



# Summer Report

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## National Convention highlights

For a week in August, Canada's beef and cattle industry gathered in Regina for the CCA's 2009 National Convention and Semi-annual Meeting to focus on "Conquering Market Challenges".

### National Convention

At the Convention, delegates heard the latest on the Canadian Beef Advantage, the new Beef InfoXchange System (BIXS), slated for roll-out this fall, the federal Agricultural Market Access Secretariat (AMAS) and presentation of The Environmental Stewardship Award (TESA). Congratulations to the 2009 TESA winners - the Madley family, from Alexis Creek, B.C. and their Canyon Ranch.



CCA President, Brad Wildeman, and Canada's Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Gerry Ritz, fielding audience questions at the National Convention.

Federal Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Gerry Ritz, wrapped up the day fielding audience questions during a 45-minute, open-mike session, covering most of the industry's hottest issues.

### Status of Agricultural Market Access Secretariat

Fred Gorrell, the newly appointed head of the Agricultural Market Access Secretariat (AMAS), joined the CCA's Foreign Trade Committee meeting to update members on the Secretariat's status.

On board for two months, Fred has focused on laying groundwork for the secretariat. He characterized AMAS as more than the "government's secretariat", but belonging to industry, too. Working from the CCA's proposed basic structure for AMAS, Fred is focused on formulating an operational plan for joint

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## Taking action...

The CCA continued to actively work on several major issues throughout the summer:

### Mandatory COOL - CCA continues calling for WTO action

We continue to be resolute and unwavering in urging the Government of Canada to proceed on their request to the WTO (World Trade Organization) to establish a dispute settlement panel against the U.S. and Mandatory Country-of-Origin Labelling (mCOOL). Through continued interaction with the Government of Canada and its working group, the CCA is looking at the economic situation caused by mCOOL and attempting to quantify the damage. These hard numbers are the key to moving forward with a trade case at the WTO.

### Federal government moves WTO trade dispute forward on South Korea

Canadian cattle producers applauded the Government of Canada for their continuing pursuit to restore trade in Canadian beef with South Korea, when the World Trade Organization (WTO) announced in early September that a trade dispute settlement panel would be established. After initial consultations with South Korea yielded no movement on its unjustified refusal to resume trade, the Canadian government made two subsequent requests to the WTO Dispute Settlement Body, to move forward with the next phase aimed at restoring trade.

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development by the government and industry.

The idea of the secretariat, spearheaded by the CCA and other red meat organizations, started to gather momentum in 2008 through the Beef Value Chain Roundtable (BVCRT) - co-chaired by CCA's Executive Vice President, Dennis Laycraft. In developing the concept, CCA and its partners established 25 key recommendations in a document titled, "Enhancing Canada's Technical Market Access Capabilities for Agriculture". It provides a comprehensive roadmap for AMAS to aggressively and strategically work full-time to secure access to international markets. The Secretariat's trade experts will work with industry and government to ensure cohesion of trade initiatives that effectively eliminate technical barriers and promote agricultural exports worldwide.

By mid-September, the Secretariat's team will number around a dozen staff, serving administrative, analytical and consultative roles in support of its central, technical functions. Each function fulfills the primary purpose of the secretariat - to co-ordinate and enhance all market access functions of the government and industry.

Fred reported that the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) embraced the AMAS initiative, inviting their key staff to participate. Dr. Gary Little, CFIA's negotiating workhorse for re-opening beef markets, is leading AMAS technical functions. By month-end, a number of additional CFIA veterinary officials are expected to come aboard.

Although CCA's focus centres on the secretariat's livestock and meat capabilities, AMAS will serve all sectors of agriculture and employ officials to work on plant-product market access issues as well.

CCA believes the initial impact of restoring all Canadian export markets would almost immediately add \$100 of value to every head of cattle produced; creating optimism and encouraging growth throughout the cattle industry and other agricultural sectors. By 2015, industry exports could increase by more than \$6 billion per year, creating over 93,000 jobs on farms, plus the transportation, processing, sales and service sectors.

*...continued from page one, "Taking action..."*

### **Panama lifts trade restrictions**

Two major market access developments occurred in August. First - Panama lifted BSE restrictions that have been in place for six years. Second - a free trade

agreement (FTA) has been signed between Panama and Canada, but no details of the agreement have been announced at this point. The CCA has been working closely with the Government of Canada throughout the process. Although traditionally a small market, we are encouraged by the investment occurring in Panama and their growing desire for higher quality beef to supply the expanding cruise ship tourism industry.

### **CCA has mixed response to FPT Ministers' meeting**

The CCA had a mixed response to the Federal/Provincial/Territorial (FPT) Ministers of Agriculture meeting, held in early July. We were pleased to see support on several fronts, including:

- the creation and implementation of AMAS
- pushing the WTO case against South Korea
- the \$20 million investment into the new Livestock Traceability Initiative
- the Ministers' willingness to conduct a thorough exploration into price insurance options for cattle producers

However, several important issues did not progress further:

- no firm commitment to improve national disaster relief programming was made
- despite the industry continuously calling for improvements to the current suite of Business Risk Management programs, the FPT meeting resulted in no measureable improvements and
- particularly disappointing - the only firm deliverable was establishing a deadline of mandatory traceability throughout Canada, by 2011, which only adds to the stress and burden felt by all cattle producers

### **Federal tax decision brings relief to disaster-stricken cattle producers**

After years of effort by the CCA to bring about a national strategy that enables disaster-stricken producers to make decisions aimed at business recovery, we welcomed news that the Government of Canada will deliver tax relief to producers struck by natural disasters across the prairie provinces in 2008 and 2009.

### **Improving business risk management programs – Cattle Price and Basis Insurance**

The CCA is closely following development of a national cattle price and basis insurance program after federal, provincial and territorial agriculture ministers directed their officials to develop a model for review at their next meeting. We continue to lobby aggressively for

development of a national price and basis insurance program, that is effective and affordable, in collaboration with governments and industry.

### British Columbia ranchers receive national recognition for environmental commitment

The Madley family and their Canyon Ranch of Alexis Creek, B.C., received the Environmental Stewardship Award (TESA) in recognition

for their outstanding contributions to the environment through their operation. Their efforts demonstrate commitment to water quality, habitat restoration, riparian, grass and nutrient management.



*Chair of CCA Environment Committee, Lynn Grant, and 2009 TESA recipients - Brooke and Bev Madley.*



*The Madley family at their Canyon Ranch, in front of their B.C. Environmental Stewardship Award sign.*

Announced at the CCA's 2009 National Convention, Brooke and Bev Madley accepted the award on the behalf of the five generations that have worked, and continue to work at the Canyon Ranch. Today, the Madley family raise Hereford-Angus-cross cattle.

### Ontario fly-ins

On June 2, the Ontario Cattlemen's Association sent a delegation to Ottawa to meet with Members of Parliament (MPs). Ontario representatives included John Gillespie, Dan Darling, Kim Sytsma, Gerald Rollins, Paul Stiles and Jen Snively - who joined the CCA's Ryder Lee and John Masswohl. During the one-day visit, the delegation delivered messages on the state of the cattle industry to 17 Members of Parliament.

The messages focused on three main issues:

#### **Improving business risk management programs**

The CCA has a number of long-standing suggested improvements to AgriStability with the objective of returning producers to a uniform national approach to business risk management. A newer innovative approach supported by CCA involves examining price and basis insurance and looking at new delivery ideas like the Margin Coverage Concept currently under

review in Alberta.

#### **Trade access**

We commended the Government of Canada on recent actions to improve market access and encouraged them to keep this up. We told them that the recently launched negotiations for a comprehensive economic agreement with the European Union represents the biggest opportunity for the Canadian beef industry since the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement; and encouraged them to maintain a high level of ambition for those negotiations. The MPs were also reminded of the importance of keeping up the heat on the U.S. and Korea through the ongoing World Trade Organization (WTO) challenges.

#### **Costs**

Lastly, costs impacting returns to producers were discussed. This includes the ongoing costs of Canada's enhanced feed ban which is not competitive with the US system. Harmonization with the American enhanced feed ban is what we are seeking which would allow the industry to recover value for SRMs such as using meat and bone meal from UTM animals for fertilizer. Other cost competitive issues discussed included access to new and innovative feed grains and veterinary inputs. The main message was that Canadian beef can compete with any other in the world, but if we have higher costs or fewer choices for inputs, the industry will continue to struggle.

### Keeping producers informed

In our efforts to improve producers' access to critical news and industry information to help their business, the CCA continues to undertake major initiatives.

#### **Revitalized CCA website evolves with industry needs – check it out**

Have you visited [www.cattle.ca](http://www.cattle.ca) lately? It received a major facelift this spring aimed at helping Canadian producers and the entire industry maximize their business opportunities. The new look offers easy access to the latest information on current issues and initiatives CCA undertakes on your behalf.

Now the homepage features:

**'Taking Action' sidebar** – provides direct links to the latest news, business and key resources. Mouse over:

- News Headlines – see latest news releases/coverage as they develop
- CCA in action – frequent updates on recent industry-leading meetings, market, trade or political developments we undertake to break down barriers and improve opportunities across

the sector at home and abroad.

- Talking to your politicians – tap into resources to enhance grassroots action at local, regional and national levels – your voice counts
- Reports and Publications – quick access to CCA's annual report, monthly newsletters, comprehensive reporting on industry initiatives

**Calendar** – see what's on slate for upcoming public/industry events nationwide

**Hot buttons link directly to major CCA programs and divisions:**

- Verified Beef Program
- Canadian Beef Advantage
- BIXS (Beef Information Xchange System) - coming this fall
- CanFax – latest market facts
- BIC's (Beef Information Centre's) new producer website – see your marketing dollars at work

**Comprehensive website navigation on every page:**

- Easy access to all major business areas through the 'Jump to' box and upper navigation bar, which features drop-down menus, plus a comprehensive 'search' feature
- Only one click away from any previously-navigated page at any time during your current visit, via the bread crumb trail on the upper left, which displays your navigational path
- Instant links to national industry organizations in 'The Cattle Zone' located at the bottom of each page

This website is dedicated to serving producers and Canada's beef cattle industry. Tell us what you want to see.

Check back regularly for the latest developments as issues evolve that impact your business. We continually fine-tune the website to meet your needs.

If you need help finding anything on the website, please contact us. Or, if you're just plain happy that access has improved, let us know.

We welcome your feedback. It's easy to contact us, e-mail 'feedback@cattle.ca'; enquire online; or call CCA Communications at 403.275.8558.

**Real-time news delivered by auction mart project**

This fall, we're launching a unique, real-time video news delivery system of news, events, projects and programs, plus market and trade information. After a

two-stage pilot is completed in early fall, the system is slated to begin roll-out to participating auction marts across Canada. It's aimed at helping you stay up-to-date on issues and factors affecting your business when you need it most - at the time you're planning to buy or sell.



*An auction mart screen prototype displayed on a 50" monitor.*

Computer monitors linked directly to a central website deliver up-to-the-minute information from regional, national and international perspectives, including local content from the auction mart, plus market facts from CanFax and North American commodity markets.

Once the pilot is completed, together with our provincial members, we plan to take the system nationwide. Stay tuned for more news on the roll-out of this exciting project.

**News delivery services - direct to you**

And just in case you're not out and about at the local auction mart daily, we're enhancing our CCA news services to deliver the latest industry news directly to individual subscribers - free. As a subscriber, you can select timely news and information on the issues that matter most to you, delivered in a format you prefer - either e-mail or fax.

To improve our news services, on September 21st, a new, bi-weekly CCA newsletter entitled "CCA Action News" will be launched. With so much news to cover as the CCA works on many major industry issues, we recognize that our stakeholders need to hear about the latest developments more frequently. To subscribe, sign-up on [www.cattle.ca](http://www.cattle.ca) or contact our Communications team at 403.275.8558.

**What's happening with VBP?**

**New Atlantic coordinator**

The Verified Beef Production (VBP) Program is pleased to announce that Jan Holmes of Prince Edward Island is the new Atlantic-region coordinator. Jan's background includes working with producers in the

horticultural sector and, most recently, for the Prince Edward Island Cattle Producers.

Jan and her husband's family also own a beef operation at Cornwall, PEI. During the summer she manages a vineyard. Jan recently joined Rinnie Bradley and Larry Ratcliffe in a meeting with Atlantic provincial governments to access 'Growing Forward' funding to augment coordinator activities.

### **Ontario co-ordinator appears as witness on Food Safety**

Dan Ferguson, Ontario VBP Coordinator, appeared as a witness with CCA's John Masswohl on behalf of the VBP Program at the House of Common Subcommittee on Food Safety. While last year's listeria incident in prepared meat was the main focus of the Committee's study, Dan explained how the VBP Program addresses food safety from an on-farm perspective. Dan and John emphasized that cattle producers take food safety very seriously, explaining that good practices in the area of food safety go hand-in-hand with good management practices and reap a variety of benefits.

### **VBP passes second, CFIA tri-ennial review**

After conducting a second, tri-ennial VBP Program review, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) recognizes the VBP Program as continuing to be technically sound and adequately implementing HACCP into its Program requirements. Specifically, the final review of the CCA Producer Manual (version 7.7), March 2009, and the HACCP Model (version 7.5), March 31, 2009, was completed.

The CFIA also recognizes that adjustment and changes made to the VBP Program are in alignment with HACCP principles.

The original Letter of Completion covering the CCA Technical Review, Part 1, remains in effect and is now valid for the following documents:

1. Quality Starts Here, Verified Beef Production, HACCP Generic Model, Live Beef Cattle Intended for Slaughter - Version 7.5
2. VBP Producer Manual, CCA - Version 7.7

### **Your check-off dollars at work: BCRC funded projects**

#### **Anti-microbial use and resistance in western Canadian feedlots**

The Beef Cattle Research Council (BCRC) is currently funding research analyzing anti-microbial use and resistance in western Canadian feedlots - subsequent to the growth of anti-microbial use (AMU) and anti-microbial resistance (AMR) as public health concerns.



Although most of the problem can be attributed to anti-microbial use in people, the volume of anti-microbials used in beef cattle production has led to growing concerns in the public and regulatory arenas and calls for countries to establish systems to monitor AMU and AMR.

The program being funded by the BCRC will establish a model for ongoing on-farm AMU and AMR surveillance in the Canadian beef sector. This will help detect potential emerging AMR problems and identify and evaluate on-farm intervention points to limit the development of AMR.

### **Canadian Beef Advantage (CBA) featured by BIC foodservice partners**

Funded in part by cattle producers through the National Check-off Agency, the Beef Information Centre (BIC) continued its efforts to maximize demand for Canadian beef, plus optimize the value of Canadian beef products to benefit cattle producers.

Since the beginning of 2009, BIC has worked extensively with the foodservice sector to deliver the CBA message of quality and food safety attributes that differentiates Canadian beef from its competitors.

The BIC Partners Program continues to expand the CBA's presence in the foodservice sector; increasing the number of companies featuring Canadian beef and the Canadian beef brand logo on their menus:

- **Boston Pizza** added a new Prime Rib beef burger to its menu. BIC assisted with the burger's development plus product procurement for the 100 per cent Canadian beef burger. It's now a permanent menu item alongside a prominently featured Canadian beef brand logo.
- **Casey's Grill Bar** is featuring several summer-influenced items on their menu, including a Canada AAA, Ontario Corn-Fed Beef 16 oz. T-Bone steak; identified on the menu with the new Canadian beef brand logo. It was expected that 4,000 steaks would be sold during the promotion, which ran until August 2, 2009.
- **Panago Pizza** featured the addition of two steak pizzas to their menu - the 'Surf and Turf' and the 'Turf and Turf', from March 2 - May 31. Advertised extensively on television, the Canadian beef brand logo was prominently featured against a backdrop of a grilling steak. As well, the brand logo was featured on eight million direct-mail flyers and on the Panago website during the length of the program.

Other foodservice industry highlights from this year

include:

- Presenting the CBA message at industry professional events across Canada including 14 foodservice distributor tradeshow focused on the independent restaurant operator - the largest attendee at these shows; plus at the Canadian Association of Foodservice Professionals meetings;
- Maintaining a close partnership with the Canadian Culinary Federation of Cooks and Chefs by presenting at their annual general meeting and encouraging recipe development, featuring under-utilized cuts of meat; and
- Co-sponsoring the 'Centre of the Plate' training workshop with the North American Meat Processors Association in Guelph, Ontario.

"BIC Partners Program is key to the success of Canada's beef industry, with programs leveraging the resources of many partners for the benefit of the industry as a whole," says John Gillespie, BIC Committee Chair and a feedlot operator from Ayr, Ontario.

#### **BIC producer website launched**

The Beef Information Centre (BIC) launched its own producer-focused website within the CCA's website. Check it out at [www.bic.cattle.ca](http://www.bic.cattle.ca). This new site was developed in conjunction with the CCA's recently redesigned website.

The new site primarily offers BIC stakeholders - Canada's beef producers, plus industry, government and agricultural media, a new, direct form of communication and interaction with easy access to information on BIC, including their vision and mission statements, projects and programs, plus other information. Stay tuned over the next few months as a significant amount of new content will be added.

#### **National Farm Animal Health and Welfare Strategy (NFAHWS) reports**

The NFAHWS Working Group, comprised of representatives of the Council of Chief Veterinary Officers (CCVO) and representatives of the Canadian livestock industry, completed development of a national strategy for farmed animal health (which began in March 2008). The final strategy is built on the statement of principles defined by industry leaders in 2006 and other core documents prepared by industry and the CCVO.

A stakeholder input process ensured that the development of the strategy was broader than the views of the working group. The input also contributed to achieving the goals and objectives of this collaborative

development approach to advance the state of farmed animal health and welfare in Canada.

Comments provided during the stakeholder input process were considered by the NFAHWS working group and resulted in some changes to the strategy document. While not all of the suggestions submitted were incorporated into the strategy document, they will not be lost as the next step is undertaken.

Many of the suggestions and unanswered questions will be dealt with in the next steps by a steering committee, which the working group proposed to finalize the terms of reference for the National Farmed Animal Health Council. The group believes the Council is critical to oversee the development of the action plan and the implementation of the strategy recommendations for improving the farmed animal health and welfare system in Canada.

Next steps include presentation of the final document to the FPT Regulatory ADM committee - which assigned the project. The Strategy has received the attention of the Federal/Provincial/Territorial (FPT) process, including Ministers, and it is the working group's intent that the strategy be advanced to the Ministers' agenda at the earliest convenience. In the ongoing development process, there will be further consultation and definition of the governance option and clarity in the financial commitment of partners.

With all of this in mind, strength will be added to the proposal if there is an indication of support from industry for the concept and a desire to move to the next steps of evolution of the NFAHWS.

***We are seeking your encouragement for the advancement of the NFAHWS initiative.*** We want to demonstrate the unity of the industry stakeholders to the FPT Ministers and show we are prepared to enter into a new era of collaboration and partnership with governments to achieve the vision that: *'Canada values and supports the health, care, and welfare of the farmed animal population and its contribution to the well-being of people, the environment and the Canadian economy.'*

For a copy of the Strategy and a summary of stakeholder comments, visit the Canadian Animal Health Coalition (CAHC) website [www.animalhealth.ca/projects](http://www.animalhealth.ca/projects).

The CCA is a founding member of the CAHC. CCA representatives on the CAHC played a key role in advancing the development of the NFAHWS.

## Working in the community...

### Ottawa Food Aid BBQ raises \$105,000 to buy beef for families in need



*Hundreds line up at Ottawa's city hall for a burger in exchange for a donation to the Food Bank's beef*

The Ottawa Food Bank held its 5<sup>th</sup> annual Food Aid Day on June 5, 2009. The funds raised are used entirely to purchase cull cows at Ottawa area sale barns in order to distribute the beef to Ottawa Food Bank clients. The program was conceived in the darkest days of BSE as a win-win for local cattle producers and the families needing the beef.

Purchasing three or four cows a week, the Ottawa Food Bank has been a welcome bidder at the sale ring during a period in which cull cow sellers experienced depressed demand due to border closures. Over the past five years, the Food Bank has purchased more than 900 cows and distributed nearly 400,000 pounds of beef to Ottawa families.

From inception, the annual fundraiser has involved a radiothon, generally raising \$40 - 50,000 on each of the first three Food Aid Days. Last year, a public BBQ was added at Ottawa's City Hall and the combination of the two approaches has been extremely beneficial in raising awareness of the beef purchase program and generating donations.

This year, all expectations were surpassed with a whopping \$105,000 raised in a single day. Over 1,500 people walked up to receive a hamburger for a \$10 donation. The Food Bank also sells a beef recipe book, "Capital Beef", for a donation to the beef program. Farmers can even donate a cow directly to the Food Bank and receive a tax receipt for the donation. Donations are accepted year-round through the website at: [www.theottawafoodbank.ca/events-food-aid.php#Cookbook](http://www.theottawafoodbank.ca/events-food-aid.php#Cookbook).

Since the borders closed in 2003, cull cow prices recovered from the low 15 cent-per-pound range to the current level of mid-50 cents-per-pound. But this is still short of the 60 – 70 cents-per-pound received before 2003.

The reality is there are still many markets which have yet to resume importing beef from Canadian cattle aged over-thirty-months. At the same time, producers' costs of feed, fuel and fertilizer have skyrocketed along with costly new regulations in slaughter facilities. These factors, combined with a punishing exchange rate on the dollar, mean that cattle producers continue to be grateful for any and all help they can receive.

Knowing that there is a program intended to help cattle producers, as well as putting healthy nutritious beef on the tables of local families, is a great source of pride for the organizers of the event - which included the Canadian Cattlemen's Association and the Canadian Meat Council.



*John Masswohl, CCA; John Newman, former Beef Information Centre Chairman; Rick Hobbs, Ontario Cattlemen's Association and Jim Laws, Canadian Meat Council describe the challenges experienced by Canadian cattle and beef producers.*

### **'Cattlemen for the Cure' charity golf tournament**

For the fourth consecutive year, cattlemen across western Canada showed their overwhelming generosity by taking to the fairways in Medicine Hat, Alberta on August 17, 2009. The 'Cattlemen for the Cure' tournament raised \$44,745 in one day! All of the generous donations raised by the cattlemen, and this year's sponsors, are going to a great cause - The Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada.



*'Cattlemen for the Cure' presenting a donation of \$44,745 to the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada.*

### **CCIA update**

#### **Tag remittance fees to increase**

As of June 1, 2009, manufacturers are paying an additional 40 cents for each RFID tag they produce for the CCIA (Canadian Cattle Identification Agency). This is the first price increase manufacturers have seen from CCIA in the 11-year history of the system.

However, producers may have seen other increases throughout the years, based on increased manufacturing and distribution costs passed on through the distribution chain to the end purchaser. CCIA does not establish the final sale price of tags to producers and subsequently, they may vary nationwide.

CCIA increased the manufacturers' remittance fees to reflect the growing need for resources in serving the industry, to match the increasing demand on the Canadian Livestock Tracking System (CLTS) since its inception and to maintain industry control of the database.

#### **Bar-code dangle tags discounted**

Just a reminder - as of January 1, 2010 ALL cattle must be tagged with an approved Canadian Cattle Identification Agency (CCIA) Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) tag.

"It is important that we implement RFID technology across the board, as this will enable us to move forward

on traceability. Of the three pillars of traceability, we have achieved animal identification. Once we have completed the second pillar – premises identification – the industry will require RFID technology to support the reporting of animal movement," states Steve Primrose, chair for CCIA and owner of Primrose Livestock Ltd.

RFID tags have been the only approved tags available to be issued for cattle since Sept. 1, 2006. However, producers were allowed until December 31, 2009 to phase out bar code tags for mature breeding stock and bulls.

Bar code tags already applied to an animal should be left in the animal's ear and a RFID tag must also be applied to that animal once bar code tags are no longer approved. The producers should cross-reference the barcode tag with the new RFID tag in the Canadian Livestock Tracking System (CLTS). This is strongly recommended to ensure that the integrity of the traceability system is maintained. If producers need assistance to cross-reference the tags, they can call 1-877-909-BEEF (2333).

**For more in-depth information on any of these stories, visit [www.cattle.ca](http://www.cattle.ca).**