



The Minnesota Cattlemans

The Official Newspaper of the Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association

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Volume 26 | Edition 3 | April 2023

Murray and Pipestone County Cattlemen's Associations to host Summer Beef Tour

By Kaitlyn Root, MSCA Executive Director

Murray and Pipestone county cattlemen associations are hosting the annual Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association (MSCA) Summer Beef Tour and Trade Show on July 17 and 18.

The tour will showcase experienced cattlemen, innovative techniques and quality beef setups by hosting participants and vendors from around the state and country to tour area farms. Registrants will have access to over 50 agricultural-related businesses featuring new products and services

available to cattlemen through the onsite trade show.

The Summer Tour events begin on July 17 with the quarterly board meeting of the MSCA at Key Largo on Lake Shetek, just north of Slayton. The annual Political Action Committee (PAC) fundraiser will follow.

The PAC event is open to everyone, and attendees are encouraged to participate in the bean bag tournament and enjoy a meal. Stay tuned for more information on registering for the tournament.

Lodging is available next door at the newly remodeled Lake Shetek Lodge. A block of rooms has been reserved under MSCA. Call (507) 763-3200 to reserve a room and enjoy the day at the lake networking with industry friends.

A room block has also been reserved at the Pelican Cove on Lake Shetek. Call (507) 763-3199 to reserve a room under Pipestone/Murray Summer Tour.

The tour and trade show will take place on July 18. This year's tour begins in Pipestone, a small town in southwestern Minnesota, just miles from South Dakota. The tour will feature farm stops in Murray and Pipestone counties, highlighting cutting edge beef production operations.

Tour stops include: Pipestone County Stops – Erik Baustian feedlot; Chestnut Angus – Cow/calf and Seedstock; Matt Brinkmeyer – open lot feedlot; Murray County Stops – Schuur Con-

crete – specializing in bunks and slats; Robert Ford – deep pit slat barns; Monogram Meats – history and virtual tour of plant; Ryan Verlinde – feedlot and new state of the art working area.

The tour headquarters will be held in the spacious and well-equipped Cattle Barn at the Pipestone County Fairgrounds. The Cattle Barn is located on the north end of the fairgrounds, just off Highway 30.

Pipestone has several accommodation options including a beautiful campsite at the Hiawatha ground. Learn more about Pipestone at pipestoneminnesota.com.

Reserve a room under Pipestone/Murray Summer Tour at the Grandstay in Pipestone by calling (507) 562-1100. Additional lodging is available in Flandreau or Marshall.

The cattlemen are seeking interested sponsors and onsite trade

show vendors for the event. Visit mnsca.org/Media/MNSCA/Docs/2023-sponsorship-form-1.pdf to view the sponsorship form listing various sponsorship, vendor and marketing options. To reserve a traditional trade show booth at Monogram Meats or fairgrounds, visit <https://forms.gle/PZsymi7nT8xRUzo7A>.

Breakfast, lunch and a steak supper are included with paid registration to the Summer Beef Tour and Trade Show. Registration is \$20 until June 1, then \$40.

To register for the tour, visit eventbrite.com/e/murraypipestone-county-summer-tour-2023-tickets-578342978417 or visit MSCA's website at <https://www.mnsca.org/events/summer-tour>. For questions or to sponsor the trade show, contact Angie Ford at (507) 360-7937 or Glenn Johnson at (507) 820-1502.

MSCA

MSCA is a grassroots organization consisting of over 20 local cattlemen's groups, providing the greatest opportunity for producer input and policy recommendations

MINNESOTA STATE CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION DISTRICT MAP & LOCAL AFFILIATES

1. Central Minnesota Cattlemen	12. Mower County Cattlemen
2. Cottonwood Cattle Producers	13. Murray County Cattlemen
3. Three Rivers Cattlemen	14. Northwestern Stockmen
4. Fillmore County Cattlemen	15. Redwood Area Cattlemen
5. Freeborn County Cattlemen	16. Rock-Redden Cattlemen
6. Glacial Ridge Cattlemen	17. Snake River Cattlemen
7. Houston County Cattlemen	18. South Central Cattlemen
8. Le Sueur County Area Cattlemen	19. Southwest Cattlemen
9. Midwest Cattlemen	20. Tri-County Cattlemen
10. Minnesota Cattlemen	21. Wabasha County Cattlemen
11. Mississippi Valley Cattlemen	22. West Central Cattlemen
	23. Pipestone Cattlemen

<https://www.mnsca.org/become-a-member/membership-application>

MNSCA Summer Tour

Save the Date

July 17 - 18, 2023

Hosted by Murray and Pipestone County Cattlemen's Associations

Visit mnsca.org/events/summer-tour to register

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NEWS - TIME SENSITIVE MATERIAL

NCBA convention location announced

While the largest cattle industry event in the country wrapped up only a few weeks ago, plans are already underway to get "Onward to Orlando." Mark your calendars for the 2024 Cattle Industry Convention & NCBA Trade Show, which is heading to the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando, Florida, Jan. 31-Feb. 2.

Thousands of cattlemen and women will gather to learn, conduct business, network and have fun. In a city known for sun and family fun, entertainment will also delight kids of all ages. Cattlemen's College, which immediately precedes convention, will bring thought-provoking, stimulating sessions that provide producers with information they can put to work on their farms and ranches.

The award-winning NCBA Trade Show will feature a new layout with several acres of indoor and outdoor displays as well as live cattle handling demonstrations, educational sessions and entertainment. Trade show exhibitors will offer products and services such as animal health products, equipment, irrigation technology, software, trailers and so much more.

Additional information will be available soon at convention.ncba.org.

**KAITLYN ROOT**

Executive Director
Office: 763-479-1011

Greetings Minnesota cattle producers!

I am sure we can all relate with how refreshing this spring weather is – it is about time! After what seemed to be a never-ending winter, we deserve a fabulous spring/summer.

These past couple of months have been busy for MSCA. Typically, January through April are membership-heavy months, with the majority of memberships coming in by May. Seeing all of the renewals/first-time memberships has me very excited for our association!

Continue pushing membership throughout the state, and let your neighbors know why it is important for them to join the Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association.

I attended meetings and receptions in March and April, including AgriGrowth's Legislative Reception, Minnesota Farm Bureau's Ag Day Gala, meetings with the Minnesota Department of Natu-



MSCA Region Four Director Mark Schoenfeld and his wife Kami attended Minnesota Farm Bureau's Ag Day Gala in March.

ral Resources (DNR) and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA).

It was great to see fellow ag industry members come together to network at the legislative reception and gala, and I

find that these events reassure me the future of ag is bright.

The main purpose of MSCA's meeting with the DNR

Root ...
continued on page 3

**JAKE THOMPSON**

Interim President

Greetings and hello fellow members of the Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association. As I am writing this, the sun is shining and the temperature feels like spring wants to finally come and stay.

For this quarter, we have been focusing on membership and strengthening our association with numbers. We have been doing this by attending

as many local annual meetings as possible and getting out and sharing the word of how important and powerful having a unified voice is through the state cattlemen's.

Kaitlyn just informed me today, April 11, that since Sept. 1, 2022, we have had 595 people renew their membership or become members for the first time, which is a little ahead of last year, with many more coming in daily through the mail/online.

As of April 11, MSCA is 833 members strong. This number is defined by those members that either renewed their membership or became members between April 11, 2022 and April 11, 2023.

I encourage you to share with nonmembers the benefits

Thompson ...
continued on page 6

**JOSIAH EBELING**

Feeder Council Chair

Greetings!

Hope everyone had a great Easter with family and friends.

On April 11, we hit 81 degrees Fahrenheit here in the southern part of the state. I think it is safe to say, spring is finally here.

Our planter is all ready to rock and roll. Dad is driving around the sections getting the neighbors excited. A couple more nice days with this wind

– the fields will be ready.

Time for everyone to fire up the grills and keep this market hot. Cash market picked up \$10 from the previous week. Cattle were trading \$1.75 to \$1.78 late last week.

This time of the year is typically the top end of the market. Feedlot inventories are beginning to fall with even tighter feeder cattle supplies and are likely to continue decreasing through 2023. We could see cash go a little higher into the early summer months and then plateau.

Processing margins were challenged again this week despite a \$10 increase in Choice box beef. Choice Cutout is at \$290.10, Select \$282.04.

With lower pork prices and

Ebeling ...
continued on page 5

**RACHEL GRAY**

MSCA Vice President

Greetings from northern Minnesota. I hope this spring finds you well and your calves are coming easy. I know we are all looking forward to green grass.

As many of you may know, in Kelliher, a little town north of Bemidji, there is a group of high school students who have been learning about the

beef industry through running a cattle company. They are called the Kelliher Cattle Company and if you have a chance, look them up on Facebook or their website.

They have been purchasing cattle and running their business as part of their classroom curriculum. An area farm, the Neft Farm, houses the cattle about five miles from the school.

The students participate in hands-on activities with the cattle such as branding, feeding, calving and breeding. The students make all the decisions from breeding to marketing.

Most recently, they decided to try their hand at beef processing and as part of the class, they had Lindsey Fulton, from

Gray ...
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**ERIC ZELTWANGER**

Cow/Calf Council Chair

Greetings fellow cattlemen,

As I sit down to write today, the weather is a balmy negative eight degrees here in west central Minnesota. The snowpack is from one to 27 feet and spring looks like it is a LONG way off. I was just informed by a nine-year-old that spring started last week, what a relief, as I am done with this winter!

On a positive note, cowboys and cowgirls, we've got some moisture and for most everyone in the state – the drought is over! The prices for cattle appear to be holding strong, and the cow/calf producer should have some bright times ahead.

We will all be dealing with higher inputs than we are used to, but I look for the price of calves to stay high with the size of the U.S. cowherd and demand for U.S. beef on the rise.

With the dry weather we had last year and now most of Minnesota getting adequate moisture, we can look forward to better pasture and hay conditions. If anyone needs assistance with hay ground and pasture questions, I encourage

Zeltwanger ...
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Minnesota
State Cattlemen's Association
PO Box 12
Maple Plain, MN 55359
763-479-1011
www.mnsca.org
mnsca@mnsca.org

Executive Committee

President - Mark Pankonin

23620 Co Rd 4 Lambert, MN 56152,
(507) 220-1412, mpank8@yahoo.com

President Elect - Jake Thompson

14610 230th St S Barnsville, MN 56514,
(218) 329-9293, fourhillfarms2@yahoo.com

Vice President - Rachel Gray

27481 Lanit Rd NE Blackduck, MN 56630,
(218) 766-4929, timber1616@gmail.com

Past President - Grant Breittkreutz

38270 Kenwood Ave Redwood Falls, MN 56283,
(507) 430-0607, gdbreittkreutz@hotmail.com

Cow-Calf Council Chair

- Eric Zeltwanger

47633 250th St Morris, MN 56267,
(320) 766-0066, ericz@springvalley-farms.com

Feeder Council Chair

- Josiah Ebeling

251 200th St Trimont, MN 56176,
(507) 236-1511, ebeling7120@gmail.com

Legislative Chair - Krist Wollum

3912 Co 109 Porter, MN 56280,
(507) 530-3854, kkwollum@yahoo.com

Membership Director - Angie Ford

437 141st St Lake Wilson, MN 56151,
(507) 360-7937, angieford7937@gmail.com

Secretary/Treasurer - Kevin Hoge

32413 280th Place, Aitkin, MN, 56431
(218) 549-3337, flatrock@frontiernet.net

Business Director -

Accounting and Membership - Heather DeLong

Maple Plain, (763) 479-1011

Executive Director -

Kaitlyn Root

Maple Plain, kaitlyn@mnsca.org,
Office: 763-479-1011

MSCA Regional Directors

Region - 1 Ben Kleinwachter

22160 420th St. NW Strnadquist, MN 56758
(218) 597-2985, btk@wiktel.com

Region - 2 & 3 Eric Mousel

11493 CR 448, Jacobson, MN, 55742
(218) 513-0781, emmousel@umn.edu

Region - 4 Mark Schoenfeld

2524 331st Ave Dawson, MN 56232,
(612) 325-4001, circlescc@hotmail.com

Region - 5 Tom Smude

500 Centennial Drive Pierz, MN 56364
(320) 360-3014, tom@smudeoil.com

Region - 6 Jeff Stobb

12879 100th St Milaca, MN 56353
(320) 224-6375, jwstobb@stcloudstate.edu

Region - 7 Tom Salentiny

503 S Lafayette Ave Fulda, MN 56131,
(507) 329-2574, thomassalentiny@gmail.com

Region - 8 Jessica Lambrecht

34781 221st Ave LeCenter, MN 56057
(952) 994-1249, jessi.lambrecht@gmail.com

Region - 9 Amanda Armstrong

3791 NE 84th Ave Owatonna, MN 55060
(651) 775-2284, armstrongfarms96@gmail.com

Minnesota Cattleman

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For Advertising Contact:

Kaitlyn Root, kaitlyn@mnsca.org,
763-479-1011

Post Master Send Address

Corrections to:

Minnesota Cattleman Publications
PO Box 12 • Maple Plain, MN 55359



The Minnesota Beef Council (MBC) team, including MSCA's executive director, attended the Minnesota Farm Bureau Ag Day Gala in March. It was a great opportunity to network with leaders in the ag industry. Pictured left to right, Chief Executive Officer Kelly Schmidt, Director of Industry Relations Jon Dilworth, MSCA Executive Director and MBC BQA Coordinator Kaitlyn Root, Business Manager Heather DeLong and Communications Director Ashley Kraemer.

Root. . . continued from page 2

was to express our concern of deer depredation in Minnesota and to develop an action plan. We will reconvene within the next week, and we are hopeful for positive involvement and action from the DNR.

MPCA meets often with ag leaders in Minnesota to discuss their environmental review process, feedlot permitting and other pollution-related topics. This is important for MSCA to have a presence at so we can stay in the loop with everything impacting us on the environmental side of the equation.

Proving that our impact on the environment as cattle producers in Minnesota is a positive one will be a constant battle, but we are here to fight it.

NCBA's Legislative Conference is coming up on April 24-26, and MSCA will have a presence in Washington D.C. for a few days. It's time to get our boots on the hill!

The legislative conference is a way to ensure Minnesota cattle producers' voices are heard in D.C. We will be meeting with Minnesota representatives directly.

The Environmental Stewardship Award (ESAP) reception will also take place at the conference. ESAP is one of the most prestigious awards in the beef cattle industry, and we hope to have a Minnesota ESAP winner soon, so it will be great to recognize this year's winners and see firsthand what the program is all about.

The 2023 Summer Beef Tour registration is up and running! Make sure to head to MSCA's website to register today! And contact Angie Ford at (507) 360-7937 with any questions.

Happy planting and happy spring!

Zeltwanger . . . continued from page 2

you to reach out and ask questions when needed.

There are lots of places to find assistance and plenty of people who are willing to help. If I can help steer you in the right direction, reach out and I will do my best to point you in the right direction.

Soon, we will get into summer events. Don't forget to register for the summer tour with the Murray-Pipestone county cattlemen!

Thank you, 2023 Beef Alliance

THANK YOU to the following businesses that have committed to support members of the Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association as a part of the Minnesota Beef Alliance Program for 2023. If you are interested in learning more about the Beef Alliance program, contact Angie Ford at mnscamembership@gmail.com.

Prime

- American Foods*
- Carlson Wholesale
- Merck Animal Health*
- Minnesota Beef Council
- Minnesota Corn Growers Association*

- Zoetis/Performance Beef
- Roto-Mix

Choice

- Purina (Land O'Lakes)
- Vaxxinova

Select

- Dry Creek Trucking

* Indicates giving above base level for that category!



MICHELLE MOUSER
CattleWomen President

The value of a good mother. Amidst our world's confused state, there is absolutely no confusion in the cattle industry of what a good mother is. We all cherish a good mothering cow. She is up after delivery, licking off that new calf, talking to it, standing still and patient as it learns to nurse, protecting it from other cows and predators and having a single-minded focus.

The opposite is a cow that gives birth, gets up and walks away. Nothing is more vulnerable than a calf without a good mother, and nothing is more exasperating and angering than working with that cow to make her, force her, to be a good mother; hobbles, halters, chutes, pens and anything else you can possibly think of.

As part of the Minnesota CattleWomen, we all are offspring of good mothering or mentoring. What a great legacy of women, mothers, that gave birth to a vision, tended, worked, dreamed, waited and persevered all while a grassroots organization was growing and taking shape.

The value of the CattleWomen "mothers" and their

ability to protect, admonish and stay focused have resulted in an amazing group of strong, healthy, vibrant women that have and are standing the test of time, 50 years!

As spring comes upon us and Mother's Day approaches, may we all be encouraged and fueled by the passion and potential that lies within each and every cattle woman. May we be like those good mothering cows we cherish; knowing our purpose is not only to raise great cattle, but to give back to the industry that feeds us through giving of our time, energy and passion in making today better for the next generation of CattleWomen.

The next time you head out

to check your cows, take a moment to reflect on who you might be raising.

Thank you to all the amazing CattleWomen mothers that have brought our organization this far. Happy CattleWomen's Mother's Day!

As always, stay connected with us by becoming a member or visit our new website, mncattlewomen.org and learn all the great things we have to offer you.

Our next CattleWomen360 event, "Mineral Nutrition: Small Nutrients that Fuel Cattle Health, Production, and Profitability," will be June 10 in Tenstrike, Minnesota. Registration is open on our website.

Minnesota CattleWomen 360° Series

The Minnesota CattleWomen designed our CattleWomen 360 Series to elevate CattleWomen through growth and learning. This series provides a 360 degree approach by focusing on 4 pillars to help all CattleWomen grow in their confidence and knowledge.

- Animal Husbandry**
Everything you need to know about your cattle.
- Farm Management**
Everything on your property, but the animals.
- Industry Advocacy**
Everything outside your farm's property lines.
- MNCW Community**
Everything to support you, the CattleWomen, every day.

Events are open to all women who want to learn! No MNCW membership needed.

JUNE 10TH

Mineral Nutrition: Small Nutrients That Fuel Cattle Health, Production and Your Profitability
Tenstrike, MN

SEPTEMBER 30TH

Disease: The One Chain You Need to Break
Aitkin, MN

NOVEMBER 4TH

Grazing: Cattle's Positive Impact on the Land and How to Share it
Starbuck, MN

DECEMBER 14TH - 16TH

MN Cattle Industry Convention - Annual Meeting
Alexandria, MN

REGISTRATIONS OPENS APRIL 17TH | MNCATTLEWOMEN.ORG

Falsehoods about mRNA vaccines corrected

The National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) released a statement on April 5 in regard to false information circulating on social media about the use of mRNA vaccines in cattle:

"There are no current mRNA vaccines licensed for use in beef cattle in the United States. Cattle farmers and ranchers do vaccinate cattle to treat and prevent many diseases, but presently none of these vaccines include mRNA technology."



MBC attends MAMP Convention

The Minnesota Beef Council was back at the Minnesota Association of Meat Processors (MAMP) Annual Convention. On Friday, March 17, we hosted the Innovative Beef Contest at the MAMP Product Show. We have three categories meat markets can compete in. The three categories are Lean Ground Beef (minimum of 85 percent of lean), Processed Beef (jerky, sausage, brats, etc.) and Steaks/Roasts (other than from the Rib/Lion). The entries are judged on appearance, edibility/flavor and creativity/marketability.

The winners were:

Lean Ground Beef: Reuben Meatballs, Dehmer's Meats Inc.; St. Michael, Minn.

Processed Beef: Smoked Beef Strips, Stokke's Meat Market; Cloquet, Minn.

Steaks/Roasts: Grovanna Beef Roll up, Grand Champion Meats; Foley, Minn.

Our overall "Best of Innovative Beef" Award



2023 MAMP Innovative Beef Winners

went to Grand Champion Meats from Foley, Minn. with their Grovanna Beef Roll.

During the trade show, the Minnesota Beef Council offered packs of 25 Confident Cooking booklets and packs of 50 Summer Grilling brochures in their booth for the meat markets to pick up and take home with them to in their meat markets.

Minnesota Retail Beef Backer

The Minnesota Beef Council is excited to announce Blondies Butcher Shop of Waukegan, Minnesota has been named the 2023 Minnesota Retail Beef Backer award winner. The Retail Beef Backer award is given to honor retailers who go above and beyond to market and merchandise beef to their customers.

Blondies Butcher Shop, the little pink meat locker in Waukegan, has been a hub in southeastern Minnesota for the last 80 years. They operate a small, but fully stocked retail area with a colorful atmosphere.

The retail side of the business continues to grow. They have remodeled in the past few years and increased the size of their retail space from a five ft. by six ft. space with a singular cooler, to now three standing coolers, additional freezers, a specialty meat cooler and a large check-out counter.

Their selection includes all the favorites like hamburger, steaks, brisket, roast and prime rib, but they also carry some specific customer favorites like liver, tongue and heart. In addition, they have a full line of



Jon Dilworth and Lindsey Fulton

value-added products like beef sticks, summer sausage and jerky, which are popular for lunch walk-ins and fishing and hunting weekend trips.

Blondies has a growing social media presence with a passion for promoting and educating the consumer on all levels. The team there is constantly educating themselves on ways to increase consumer beef demand. Their mission is to be a trusted resource, a relatable community leader and a provider of quality beef.

"At Blondies, we strive to provide an environment for people to learn and ask questions about beef," said Lindsey. "We encourage conversations about types of beef, to cook-



Lindsey Fulton, Blondies Butcher Shop owner

ing instructions, grilling and smoking, or just experimenting with a new cut. We are here to make your beef buying an experience in a colorful atmosphere in the heart of a small farming community."

Blondies Butcher Shop received an engraved award with "2023 Retail Beef Backer" on it to display in their retail shop.

Any independent or chain retailer based in Minnesota is eligible to apply to be the Retail Beef Backer. Retail operations or owners may enter themselves or may be nominated by a customer or vendor.



MNBC GRILLING RECIPE

BARBECUE CHIPOTLE BURGER

Whip up your own barbecue sauce, then slather it on a perfectly prepared ground beef patty. Serve it all up on a "bun" of delicious Texas Toast.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound Ground Beef (93% lean or leaner)
- 1/2 cup beer
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons ketchup
- 1 tablespoon minced chipotle peppers in adobo sauce
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
- 4 slices frozen Texas Toast
- 2 spears pickled okra, sliced

COOKING:

1. To prepare barbecue sauce, combine beer, brown sugar, ketchup, chipotle peppers and Worcestershire sauce in saucepan; bring to a boil. Simmer 8 to 10 minutes until sauce is thickened; set aside.

2. Lightly shape ground beef into four 1/2-inch thick patties. Place patties on grid over medium, ash-covered coals. Grill, covered, 8 to 10 minutes (over medium heat on preheated gas grill, covered, 7 to 9 minutes) until instant-read thermometer inserted horizontally into center registers 160°F, turning occasionally.

Cook's Tip: Cooking times are for fresh or thoroughly thawed ground beef. Ground beef should be cooked to an internal temperature of 160°F. Color is not a reliable indicator of ground beef doneness.

3. Meanwhile, prepare Texas Toast according to package directions. Cut each piece of toast in half.

Cook's Tip: Fresh Texas toast, buttered, may be used instead of frozen product.

4. For each sandwich, spread 1 tablespoon barbecue sauce over one toast half. Top with burger, another tablespoon sauce and okra slices. Close sandwich.

Cook's Tip: Dill pickle chips or pickled jalapeño peppers may be substituted for pickled okra.

Nutrition information per serving using 93% lean ground beef: 382 Calories; 144 Calories from fat; 16g Total Fat (6.3 g Saturated Fat; 0.1 g Trans Fat; 0.3 g Polyunsaturated Fat; 3.3 g Monounsaturated Fat); 84 mg Cholesterol; 454 mg Sodium; 32 g Total Carbohydrate; 1 g Dietary Fiber; 10.2 g Total Sugars; 29 g Protein; 8.2 g Added Sugars; 33.4 mg Calcium; 3.9 mg Iron; 480 mg Potassium; 0 mcg Vitamin D; 0.2 mg Riboflavin; 6.6 mg NE Niacin; 0.4 mg Vitamin B6; 2.8 mcg Vitamin B12; 236 mg Phosphorus; 6.5 mg Zinc; 21.3 mcg Selenium; 99.8 mg Choline.

** Based on a 2,000 calorie diet*

*** Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000-calorie diet*

This recipe is an excellent source of Protein, Iron, Niacin, Vitamin B6, Vitamin B12, Zinc, and Selenium; and a good source of Potassium, Riboflavin, Phosphorus, and Choline.

MBC Board Meeting

The next Minnesota Beef Council Board of Directors Meeting is scheduled for Monday, July 17, 2023, at Key Largo on Lake Shetek, north of Slayton, MN

Minnesota Beef Council Events

June 14-15: MN Top of the Class, Maple Plain, MN

June 25-28: Reciprocal Meat Conference, St. Paul, MN

July 17: MBC Board of Directors Meeting, at Key Largo on Lake Shetek, north of Slayton, MN

July 18: MSCA Summer Tour Murry/Pipestone

Minnesota farmers' bottom lines remain strong despite challenging year

Minnesota farms saw continued financial improvement in 2022, despite global uncertainty, inflationary pressures and lingering drought conditions across much of the state. Crop yields were above trendline even with the difficult growing conditions. With strong prices throughout the year for the state's major commodities, Minnesota farms were able to improve their financial position in preparation for expected economic challenges in 2023.

Median net farm income for Minnesota farms reached \$179,728 in 2022. This was another year of improved profitability after challenging financial years from 2013 to 2019. This profitability level was an eight percent increase over the previous year and when adjusted for inflation, 2022 farm profits were the second highest among historical records.

The average Minnesota farm saw continued improvement in working capital and retained earnings. Repayment capacity, solvency and financial efficiency performance remained strong.

"There was much uncertainty going into the 2022 production year for Minnesota farms. The dry conditions, inflationary pressures and market volatility were all top of mind for Minnesota producers," said Pauline Van Nurden of the University of Minnesota's Center for Farm Financial Management. "Many Minnesota farms used risk management techniques to lock in profits by marketing their commodities and securing inputs before costs soared. This will be harder to do in the coming year."

This analysis includes 2,131 participants in the Minnesota State Farm Business Management programs and 109 members of the Southwest Farm Business Management Association. Participating farmers represent about 12 percent of Minnesota's farms with gross incomes over \$250,000 annually.

The data is collected by a database called the FINBIN. The FINBIN not only provides data for traditional commodity agriculture but several special initiatives in recent years are helping to address big questions in Minnesota agriculture. A beginning farmer program has aimed to help with farm transition; an organic benchmarking program is analyzing the profitability of these farms; and decision tools are being developed to help address the questions related to climate smart agriculture.

"We are excited to dig into the economic impact of cover crops. We hope to expand the findings of this project over time, by tracking acres using cover crops over several years to learn more about the economic impacts of this production system. These are big questions on the minds of farmers today. We hope to help inform the decision-making process for Minnesota farmers," said Keith Olander of the Minnesota State Northern Agricultural Center of Excellence.

Improved prices lead to profits; increased expenses hamper gains

The median net income for crop farms was \$234,853. Cash crop sale prices during the year were again up compared to 2021. Yields for the major crops of the state were also above the

10-year average. This includes corn, soybeans, wheat and sugarbeets.

Higher crop prices translated into higher feed costs for Minnesota livestock producers. Yet, earnings improved for most dairy and beef producers, while hog farm profits were down slightly year-over-year. In general, livestock operation profitability was bolstered by the cropping side of their farming operation.

"Livestock profitability was improved in 2022. By year end, livestock prices began to erode and input expenses remained high. Currently, many livestock operations are operating at a loss. And, unfortunately, I expect this to continue for the foreseeable future. Hopefully farmers were able to build a strong financial position to weather this current financial storm and all the inflationary challenges facing them," said Nate Converse, farm business management instructor at Central Lakes College.

After receiving substantial government support related to the pandemic's impact on ag markets, government support payments were much lower in 2022. Only two percent of gross farm revenue came from government payments. Government payments received by farms were down by more than 50 percent in 2022.

Prospects for 2023

There is much uncertainty related to 2023 farm profitability in Minnesota. Farmers and consumers alike share many of the same concerns. This includes the impact of inflation, rising interest rates and general economic uncertainty. The

global market situation is also worrisome for Minnesota producers.

Agriculture is a global market, therefore the continued war in Ukraine, and uncertainty related to Mexico and China, two of our largest export markets, are areas of concern. Much of the future concern relates to decreased commodity prices, compressed margins and interest rate increases.

The latest USDA Farm Income Forecast echoes this concern. USDA's February 2023 forecast predicts inflation adjusted net farm income will decrease over 18 percent in 2023. This is the result of decreased commodity prices and input costs remaining high. Given the global nature of agriculture and the current state of world affairs, this estimate may be overly optimistic.

"Input costs are typically 'sticky' for farmers. Commodity prices correct quickly, while input costs tend to stay high after they've increased. Over the last year, machinery costs, land rent, and fertilizer have all increased. These expenses don't look like they will come down as fast as commodity prices are expected to fall this year," said Garen Paulson, lead field staff for the University of Minnesota's Southwest Minnesota Farm Business Management Association. "I encourage all farms to know their cost of production and use this in their marketing plans to try and lock in a profit for the coming year."

This article is courtesy of the University of Minnesota Extension team. For more information, visit extension.umn.edu.

Ebeling ... continued from page 2

higher beef prices, we would expect more pork demand. Despite the price gap, consumers still demand our high-quality beef in their diet. The question is how high-priced beef will fare when household budgets are squeezed and consumers are struggling to match daily living cost amid high fuel, rent and interest rates.

Make sure everyone gets signed up for the Summer Beef Tour July 17-18 hosted by Pipestone and Murray county cattlemen's associations. It will be a fun filled day spent interacting with producers, visiting feedlots and cow/calf operations.

Everyone, have a safe spring planting!

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Green Lands Blue Waters SARE

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Advancing for the Future

By Todd Wilkinson, NCBA President

As farmers and ranchers, we recognize the multitude of benefits that come from fusing purpose to profit. It's how we operate sustainable businesses while producing a great product consumers continue to demand. We impact our business and this industry with how we adopt new ideas and technologies to build sustainable growth.

But sometimes, it feels hard enough to keep up with the current, let alone advance for the future. In business, we can't do it all. Identifying priorities and focusing on what adds value is critical to every business.

Genetics and marketing have always been important to my family's operation. When I first started raising cattle, our focus was on building the best cowherd we could by identifying genetics that would work for our environment and finishing operation.

In 2003, BSE threw our industry a curve ball, and we suddenly found ourselves trying to regain export market share. This signaled a change

in marketing and the need to include age and source verification on finished cattle to regain access to export markets, so we did this for an economic advantage.

Another shift to our business happened when my son wanted to come back to the ranch. Over the years, Wilkinson Livestock went from a cow/calf and finishing operation to a cow/calf and stocker operation growing cattle for the Prime Pursuits program.

An evolving family dynamic actually created value for our business. This move also connected us with breeders using the best genetics and gives us insight on employing the latest cutting-edge science.

My involvement in the industry has shown me that things we have always done, conservation and animal handling practices to be specific, are very valuable across the supply chain, especially to consumers. The opportunity is to continuously improve the way we do these things and look for avenues where improvement

in these practices adds value.

Continual improvement by all of us is an investment in the future. The way I see it, advancing for the future is two-fold in our business. There has to be a level of understanding in what works for our unique business models and what doesn't.

We cannot follow every trend out there. But we also must recognize our industry is ever evolving because our consumer is ever evolving, and the ways to capture profitability are ever evolving. If we're not focused on advancing for the future, then we're missing the boat.

With increasing operational costs, efficiency and innovation will dictate success. Operating the same as it was done 50 years ago and being resistant to changing market conditions can be a recipe for disaster. Working together, let us retain the best of the past while embracing those innovations that can best lead us into the future.

Thompson . . . continued from page 2

of becoming a member and encourage them to do so.

I wanted to thank the membership for all the photos, videos and stories about deer depredation happening throughout the state. We compiled all of the information and presented it to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR) on April 4 when we had a meeting with MNDNR Assistant Commissioner Bob Meier and MNDNR Division of Fish and Wildlife Director Dave Olfelt.

We discussed the invasion of the whitetail and the trouble coming with it for our producers. We also discussed the turkey and elk depredation issues.

We presented a couple of possible solutions for them to consider to help to try and improve the situation. Overall, all that were on the call felt it was a productive meeting and will continue talks going forward.

I encourage you all to revisit the Policy Pen weekly update for the week of April 7 and April 14. There is contact information listed for regional wildlife directors in the updates.

These individuals have a say when making hunting limits that could impact producers. They need to hear from our members in the hopes to adjust the bag limits for the upcoming hunting season.

Angie, Kaitlyn and I will be attending the NCBA Legislative Conference in Washington D.C. April 24-26 to discuss farm bill and other federal issues with our representatives in D.C.

I hope the sun continues to shine and dries out your lots and fields and hope we all get some green grass growing!

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Kelliher Cattle Company is a student built and student run cattle company which started in 2019. Pictured left to right, Amy Mastin (Advisor), Jordan Waldo, Kooper Owen, Aarion Lyons, BillyJack Schoenborn, Evan Waldo, Abby Neft, Braxton Cloud, Hannah Mastin, Marcus Johnson, Rylle Neft, Wyatt Plackner, Alexis Herron and Cooper Brambrink.

Gray . . . continued from page 2

Blondies Butcher Shop, come to school for a day and help them process a steer they raised.

If you have a chance, follow this innovative group of kids on Facebook to see what they are up to. I think you will be as impressed as I am with what they are learning and accomplishing.

I am excited to see our industry being promoted!

I hope the spring goes well for you and cattle prices continue to look great. I know in this area, we are looking forward to turning cattle out onto pastures and getting some fieldwork done.

NCBA Highlights Federal Injunction Stopping WOTUS Rule in 24 States

WASHINGTON (April 12, 2023) – The National Cattlemen’s Beef Association (NCBA) praised the decision by a judge in the U.S. District Court for the District of North Dakota to grant a preliminary injunction stopping the Biden administration’s “Waters of the U.S.” (WOTUS) rule from taking effect in 24 states. Combined with a previous ruling in the Southern District of Texas, 26 states across the country are protected from the Biden WOTUS rule.

“Once again, the courts have affirmed that the Biden administration’s WOTUS rule is overreaching and harmful to America’s beef farmers and ranchers,” said NCBA President Todd Wilkinson, a South Dakota cattle producer. “Cattle producers in 26 states now have some additional certainty while this rule is being litigated and we are optimistic that the Supreme Court will provide nationwide clarity on the federal government’s proper jurisdiction over water.”

This injunction was granted thanks to a lawsuit filed by 24 state attorneys general seeking to overturn the WOTUS rule. In total, NCBA and its litigation partners have secured preliminary injunctions in Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, West Virginia and Wyoming. NCBA’s motion for a nationwide injunction is still pending in the North Dakota court.

USDM provides drought updates

During the week of April 4, the U.S. Drought Monitor (USDM) saw continued widespread improvements on the map across areas of the western U.S. including in California, Nevada, Oregon, Idaho and Utah. Overall, the areal extent of drought in the West dipped to 31 percent this week as compared to 73 percent at the beginning of the Water Year in early October.

The week’s improvements reflected the impact of the recent storm events which continued to boost mountain snowpack levels to record, or near-record levels as observed at numerous Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) SNOTEL monitoring stations across the Sierra Nevada, southern Cascades, eastern Great Basin, Wasatch, Uintas and the southern and central Rockies.

In California, the statewide snowpack was 243 percent of normal (April 5), with the Northern Sierra at 198 percent, Central Sierra at 242 percent and Southern Sierra at 302 percent. Elsewhere in the region, the state of Utah is observing historic snowpack levels with the statewide snow water equivalent (SWE) at its highest level on record (April 5) at 211 percent of median, according to NRCS SNOTEL.

In other regions, areas of the South (Texas) and the Southern Plains (Kansas, Oklahoma) saw further degradations on the map in response to a combination of short and long-term dry conditions, very low streamflow and reservoir levels and reported impacts in the agricultural sector. In the High Plains, blizzard-like conditions and moderate to heavy snowfall accumulations were observed in the Dakotas during the past week as well as in areas of the Upper Midwest including northwestern Minnesota.

In the Southeast, dry conditions and reports of deteriorating pasture conditions led to the expansion of severe drought areas in central Florida. Likewise, short-term precipitation deficits and increasing fire danger in areas of the Coastal Plain of North Carolina led to the expansion of areas of drought.



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“Match Made In Heaven” Survey and the Midwest Grazing Exchange

Contact: Project Outreach Coordinator: Amy Fenn, fennsfolly@gmail.com

“Match Made In Heaven: Livestock + Crops” is a collaboration of over 50 groups in Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri and Wisconsin. The project is surveying farmers in six states to learn about a growing movement to reintegrate crop and livestock systems in the cornbelt. “We invite farmers to fill out the survey and help us understand the opportunities and barriers related to these integrated systems,” said Amy Fenn, the project’s coordinator. “The survey will be used to identify strategies for capturing more environmental, economic, and social benefits of integrated systems and share this information with partners across the region.”

Participating organizations include crop and livestock associations, state and federal agencies, universities, soil and water groups, and farmers who have successfully integrated crops and livestock in their operations. The project is funded through an NCR-SARE grant developed by Green Lands Blue Waters at the University of Minnesota. Farmers interested in participating in the survey can find it online at <https://z.umn.edu/MatchMadeSurvey>.



Farming practices that integrate crops and livestock, such as grazing cover crops or crop residue, can create mutual benefits on both the crop and livestock sides. Crop enterprises can save on fertilizer costs, break pest and disease cycles, add soil organic matter, market their cover crops as forage, and potentially receive ecosystem service credits; while livestock enterprises can use cover crops and crop residue to stretch the grazing season into winter. “A key feature is the same farmer need not do all the work to make it happen,” said co-director Laura Paine. “There is huge potential for partnerships between crop producers, livestock producers, and custom operators.” Beginning farmers can begin their farming careers with lower capital investment by partnering with other farmers.

Earlier this year the project released an infographic depicting integration of livestock and crops at a glance, highlighting

some of the many benefits and challenges, and suggesting a few places to start - such as the Midwest Grazing Exchange. “We’re trying to build conversation around integration, and the Midwest Grazing Exchange is already this great tool available to help crop and livestock farmers team up with each other,” said Jewett. “We hope it will be shared widely!”

The Midwest Grazing Exchange is like a dating app for livestock and pasture. Farmers and landowners with pasture, crop residue, or cover crops available for grazing can list on the Exchange. Likewise, livestock owners willing to transport their animals to available grazing can list their herd or flock information on the Exchange. The Exchange website is easy to navigate. Registering and adding a listing only takes about five minutes. It currently covers seven states: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, and Wisconsin. State Leads in each state are available to assist with listings or connecting to additional grazing resources: <https://www.midwestgrazingexchange.com/contacts>.

No-cost RFID tags offered

The Minnesota Board of Animal Health is offering a limited number of no-cost RFID tags for all bovine species. Take advantage of this opportunity while they are in supply by visiting bah.state.mn.us/order-bovine-official-rfid/.

The form can also be found on the MN Board of Animal Health website under the “Forms” dropdown, select “View All Online Forms”, select “Order Tags, ID or Supplies”, then “Order Bovine Official RFID-Minnesota.” Larger quantities of RFID tags for replacement heifers can still be ordered at bah.state.mn.us/order-rfid/.

RFID tags help prevent and control animal diseases more efficiently. Learn more about official identification at bah.state.mn.us/traceability/ and bah.state.mn.us/official-id/.

IMPORTANT DATES:

April 24-26 – NCBA Legislative Conference – Washington D.C.

July 17 – MSCA Quarterly Meeting – Key Largo on Lake Shetek, Slayton, MN

July 17 – MSCA PAC Event – Key Largo, 5:30-10 p.m.

July 17-18 – Summer Tour – hosted by Murray County Cattlemen’s Association and Pipestone County Cattlemen’s Association

July 24-26 – NCBA Summer Business Meeting – San Diego, California

Aug. 1-3 – Farm Fest

Sept. – MSCA Third Quarterly Meeting – Date/Time/Location TBD

Dec. 14-16 – 2023 Minnesota Cattle Industry Convention – Arrowwood Resort, Alexandria

For more details on events listed above, visit www.mnsca.org

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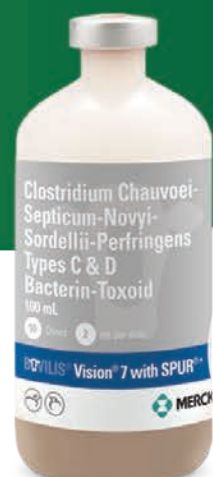
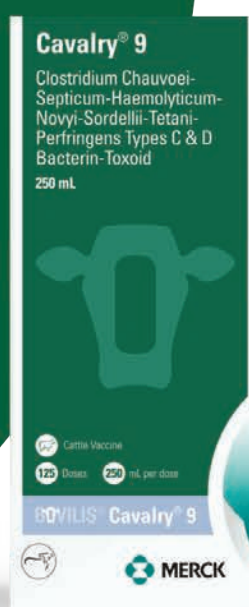
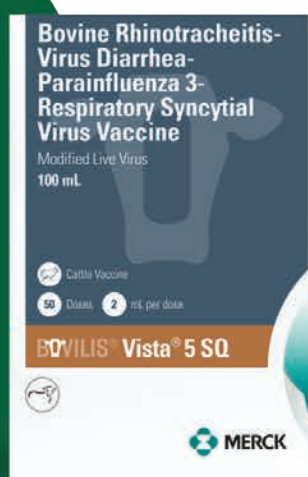
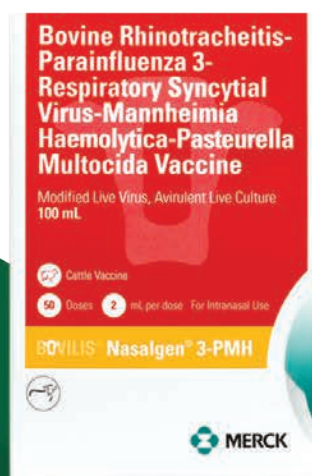
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MSCA offers scholarship opportunities

The Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association (MSCA) is excited to announce scholarship opportunities for students continuing education. MSCA is offering the 2023 Reid Mason Memorial Scholarship and the 2023 Dennis Bottem Memorial Scholarship. Students have the opportunity to win up to \$500 for continuing education.

Both scholarship applications have a due date of June 1, 2023, and winners will be announced at the Summer Tour in July and awarded at MSCA's Annual Convention in December.

Criteria for eligibility for the Reid Mason Memorial Scholarship includes:

- Applicant, parent or guardian must be a member of the Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association and National Cattlemen's Beef Association.
- Applicant must be enrolled as a junior or senior in a college or university in Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wisconsin or Iowa.
- Applicant should be majoring in animal science with emphasis on beef cattle.
- Applicant must submit with the application:
 - o Most recent copy of grades
 - o Two references – one must be a postsecondary reference

Criteria for eligibility for the Dennis Bottem Memorial Scholarship Application includes:

- Applicant must be a Minnesota resident
- Applicant must be enrolled in either a two (2) or four (4) year agriculture program in any college or University in Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wisconsin or Iowa.
- Applicant must be majoring in animal science or agronomy.
- Applicant, parent or guardian must be a member of the Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association.
- Applicant must submit with the application:
 - o Most recent copy of grades
 - o Two references – one must be a postsecondary reference

Visit mnsca.org/resources/scholarships-awards to apply, and spread the word to students you know that qualify for this scholarship. For any questions, email mnsca@mnsca.org.



**MINNESOTA
STATE
CATTLEMEN'S
ASSOCIATION**



SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

REID MASON MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Eligibility Criteria

- ✓ Applicant, parent or guardian must be a member of the Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association and National Cattlemen's Beef Association.
- ✓ Applicant must be enrolled as a junior or senior in a college or university in Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wisconsin or Iowa.
- ✓ Applicant should be majoring in animal science with emphasis on beef cattle.
- ✓ Applicant must submit with the application:
 - Most recent copy of grades
 - Two references – one must be a postsecondary reference



For more information and to fill out an application, scan the QR code or visit [MNSCA.org](https://mnsca.org)

DENNIS BOTTEM MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Eligibility Criteria

- ✓ Applicant must be a Minnesota resident
- ✓ Applicant must be enrolled in either a two- or four-year agriculture program in any college or university in Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wisconsin or Iowa.
- ✓ Applicant must be majoring in animal science or agronomy.
- ✓ Applicant, parent or guardian must be a member of the Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association.
- ✓ Applicant must submit with the application:
 - Most recent copy of grades
 - Two references – one must be a postsecondary reference



For more information and to fill out an application, scan the QR code or visit [MNSCA.org](https://mnsca.org)

APPLICATIONS DUE JUNE 1, 2023
For questions or more information, email mnsca@mnsca.org.

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NEWS BRIEFS

Utilize WSS to learn about your land

Web Soil Survey (WSS), operated by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), is a web-based application providing access to soil data and information for making management decisions. Data is available for more than 95 percent of U.S. counties.

How to use WSS

Find the general location of the area by typing in an address, latitude and longitude, section/township/range or other information. From there, you can zoom in or out to change the view area.

Define your Area of Interest (AOI) which creates boundaries for the specific location you are interested in learning more about. Once you have defined it, you can provide a name for your AOI.

View or print detailed descriptions of the soils in your AOI through the Soil Map tab.

For each soil type, you can view the acres found within your AOI. You can learn more about each soil type (e.g., slope, elevation, frost-free days, depth to the water table, available water supply) by clicking on its name.

Access additional soil characteristics for your AOI through the Soil Data Explorer tab. This allows you to determine the suitability of the soil for a particular use such as building site development, land management and recreational development.

The land management tab provides several useful interpretations for forestry such as harvest equipment operability, potential for seedling mortality, suitability for hand planting, suitability for mechanical site preparation and planting, and windthrow hazard.

Use the Shopping Cart tab to print out a custom report for your AOI. This information can also be saved as a PDF for referencing at a later time.

Visit websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/ to help you make more informed land purchase decisions or better use property you already own.

Stockmanship and Stewardship registration opens

CENTENNIAL, Colo. – Registration is now open for six Stockmanship & Stewardship regional events in five states this spring and summer, with an additional virtual event to be held in November. During each event, producers can become Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) certified, network with fellow cattlemen and women, participate in hands-on demonstrations led by animal handling experts including Curt Pate and Dr. Ron Gill and learn cutting-edge operation techniques.

2023 Stockmanship & Stewardship dates and locations:

- May 10-12, Farmington, New Mexico
- June 13-14, Norfolk, Nebraska
- June 15, McCook, Nebraska
- August 18, Fort Collins, Colorado
- September 15-16, Ontario, Oregon
- September 29-30, Caldwell, Ohio
- November 1, Virtual

A previous Stockmanship & Stewardship attendee shared, “While I have had experience with most of the topics covered, it was great to hear the speakers talk and give a good overview of industry practices. It was a great event, and it’s one that I encourage others to attend.”

Stockmanship & Stewardship is a unique educational experience for cattle producers featuring low-stress cattle handling demonstrations, BQA educa-

tional sessions, facility design sessions and industry updates. The program is sponsored by the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association (NCBA), Merck Animal Health and the Beef Checkoff-funded National BQA program.

“At Merck Animal Health, we are committed to continuously improving animal health and well-being through our investments in research and development, our comprehensive portfolio of innovative products and technologies, the expertise of our people and in supporting the cattle industry and its causes,” said Kevin Mobley, executive director of sales at Merck Animal Health. “We are proud to have a long-standing partnership with the Beef Checkoff and NCBA on its Stockmanship & Stewardship program to provide cattle producers with animal care training and education to help them be more profitable and sustainable in their operations.”

For more information about upcoming Stockmanship & Stewardship events and to register, visit StockmanshipAndStewardship.org. Cattle producers attending a Stockmanship & Stewardship event are eligible for reimbursement through the Rancher Resilience Grant. To apply for a grant to cover registration costs and two nights hotel, visit ncba.org/producers/rancher-resilience-grant.

Biden vetoes congressional resolution to end WOTUS rule

President Joe Biden vetoed a bipartisan congressional joint resolution which would have overturned the harmful Waters of the U.S. (WOTUS) rule, which has been in effect since March 20. The resolution was passed by both the House and Senate under the Congressional Review Act, which allows Congress to overturn rules from federal agencies, like the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

“America’s farmers, ranchers and landowners have made it clear this WOTUS definition is overly burdensome and unworkable, only exacerbating the regulatory uncertainty rural communities currently face. By vetoing this resolution, President Biden has once again turned his back on rural America,” said Rep. Glenn “GT” Thompson of Pennsylvania, chairman of the House Committee on Agriculture and cosponsor of the resolution.

The new WOTUS rule creates more uncertainty for cattle producers by putting the burden on individuals to determine if a water feature on their land is considered federally regulated. NCBA remains actively engaged on this issue, both in the courts and in Congress.

Grasslands partnership announced

THEIF RIVER FALLS, Minn. – Healthy grasslands are the key to carbon storage and water retention, as well as improved water filtration, increased soil quality and the survival of countless animal species. That’s why Ducks Unlimited (DU) has partnered with the USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to protect 6,000 acres of grasslands in northwest Minnesota over the next three years.

DU is engaging and educating Minnesota cattle ranchers on the benefits of sustainable grazing practices.

“The NRCS has a long history of working with landowners and ranchers to protect and restore our prairies, so DU is excited to partner with them on this project,” said Chris McLeland, DU director of conservation programs. “We know healthy grasslands are critical to slowing global climate change and for the

future of all kinds of wildlife.”

The NRCS program, known as the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), offers ranchers financial assistance and strategies for keeping grasslands sustainable, namely by moving their cattle before grass health is compromised. EQIP assists with costs for fencing, seeding and other expenses while providing technical assistance from a grazing biologist and other resources, free of charge.

NRCS and DU work with producers to develop a specific science-based conservation plan that outlines practices and activities that can help solve on-farm resource issues. When producers implement these practices and activities properly, it can lead to cleaner water and air, healthier soil and better wildlife habitat while improving their agricultural operations.

Once a producer contacts their local NRCS office, a conservation planner schedules a site visit to the property. The planner walks the land with the rancher to discuss goals and review any resource concerns. After the site visit, the conservation planner develops a plan that includes a variety of conservation practices to address resource concerns and establish management goals.

Black Vulture Relief Act introduced

WASHINGTON – On March 9, the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association (NCBA) welcomed the introduction of the bipartisan Black Vulture Relief Act, led by Rep. John Rose (R-TN) and Rep. Darren Soto (D-FL).

“Across the country, cattle producers are coping with extreme input costs and the worst inflation rate in 40 years. Livestock deaths due to black vultures are a financial loss that no one can afford right now,” said NCBA Director of Government Affairs Sigrid Johannes. “Giving producers greater flexibility on black vulture management means one less financial burden to worry about. We appreciate Congressman Rose and Congressman Soto’s leadership and commonsense approach to controlling this abundant predator species.”

The bill would allow a cattle producer to “take” (capture, kill, disperse, or transport) black vultures that pose a risk to livestock. Additionally, the bill reduces permitting burdens and red tape by instituting a simple report that producers submit once per year detailing the number of black vultures they took. Streamlining the system and lifting the cap on number of black vultures that producers can take is a commonsense approach to managing a fully recovered, aggressive predator species.

“Black vultures have developed into a lethal predator for newborn calves, costing Tennessee cattle producers thousands of dollars in lost revenue each year. We appreciate Congressman Rose’s bill as a significant tool to help control the over-population of these predators,” said Tennessee Cattlemen’s Association Executive Director Charles Hord.

Black vulture depredation rates have increased across the Southeast in recent years, surpassing 30 percent in some states like Florida.

“The Florida Cattlemen’s Association appreciates Congressman Soto’s co-sponsorship of this commonsense bill,” said Jim Handley, executive vice president of the Florida Cattlemen’s Association. “The economic loss to Florida cattle ranchers from black vultures is significant every year, and we thank Congressman Soto for taking action to assist our industry with this legislation.”

NEWS BRIEFS

FMD protection funding awarded

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) announced the week of March 16 that they are awarding the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) with \$445,396 in funding to advance the Secure Beef Supply Plan (SBS) in the event of a foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) outbreak in the U.S.

"NCBA thanks USDA for awarding this critical funding to help continue defending the U.S. cattle herd from the threat of foot-and-mouth disease. The Secure Beef Supply Plan combined with USDA's national vaccine bank provides a strong safety net for cattle producers and multiple tools to mitigate risk from a potential outbreak," said Allison Rivera, NCBA executive director of government affairs. "This funding was made available through the 2018 Farm Bill, showing why continued support and further funding for animal disease preparation measures like the Secure Beef Supply Plan and the National Animal Vaccine and Veterinary Countermeasure Bank are so important as Congress works on the 2023 Farm Bill."

The SBS Plan provides guidance on workable business continuity measures for beef cattle operations with no evidence of FMD infection during an FMD outbreak. The SBS Plan is the result of a multi-year collaborative effort by industry, state, federal, and academic representatives to provide guidance on moving uninfected cattle to continue beef cattle production and keep grocery store shelves stocked.

FDA commissioner comments on cell cultured meat

On March 29, FDA Commissioner Robert Califf testified before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration and Related Agencies. During the hearing, Rep. Julia Letlow (R-LA) asked the Commissioner how the agency plans to coordinate with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) on pre-market consultation for reviewing cell cultured chicken products. In his answer, Commissioner Califf referenced climate change and the need for additional cell cultured research as a way to mitigate the impact of climate change.

Under a memorandum of understanding signed in 2019, USDA and FDA have joint jurisdiction over fake meat products, with USDA taking the lead on enforcing accurate labeling and food safety. This memorandum was supported by NCBA because of USDA's expertise in food inspections and labeling.

When FDA announced its second pre-market consultation for cell cultured chicken last week, the agency said that it is "ready to work with additional firms that are developing cultured animal cell food" and "will issue guidance to assist firms that intend to produce human food made from cultured animal cells." These statements are highly concerning and indicate FDA's desire to promote additional cell cultured meat products.

National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) Vice President of Government Affairs Ethan Lane slammed Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Commissioner Robert Califf's comments regarding cell cultured meat that he made during a hearing on the FDA's fiscal year 2024 budget request:

"By his own admission, the FDA's role is to ensure food safety, but Commissioner Califf's comments today indicate that he intends to bring his agency into climate and environmental discussions while promoting cell cultured meat. This viewpoint is extremely disappointing to America's cattle producers whose stewardship of the land already does more to protect our environment than fake meat production ever will.

We appreciate Congresswoman Letlow shining a light on these concerning issues at FDA and hope that Commissioner Califf will reverse course and coordinate with the U.S. Department of Agriculture on the regulation of these cell cultured substitutes."

Producers support legislation to repeal Death Tax

The National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) strongly supports legislation introduced today by Sen. John Thune (R-SD) to repeal the federal estate tax, commonly referred to as the Death Tax.

"No cattle producer should ever be forced to sell their family's farm or ranch to pay a tax bill due to the death of a family member. Repealing the Death Tax is a commonsense way to keep the farm or ranch in the family," said NCBA President and South Dakota cattle producer Todd Wilkinson. "As a land-based, capital-intensive industry, most cattle producing families are asset-rich and cash-poor, with few options to pay off tax liabilities. It is unacceptable that some families are forced to sell off land, farm equipment, parts of the operation, or the entire ranch to pay the estate tax. We need a tax code that promotes the continuation of family-owned businesses instead of breaking them up."

Ensuring a farm or ranch can be passed to children or grandchildren is a priority for family-owned farms, ranches and agricultural businesses. It is critically important that producers and business owners have permanent relief from the Death Tax. Current Death Tax relief is set to expire at the end of 2025, and it is vital that Congress takes immediate action to provide permanent relief for agricultural families. NCBA is committed to working with Senator Thune and members of the Senate and House, those who support American cattlemen and women and rural communities to kill the Death Tax.

Minnesota students selected for the James W. Tracy Scholarship

PLAINVIEW, Minn. – The Minnesota FFA Foundation announced the 25 Minnesota students who will receive the James W. Tracy scholarship. The scholarship is available to Minnesota students who are enrolled or planning to enroll in an accredited post-secondary school and pursuing a degree in Agriculture. The Scholarship is scored on leadership, involvement, agriculture interest and financial need.

The scholarship is possible due to the generosity of James W. Tracy, a farmer from Dennison, Minnesota who lost his battle with illness in 2014. Jim had a deep love for the land, farming and the desire to support youth which led him to donate his farm to the Minnesota FFA Foundation. Generations of high school seniors interested in studying agriculture will benefit from this donation through the James W. Tracy Scholarship.

Scholarship recipients are: Makenzie Alberts – Pine Island High School; Olivia Amsbaugh – Zumbrota-Mazeppa High School; Connor Ballman – Goodhue High School; Natalie Beckendorf – Renville County West; Andrew Burns – GFW High School; Faith Butterfass – Morris Area High School; Brooke Calteaux – Winona Senior High School; McKayla Carlson-Hughes – Braham Area High School; Natalie Clemenson – Zumbrota-Mazeppa High School; Karlie DeGroot – Bethlehem-Academy High School; Kyle Hagen – Glencoe-Silver Lake High School; Cora Huhn – Litchfield High School; Danika Jackels – Murray County Central High School; Brooke Johnson – Bethlehem-Academy High School; Hailey Klimek

– Alexandria Area High School; Lily Krona – Bemidji High School; Mackenzie Kuschel – Sebeka High School; Brynn Lozinski – MACCRA; Alison Murrell – Braham Area High School; Halli Poppler – Howard Lake – Waverly Winsted; Tyler Ratka – ROCORI High School; MaryEmma Reeser – New Prague High School; Amanda Sauder – Sauder Homeschool; Kyle Thomas – Rockford High School; and Kloe Wadd – Waseca High School.

The scholarship recipients will have the opportunity to be recognized for their James W. Tracy scholarship on stage at the 2023 Minnesota FFA State Convention. Recipients will be honored during the Fifth General Session on Tuesday, April 25 beginning at 12 p.m. at Williams Arena – University of Minnesota Minneapolis campus.

The scholarship guidelines and application for school year 2023-2024 will be available November 15 at mnffaoundation.org.

Minnesota's moose count down

This year's population estimate of 3,290 moose marks a decade of Minnesota's moose population remaining relatively stable, according to the results of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) 2023 aerial population survey.

Although the estimate dropped from 2022's estimate of 4,700, the change continues to reflect the population stability observed in previous years. After a decline from a population estimate of approximately 8,000 in 2009, Minnesota's moose population appears to have stabilized at about 3,700 animals in recent years.

Stabilized doesn't mean the population is constant, said John Giudice, DNR wildlife biometrician. Instead, annual changes since 2013 appear to be relatively small on average and random, with some years showing a population increase and others a decrease.

Although survey results suggest a decrease in the moose population from 2022 to 2023, those estimates are better used to understand long-term trends. Factors such as visibility of moose from the air, challenging weather conditions and moose avoidance of aircraft create moderately high sampling uncertainty. This uncertainty makes it difficult for researchers to make confident statements about the magnitude of annual population changes unless those changes are relatively large.

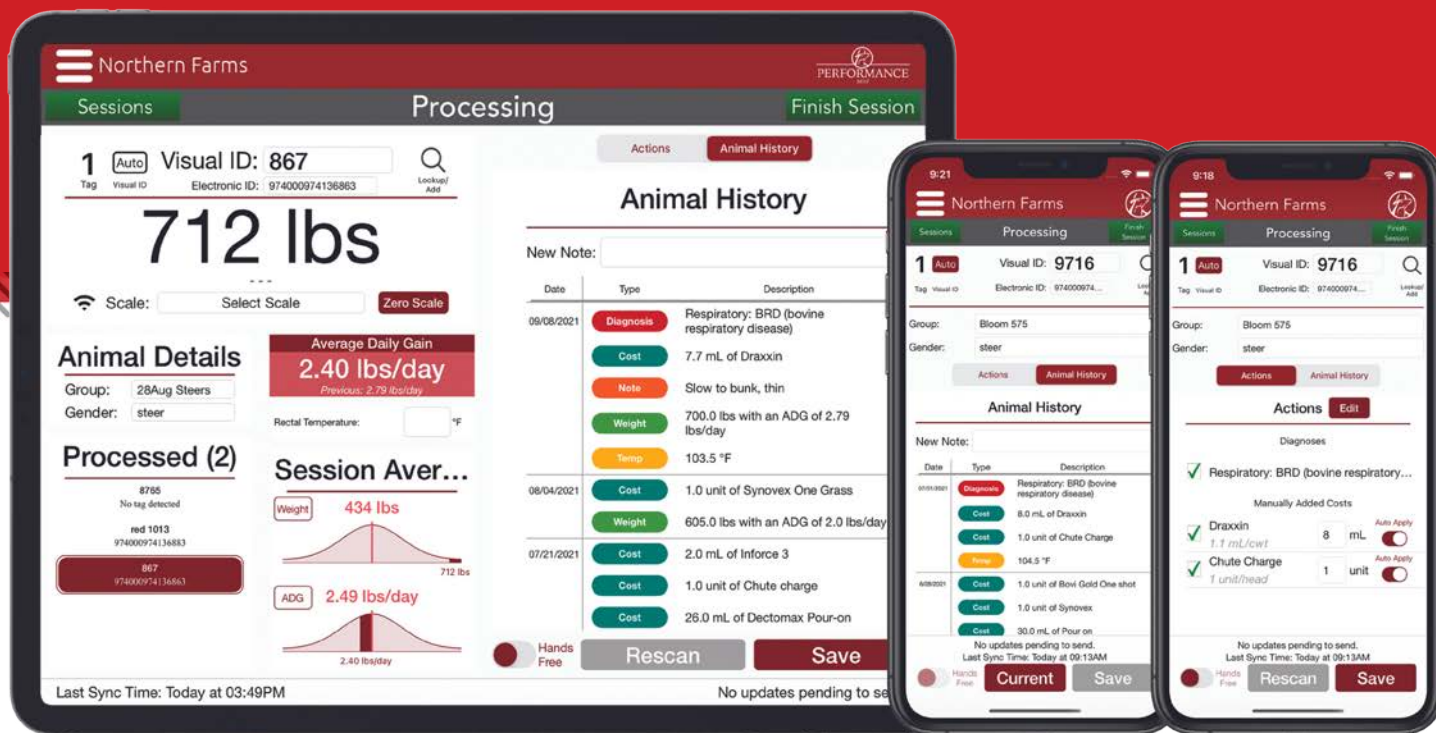
But data collected recently by researchers with the Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa suggest the magnitude of this year's decline could be more than an artifact of sampling. They have reported high mortality rates on collared moose and similar decreases in aerial surveys around Grand Portage and Isle Royale. Continued comparisons in coming years will help answer that question.

The 2023 DNR survey results showed calves comprised an estimated 16 percent of the population and the estimated calf/cow ratio was 38 calves per 100 cows. Those estimates are slightly lower than last year's figures but are comparable to values observed during the last 10 years, especially considering moderate-to-high levels of sampling uncertainty. Both factors are key indicators of reproductive success.

While estimates suggest continued stability in the population and reproductive success, DNR researchers point out that Minnesota moose remain at risk given long-term trends.

Both the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa and the 1854 Treaty Authority contributed funding and personnel for the 2023 annual survey. The survey is available on the DNR's moose management page at mndnr.gov/moose.

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Making Ourselves Better

By Colin Woodall, NCBA CEO

Spring is here, and it is a natural time to look at how the year's fresh start is playing out in each of our lives. For some of you, calving is done, and you are focused on getting every bit of value out of the new calf crop. Many of you are getting tractors and planters ready for field work. Some of you are still praying for rain.

Whatever situation you find yourself in, there is probably something you are doing, or plan to do, that is different from what you have done in the past. Making ourselves better by taking advantage of the many educational opportunities that exist is why the U.S. cattle and beef industry is better today than it was even five years ago.

A commitment to continual improvement is required for us to continue to do more with less. USDA's Economic Research Service reported in January that direct on-farm employment accounted for only 1.3 percent of U.S. employment. We also know that every day we lose more and more agricultural land to development. If we are going to continue our record of feeding the world, we need

to learn new tips, tricks and methods in raising our cattle.

NCBA is committed to producer education. Our Producer Education team works diligently throughout the year to provide continuing education programs for producers of all ages and all ranges of experience.

One of the highlights of the Cattle Industry Annual Convention is Cattleman's College. The number of courses available, presented by top-rate speakers and experts, is really hard to fathom unless you have attended it. We always receive feedback from attendees who intend to take what they learned and implement it back home.

Once-a-year training, however, is not enough. Throughout the year, our Producer Education team hosts the Cattleman's Webinar Series. These are typically hour-long webinars hosted in the evening on important topics such as managing drought or dealing with stress.

Want to get more hands-on educational opportunities? Then you need to participate in a Stockmanship & Stewardship seminar. The 2023 tour covers value-

added programs, animal health, cattle behavior and low-stress cattle handling demonstrations.

If you are concerned that you don't have the financial resources to attend these training sessions, then you should apply for a NCBA Rancher's Resilience Grant established by the National Cattlemen's Foundation and Cargill Protein. Go to ncba.org/producers and search for Rancher's Resilience Grant to learn how to apply.

When it comes to training and its impact on our industry, nothing does more than the Checkoff-funded Beef Quality Assurance (BQA). BQA is the gold-standard of producer education and training by showing you the proper way to handle and administer vaccines and other veterinary products, addressing bio-security protocols on your operation, learning how to safely transport cattle and more.

In fact, if you are reading this and are not BQA certified, go straight to bqa.org and start the training. You can learn at your own pace through the various online learning modules.

BQA has been a critical component of improving the quality of animal care, the overall quality of our beef and it was a key element of turning around the downward beef consumption trend we saw years ago.

You can also find local seminars and field days conducted by your cooperative extension agents. Extension has long been a source of information producers can use to improve their operations, the quality of their herds and their financial management.

In many cases, extension programs are reliant on the wealth of information gleaned from research conducted at our nation's land-grant universities. This research is the foundation of continual improvement, not to mention its role in protecting us from animal diseases or helping us treat them once they manifest themselves. NCBA's Farm Bill priorities include protecting the funds for agricultural research and information dissemination.

Learning something new each day is a trait I believe is important. NCBA is doing our best to help you do the same.



Over-the-counter antibiotics are moving to prescription on June 11, 2023

By Joe Armstrong DVM, UMN Cattle Production Systems Extension Educator

U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Guidance for Industry (GFI) #263 is titled, "Recommendations for sponsors of medically important antimicrobial drugs approved for use in animals to voluntarily bring under veterinary oversight all products that continue to be available over-the-counter."

What does the guidance mean? It means that starting June 11, 2023, all currently available over-the-counter antibiotics will only be available as prescription medications.

Like the Voluntary Feed Directive (VFD) rule change from several years ago, GFI #263 is part of a larger effort to mitigate antibiotic resistance. Whether justified in further regulating these valuable tools or not, they will be placed under veterinary oversight to keep them available to livestock producers.

Which antibiotics will no longer be over-the-counter starting June 11, 2023?

All currently available over-the-counter antibiotics will only be available as prescription medications starting June 11, 2023. This includes but is not limited to the following:

- Penicillin
- Oxytetracycline
- Sulfa antibiotics
- Mastitis tubes

Which medications will remain over-the-counter after June 11, 2023?

Some medications are not considered crucial for human medicine and will remain over-the-counter. This includes the following:

- Ionophores, i.e., Rumensin, Bovatec
- Parasiticides, i.e., Ivermectin

- Oral pre/pro/postbiotics
- Topical non-antibiotic treatments

Which livestock species will be affected by this rule change?

This new rule will impact all livestock species. Goats, sheep, horses, pigs and cows will all be affected by the rule change. In some ways, smaller producers may be impacted more than larger producers, which are more likely to have already occurring routine veterinary visits.

Why are over-the-counter antibiotics moving to prescription only?

Over-the-counter antibiotics are moving to prescription only to provide more veterinary oversight. Similar to the Veterinary Feed Directive, placing antibiotics under the supervision of veterinarians should result in more judicious use and less antibiotic resistance.

What do you need before you can get a prescription from a veterinarian?

Livestock producers must have a valid Veterinary-Client-Patient Relationship (VCPR) in place before they can be prescribed antibiotics by a veterinarian.

What is a Veterinary-Client-Patient Relationship (VCPR)?

A VCPR is a working relationship between a veterinarian (veterinary clinic) and a client. Ideally, a VCPR is a documented agreement between both parties including a dedicated visit to the animal location(s) the client operates. This visit and documentation must occur at least once every year.

What questions about antibiotics from your veterinarian should you be prepared to answer?

The main question you should be prepared to answer

is, how are you using antibiotics right now? This includes the following:

- What antibiotics do you use?
- How do you administer each antibiotic?
- When do you administer antibiotics?
- Why do you administer antibiotics?

Hopefully, this rule change sparks meaningful discussion with your veterinarian about how antibiotics are used in your system. As an example, I often point to conversations about treating calf scours.

Most calf scours cases are caused by non-bacterial pathogens – cryptosporidium is a parasite, and rotavirus and coronavirus are viruses. This means most cases of scours do not require antibiotics, and if you are using antibiotics for every case, you have an opportunity to save money and use antibiotics more judiciously.

Do you have to buy antibiotics from your veterinarian?

While a prescription is needed from your veterinarian to purchase the medications, you are not required to purchase them from your veterinarian. However, supporting your local veterinarian is like supporting any other small business that you wish to continue to be in business, and buying medications from your veterinarian is one way to support their business.

What if I don't have a veterinarian or a VCPR?

Ideally, identifying a veterinarian and a VCPR would happen before the deadline of June 11, 2023. Veterinarians will have many requests to renew VCPR's at the time of the rule change, and getting it done ahead of time will save you the stress of trying to get an appointment at the same time as everyone else.

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