



The Minnesota Cattleman

The Official Newspaper of the Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association®

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MSCA Hosts Annual Cattle Industry Convention

By MSCA Executive Director Kaitlyn Root

The Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association (MSCA) hosted another successful Annual Minnesota Cattle Industry Convention on Dec. 15-16 at the Arrowwood Resort in Alexandria. The convention included networking opportunities, entertainment, educational sessions, live and silent auction and more. This year's theme was, "Creating a Dynasty, Leaving a Legacy."

"We wanted this year's

theme to reflect the hard work producers put in each day to leave a lasting legacy for future generations," says MSCA Executive Director Kaitlyn Root. "We are extremely happy with this year's turnout and the excitement for the future of the cattle industry."

Convention kicked off Friday morning with a presentation from National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) Director of Producer Education

Michaela Clowser on the 2022 National Beef Quality Audit (NBQA) report.

The NBQA is a comprehensive survey which evaluates beef industry efforts to improve beef quality. Conducted every five years since 1991, the checkoff-funded audit assesses progress the industry makes on a variety of production issues which ultimately affect consumer demand for beef.

The luncheon speakers on Friday included American National CattleWomen President Pam Griffin, NCBA President Todd Wilkinson and USMEF Senior VP, Industry Relations, John Hinners. They all provided updates on the work their organizations are doing for the cattle industry and urged producers to become more involved within the industry's organizations.

Bruce Kleven, MSCA legislative consultant, concluded the Friday educational sessions with a legislative update. He

updated the crowd on what the MSCA does for cattle producers and his predictions for the upcoming legislative session.

Convention offered many opportunities to network with producers and industry organizations, including visiting the tradeshow which had 50 vendors. It was the perfect time to visit with old friends and to make new connections.

Friday night ended with the "Best of Beef Banquet." During this time, attendees enjoyed a beef dinner, entertainment by Comedian C. Willi Myles, awards ceremony and a live auction.

Mark Pankonin was awarded as the 2023 Cattleman of the Year, and American Foods Group received the 2023 Industry Service Award during the banquet. The Minnesota Beef Council awarded the Cottonwood Cattle Producers with the Prime Promoter Award.

Saturday morning wrapped up with the Breakfast Pan-

el with panelists including MSCA Past President Grant Breitreutz, Renovo Seeds Direct Sales Lead Colin Geppert, University of Minnesota Extension Educator Eric Mousel and Minnesota Soil Health Coalition Chairman Ben Dwire. Panelists discussed integrating grazing in a cover crop system, managing feed during drought years, how soil health impacts profitability and more.

The MSCA Quarterly and Annual Meeting followed the panel. Rachel Gray was elected to serve as president-elect. New regional directors include Region 2/3 Director Dustin Wiese, Region 5 Director Darv Keehr and Region 6 Director Ryan Anderson.

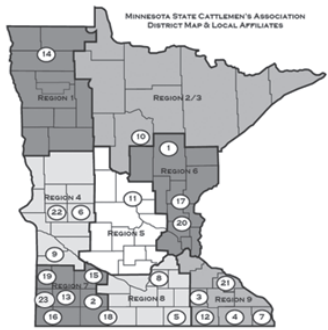
The MSCA is a membership-based organization representing cattle farmers and individuals who are part of the cattle community in Minnesota. For more information or to become a member, visit [mnsca.org](https://www.mnsca.org).

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 members, did you know you can pay your local affiliate dues online? Use the link below to renew your membership for the state and local association!

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



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-Hobbes 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
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11. Mississippi Valley Cattlemen	22. West Central Cattlemen
	23. Pipestone Cattlemen

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NEWS - TIME SENSITIVE MATERIAL



Cattleman of the Year – Mark Pankonin and his family gather at the Minnesota Cattle Industry Convention to celebrate Pankonin's recognition as the 2023 Cattleman of the Year.

See pages 14 & 15 for more convention photos



KAITLYN ROOT
Executive Director
Office: 763-479-1011

Greetings, and Happy New Year,

As I reflect on this past year, I feel proud of the positive

contribution the Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association (MSCA) has had on the beef industry and Minnesota cattle producers. Although it can be easy to see the attacks on cattle producers and develop a negative mindset, I urge you all to remember the positives of 2023 and look forward to what 2024 will offer.

The MSCA had boots on the ground in St. Paul and Washington D.C. this past year, and we even had a presence overseas in Japan! The MSCA 2023 Annual Report will hit your mailbox soon, and I hope you

take the time to reflect on all the work MSCA contributed to bettering the beef industry while you review the report.

This year is kicking off with NCBA CattleCon in Orlando, Florida, and Minnesota will be well-represented with MSCA Board Members and members, as well as Minnesota Beef Council Board Members and staff, attending the convention. This is an exciting opportunity to network with cattle producers across the nation, and Jake, Angie and I are looking forward to it!

MSCA leadership is working

hard to promote the association and share the benefits of joining with producers. We have had a presence at most local affiliate annual meetings and will be speaking at the upcoming Cow/Calf Day Events.

MSCA partnered with Boehringer Ingelheim starting Dec. 1, 2023, to offer a free one-liter of Eprinex Pour-On to each new Producer Member of the MSCA, and this incentive will run through April 1 of this year. Help us spread the word on this incentive by talking with your neighbors and assisting them in joining.



JAKE THOMPSON
President

Greetings fellow cattlemen and cattlemen,

Happy New Year! I hope this finds you warm with chores done without issues and waters open. When mother nature decides it is going to be winter, she really goes for it.

This morning as I write this it feels like -33 degrees Fahrenheit outside, but I can tell you things are heating up at the Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association.

I would like to start by thanking everyone who helped, attended or participated in the convention at Alexandria in December. The attendance was great, with a lot of people taking in some great speakers and a fabulous tradeshow.

It was a great opportunity to network with not only other cattlemen throughout the state, but to network with all the great companies who support our industry within the state.

The end of January starts getting busy with Cow/Calf

Days throughout the state, different local annual meetings and CattleCon 2024. Cow/Calf Days start on Jan. 23 in Staples and Bagley and move on to Roseau Jan. 24 and Iron Jan. 25. The southern schedule starts Feb. 5 in Mora, Feb. 6 in Starbuck, Feb. 7 in Pipestone, Feb. 8 in Oronoco and Feb. 9 in Lesueur.

We have been working on a few different things from the first of the year, with more meetings on deer depredation and elk depredation with the DNR and working on a few different possible solutions. MSCA has also been working to review the MPCA draft feedlot EAW form which will be open to public comment at a later date.

We decided to participate in an amicus brief filing with Minnesota Farm Bureau, Minnesota Milk Producers, Winona County Farm Bureau and Minnesota Pork Producers on behalf of the Daley family and the injustice of their attempted expansion. On Jan. 30, we will be heading to Florida for NCBA CattleCon where we will present a few of the resolutions adopted at the annual meeting.

If you have a local cattlemen's event coming up, please reach out to Kaitlyn with details. We would love to have representation there to update everyone on what is going on at the state level and work on membership.

Cheers!



RACHEL GRAY
President-Elect

Hello from northern Minnesota, I hope you are staying warm and the waterers are all open. I know I do a little happy dance when all 10 waterers are open and working in the temperatures we have been having the last couple of days.

I know some of us are getting ready for calving season and making sure all those cows are in the best condition to calve. We are making sure the pregnant cows have good smooth ground to walk on which is no easy task this winter.

I do not think we have ever seen so much mud in the winter. We are also making sure

they have access to good minerals and salt. Now is the time to get the second round of scour shots into those early calving cows if you use that.

In the last article I talked about having kids with as we work on the farm and do our jobs. What an incredible thing to watch them grow and become more involved.

Audrey, my granddaughter, is five and Jaxon, my grandson, is three. The last few days with the cold temperatures, they have been in the house.

This morning, as Jaxon was having breakfast, he was very worried about "his cows." He was telling me that with the cold, they needed "extra, extra busted bedding."

He is anxious to get back out and get everything checked and make sure his cows are all ok. I love that even at such an early age, he is taking pride and ownership in what we do.

I hope you have a wonderful start to calving season if you

**Gray . . .
continued on page 3**



ERIC ZELTWANGER
Cow/Calf Council Chair

Greetings fellow cattlemen, I hope everyone had a joyous holiday season.

Well, 2023 is now here and gone. I got a year older and still have a list of things I have not got done. No, I didn't waste the whole year, I just have some projects that I wasn't able to get to. I hope I am more like the majority in this than not.

We were blessed with an outstanding fall in West Central Minnesota, from better-than-expected yields in the fields (drought) to way above average fall temps (to get many other projects done). We were able to graze up to the week of Christ-

mas on corn stalks, only moving closer to home to avoid issues over the holiday season.

This is huge for cost savings and also makes the winter feel much shorter. All things that cattlemen have to be happy about.

NCBA Convention is right around the corner, and we here in Minnesota have been represented well in the last couple years at the national level. I would like to thank guys like Don Schiefelbein and Mike Landuyt for the time and commitment they have given at the next level.

If you are able to attend the convention, make the time to visit with the producers that will be there from across the country. It is one of the biggest gatherings of like-minded people you will find.

As we move into 2024, things like bull sale season and our own pending calving seasons start to cross our minds.

Do we need to update herd bulls this spring? Are the cattle

**Zeltwanger . . .
continued on page 3**

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Minnesota Cattleman

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ROSEMARY GUSTAFSON
CattleWomen President

Happy 2024!

Thank you to all who attended the Minnesota Cattle Industry Convention, and especially the CattleWomen's annual meeting. We were fortunate to have our American National CattleWomen President Pam Griffin in attendance and swear in our new executive team: Rosemary Gustafson, President – Amanda Armstrong, President-Elect – Nikay Anderson, Vice-President – Leah Pederson, Treasurer – Shannon Hackett, Secretary.

I am excited to kick off the year with this great slate of officers at our budget meeting and planning session on Jan. 27 in Aitkin, MN. Hats off to all those who planned the Annual Convention – it was a great roster of speakers. I always enjoy the opportunity to gather and catch up on what's new in the industry.

Our first CattleWomen 360 event, CattleWomen to CattleWomen: Matters of the Mind, will be held Saturday, Feb. 24 in Elysian, MN. Guest speakers include Emily Kerkerberg from the University of Minnesota Extension in Rochester, MN, and Dr. Michael Hennes, a Doctor of Chiropractic

Medicine and Chiropractic Neurologist at The Neural Connection in Edina, MN.

Registration is open at mncattlwomen.org/events up to the day of the event or until the event is full. We look forward to learning more about maintaining good brain health for sharp decision making, efficient management of daily operations and contributing to overall success and wellness of being on the farm.

The MN State Beef Ambassador team is planning to attend the University of Minnesota Cow/Calf Beef days throughout the state. They also plan to travel to Kimball, MN to attend the Schiefelbein Farms Annual farm tours and Sale Feb. 16-17, 2024.

A special thank you to Jennifer Schiefelbein who welcomed us to last year's farm tour and sale day at their farm and provided the team with special educational talks – and for extending the opportunity to this year's team as well. Follow the ambassador team at @mnbeefambassadors.

We continue working on enhancing our website to include additional content to add value for our membership. If you haven't logged in for a while, you might want to check it out!

Our newsletters are available online, as well as all events and calendars. Follow us on Facebook or Instagram on @MNCattleWomen and on our website at mncattlwomen.org/.

Excited to see what 2024 holds for our industry.

Thank you, 2024 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 Group*
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Merck Animal Health*
Minnesota Beef Council
Minnesota Corn Growers Association
Roto-Mix
CKP Insurance
Form-A-Feed

Producers Livestock Marketing Association

Choice

Purina (Land O'Lakes)
Vaxxinova
Artex
Dry Creek Trucking
Zoetis

Select

Minnesota Farm Bureau
ADM
Northwest Lighting Systems

Presidential

Wieser Concrete

* Indicates giving above base level for that category!



JOSIAH EBELING
Feeder Council Chair

Season's Greetings,

Hope everyone had a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Hard to complain with this weather – it has been very nice cattle feeding weather. That being said, it looks like some cold weather is upon us.

Frigid sub-zero weather is in the news and the impact to beef production is unclear. Slaughter schedules and feedlot finishing weights will both be interrupted. Transportation will be slowed or stopped of cattle into feedlots, beef plants and out of the beef plants to the consumer.

Sales last week were slow

and tedious with most focus on the weather. Late week trade in the south occurred at \$172 – one lower than the previous week. In the north live trade was at \$173-175 and \$273 dressed – also one to two dollars lower than the previous week.

Slaughter at 549,000 head was 7,000 smaller than the holiday shortened previous week. The small slaughter was a whopping 112,000 under last year. Margins are negative for cattle feeders with storms taking a toll on out weights and cattle performance.

Beef plant margins improved this past week but assessing the damage from reduced slaughter and lost shifts at the beef plants varies with each individual plant. The box prices gained \$10 and input price from feedlot purchases declined one to two dollars.

This week will find beef plants short bought and feedlots assessing cattle conditions from storm related damage to performance.

The latest report shows carcass weights at 899# down 4# from prior week and 16# heavier than last year. Carcass weights will be fundamental in determining total beef production.

The combined steer and heifer weights can easily be influenced when the proportion of steers to heifers in the weekly slaughter changes. Quality grade was down .2 percent at 83.40 percent.

At the beginning of the month, we had Top of the Class out in Denver. It was four days filled with fun and knowledgeable experiences. We got the opportunity to meet at the CBB office, NCBA, toured Cargill's beef packing plant and Five Rivers Feedlot.

This was a great experience, and I highly recommend anyone that wants to learn more about beef advocacy getting a hold of Jon Dilworth with Minnesota Beef Council.

Stay safe and warm through the rest of winter!

Gray ... continued from page 2

start early. Be watching the mail for all the bull catalogs coming out, and make some good selections for your business.

I am always impressed with the number and quality of Minnesota breeders we have. Don't hesitate to call those bull producers and ask for their input and advice on your choices. They love to talk about cattle and their bulls.



Zeltwanger ...continued from page 2

in good condition for calving? What will 2024 throw at us?

Some of these things we can look at our operations and answer, some we can only guess. I, for one, will be updating a herd bull or two this spring.

For the seedstock breeders out there, I ask you, can you get more MSCA members signed up with your sales? We are always looking for ways to increase membership, and maybe sharing what we do for all of the state producers as we gather can interest others in joining.

Do we need to get more condition on the cows? In this area, we have had the best fall I can remember for this to not be a problem.

But if your cows are on the thin side, I encourage starting as soon as possible to get them where you want to be for calving. As cold weather is bound to hit, we should keep working to have them in tip top shape for the calving season.

What does 2024 hold for us producers? Who the heck knows!

All I know is I am going to wake up every day happy to be able to do what I can in the beef industry. I will keep working on that to-do list, taking off jobs whenever I can.

As always,
Z

CHECK US OUT ON THE WEB AT www.mnsca.org





Twin Cities Live

The Minnesota Beef Council makes a monthly appearance on Twin Cities Live, a show airing daily from 3-4 p.m. CST on KSTP, Channel 5-Eyewitness News and is rebroadcasted late in the evening. For January, Ashley Wulf, communications director, featured three different hearty beef recipes, fitting for the colder weather. You can find the recorded segment along with recipes and a grocery list on our Facebook page or visit us at mnbeef.org.

Minnesota Top of Class



2024 Minnesota Top of the Class

THE MISSION

To develop the skills of Minnesota's beef industry leaders so they may maximize their impact and effectiveness in local, state, national, and international arenas.

THE PROGRAM

A dynamic year-long educational experience featuring a couple of two-day in-state seminars along with an out-of-state experience to conclude the program.

WHAT IS THE FOCUS?

The program will equip Top of Class participants with the training, knowledge, and experience they need to be sources of information for local, state, and national media outlets, journalists, and consumers looking for more information about beef production. Participants will be extensively trained in media interviews, culinary demonstrations, impactful presentations, social media, and other timely topics.

WHO CAN PARTICIPATE?

Each class is comprised of a small group of participants. Beef producers and others who are professionals involved in agribusiness or rural leadership positions may be eligible to participate.

TUITION

Tuition is a fraction of the true cost of each class participant.

Tuition costs for the 2024 Minnesota Top of the Class program is \$300 and must be paid prior to the first seminar. This covers lodging (based on a lodging rotation with double occupancy), some travel expenses, and most meals during the program.

Out-of-pocket costs include travel to in-state seminar locations and points of departure (normally MSP International) for out-of-state seminars as well as some independent meals.

WHAT IS THE PROGRAM SCHEDULE?

The seminar calendar is designed to accommodate the busy schedules of participants. Most of the activities occur in two-day increments.

- In-state seminars: Session I – June 12 & 13 (St. Paul, Minnesota)
Session II – October 23 & 24 (St. Paul, Minnesota)
- Out-state seminar: Session III – January 7 – 10, 2025 (Denver, Colorado)

Application Deadline: April 5th, 2024



In January, the Minnesota Top of Class went to Denver for their final session. They were able to hear from many staff members at the Cattlemen's Beef Board and the National Cattlemen's Beef Association about beef nutrition, promotion and research. One of the teams they heard from was the Issues Management Team, which monitors all the information about beef on the internet and in the media to see how much traction it is getting with the public. They have a digital command center which is monitored 24/7 and if there is an issue that comes up, they address it.

The class visited a 100,000-head feedlot in Kersey, CO. They learned about the history of the feedlot, how the operation runs and their brand programs, toured the feed mill, processing center and toured the pens. It is always a highlight with the classes since we do not have that large of a feedlot in Minnesota.

The Top of Class crew traveled to Cargill Meat Solutions in Fort Morgan, Colorado, for a tour of the packing plant. It was agreed what an incredible experience it was to see the efficiencies of the plant and the number of workers needed to process thousands of head of cattle per day.

The U. S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF) also came and spoke to the group about how their nonprofit trade association works to create new opportunities and develop existing international markets for U.S. Beef. They are headquartered in Denver but have offices in Seoul, Tokyo, Beijing, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Singapore, Taipei, Moscow, St. Petersburg, Mexico City, Monterrey and Brussels.

Through its worldwide network of offices, USMEF has forged a series of partnerships which have enabled U.S. companies and U.S. products to become an integral part of the international red meat markets.

The mission of the Minnesota Top of Class program is to develop the skills of Minnesota's beef industry leaders so they may maximize their impact and effectiveness in local, state, national and international arenas. This program is a dynamic year-long educational experience featuring two two-day in-state seminars, along with an out-of-state experience to conclude the program.

We have opened applications for the 2024 Minnesota Top of Class. Email Jon at jon@mnbeef.org for more information. You can also find it on the Minnesota Beef Council website under the "About Us" page.

MBC Board Meeting

The next Minnesota Beef Council Board of Directors Meeting is scheduled in April at the office in Maple Plain, MN. Exact date/time is TBD.

Minnesota Beef Council Events

January 31-Feb. 2 – NCBA CattleCon

March 8 & 9 – All breeds Dairy Convention, St. Cloud, MN

March 14-17 – MAMP Convention, St. Cloud, MN

March 19 – MN Ag Day Gala

April 19-20 – BBQ Spring Training



MINNESOTA BEEF COUNCIL

Host a BQA Training!

CONTACT MBC BQA COORDINATOR KAITLYN ROOT AT [KAITLYN@MNBEEF.ORG](mailto:kaitlyn@mnbeef.org) TODAY!

IMPORTANT DATES:

- Jan. 30 - Feb. 2, 2024 – NCBA CattleCon 2024 – Orlando, Florida
- March 9 – MSCA Quarterly Meeting – 11 a.m.-2 p.m., American Legion, Aitkin, MN
- June 24, 2024 – MSCA Quarterly Meeting & PAC Event – Huck Olson Memorial Civic Center, Thief River Falls
- June 25, 2024 – Summer Tour – hosted by Northwestern Stockmen’s Association – Thief River Falls
- Dec. 6-7, 2024 – 2024 Minnesota Cattle Industry Convention – River’s Edge Convention Center, St. Cloud

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

Cow Calf Days™

2024 Seminar Tour & Trade Show

Northern Tour

JAN 23	Staples, MN	9:30AM	Timbers Event Center
JAN 23	Bagley, MN	5:30PM	American Legion
JAN 24	Roseau	5:30PM	Gene’s Bar & Grill
JAN 25	Iron, MN	5:30PM	Clinton Hall

Southern Tour

FEB 5	Mora, MN	5:30PM	Grand Event Center
FEB 6	Starbuck, MN	9:30AM	Jim Wulf’s Sale Facility
FEB 7	Pipestone, MN	9:30 AM	MN West CC
FEB 8	Oronoco, MN	5:30 PM	Tony Rossman Farm
FEB 9	LeSueur, MN	9:30 AM	Ag Partners HQ

\$10 per person at the door, includes meal and materials

Topics

<i>Beef Research Update</i>	<i>Eric Mousel U of M Beef Team</i>
<i>Grazing Strategies</i>	<i>MN Grazing Lands Association</i>
<i>Cow and Heifer Nutrition to Optimize Success</i>	<i>Dr. Dan Larson, Great Plains Livestock & Dr. Grant Crawford, Merck Animal Health</i>

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Minnesota Farm Groups Seek Fairness in Livestock Expansion Decisions

The MSCA, along with four other organizations, file court motion to participate in support of Daley Farm

WINONA, Minn. — In seeking to ensure fairness for livestock farmers statewide, five farm groups are asking the Minnesota Court of Appeals to allow them to officially advocate for a family farm in Lewiston that is looking to expand but has been mired in a years-long legal battle.

On Jan. 4, the groups — Minnesota Milk Producers Association, Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation, Minnesota Pork Producers Association, Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association and Winona County Farm Bureau — filed a request to participate in the Daley Farm case as amici curiae or "friend of the court."

The broad legal issue raised in the Daleys' appeal is whether the multigenerational family-owned farm was treated fairly by the Winona County Board of Adjustment in denying the farm a permit to increase the size of its herd. The groups said they want to protect Minnesota livestock farmers from facing bias at the local level when pursuing an expansion.

"This Court would benefit from a thorough examination of the strengths of (Minnesota's) corporate farm law and the various farming structures that are allowed to operate in Minnesota as it considers whether the Daley family farm was treated fairly in this case," the groups wrote in their court brief.

Earlier, a district court judge ruled that three members of the Board of Adjustment prejudged the original decision to deny a variance needed for expansion.

"Ironically, it is farming operations like the Daleys' that our society should be advocating for rather than actively opposing," the groups wrote. "The Daley Farm is a multi-generational, independent family-owned and operated business, with no outside investment of any kind, that simply wants to modernize and expand in order to include the next generation of family farmers."

The legal brief filed by the farm groups asks the Court of Appeals to consider two concepts:

1. Whether allowing the permitting process to play out as it did for the Daleys would empower other counties to appoint biased board members to make decisions that hurt family farms.

2. Whether farms have a legal right to have their evidence decided on an expansion permit within 60 days of filing. The delays in the Daleys' case have pushed this filing period far beyond that mark.

Comments from the individual farm groups:

"This case is about the rights of family dairy

farms and other animal agriculture operations to be judged fairly. If a farm meets the extensive environmental requirements of the law — as the Daleys have — a group of activists shouldn't be able to stack the deck against you."

— Lucas Sjostrom, Executive Director of Minnesota Milk Producers Association

"Minnesota Farm Bureau supports a diverse range of farmers and ranchers across the state. Winona County farmers have the same right to a fair and unbiased process when looking to start or expand a family farm, as do all farmers and ranchers in the state. We wish to be part of the conversation to ensure family farms are treated fairly in these matters, setting up the next generation for success and ensuring agriculture's vitality across Minnesota for years to come."

— Dan Glessing, President of Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation

"We need to ensure that livestock producers in the state of Minnesota are not subject to biased decision-making processes, and that they are treated fairly. Family farms deserve the right to expand for future generations, and, just like any other business operation, they deserve the right to a fair, unbiased county board decision."

— Kaitlyn Root, Executive Director of Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association



MinnesotaCorn
GROWERS ASSOCIATION

Whether it's in your community or at the Capitol, the Minnesota Corn Growers Association is the essential advocate for corn farmers.

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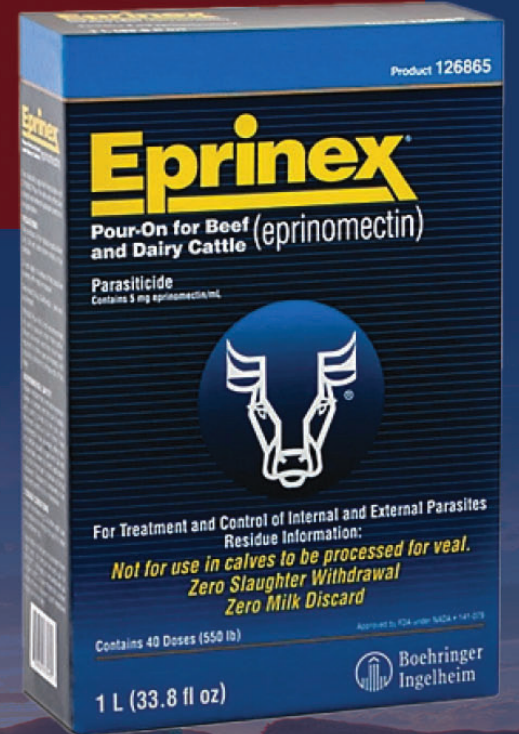
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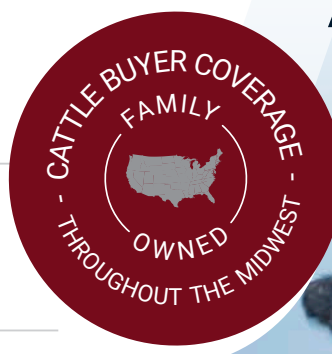
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Wildlife Weaponization Ramps Up

By the National Cattlemen's Beef Association

In 2023, we experienced a drastic increase in federal rulemakings aimed at expanding habitat and increasing the population of many different species of wildlife. Cattle producers are no stranger to Endangered Species Act (ESA) listings and the frustrations that come with the law, which makes it relatively easy to list a species but extremely hard to delist recovered species. In 50 years, only 54 species have been delisted under the ESA — less than 4% of all the species that have received federal protections and investments under the Act. This is not due to a lack of demonstrated recovery; there are numerous ESA success stories. This is something NCBA has beat the drum about for decades, but radical activist groups increasingly weaponize the ESA not to the benefit of threatened species, but to gain more control over agricultural producers and private landowners. These activists do not care about following science and effectively maintaining a balanced, healthy ecosystem for a variety of wildlife. They simply want to increase the number of species federally protected and make producers jump through as many hoops as possible, because growing the federal footprint on private and public land brings them closer to their goal of severely reducing or ending animal agriculture.

That is why NCBA fights hard by submitting comments on the negative impacts of these rulemakings, suing the federal government when appropriate, and building coalitions of our state affiliates and like-minded groups to push back as a collective force on Capitol Hill and in the regulatory process. It was made clear in 2023 that the Biden administration not only designates a species as “threatened” or “endangered” but is also pursuing more unconventional tactics that can burden producers. The Biden administration recently closed a public comment period for a rulemaking to reintroduce grizzly bears in the Northern Cascades Ecosystem in Washington state, where there hasn't been a grizzly bear sighting since 1996. Their plan, which has support from a wide array of radical activists, is to airdrop five to seven Canadian grizzly bears each year into this

rural community via helicopter. These bears would be deemed an “experimental” population, and the airdrops would not stop until roughly 300-400 bears are present in the Northern Cascades.

This is not a question of an endangered species on the verge of extinction, these are 800-pound apex predators 20 times deadlier than black bears, and their current status is considered of least concern under ESA. Grizzly bears can roam for distances across hundreds of miles and are already present and thriving in other areas of Washington and the inland northwest. In other regions, where populations of apex predators have skyrocketed, cattle producers and other landowners have seen increased conflicts, increased livestock stress and depredation, and even wildlife challenges as ecosystems struggle with the introduction of federally protected species.

One of the greatest voluntary species conservation success stories is the greater sage grouse, which NCBA has successfully fought for decades to keep from being listed under the ESA. Despite repeated attempts by activists to have the species listed as threatened or endangered, NCBA has continually highlighted that cattle grazing builds strong ecosystems for these birds to thrive. This year, NCBA received vindication in the form of a landmark 10-year study from the University of Idaho confirming scientific evidence of what ranchers have said all along: grazing does not hurt sage grouse nesting or survival rates and can only help bolster grouse numbers. Grazing increases biodiversity and there is more forage available on land actively managed by ranchers than on land without livestock grazing. More food and greater biodiversity are exactly what sage grouse need to increase their populations and thrive for generations. The bird exemplifies the positive results from voluntary, proactive partnerships between ranchers, conservationists and local leaders under the leadership of state officials — not the federal government hundreds or even thousands of miles away.

An emerging problem producers are seeing on the ground is the Biden administration's proposed \$31

million recovery plan for the Canada lynx, a predator that less than five years ago was deemed to have been recovered and no longer threatened. Unfortunately, litigious animal activist groups sued the Biden administration. In the settlement, the lynx kept its threatened status. Currently, U.S. lynx populations are already more than the 20-year goal outlined in this unscientific proposal. This is a snow-dependent wildcat species impacted by annual snowfall, not by cattle producers. Yet, this proposal has broad implications for producers who live in states where lynxes are present. This proposal would limit the ability to set traps to protect against large predators posing a real risk to the lives of producers and their cattle, along with recreationalists such as hikers, skiers and snowmobilers. Putting sweeping protections on an already-recovered population of predators has a host of negative consequences, some that can be anticipated but many that cannot be predicted.

For half a century, the pattern of ESA activity has followed a common theme. Animal activists unilaterally declare a species in a rural, usually Western, part of the country endangered as a test to see how damaging these species-specific fights can be to animal agriculture. With the sage grouse, they saw how many problems they created for producers in the West, even though cattle production helps grow grouse populations. Then they moved their targets east to larger population centers. The listing battle over sage grouse in the West has now shifted to lesser prairie chickens in the Plains. The issue of gray wolves has now shifted to include other predators such as Canada lynx that have significant populations located in the North and Northwest. Species protections started more than 50 years ago to serve a real purpose. Now they are just another tool for activist groups to gain more power over working lands and producers who make their living on those landscapes, while ignoring all the benefits cattle production has for strengthening wildlife populations.

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Optimism for the Future

By Todd Wilkinson, NCBA President

As I write this column, winter meeting season is in full swing, and I've had the opportunity to speak to state cattlemen's groups across the country. The New Year often comes with a renewed sense of optimism and that has certainly been on display for several sectors of our industry. Calf prices are at record levels and profit margins are strong; there's continued demand for the high-quality product we produce, and there's optimism around young producers entering the business.

These meetings also reaffirm for me that our national and state organizations are the sword and the shield. Associations shield us from government overreach and activist attacks which have become all too common in the past several years. Yet, what motivates me is that we're the tip of the sword. We don't bow to pressure. We focus on creating opportunities for years to come and doing what's right for our families, our communities and the consumers who purchase our product.

Part of NCBA's role, and an important part of our success, is the ability to identify and develop leaders while also preparing them to meet industry challenges head on. NCBA's flagship program for leadership development is the Young Cattlemen's Conference (YCC). Participants of this program experience nine days of intensive leadership training and a four-city tour, which showcases every facet of the beef industry. They are also exposed to the policy process and learn how young leaders can engage and make a positive impact when working with decision makers at every level of government.

NCBA, as a contractor to the Beef Checkoff, also hosts the Masters of Beef Advocacy program and the Trailblazers top advocate program. These Checkoff-funded advocacy programs are also intensive leadership development endeavors focusing on helping emerging and current young leaders to better communicate with consumers while also developing skills for correcting misinformation about beef and beef production practices.

These leadership programs give young producers a chance to build their network. They are encouraged to come together to work toward common sense solutions. It's vital our producers from every sector of our industry work together as public interest in our way of life increases.

The cow-calf sector offers a good opportunity for young producers to enter the industry or grow their businesses in the next couple of years. With tight cattle supplies and continued pressure from drought, profits to cow-calf operations are expected to reach levels near \$500 per head in 2024. Herd re-

building is going to take a few years, but this process will put the cow-calf producer in a sound position with better rates of return as we head into the New Year.

Looking toward 2024, I'm optimistic it will be a year of growth not only for our industry but for our associations. I'd like to invite you all to attend CattleCon in Orlando, Florida, Jan. 31-Feb. 2. I can't think of a better way to escape the winter, reconnect with old friends, meet new acquaintances, and most importantly, deal with the business of the beef industry. It is your

participation that makes this event and our organization successful.

CattleCon is the place to share ideas, find out what is happening on operations across the country, and move our industry forward. What I enjoy most about this week is the opportunity to network with people because no other event brings the industry together like CattleCon.

Thank you for being a member of NCBA and helping shape the future of our industry, and I look forward to visiting with you during CattleCon24!

SAVE THE DATE!

Minnesota State
Cattlemen's
Association
Summer Tour

June 25, 2024

See page 16 for more information.

2024 Women in Ag Conference



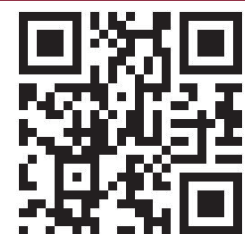
The Minnesota Women in Ag Network, along with Minnesota Farm Service Agency, invite you to the 2024 Women in Ag Conference to be held on Tuesday, February 6, 2024, at the Holiday Inn & Suites St Cloud.

The theme this year is "Planting Possibilities: Shaping the Future of Farming" and brings a variety of speakers and topics from whom participants will learn about the topic of "planning". Planning on the farm takes many forms and requires a variety of skills. Planning is something women are leading or involved with on the farm or in their work in the various ag sectors that support the farming industry.

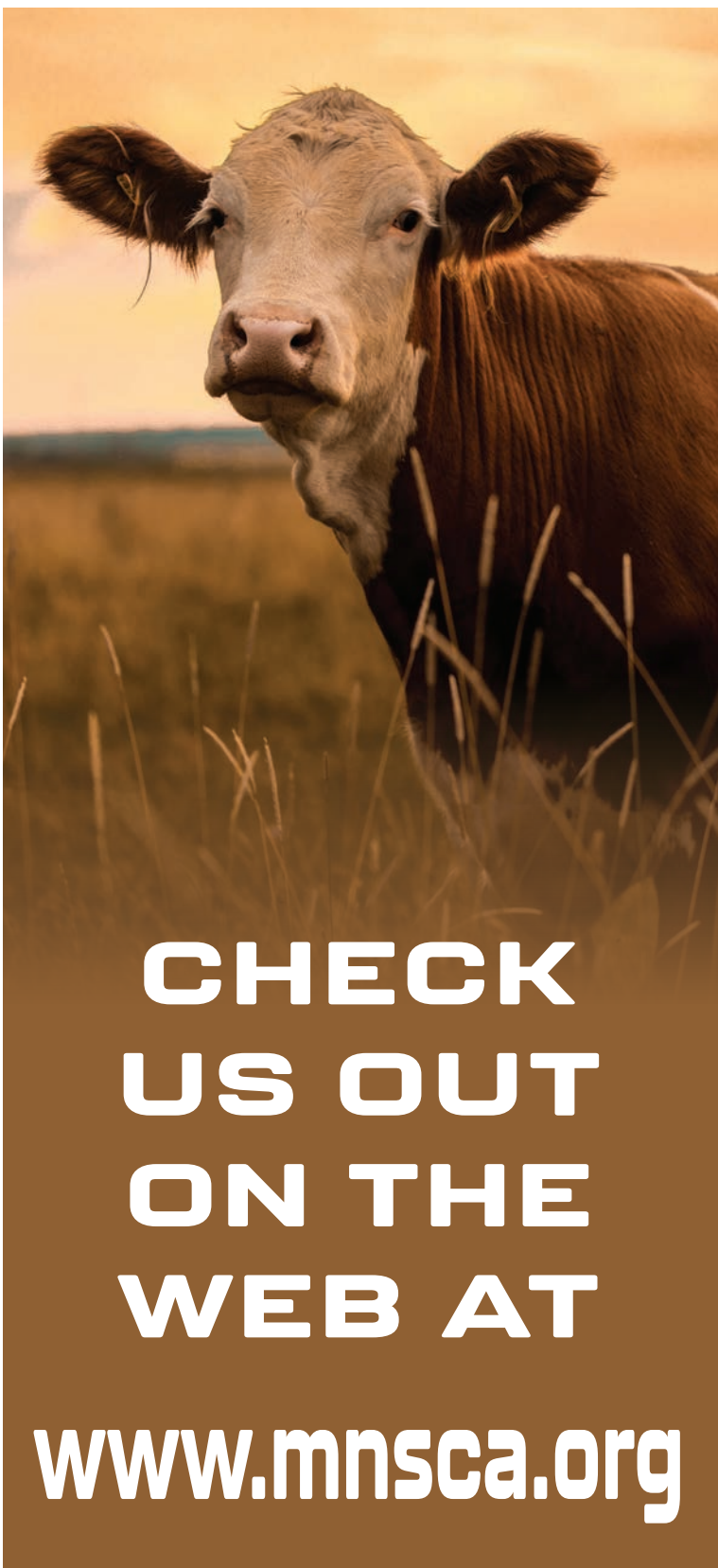
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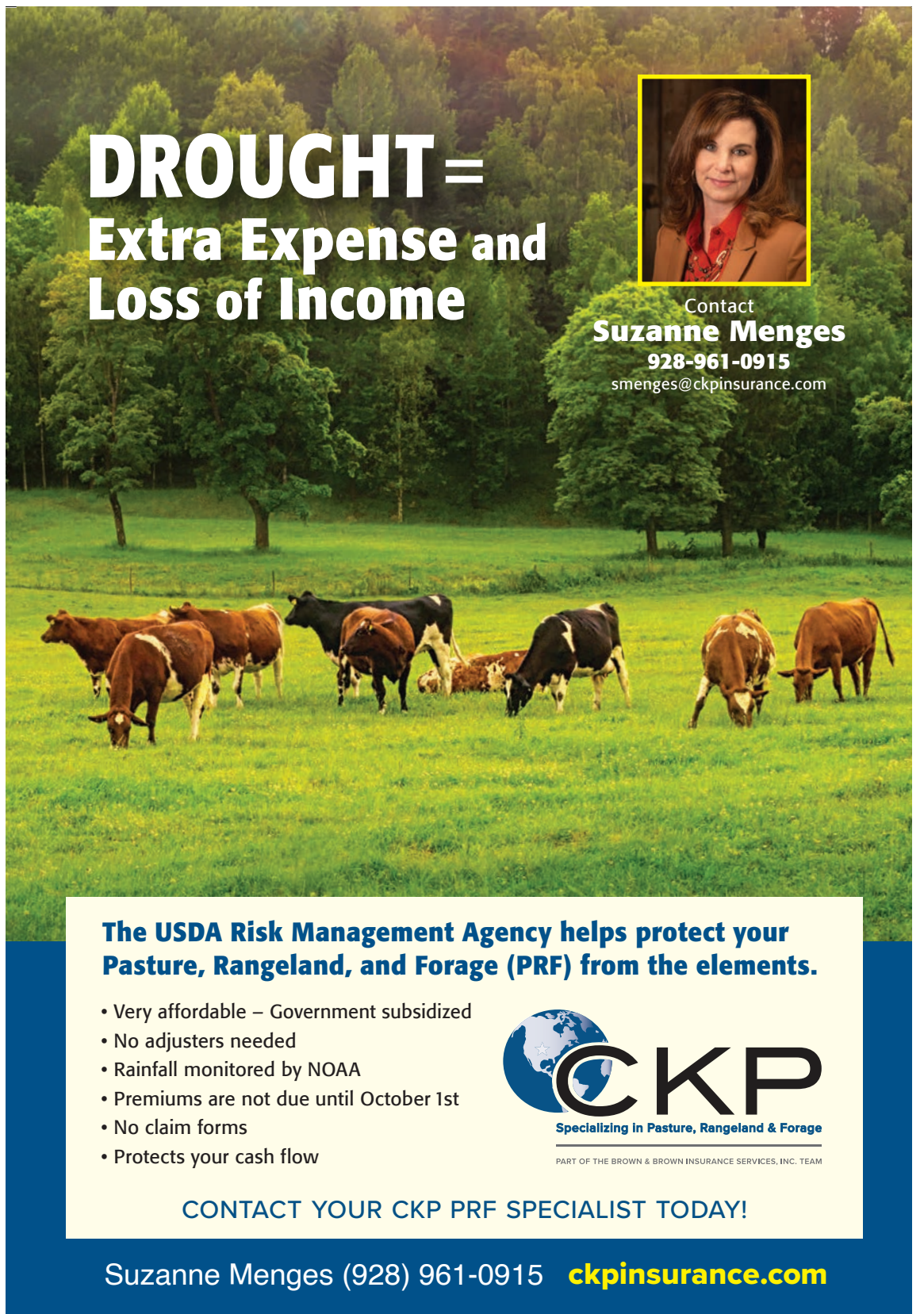
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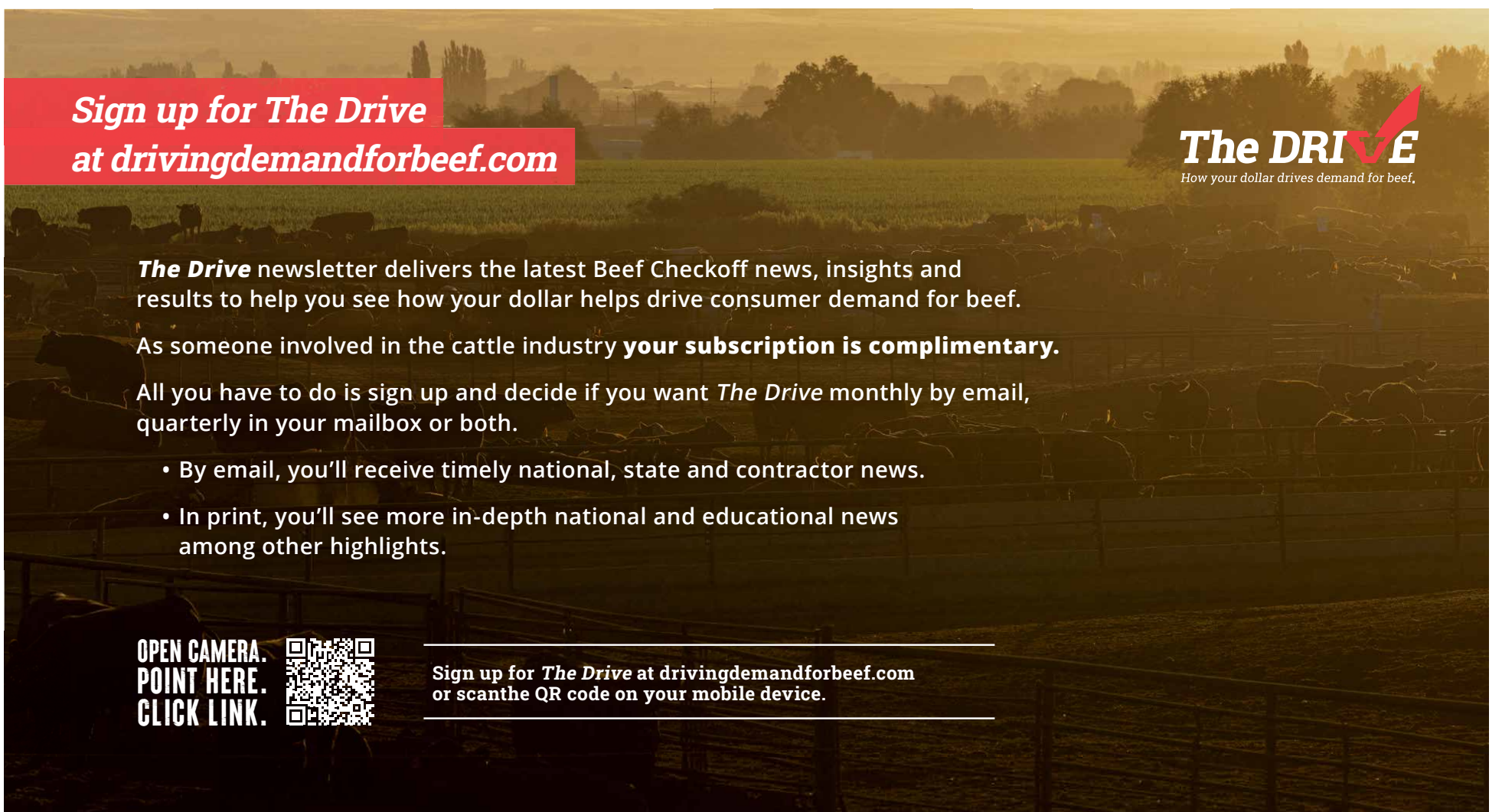
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NEWS BRIEFS

MDA Now Accepting Applications for 2024 Beginning Farmer Tax Credit

Eligible parties are encouraged to apply early for funding

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture's (MDA) Rural Finance Authority (RFA) is now accepting applications for the 2024 Beginning Farmer Tax Credit, an annual program available to landlords and sellers (asset owners) who rent or sell farmland, equipment, livestock, and other agricultural assets to beginning farmers.

Total funding available for the 2024 Beginning Farmer Tax Credit program is \$4 million. The credits are funded in a first-come, first-served manner, so applicants are highly encouraged to apply early in the year before the stated deadlines. Both the asset owners and beginning farmers must submit applications with lease and/or sale documents to be eligible for funding and to hold their place in line. They may apply before sales close, if needed.

Qualifying asset owners can include individuals, trusts, or qualified pass-through entities renting or selling land, livestock, facilities, buildings, or machinery used for farming in Minnesota to a beginning farmer. Through changes made to the program during the 2023 legislative session, parents, grandparents, and siblings are now eligible for the tax credit if they sell farmland to a direct family member. However, this does not apply to leases or non-land sales (e.g., livestock, vehicles).

A beginning farmer is defined as a Minnesota resident with the desire to start farming or who began farming within the past 10 years. They must provide positive projected earnings statements, have a net worth less than \$979,000, and enroll in, or have completed, an approved farm business management (FBM) program.

Beginning farmers are also eligible for a nonrefundable Minnesota tax credit equal to the amount paid for FBM tuition, up to a maximum of \$1,500. This tax credit is available for up to three years.

Full eligibility requirements and application materials can be found on the Beginning Farmer Tax Credit web page. Questions may be directed to Jenny Heck at Jenny.Heck@state.mn.us or 651-201-6316.

Northwestern Stockmen to Host Annual MSCA Summer Tour

The Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association (MSCA) Summer Tour has traveled around the state of Minnesota for 50 years, this year making its way to Thief River Falls on June 25. The Northwestern Stockmen's Association (NWSA), one of 21 MSCA local affiliate associations, will host the tour highlighting cattle operations and unique businesses in northern Minnesota.

"The NWSA and supporting cast are very excited to host this year's Summer Tour," says NWSA President Dana Didrikson. "We've put together a wide range of tour stops to touch on everything northern Minnesota and the beef industry have to offer. We invite you to come for the tour and stay for the weekend to experience our area of the state."

The Huck Olson Memorial Civic Center in Thief River Falls will be the home-base for tour, and tour stops include: Natural Mills Trust, an organic whole grains, flours and cereals company; Didrikson Farms; Greenbush Vet Clinic; Waage Farms; Northland Community and Technical College; Hanson's Dairy/Ruprecht's Herefords; Digi-Key, an electronic com-

ponents distributor; and Open Trails Trophy White-tails, an established hunting preserve.

There is something for everyone in this year's diverse tour lineup.

"What makes the MSCA Summer Tour so special is that each year there are new operations and businesses to visit," says MSCA Executive Director Kaitlyn Root. "The MSCA Board and I are extremely pleased with the unique tour stop lineup the NWSA organized."

The MSCA Quarterly Meeting and Political Action Committee Event will be held on June 24 at the tour headquarters, so head to Thief River Falls the day before tour and participate in the meeting, dinner and beanbag tournament for a fun-filled day networking with cattle producers.

Summer Tour registration opens Feb. 1, and tickets are \$25 per person before June 1, and student tickets are \$10. Stay informed on tour details and registration information by following the MSCA and NWSA on Facebook. Ensure you never miss an update by becoming a NWSA and MSCA member at mnsca.org/become-a-member.

If your business is interested in sponsoring the tour, contact Kaiya Novacek at novac067@umn.edu for more information.

Pankonin Recognized as 2023 Cattleman of the Year

The Annual Minnesota Cattle Industry Convention, hosted by the Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association (MSCA), was held at the Arrowwood Resort in Alexandria on Dec. 15-16. The event brings cattlemen and cattlemen from across the state and surrounding states together to network, take part in educational sessions and enjoy a banquet including entertainment, awards ceremony and live auction.

MSCA Board Member Mark Pankonin was awarded as the 2023 Cattleman of the Year during the banquet on Dec. 15.

The Cattleman of the Year award goes to a member or group that has demonstrated outstanding leadership and personal dedication to Minnesota's cattle community.

Qualities and achievements shared by recipients of the Cattleman of the Year Award include, but are not limited to the following: demonstrated leadership and organizational skills that have made a positive and lasting contribution to Minnesota's cattle community; strong record of active promotion of the beef industry and a willingness to speak out publicly on behalf of the industry; served in a variety of volunteer, appointed and elected positions of responsibility within Minnesota's beef sector, within their local and at the national level; well respected by fellow cattlemen, local community leaders and government officials; and an active participant in and supporter of the MSCA.

With experience and investment in many phases of the cattle business, Pankonin is a leader and influencer for the beef industry at the local and state levels. In recent years, he served as president-elect, vice president and feeder council chair of the MSCA, he has represented Minnesota on a trade trip to Japan and was elected president of the MSCA at the 2022 Minnesota Cattle Industry Convention. He voluntarily resigned that position to focus on his health.

The MSCA is grateful for Pankonin's leadership and proud to award Mark Pankonin as the 2023 Cattleman of the Year.

Minnesota Beef Ambassador Program Winners Named

Developing beef advocates and leaders for the cattle industry is the goal of the MN State Beef Ambassador Program. Hosted by Minnesota State Cattlewomen (MNCW), the advocacy program provides an outlet for students to use their unique strengths to connect with consumers and peers to promote beef.

The youth advocacy program matches the vision and purpose of MNCW by ensuring the selected students strengthen their leadership and communication skills, establish career networks and enhance their knowledge of the industry. This experience will assist participants in furthering their passion for beef advocacy by providing top notch training, access to educational resources, and unique experiences. Through this program participants will be enabled to become an integral voice for the beef community.

The youth selected to serve on the 2023-2024 MN State Beef Ambassador Team are: Alicia Holtz; Little Falls, MN, Matalyn Martinson; Otsego, MN and Aubree Paplow; Sanborn, MN. Rachael Dose; Arlington, MN will serve as the team's Peer Advisor. The competition and announcement of the team took place during the Minnesota State Beef Expo held in St Paul, MN October 21, 2023.

During their year of service, the recipients will participate in beef advocacy programs hosted by the MN State CattleWomen, Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association and the Minnesota Beef Council, engage in social media efforts promoting beef, and pursue opportunities to connect with peers by sharing the positive story of beef. The students will also travel the state to participate in industry events. Each winner will earn a scholarship.

Dose is from Arlington, MN and is a Senior at Sibley East High School. She is the daughter of Allan and Joleen Dose. She plans to attend the university of Nebraska Lincoln double majoring in animal science and agriculture communications, with plans to pursue a career in ruminant nutrition.

Holtz is from Little Falls, MN, and attends Little Falls Community High School. She is the daughter of John and Missy Holtz. She plans to attend college with a major in Human Biology with a minor in Animal Science with hopes of being on a livestock judging team.

Paplow is from rural Sanborn in SW Minnesota and attends Springfield Public High School. Her parents are Troy and Hilary Paplow. Aubree is very involved in both Cottonwood and Brown Counties.

Martinson is from Otsego, MN and attends Rogers High School where she is a Senior. Her parents are Krishona and the late Chad Martinson. She plans to attend college and major in Animal Science with an emphasis in beef cattle production. Her goal is to have a career in the beef industry focused on reproduction.

Minnesota State CattleWomen consists of members from across the State and has a 50+ year history of uniting women in agriculture to focus on its core concepts of beef promotion, education, and legislation.

For more information about MNCW, including how to join, visit MNCattleWomen.org. For more information about the MN State Beef Ambassador Program, email Program Director Rosemary Gustafson at MN-BeefAmbassadors@gmail.com.

NEWS BRIEFS

Farm Show Date Announced

For over 50 years the Central Minnesota Farm Show has been a popular community event for Central Minnesota. The Farm Show features a large exhibitor floor, educational speakers, prizes and more. Organized by the St. Cloud Area Chamber of Commerce, the 2024 Central Minnesota Farm Show is taking place on Feb. 27 and 28.

Allen Brinkman is the co-chair of the Central MN Farm Show planning committee.

“The Farm Show is a great way to learn more about the agriculture industry, check out the latest equipment and technology and discover farm resources all in one place,” Brinkman said.

He encourages farmers and anyone who has an interest in the agriculture industry to come and check it out.

“No matter how involved you are in farming, we have a lot of great things to offer at the Farm Show,” Travis Theis said. Theis is the other co-chair of the Central MN Farm Show. “We give out agriculture scholarships to students, host educational sessions and have over 200 exhibitor booths for attendees to visit.”

Other things to look forward to at the Farm Show include daily prize giveaways, free donuts, cookies and coffee and plenty of great networking with attendees from all over Central Minnesota. There are also opportunities to sponsor the show or have an exhibitor booth at the show.

The Central MN Farm Show takes place at the River’s Edge Convention Center in St. Cloud, Minnesota. It is open on Tuesday, Feb. 27 from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. and Wednesday, Feb. 28 from 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

The show is free to attend and open to the public. For more information on attending, sponsoring or exhibit-

ing at the Farm Show, reach out to the St. Cloud Area Chamber of Commerce at 320-656-3831 or visit CentralMNFarmShow.com.

USDA Launches Workshops on Livestock Risk Management Products

USDA’s Risk Management Agency (RMA) is hosting a series of Livestock Roadshows with more than a dozen in-person and virtual workshops this winter for producers to learn about new and expanded livestock

risk management products. Some of the programs to be discussed include Livestock Gross Margin, Livestock Risk Protection, Pasture, Rangeland and Forage, and the new Weaned Calf Risk Protection program.

USDA RMA’s Livestock Roadshows will also highlight the policy improvements that were based on feedback from America’s livestock producers which helped increase the popularity of these important risk management programs.

View full list of events by visiting the USDA Livestock Roadshow page.

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2023 MINNESOTA CATTLE



MSCA 2024 Leadership Team – Pictured left to right, Region 7 Director Thomas Salentiny, Membership and Industry Relations Chair Angie Ford, President Jake Thompson, Executive Director Kaitlyn Root, Past President Grant Breikreutz, President-Elect Rachel Gray, Region 2/3 Director Dustin Wiese, Cow/Calf Chair Eric Zeltwanger, Region 4 Director Mark Schoenfeld, Region 1 Director Ben Kleinwachter, Region 6 Director Ryan Anderson and Secretary/Treasurer Kevin Hoge. Not pictured: Advisor to the Board Mark Pankonin, Feeder Council Chair Josiah Ebeling, Legislative Chair Krist Wollum, Region 5 Director Darv Keehr, Region 8 Director Jessi Lambrecht and Region 9 Director Amanda Armstrong.



Entertainment – Comedian C. Willi Myles kept the crowd laughing with his hilarious jokes during the annual banquet.



Prime Promoter – The Minnesota Beef Council (MBC) awarded the Cottonwood Cattle Producers with the Prime Promoter of the Year Award during the banquet. Pictured left to right, MBC Director of Industry Relations Jon Dilworth, Cottonwood Cattle Producers President Christy Jackson and MBC CEO Kelly Schmidt.



Networking – Representative Kaohly Vang Her, Representative Ethan Cha and MSCA member Mike Landuyt pictured at convention.



Tradeshow – With 50 vendors, the convention tradeshow was the perfect place for attendees to chat with cattle producers and businesses.



Merck donation – Keeping tradition, Merck presented the MSCA with a \$10,000 donation as part of our “Cartridges for Cash” partnership.

INDUSTRY CONVENTION



Policy discussion – Cattlemen gathered on Dec. 14 at the resort for the Annual Resolutions Meeting where resolutions are presented and voted on which guide the MSCA on decision-making throughout the year.



Industry Service Award – MSCA President Jake Thompson presented American Foods Group as the 2023 Industry Service Award winner.



Influential speakers – USMEF Senior VP, Industry Relations, John Hinners, American National CattleWomen President Pam Griffin and NCBA President Todd Wilkinson spoke during the Friday luncheon.



Interviews – Multiple media outlets attended convention to showcase the MSCA. MSCA President Jake Thompson is pictured with WNAAX Farm Director Keith Lundberg.



Cattleman of the Year – 2022 Cattleman of the Year Mike Landuyt awards Mark Pankonin as the 2023 Cattleman of the Year.



Best management practices – Saturday's breakfast panel included discussion on soil health and economically managing your herd.



Successful event – The convention had a wonderful turnout, with around 250 attendees celebrating another year in the cattle industry.




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Student (24 or younger) - \$53

1251 - 1500 - \$1493

1501 - 1750 - \$1760

1751 - 2000 - \$2027

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