty 7, which had been signed in 1877. That Treaty required the government to supply food. The native bison herds, which had been the primary food source, had been largely eliminated due to over harvesting. To attract investment to increase the number of cattle and to prevent starvation among Indigenous communities, the government created a lease tenure system that allowed for ranches as large as 100,000 acres with 21-year renewable lease terms.

U.S. INFLUENCE ON THE CANADIAN GRAZING LEASE SYSTEM

What was happening in the United States simultaneously greatly influenced Canada's current system. The Canadian grazing lease system was developed in the context of the "range wars" and environmental degradation occurring on the Great Plains of the United States of America from 1866 through 1885. The U.S. system inadvertently created an environmental policy disaster that Garret Hardin famously describes in his article "The Tragedy of the Commons," published in the journal *Science*. The premise of the tragedy of the commons is that if it is 'owned' by everyone, no one is responsible or accountable for it and isn't looked after. The result is degradation.

The story begins with the American Civil War and the Union Army's southward advances in 1863, eventually cutting off the Confederate supply lines across the Mississippi River. For years prior, America's largest cattle herd was in Texas. When the cattle could no longer be moved east to supply the Confederate Army, the Texas herd grew unchecked until the war's end in 1865, when the cattle numbers reached over 5 million.

The American ranchers and investors decided to move large herds north onto the public grasslands on the Great Plains of what is now Oklahoma, Kansas, Nebraska, Colorado, Wyoming, the Dakotas and Montana. The end of the Civil War brought a sharp increase in the demand for meat in the growing industrialized cities of the U.S. East and Midwest. The Great Plains presented an abundance of free grass and a connection to the eastern railways.

In the period of 1866 to 1885, the United States had an "open range policy." The United States Supreme Court declared that:

...public lands of the United States, especially those in which the natural grasses are adapted to the growth and fattening of domestic animals, shall be free for the people who seek to use them where they are left open and unenclosed.

The effect of the open-range policy was that whichever rancher could get his cattle to the grass first got the grass. This led to intense competition for grass resources and a decimation of rangeland health, finally leading to what is known as the Dust Bowl era. At the same time, the U.S. sheep herd was also increasing. Not only was there fierce competition among the cattle ranchers there was also conflict with the sheep herders. This led to a literal range of wars, killings, poisoning of water sources and more, all of which were later depicted in classic Hollywood western movies.

CANADA – BASED ON THE AUSTRALIAN MODEL

It is well documented that back in Canada, Senator Matthew Cochrane and Sir John A. McDonald debated how to avoid the range wars and environmental degradation occurring in the United States while simultaneously creating sufficient security of tenure to attract the investment needed for a viable cattle industry.

They rejected the United States' open-range land policies. Instead, the 1881 Canadian grazing lease system was designed to create a lease of real property at common law based on the Australian model. From 1882 to 1886, hundreds of thousands of acres of Crown grasslands were placed under the Crown Grazing Lease, and Alberta's cattle industry emerged. ▼

Crown Grazing Leases Part Two will appear in the next issue of ABP Magazine.

Submitted by Alberta Grazing Leaseholders Association. AGLA works to protect the rights of leaseholders and the integrity of the grazing lease system in Alberta. For membership information, visit albertagrazinglease.ca

Celebrating 50 Years of Farmfair International

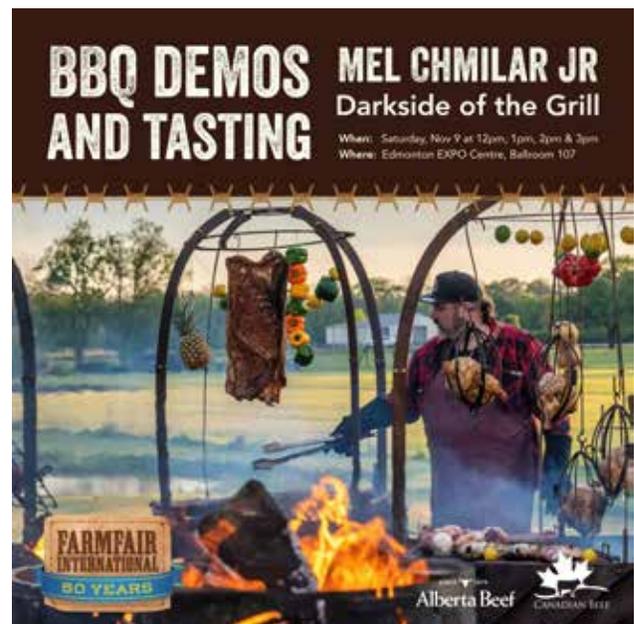
This year Alberta wrapped up its fall show circuit with a bang as quality cattle from across the country attended the 50th year of Farmfair International.

With the exhibit halls packed, quality genetics were on display over the course of the week at the Edmonton Expo Centre. Alberta Beef Producers was represented by General Manager Brad Dubeau and Chair Brodie Haugan at the International Reception, which featured many traditional aspects of Farmfair International's feature country, Mexico.

Friday morning, ABP celebrated 150 years of Alberta Beef by providing breakfast to some of the producers who made this possible. Throughout the remainder of the day, those who attended Farmfair were able to snag a photo in front of our "I ♥ AB Beef" marquee letters in the main corridor. The letters were a big hit for all in attendance.

To wrap up the festivities, Mel Chmilar Jr. of Dark Side of the Grill partnered with Alberta Beef Producers and Canada Beef for beef cooking demonstrations on Saturday afternoon. Mel and his trustee smoker "Elvira" highlighted the different ways a simple Sirloin Tip roast can be cooked, accompanied by mouth-watering Chimichurri and a Ginger-Miso pan sauce recipe from the Canadian Beef

Information Gateway. Following the demonstration, ABP representatives made their way to ringside to view the Farmfair International Supreme Show, which showcased the best of the best from each breed show.





Congratulations to all the 2024 Supreme Show Qualifiers from Olds Fall Classic, Lloydminster Stockade Round Up and Farmfair International.

2024 SUPREME SHOW RESULTS



Supreme Champion Bull
 Red Wilbar Hennessy 3K, exhibited by Wilbar Cattle Co & Rohrich Cutting Edge Ranch



Supreme Champion Female
 Miss Prairie Cove 204K, exhibited by Prairie Cove Charolais



Junior Supreme Champion
 Erixon Darlin 2.0, exhibited by Gracie Bohrson/Canadian Donors/Indian Rover, Dunc, Destiny, Abby Hill/Havencrest

Congratulations to all who exhibited this fall, and a shout-out to those who participated in Canadian Western Agribition this November.

To view winners from the qualifying shows, visit farmfairinternational.com or cattlevidsviewer.ca 🇨🇦

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Cleanfarms operates the **Alberta Ag-Plastic. Recycle It!** pilot program to help Alberta farmers improve sustainability by recycling baler twine and grain bags.

For more about **Alberta Ag-Plastic. Recycle It!** – go to AlbertaAgPlastics.ca



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Recycle Baler Twine

BAG – get a free recycling bag from a participating collection site and fill with used plastic baler twine.

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*Netting/net wrap is not accepted for recycling for technical reasons. If added, the whole bag will be unrecyclable.

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**ALBERTA AG-PLASTIC
RECYCLE IT!**

Alberta

The pilot project is led by the multi-stakeholder Agricultural Plastics Recycling Group; funds were granted by the Government of Alberta and are administered by Alberta Beef Producers.



From the Government Desk

BY MARK LYSENG

This fall has brought a whirlwind of legislative activity impacting agriculture, with several significant bills and reviews at both the provincial and federal levels.

PROVINCIAL LEGISLATION

In Alberta, amendments to the *Meat Inspection Act* were introduced on October 30 by Agriculture and Irrigation Minister RJ Sigurdson. These changes aim to address illegal meat sales by significantly increasing maximum fines from \$10,000 to \$100,000 per offence. With violations on the rise, these amendments have received ABP's support due to the critical role food safety plays in protecting human health and consumer confidence.

The Recreational Access Regulation, under Forestry and Parks, is a contentious one because it attempts to balance the needs of the leaseholder (and public land disposition holders) with the hunting industry. I'm saying "hunting" here because the vast majority of the debate around the regulation relates to hunters. Before the Recreational Access Regulation, leaseholders had common law rights akin to freehold land. In 2003, the government of the day decided if the land was not actively being grazed, or the recreational activity did

not impact the long-term health of the grazing resource, then the public had a “reasonable” right to access. The regulation, therefore, allows access in those situations after contacting the leaseholder first.

Twenty-two years later, leaseholders are defending their right to use and protect the resource. Leaseholders have done a great job of stewarding the ~5 million acres of grazing lease. Thanks to their stewardship, of the 100 million acres of public land in the province, grazing lease land is the most desirable land to hunt. Demand for hunting access has grown substantially since the onset of the Regulation, with some leases near urban centres receiving hundreds of requests. This is certainly not reasonable for the leaseholder, and likely not a great experience for the hunters. As leaseholders have tried to throttle this increasing flow of demand to maintain the ecosystem, their operation, and manage their time, they have been met with growing frustration from hunters.

Leaseholders’ efforts have resulted in grazing leases being some of the most ecologically valuable lands in the province, benefiting both agricultural production and conservation. However, as the government has expanded wildlife populations and increased the issuance of hunting tags, the lack of adequate access management has placed leaseholders in a challenging position. Too often, they are unfairly portrayed as obstacles rather than being recognized for their vital role as stewards of these landscapes.

FEDERAL LEGISLATION

At the federal level, two bills have been key priorities for the beef industry. Bill C-282, which restricts trade negotiators from discussing supply-managed commodities, threatens Canada’s ability to maintain flexible trade agreements. The bill jeopardizes the 90 per cent of agricultural producers who rely on free trade. To address these concerns, ABP has joined forces with Alberta Pork, Alberta Cattle Feeders and Team Alberta Crops to urge the province to advocate for policies that protect the broader agricultural sector.

With a new administration in the U.S. that ran on a platform of tariffs, we do not want to put a target on the back of Canadian agriculture.

Bill C-293, which focuses on pandemic preparedness, has also raised concerns. While the overall objective of preventing disease outbreaks is sound, certain provisions could disrupt supply chains in animal agriculture. Notably, the bill explicitly promotes alternative proteins, which ABP believes is misguided in the context of pandemic preparedness. Thankfully, Alberta’s government has backed our efforts to amend the legislation. ABP has worked closely with Minister Sigurdson and Minister of Health, Adriana LaGrange, to raise these issues with senators, advocating for changes that protect the beef industry.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Business risk management programs have been another critical area of focus, particularly AgriStability. This spring, a pilot project was launched to explore program adjustments for grazers, including cattle, bison and sheep, which rely heavily on pasture-based systems. The pilot confirmed longstanding concerns, such as issues with non-market feed adjustments and ineligible feed. This new evidence strengthens the case for reforms under the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership. There was strong support for the concept of reforming AgriStability to provide much-needed Business Risk Management (BRM) support to the cow-calf sector. Further, with the high stakes of farming right now, the cap on AgriStability could be a major limitation for feeders and some cow-calf operations in a disaster scenario.

While programs like Livestock Price Insurance (LPI), AgriStability, and Moisture Deficiency Insurance (MDI) are important, their payouts fall far short compared to crop insurance. For example, in 2021, crop and hail insurance paid out \$2.6 billion, whereas programs supporting livestock sectors collectively paid out around \$500 million. At the time of writing, the 2023 numbers were not publicly reported, but I expect the payout to beef to



There is growing concern that governments may seek to regulate grazing lands, leveraging the exceptional stewardship provided by beef producers.

be similar, as AgriRecovery was less, but the MDI improvements paid out more. Achieving parity between these programs is essential to ensure the long-term viability of cow-calf operations and feedlots.

PLANNING

The South Saskatchewan Regional Plan and Nature Strategy consultations are underway with Environment and Protected Areas, and ABP is actively participating to advocate for beef producers. ABP is pushing for the inclusion of payments for ecological goods and services and for recognition of the conservation work that producers carry out daily.

There is growing concern that governments may seek to regulate grazing lands, leveraging the exceptional stewardship provided by beef producers. These lands' health and productivity are a direct result of producers' dedication, but regulation could jeopardize their rights and livelihoods. ABP strongly advocates that any regulatory measures must be voluntary or producers must be fairly compensated for the value that is taken from them. Striking a balance between protecting producers' rights and ensuring sustainable land use is essential, and implementing ecological goods and services payments offers a practical solution to achieve this equilibrium.

GOING FORWARD

Predicting the future in government relations is always challenging, as things can shift rapidly. However, there are several key issues currently gaining momentum that ABP will focus on addressing. They are:

1. Drought Management

Drought continues to pose a serious threat, with parts of Alberta entering winter with record-low water tables. If these conditions persist and dugouts are not replenished,

producers will face significant challenges in the coming year. Thought and programming will be needed to help producers navigate potential water shortages.

2. Grazing Leases and Public Perception

The tension surrounding grazing leases and the Recreational Access Regulation is increasing. Public perception often overlooks the critical role these leases play in agricultural production, land management, and conservation. ABP will work to ensure the value of these leases is recognized and that leaseholders are supported in managing public access effectively.

3. Improving Risk Management Programs

Risk management programs must evolve to remain relevant for cow-calf and feedlot producers. ABP is advocating for improvements to ensure these programs provide reliable and effective support during challenging times. A comprehensive system, comparable in effectiveness to crop insurance, is essential to meet the needs of beef producers.

4. Expanding Private Land Conservation Tools

Private land conservation offers an opportunity to create new income streams for producers. While discussed for decades, payments for ecological goods and services need to become a reality. Current tools, such as conservation easements, are limited in scope. ABP is pushing for expanded options, including term payments, land development credits and other mechanisms to reward sustainable land management practices.

As 2024 comes to a close, ABP remains focused on advocating for policies that support the beef industry. Producer Meetings and resolutions will continue to play a critical role in guiding our efforts, and we encourage everyone to participate as we navigate these complex issues together. ▼

Virtual Fencing Collars

BY BRIANNA ELLIOT,
PROJECT LEAD, TACLCP, OLDS COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE & TECHNOLOGY

The Technology Access Centre for Livestock Production (TACLCP) at Olds College of Agriculture & Technology has recently piloted the use of two different virtual fencing collars, Gallagher's eShepherd and Nofence, marking a significant advancement in grazing management.

This innovative technology was tested during past grazing seasons, allowing researchers to evaluate herd movements without physical

fences. Both collar systems emit audio cues to encourage cattle to stay within designated areas, with electric pulses as reinforcement if animals move outside the boundaries. These virtual paddocks are easily managed through web-based or mobile software, giving producers flexibility and real-time control over grazing areas.

The pilot project primarily focused on assessing the effectiveness of collars in managing grazing

distribution across different pasture types, evaluating collar usability and observing the impact on animal welfare. Cattle behaviour and grazing patterns were closely monitored to gauge how effectively the collars kept animals within defined grazing zones. Key considerations included the technology's potential to prevent overgrazing and its ease of integration into existing ranch operations. GPS data collected through this system allowed the team to visualize spatial pasture



use, offering insights into how virtual fencing can help producers optimize forage utilization and protect sensitive areas.

The TACLP sees promising potential for virtual fencing collars in extended fall grazing systems and grazing crop residues after harvest. Virtual fencing could allow producers to move cattle precisely to desired areas, reducing waste and extending the grazing season without the need for additional physical fencing. As sustainability and efficient resource use become increasingly vital in livestock production, this technology offers an innovative solution that aligns with Olds College's

commitment to integrating advanced technology in agriculture.

In addition to livestock research, Olds College is home to the National Meat Training Centre, which was established in 1969. It provides skill and expertise to the meat industry by focusing on its greatest asset – students. The Olds College Retail Meat Store sells products created by students in the renowned Meat Processing Certificate program.

Olds College is passionate about the art of the artisan butcher – quality, craftsmanship and sustainability. Expert staff guide students through an intense program that is the only

of its kind in North America (and one of two in the world). Students learn the entire process, from slaughter to cutting and processing products. They also gain valuable experience in marketing, merchandising and customer service through the Retail Meat Store.

The products and supply revolve around the students and program. What is sold in the Retail Meat Store each week depends on the number of students in class and where students are in the curriculum.

For more information on the TACLP and the National Meat Training Centre, visit oldscollege.ca



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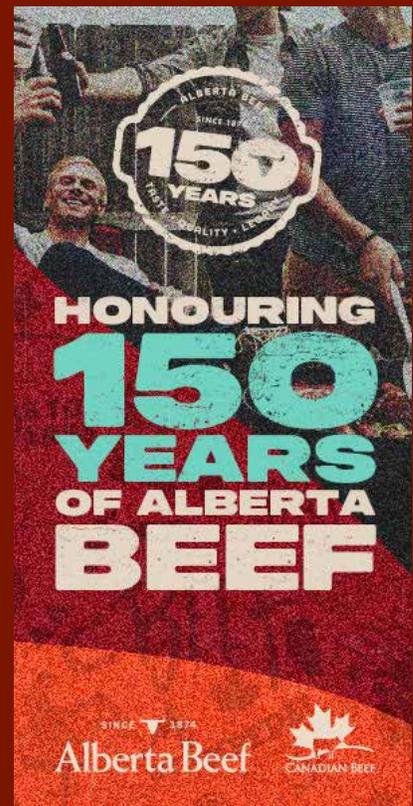
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Celebrating 150 Years of Alberta Beef

Honouring Alberta Beef's legacy and heritage, the All Ways to Celebrate campaign built on the success of the previous year's campaign, telling our compelling story of tradition and commitment. As we commemorate 150 years of the Alberta Beef brand, let's recap the celebration, culinary competitions and culminating contest.

UNVEILING THE CAMPAIGN

Launched in August 2024, *All Ways to Celebrate* emerged as an homage to Alberta Beef's rich legacy through both culinary appreciation and a collective celebration of our province's identity. Rooted in a commitment to quality, great-tasting beef and our support for Alberta's beef producers, the campaign rallied Albertans to celebrate this legacy with us. This year, we leveraged the Calgary Stampede to enhance visibility through localized content. Ties to the community were built with influencers and local media with PR tactics that earned attention on Sportsnet and Corus Entertainment



Radio with more than 14.1 million views. In the new year, our online efforts will highlight user-generated content collected throughout our All Ways contest period and build community support.

RAISING THE STEAKS

Amidst the Stampede excitement, the Kitchen Theatre served as a battleground as renowned chefs went head-to-head in sizzling competitions and cutting demonstrations. From expert Pitmasters Chef Mel and Chef Brad to Chef Xavier's culinary finesse, each dish showcased Alberta Beef's versatility and allure.

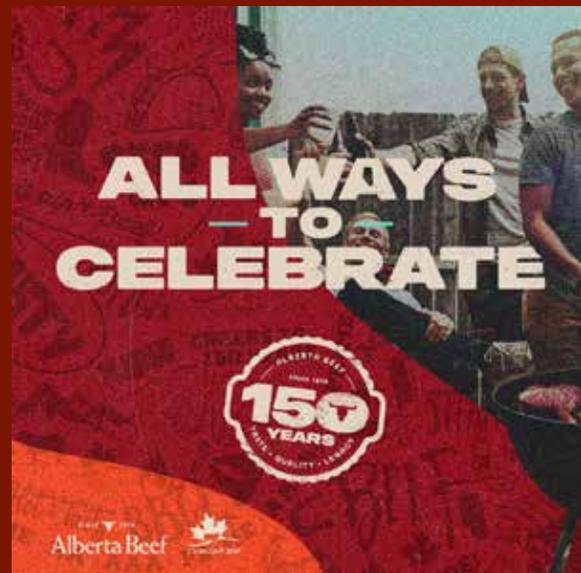
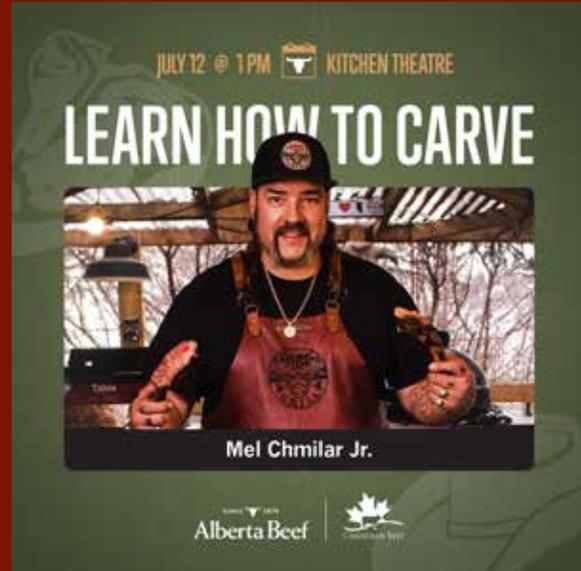
On the Cattle Trail, visitors had the chance to Ask an Expert and snap a photo with our I Love AB Beef light-up installation, which was always busy with attendees getting their souvenir pictures.

In early November, we were at Farmfair International with our light-up I Love AB Beef installation and were on-site with Chef Mel, who led four Pitmaster BBQ demos and tastings.

THE ULTIMATE GRILL PACKAGE

Our online excitement continues with 150 days of content through to the end of the year and the end of our All Ways to Win contest. With a Blackstone Griddle at stake, contest participants have been excited to showcase the diverse ways that Albertans honour and savour Alberta Beef in their own celebrations. We've seen flavourful stir-fries, buttery steaks on the grill and fun, fresh takes on salad that all resonate with the essence of community, tradition and shared love for Alberta Beef. ▼

As we continue our story, we're bringing focus to the producers and sharing their stories of *Where Lands Meets Legacy*. Using powerful interview quotes from our time spent with John Buckley of Quarter Circle X Ranch and Cherie Copithorne-Barnes of C.L. Ranches, we're giving producers an authentic voice in telling their stories on their relationship to the land and the impact it has on their livelihood. This broadcast television spot will air on CBC and CTV paying tribute to the longstanding care taken by producers for their cattle on the grazing lands of Alberta. It's a story we're thrilled to tell – a story that's been 150 years in the making.



Proposed ABP Plan and Bylaw Amendments

BY ADRIENNE WALLER, ABP LEGAL



In the article entitled *Commission Mechanics: How ABP Leverages Producer Dollars to Foster a Successful Alberta Beef Industry* (ABP Magazine, Volume 4 Issue 3), Emma Cross explained that Alberta Beef Producers is a commission established under the *Marketing of Agricultural Products Act* and how ABP, as a commission, differs from other beef cattle organizations that represent producer members.

The defining feature of ABP, as a commission, is that it works on behalf of all Alberta cattle producers and, through its governing documents is accountable to all cattle producers in Alberta and to the Alberta Agricultural Products Marketing Council (Marketing Council), which oversees the operations of all the marketing boards and commissions.

By way of recap, ABP's governing documents, in order of supremacy, are:

- the *Marketing of Agricultural Products Act*;
- Marketing Council's policies, rules and regulations governing boards and commissions;
- the Alberta Beef Producers Plan Regulation;
- the Alberta Beef Producers Authorization Regulation;
- the Alberta Beef Producers Commission Regulation; and
- the Alberta Beef Producers Bylaws.

The Plan and Authorization Regulations are ministerial regulations. The Commission Regulation is made by ABP and approved by the Marketing Council. All three regulations are subject to the government's regulatory review and approval process.

From 1969, when ABP was established, until the fall of 2009, ABP's election process and authority were solely governed by its Plan Regulation, which underwent regular reviews and amendments between 1969 and 2008. As noted in the previous article, in 2009, ABP became the first and only board or commission to move some of the provisions in its Plan Regulation to Bylaws and be governed by both a Plan Regulation and Bylaws. The other boards and commissions did not develop bylaws until after the Act was amended in 2020.

In 2009, the ABP Plan Regulation was significantly reduced in size and content. Only those provisions required by the Marketing of Agricultural Products Act and Marketing Council were retained in the Plan Regulation. The Bylaws enacted in 2009, being the first of its kind, have undergone a series of amendments since then to better reflect the needs of the producers, delegates, and the commission.

A copy of the current ABP Plan Regulation, Commission Regulation and Bylaws can be found on the ABP Website on the "About Us" page.

CHANGES TO THE PLAN REGULATION

The proposed amendment to the ABP Plan Regulation and Bylaws will further streamline the ABP Plan Regulation. ABP and Marketing Council have identified the sections that can be moved from the Plan Regulation to the Bylaws. Following feedback from producers and approval by the delegates at the annual delegate meeting, the proposed amendments will be presented to the Marketing Council and the Minister for their respective approval before coming into effect.

The following sections from the ABP Plan Regulation are proposed to be moved to the ABP Bylaws:

SECTION #	PROVISION
s. 1(1)(a.1)	Definition of “assets”
s. 1(1)(a.2)	Definition of “auditor”
s. 1(1)(i)	Definition of “Commission meeting”
s. 1(1)(l)	Definition of “delegate”
s. 1(1)(m)	Definition of “delegate meeting”
s. 1(1)(m.1)	Definition of “investment”
s. 1(1)(p)	Definition of “producer meeting”
s. 6(3)	Authority to invest, manage and retain assets
s. 8	Requirement to hold commission (board) meetings
s. 9	Requirement to hold delegate meetings.
s. 10	Requirement to hold zone producer meetings.
s. 11	Requirements governing notice of meetings.
s. 12	Quorum for meetings
s. 13	Auditor appointment
s. 16	Removal of directors
s. 18	Appointment of returning officer
s. 19	Eligibility to vote
s. 20	Destruction of ballots.

Except for section 11, the wording from the Plan Regulation has been incorporated verbatim into the Bylaws. For section 11, unlike the Plan, the bylaws do not require notice of meetings via newspapers circulating in the zones.

In addition, changes to the Plan Regulation will be;

SECTION # PROVISION

New	Marketing Council will be adding two new sections, the first describing the functions of the Commission and the second describing how the Plan is financed. The new section with respect to functions replaces section 6(1) and (2) which is being repealed.
s. s. 7(1)	The section authorizing ABP to make bylaws is removed as this authority is now in the Act.
s. 14	Rather than requiring 12 directors, the commission will have the ability to establish the number of directors in the bylaws between 9 and 15 directors. The amended bylaws continue to require 12 directors to be elected.
s. 17	Vacancies on the commission will now be filled for the unexpired portion of that term of office, rather than until the next annual delegate meeting.
New	Marketing Council is adding a new section confirming that an election without the required quorum is void.
s. 25	The next review date will be June 30, 2032.

An unofficial draft of the Plan Regulation showing the proposed deletions and additions is available on the “About Us” page of the ABP Website.

CHANGES TO THE ABP BYLAWS

As mentioned earlier, with one exception, the wording from the Plan Regulation has been incorporated verbatim into the Bylaws. Adding these new provisions into the Bylaws has resulted in some re-organization of the Bylaws to accommodate the additional clauses. Any definitions in the Plan that were also in the Bylaws have been removed from the Bylaws.

In reviewing the Bylaws to add the provisions from the Plan Regulation, a few housekeeping edits were made to clarify the current wording and reflect current practices, but these are not substantive in nature.

A draft of the amended Bylaws showing the proposed additions and edits is available on the “About Us” page of the ABP Website. The Marketing Commission Regulation is also available on the ABP Website and is open for comment by producers and delegates.

RESULTS

As noted in the previous article, the proposed changes will create a nimbler, less bureaucratic regulatory framework for ABP. No substantive changes are being proposed at this time. Moving these governance-related provisions from the ABP Plan Regulation to the Bylaws will give ABP greater flexibility in managing future changes with appropriate oversight of Council. This

new framework also frees the Minister to focus on more substantive policy and regulatory matters affecting ABP and other agricultural commodities.

PRODUCER AND DELEGATE MEETINGS

The proposed changes to the ABP Plan Regulation and ABP Bylaws will be one of the topics for discussion at the Producer Meetings in February 2025. Any feedback from those meetings will be considered in the draft that is put to the delegates for a vote at the 2025 annual delegate meeting.

ABP invites producers and key stakeholders to review the draft amended Plan Regulation and Bylaws and submit any comments and suggestions to Brad Dubeau, ABP, by email at bradd@albertabeef.org or bring them to the 2025 Producer Meetings, where ABP will lead discussions on the details of these changes. ▼

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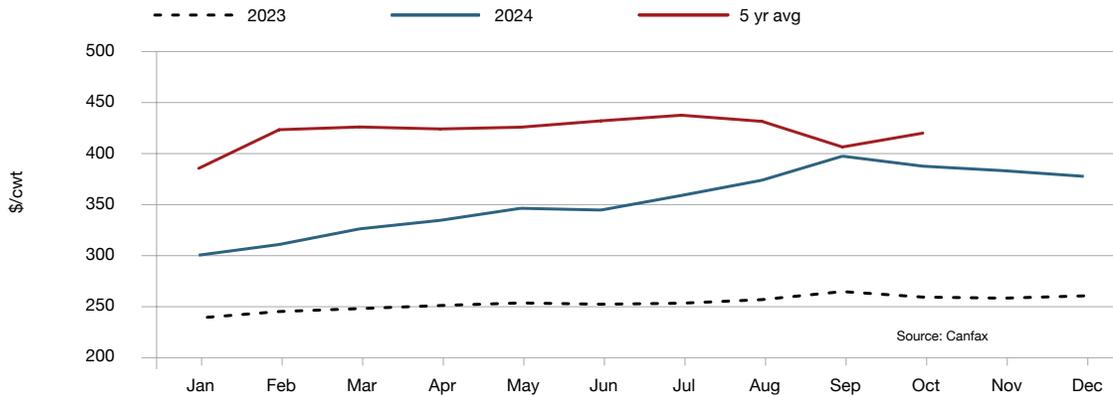
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Smaller Fall Auction Volumes Provide October Rebound in Feeder Prices

Alberta auction volumes from August through October were 18 per cent smaller than last year and 6 per cent smaller than the five-year average. Across western Canada, auction volumes were 13 per cent smaller than last year and 2 per cent smaller than the five-year average. Tighter supplies have shown up all year long, with weekly volumes in the west being smaller than last year for 26 out of the previous 29 weeks. In addition, electronic sales from August to October were 46 per cent smaller than last year.

Historically, calf prices put in their annual peak in September, just as the fall run ramps up, but that was not the case this year. Alberta 550-lb steers found headwinds beginning in July, with a general softening tone throughout the third quarter. By September, Alberta steer calves bottomed just above last year's annual high set in September. Optimism entered the market in October with prices rebounding 8 per cent higher than September to \$421/cwt, to be \$33/cwt above last year. Momentum carried into the first half of November, with steer calves once again putting in solid week-over-week gains, most recently climbing above \$443/cwt for the first time and establishing a new all-time record high, \$3/cwt higher than the previous record set the first week of July.

September was also a softer month in Ontario for 550-lb steer calves after they put in record-high prices in August. Steer calves were largely rangebound at \$415/cwt between the beginning of September and the second half of October but broke above \$430/cwt in November to be \$49/cwt higher than last year. However, they remain 5 per cent below their August high.

U.S. 550-lb steers were under pressure for most of the third quarter but found some tailwinds to begin the fourth quarter. They moved 4 per cent higher between the end of September and the middle of November, plateauing near USD 295/cwt, USD 10/cwt higher than last year. U.S. 550-lb steers are nearly 10 per cent below their record high set in March 2024.

Between August and October, Alberta calf prices were at a \$5/cwt discount to Ontario, while the U.S. was at a C\$20/cwt discount to Alberta over the same period. This may have encouraged feedlots in Alberta to look south to source feedlot replacements.

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



An Influential Canadian Ranching Experience

WITH PUBLIC & STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT, CCA

Have you noticed the recent mainstream popularity of Western fashion, country music and romanticized aspects of ranching and rural lifestyle? This trendiness of all things ‘Western’ is an opportunity that the Canadian beef sector can capitalize on – and that is precisely what the Canadian Cattle Association (CCA) did this summer.

The full-day 'Ranching Experience' for social media influencers took place in July and was led by Public and Stakeholder Engagement (PSE), a national check-off funded program of the Canadian Cattle Association, which aims to build public trust in how beef cattle are raised in Canada.

Influencers from Ontario, British Columbia and Alberta, with audiences across Canada and social media accounts focusing on food, travel, fashion and lifestyle, were sourced and encouraged to apply for the chance to participate.

Twelve influencers were selected based on their content and demographics of their following.

Those chosen started their 'Ranching Experience' in Calgary with an exclusive shopping event at a new Lammlé's Western Wear store, where they were 'suited and booted,' courtesy of Lammlé's.

From Lammlé's, the group took a chartered coach to the Foothills of southwestern Alberta, where they spent most of the day with fourth-generation ranchers Rachel and Tyler Herbert of Trail's End Beef, who proudly keep sustainability at the heart of their ranch. One influencer described the Herberts as 'glowing with passion for what they do' as they shared the story of their business, its history and their hopes for its future. Trail's End Beef's was an idyllic location, and the Herberts' ability to be tremendous spokespeople on behalf of the Canadian beef community made for the perfect ranch visit. Representatives from PSE, Canadian Cattle Young Leaders and Canadian Roundtable for Sustainable Beef (CRSB) were in attendance throughout the tour, with one industry representative appointed to each influencer, which led to great discussion and questions throughout the day.

Chop Steakhouse's Executive Chef Stephen Clark expertly prepared a long-table barn lunch using Trail's End Beef patties. Following lunch, influencers learned about raising beef cattle, stockmanship and sustainability through interactive stations and demonstrations. The activities provided simultaneous content creation and learning opportunities for each influencer, including the screening of *Guardians of the Grasslands* inside the Trail's End barn.



Left page: Influencers dressed the part for their Ranching Experience, compliments of Lammlé's Western Wear, Calgary. Above: Representatives from NCC and DUC talk about the importance of preserving grasslands. Chop Steakhouse's Executive Chef Stephen Clark prepared a culinary adventure featuring Canadian beef dishes.

Influencers also experienced a tour through the Porcupine Hills to Trail's End Beef's summer pasture. The rolling hills were ablaze with wildflowers, and the expansiveness of the native prairie and grasslands was something most of the creators had never experienced.

Representatives from the Nature Conservancy of Canada and Ducks Unlimited Canada joined the grassland tour, speaking about the importance of the grassland ecosystem for wildlife habitat and as a natural climate solution. As a result, all of the influencers mentioned in their content that the grassland ecosystem is more endangered than rain forests or coral reefs. They acknowledged Canada's beef producers for the critical role they play in conserving what is left.

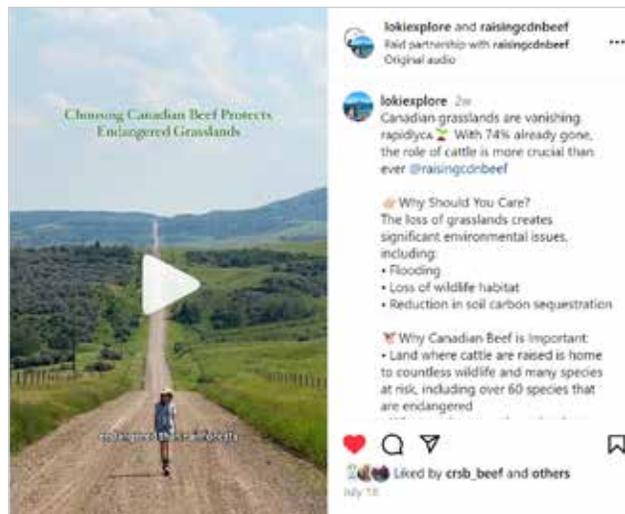
Rounding out the day was a dining experience at Chop Steakhouse in Calgary. Executive Chef Stephen Clark served the group a tasting menu of dishes featuring Canadian beef, and he described why he loves showcasing Canadian beef on Chops' menu and the importance of the restaurant's CRSB membership.

Each influencer approached the experience and what they learned through their social platforms with different and unique content creation – some humorous, some more factual. Many went above and beyond, sharing more than they initially committed to based on sheer interest and excitement about the day.

The content reach and rollout from 'The Ranching Experience' have been a highlight for PSE and the CCA this year. It has reached more than 200,000 social media followers and new audiences with positive insights and education about our industry.

We thank the Nature Conservancy of Canada and Ducks Unlimited Canada for sharing their expertise, as well as partners Lammle's Western Wear, Chop Steakhouse and Trail's End Beef, who played integral roles in the initiative's success.

You can view some of the Instagram Reels from the day by visiting [@raisingcdnbeef](#) on Instagram. 🐾



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ABP Delegate Bios

ALL PRODUCERS WHO PUT THEIR NAMES FORWARD FOR A POSITION ON THE DELEGATE BODY FOR 2024 ARE ACCLAIMED, AND WE WILL NOT BE HOLDING AN ELECTION.

Below you'll find a list of delegates acclaimed to the 2025-2027 term. You can find contact information for delegates at the back of this book and via our websites – ABP Daily and albertabeef.org

ABP also welcomed two delegates earlier this year. Dorothy Thengs and Braydon Gough were appointed by their zones and approved by the Board of Directors to fill vacancies in those areas. You'll find their biographies below as well.

ABP is a producer-led organization, and the dedication and hard work of passionate people is what keeps us moving forward as an industry.

Thanks to past, present, and future delegates for all of your contributions.

NORTHEAST ZONE

George L'Heureux

George L'Heureux operates a ranch near Lac La Biche. As he retires, he is downsizing to a 60-head cow-calf operation, allowing him to dedicate more time to ABP and assist the industry going forward. He has previously served as county councillor and currently sits as Chair of the Athabasca Heifer Co-op and Vice Chair of the Lac La Biche Ag Society.

Josie Pashulka

Josie Pashulka lives in the County of Two Hills, near Derwent. She lives with her husband and three sons on a cattle, grain and hay operation. The farm consists of purebred Black Angus, Simmental, and Maine-Anjou cows, as well as a commercial herd. Josie and her family also farm 2000 acres of grain, silage, hay and grazing corn. Their farm practices rotational grazing, winter corn grazing, zero-till and AI/embryo transplant.

Kailey Wirsta

Kailey Wirsta and her family own and operate K-Cow Ranch, a purebred cow-calf operation raising Hereford, Charolais, and Black Angus cattle. With extensive experience in cattle management and breeding, Kailey focuses on producing high-quality genetics for both commercial and purebred markets. In addition to ranching, Kailey serves as the Marketing Chair for the Stoney Lake Community Association, managing social media and engagement efforts. Passionate about the future of Alberta's beef industry, Kailey is interested in becoming a delegate for Alberta Beef Producers to advocate for producers and promote sustainable growth in the sector.



SOUTHEAST ZONE

Kent Holowath

Kent Holowath operates a mixed farm involving cow-calf, backgrounding and crops with his wife, Jill, their daughter and two sons. Kent has been on the Board of Directors since 2020 and has held the position of Finance Chair, as well as sitting on other committees as needed. Currently, Kent is the Chair of the Big Valley Feeder Association and a founding member of the Palliser Grazing Club.

Wacey Manning

Wacey Manning grew up on a cow-calf operation near Cadogan, AB. Three years ago, he moved his family and cows to the Sounding Lake area, where he lives and works on the GW Murray Ranch. Working for the Murrays has allowed Wacey to grow his experience as they run a cow-calf herd, feedlot and a purebred operation. Currently, he is a member of the Highway 13 Cattleman's Club. Joining the club revealed to Wacey the importance of increasing involvement from the younger generation to bring new perspectives while still learning from the previous generations. His two young children fuel his passion to ensure the industry keeps progressing for the sake of their future.

Craig Lehr

Craig Lehr is a third-generation rancher and farmer of Short Grass Ranches, which consists of a cow-calf operation, a background feedlot and irrigation and dryland farming. In his time on ABP, Craig has sat on the Governance Committee and has been heavily involved in the Research Committee. He has also been involved nationally, sitting on the Beef Cattle Research Council, where he's completing his second year as Chair. Craig looks forward to continued involvement and working to help the beef industry thrive.

Ryan Slenders

Ryan Slenders is a third-generation producer. Ryan and his family operate a mixed grain/seed and beef operation in the County of Newell. He operates a 2,500-head feed yard and assists with the family cow-calf operation. Ryan has served on multiple community boards and is a volunteer Fire Chief for his community. As a delegate, Ryan wants to help protect policy in the best interest of producers and support the image portrayed of beef producers and the industry as the highest quality and calibre in the world.

CENTRAL ZONE

Brenda Rosadiuk

Brenda Rosadiuk and her husband, Anthony, live on a family farm just north of Evansburg, where they operate a cow-calf operation with their two adult sons. Brenda comes from a strong farm background and believes the younger generation of their farm brings a positive perspective of progressing farming, which creates a positive outlook for the cattle industry. Brenda has served as a delegate with ABP for the past two years, and one year of this time has been serving as a Director. Over the past two years since becoming a delegate for ABP, Brenda has served on the Audit, Governance and Resolutions Committee.

Phil Hamar

Phil Hamar is the proud owner and operator of Lazy H Ranch, a family-owned cattle ranch established in 1929. As a fourth-generation rancher, Phil carries forward a legacy of nearly a century, blending traditional ranching practices with modern innovations. Under his stewardship, Lazy H Ranch specializes in developing tame, bucket-trained heifers ready for breeding success through their Custom Background Feeding Program. Phil's deep-rooted passion for agriculture and commitment to excellence have made the ranch a cornerstone of the local community. His dedication ensures that Lazy H Ranch continues to uphold its longstanding values while contributing to the future of sustainable ranching.

SOUTHWEST ZONE

Jim Bowhay

Jim Bowhay operates a mixed farm operation in the Sundre area with his wife, Nola. He runs a cow-calf operation along with a few backgrounders. Jim has been involved with 4-H for more than 50 years. He is the current East Olds Feeder Association Chairman, Zone 2 Director, and Vice Chair of the Provincial Board of Feeders Association of Alberta. He is currently an ABP delegate and sits on CCA. He has farmed and ranched his entire life. He has a passion for the industry and its sustainability and youth. Jim wants to ensure the next generation has the tools to carry on and succeed while producing wholesome food to nourish the country's population.

Layne Burton

Layne Burton is a fourth-generation producer who grew up on a cow-calf operation west of Claresholm. In 2022, Layne completed his Bachelor of Business Administration at Mount Royal University and has worked in the agri-finance industry ever since. He and his parents are currently working on succession planning to ensure the longevity of their operation. Layne is focused on how economic factors will affect the sustainability of the cattle industry and how we can ensure financial viability for the next generation. Throughout his years in 4-H, Layne learned the value of mentorship, leadership and effective communication. Layne believes it is important for the next generation to step up and advocate for having a seat at the table while learning from previous generations of producers.

Graeme Finn

Graeme Finn and his wife, Heather, run a cow-calf and grass-finishing operation near Madden. They also run a year-round grazing program based on regenerative agriculture. Graeme is the founder and president of Union Forage, a cover crop and perennial forage seed company that mentors and trains its customers in regenerative grazing management.

In addition to his roles in primary production, Graeme has experience as Past Vice President on the Agricultural Research Extension Council of Alberta (ARECA) board and Past Chair of the CRSB Research Committee Chairman. He has participated as a mentor in both the Cattlemen's Young Leaders Program and the BCRC researcher mentorship program. Graeme sits on the Research Advisory Committee of the ABP and serves on the BCRC Producer Council.

Lee Irvine

Lee Irvine and his family have a grass backgrounding operation in the Cochrane area. Lee is also the beef specialist with ATB Financial and brokers cattle through TEAM and Calgary Stockyards. Throughout his career, Lee has been privileged to sit in the boardroom of multinational pharmaceutical companies, market cattle, and run an auction and feedlot software division. This will be Lee's third term as a delegate and board member for ABP. He has served on the Tier Advisory Team, as Zone Coordinator and as Alberta representative on the BCRC Producer Council. Over the course of Lee's tenure as a delegate and board member, he has seen ABP grow, increase its engagement with producers and improve its focus while helping to bring value to producers. He looks forward to continuing this work as an ABP delegate.

ALSO ACKNOWLEDGING

Dorothy Thengs, Southwest Zone

Dorothy Thengs grew up on a farming operation outside of Sundre and has been part of the ag industry her entire life. Along with her family, Dorothy farms silage and cereal crops in Alberta and rotational cereal crops in Saskatchewan. She also manages their 10,000-head feedlot.

Dorothy believes in encouraging youth that there's a bright future in agriculture. She teaches the Green Certificate, provides tours and information sessions for local 4-H, and worked with Olds College to help provide hands-on training for Vet Tech students. She also sits as a delegate for UFA.

Braydon Gough, Northwest Zone

Braydon Gough is a fourth-generation rancher who bought his first registered Angus cow at the age of 12. His nine-year involvement in 4-H instilled a lifelong passion for the cattle industry.

Braydon currently runs a registered seedstock operation in Whitelaw, producing Angus and Simmental genetics. He is a young, innovative rancher who is excited to represent other cattle producers in his role with Alberta Beef Producers. ▾

There are currently vacancies for the 2024-2026 term in the Central Zone, Southeast Zone, and Northwest Zone. To be considered, eligible producers should submit a 2025 Nomination Form to their zone. A zone can appoint a producer to serve the duration of a vacant term, subject to the Board of Directors' approval.

There are also vacancies for the 2025-2027 term in the Northeast Zone, Central Zone, and Northwest Zone. To be considered for this term, eligible producers should submit a 2025 Nomination Form to their zone. Delegates serving the 2025-2026 year can appoint a producer to serve the duration of a vacant term, subject to the Board of Directors' approval.

Find more information and nomination forms on ABP Daily.



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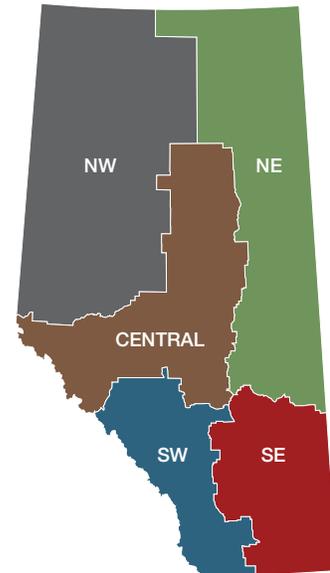
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Cheers to 2024

On behalf of Alberta Beef Producers board of directors and staff, we want to thank all of our producers and industry supporters for staying connected with us this year. We are excited to continue to bring together the beef community across this province in 2025.

Best wishes this holiday season!