



CCA IS THE NATIONAL VOICE OF CANADA'S 60,000 BEEF FARMS

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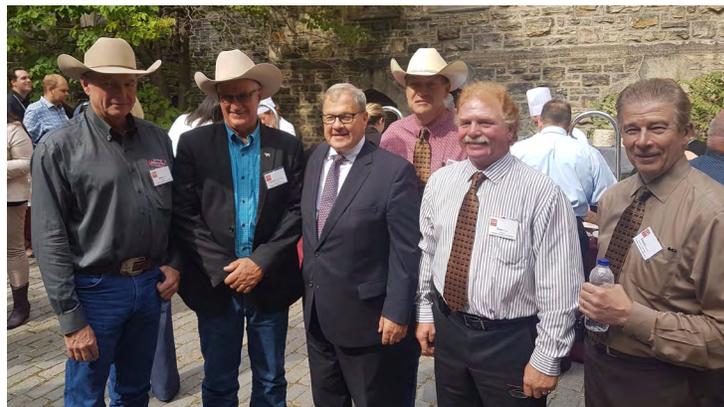
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CCA in Ottawa for round three of NAFTA talks, annual fall picnic

The Canadian Cattlemen's Association (CCA) had a busy week in Ottawa, with the third round of North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) trade talks occurring just ahead of the CCA annual fall picnic on the East Block on Parliament Hill. The CCA also held several one-on-one meetings with Members of Parliament, including Agriculture and Agri-Food Minister Lawrence MacAulay

and International Trade Minister François-Philippe Champagne.

CCA Executive Vice President Dennis Laycraft was among two dozen agriculture groups outlining the priorities of their respective sectors to Minister MacAulay and other Government of Canada officials at the meetings. In addition to maintaining NAFTA's terms of trade for beef, the CCA seeks to improve the flow of trade for beef and cattle through greater regulatory alignment. We also took part in daily briefings that afforded the opportunity to go over details with the agriculture negotiators.



CCA's annual fall picnic on Parliament Hill (top) and meeting with Minister Champagne (bottom). Photo credit: CCA



The CCA is making recommendations to modernize NAFTA and identified areas that would benefit from regulatory alignment including the elimination of meat re-inspection at the border and reciprocal beef grading. We again stressed the importance of continued duty-free access for the beef trade, and the importance of maintaining dispute settlement mechanisms.

Joining the CCA in Ottawa were our Mexican counterparts, Salvador Alvares Moran and Andrés Piedra Ibarra of the Confederación Nacional de Organizaciones Ganaderas (CNOG).

In May, the CCA issued a joint public statement with our Mexican and U.S. counterparts indicating that beef producers in all three countries are united in their desire to keep NAFTA intact. We are following the negotiations closely and will have representatives on site at every negotiation round to provide expert advice where needed.

The CNOG guests also attended the CCA annual fall picnic, where over 300 guests were in attendance including approximately 80 Members of Parliament and Senators. In his remarks, CCA President Dan Darling touched on NAFTA and other trade agreements of importance to beef producers, like the Trans-Pacific Partnership and the Canada-EU Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement. He underscored the importance of maintaining a strong partnership between Government and agriculture producers. "We will continue to engage and bring our voice forward so that the beef sector may continue to be a major generator of economic activity and jobs in Canada," he said.

CCA shares recommendations for Canada's Food Policy with Standing Committee on Agriculture

CCA President Dan Darling and Ottawa staff Brady Stadnicki appeared before the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food recently to share CCA's views on Canada's Food Policy. Earlier this May, the Government of Canada launched consultations and outlined its objectives for Canada's Food Policy. The CCA has been actively engaged in the Food Policy consultations to ensure the interests of the beef industry are represented in the policy making process.

The CCA's recommendations to the committee include ensuring farmers and ranchers play a meaningful role in developing this policy. We ask that the governance structure or council that provides guidance to FPT governments developing the policy have strong representation from agriculture producers.

Additionally, Canada's Food Policy must be science based and utilize the best available data and research. As the Policy develops, it also needs to leverage and complement current federal initiatives rather than duplicating them.

The proposed themes of the Food Policy are: 1) Increasing Access to Affordable Food; 2) Improving Health and Food Safety; 3) Conserving our Soil, Water and Air and; 4) Growing more High-Quality Food.

The proposed policy must also recognize that innovation and technology help our industry, and other commodities, remain efficient in using resources, while keeping costs of production down - which in turn allows for food to be affordable to the consumer. The beneficial role of cattle in terms of conserving soil, improving grassland health, and ensuring the preservation of important rangelands, must be acknowledged. Keeping grasslands that are utilized by cattle intact also provides public goods such as carbon sequestration, wildlife habitat, increased biodiversity and improved water quality.

The Canadian beef industry and all Canadian agriculture is a strategic growth asset and is well positioned to play a vital role in feeding the world. It will be imperative that Canada's Food Policy places a strong emphasis on creating the most competitive business environment with an emphasis on market access, research, labour and a competitive regulatory system.

Recognizing that raising cattle and supplying beef to consumers can play an important role in achieving the policy goals will be essential in a Food Policy that we can support. We are confident that if designed and implemented properly, this initiative has the potential to bring the public and farmers and ranchers together to find shared values in Canada's food and agriculture systems to enhance public trust.

CANFAX MARKET BRIEFS

Week ending September 29th, 2017

(in Cdn\$)		This wk.	Change
↓	Fed Steers	131.63	-2.95
	Fed heifers	n/a	n/a
↑	Feeder Steers	---	+3.10
↑	Feeder heifers	---	+4.11
↑	Cdn Feeder Index	202.74	+3.40
↑	Cdn Calf Index	217.55	+3.93
↑	D1/D2 cows	87.43	+1.71
↑	Slaughter bulls	100.55	+0.40
(in US\$)			
↓	Cdn spot dollar	80.32	-0.72
↓	Oct live cattle	108.98	-1.12
↓	Sep feeder cattle	152.78	-0.40



CCA attends LEAP meeting at FAO HQ



Canfax Research Services Manager Brenna Grant represented the CCA at annual meeting of the Livestock Environmental Assessment and Performance (LEAP) Partnership at the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) headquarters in Rome, Italy. LEAP develops comprehensive guidance and methodology for understanding the environmental performance of livestock supply chains, to shape evidence-based policy measures and business strategies. The meeting provided a progress update on current Technical Advisory Groups including Nutrient, Water, Soil Carbon, and Biodiversity; discussions on application of tools and potential direction moving forward including the use of case studies and road-testing of guidance documents by partners. The LEAP Partnership is a multi-stakeholder initiative that is committed to improving the environmental performance of livestock supply chains, while ensuring its economic and social viability.

Photo credit: Brenna Grant

Issues Management Monthly: Canada Food Guide must acknowledge meat is part of a balanced, healthy diet

The Issues Management Monthly column highlights the work being done to address beef industry issues by Canadian Cattlemen's Association (CCA) staff, featuring Issues Manager Tom Lynch-Staunton.

The National Beef Strategy is about positioning the Canadian beef industry for greater profitability, growth and continued production of a high-quality beef product of choice in the world. Demand for high quality protein is expected to continue to grow in most developing nations. The majority of markets closed due to BSE have been reopened, and a number of new trade agreements are coming into effect providing new opportunities for Canada's beef industry. The National Check-off is scheduled to increase to \$2.50/head in most provinces in the spring of 2018.

It has been widely recognized in the beef industry that there is growing disconnect between the public and where our food comes from. This disconnection from the farm has resulted in consumers asking questions about how their beef is raised. Unfortunately, they also have access to large amounts of information, which many times presents misinformation and rhetoric that is largely negative towards the beef industry, which in turn is eroding public trust in beef production. This is evidenced by a continued decline in per capita beef consumption in Canada, in relation to other commodities, which can be attributed in part to this increase in misinformation, misperceptions, and negative media coverage of issues like the environmental impacts of beef production, hormone and antibiotic use, healthfulness of beef, and animal welfare.





To address this problem, an Issues Management initiative was developed within the Connectivity and Beef Demand Pillars in the National Beef Strategy. The main goal of the Issues Management program is simple: To increase public confidence, and enhance the credibility, reputation, and trust in the Canadian beef industry, thereby increasing overall demand for beef in Canada, which in turn, will help ensure long-term sustainability for beef producers. Achieving this will take increased effort and resources to effectively address public concerns about beef production, in a meaningful way that inspires confidence in beef production and leaves consumers feeling good about beef. It is through a larger coordinated effort and transparency that we will be able to have this effect.

What producers can expect to see with this increased investment and allocation to Issues Management? An important component of the Issues Management program, and our other main goal, will be to develop stronger relationships and connectivity among industry partners and organizations to manage issues more efficiently and effectively. The Issues Management team is intended to be a neutral hub, reporting to the Canadian Beef Advisors and the Canadian Beef Cattle Check-off Agency, that works with all the national beef organizations (BCRC, Canada Beef, CCA, Canadian Beef Breeds Council, Canadian Roundtable for Sustainable Beef (CRSB), National Cattle Feeders Association, and Canadian Meat Council(CMC)) and the provincial beef associations to gather key messages, applicable research, spokespeople and information and share it with the other organizations so that they are well prepared when dealing with consumer based issues or concerns. This will create better industry relationships, and significantly improve efficiencies through reduced duplication of effort if each organization had to act on their own.

We have already had examples of coordinated effort working well, through our newly formed “Issue Response Team” which has representatives of all the organizations mentioned above and has become a forum to share key information. This summer Issues Management coordinated industry efforts with a response to the Canada Food Guide Draft guiding principles, sharing key messages developed by Canada Beef and the CMC on the healthfulness of beef to the various producer organizations. This resulted in a tremendous response to government, coupled by a reduced duplication of effort. One partner noted that this “saved me two and a half days of work, if I had to gather this information on my own.”

In addition to dedicated staff within the Issues Management program to deal with consumer issues as they arise, funds will be used to train industry spokespeople in media training, social media communications, the Beef Advocacy Program, and other professional development; develop a key resource repository for easy access to key message information on specific issues; develop consumer communications and public engagement “tool kits” for the provincial and national organizations; support partner organizations that can amplify our messages to build public trust (i.e. Canadian Centre for Food Integrity, CRSB, etc.); create specific issue response plans; develop consumer and public forums to engage consumers; and help fund research in consumer behaviour and perceptions.

What we will have to remember is that to strengthen public confidence, it will take a coordinated effort, and everyone will play both leading and supporting roles, depending on what we are dealing with. It is important that silos and empire building don't cloud the way, since we should all ultimately be trying to do the same thing: help ensure our industry is sustainable and competitive long into the future. A producer has described the Issues Management program as being like an insurance policy; we invest in it to reduce risk, hoping that we don't have to use it. The ultimate goal would be the time that we don't need an Issues Management program in the first place, where trust has been solidified, we have reconnected our public back to their farm, and they feel good about how cattle are raised and where beef comes from.

For more information on this and other initiatives under the National Beef Strategy, please visit:

<https://canadabeef.ca/producer/>

<http://www.beefresearch.ca/blog/increased-check-off-research/>

<http://beefstrategy.com/>

<http://www.cattle.ca/assets/IM-1-Pager-v2.pdf>

Production & Management Practices that Drive Profitability – a *CRS Fact Sheet* sponsored by Merck Animal Health

In the past 20 years, estimated average per unit cost of production (COP) in the cow-calf sector has increased more than 25% from \$1.04 to \$1.46/cwt (for a 1200 lb cow), with increased costs in feed, labour, fuel and land. The increase has been especially rapid in the past five years with a 31% increase from



\$1.11/cwt in 2012 to \$1.46/cwt in 2016, making it increasingly important for all producers to watch their costs and cost structures carefully. Despite thin margins and higher COP on average, a study by Western Beef Development Centre (WBDC) found that there is big difference in COP between the study average and low-cost producers (top 25%) – at least \$100/cow or >20% difference during 2001 to 2012. As cow-calf returns realign with the long-term average, this 20% difference is crucial for a producer as it could make a difference between being profitable or unprofitable.

What are these top 25% of producers doing differently from other producers? And what are the top production practices that drive profitability?

These questions were discussed at the June 2017 Agri benchmark Conference hosted by Canfax Research Services in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan with beef economists from around the world.

Go to <http://canfax.ca/FactSheets.aspx> for the full article.

Forage quality important in winter grazing

With colder weather on its way and many Canadians beef producers are starting to set up for winter grazing. For producers who are planning on swath or bale grazing this winter it is important to ensure that cattle are matched to the forage quality. As the winter progresses and cows advance through the stages of pregnancy they require more energy, feed testing and evaluating the body condition score of cattle can help producers to figure out which pastures to turn cows into at which time.

If mud during extended grazing is a problem in your area it is recommended to leave as much biomass on the field as possible, this will help hold the water in and act like a snowshoe to help prevent cows to walk on top of the mud. When conditions are muddy it is advisable to turn cows onto grazing pastures that will be broken up in the string to prevent damage to pastures that will continue to be grazed.

For more tips on winter grazing go to <http://www.beefresearch.ca/blog/3-tips-for-swath-and-bale-grazing/>

CCA Action News

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The Canadian Cattlemen's Association is the national voice for Canada's beef cattle industry representing 60,000 beef farms and feedlots.

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