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Spotlight on WAGYU

OCTOBER 2026 • Vol. 40, Issue No. 10

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THE CAROLINA CATTLE CONNECTION

Volume 40, Number 10 • OCTOBER 2026

*The official publication of the
North Carolina & South Carolina Cattlemen's Associations.*

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Cary, NC 27511

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The Carolina Cattle Connection is printed on 30 lb recycled
newsprint by BN Printing in Benson, N.C.

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The Carolina Cattle Connection is published
monthly by the N.C. Cattlemen's Association.

A complementary subscription is included with
membership to each state's association.
Non-member subscriptions are \$30 per year.

All address changes for NCCA members to:
The Carolina Cattle Connection
P.O. Box 1207, Cary, NC 27512

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Inside Connection

SPOTLIGHT ON WAGYU

Got to Be N.C. ChefWeekend at Wilders Farm	Page 20
Raising 100 Percent Fullblood Wagyu in Eastern North Carolina	Page 18
The Journey from Japanese Roots to American Plates, by Nicole Correa	Page 14
Understanding Wagyu — Fullblood vs. American	Page 17
Wagyu — The History of an Ancient Asian Breed	Page 12
Why Raise Wagyu?	Page 16
Wilders General Store, by Heather Smith Thomas	Page 9

MONTHLY FEATURES

Amazing Grazing, by Dr. Matt Poore	Page 26
Clemson Corner, by Garrett Ulmer, Dr. Saulo Zoca, & Dr. Troy Rowan	Page 32
Director’s Report, by Milo Lewis	Page 5
E.B.’s View from the Cow Pasture, by E.B. Harris	Page 24
Have You Herd, by Luisa Alegro	Page 28
N.C. Beef Council Update,	Page 22
The Chaplain’s Corral, by Dave Harvey	Page 25
You Decide!, by Dr. Mike Walden	Page 30

STAY CONNECTED TO YOUR BREED

American Angus Association Update	Page 44
American Brahman Breeders Association News	Page 55
American Brahman Breeders Association Executive Vice President Update, by Paul Maulsby	Page 54
American Simmental Association News	Page 58
American Simmental Association Executive Vice President Report, by Jon DeClerck	Page 60
Certified Angus Beef News	Page 36
Common Ground, by Mark McCulley	Page 38
In Loving Memory	Page 84
North American Limousin Foundation Update	Page 74
S.C. Charolais News, by Georgeanne Webb	Page 66
The President’s Letter, by Jim Brinkley	Page 40
The Simmental Trail, by Brooke Harward	Page 56

WHAT’S NEW IN THE INDUSTRY?

Alltech News	Page 110
Animal Agriculture Alliance News	Page 80
Boehringer Ingelheim News	Page 114
Corteva Agriscience News	Page 71
John Deere News	Page 108

WHAT’S HAPPENING IN YOUR STATE?

2026 N.C. Sale Barn Cattle Receipts	Page 85
2026 S.C. Sale Barn Cattle Receipts	Page 119
NCCA Intern Corner, by Alex Berdecia	Page 92
N.C. Cattle Receipts, Trends, & Prices	Page 99
New NCCA Members for 2026	Page 92
Pasture Management Systems “Mile of Fence” Update ...	Page 91
S.C. Cattle Receipts, Trends, & Prices	Page 115
Two Inducted in the N.C. Mountain State Fair Livestock Hall of Fame	Page 75

NCBA & BEEF CHECKOFF — WORKING HARD FOR YOU!

A Message From the CEO, by Colin Woodall	Page 100
Beef Checkoff News	Page 126
Cattlemen’s Beef Board Update, by Melissa Daniels	Page 131
Federation of State Beef Councils Update	Page 128
National Cattlemen’s Beef Association News	Page 99
National Cattlemen’s Beef Association President’s Report, by Gene Copenhaver	Page 94

THE DAIRY CONNECTION

National Milk Producers Federation News	Page 116
The CEO’s Corner, by Gregg Doud	Page 118

EDUCATION, OPINIONS, AND EVERYTHING ELSE!

Beef Cuts & Recommended Cooking Methods	Page 130
Carolina Cooking	Page 127
Food & Drug Administration News	Page 112
Hobby Farm Designation for Livestock Operations	Page 93
Management Strategies to Improve Stocker Productivity and Profitability, by Dr. Benjamin Rajo & Dr. Carrie Pickworth ...	Page 72
NovoFly Screwworm Strain Readied for Active Duty	Page 117
The Beef Industry’s Commitment to Animal Health & Welfare	Page 132
Trending in Food & Media	Page 129
U.S. Department of Agriculture News	Page 102
What Virtual Fencing System Makes Sense for You?, by Marissa Eekhoff, Yijie Xiong, Mitch Stephenson, & Mary Drewnoski	Page 76
Where Agriculture and Communication Meet, by Jessica Williams	Page 82
Where’s the (Local) Beef, by D’Lyn Ford	Page 78



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By MILO LEWIS, N.C. Cattlemen's Association

Director's Report

Making Decisions in a Season of Change

This time of year, change is easy to see. Days get shorter, leaves begin to turn, calves head to market, and producers start making decisions that will carry their operations into another year. Fall has a way of reminding us that change is a constant part of agriculture. Some changes come predictably with the season. Others arrive much less predictably.

Right now, cattle producers are navigating plenty of both. Cattle markets are moving. Producers are making decisions about replacement females. Conversations continue about rebuilding the U.S. cattle herd, beef trade and imports, processing capacity, animal health, and policies coming out of Raleigh and Washington.

There is change within our Association as well. After years of service, Ashley Herring has moved on from her role with our organization. I want to take this opportunity to thank Ashley for the time, energy, and dedication she has given to the Association and Beef Council over the years. Her role touched many areas of our work, and we appreciate her service to North Carolina's cattle and beef industry. We wish her the very best in what comes next.

Transitions naturally bring some adjustments, and we are working through those while continuing to look carefully at how we can best serve our members and fulfill the responsibilities of both the Association and Beef Council moving forward.

In many ways, that process isn't all that different from what cattle producers do every day — evaluate what is in front of you, adapt when circumstances change, and keep your focus on where you are trying to go.

Strong Markets Still Require Tough Decisions — There is certainly plenty to appreciate about today's cattle market. Strong cattle values have created opportunities for producers after years when margins were much tighter.

But strong prices don't make every decision easy. A heifer retained today represents significant value that could have been realized at the sale barn. Replacing cows costs more. Expanding a herd requires more capital. Investments in genetics, facilities, forages, and herd health all have to compete for those same dollars.

At the same time, there is considerable discussion nationally about rebuilding the U.S. cattle herd. From an industry wide perspective, rebuilding cattle numbers will eventually be part of increasing domestic beef production.

But that doesn't mean every producer should retain every heifer. For an individual operation, the question is much more practical — does retaining females make sense for my forage base, finances, labor, facilities, and long term plans? For some producers, the answer may be yes. For others, today's market may make selling those females the better business decision. That's the reality of this industry. What makes sense for one farm doesn't always translate into the same decision on every farm. That's why producers need the flexibility and information to make decisions that work for their own operations.

More Than the Market Is Moving — While producers are working through those decisions at home, there is a lot happening outside the farm gate as well. Beef imports and trade have received significant attention. There is continued discussion about domestic cattle supplies and what it will take to increase U.S. beef production. Processing capacity and labeling requirements remain part of that conversation. Animal health, drought, risk-management tools and federal programs can also have very real implications for producers.

These aren't simple issues. Take beef imports as an example. The U.S. produces a tremendous amount of high quality, highly marbled beef. Our ground beef market also utilizes lean beef, including imported lean trimmings, to create the blends consumers purchase every day. Understanding that market is important. So is understanding how changes in trade policy and import volumes may affect cattle markets and producer confidence.

That's why our job as an Association can't simply be to react to a headline. We need to understand what is being proposed, what problem it is intended to solve, and what the consequences, intended or unintended, could be for cattle producers.

The same is true when we talk about rebuilding the cattle herd. Increasing cattle numbers sounds simple until we start asking what has to happen on individual farms to get there. Producers need forage. They need access to capital. They need confidence that retaining a female today makes sense several years down the road. They need animal health resources, risk management options, and markets that allow them to remain profitable. And if we want

Director's Report continued on the next page

Director's Report *continued from the previous page*

to produce and market more cattle domestically, we also need the infrastructure to support them. That includes processing capacity. We have processors here in North Carolina looking at ways to expand capacity and others serving producers who market beef directly to consumers.

Those businesses are part of the cattle industry's infrastructure, too. Strengthening domestic beef production requires looking at the entire chain, from the pasture to the beef on the consumer's plate.

Keeping the Producer in the Conversation – There will be no shortage of ideas and proposals surrounding the cattle industry in the months ahead. Our role as the Association is to represent our cattle producers. Regardless of which administration is in office, which party introduces an idea or who makes an announcement, our questions should remain pretty consistent. What does this mean for our cattle producers? Does it help them remain profitable? Does it support a competitive marketplace? Does it strengthen our ability to produce cattle and beef here at home? Does it give producers the flexibility to make the decisions that are right for their own operations? When those answers aren't clear, we need to ask more questions. When a proposal creates an opportunity, we should be

willing to recognize it. When something could negatively affect producers, we need to say that too.

That requires relationships. Over the past several months, we have continued conversations with members of our congressional delegation and their staffs, our national partners, state agricultural leaders, and others involved in decisions affecting the cattle industry.

But some of the most important conversations are still the ones happening with producers. I can read a market report or a policy proposal. What I can't learn from either one is exactly how a decision affects a cattle operation in the east, the Piedmont, or the mountains. That perspective has to come from you. It's one of the reasons producer engagement with this Association matters. When we talk with elected officials or other decision makers, the strongest examples we can share aren't theoretical. They're the experiences of cattle producers who can explain what a change means on their farm, at their livestock market, or in their business.

Opportunity and Uncertainty Can Exist Together – There is a tendency to think we should either be optimistic or concerned about the cattle business. I don't think those have to be mutually exclusive.

There are reasons for optimism. Cattle values have created meaningful opportunities. Consumers continue to value beef. There is renewed attention on domestic cattle production, processing capacity, and the infrastructure needed to support our industry.

There are also reasons to pay attention. Markets can change. Weather will continue to challenge us. Animal health threats don't disappear because cattle prices are good. Government actions can have unintended consequences. And today's strong market doesn't guarantee what the market will look like when a heifer retained this fall produces her first calf.

That's agriculture. We make decisions without knowing exactly what the next season will bring. The best producers I know don't spend much time trying to predict every turn. They pay attention, manage what they can control, prepare for what they can't, and make the best decisions possible for their operation.

I think there is a lesson in that for your Association as well. As we work through our own season of change, we have an opportunity to look carefully at what we do, where our resources are best used, and how we can continue strengthening the value we provide North Carolina cattle producers.

We can't control every market movement or policy decision affecting this industry. But we can pay attention. We can ask questions. We can bring producers to the table. We can work with partners when our interests align, and we can speak up when our cattle producers need a voice.

The leaves will turn. Calves will be sold. Another season will come and go. Markets will move, policies will change, and organizations will evolve. Through all of it, our focus doesn't need to change. The N.C. Cattlemen's Association exists to serve and represent cattle producers. As we move into this next season, that remains our responsibility and our priority.



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SPOTLIGHT on WAGYU

Wilders General Store

By HEATHER SMITH THOMAS

Wilders Wagyu in Sampson County, N.C., was founded by Reid and Jaclyn Smith, who originally started a business in real estate, construction, and development. The Smiths founded the RiverWILD family of brands — their real estate development company in Clayton, N.C. — nine years ago, and their new venture with Wagyu was their first agricultural business. Their mission is to build the local economy through a program that offers products people can count on.

The name “Wilders” comes from the name of the township Reid grew up in. He grew up around SimAngus cattle and developed a passion for agriculture. When the pandemic came along, he and Jaclyn wanted to find ways to get their family outside and involved in agriculture. Wagyu cattle grabbed their attention. They already had Angus cows on their small farm and added some Wagyu as they learned more about this breed and genetics.

“We fell in love with Wagyu and so did our team — the people in

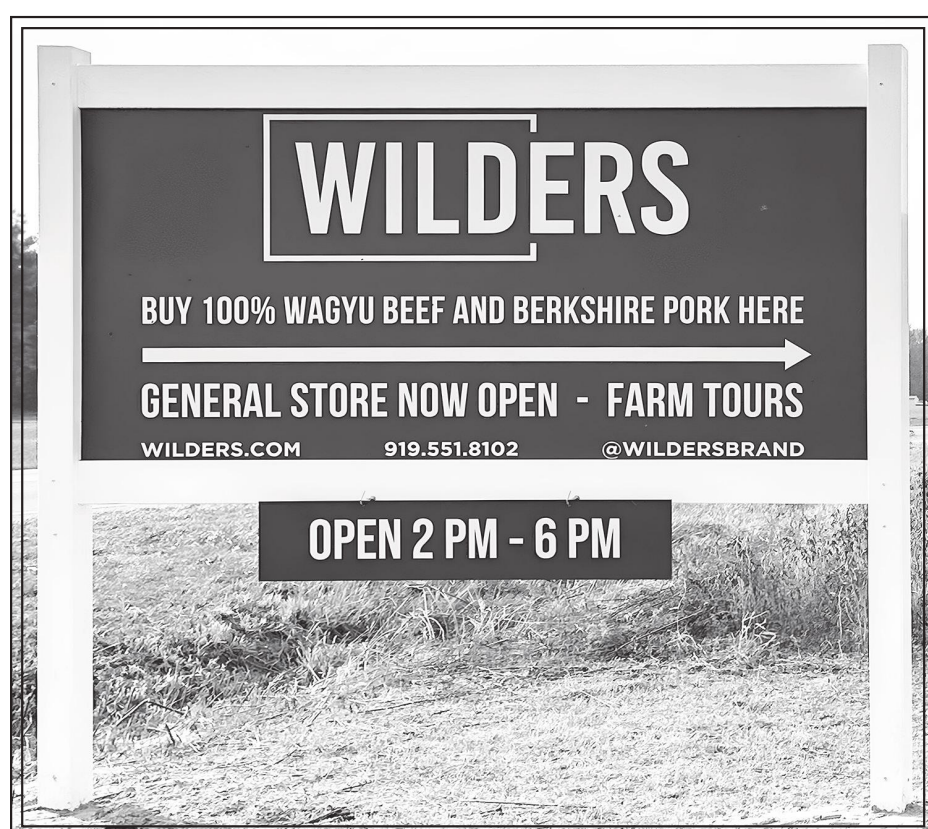
our company — and they all rallied around this breed,” Reid says. “A key thing with our company is that our purpose is to impact and develop people. So from the beginning, we’ve seen the farm as an opportunity to bring as many people along for the agriculture ride as possible. This is a big part of what we try to do every day — to try to include people. We are raising cows, but to us, it’s even more important to enjoy doing it with the people we’re doing it with,” he says. It was an opportunity to introduce people to Wagyu in eastern North Carolina and also bring the best beef in the world to people in the local community.

“We opened a general store on the farm at the beginning of November 2023,” says Danielle Lantz, Vice President of Brand and Operations for Wilders Wagyu. “We timed this opening to be the same weekend as our first production sale on the farm. Our Wagyu cattle customers were therefore the first folks to come shop at our store,” she says.

“Our farm is in eastern North Carolina, in the small town of Turkey. Sampson County is the largest agricultural county in North Carolina. It is well known for hog farming and row crops, and we are one of the largest cattle operations. The farm itself was once an old cutting horse farm, built by Jeffrey Matthews. He created an awesome program and an awesome farm to house those horses. When he moved out a few years ago, we purchased the farm and switched it from a horse to a cattle operation. There are some beautiful buildings and facilities that were already here, and we didn’t need to build much; he already had it wonderfully set up, and we didn’t need to change it very much,” Danielle says.

“He had some old tool sheds and buildings like tobacco barns and hay barns, and we renovated one of the tool sheds into a general store so we could have a beef outlet right here on the farm for consumers. It was important to us to be able to have a place where people could come shop and experience the farm. It is a beautiful place, and we wanted to be able to share this with our customers and people in our area,” she says.

“Our hope is that we can offer farm tours on Saturdays so the people who come to shop can also tour the farm. They can then see what we are doing and how we raise our cattle. We also pasture raise





Berkshire hogs here on the property. Our main goal is to educate consumers and get them excited about agriculture. This is our passion and focus, in connecting to the local community by allowing people to come and see how their food is raised. They can experience North Carolina agriculture. This was the purpose behind opening the store.”

The beef program has been tremendously scaled up and is now an e-commerce Wagyu beef business. “We sell beef and pork directly to consumers through our online website at www.wilders.com, but we never had a true retail space. With the general store, we can now allow our customers to come pick up orders. We do some special in-store only bundles and discounts to encourage people to shop in person. All of our beef is frozen, so we have several freezers in the general store; people can come shop and pick out their individual cuts,” says Danielle.

The biggest thing she noticed is that people really love to buy the bundles. “We try to offer a different bundle every other week, and

our customers get excited about that. We tell them to come back again because we will be switching out the bundle, and they can come back and try something different. This is a good way to help move cuts that people might not normally buy, and we can educate them about different parts of the cow. Not everyone knows what a flat iron is or a hanger steak or flank steak. By putting those in the bundle, it allows us to sell the entire animal and get people to try those lesser known cuts. They come back and tell us they never knew about those but love the flat iron and want to buy one of those again separately,” she says.

“We try to keep our bundles under \$100 so they are an easy price point, allowing people to come in and try a variety of things that aren’t really expensive. This is also a great way to move ground beef. We always include some kind of ground product in the bundle as well, and this helps us move the ground beef quicker,” Danielle says.

“We are fullblood Wagyu beef producers, and we use this in all of our branding and messaging. I think the biggest hurdle for us is to educate the customers about why we are charging so much for beef compared to what they are used to. By having face-to-face interaction at the store, they can ask questions, and we can help them learn more about it and overcome those hurdles. By contrast, people buying beef online don’t get the full story or picture,” she explains.

Currently, the store is only open on Fridays and Saturdays, but during the summer, the plan is to expand the hours. The farm is in an ideal location for people to come by, between a big city area and a popular beach town. “We are right off the interstate highway that connects Raleigh and Wilmington. There is a lot of traffic, especially during the summer when people are going back and forth to the beach. This is a prime spot for people to just pull off the highway and grab something they want on their way in and out of town,” says Danielle.



“We hope to expand our hours as we go into spring and summer to help accommodate the people traveling back and forth. We also offer more than just beef and pork in our general store. We have a lot of awesome branded items with our farm name, like T-shirts and hoodies, cups and stickers, cutting boards, hats, keychains, etc., that have our logo on them for our cattle brand,” she says. It’s a place where farm meets flavor and fun.

“This all connects back to our core values as a company. That’s what WILD stands for — doing business the WILD way, which stands for our core values: with a Will to win, we Intentionally adapt while Living compassionately with Disciplined execution. We try to live by this every day, regardless of what we are doing — whether in agriculture or in our day-to-day business,” she says.

“The way we do business is basically driven by relationships. We are glad to offer a space where we can connect with our customers in a way that goes beyond just a transaction. This means a lot to us, along with being able to educate people about agriculture and specifically Wagyu beef since there’s a lot of misconceptions about it.” The interaction with customers really helps.

“We just started offering some cooked products like summer sausage and snack sticks. We hope this will take off and become popular; it gives people something to instantly try, as opposed to buying a frozen steak that they can’t really try right there on the spot,” she says.

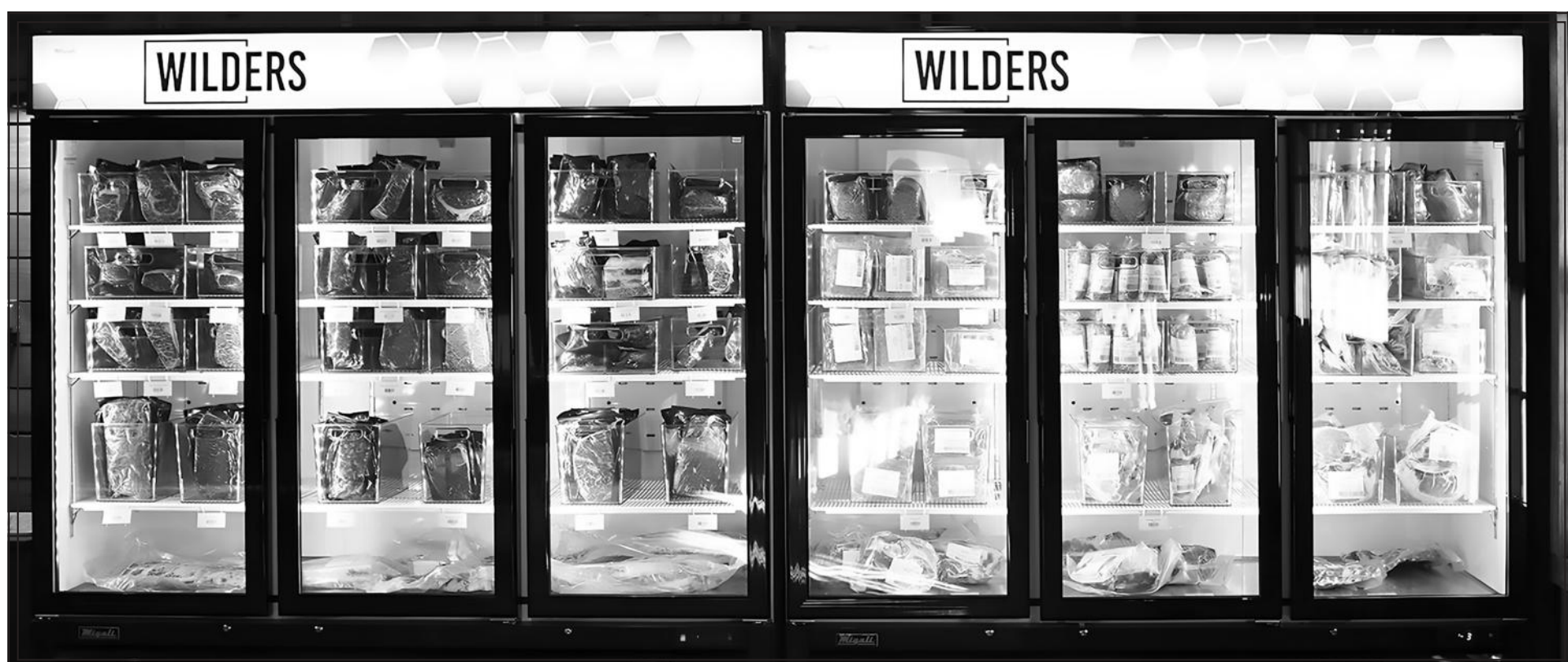
“Maybe on down the road, we might be able to offer more than just our own products in the store. We have met many great producers across the state at farmers’ markets. Being able to eventually offer some of their products in our store would be our ultimate goal. This could help connect consumers and producers,” she says.

“Our success at the store thus far is due to a great relationship with our local county extension office and our state department of agriculture. Both have helped promote our store and beef program extensively, and we are lucky to live in a state that values agriculture



as much as we do,” Danielle says.

“We focus on relationships and customer experiences, which is important when you are offering a high quality product, such as locally raised, 100 percent fullblood Wagyu beef. We want people to feel like they’re buying into something that’s more than just buying meat — that they understand where it comes from and that they’re excited about the brand that we’ve built.”



SPOTLIGHT on WAGYU

Wagyu – The History of an Ancient Asian Breed

Wagyu — a Japanese beef cattle breed — derive from native Asian cattle. ‘WAGYU’ refers to all Japanese beef cattle, where ‘Wa’ means Japanese, and ‘gyu’ means cow.

Wagyu were originally draft animals used in agriculture and were selected for their physical endurance. This selection favored animals with more intramuscular fat cells — ‘marbling’ — which provided a readily available energy source. Wagyu is a horned breed, and the cattle are either black or red in color.



Wagyu Breed History in Japan – There is some evidence of genetic separation into the Wagyu genetic strain as much as 35,000 years ago. Modern Wagyu cattle are the result of crossing the native cattle in Japan with imported breeds. Crossing began in 1868 after the Meiji Restoration in that year. The government wanted to introduce Western food habits and culture. Brown Swiss, Devon, Shorthorn, Simmental, Ayrshire, and Korean cattle were imported during this period. The infusions of these British, European, and Asian breeds were closed to outside genetic infusions in 1910.

The variation of conformation within the Wagyu breed is greater than the variation across British and European breeds. The three major black strains – Tajiri or Tajima, Fujiyoshi (Shimane), and Kedaka (Tottori) evolved due to regional geographic isolation

in Japan. These breeding differences have produced a Japanese national herd that comprises 90 percent black cattle, with the remainder being of the red strains Kochi and Kumamoto.

In Japan, there are four breeds that are considered Wagyu, and those are the Japanese Black (the predominant Wagyu exported to the U.S.), Japanese Brown (In the U.S. referred to as Red Wagyu), Japanese Polled, and Japanese Shorthorn. There are no Japanese Polled or Shorthorns being bred outside Japan. Wagyu strains were isolated according to prefecture (state), and breeds imported for crossing were not the same in each prefecture.

The production of Wagyu beef in Japan is highly regulated, and progeny testing is mandatory. Only the very best proven genetics are kept for breeding. Realizing the value of their unique product, the Japanese government banned the export of Wagyu and declared them a national living treasure. Zenwa is the government held entity in Japan that oversees the Wagyu registry for Japanese Black, Brown, Polled, and Shorthorn.





Wagyu Breed History in the U.S. – Wagyu cattle were first imported in 1975 when two black and two red bulls were imported by Morris Whitney. In 1989 the Japanese began to reduce their tariffs on imported beef, which encouraged U.S. producers to produce a high quality product for Japan. In the 1990s, there were several importations of quality Wagyu. Most were black, but a few were Red Wagyu. These cattle have the greatest influence on the U.S. herd and those in many other countries.

Most U.S. production was exported to Japan until 2003, when BSE was discovered, and Japan and other countries stopped the import of beef from the United States. However, chefs and others in the U.S. were aware of the superior eating quality of Wagyu and the domestic market then and now utilizes much of the U.S. production.

Wagyu Beef – Delicious and Healthy – The unique taste and tenderness of highly marbled Wagyu beef make for an unrivaled eating experience. That is why Wagyu beef is finding its way into the repertoires of gourmet cooks and fine restaurants across the United States.

Not only is it a gastronomic delight, but it's healthy for you too. Health experts have discovered the monounsaturated to saturated fat ratio is higher in Wagyu than in other beef, and the saturated fat contained in Wagyu is different. Forty percent is in a version

called stearic acid, which is regarded as having a minimal impact on raising cholesterol levels. The profile of marbled Wagyu beef is more beneficial and healthier for human health.

Wagyu is also higher in a type of fatty acid called conjugated linoleic acid (CLA). Wagyu beef contains the highest amount of CLA per gram of any foodstuff – about 30 percent more than other beef breeds – due to higher linoleic acid levels. Foods that are naturally high in CLA have fewer negative health effects.



U.S. Wagyu Today – The American Wagyu Association was incorporated in Texas on March 14, 1990, and serves to register Wagyu cattle in the U.S., Canada, and other countries. The association headquarters are based in Post Falls, Idaho. The association has a vibrant membership base and continues to promote and develop a sustainable industry here in the United States.

The opportunities Wagyu beef can offer are endless. This industry caters to the breeder/feeder targeting the high end restaurant trade with highly marbled beef and to the bull producer supplying the cow/calf rearer a crossbred alternative that will offer calving ease ability and premium carcass quality in a single cross, which no other beef breed can come close to.

The Wagyu breed has a vital role to play in the U.S. to increase the quality of red meat produced in the U.S. that our health conscious consumer of the 21st century is forever seeking.



SPOTLIGHT on WAGYU

The Journey from Japanese Roots to American Plates

By NICOLE CORREA, *Clemson University*

As we feature Wagyu as our breed of the month, it's the perfect time to delve into the fascinating history of Wagyu in the United States. To shed light on this subject, I reached out to Michael DuPonte, a former extension agent at the University of Hawai'i. Known for his pivotal role in introducing Wagyu genetics to the Hawaiian Islands, Michael's connection with Washington State University played a crucial part in bringing these esteemed cattle to the United States. Additionally, Dr. Jerry Reeves, a professor emeritus at Washington State University and an influential ranch owner, provided valuable insights into the introduction of Wagyu cattle into the American market.

The journey of Wagyu cattle to the U.S. began in 1975, when a modest shipment of four Wagyu cattle was brought to the United States. These early imports marked the start of a long and complex process of integrating this prized breed into American agriculture. By 1989, the potential of Wagyu had caught the attention of the academic and agricultural communities. Faculty from Washington State University were granted a unique opportunity to visit Japan to explore Wagyu genetics and discuss the possibility of exporting live animals.

This pivotal visit led to a historic import permit being issued in 1993, allowing the entry of approximately 30 bulls and 200 cows into the United States. The promise was to supply high quality F1 meat to the Japanese market. For a time, the U.S. and Australia became significant suppliers of meat to Japan, with most of these animals being Wagyu x Angus crosses, known as F1s. Unfortunately, this promising venture faced a severe setback in 2003 due to an outbreak of Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE), commonly known as mad cow disease. The outbreak halted the export of meat to Japan and devastated the market, leading to the sale of this unknown product at significantly reduced prices in the U.S. marketplace. This crisis severely impacted the U.S. Wagyu market for about 18 months, or until the restaurant trade realized the superiority of this product. Many producers managed to preserve their genetics and help develop the U.S. market.

Understanding the types of Wagyu cattle is crucial for

appreciating their impact and adaptation in the United States. There are four primary breeds of Wagyu, each with unique traits, but only two of those breeds are used outside of Japan.

- **Kuroge Washu — Japanese Black** – Renowned for its exceptional marbling and rich, buttery texture. However, Kuroge Washu cattle are also known for their slower growth rates, which can be a consideration in commercial production.

- **Akaushi — Japanese Red** – Recognized for its marbling and growth patterns, Akaushi is one of the two Wagyu breeds that have been integrated into U.S. breeding programs.

- **Mukaku Washu — Japanese Polled** – This breed is naturally hornless and less common. It has different traits compared to other Wagyu types, but is not used outside Japan.

- **Akage Washu — Japanese Brown** – Known for their distinctive coloration and unique characteristics, Akage Washu are another breed found only in Japan.

The integration of Wagyu into U.S. cattle herds posed several challenges. Japanese Wagyu breeds, such as the Kuroge Washu and Akaushi, had to be adapted to the American environment, which included differences in climate, feed, and breeding practices. Some key considerations when selecting genetic lines include:

- **Tajima Strains** – These are known for their superior marbling but also exhibit lower growth rates. While they produce high quality beef, their slower growth can be a drawback in commercial contexts.

- **Totori/Shamani Strains** – These strains offer better growth rates and are more suited to balancing quality with efficiency. They are often chosen by breeders who seek to optimize both marbling and growth.

In the U.S., the highest beef grade is USDA Prime. In contrast, Japan has a more detailed grading system with 12 levels, including the prestigious A5 grade. Japanese A5 beef represents the pinnacle of yield grade and marbling, but this grading system is unique to Japan and does not directly translate to American standards. American consumers have specific preferences that influence how Wagyu is bred and marketed:

- **Consumer Preferences** – In the U.S., beef that exceeds USDA

In summary, the history of Wagyu in the U.S. is a testament to

References

www.texasmonthly.com/bbq/history-of-texas-wagyu



SPOTLIGHT on WAGYU

Why Raise Wagyu?

One question we hear all the time is, “You’re raising Wagyu cattle in the American South? Aren’t they from Japan?” In an agricultural space heavily focused on Angus and other cattle breeds, Japanese luxury cattle is a unique choice.

Wagyu cattle are known for their high quality genetics and specific lifestyle regimens, making them a premium product in the beef market. But beyond the demand for top tier products, there are several reasons to raise this unique breed.

High Market Demand – The demand for Wagyu beef has soared in recent years and will only continue to grow. Wagyu’s reputation for flavor and tenderness drives an eager market, excited about the availability of premium products. And with suppliers less common in the U.S. than in places like Australia, the market is prime for growth.

Wagyu Cattle Are Adaptable – Wagyu cattle are a hardy breed. They’re genetically predisposed to being able to thrive in a variety of climates, including environments as arid and hot as Australia and more temperate areas of the United States — making them a good choice for a variety of regions.



Sustainability Is Achievable – Raising Wagyu cattle aligns well with sustainability priorities. These cattle can be integrated into a wide variety of environments and support biodiversity. Their ability to finish on grass or grain allows producers to tailor their decisions to best fit their environment.

The U.S. Industry Is Growing – At Wilders we are focused on growing not just our own herd, but the U.S. Wagyu industry as a whole. We want to see new producers learn and thrive in this industry, so we focus on providing not just our genetics but a whole host of relationship first services to help others succeed.

If you’re interested in learning more about raising Wagyu as the right choice for your farm, email Jake Newbold at jake@staywild.com.



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SPOTLIGHT on WAGYU

Understanding Wagyu – Fullblood vs. American

As Wagyu continues to grow in popularity across the U.S., the word itself is appearing on more menus, meat cases, and sale catalogs than ever before. But not every product labeled Wagyu represents the same genetic makeup. For cattle producers and consumers alike, understanding the terminology is an important part of knowing what is behind the name.

Two terms commonly encountered are 100 percent fullblood Wagyu and American Wagyu. Both have a place in the beef industry, but they are not interchangeable.

What Is 100 percent fullblood Wagyu? In the U.S., fullblood Wagyu refers to cattle whose pedigrees trace entirely to the original Wagyu genetics exported from Japan, with no evidence of crossbreeding with another breed. A registered fullblood animal is the offspring of two fullblood parents, and its parentage is verified through DNA.

That traceability matters. It gives producers a documented genetic foundation and allows them to make breeding decisions with greater confidence. The American Wagyu Association maintains herdbook records for registered cattle and uses DNA parent verification to help protect the integrity of fullblood and purebred pedigrees.

Wagyu cattle are known for their genetic potential to produce highly marbled beef. Marbling contributes to the tenderness, juiciness, and rich flavor associated with the breed. Still, genetics are only part of the equation. Nutrition, animal health, environment, handling, and management all influence how an animal ultimately performs. Raising fullblood Wagyu well requires both a strong genetic base and a long-term commitment to the details.

What Does American Wagyu Mean? American Wagyu is a broader term commonly used for cattle and beef produced in the United States with Wagyu influence. Most often, it refers to Wagyu crossed with a traditional American beef breed, particularly Angus. A first generation cross between a Fullblood Wagyu and a non-Wagyu animal is commonly called an F1 and is 50 percent Wagyu.

Producers may continue breeding those cattle back to Wagyu, increasing the percentage of Wagyu genetics in each generation. Under American Wagyu Association classifications, cattle that reach at least 93.75 percent Wagyu genetics may qualify as purebred Wagyu, provided they meet the association's registration requirements.

In Wagyu terminology, purebred and fullblood are therefore two different classifications. Fullblood means 100 percent Wagyu

lineage, while purebred refers to high percentage Wagyu cattle that retain a small percentage of another breed in their ancestry.

American Wagyu crosses can combine desirable characteristics from both sides of the pedigree. Angus influence, for example, may contribute traits valued in conventional American production systems, while Wagyu genetics can add marbling potential and eating quality. The result can be excellent beef, but it is genetically different from 100 percent fullblood Wagyu.

It is also important to recognize that "American Wagyu" is used broadly in the marketplace. The phrase alone does not always tell a buyer the exact percentage of Wagyu genetics in an animal or a package of beef. That is why clear records, registration information, and transparent labeling are valuable.

Why the Difference Matters – For seedstock producers, the distinction affects pedigree value, breeding strategy, and the ability to predict and document genetic progress. For commercial cattlemen, knowing the Wagyu percentage helps establish realistic expectations for growth, maternal traits, carcass performance, and the type of production system needed. For consumers, it provides a clearer understanding of what they are purchasing.

Neither designation tells the entire story of quality on its own. A label cannot replace sound breeding decisions, responsible management, or actual performance data. But accurate terminology gives the industry a shared starting point.

At Wilders Wagyu, we have chosen to focus on raising 100 percent fullblood Wagyu in Eastern North Carolina. We pair documented pedigrees and DNA verification with performance information, feed management, and real carcass results. By following our cattle from the pasture to the feed bunk and ultimately to the rail, we can better understand how our genetics perform and use that knowledge to keep improving our herd.

As interest in Wagyu grows, education and transparency will remain essential. Asking whether cattle are fullblood, purebred, or percentage Wagyu is not about diminishing one production model in favor of another. It is about understanding the genetics behind the label and giving producers and consumers the information they need to make informed decisions.

The more clearly our industry communicates those differences, the more confidently we can build trust in Wagyu and in the cattlemen committed to raising it well.

SPOTLIGHT on WAGYU

Raising 100 Percent Fullblood Wagyu in Eastern North Carolina

Eastern North Carolina may not be the first place that comes to mind when people think about Wagyu cattle. At Wilders Wagyu, however, it is where we are building a 100 percent fullblood Wagyu program shaped by our land, our team, and a commitment to understanding how cattle perform through every stage of production.

Our operation is based in Turkey, N.C., where raising cattle means working with long growing seasons, humid summers, changing weather, and the day-to-day realities of producing feed in the Southeast. Those conditions influence how we manage cattle, but they do not change the standard we are working toward. They make it even more important to pay attention, collect meaningful information, and make decisions based on how our cattle perform in the environment where we raise them.

A Fullblood Program Built From the Ground Up – Every animal in our fullblood herd traces entirely to Japanese Wagyu genetics. That genetic foundation matters, but pedigree alone does not tell the complete story of an animal or a program. For us, raising Fullblood

Wagyu means taking responsibility for developing those genetics under real production conditions and learning from the results.

We evaluate cattle with the long term in mind. Structure, growth, maternal ability, disposition, feed performance, and carcass merit all contribute to the kind of cattle we want to produce. No single number or trait can carry the entire program. The goal is to build cattle that are functional for producers while continuing to deliver the marbling and eating quality for which Wagyu is known.

Wagyu production takes patience, and the time between a breeding decision and a finished carcass can be significant. The more closely we connect what we see in the pasture with later performance and carcass results, the better equipped we are to move forward.

Following Our Cattle Beyond the Pasture – One of the most valuable parts of our program is the ability to follow our genetics beyond the seedstock stage. Wilders is both a fullblood Wagyu genetics operation and a beef company. That connection gives our team a view of the animal that does not end when it leaves the pasture.

We manage our own feed program on the farm and continue



tracking cattle through finishing and harvest. Through the WILD Carcass Database, we connect feed performance with real carcass outcomes. Marbling, carcass weight, ribeye area, yield, and other results help us evaluate whether the genetic decisions made years earlier delivered what we expected.

Carcass data brings accountability to the breeding program. It can confirm strengths, reveal inconsistencies, and keep us from relying only on appearance or pedigree. An animal can look promising on paper, but following its influence to the rail gives us a more complete measure of performance.

Managing Feed With the Final Product in Mind – Our feed program is another important link between genetics and carcass results. Feed is not separate from genetic evaluation. It is part of the environment in which genetic potential is expressed. By managing the program ourselves, we can watch cattle develop, compare performance, and better understand how groups respond over time.

Producing feed in Eastern North Carolina keeps us grounded in agriculture beyond the cattle themselves. Planting, harvesting, storing, and feeding crops requires a willingness to adapt as weather and growing conditions change. Managing those variables gives us valuable context for the performance data we collect.

Our goal is a consistent approach that supports animal health, allows Wagyu genetics time to express themselves, and produces information we can use. Together, feed and carcass data tell a much

stronger story than either one can tell alone.

Data That Comes Back to the Herd – Collecting data only matters if it changes what happens next. The information we gather comes back to the herd and helps guide sire selection, donor decisions, replacements, and the genetics we choose to offer customers.

Livestock cannot be reduced to a spreadsheet. Phenotype, pedigree, performance, and practical observation still matter. Data strengthens those evaluations by adding evidence from later in the production cycle, including results that cannot be seen in a live animal.

Over time, this feedback loop helps us become more selective and gives us greater confidence in the cattle we retain and the genetics we offer. Our customers are investing in genetics shaped by an operation that continually compares expectations with actual outcomes.

Raising Wagyu the WILD Way – We are proud to raise 100 percent fullblood Wagyu in Eastern North Carolina. This environment tests our management, shapes our feed program, and gives our team the opportunity to develop cattle under conditions we know firsthand.

Our approach is straightforward – preserve the value of fullblood genetics, manage cattle with care, follow performance from the pasture to the rail, and allow the results to inform the next decision.

For us, raising fullblood Wagyu here means building a program rooted in Eastern North Carolina, supported by real data, and focused on producing cattle and genetics that can contribute to the American Wagyu industry

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SPOTLIGHT on

WAGYU

Got to Be N.C. Chef Weekend at Wilders Farm

Back in May, we had the honor of hosting the first ever Got to Be NC Chef Weekend at Wilders Farm in Turkey, North Carolina. What began as an idea to bring chefs, producers, and industry partners together became a weekend we will not soon forget.

Chefs from across North Carolina joined us on the farm to step away from their kitchens, experience Eastern North Carolina agriculture firsthand, and get a closer look at one of the largest 100 percent fullblood Wagyu operations in the United States. From touring the farm and learning about our cattle and feeding program to sampling different Wagyu beef and Berkshire pork cuts prepared on-site, the weekend was filled with meaningful conversations, collaboration, and a shared passion for quality food and agriculture.

Understanding Wagyu Beyond the Plate – For chefs, Wagyu offers an opportunity to create a dining experience that goes beyond serving a great steak. Its rich marbling, tenderness, and depth of flavor allow chefs to approach familiar dishes in an entirely different way. While premium steaks may be what first comes to mind, Wagyu can bring something special to a wide range of dishes, cuts, and cooking styles.

The quality of Wagyu beef begins long before it reaches the kitchen. Genetics, animal care, nutrition, and the way cattle are raised all contribute to the final product. At Wilders, we manage each part of that process with the goal of producing beef that is rich,



consistent, and dependable for the chefs who serve it.

That consistency matters in a professional kitchen. Chefs need ingredients they can trust to perform well while giving them the flexibility to be creative. By understanding how our cattle are raised and how different cuts respond to various preparations, chefs can make more informed decisions about how they feature Wagyu on their menus.

During Chef Weekend, those conversations moved naturally from the pasture to the plate. Chefs were able to learn more about



our approach to raising 100 percent fullblood Wagyu while sharing their own perspectives on flavor, preparation, portioning, and what guests are looking for when they order Wagyu.

Strengthening North Carolina's Farm-to-Table Community

– North Carolina has a strong and growing farm-to-table culture, supported by chefs and consumers who want to know more about where their food comes from. For many chefs, sourcing locally is about more than location. It is about building relationships with producers, understanding how an ingredient was raised or grown, and being able to share that story with the people gathered around their tables.

When chefs visit the farms behind the ingredients they serve, they gain a deeper connection to the food and the people responsible for producing it. They can see the care that goes into raising livestock, ask questions directly, and better understand the decisions that influence quality from start to finish.

Those relationships also benefit producers. Hearing directly from chefs helps us better understand what they value, how they use different cuts, and what they need from a local agricultural partner. That exchange of knowledge can lead to better products, more creative menus, and new opportunities to showcase North Carolina agriculture.

More than anything, weekends like this matter because they create genuine connections. Seeing ideas sparked around the table and relationships built between chefs, producers, and partners was incredibly special. It was a reminder of how much can happen when the agricultural and culinary sides of our state come together.

A Weekend Built Around North Carolina Agriculture – A huge thank you to Got to Be N.C. and the N.C. Department of Agriculture, especially Chad Blackwelder, for helping bring this event to life and believing in what we are building at Wilders. Their continued work to connect North Carolina farmers, producers, chefs, and consumers plays an important role in strengthening agriculture across our state.

Thank you as well to Chef Luis Zouain of LaGana in Raleigh and Chef Serge Falcoz-Vigne of Bodega in Wake Forest for serving alongside us and creating incredible meals that showcased the quality and versatility of North Carolina agriculture.



We are also grateful for the support of our event partners:

- Wye Hill Kitchen & Brewing
- End of Days Distillery
- Gold Hen Bloody Mary Mix
- Miso Master
- River Landing
- Elizabeth's Pecans

Thank you to every chef, sponsor, partner, and team member who spent the weekend with us. This was a special experience for our farm and our team, but it also represented something bigger. It showed what the future of collaboration in North Carolina agriculture can look like when chefs and producers come together to learn from one another, celebrate locally raised food, and create experiences that begin on the farm and continue at the table.

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Your Beef Checkoff – Understanding the Dollar Before We Talk About the Work

If you sell cattle in North Carolina, you are familiar with the \$1.00/head Beef Checkoff. But you may not be as familiar with what happens to that dollar after it is collected — where it goes, who is responsible for it, and, just as importantly, what it can and cannot be used for.

Over the coming months, we are going to use this space to highlight some of the programs and activities supported through the N.C. Beef Council. But before we talk about the work, it makes sense to start with the dollar.

The Beef Checkoff is not a membership program, and Checkoff dollars are separate from the N.C. Cattlemen's Association dues. The Beef Checkoff was established under federal law for a specific purpose — promoting beef and beef products and supporting research and information programs that help maintain and expand markets for beef.

Those rules shape everything that happens after the dollar is collected.

Why a Qualified State Beef Council? The Beef Promotion and Research Act established a system that allows Checkoff dollars to work at both the state and national levels.

At the state level, that work is carried out through Qualified State Beef Councils, commonly referred to as QSBCs. These are the organizations recognized to collect the federal Beef Checkoff assessment and carry out approved Checkoff programs within their states.

Here in North Carolina, that organization is the N.C. Beef Council.

The N.C. Beef Council is responsible for collecting Checkoff assessments, properly accounting for those dollars, and investing the state portion in programs and activities allowed under the Beef Promotion and Research Act and Order.

For each \$1.00 of federal Beef Checkoff assessment collected in North Carolina, 50¢ is remitted to the Cattlemen's Beef Board to support national Beef Checkoff programs. Up to 50¢ can be retained by the N.C. Beef Council and invested in approved Checkoff programs.

That gives us the opportunity to put dollars to work here in North Carolina while also benefiting from the larger reach that

comes from producers across the country investing together.

At the state level, that might mean reaching North Carolina consumers with beef information, recipes, and education. Nationally, pooling Checkoff dollars allows for larger investments in areas such as research, promotion, nutrition, education, and market development.

There Are Rules Around the Dollar – Because the Beef Checkoff is a mandatory federal assessment, there are rules around how those dollars can and cannot be used.

Checkoff dollars can be invested in areas including promotion, research, consumer information, industry information, foreign marketing, and producer communications.

What does that actually look like? It can mean putting beef recipes and information in front of consumers at the N.C. State Fair. It can mean nutrition or consumer research. It can support efforts such as Beef Quality Assurance that help demonstrate our industry's commitment to cattle care and beef quality and safety. It



can help build international markets for U.S. beef. And it can help us communicate with producers about how their Checkoff investment is being used.

There are also things those dollars cannot do. Federal Beef Checkoff dollars cannot be used to influence government policy or action, including lobbying. That is an important distinction between the work of the N.C. Beef Council and the work of a cattlemen's association.

Both have an interest in a strong beef industry, but the dollars funding that work and the rules surrounding them are different.

Who Is Watching the Checkoff? There are several layers of accountability built into the Beef Checkoff program.

At the national level, the Cattlemen's Beef Board administers the Beef Checkoff program. Its members are cattle producers and importers who are nominated by eligible organizations and appointed by the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture.

Producers also have a direct role in determining how national Checkoff dollars are invested. Organizations seeking Checkoff funding submit proposals detailing the work they want to conduct, the funding requested, and what they expect the program to accomplish. Those proposals go through a producer led review and approval process before funding decisions are made.

USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service provides federal oversight of the program and works to ensure Checkoff dollars are managed in accordance with the federal Act and Order.

Financial accountability is part of that process as well. The Cattlemen's Beef Board undergoes an independent financial audit each year, and its producer and importer led Budget and Audit Committee works with the independent auditors, reviews accounting controls, and reports the results to the full Beef Board.

Qualified State Beef Councils have responsibilities of their own. We must meet the requirements associated with maintaining qualified status and properly collect, account for, and invest Beef Checkoff assessments.

Simply put, there are multiple sets of eyes on the dollar — from the state council collecting it, to producers making decisions about investments, to the Cattlemen's Beef Board administering the national program, to USDA providing federal oversight.

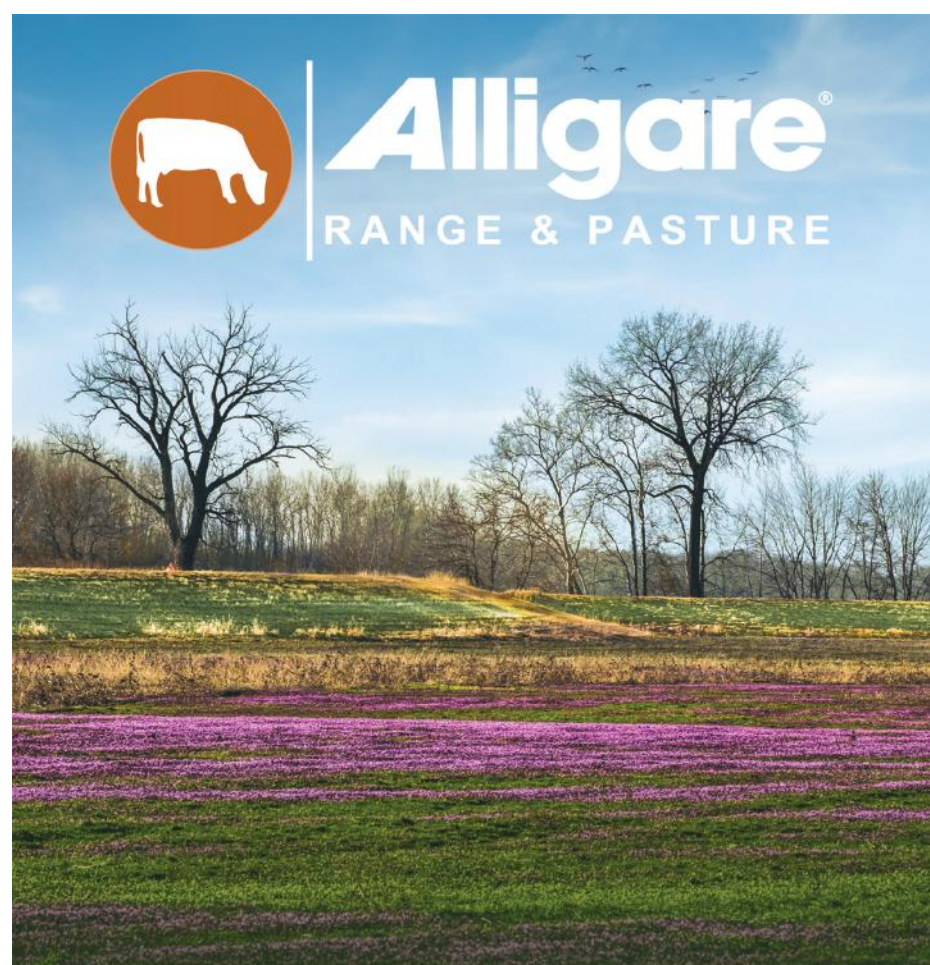
Now, Let's Talk About What the Dollar Does – Understanding how the Checkoff is structured is important, but it is only the beginning.

The question we really want to answer through this series is much simpler — what does your Beef Checkoff investment accomplish?

Over the coming months, we'll use this space to take a closer look at the work your Beef Checkoff supports, from promotion and consumer information to Beef Quality Assurance, nutrition education, and more.

We'll also show you how national Beef Checkoff resources connect with work happening right here in North Carolina and why those investments are being made.

You already know where the dollar comes from. Through this series, we want to give you a closer look at where it goes, who is responsible for it, and, most importantly, what it is accomplishing on behalf of beef producers.



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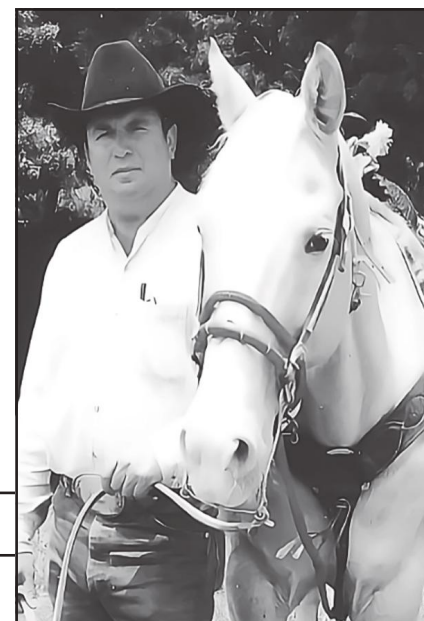


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❖ E.B.'s VIEW FROM THE COW PASTURE ❖

Ways Around Zoning Ordinances

By E.B. HARRIS, Warrenton, N.C.



About a year ago I wrote an article and made mention of a mulcher head on a skid steer and went on to say that I really enjoyed running that machine — and still do.

We picked up a new farm but had actually been farming it for several years. It had two tenants on it — us and a friend who had passed away. He was making hay on one of the fields, and we were using the rest of the land for crops — silage and beans. The landlord asked us if we wanted to make hay on this part of the farm. It was right close to us and would work in our program, so we came to terms.

I wanted to do a little trimming on this part of the farm, so I took the skid steer over. I was close to the homestead, and I kept looking through the vines and bushes. I could tell a black object was in there. After I got closer to it, I made out it was a four door '49 Plymouth. I remember that car being on the road when I was a child.

The tires had been taken off, and the car was sitting on cinder blocks. After I got a little closer, there was about a 2'x2' hole cut in the passenger side door. I sat there and looked at it for a short time.

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(20) 1st calf heifers w/October calf @ side – Angus, BWF, Simmental X, Star 5, all bred to calving Angus Knollcrest CE ease bull.

(36) fall & winter calving Angus & Star 5 based bred heifers - all bred to CE bull.

(42) head of '19 model proven commercial matrons coming w/6th calf- consist of Angus, Angus X, Red Angus, Simmental X Red Roan, & Profit or Prestige – the highest percentage body weight weaned for percentage of cow weight that we own - all bred to Springfield Angus & Angus bulls - All mature cows and heifers to start calving week after sale.

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Then it came to me. I knew the landlord liked to rabbit hunt a lot, and he used this car as a doghouse.

This is the first time I have seen an automobile set up as a doghouse. If someone reading this article lives in a subdivision that has an ordinance against setting a car up on blocks, just cut a hole in the side and tell them it's a doghouse. There are ways around everything. Different doghouses have different styles. They probably won't let Fido sleep out in the cold, but if someone gets put in the doghouse, it will be fairly comfortable on the bench seats for a sleeping spot.

When you think you have seen it all, you always find something else.



Just when you think you have seen it all!

COWBOYS FOR CHRIST



THE CHAPLAIN'S CORRAL

Regret

By DAVE HARVEY, *Cowboys for Christ Chaplain*

Why did I say that? Why did I do that? Why was I thinking those terrible thoughts? I suspect that most of us have said that to ourselves many times throughout our lives. I have sure said and done things that I have regretted, and possibly, there are a few folks reading this who have had the same happen in their lives, too. In fact, I have beaten myself up for hours, and even days, because of things I have done or said that I greatly regretted. Those times were mostly when I was just totally not thinking before I acted or spoke. Those actions, or reactions, stirred an emotion called "regret." Regret is a little word, but it sure has a lot of power to cause a bunch of stress, strain, confusion, and most of all sorrow.

Throughout God's Holy Word there are many people that I am sure had major regret for their words and actions. Think about Adam. He lived for many years with the memory of the Garden of Eden — especially knowing that he had lost the personal fellowship with Almighty God. *Genesis 5:3 says, "When Adam had lived 130 years, he had a son in his own likeness, in his own image; and he named him Seth. After Seth was born, Adam lived 800 years and had other sons and daughters. Altogether, Adam lived 930 years, and then he died."*

I suspect he lay awake many nights and relived that terrible day that he accepted the forbidden fruit from Eve and ate it. He said that it tasted good, but it was sure a bitter pill to swallow for many centuries for him and the rest of his family. And that bitter taste still lingers thousands of years later for all mankind. I just have to believe that, at times, he cried many tears and was totally consumed

with "regret."

But what about us now? What are we to do when we feel regret over our actions and words? I feel that is the reason we have such a wonderful account of how King David reacted when he failed or sinned.

He cried bitter tears of remorse, and he went to the Lord to repent and ask forgiveness. He was ready to acknowledge that he was wrong and that he needed to ask for forgiveness. Sometimes the words "I am sorry" are so hard to say, and they seem to get caught in our throats. We just cannot get those three little words to come out. We not only don't ask to be forgiven for these evil words or deeds from someone, but we also forget to go to the Lord and ask him for forgiveness. King David sure tells us how in *Psalms 51:4* — *"Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are proved right when you speak and justified when you judge."*

It may not be possible to be "regret free" on this side of Heaven, but we sure could try to be quick to ask for forgiveness and seek restoration whenever possible. And we must be very faithful to seek the Lord for forgiveness to make sure that our prayers to him are not interrupted, especially when we do things that cause others harm, hurt, stress, or strife and cause us many hours of "regret." Little words like "I am sorry" and "please forgive me" are really not painful to say and mean it just takes a little humbleness and Christian love. That is something we sure need to be known for as we strive to be Christ like and "children of God."

God bless you as you seek and receive forgiveness, in Jesus's name. Amen.

❖ AMAZING GRAZING ❖

Whole Cottonseed and Cotton Gin Byproduct in Your Winter Feeding Program

By DR. MATT POORE, N.C. State University



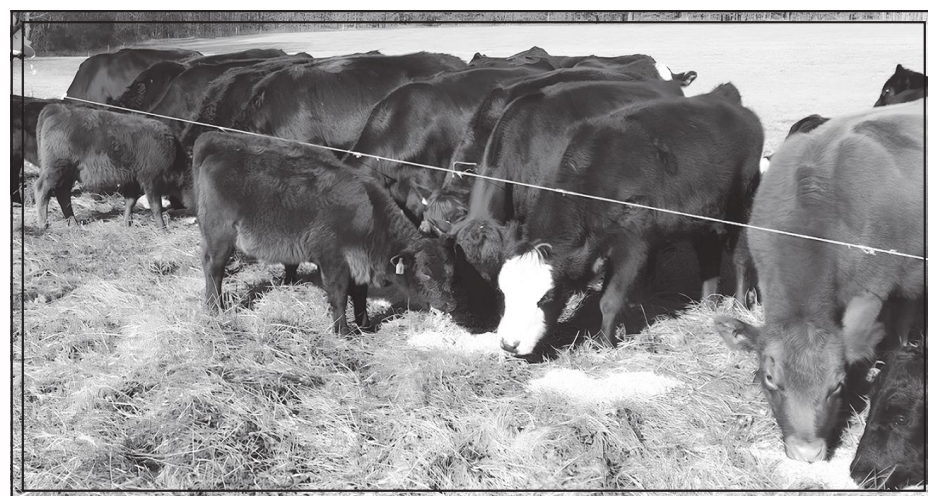
North Carolina and South Carolina have experienced drought during most of the 2026 grazing season. Some rain fell during mid-summer, but the region had a very short first cutting hay crop, and recurring dry weather and poor pasture condition will mean an early end to the grazing season. It is important for you to plan your winter feeding program now. Make sure you have adequate hay or other feed resources to get your cattle through to spring grass. There will be a cotton crop this year, so as you make your feeding plan, consider whole cottonseed and cotton gin byproduct to help extend your hay.

Whole cottonseed – Whole cottonseed is generally used as a protein and energy supplement and is more economical than most alternative commercial supplements. Whole cottonseed has about 23 percent crude protein, 96 percent total digestible nutrients, and is easy to feed in a bunk, off sod, or on top of unrolled hay. Many beef producers in the South have adopted whole cottonseed as their primary supplement and have developed a handling and feeding system that fits their farm resources.

Whole cottonseed is best purchased by the tractor-trailer load. If you have a large herd, this is not a problem. If you are a small farmer and near a cotton gin, the gin will often work with you to purchase a smaller amount. If you are not located near a cotton gin, consider going together with friends or family to split a load. Storage is best accomplished in an open shed. If the shed has a dirt floor, putting a

layer of straw or other breathable material under the pile will work out better than plastic.

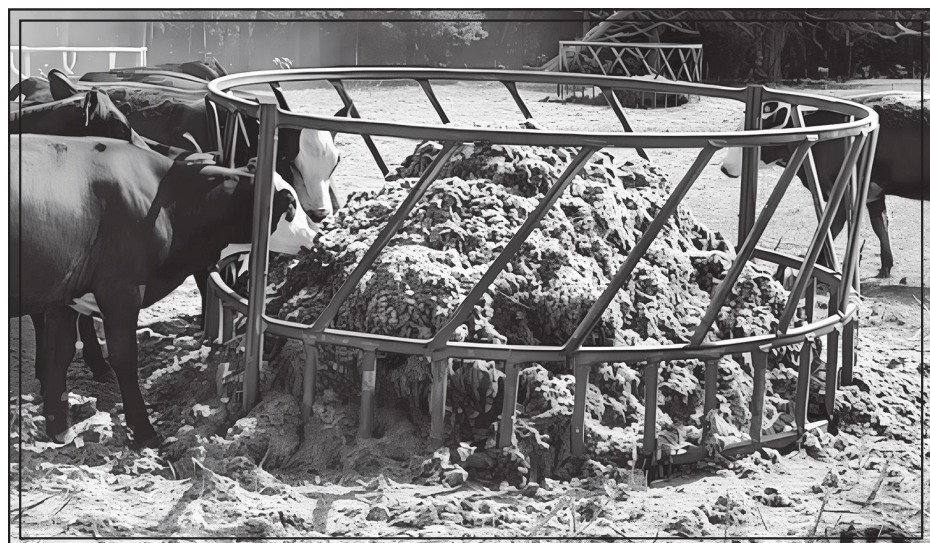
Handling whole cottonseed can be a challenge, but it is most practical to move it in trash cans, barrels, or feed bags. At home we use feed bags that hold 40 lbs. We use a 15 gallon barrel with the top and bottom cut out and a split down the side to make it easy to fill bags. This takes some labor, but for me it is a great way to start the day with a little bit of upper body exercise. I typically bag 6–8 bags of seed every morning, giving me a good 15 minute workout!



Brood cows will generally be fed 3–5 lbs of cottonseed a day. The limit should be 0.5 percent of body weight (7 lbs for a 1,400 lb cow) to prevent any problems associated with a high level of fat and gossypol in the diet. Young cattle should not be fed more than 0.33 percent of body weight (2.5 lbs for a 750 lb heifer or steer). Usually 3 lbs will meet the needs of a mature cow, but with careful management you could feed a higher level as a substitute for hay.

Cottonseed should not be fed to cattle free choice. Cottonseed can be fed off a good sod under a polywire with a very good outcome. Likewise, unrolling a round bale and pouring the cottonseed along the hay has proven to be a workable system.

One common concern about whole cottonseed is that it contains a toxin called gossypol that can cause sterility in bulls if fed at a high level for a long time. I can say we have never seen a problem with bull fertility when cottonseed was fed at or below the recommended



rate during a controlled breeding season. We don't recommend feeding bulls whole cottonseed during development, as young bulls may be more susceptible than older bulls to gossypol. Likewise, we don't recommend feeding bulls whole cottonseed for 4 months before they go with cows.

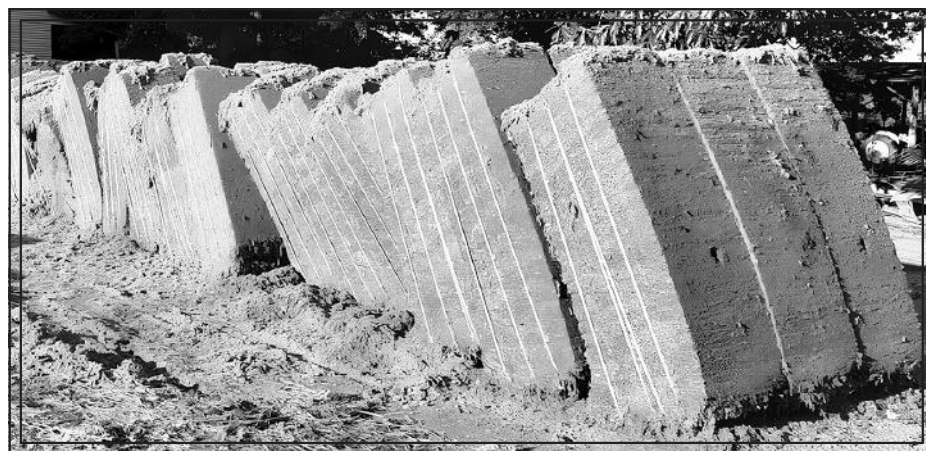
Cotton Gin Byproduct – Cotton gin byproduct was formerly known as cotton gin trash or cotton burrs. It is a high fiber product containing bolls, stems, leaves, cotton fiber, and immature cottonseed. Most gins process cotton, separating cottonseed, marketable fiber, and the rest — called cotton gin byproduct.

Cotton gin byproduct is about 12 percent crude protein and 50 percent total digestible nutrients. While cotton gin byproduct is clearly a low energy feed, it makes a potential replacement for hay for brood cows and growing heifers and is a potential fiber source for growing cattle diets. Over the years we have had many experiences with cotton gin byproduct, especially for feeding as an alternative feed during drought or other disasters.

In a recent survey we conducted with cotton gins across North Carolina, we found that only about 1/2 of the material produced is used as feed, meaning that cotton gin byproduct is still an underutilized feed resource. Because cotton gin byproduct is fluffy, it has generally only been economical to use it near a gin due to high transportation costs. In recent years, many gins have installed balers so that the material is now available in 600–800 lb bales. Currently, many companies that broker commodities can provide loads of cotton gin byproduct at a price well below the price of hay.

In research with brood cows, we have found that they do quite well on cotton gin byproduct. The material is very palatable, and cows will eat much more than you would expect based on the high fiber content. Cows will consume much more of this material than they would a low quality hay with similar digestibility, so that is why they do surprisingly well on it. In practical feeding situations, it works best to provide cotton gin byproduct free choice along with some hay, as there may be a few animals that don't like it until they learn what it is. As always, you should monitor body condition and provide supplemental energy if necessary to maintain desirable production.

While it is convenient to get this material in large square bales, they can be a challenge to handle. The bales will usually come to you in a walking floor truck. As they move to the back of the truck, they will drop down to the ground and might bust, which can make a big mess. Once you get experience with unloading, you can move the



truck forward slightly so that they stand up with few breaking. This takes some effort, but it is very difficult to deal with the material if a lot of the bales get busted unloading.

Be prepared to get the material cleaned up and stacked quickly after unloading. You should expect some broken bales, so plan how you will clean up and store that. Cotton gin byproduct is easily damaged by rainfall, so it is important to get it stacked and covered before damage occurs.

For feeding, the material can be fed from hay trailers or rings just like round bales. It is strongly recommended to use a feeder of some type because if cattle have full access, they will waste a lot.

A common concern with cotton gin byproduct is the possibility that it might contain various chemicals used in cotton production. The main concern is the defoliant, which is applied shortly before harvest. In available research the levels of compounds found don't cause a high level of concern, and we have not experienced problems associated with chemical residues. Cotton gin byproduct is defined by the American Association of Feed Control Officials and is an accepted feed ingredient.

Cotton gin byproduct will contain some gossypol, so care should be taken not to feed a high level along with recommended levels of whole cottonseed. This could lead to excessive gossypol levels in the whole diet.

In recent years, we have been evaluating cotton gin byproduct as an ingredient in stocker cattle rations. This work has been supported by the N.C. Cattle Industry Assessment Program. We have looked at dietary levels from 0–40 percent (dry basis) in corn silage based diets. Dry matter intake and average daily gain have been increased by 20 percent in the diet, with excellent performance still observed at 40 percent. In general feed efficiency declines as you increase cotton gin byproduct in the diet, but because of increased intake overall performance has been excellent.

In practice, this material makes an excellent base for a mixed commodity diet, including some corn silage or other wet ingredient to help control dust. Cotton gin byproduct blends well in a total mixed ration, so it has found some regular use across the region for stocker cattle diets.

It has been a rough year for forage production across our region due to historic drought. As you plan your winter feeding plan, look at all alternatives available to you, including byproducts of the cotton industry. Make sure you purchase sufficient hay or alternatives early, as the supply will likely be very tight by late winter.



Have You Herd

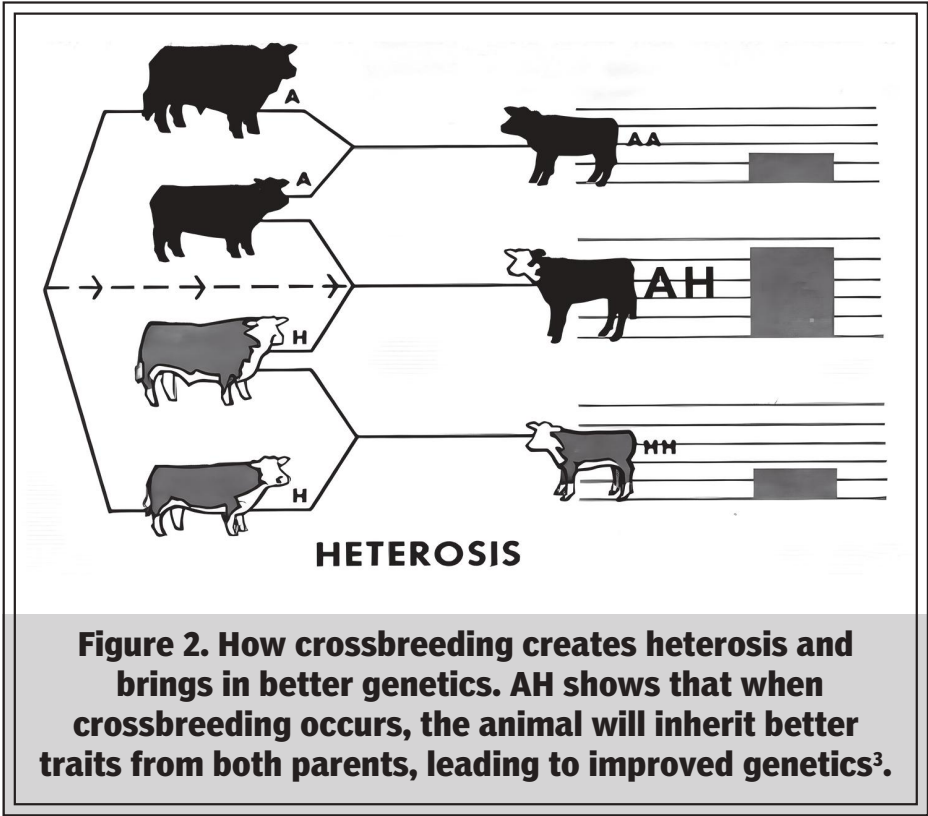
Where Steak Meets Shakes – The Rise of Beef on Dairy Crossbreeding

By LUISA ALEGRO, N.C. State University -- ANS 402 Beef Management

When you order a burger and a milkshake, you probably don’t associate those foods with one another. One comes from beef cattle and the other from dairy cattle, right? Wrong! Both can start in the dairy industry due to the rise in beef-on-dairy crossbreeding⁷.

In past years, beef on dairy crossbreeding has been rising significantly, alongside a major increase in domestic beef semen sales². These sales grew from 1.2 million to 9.4 million units between 2010 and 2023, as seen in Figure 1. The rise in popularity of reproductive technologies like artificial insemination (A.I.), along with a shift in type of semen used, more specifically the increase in use of sexed semen, makes these crosses possible¹. Data shows that, in 2025, 72 percent of dairy farms implemented these crosses in their operations¹.

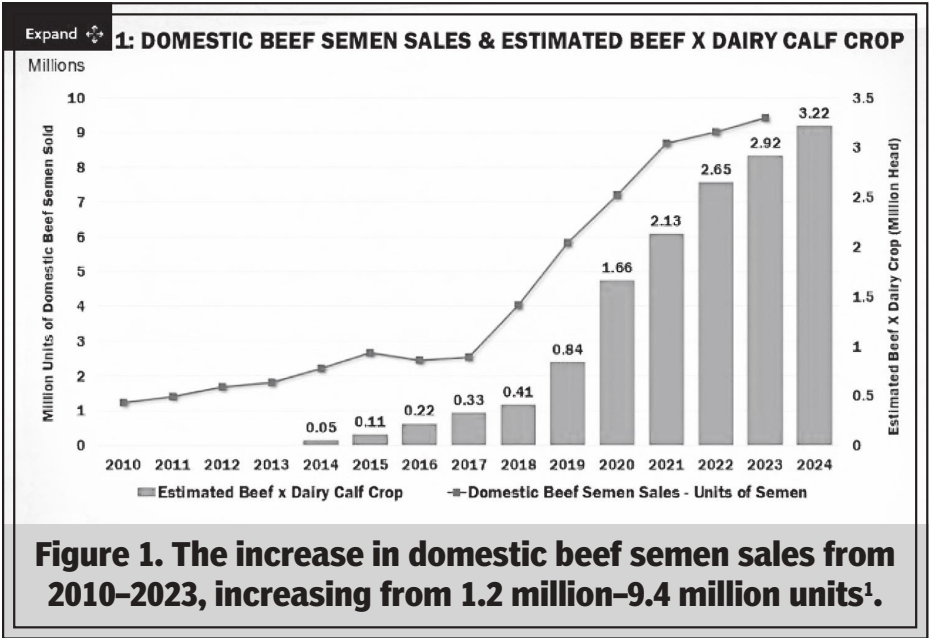
Dairy cows are bred for milk yield and fertility, but when it comes to dairy males, value is lost due to their limited use in the dairy industry⁷, along with the lack of carcass quality and muscling ability required by the meat industry¹. Decreasing milk prices lead dairy producers to look for extra forms of income⁶, and this is where beef on dairy crossings come in, increasing the value of dairy bull calves produced in these systems. Crossbred calves, produced from



dairy cows and beef bull semen, offer improved finishing traits like carcass quality and increased feed efficiency, reaching market weight faster than straight dairy genetics¹. This adds more value to the cattle at the finishing stages, resulting in higher and quicker returns for producers¹, possibly even doubling their value⁴.

Due to shrinking beef cattle herds, the beef industry is now relying heavily on the dairy sector for its products¹. This market driven partnership, although not formally written between the two industries, ensures a more stable beef supply¹ since dairy cattle must produce a consistent number of offspring annually⁶ to maintain milk production, guaranteeing a steady supply for the beef industry’s needs. Both industries are highly impacted by these crosses. Crossbreeding provides hybrid vigor, or heterosis, which results in better individual performance compared to the parents³, as shown in Figure 2, leading to more desirable traits for both industries.

Crossbred dairy calves exhibit multiple traits that packers and consumers look for. These cattle present higher average daily gain than



dairy calves and similar numbers to beef, along with improved beef grading that is comparable to or sometimes better than that of beef cattle⁶. There's also a higher red meat yield, which is very beneficial for sellers and consumers⁶. Crossbreeding has also resolved the issue concerning meat color, as dairy cattle meat was previously colored differently from beef cattle meat; now the color is uniform, which contributes to consumer preference⁶. Muscle shape in crossbreds is also the same as in beef cattle⁶. One of the most beneficial traits is that, due to better feed efficiency and daily gain, these cattle can reduce finishing times by 20 percent than straight dairy calves, making it more sustainable for producers⁶. Overall, more desirable calves for beef production are created through these crosses⁸.

One of the key factors for success in crossbreeding is choosing superior genetics. This involves selecting the best bull for the desired traits. When selecting a bull, traits such as frame size, muscling, carcass composition, feed efficiency, and ribeye area are the primary focus¹⁰. A frame size of 5 or less is preferred to improve feed efficiency, which reduces feed costs and maximize profits¹⁰. Producers should also utilize EPDs as a tool to select for the best bull traits². If the selection standards are proper and prioritize production efficiency, the specific breed has minimal to no influence on growth or carcass outcome⁹.

Although beef-on-dairy crossbreeding can seem like the best of both worlds, there are also drawbacks to consider. These crosses can lead to increased subcutaneous fat production, which lowers carcass yield and grade⁴. Studies have found that 80 percent of these crosses displayed lung lesions, meaning only 20 percent had fully healthy lungs⁵. One of the most significant issues identified was the high prevalence of liver abscesses, with up to 68 percent of animals affected by this condition⁵. This leads to less marketable meat (such as skirt steaks), along with decreased feed efficiency, carcass weight, marbling, and ribeye area⁵. Even with these challenges, the benefits still outweigh the disadvantages. However, this is still an area where further research is needed to improve nutrition, health, and overall management for better quality production.

The rise of beef-on-dairy crossbreeding is one of the most significant advancements in both industries, improving feed efficiency, profitability for producers, and sustainability. What were once seen as two different operations are now interconnected, benefiting both producers and consumers. With these crosses, we can add value to dairy calves that were previously worth less, while providing support for the beef industry's decreasing numbers. It is also highly beneficial for dairy producers looking for extra income, as, in the end, they are beef producers too.

The ultimate goal is to produce healthy calves/cattle that exhibit superior feed efficiency and the ability to gain weight and optimum muscling. Crossbreeding is the solution.

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Have You Herd is written as a portion of ANS 402 Beef Management course requirement at N.C. State University Department of Animal Science under the instruction of Dr. Carrie Pickworth. The opinions of Luisa Alegro are not necessarily those of N.C. State University or Dr. Carrie Pickworth.

2026 SPOTLIGHT ISSUES SCHEDULE

Most of the breed associations in North and South Carolina have stepped forward and renewed their contracts for Spotlight sections in *The Carolina Cattle Connection* for 2026. If your breed is not featured as a Spotlight section and you would like to inquire on any open months please feel free to contact me. Below is the tentative schedule for the upcoming year.

2026 RESERVED SPOTLIGHT ISSUES

JANUARY	CHAROLAIS
FEBRUARY	FORAGES
MARCH	ANGUS
APRIL	PIEDMONTESE
MAY	BRAHMAN
JUNE	HEREFORD
JULY	BELTED GALLOWAY
AUGUST	SIMMENTAL
SEPTEMBER	SANTA GERTRUDIS
OCTOBER	WAGYU
NOVEMBER	BRANGUS
DECEMBER	SOUTH POLL

For more information
about your breed's Spotlight Issue, contact:

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You Decide!

By **DR. MIKE WALDEN**, *William Neal Reynolds Distinguished Professor Emeritus, N.C. State University*

You Decide: Should Young Workers Be Angry About the Economy?

Young workers, defined as those from Generation Z — born between 1997 and 2012 — are reported to have numerous complaints about the economy, so much so that polls show them being among the strongest backers of socialism. Their concerns span many topics, including earnings, treatment by their employers, costs, and their inability to achieve the living standards of previous generations, particularly the standards of their predecessor generation, the Millennials, born from 1981 to 1996.

The first stop is earnings. The oldest Gen Z worker today is 29, so comparisons across generations should be based on similar ages. Also important is accounting for inflation. Price inflation lowers the purchasing power of each dollar earned. Hence, dollar amounts of earnings must first be adjusted for price increases so accurate comparisons can be made of how much the dollars of a worker's salary can purchase in different years.

The importance of accounting for inflation can readily be seen in the comparison between same age Gen Z workers and the previous generation of Millennial workers. If no inflation adjustment is made, the comparison shows Gen Z workers are paid more. But, if the comparison is made after adjusting for inflation between the two time periods, the result shows Millennials were paid more. Hence, Gen Z workers have a legitimate concern about the purchasing power of their earnings being lower than the earnings of the preceding generation.

Another concern of today's young workers is that their employers don't compensate them for higher productivity. Productivity measures how much output is produced per worker. Traditionally, companies compensated workers for higher productivity. But this hasn't happened for Gen Z workers. Indeed, the situation has been much the same for Millennial workers. However, one logical explanation is that much of modern productivity improvements have been due to technology, not workers.

Perhaps the biggest complaint of Gen Z workers is their inability to afford some of the traditional purchases of self supporting adults. The best example is home ownership. Many Gen Z workers complain that not being able to purchase a home means they can't participate in this traditional symbol of adult accomplishment. Without owning a home, they also forego the wealth accumulation over time that usually comes with owning a home. Many Gen Z households add that not being a homeowner reduces their desire to have children. Indeed, the birth rate of Gen Z couples has been declining.

Home affordability depends on two major factors — the price of the

home and the interest rate on a mortgage, which most first time buyers need to use for the purchase. There's no question that home prices have risen this decade. Price per square foot is up 50 percent since 2020, although there's been a slight drop in the last year. The 30 year fixed mortgage rate is significantly higher today than at any time since 2010. An index of home affordability that combines both costs and then compares them to median household income has fallen this year.

Some criticism suggests part of the affordability issue faced by Gen Z is based on their spending habits. There is evidence that relative to their income, Gen Z spends more on restaurants and home entertainment, spending that can be considered nonessential. Restaurant meals can be three to four times more expensive than preparing the same meal at home.

Perhaps ironically, a recent study showed Gen Z is saving more as a percentage of their paychecks than any other generation. This behavior points to a potential answer to their problem of purchasing big ticket items, like a home. The problem may not be that the generation spends too much, but instead that the issue is their lack of sufficient income.

In this economist's mind, these results point to a solution for young workers' frustration with the economy. Gen Z has to earn more, either through higher paying jobs or by adding second jobs. Alternatively, if they're willing to buy a home later, Gen Z should continue to save, and indeed, save even more by eating at home and cutting back on other nonessential spending. I was 30 before I bought my first "starter home," about the same age as today's oldest member of Gen Z.

Economics is a science that focuses on trade-offs. Every choice made leaves another choice unmet, for the simple reason that resources are limited. Can young workers make some changes that will increase the affordability of what they desire? You decide.

You Decide: How Do Private and Public Companies Differ? The battle over whether capitalism or socialism is the best system for organizing our economy continues. In some localities, the debate is entering the test phase with socialist practices being established, thereby giving results that can be compared to capitalist practices. For example, New York City is moving ahead with plans to establish publicly owned grocery stores.

What can we expect to find when there is a debate about private providers — capitalism — and public providers — socialism? In this article, I use economics to identify the pros and cons of private and public provision and then let you decide which approach wins.

My first task is to more specifically explain the differences

between private and public provision of products. One key difference is the origin of funding for the providers. Private companies are funded by private individuals, usually called investors. The number of individuals can vary from one, in the case of a one person firm, to millions for very large national and international companies owned by stockholders.

In contrast, public companies are funded directly by a government, which could be local, state, or national. But since governments derive their funding from citizens within their jurisdiction, it is really the citizens paying taxes who are the funders.

While funding of companies ultimately comes from individuals in both socialist and capitalist situations, there is a key difference in how the funds are acquired. Investors willingly provide funds to companies based on their evaluation of the company's prospects. There is often a risk that the company will not perform as expected, and the higher the risk, the more promised profits investors will require if the company is successful.

With public investments, funds come from individuals through taxation. Paying taxes is not an option. Hence, those taxpayers who are not in favor of a particular public investment must still help fund the investments. This is the opposite of private investing. However, one long run option for citizens opposed to a particular public investment is to eventually move to another governmental jurisdiction. This is often called "voting with your feet."

Evaluations for private and public projects are also different. Most private projects must promise profitability before investors will fund them. Investors of private projects are expecting to earn profits. Indeed, the expectation of earning profits is the main reason for the investment. While some consider "profits" to be a negative word, profits are what determine a successful private project. Profits mean that all costs have been covered by the project's revenues, plus other funds generated to compensate investors for taking the risk of potentially losing money. Profits are a signal that the project is successful.

In contrast, most, but not all, public projects create no profits. This has two important implications. First, it means the costs of the public project can be lower than if the project were developed privately because profits are not part of the total costs. Second, this means some public projects are developed that would not be developed privately due to higher private costs. Low cost public housing built for people with low income is a good example.

Finally, there is the important difference of innovation between private and public projects. Investors in public projects are always looking for ways to improve their profits. While this may sound greedy, there are benefits. If private projects can be improved to make them more attractive to users and to investors, both sides — investors and users — can benefit. Today, we often see this happening in the technology industry. Competing companies are motivated to improve so as to attract more buyers.

This motivation doesn't exist for public providers because there are usually no or limited competitors. However, competition can exist if people are willing to move. This is called "moving with your feet," and it is a way to generate competition between governments. We've seen this competition exist between states.

So, you decide what the pluses and minuses of private provision

and public provision are. Should they be compared, or do they exist for different purposes?

You Decide: Why Did the Fed Raise Its Interest Rate? Among the powers of the Federal Reserve — the Fed — is the ability to impact interest rates. The Fed doesn't directly control all interest rates in the economy, but it can directly change an interest rate called the federal funds rate, which is the interest rate charged when one bank borrows from another bank. Still, when the Fed makes changes to its federal funds rate, other interest rates in the economy tend to move in the same direction.

Hence, when the Fed raised the federal funds rate by $\frac{1}{4}$ percentage point on September 16, immediately there was the expectation other interest rates in the economy would also increase. In fact, some interest rates had already risen prior to the Fed hike because for weeks the Fed's leaders had been publicly saying they were ready to push up their rate at their next meeting.

Influencing interest rates is one of the significant powers the Fed has to achieve the goals Congress has given this independent agency. Specifically, the Fed's charter stipulates that the agency use its powers to achieve a low unemployment rate as well as a low inflation rate. The national unemployment rate has hovered near 4 percent for several months. A 4 percent jobless rate is considered relatively low.

But the inflation rate is another matter. The inflation rate measures the percentage change in the prices of products and services that typical households buy. Usually, the rate is quoted on an annual basis. The Fed's goal is a 2 percent or lower annual inflation rate. But recently the annual inflation rate has hovered 3.5–4 percent, obviously well above the 2 percent goal.

The Fed doesn't have the power to directly reduce price increases. But what it can do is reduce the upward pressure on prices. Specifically, the Fed uses its tools to motivate consumers to slow their buying. With households buying less, the expectation is that sellers will not raise their prices as much.

One of the ways to motivate households to slow their spending is to make borrowing more expensive. Households often borrow in order to spend. Borrowing to buy a home or a vehicle is an example. Consequently, when the Fed raises its interest rate and other rates follow, borrowing and spending slow, and inflation moderates. However, the Fed needs to be careful not to generate such a large consumer spending pullback as to cause a recession.

Using its power to impact interest rates is not uncommon for the Fed. For example, as the country recovered from the pandemic, there was a surge in inflation as pent up consumer buying outpaced production. The Fed significantly raised its interest rate to cool off inflation. Afterward, the Fed gradually lowered its interest rate to make sure economic growth continued. But the stubbornness of today's inflation, partly due to tariffs and the Iran War, ultimately caused the Fed to reverse and push interest rates higher.

The Fed has already indicated another rate hike is coming. So, I would expect higher interest rates at least through early 2027. However, if tariffs are reduced and/or the Iran War is ended, another rate hike may not happen.

Bottom line — Did the Fed have good reasons to increase their interest rate? You decide.



Clemson Corner

Replacement Heifer Selection

By GARRETT ULMER, DR. SAULO ZOCA, & DR. TROY ROWAN, *Clemson University*

One definition of a “good cow” is a problem free female who successfully weans a calf every year for as many years as possible. Identifying these females early in life is a complex and imperfect process but is crucial for long term profitability of cattle operations, as developing heifers is expensive, and cow costs continually increase. Research shows it takes between 5 and 6 calves before a cow covers her costs of development and maintenance and starts to become profitable¹. In some cases, purchasing heifers may be a better option than attempting to generate them on farm. However, for operations that opt to develop their own replacements, there is a wide range of phenotypic and genomic tools that can be used to ensure you select heifers today that will become good cows tomorrow.

Economic Considerations – Before making the decision to develop replacement females, it is important to consider if it can be done profitably on one’s own operation. One of the first costs that should be considered is the opportunity cost of foregoing weaned calf prices. Proper development of heifers requires extra labor and space, as well as increased feed costs and intentional breeding and selection decisions. The bulls selected to be used on heifers are likely different from what would be used in the mature cow herd. Operations that produce their own replacements also face an economic loss on heifers that fail to breed or are culled soon after being developed. Larger producers may be able to take advantage of economies of scale to reduce feed and labor costs, whereas smaller producers may benefit from custom development or purchasing bred females.

Awareness of the current phase of the cattle cycle is also fundamental to ensuring profitable heifer development. Some beef producers mistakenly believe that weaned heifers should be retained when cattle prices are high to capitalize on current market values. This is contrary to sound business principles, as these replacements will not calve for another 1.5 years, meaning their peak production years will coincide with a lower price phase of the cattle cycle⁴. When comparing replacement strategies over a 30 year period, retaining the same dollar value of heifers annually outperforms maintaining a constant herd size or prioritizing stable cash flow by selling more heifers during low price periods⁴. The optimal strategy here suggests retaining fewer, higher quality heifers when prices are high and investing more heavily in replacements when prices are low. While market timing significantly influences the profitability of heifer development, selecting the right individuals is equally critical for

long term success. How we choose these heifers, regardless of how many, matters. Luckily, there are numerous phenotypic and genetic information sources that can be used to determine the heifers most likely to have productive lives as cows.

Phenotypic Considerations – Phenotypic selection is where most producers start. Choosing to keep heifers born in the beginning of the calving season can help advance lifetime reproductive success. Early born heifers will be older and are more likely to be pubertal at breeding, increasing their chances of conception during early services. This leads to early calving as a heifer, a situation that puts the cow ahead of the curve for the rest of her productive life². This is not to say that there is no value in later born heifers; in fact, in a maternally oriented breeding program, a producer may find it profitable to market later born heifers to other producers with calving seasons that are later in the year.

Feet and leg confirmation are also important to consider when selecting females, as an animal’s ability to be productive long term is directly impacted by their level of mobility. Although selection standards may vary among operations in the degree of conformational faults tolerated, any animals with stiffness or restricted movement should not be developed as replacements.

Teat and udder structure problems usually don’t present themselves until lactation, at which point the cost of heifer development has already been incurred. Therefore, it is crucial to know the phenotypes of the dam and paternal granddam — sire’s mother — to prevent fallouts after development.

Frame and mature cow weight should also be moderated. Large females tend to use feed resources less efficiently than their smaller counterparts. On the flip side, genetic correlations between growth and energy needs mean that smaller females may lack some genetic potential to produce calves with sufficient weaning weights. Moderating cow size is a sure way to up overall herd efficiency.

Pelvic measurements can be taken when females are 12 months old and provide a measure of the area of the current pelvic opening. These allow for estimation of that same area at calving and help a producer to screen females with small or abnormally structured pelvises.

Reproductive tract scores are used to assess the sexual maturity of females based on examination of the ovaries and uterus. Pelvic measures and reproductive tract scores can be taken four to six weeks before breeding and allow time to adjust nutritional

programs and screen heifers that will not be able to breed. Though these phenotypes aren't observed until heifers have already been developed, it is still crucial to measure to ensure breeding efforts aren't wasted on immature heifers.

Evaluation of pregnancy status after the breeding season and proper culling are also important for farm profitability. Females that calve during the first 21 day period of the breeding season have increased pregnancy rates and wean more calves in their lifetime when compared to heifers that calve later in their first calving season³. Producers may find later bred heifers are more valuable to other producers and market them as bred females for producers with different calving seasons. Goals for open heifers should be shifted from reproduction to terminal product. Open heifers can be marketed as freezer beef or fed out to become fat calves.

Genetic Considerations – To predict phenotypes that won't be expressed until after selection, producers can use genetic selection tools like expected progeny differences (EPDs). These are calculated using pedigree information, individual and progeny performance information, and, recently, genomic information. EPDs allow for within breed comparison of animals on their genetic potential as parents for a given trait, enabling producers to make more accurate selection decisions on young, unproven animals with limited performance data.

The most important application of genomics for a commercial producer is increasing the accuracy of bull selection. In one bull herds that breed and develop their own replacement females, the past three bull purchases make up 87.5 percent of the genetics of the current calf crop. Therefore, it is essential that they make informed decisions on the maternal potential of their bull purchases.

EPDs are particularly useful for evaluating maternal traits in bulls. Heifer pregnancy and longevity are EPDs that examine the likelihood of a bull's daughters to achieve pregnancies in their first breeding season and assess the number of calves they will have in their lifetime. Because bulls drive genetic progress but don't express these maternal traits, producers must rely on genetic predictions to assess a bull's potential to improve these maternal characteristics in their cowherd. However, producers should avoid selecting bulls based on single traits, as this approach can negatively impact the breeding program. For example, selecting exclusively for growth will often compromise structural soundness and fertility.

Economic selection indexes address this challenge by combining multiple traits into a single weighted value, enabling producers to make balanced selection decisions toward a specific breeding objective. These tools help ensure producers invest in genetics that support long term herd improvement rather than short term gains in isolated traits.

Genomic tools have recently become available for commercial replacement females, allowing commercial producers to make more informed selection decisions. Commercial genomic tests can be used to estimate the genetic component of traits; however, it is important to remember that the actual phenotypes that will be displayed are determined by varying combinations of genomic and environmental variables. Therefore, in lowly heritable traits, such as cow longevity, genomic information may account for only a small percentage of the

animal's expressed phenotype.

Genomic data also aids in determining parentage and breed composition, which are important for both pure breeding and crossbreeding programs. Identifying animals with high heterosis potential can allow producers to optimize their mating decisions to maximize productivity of the cowherd. Utilizing a crossbreeding program is invaluable for a maternally aligned breeding program. Crossbreeding animals introduces heterosis, which is the increased productivity observed in crossbred calves compared to the average of their straightbred parent breeds. Heterosis is highest in lowly heritable traits such as maternal ability and cow longevity. In the southern U.S. and Gulf Coast, there are likely major benefits to crossbreeding *Bos indicus* and *Bos taurus* breeds for not just heat tolerance, but more importantly maximized heterosis, as *Bos indicus* and *Bos taurus* breeds are more genetically distant.

Terminal crossing can also be of use to producers who wish to market all their calves as terminal products. This can be accomplished by purchasing maternally designed females and using terminal sires to inject carcass quality and growth into the calf crop. It is important in terminal breeding programs to have a reliable source for replacement females, as the heifers in the terminal calf crop will not have been bred for maternal quality. Retaining terminally bred heifers undermines terminal systems by increasing mature cow size and maintenance requirements over time without intentional improvements in maternal traits such as longevity and fertility.

The decision to develop or purchase replacement females should not be taken lightly, as these females will hopefully be in the herd for many years to come. When selecting heifers to develop or purchase, producers should be sure to assess the phenotypic and genotypic differences in females to ensure that females will have the ability to become your specific operation's definition of a good cow. Ultimately, a combination of technology and practical observations can be used to ensure the heifers you select today will become good cows tomorrow.

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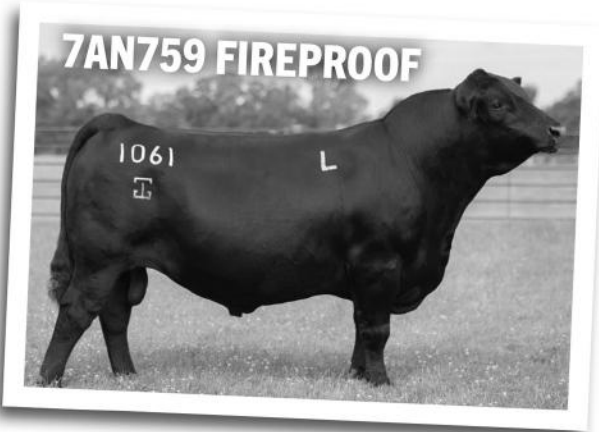
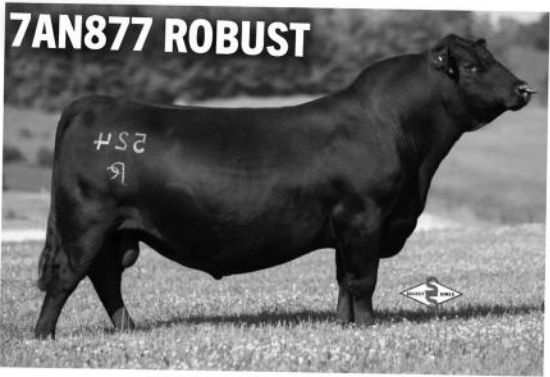
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20370357	7AN759	FIREPROOF	-0.13	0.75
20905517	7AN877	ROBUST	-0.13	0.32
19418336	7AN589	SILVERADO	-0.08	0.61
17817177	14AN502	TAHOE	-0.07	0.86
20500166	7AN795	PREEMINENT	-0.06	0.29
21239294	6AN940	GALAXY	-0.05	0.34
19449493	7AN581	VERIFIED	-0.04	0.31
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Information to Opportunity. *Feeding Quality Forum speakers said the new era of quality requires turning data into value driven opportunities.* The journey to produce high quality beef presents market volatility and management challenges. But today, there are data, technology, tools, and partners to identify the best value and how to attain it.

At the 2026 Feeding Quality Forum, each speaker added to the same message on August 4–5 in Amarillo, Texas. Hosted by Certified Angus Beef (CAB), the event drew more than 230 cow-calf producers, feedyard managers, allied industry, and academia for two days of learning, sharing, and networking.

Low inventory, high prices, volatile markets – The old news: the U.S. cow herd is small – 86 million cattle today compared to 134 million 50 years ago. Economists like Dan Basse, president of AgResource Company, doubt cow numbers will return to what they were.

Cattle cycles are being stretched. Past bull markets for cattle averaged 48–59 months in a rally phase, Basse said. This one is around 75 months.

“We are in this period where we’re going to be extremely volatile within a very high price range,” Basse said. “Fed cattle are projected to bring \$260 per hundredweight (cwt.) in the top and \$210, \$205 per cwt. on the bottom. And we are going to whip back and forth repeatedly between those price levels.”

With the Mexican border open, 80,000–90,000 feeder cattle could be brought into the U.S. on an annual basis. Basse expects to see effects on fed cattle supplies in the second half of 2027.

Data driven business – Cattle are worth a lot, making each decision and good data more important than ever.

“You really have to sit down with pen, paper, and calculator to know what your numbers are,” said Mark Sorensen, relationship manager at Rabo AgriFinance.

The ranch is a business, and he suggested that cattlemen should think like businessmen and understand what it costs to produce a pound of beef in their operation.

Another metric to consider tracking is calves weaned per cow exposed, said Texas rancher James Henderson of Bradley 3 Ranch.

“You better manage best cost and understand if you spend more money here, what’s the return on the other side?” Henderson said.

Another key to good management is to understand the kind of cattle you have.

Brian Walt of W6 Cattle in Kansas has used GeneMax DNA tests since 2018 to select replacement heifers, bringing loads of home raised steers and heifers to average 90 percent Prime.

“As we move forward to expand this herd, it’s the shortcut to get a better set of cows faster,” the commercial rancher said.

With better cows come better calves and more reasons for value based marketing. Enrolling calves in programs like AngusLink



helps differentiate calves on sale day. The commercial program evaluates and communicates a group of calves’ genetic potential to buyers like Spencer Smith, a Capstone Beef partner.

“Do I bid one more time or do I quit there?” Smith said. “[Genetic Merit Scorecard scores] certainly give us confidence when we’re trying to buy calves.”

At the feedyard, DNA tests allow feeders to more accurately sort cattle and manage them individually, said Tom Fanning, general manager at Pratt Feeders Group.

“Think about your herd genetics as a map,” Fanning said. “And DNA is the route that you want to take to get to your objective. And there are a lot of different weight points when you’re on that course.”

The goal is to optimally reach the ultimate endpoint so each animal fully expresses its genetic potential.

Modern health approach – None of this matters if the cattle don’t stay alive until harvest.

“The largest economic impact would be death loss,” said Levi Berry, Smith Cattle Company’s general manager, adding that strengthening cattle immune systems sets them up for success in every sector.

In addition to vaccination protocols, one answer may lie within the gut. Research reveals the hindgut is the largest contributor to immunity, said Jeff Heldt, beef technical lead for Selko USA.

Learning from human health, the company is researching phyto-complexes, such as capsicum, clove, garlic, black pepper, turmeric, and cinnamon, as feed additives to improve host health. These natural, plant based supplements improve gut health for better nutrient absorption, immunity and overall performance, both at the feedyard and ranch.

“These are to be viewed as additive to whatever production systems we put them in,” Heldt emphasized, noting they should not replace modern medicine such as vaccines or antibiotics.

This becomes even more relevant for the beef-on-dairy population of fed cattle. These calves come from a variety of backgrounds, and understanding how they have been handled and raised sets them up for success or failure, said Taylor Engle, consulting veterinarian and partner at Four Star Veterinary Service.

“You have to meet them where they’re at,” Engle said. “Whenever we see failures or big challenges, we always expect cattle to meet us where we’re at. But the variation of how they’re raised is the biggest hurdle.”

He said cattle feeders who receive beef-on-dairy calves should ask questions about confinement variables, how far they were trucked, what ages they were moved, and how they were fed.

More accurate measures – “With fewer cattle and low feed costs, markets have supported making cattle bigger and feeding them longer. Every day on feed adds \$2 to \$3,” Anderson said.

“Profitability increases until the incremental cost of gain exceeds sale price,” Anderson said. “And right now I’m telling you that will virtually never happen.”



Mark McCully, Brian Walt, James Henderson, and Mark Sorensen talked about what it will take to grow the U.S. beef cow herd.

Red meat yield defines the number of saleable pounds on a beef carcass at the packing plant. Bigger cattle come with more fat, and not always the good kind.

Nick Hardcastle, Cargill senior director of beef grading and meat science technical lead and member of the Red Meat Yield Working Group, talked about the work happening to accurately assess and value red meat yield. The current yield grade equation was developed in 1960, but cattle composition, genetics, and management have changed since then. Hardcastle shared how Cargill is testing new technology, such as size, that measures a carcass at chain speed and has proven both accurate and repeatable. Figuring this out will allow packers to more accurately value beef carcasses on the selling and buying side.

New era for quality – “If you don’t have quality, if you only have commodity, breakeven is about as good as you can do unless you buy them really cheap,” Anderson said. “But if you have quality, then you have opportunity.”

With an average of 85 percent Choice, the money is in hitting premium programs like CAB, Prime, and others that require higher marbling levels, he said.

“Prime has become more valuable as we got more of it because now we know we have it,” Anderson said.

With a reliable supply of Prime, restaurants and grocery stores can buy and promote with confidence. And consumers love it, too.

“Restaurants like Evie Mae’s Pit Barbecue have built comeback customers by offering CAB Prime. No other product offers the quality and consistency of fabrication,” said Arnis Robbins, Evie Mae’s owner.

“Competitors bring us product all the time,” Robbins said. “And we have never found a product that compares anywhere close to what we get consistently through Certified Angus Beef Prime brisket.”

As restaurant owners face high input costs, too, offering a higher quality product that ensures the best eating experience for just a little more money is an easy sell, said B.J. Johnson, director of sales for Buckhead Meat of Atlanta.

“It’s an emotional connection now because they see that this product is going to perform week in, week out, day in, day out,” Johnson said. “And if I can base my business off that, I can go worry about something else in the restaurant.”

Decisions start today – Changing the genetics of the cow herd

takes time.

“If we as seedstock producers are not thinking about where we need to be six or seven years from now, we’re already behind,” Henderson said.

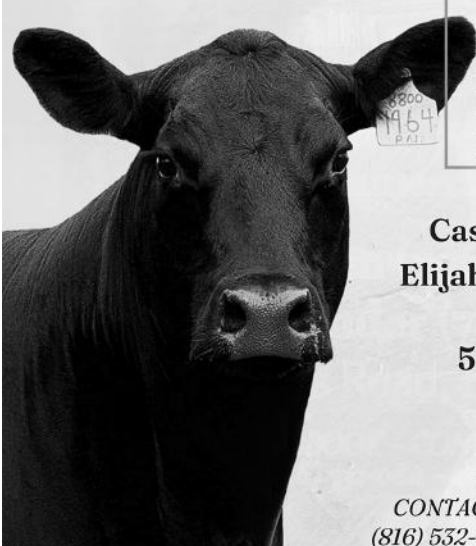
While there’s talk about hitting the maximum for beef demand, it remains strong, Basse assured. That’s encouraging for farmers and ranchers.

“We’re in the business of producing a consumer product,” Henderson said. “And we need to understand how we can do that most cost effectively and produce something that somebody wants to buy.”

If you’re interested in learning more on similar hot topics, mark your calendar for the 2027 Feeding Quality Forum in Kearney, Neb., on August 3–4. Find more information at FeedingQualityForum.com.

Feeding Quality Forum was made possible by AngusLink, BEEF, Cattlemen’s Education Series sponsored by National Corn Growers’ Association, Caviness Beef Packers, Cotton Seed, Diamond V, Drovers, Elanco, Feed Lot, Rabobank, Select Sires Inc., and Selko.

Who is Certified Angus Beef? At Certified Angus Beef, we know people want to put great meals on the table. Our employees work across the beef supply chain to ensure chefs and home cooks find and prepare the best Angus beef. Led by our culinary, beef, and marketing experts, our team provides consultation, marketing materials, training, market insights, and tools that help businesses like grocery stores and restaurants thrive. Our team is also dedicated to sharing the story of family farmers and ranchers who supply the brand.



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COMMON GROUND



A Summer of Optimism

By MARK McCULLY, American Angus Association CEO

“Learning, leading, and advancing Angus together.”

If you’re familiar with it, you know the message. A young girl thinks she’s simply spending time at the lake with her dad but years later realizes he was teaching lessons that had little to do with fishing.

As I walked through the barns at the National Junior Angus Show (NJAS) in Louisville, I couldn’t help but think about that song.

Many of our junior members probably think they’re “just showing

cattle.” They see early mornings, fitting contests, showmanship classes, and long days in the barn. But parents, grandparents, and mentors know something much bigger is happening. They’re teaching responsibility, work ethic, resilience, sportsmanship, and confidence. Those lessons will last a lifetime, long after the banners are put away.

This year’s NJAS was another reminder of how bright the future of our breed is. Nearly 240 exhibitors attended their first NJAS, bringing new energy and enthusiasm. One of the most encouraging developments was the continued growth of the Phenotype and Genotype Show. The program challenges young breeders to think beyond visual appraisal and better understand how genetics influence the cattle they evaluate.

Just as impressive was the talent displayed outside the show ring. Whether in public speaking or the Auxiliary sponsored All American Certified Angus Beef Cook-off, junior members demonstrated skills that will serve them beyond the cattle business.

We’re not simply developing cattle breeders; we’re helping shape the next generation of leaders.

A few weeks before Louisville, many of us gathered in Boise for the Beef Improvement Federation meetings. There, the conversation centered on the rapid evolution of genetic evaluation and the opportunities ahead.

The pace of change is remarkable. New traits are being pursued at an unprecedented rate, including those related to bovine respiratory disease (BRD), health, and resilience. Equally significant is the source of data. Today, valuable information is being generated not only through breed associations but also by feedlots, coordinated supply chains, researchers, and more.

I heard the term “proprietary genetics” several times during the meetings. For independent Angus breeders, that’s a timely reminder of why access matters. As the industry generates more data from more sources, our Association’s role in providing transparent, accessible information becomes even more important to the long-term success of Angus breeders.

The value of data was reinforced throughout this summer’s video sale season. June marked a record month for AngusLink enrollments as more commercial producers sought to document and communicate the value of their cattle. Across summer video sales, AngusLink enrolled calves consistently captured premiums of \$15–\$30 per hundredweight. Those premiums aren’t simply a reward for black hided cattle. They’re a reward for information. Buyers want confidence in the genetics, management, and health programs behind the cattle they purchase. AngusLink helps provide that confidence, and the marketplace continues to reward it. I’m excited to see the number of Angus breeders that are introducing AngusLink to their bull customers.

Whether it’s junior members learning life lessons, researchers pursuing new genetic predictions, or commercial producers documenting the value of their calves, the common thread is participation. As summer gives way to fall, I hope you’ll continue that spirit of participation by joining us at the Angus Convention. It’s one of the best opportunities of the year to connect with fellow breeders, learn from one another, and help shape the future of our Association.

Together, we’ll continue building on the momentum of this summer and ensure Angus remains the breed that leads through innovation, participation, and the power of good information.

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*20616660

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+10	+4	+80	+138	+25	+82	+65	+55	+78	+149	+271

Sire: *DB Iconic G95 • Dam: *Ingram Emblynette 0103
Bred to calve February 13, 2027 to Connealy Scotchman.

WHITESTONE PRIDE T085



SHE
SELLS!

Reg.
20760023

CED	BW	WW	YW	MILK	MB	REA	CW	\$M	\$B	\$C
+3	+2.5	+84	+154	+24	+48	+1.09	+76	+58	+181	+293

Sire: +*Koupals B&B Progress 0017 • Dam: B&B Pride 7119
Bred to calve January 24, 2027 to Connealy Scotchman.

WHITESTONE ERICA T158



SHE
SELLS!

Reg.
20760043

CED	BW	WW	YW	MILK	MB	REA	CW	\$M	\$B	\$C
+3	+1.6	+69	+136	+32	+65	+91	+75	+56	+192	+305

Sire: Koupals B & B Knockout 9080 • Dam: #+B&B Erica 7073
Bred to calve March 16, 2027 to Connealy Scotchman.

WHITESTONE BLKBRD PRGRS T106



SHE
SELLS!

Reg.
20773904

CED	BW	WW	YW	MILK	MB	REA	CW	\$M	\$B	\$C
+12	-.6	+55	+104	+32	+36	+09	+34	+70	+97	+196

Sire: *Koupals B&B Beyond 1066 • Dam: B&B Blkbrd Progress 1230
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The President's Letter

By JIM BRINKLEY, *American Angus Association*



Dear Members of the American Brahman Breeders Association,

The American Angus Association Board of Directors met September 14–17 in Saint Joseph, Missouri. Committees met virtually prior to the meeting this week, allowing for very productive discussions about the future of the Angus breed.

Financially, the Association is on firm ground, with all entities projected to finish out the fiscal year on September 30 with positive

bottom lines and in line with budgets. Registrations are up 7.1 percent and transfers are up 1.5 percent through August, with projections bringing us into a very strong year end, potentially reaching 330,000 registrations for the year. In addition, Angus Herd Improvement Record data have seen strong growth, with nearly every category up from the previous year. Growth in the Data Driven Herds has been phenomenal. In just the second year of the program, the number of herds recognized went from 129 last year to 299 this



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year, with 91 Gold, 71 Silver, and 137 Bronze.

Events and Junior Activities Committee

We celebrated a fantastic National Junior Angus Show and reviewed suggestions for changes and improvements. Social media reach during the 10 days topped 4 million views on Instagram alone. The show program received more than 83,000 page views, and the webcast had over 77,000 views. Based on overall entries, the 2026 event was the 12th largest in history. One new change for 2027 will introduce the owned bull category as a separate show. We also discussed how the show is funded between the Association and host states, as well as the cost of potential future locations.

Significant discussion was given to member feedback regarding the age limit of the National Junior Angus Association (NJAA), with some in favor and some opposed to increasing the age to 22. Ultimately, the committee recognizes this would require a bylaw change of the NJAA and therefore is asking the NJAA board to consider this item.

Breed Improvement Committee

As a continuation of our discussion from June, the committee considered potential changes to the requirements for a sire to qualify for the Pathfinder program. While no action was taken at this time, the board and staff will continue to look at ways to expand education and promotion for the program. We certainly welcome your ideas and feedback.

We heard updates on several research projects, including a new study evaluating fertility traits with the University of Missouri. This study looks to leverage data that are being recorded but are not currently used for genetic evaluation, such as reproduction tract scores, days open, and more. Another new project, in conjunction with *N.C. State University* and AGI and supported by the Angus Foundation, is evaluating how environmental stress influences genetic diversity and inbreeding depression in Angus cattle. More details on both projects will be shared as they progress. The Association is also supporting an industry wide research project exploring potential red meat yield phenotypes for use in genetic evaluation programs using the U.S. Meat and Animal Research Center herd.

While no action was taken, we had good discussion around customizable \$Values and opportunities with forecasted economic assumptions, in addition to historic data.

Finance and Planning Committee

We discussed and approved budgets for the upcoming fiscal year, beginning October 1. Interest income from investment reserves plays an important part in balancing budgets. Discussion continues regarding the approximately \$700,000 annual spend on credit card processing fees across the organization. Technology upgrades are

Angus President's Letter continued on the next page



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Angus President's Letter *continued from the previous page*

being implemented, allowing greater flexibility in payment options and the ability to pass along fees for credit card use.

Commercial Programs Committee

The committee reviewed AngusLink enrollment numbers, which are lower than the previous year, largely explained by lower video sale consignments and market uncertainty. However, we had record enrollments during the month of June, and the number of herds we've enrolled this year is even with the previous year. Premiums for AngusLink remained strong even as record prices were recorded at the beginning of the sale season. The AngusVerified program achieved the 1 million head enrolled mark since 2018, thanks to the seedstock and commercial producers who have chosen a commitment to creating value through documentation of genetics.

Member Services Committee

We heard about updates underway for the AIMS program, including the eventual move to a web based platform. Through member feedback groups, staff has been able to test concepts,

prioritize program features, and demo future functionality. This investment in programming has been an important service to our members. We also discussed the pricing structure for the new software to support ongoing maintenance and service. Staff is continuing an effort to work with third party herd management software companies to allow easier data upload into the Angus system.

The switch to paperless billing earlier this year has gone well, improving efficiency and reducing costs. The committee also discussed the need to improve security with AAA login accounts in the future. Staff provided an update on their research into providing member health insurance. There are no good options today that align with our members' needs, so we will continue to monitor the situation and discuss as needed.

Communications and PR Committee

The Pathway to Progress is an initiative focused on communicating ways that purchasing registered Angus genetics can bring profitability to commercial producers. As we continue to drive that point home, staff has developed new customer service



DECEMBER 5, 2026

PRODUCTION SALE

DENTON, NORTH CAROLINA

with Car-J Angus

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resources, including a sale book insert and incentive for members, to be shared during the convention. We also discussed ways to continually improve member communication, making it easier for members to get Association updates in whatever format they wish to receive it. One challenge the team faces is adjusting and adapting to new technology, including artificial intelligence.

Angus Foundation

We experienced a positive year for the Foundation, driven by the generosity of Angus breeders. Growth in support through Fund the Future, along with other initiatives, means we can expand our impact across our pillars of education, youth, and research, supporting programs such as Herdsman Bootcamp, National Junior Angus Show, and Beef Leaders Institute. As we move into the coming year, the Board approved budget includes increased investment in research and education, and the Foundation is pursuing additional public and private grant opportunities that align with our mission.

Angus Media

As the end of the fiscal year winds down, we had a chance to revisit the year and look to the next. We reviewed the editorial calendars for both *Angus Journal* and *Angus Beef Bulletin*. Looking to improve efficiency and capacity to help serve Angus breeders with their marketing, Angus Media recently reorganized the employee structure. For breeders, their regional managers remain the main contact and resource. Digital media products continue to expand, including advertising spots available on the Angus mobile app and TikTok. One new initiative that we are excited about is sending complimentary issues of *Angus Journal* to new members. Funded by Angus Foundation, we believe this will showcase the educational value of a subscription.

Angus Genetics Inc.

The second edition of *Imagine – AGI's Beef Genetics Forum* in mid-August was a success, and a white paper summarizing discussion will be available publicly in early 2027. Heart health research continues with data collection, and the team continues to push toward developing a selection tool. We heard updates on building a system for commercial data collection to bolster our genetic evaluation with hard-to-measure or lowly heritable traits. AGI also reported a projected 157 percent increase in GeneMax Advantage sales for fiscal year 2026, reflecting commercial producers' growing interest and breeders' commitment to leveraging it as a customer service tool. AGI also continues to closely monitor changes within the genomic service provider landscape, and we discussed strategies to ensure Angus breeders remain well positioned for long term success as the industry evolves.

Certified Angus Beef

In spite of significant reductions in fed cattle supply, CAB sales remained strong. We estimate sales to be 1.225 billion pounds this year, only down 0.8 percent from last year, while certified head was reduced annually by 7 percent. It was the best year in the history of the brand for CAB Prime sales, which mirrors record Prime production across all major cattle feeding regions and

represented a supply increase of 6 percent. That aligns with a recent producer study that shows breeders are interested in helping their customers target CAB Prime. Production of CAB in Uruguay will be approximately 1 million pounds in the first year of production and has allowed the brand to enter new markets around the world.

Member participation in the annual process of electing the delegates to the 143rd Convention of Delegates was strong. Members elected 301 delegates and 247 alternates. We are looking forward to the meeting, scheduled for November 16 in Louisville, Ken., as a part of the Angus Convention. Held in conjunction with the North American International Livestock Exposition, I hope to see you there! In addition to thought provoking general and educational sessions, we will elect five new members to the board. Eight people have announced their candidacy for those spots – Dean Bryant of Maryland, Scott Bush of South Dakota, Kenny Hinkle of Missouri, Steve Knoll of Texas, Will McMillan of Mississippi, Matt Perrier of Kansas, Logan Sampson of Nevada, and Doug Stevenson of Montana. Darrell Stevenson of Montana and Smitty Lamb of Georgia were nominated to serve as president and vice president, respectively. Charles Mogck of Olivet, S.D., was elected by the Board to serve as treasurer for the coming year.

As always, I invite you to reach out to me or any of the board members if you have any questions. I look forward to seeing you in November at Angus Convention.

Hancock Angus & McMahan Farm

Annual Registered Angus Bull Sale

November 14, 2026 • 12:00 noon
at the farm in Mocksville, N.C.



Sons from these A.I. sires:
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All bulls will have passed a BSE exam before the sale
Bulls are forage fed with little supplement



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McMahan Farm
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ANGUS

THE BUSINESS BREED

UPDATE

Delegates elected by peers to 143rd Convention of Delegates. Delegates will meet to conduct annual business on November 16, as part of the 2026 Angus Convention. Delegates and alternates have been elected to the 143rd American Angus Association Convention of Delegates, to be held on November 16 in Louisville, Ken., as part of the 2026 Angus Convention. Angus breeders were elected by fellow members in their state or district to serve as voting representatives at the annual meeting. Representing the U.S. and Canada, the delegates will participate in the annual business meeting, which includes the election of officers and five directors to the American Angus Association Board of Directors.

Delegate candidates were nominated this spring through a process outlined in the Breeder’s Reference Guide. To be eligible to vote, nominate, or be nominated this year, members needed to be active life or regular members and have met the requirements to be an eligible voting member by April 17. During the nomination period, nominations can be made by any eligible voting member whose farm or ranch is located in the same herd state as the nominee. Following the close of nominations, ballots are prepared and sent to eligible voting members in each voting district (state or Canada). This year’s voting period was July 17–August 18.

Paper ballots mailed to the office and received by August 18, were counted on August 19 by Association staff using a multi-step process that includes several checks and balances to ensure the process followed the guidelines set out in the Breeder’s Reference Guide. Election observers and Association members Lori Fink of Kansas and Jake Tiedeman of Nebraska oversaw the process.

Online ballots were tabulated by the online voting platform, YesElections. Mailed-in and online votes were then totaled together, and the results were audited to ensure accuracy of the count and the eligibility of any delegates who were elected through the write-in process.

- As a part of the process:
- 2,225 ballots were received.
 - 2,169 ballots were eligible to be counted.
 - 1,178 ballots were electronically submitted, 54.3 percent of total eligible ballots.
 - 301 delegates and 247 alternates were elected from 44 states, Canada, and Washington D.C.

Delegates and alternates from North Carolina and South Carolina are listed below. Delegates and alternates were notified by email. State chairs are denoted with an “*” in front of their name.

Alternate delegates are listed in order of rank.

North Carolina
Delegates
*Callie Carson, Laurel Springs
Eugene Shuffler, Union Grove
Mark Wilburn II, Asheboro
Steve McPherson, Snow Camp

Alternates (in order of rank)
Jeffrey Edwards, Ellenboro
Jason Flowers, Godwin
Brent Scarlett, Asheboro
Zach Moffitt, Statesville

South Carolina
Delegates
*Kevin Yon, Ridge Spring
Lynn Shealy, Chapin
Donnie Watts, Lynchburg

Alternates (in order of rank)
John C. Garrett, Troy
Shane Whitaker, Smyrna

Tolbert to Lead Commercial Relations and Producer Education. Longtime regional manager promoted to director role. The American Angus Association has promoted Alex Tolbert, regional manager for Kentucky, Ohio, and Tennessee, to Director of Commercial Relations and Producer Education. For the past 12 years, Tolbert has served Association members and commercial cattlemen with a deep passion



for the Angus breed and a commitment to producer success. In his new role, he will lead efforts to advance programs that improve profitability for users of registered Angus genetics, strengthen commercial industry relationships, and expand producer education.

As a regional manager, Tolbert championed educational efforts surrounding AngusLink and GeneMax Advantage and worked to connect both commercial and seedstock producers with tools designed to add value across the beef supply chain. His efforts helped drive significant growth in GeneMax testing throughout the region, with testing doubling year over year for two consecutive years.

"I once heard, 'The seedstock industry exists as a business to meet the needs of the commercial cattleman,'" Tolbert said. "That idea has shaped the way I approach my work at the Association. Whether serving as a regional manager or in this new role, my goal remains the same: to serve Angus breeders and commercial cattlemen while strengthening the value Angus genetics bring to the beef industry."

Tolbert is a product of the Angus breed, having grown up on an operation in Jackson County, Georgia. As a member of the National Junior Angus Association, he served on the National Junior Angus Board. Following graduation from Oklahoma State University, Tolbert worked for the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service's Livestock and Grain Market News Service and eventually managed the Federal/State program in Kentucky and Tennessee. Throughout his tenure with the Association, Tolbert has expanded outreach across his region by strengthening industry partnerships, serving as a trusted resource for cattle producers, and organizing educational opportunities.

"Alex brings a unique combination of commercial industry perspective, practical experience, and passion for the Angus breed to the position," said Casey Jentz, chief operating officer of the American Angus Association. "His ability to build relationships and connect producers with solutions that improve profitability makes him exceptionally well suited to lead our commercial relations and producer education efforts."

Tolbert will transition into the role on September 14. He will continue supporting previously scheduled sales and events within Region 3 during the transition period. The Association is actively recruiting a regional manager to serve Kentucky, Ohio, and Tennessee. Interested applicants can learn more and apply at angus.org/careers.

Donor Dam Rule Update. *Changes may affect your operation.* One of the biggest milestones we've celebrated this year is surpassing two million genotypes collected and submitted to Angus Genetics Inc. (AGI). No other breed has been able to do that. It is a credit to your commitment to embrace tools that drive genetic progress, improve herd accuracy, strengthen parentage verification, and protect the integrity of Association programs and the Angus breed. It's a clear signal that the breed is not just keeping pace with innovation — it's leading it.

While not directly tied to this milestone, the robust nature of information we have on hand provided an opportunity for the American Angus Association Board of Directors to review and approve updates to Rule 104 (d)(2) — Calves produced by Embryo

North Carolina Angus Association

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robinbackcreek@att.net
Facebook: Back Creek Angus

BILTMORE ESTATE

Kyle Mayberry - Manager
Asheville
828-768-1956
livestock@biltmore.com
www.biltmorelivestock.com

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John, Callie, Isaac & J.R. Carson
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carsonfamilyfarm@gmail.com
Facebook: Carson Family Farm

CHAPMAN CATTLE COMPANY

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bryantchapman21@gmail.com
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704-473-8707
trooperdhowell@yahoo.com

DOUBLE CREEK ANGUS

Doug Rowell
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704-787-6819
doublecreekanguscattle@gmail.com

FOUR S FARMS

Kim & Connie and Jason & Robin Starnes
Luther Lyerly - Manager
Salisbury
704-640-5875
kim-4sfarms@carolina.rr.com

GENTRY HOMEPLACE ANGUS

Howard & Donna Gentry
King
336-413-6698
whgentry@windstream.net

GRAGG FARMS

Paul, Chris & David Gragg
Boone
828-268-4136 (Paul); 828-268-4137 (Chris)
828-268-4135 (David)
gragg_farms@hotmail.com

H&H FARMS

Buddy & Jennifer Hamrick - Owners
Bly Hamrick - Manager
Boiling Springs
704-472-1912
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Cortney Holshouser

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www.ncangus.org

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704-322-5201 (Marcie); 704-322-0831 (Mattie)
harwardsisters@gmail.com
www.harwardsisters.com

HILL ANGUS FARM

Dr. Gary M. Hill
Hendersonville
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gmhill@uga.edu

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reichert.brock@gmail.com

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jfhokie7@verizon.net

N.C. STATE UNIVERSITY - E. Carroll Joyner Beef Unit

Matt Morrison - Manager
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THE 909 RANCH

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Michael Jensen - Manager
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TRIPLE LLL ANGUS

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VANDEMARK ANGUS

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Will Moss - Manager
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Angus Update *continued from the previous page*

Transfer during the June board meeting.

The original rule, passed in 2023, required all donor dams born on or after January 1, 2023, to have DNA markers on file and be tested for the full genetic condition bundle. The rule was put in place to ensure we can maintain breed purity through parent verification and are aware of any potential genetic defects that a high influence dam may carry prior to breeding. Given the growth in adoption of DNA testing since 2023, we are now often able to verify potential genetic defect markers.

As a result, the Board approved the following updates to Rule 104 (d)(2) for dams born on or after January 1, 2023:

- The full suite of genetic testing will be required on donor dams that are not parent qualified.
- Donor dams who are parent qualified and listed as a potential carrier for genetic conditions will be required to be tested for those genetic conditions.
- Donor dams who are parent qualified and free of potential genetic conditions, as confirmed by their pedigree, will not need a genetic conditions test.

No changes were made to the requirements that all donor dams must be DNA marker typed or must have been blood typed prior to January 1, 2001.

The new rule's language reads:

2. The Embryo Transfer Donor Dam must be DNA-marker typed or must have been blood typed before January 1, 2001. All donor dams, born on or after January 1, 2023, used for purpose of Embryo Transfer that are (1) not parent qualified must be tested for the full suite of known commercially available genetic conditions or (2) parent qualified and are listed as a potential carrier for genetic conditions must be tested for those specific genetic conditions monitored by the American Angus Association. (As amended June 8, 2023, and June 10, 2026)

In the event DNA is unavailable from the donor dam for genetic condition testing, the full suite of known commercially available tests for the genetic conditions monitored by the American Angus Association will be required for all offspring applying for registration.

This rule can be found on page 35 of the *Breeder's Reference Guide*.

Today, 52 percent of registrations received are parent qualified and identified on the registration certificate in two ways. If an animal is matched to both parents, "Parent Qualified" is displayed. Since 2017, the asterisk symbol (*) has also noted this.

An animal's genetic condition status is abbreviated on the registration certificate under the registration number using assigned codes for each genetic condition. These are populated from historic pedigree testing when available. A complete list of the codes can be found on page 190 in "Association Highlights."

The rule change allows you to continue with the registration of ET calves and not have the added expense of testing an animal when historic testing can provide the required information. It is because you, as members, keep advancing the breed through the use of ET, artificial insemination, and other available tools that the breed remains the industry choice for commercial cattlemen.

American Angus Association seeking 2027 summer interns. Applications for internships are open through November 18. AAA offers a hands-on, tailored learning experience for young cattle enthusiasts. Internships are offered in several departments and entities and provide opportunities for growth in a student's chosen field during the ten week summer program. Students will be immersed in a fast paced, professional environment and work side-by-side with experts at the forefront of the cattle industry.

"Working with both commercial cattle producers and registered Angus breeders gave me the opportunity to learn from a wide range of operations and gain insight into different areas of the Angus breed," said Olivia Hadrack, 2026 Commercial Programs & Producer Support Intern. "I'm thankful for the mentorship and opportunities I've received this summer, and I'll carry the lessons I've learned with me throughout my career."

Interns are based out of St. Joseph, Mo.; some positions offer opportunities to travel. Students who are interested in growth and networking opportunities, have a good attitude, and are willing to jump

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Maternal Roots

FALL FEMALE & BULL SALE

THE FEMALES

Sell

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 30th at 1:00 p.m.

Selling 100 Angus Females- donor prospects, elite open feature heifers, fall pairs, bred cows & bred heifers

Nearly 1500 females reside at Yon Family Farms that compile **AVERAGE EPD/Index** rankings of:

CED	WW	YW	DOC	HS	Claw	Angle	HP	MB	\$M	\$G	\$B	\$C
30%	20%	20%	35%	25%	35%	30%	10%	30%	5%	25%	30%	15%



Yon Saluda P58 / He sells as Lot 266
Yon Saluda x Yon Witch J91 (Yon Chattooga E46)
SELLING 3 FULL BROTHERS TO YON SOUTHERN ROCK



Yon Keystone P04 / He sells as Lot 269
Basin Keystone 2021 x Yon Sarah D668 (Discovery 2240)



Yon Witch P368 / She sells as Lot 1
Ellingson Prosper x Yon Witch J91 (Yon Chattooga E46)



Yon Sarah P672 / She sells as Lot 2
Ellingson Prosper x Yon Sarah D668 (Discovery 2240)

THE BULLS

Sell

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31st at 11:00 a.m.

Selling 300 Angus Bulls - 200 two-year-old bulls & 100 yearling bulls



90% qualify for Targeting the Brand specs for Certified Angus Beef, and over half those met the newly published specs for "Prime."

Our bull sale offering **AVERAGE EPD/index** ranking in comparison to the entire non-parent Angus bull population

CED	WW	YW	DOC	HS	Claw	Angle	HP	MB	\$M	\$G	\$B	\$C
40%	20%	20%	35%	25%	30%	25%	10%	30%	5%	25%	30%	15%

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Watch the sale
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at CCI.Live

BAR
REMINGTON 452M
21266442
BD: 10/19/24
Sire: Poss Remington
MGS: Sitz Alpine 11076

CED	BW	WW	YW	SC	DOC	CLAW	ANGLE
+10/25%	+1.2	+87/10%	+141/25%	+0.91	+21	+0.42	+0.49
PAP	HS	HP	Milk	Teat	UDDR	FL	CW
+3.83	+0.56	+12	+29	+0.53	+0.54	+1.13/20%	+67
Marb	RE	\$M	\$W	\$F	\$G	\$B	\$C
+1.30/15%	+0.85	+92/15%	+105/5%	+102	+88/15%	+191/20%	+340/15%

BAR
JAMESON 460M
21272339
BD: 9/25/24
Sire: Basin Jameson 1076
MGS: Connealy Clarity

CED	BW	WW	YW	SC	DOC	CLAW	ANGLE
+15/3%	+1.2	+97/2%	+156/10%	+0.37	+31/4%	+0.34/10%	+0.28/1%
PAP	HS	HP	Milk	Teat	UDDR	FL	CW
+1.33	+0.53	+12.8	+27	+0.76/15%	+0.67/20%	+1.07	+75/15%
Marb	RE	\$M	\$W	\$F	\$G	\$B	\$C
+1.99/1%	+1.18/10%	+121/1%	+119/1%	+115/25%	+130/1%	+245/4%	+439/1%

BAR
RATIFIED 478M
21278299
BD: 11/14/24
Sire: Poss Ratified
MGS: Connealy Clarity

CED	BW	WW	YW	SC	DOC	CLAW	ANGLE
+16/2%	-1.6/10%	+83/20%	+146/15%	+0.44	+36/1%	+0.44	+0.39/15%
PAP	HS	HP	Milk	Teat	UDDR	FL	CW
+2.83	+0.56	+12.3	+20	+0.81/10%	+0.9/1%	+1.09	+68/25%
Marb	RE	\$M	\$W	\$F	\$G	\$B	\$C
+1.1/25%	+0.63	+107/3%	+87/25%	+125/15%	+71	+196/20%	+361/10%

Ginger Hill

ANGUS

ANNUAL PRODUCTION SALE
NOV. 14, 2026 • 12 p.m.

The Culpeper Agricultural Enterprises Culpeper, VA •

40 PERFORMANCE-TESTED
FALL YEARLING ANGUS BULLS

30 FALL CALVING COWS AND HEIFERS
Many with calf-at-side or heavy in calf



Ginger Hill Eva 734 • AAA# 19144539 • Dam of 552, 553 and more!



Ginger Hill Helen 808 • AAA# 19319608 • Dam of 551, 575 and more in the sale!



Ginger Hill Land Grant 552
AAA# 21466089



Ginger Hill Grant 553
AAA# 21466090



Ginger Hill General 551
AAA# 21466092



Ginger Hill Sure Thing 575
AAA# 21466047



Ginger Hill Complete 595
AAA# 21466016



Ginger Hill Cisco Kid 559
AAA# 21466077



Ginger Hill Grant 555
AAA# 21466082



Ginger Hill Helen 739 • Dam of 555
AAA# 19144544



Ginger Hill Night Rider 568
AAA# 21466060



Ginger Hill Helen 746 • Dam of 568
AAA# 19144551



Ginger Hill Grant 555
AAA# 21466082



Ginger Hill Helen 739 • Dam of 555
AAA# 19144544

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FALL PRODUCTION SALE

NOVEMBER 28
STATESVILLE, NC 2026 3:00 PM EST

Offering

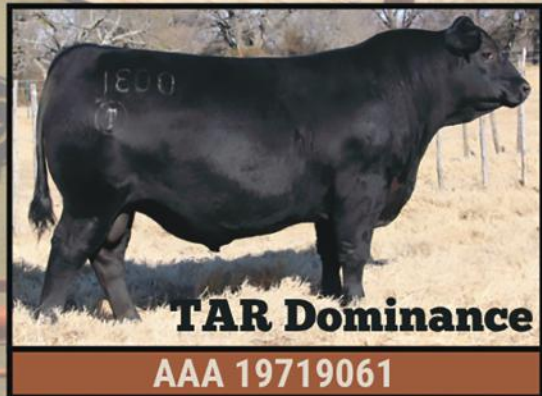
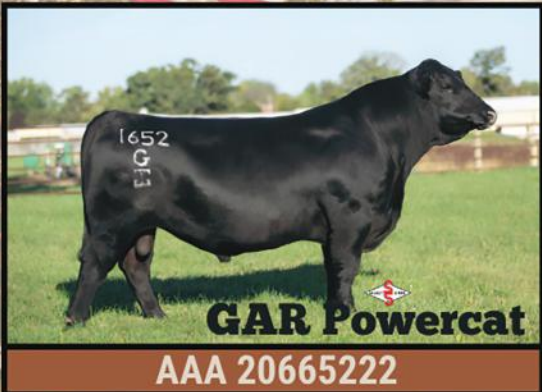
40+/- YEARLING BULLS
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&
FALL PAIRS

Consignors:
Goforth Angus & 323 Ranch



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FEATURED:



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Will Thompson, Auctioneer
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Michael Jensen, Ranch Manager
336-769-6700
Rick Ankrum, Owner
Info@The909Ranch.com

Angus Update continued from page 46

into new and challenging situations for hands-on experience should apply at angus.org/careers by November 18, 2026, to be considered.

If students prefer to spend their 2027 summer on the ranch, the Angus Foundation is accepting applications for the Angus/Talon Youth Educational Learning Program internship. The Talon internship program provides college aged students with the unique opportunity to spend their summer on an Angus operation. Interns gain extensive ranching knowledge while enhancing their skills as advocates for the beef industry. Students interested in participating in the program can learn more at www.angus.org/foundation/our-mission/youth/talon-youth. The deadline is also November 18 through angus.org/careers.

Association Communications – From print writing to graphic design, photography, and video, the communications intern will gain multi-faceted agricultural communications experience to enhance their marketability as a young professional. The communications intern will help with the promotion and coverage of one of the Association’s biggest events, the National Junior Angus Show, and will travel with the team to the event. Applicants should have strong writing and design skills and have completed coursework in news and feature writing, editing, and design. Experience in photography, video, and social media is preferred.

Association Events & Junior Activities – The intern will

assist in planning and executing youth events hosted by the National Junior Angus Association (NJAA), including preparation, correspondence, and coordination for shows and events. Applicants should be self starters, detail oriented, and outgoing with the ability to work well with others. Livestock and event planning experience is preferred, but not required. Travel to the 2026 National Junior Angus Show (NJAS), Leaders Engaged in Angus Development (LEAD) Conference, and other events is expected.

Association Commercial Programs & Producer Support – This position is designed to give students hands-on exposure to the Association’s work with both seedstock and commercial cattlemen, while building skills in customer relations, data support, and industry communication. Interns will work closely with programs including AngusLink and Angus Herd Improvement Records (AHIR), supporting outreach efforts as well as producer engagement and training. Interns will develop a deeper understanding of genetic tools, herd improvement programs, and the role data plays in driving progress within the beef industry. Applicants should have an interest in beef cattle production,

Angus Update continued on the next page

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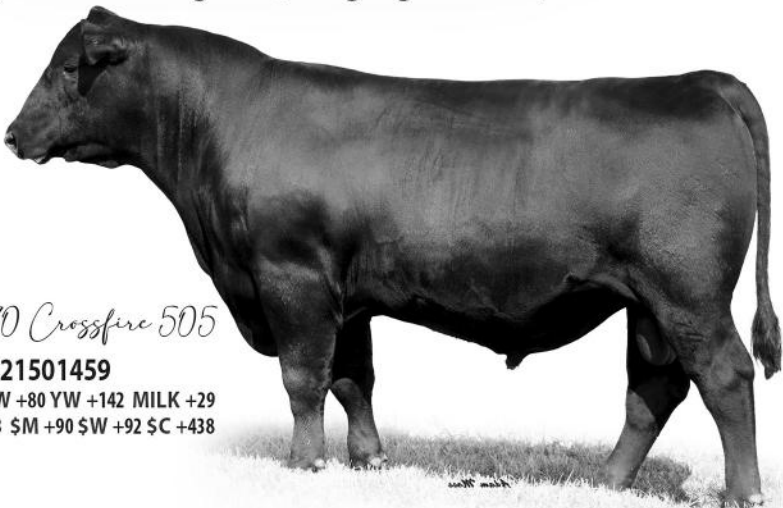
LLF 270 Everett 561
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CED +12 WW +76 YW +136 MILK +35
MARB +1.06 \$M +128 \$W +99 \$C +426

Bull & Female Sale

Saturday November 14, 2026 12:30 pm est

12065 Chatham Rd., Vernon Hill, VA

Selling 70 Aged and Yearling Bulls, 7 Highlight Heifers, & 20 Fall Pairs.



LLF 270 Crossfire 505
21501459
CED +10 WW +80 YW +142 MILK +29
MARB +1.63 \$M +90 \$W +92 \$C +438

LLF 156 Kingston 502 21454005

CED +11 WW +90 YW +144 MILK +34
MARB +1.41 \$M +115 \$W +121 \$C +326

LLF 156 Kingston 504 21501452

CED +14 WW +78 YW +134 MILK +27
MARB +1.18 \$M +110 \$W +92 \$C +354

LLF 264 Commerce 511 21501457

CED +7 WW +96 YW +172 MILK +29
MARB +.91 \$M +76 \$W +107 \$C +354

CONTACTS:
Mike McDowell 434.575.4850
Jon Collins 434.222.8369

LOCUSTLEVELFARMS.COM





SALE MANAGER:
Zach Moffitt Cattle Marketing
and Consulting 336.736.6340
zmoffitt19@gmail.com
zmoffittcattlemarketing.com

Angus Update continued from the previous page

genetics, and commercial cattle marketing. Opportunities for herd visits and travel to industry events may also be available.

Angus Media – Marketing – This position will provide valuable experience in email marketing, graphic design, digital advertising, social media content creation, and data analytics. The intern will work alongside an experienced team to develop skills and contribute to real cattle producers’ marketing campaigns and success. Applicants should demonstrate an excitement and passion for Association work and the cattle industry. Previous management or oversight of business social media accounts is preferred.

Angus Media – Publications – This writing intensive opportunity offers the chance to join a multi-media effort, which includes the *Angus Journal* print publication and the *AJ Daily* electronic newsletter, as well as the *Angus Journal’s* website, podcast, and social media presence. The internship can be tailored to the intern’s strengths, but many duties can be anticipated, including traveling to industry events. Experience in news and feature writing, editing, and photography is strongly suggested.

Angus Genetics Inc. (AGI) – Students pursuing their master’s degree or Ph.D. in animal breeding and genetics and related areas are encouraged to apply for the AGI summer internship. The intern

will have the opportunity to work with the world’s largest single beef breed genomic databases, conducting research on economically relevant traits. The internship will focus on research that involves data analysis. Candidates should have experience in analyzing animal breeding data sets, including genomic data.

About the Angus Foundation. Established as a 501(c)(3) organization in 1980, the Angus Foundation remains focused on its mission to support Angus education, youth, and research. The organization has distributed more than \$4.9 million in youth scholarships since 1998 and has also invested more than \$1.4 million in beef cattle research in the past decade. For more information, contact the Angus Foundation at 816-383-5100.

ANGUS MEANS BUSINESS. The American Angus Association is the nation’s largest beef breed organization, serving more than 21,000 members across the United States, Canada, and several other countries. It’s home to an extensive breed registry that grows by more than 300,000 animals each year. The Association also provides programs and services to farmers, ranchers, and others who rely on Angus to produce quality genetics for the beef industry and quality beef for consumers. For more information about Angus cattle and the American Angus Association, visit www.angus.org.

LA

4th Annual Lorson Angus Sale

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31, 2026 AT 1 P.M. EDT

ROCKINGHAM COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS • 4808 S VALLEY PIKE, HARRISONBURG, VA

CCi LIVE



GREEN GARDEN LADY T276

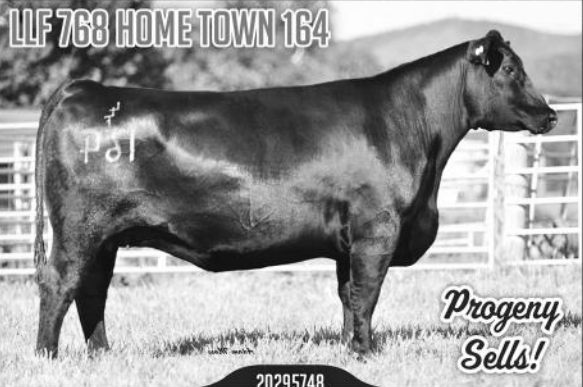


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LA SD31 OF F131 DRAFT PICK
AAA 21562169
LA GW91 OF 4F91 WALLACE
AAA 21630000
LA GT05 OF 0404 TRUE BALANCE
AAA 21652845

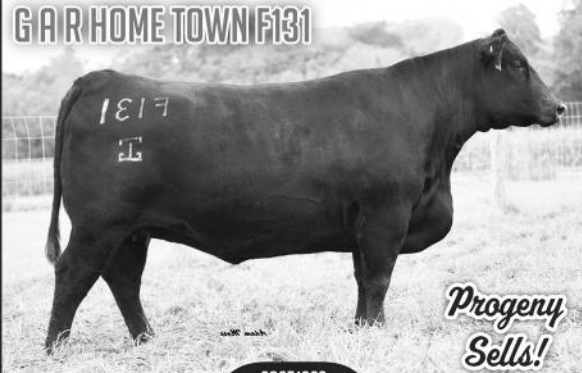


ZACH MOFFITT
CATTLE MARKETING
& CONSULTING

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336-736-6340

AUCTIONEER WILL THOMPSON
704-616-8553

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JERSEY SHORE, PA 17740
JASON AREHART
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JASONAREHART@YAHOO.COM

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NAVIGATING NITRATE RISKS IN FORAGES FOR BEEF CATTLE & OTHER PASTURE-BASED LIVESTOCK

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 13TH NOON-1PM

IS YOUR PASTURE HOLDING A HIDDEN TOXICITY RISK?



High nitrate levels in forages can develop quickly—especially following drought, sudden weather shifts, or heavy fertilization—posing a serious threat to your herd's health.

Webinar Topics Covered

- Factors that cause nitrate accumulation in common forage crops
- Symptoms of nitrate poisoning in cattle and small ruminants
- Practical sampling methods and field-testing best practices
- Forage management strategies to keep your livestock safe

Registration:

<https://go.ncsu.edu/nitraterisks2026>

ABBA

Executive Vice President Update

By PAUL MAULSBY, *American Brahman Breeders Association*



Dear Members of the American Brahman Breeders Association,

Performance Begins with Phenotypes

– Building the Future of the American Brahman

As our industry continues to embrace genomic technology and advanced genetic evaluation, one principle remains unchanged — genetic progress begins with phenotypic data.

Every birth weight recorded, every weaning weight submitted, every ultrasound scan completed, and every fertility record documented strengthens our ability to identify superior genetics. These real world performance records are the foundation upon which Expected Progeny Differences (EPDs) are built and continually refined.

If I'm being candid, I don't believe we, as an industry across most beef breeds, do a good enough job of collecting and submitting phenotypic data. It is an area where we all have an opportunity to improve. The more complete and accurate the information we collect, the more valuable our genetic evaluations become — not only for our own herds but for the breed as a whole.

DNA testing has become a pivotal component of the beef cattle equation, helping us better understand an animal's genetic potential. However, genomics is only one piece of the puzzle. To create the most accurate and meaningful genetic evaluations possible, it must be paired with quality phenotypic data. While DNA identifies genetic potential, phenotypic data demonstrates how that potential is expressed under real world management and environmental conditions. The two technologies complement one another. Without a continuous stream of accurate performance records from breeders, genomic predictions lose accuracy over time because they rely on phenotypic information for validation and ongoing refinement.

For the American Brahman breed, this commitment to performance recording is especially important. Our cattle have earned a worldwide reputation for adaptability, longevity, maternal excellence, fertility, and efficiency in demanding environments. By documenting these strengths through performance records, we provide objective evidence of the value Brahman genetics deliver to both seedstock and commercial producers.

Performance recording also allows us to make meaningful genetic progress in economically important traits such as reproductive efficiency, growth, carcass merit, structural soundness, and longevity. As consumer expectations and market demands continue to evolve, our ability to collect information on emerging traits — including feed

efficiency, carcass composition, environmental sustainability, and health — will become increasingly valuable to producers.

Some of our most economically important traits — particularly fertility, longevity, and health — cannot be improved overnight. They require years of consistent, accurate performance records collected across many herds. Every breeder who submits data contributes not only to the improvement of their own operation but also to the advancement of the American Brahman breed.

Whether you are just beginning to collect performance information or are looking to expand your herd's records, I encourage you to explore the BHIR resources available on the ABBA website. Members will find instructional materials, performance recording guidelines, ultrasound resources, and data collection forms designed to help integrate performance recording into their operation. These tools are available to assist breeders in building stronger herds while contributing to the long term genetic improvement of the breed.

As we continue investing in research, genomics, and new technologies, our success will always depend on one thing — quality data collected by dedicated breeders. Every calf recorded, every weight submitted, every ultrasound scan completed, and every performance trait documented strengthens the American Brahman breed and provides greater confidence in the genetic tools our members use to make breeding decisions.

The future of the American Brahman breed will certainly be influenced by advancing technologies, but it will always be built on the commitment of breeders who are willing to measure performance, record the data, and share that information for the benefit of the entire breed.

The best genetic evaluations don't begin in a laboratory — they begin in your pasture.



You shouldn't have to have a gun held to your head to take advantage of the expert A.I., superior genetics, the best in purebreds and outstanding farm supplies featured in the CLASSIFIEDS in this issue!

ABBA Strengthens International Partnership in Paraguay. ABBA Strengthens International Partnership in Paraguay The American Brahman Breeders Association recently continued its international outreach efforts through an educational mission to Asunción, Paraguay, reinforcing the longstanding partnership between ABBA and the Paraguay Brahman Association. Representing ABBA were Executive Vice President Paul Mulsby and Iridiana (Idi) Ibarra-Leal, who participated in the Association's annual meetings, educational programming, ranch visits, and the Paraguay International Brahman Show.

The visit marked the first official educational mission of the year by the ABBA office through the U.S. Livestock Genetics Export (USLGE) Program and highlighted ABBA's continued commitment to supporting breeders through education, technical resources, and international collaboration.



Throughout the week, meetings with Paraguay Brahman Association leadership, technical committee members, and breeders focused on topics shaping the future of the breed, including DNA technology, high density genomic testing, performance recording, Expected Progeny Differences (EPDs), registry services, and long term genetic improvement. Educational presentations, ranch visits, and discussions with producers from Paraguay, Argentina, and Bolivia created valuable opportunities to exchange ideas while strengthening relationships that continue to support the use of

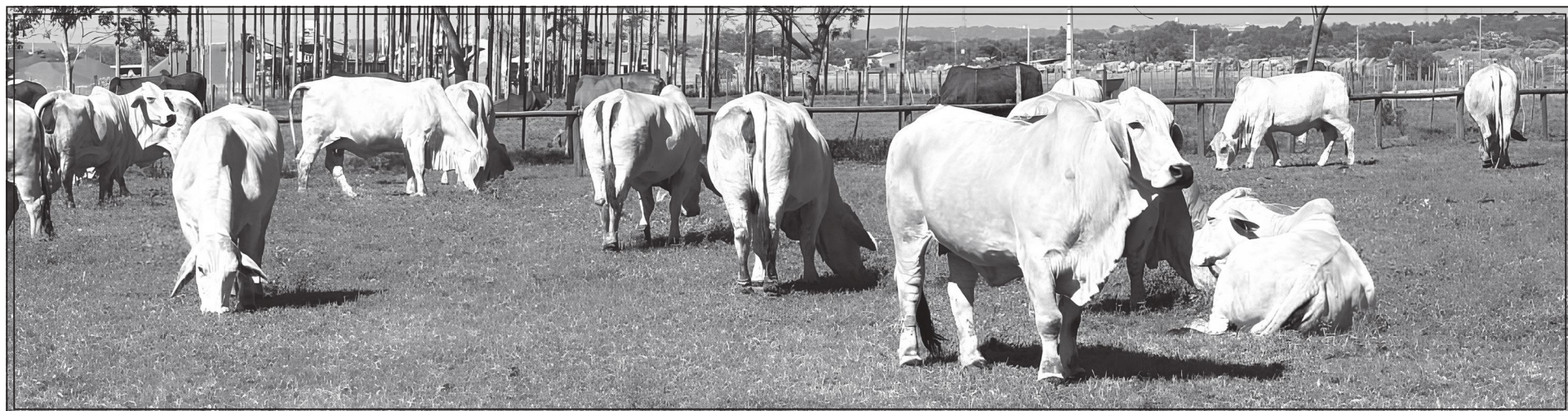


American Brahman genetics throughout South America.

Paraguay continues to stand out as one of the world's strongest users of American Brahman genetics. Throughout the trip, American semen, embryos, and breeding stock were evident in both the seedstock and commercial sectors, reflecting decades of investment in American genetics while showcasing the progress of Paraguay's own breeding programs. Visits to progressive ranches also provided insight into one of the most advanced commercial beef production systems in Latin America, where performance, efficiency, and practical cattle evaluation remain key priorities.

As international demand for American Brahman genetics continues to grow, opportunities such as these demonstrate the important role ABBA plays beyond the registry. Through educational programming, technical support, and collaboration with international associations, the Association continues to strengthen relationships, promote American Brahman genetics, and support breeders around the world. Paraguay remains an outstanding example of how education, partnership, and a shared commitment to breed improvement continue to advance the global influence of the American Brahman breed.

About the American Brahman Breeders Association. *The American Brahman Breeders Association is the world registry for Brahman cattle, the #1 beef breed for efficiency, hybrid vigor, and environmental adaptability. ABBA provides an array of member services, educational opportunities, and a wide array of programs to assist the profitability of its members. For more information about the American Brahman breed or the many opportunities offered by the ABBA, visit www.brahman.org.*

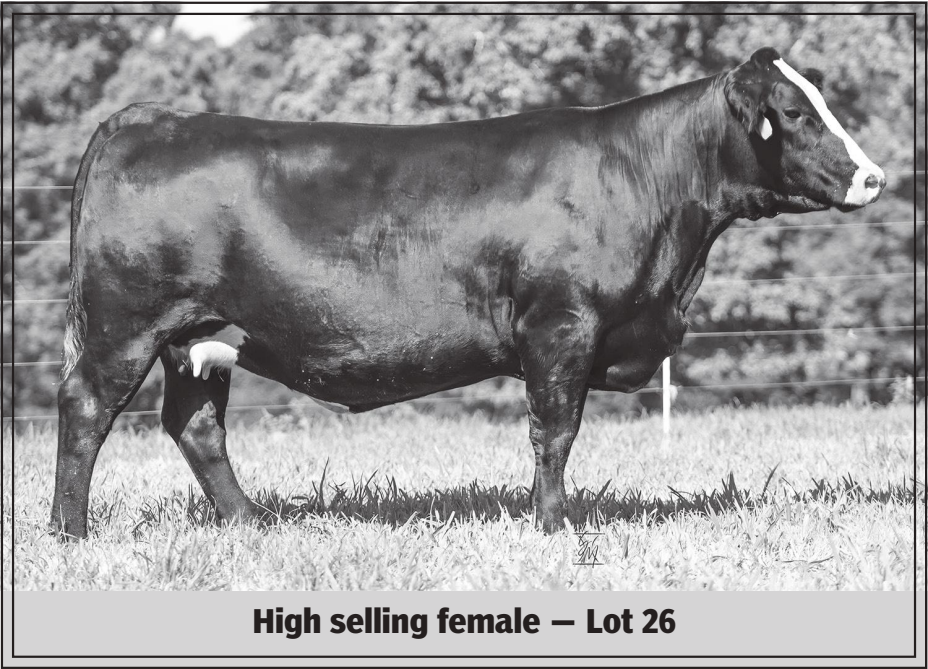




By BROOKE HARWARD, N.C. Simmental Association

2026 Fall Harvest Sale Results. We kicked off the fall sale season with another great Fall Harvest Sale! This year was the N.C. Simmental Association’s 52nd annual sale, and the crowd braved the heat to join us for a great display of Simmental cattle. This year’s sale once again featured bred and open heifers, bred cows, pairs, bulls, and genetic lots. Overall, we had 50 lots that averaged \$4,702. Thank you to all the consignors and buyers who participated in the sale!

The young bred cows and heifers were a highlight of the sale again this year. The high selling animal was Lot 26, a three-year-old purebred Simmental cow that sold for \$9,500. This LCDR



High selling female – Lot 26

Reserve 210J daughter, bred to WC Red Bird, was consigned by Woodlawn Simmentals in Georgia and was purchased by Matthew King of Virginia. Lot 20, coming from Cherokee Hills Farm in South Carolina, was the high selling bred heifer and sold for \$7,250 to Sloup Simmentals of Nebraska. She is a purebred Simmental daughter of CCS/JS Doc 48H and is bred to SRS J914 Preferred Beef. Other high selling young cows included Lot 24 from Lucas Farm in Virginia and Lot 27 from Woodlawn Simmentals, selling

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74lb.
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Today’s industry pays big for heavy fat steers, but your pocketbook demands smaller cows. Simmental-influenced cows are an average 74 lb. lighter at maturity than Angus-sired counterparts.^a Meanwhile, packers pay \$20 to \$34 more for SimAngus™ and Simmental-sired steers than English-sired calves.^b The proof is in the data.

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Brooke Harward, Executive Secretary
Anna English, President

^aUSMARC, Zimmerman, M., et al., "Breed and heterotic effects for mature weight in beef cattle," J. of Anim. Sci., Vol. 99, 2021. ^bEffect of sire breed group on carcass value of feedlot cattle harvested through Tri-County Steer Carcass Futurity Cooperative, Lewis, Iowa, 2002 to 2018. Odde, K. & King, M. (March 2021). Kansas State University.



for \$6,500 and \$6,250, respectively, to buyers in Virginia and Nebraska. Two of the other high selling bred heifers included Lot 11 from Jeff Broadaway of North Carolina and Lot 14 from Virginia Tech in Virginia, selling for \$5,800 and \$5,500, respectively, to buyers in Virginia and North Carolina.



The pairs offer proven genetics, and the buyers recognized the advantage of adding these proven producers to their herds. While we did not have many, they proved to be in high demand. The high selling pair came through as Lot 30 from Stanfield Simmental Farms in Ohio and sold to Sloup Simmentals for \$7,500. She is a purebred Simmental daughter of W/C Fort Knox 69H Hardwire with a B&L/IVS/WCS County Line 83J heifer calf at side and bred back to WHF Commandment M555. Lot 17 was another high selling pair coming from Rockin R & L Farms in Virginia and sold for \$6,250 to Matthew King. She is also a purebred Simmental and a daughter of JASS On the Mark 69D with a heifer calf at side.



We also sold two bulls in this year's sale. The high selling bull was Lot 32, consigned by TX Enterprises in North Carolina and sold to Don Brown, also from North Carolina, for \$8,100. He is a purebred Simmental bull sired by LLSF Redstone J89 out of an OMF Epic E27 dam. To end the sale, we sold a high quality set of frozen genetics through embryos, semen, and one pregnancy lot.

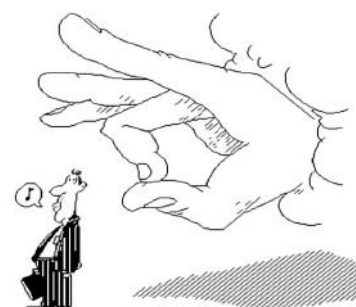
This year we had 24 consignors from North Carolina, Virginia, South Carolina, Ohio, Georgia, Iowa, Alabama, Kansas, and Minnesota. Cattle were purchased by buyers from 10 states, including North Carolina, Virginia, South Carolina, Kentucky, Nebraska, Mississippi, Indiana, Pennsylvania, Florida, and Iowa, with buyers registered for the sale from across the country. Thank you to all the sellers, buyers, and sale attendees. We also want to say a special thank you to the team at DP Sales Management and Doug Parke for managing the sale again this year as well as the N.C. Junior Simmental Association for serving our sale day lunch. We hope you can make plans to join us next year on September 4, 2027, for the 53rd Annual Fall Harvest Sale!

Upcoming Events

- October 15 – N.C. State Fair Open Simmental Show
- October 16 – N.C. State Fair Open Percentage Simmental Show
- October 17 – Fred Smith Company Ranch Extra Effort Sale
- October 19 – N.C. State Fair Junior Simmental & Percentage Simmental Show
- October 30 – Hokie Harvest Sale

**Regular copy deadline
is OCTOBER 5 for the
NOVEMBER issue**

**Spotlight material
is due
OCTOBER 1 for the
NOVEMBER issue**



ASA Hosts Memorable Fall Focus Event. The American Simmental Association (ASA) hosted its 2026 Fall Focus on August 2 to September 1 in Bozeman, Mont., bringing together 200 breeders, industry professionals, and ASA members for education, recognition, and Association business.

The Montana Simmental Association hosted tours of Montana State University's Bozeman Agricultural Research and Teaching (BART) Farm and a dinner at the ASA Headquarters. The Association hosted a day long educational symposium, covering topics relevant to the breed and beyond. The event also included a town hall session and the ASA Board of Trustees fall meeting.

The Educational Symposium on August 29 included presentations from Drs. Dale Woerner, Andrew Griffith, Ryan Boldt, Elizabeth Dressler, Ryan Rathmann, and Troy Rowan, covering red meat yield, beef demand, genetic evaluation, new trait development, female selection, and cow efficiency. Panel discussions throughout the day provided additional opportunities for discussion around each topic.

A highlight of the symposium was "A Reflection on Defining Moments in Simmental History," moderated by Dr. Jerry Lipsey, past ASA EVP. The interactive discussion had pioneers of the Simmental breed speak on turning points throughout ASA's history.

The Recognition Dinner was held Saturday evening, honoring recipients of the World Simmental-Fleckvieh Federation Golden Book Awards and Lifetime Promoter Awards. Golden Book recipients included John B. Collier of Stephenville, Tex., and Gibbs Farms of Ranburne, Alabama. The Lifetime Promoter Awards recognized Doug Parke of Paris, Ken., and Jim Butcher of Lewistown, Mont., honoring their significant contributions to the promotion and progressive enhancement of the Simmental breed.

The ASA Board of Trustees held their fall meeting following the educational program. The Town Hall was followed by committee meetings and the full Board meeting. Fall Focus 2027 will be held in Sioux Falls, S.D., on August 20–24. Visit fallfocus.org to learn more.

August Board of Trustees Meeting Highlights. The American Simmental Association Board of Trustees convened during Fall Focus 2026 with five committees meeting to conduct business on behalf of ASA membership. The following highlights some of the more notable directives and resolutions passed by the full board during the meeting, though this is not a complete list:

Activities & Events – Approved the application from the Missouri Junior Simmental Association to host the 2027 South Central Regional in Springfield, Mo., on June 14–20, 2027.

Growth & Development – Approved the establishment of Seedstock and Commercial Producer of the Year Awards for the American Simmental Association. These producers will be submitted for consideration for the Beef Improvement Federation's annual Seedstock and Commercial Producer of the Year Awards on behalf of ASA.

Breed Improvement – Voted in support of a directive to contact the owners and breeders of animals with "carrier in the lineage" for Hydrops, and share about the available DNA test.

Policy & Procedures – Passed a resolution to change the rules to include a 840 EID as a permanent form of ID, including a secondary



identifier that could be a tattoo, hot or freeze brand, or DNA on file with ASA.

For more information, contact ASA or a trustee from your region.

Gibbs Farms Honored with WSFF Golden Book Award. The American Simmental Association recently honored Gibbs Farms in Ranburne, Ala., with the World Simmental-Fleckvieh Federation (WSFF) Golden Book Award, the Association's highest honor. Selected by the ASA Board of Trustees, recipients of this award are lifelong promoters of the Simmental breed. Gibbs Farms was recognized during ASA's Fall Focus 2026.

The Gibbs family has been raising SimGenetics cattle since 1972, when they transitioned their herd from polled Herefords. As the industry shifted toward black hided cattle, Gibbs Farms was at the forefront, adding Angus to their program before SimAngus became an industry leading cross. Wendell and Nan planned to market these crossbred cattle as commercial feeder calves but quickly realized an opportunity to do something entirely new. They started selling SimAngus seedstock, marketing the maternal strength of the females, and the wide array of benefits commercial producers could get from hybrid vigor. After seeing success with SimAngus females, their customers started asking for crossbred bulls as well. This kickstarted what is now a decades long focus on raising sought after



SimAngus genetics.

Today, Gibbs Farms continues this commitment. Wendell and Nan's son, Doug, and grandson, Bradley, lead the operation. Data collection — from carcass records to cow herd records — are meticulously kept and submitted to the Association. The GIBBS prefix appears in influential pedigrees throughout the breed, and their annual sale draws in seedstock and commercial producers from across the country.

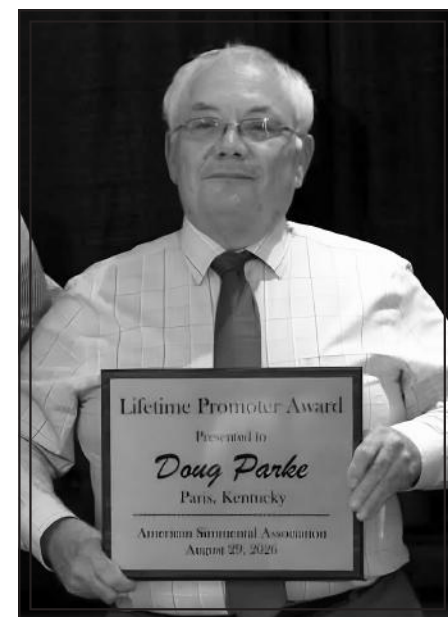
Doug Parke Honored with Lifetime Promoter Award. The American Simmental Association (ASA) recently honored Doug Parke of Paris, Ken., with the Lifetime Promoter Award. Established in 2019, this award is given to individuals, families, or businesses who make significant contributions to the promotion and advancement of SimGenetics and the American Simmental Association. Parke was recognized during ASA's Fall Focus 2026.

Doug Parke attended his first Simmental sale in 1973, kicking off a long career fostering the growth of the breed. After receiving a degree in animal science from Eastern Kentucky University, Doug worked for Kieckhefer Simmentals. He went on to work for and with many influential breeders, including time as manager for Breck Ellison Simmentals. In this role, he was especially focused on advertising and promoting SimGenetics seedstock. Doug's talent in advertising and promotion, combined with his experience as herdsman for influential operations, led to the formation of

DP Sales Management and DP Online Sales. Today, the business is operated by Doug, his wife Debbie, their daughter Holli, and her husband Drew Hatmaker. At in-person events and through hosting online sales, DP Sales Management has been instrumental in the growth of the Simmental breed.

Doug has held many leadership positions, including a term as chairman of the ASA Board of Trustees. He is a passionate supporter of the American Junior Simmental Association, rarely missing a National Classic.

About the American Simmental Association. Founded in 1968, the American Simmental Association is headquartered in Bozeman, Montana. ASA is committed to leveraging technology, education, and collaboration to accelerate genetic profitability for the beef industry. In keeping with its commitment, ASA and its partners formed International Genetic Solutions — the world's largest genetic evaluation of beef cattle. Learn more at www.simmental.org.





HARWARD BROTHERS LIVESTOCK MARKET
2207 Turnersburg Hwy. Turnersburg, NC
Phone: 704-546-2692
WWW.TURNERSBURGSTOCKYARDNC.COM

Weekly Sales - Every Monday at 11:30 am
Take in livestock on Sunday (12 pm - 7 pm) and Monday
3:00 pm - Holstein & Dairy Influenced Feeder Cattle
MONDAY - Small Animal Sale (Baby Calves, Goats, Sheep)

Marcus Harward • 704-322-0840
Brooke Harward • 704-322-9770



STANLY COUNTY LIVESTOCK MARKET
13215 Indian Mound Rd. Norwood, NC
Phone: 704-474-7683
WWW.NORWOODSTOCKYARDNC.COM

Weekly Sales - Every Wednesday at 10:30 am
Take in livestock on Tuesday (10 am - 8 pm) and Wednesday
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2026 - Fall Cow & Heifer Sale
See more information at www.norwoodstockyardnc.com

Marcus Harward • 704-322-0840
Catherine Edwards • 704-550-7920
Will Edwards • 919-449-8064

Watch the sales live every week!

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A marketing program available at both sale locations for vaccinated steers and heifers. Calves that meet vaccination requirements and have the sale tag in their ear will sell in the MAC-VAC portion of the sale at the beginning of the feeder calf sale each week. For more information, please visit www.norwoodfeeder calf.com or contact any of the numbers listed here.

Catching, hauling, and cattle work services:
For hauling services, contact Marcus at 704-322-0840.
If you need help working your cattle, contact Marcus Harward at 704-322-0840 or Chuck Doolittle at 704-221-1447 for more information.



SIMMENTAL

Executive Vice President Report

By JON DeCLERCK, *American Simmental Association*

Dear Members of the American Simmental Association,

Building on Progress – Why It's Time to Update \$API and \$TI

The American Simmental Association (ASA) took an important step forward in how breeders used genetic information 20 years ago.

\$API and \$TI were first published in the Spring 2005 Sire Summary. At the time, Dr. Wade Shafer described economic indexes as a way to turn a growing collection of EPD into a roadmap for genetic progress. His analogy was simple — EPD without indexes was like superhighways without maps — you could move fast but not always know whether you were headed in the right direction.

That philosophy still holds today.

Over the last two decades, Simmental cattle have made tremendous progress in calving ease, marbling, growth, and carcass performance. \$API and \$TI helped encourage breeders to think beyond individual EPD and instead consider how multiple traits influence profitability across an entire production system.

During that same period, ASA registrations have grown by around 54 percent. That growth reflects many factors — breeders, commercial customers, improved genetic tools, marketing efforts, and changing industry demand among them. \$API and \$TI are only one part of that story, but they helped drive clear genetic progress and increase the demand for Simmental cattle in the commercial beef industry.

So why update \$API and \$TI? Because the industry around them has changed — and so have the tools available to us. Updating \$API and \$TI is not about moving away from what has worked. It is about building on that success with better data, better technology, and a better ability to model the biology and economics of today's cattle industry.

New Traits Create New Opportunities — When \$API and \$TI were developed, ASA was already focused on economically relevant traits that directly influence profitability. The familiar \$API pyramid reflects that philosophy, with factors such as cow herd intake, heifer pregnancy, carcass weight, feedlot intake, and salvage value included in the model.

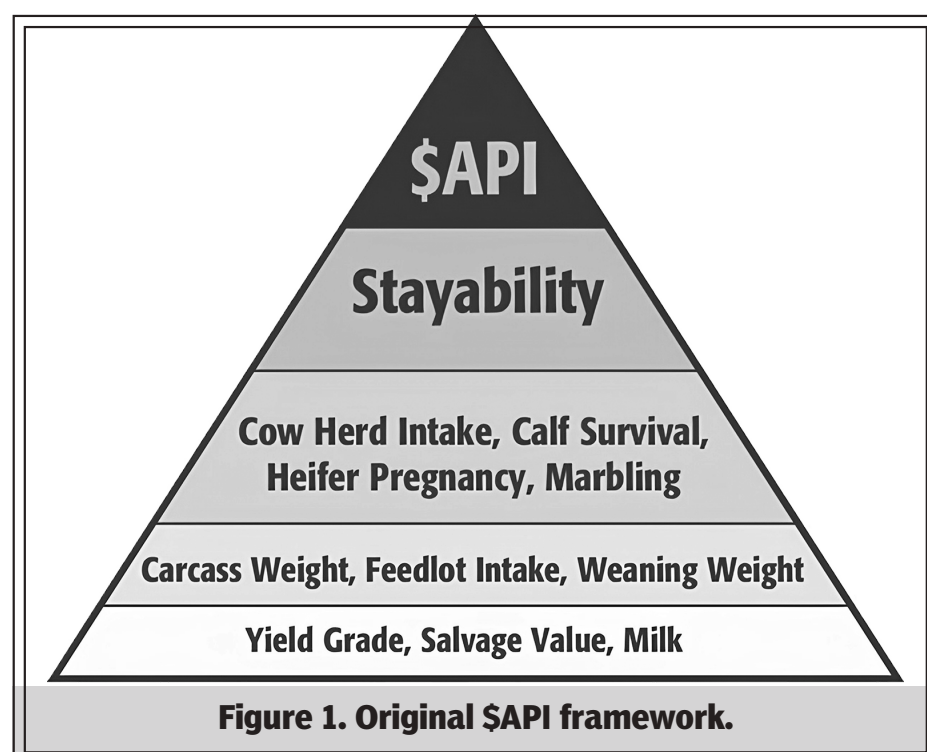
The challenge was that ASA could not directly predict those traits at the time. Instead, the indexes relied on known genetic relationships with traits such as growth and milk to estimate them indirectly.

Today, we can do more. In roughly the past year, International Genetic Solutions (IGS) has added Mature Cow Weight, Cow Energy Requirement, Heifer Pregnancy, Dry Matter Intake, and \$Gain to the genetic toolbox. These advances allow more economically important traits — including heifer pregnancy, dry matter intake, and mature weight — to be incorporated more directly into the updated indexes rather than estimated through correlated traits.

Direct predictions improve index accuracy by incorporating actual performance records, rather than relying strictly on correlated stand-ins. This allows us to more precisely evaluate the traits that directly drive profitability, giving maximum value to the data breeders submit. That is exactly the kind of progress our economic indexes should take advantage of.

The Cattle Business Has Changed — At their core, economic indexes attempt to answer a relatively simple question — Which genetics are expected to create the most value in a defined production system?

The challenge is that the cattle industry does not stand still. We have all heard the same conversations — cow numbers are historically low, cattle are being fed longer, and carcass weights are increasing as the industry looks to produce more beef from fewer animals. At the same time, feed costs, cattle values, replacement



costs, and interest rates have all shifted.

When the economics and production system change, the indexes guiding selection need to evolve with them. This time, however, we are doing more than simply updating old prices with new prices.

Historical CattleFax data remain an important foundation, but the updated work also incorporates forward looking economic models designed to project prices across the next cattle cycle. We want these indexes to reflect where the cattle industry is headed, not simply where it has been.

Technology Has Changed What We Can Model – Think about the phone you carried in 2005. The first iPhone had not even been introduced. There is a good chance it was a flip phone. It probably made calls, sent text messages, and did those jobs pretty well.

But nobody would expect that same phone to have facial recognition, run today's applications, provide turn-by-turn navigation, or perform the countless other tasks we now take for granted.

The same principle applies here. The original \$API and \$TI were sophisticated tools built with the best computing power available at the time. But technology has advanced enormously over the last 20 years.

We now have more records, more genomic information, improved software, better simulation capability, and more sophisticated estimates of heterosis and breed effects. That greater precision allows the updated models to better account for one of the foundations of Simmental's success — the power of crossbreeding.

At ASA, we have long believed breeds are not competitors; they are crossbreeding partners. The value of Simmental genetics is not simply measured by how they perform in isolation but by the added value they bring to a complementary breeding system through breed strengths and heterosis.

The updated models more accurately account for heterosis, allowing \$API and \$TI to more closely reflect how Simmental genetics are used in the commercial industry and to better recognize the traits that create value in those production systems.

Building the next version – One of Dr. Shafer's early articles described economic indexes as a "genetic business plan," combining an animal's genetic profile with input costs and output values to project profitability.

And just like any business plan, they should occasionally be revisited when the assumptions, technology, and operating environment change.

That is where we are today. The work is not finished simply because the initial modeling is complete. ASA and IGS will continue developing educational materials, sharing research results, and creating opportunities for feedback before final implementation. We feel good about the direction of the work, but these indexes are ultimately built to serve breeders and commercial producers. It is important that we explain the changes clearly, listen to the people who use these tools, and incorporate that feedback as the process moves forward.

For now, the important message is simple. \$API and \$TI helped move the Simmental breed forward for the last 20 years.

Updating them is not a departure from that success. It is the next step.

Building the Next \$API and \$TI – A Look at the Updated Model

The short version about why it is time to update \$API and \$TI is that three things have changed — the economics of the cattle business, the technology available to model profitability, and the traits we can now measure and predict directly.

Before digging deeper into what has changed within the indexes, it is probably worth taking one step back and asking a more basic question:

What exactly are \$API and \$TI trying to do? At their core, economic indexes combine multiple EPDs into one number designed to predict profit within a specific production system. I think of it like a scoreboard. If I gave you all the statistics from a baseball game — hits, errors, strikeouts, walks, home runs — you would have a lot of useful information, but you still might not know who won.

EPDs are those individual statistics. \$API and \$TI are the final score. The score does not replace the stats; it simply helps show how they add up economically. Once you know the score, you can go back to the individual EPDs and see how an animal got there. One bull may generate profit through Stayability, while another may get there through growth and carcass merit.

How does the updated simulation work? The word "simulation" can also make this process sound more complicated

Simmental Executive VP Report continued on the next page

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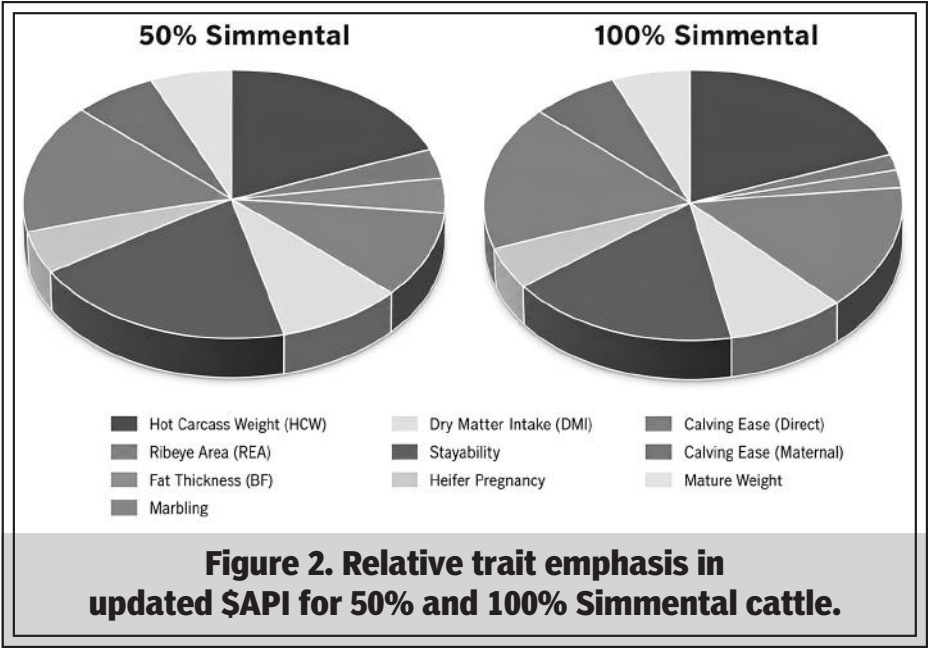


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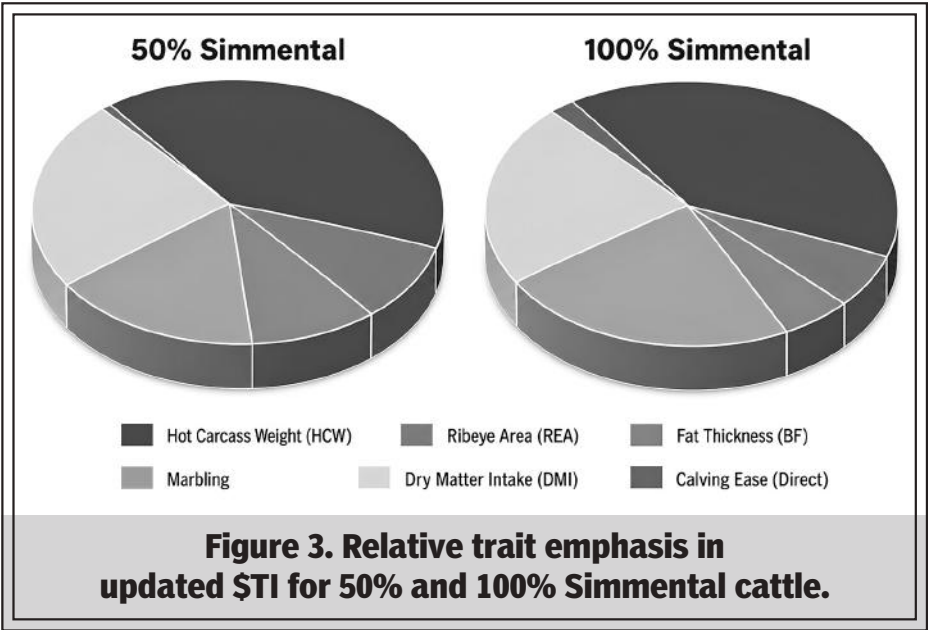
than it really is.

Every breeder simulates or estimates profitability when evaluating cattle. You study a bull, his phenotype, pedigree, and EPD, and decide what you believe he could be worth in your program. The computer model is doing a similar exercise, using the animal's genetics and the economics of the production system to estimate profit.



To build the updated indexes, ASA customized the iGENDEC software to better reflect the production systems our breeders and commercial customers operate in. Both \$API and \$TI begin with a 500 head herd of 1,300 pound Angus cows, but from there the two indexes take different paths.

\$API assumes the producer keeps replacement females, so cow size can change over time. It also uses a fixed land base; in simple terms, the ranch only has so much grass. If the cows get bigger, you can run fewer of them; if they get smaller, you can run more. That gives the model a practical way to balance cow maintenance costs against the downstream carcass value of the calves they produce.



\$TI starts with the same cow herd, but it is a terminal index. No replacements are kept, so cow size stays constant, and the focus stays on the value of the terminal calf through the feedlot and on the rail.

Another major improvement is breed composition. Instead of one set of assumptions for every animal, the updated indexes evaluate Simmental percentage in 10 percent increments. That helps the model better account for heterosis and breed complementarity.

The following figures show how relative trait emphasis differs between half blood and purebred Simmental cattle in \$API and \$TI.

In simple terms, the model recognizes that a half blood Simmental bull and a purebred Simmental bull are likely to bring different strengths when mated to purebred Angus cows.

As a former beef cattle nutritionist, I think about it like ration formulation. Imagine feeding the same ration to weaned calves, developing sale bulls, and mature cows. It might work reasonably well, but it would never be as precise as formulating a ration for each class of cattle.



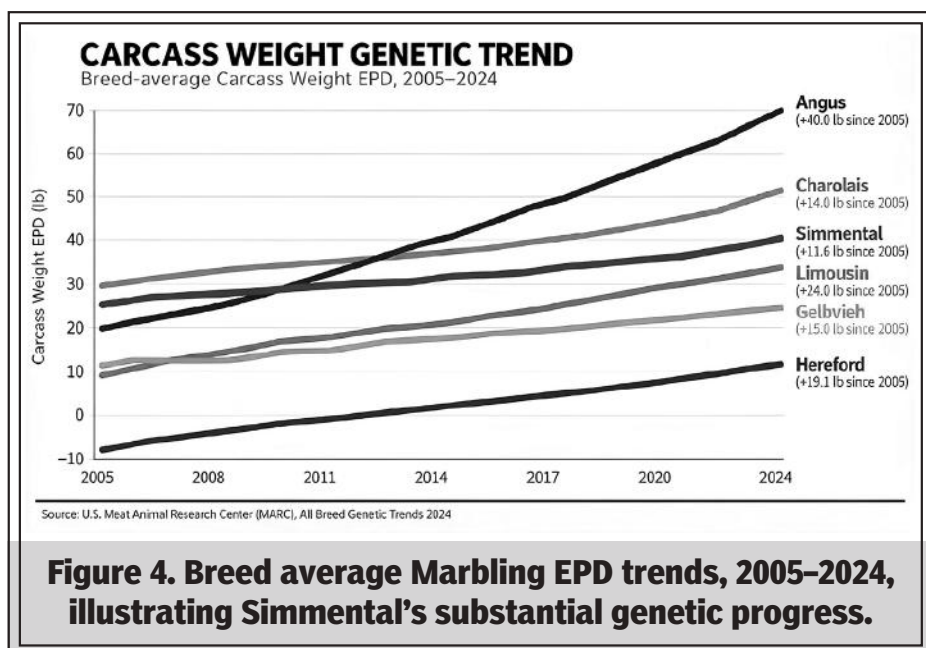
The original \$API and \$TI worked in much the same way, using one general relative emphasis framework (the familiar \$API pyramid). The updated model allows emphasis to change as breed composition changes, much like adjusting a ration to better fit the cattle you are feeding.

There will be much more to discuss in the weeks ahead, including why certain traits receive more or less emphasis and how today's economics influence those decisions.

We are excited about where the updated \$API and \$TI are headed and will continue sharing more detail as we move forward.

Finding the Balance – Cow Efficiency and Carcass Value in the Updated \$API and \$TI

As we have shared more information about the updated \$API and \$TI, three changes have received a lot of attention — \$API places downward pressure on mature cow weight, carcass weight carries more relative emphasis, and marbling carries less relative emphasis than before.



In many ways, those changes reflect a larger challenge facing the beef industry. We are being asked to produce more pounds of product while also keeping cow size, maintenance cost, and forage use in check.

That creates an obvious tension. If we want more carcass weight, are we simply going to make mature cows bigger too? And if moderate, cost efficient cows are important, why not build an index

that stops at weaning and focuses solely on the cow-calf producer?

These are fair questions that highlight what I like most about the updated \$API — it balances cow efficiency with downstream terminal value.

Marbling Still Matters – When \$API and \$TI debuted over 20 years ago, carcass quality was a major challenge across the industry, with the percentage of cattle grading Choice and Prime near historic lows. Improving marbling offered substantial economic opportunity.

Simmental breeders responded. Over the next two decades, breeders submitted carcass and ultrasound data, used the Marbling EPD, and embraced \$API and \$TI as selection tools. Today's population is far better positioned to capture grid premiums than it was in 2005. In short, the indexes did their job.

Think of a basketball player who struggles from the three point line.

He practices relentlessly until he becomes a great shooter.

Does he stop shooting threes? Of course not.

But he doesn't keep spending all his practice time fixing a problem he's already solved.

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We've made tremendous progress.

Simmental Executive VP Report continued on the next page

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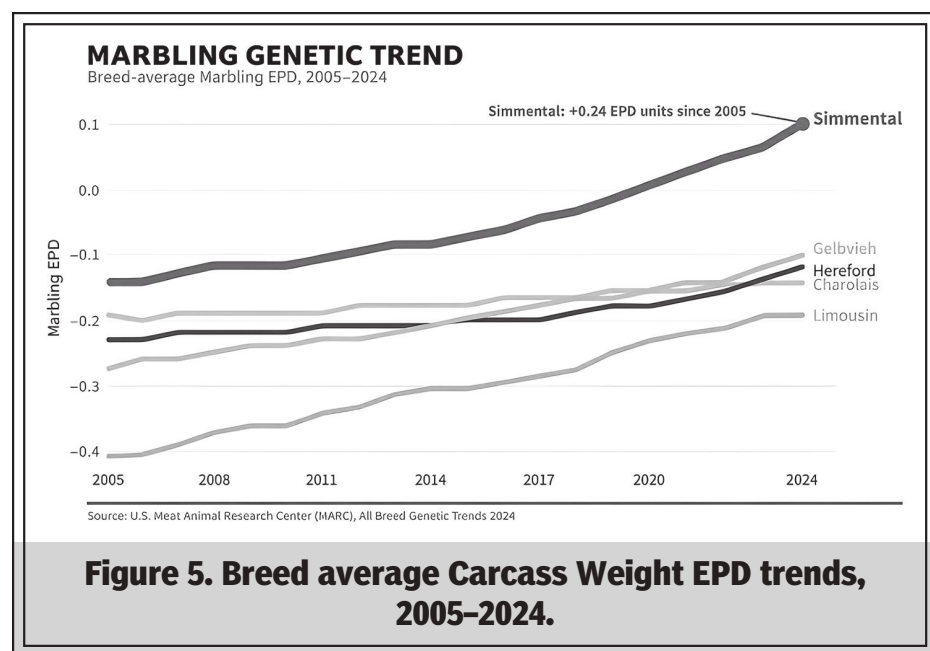
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Simmental Executive VP Report *continued from the previous page*



Marbling still matters. It still pays. It still carries substantial weight in our indexes.

But progress gives us permission to put more pressure on the next opportunities.

At the same time, the industry has continued moving toward substantially heavier carcasses, a long term trend that has accelerated sharply in recent years. In work by Dr. Tatum and colleagues, although quality grade mattered, carcass weight was by far the biggest driver of carcass value, accounting for roughly 77–84 percent of the difference in revenue.

That makes intuitive sense. On most grids, I would rather market a 950 pound Choice carcass than an 800 pound Prime carcass. Prime premiums are important, but so are pounds. In this case, I still have another 150 pounds of product to sell.

Genetic trends remind us that selection indexes work. While Simmental breeders made substantial progress in marbling, other breeds have emphasized carcass weight.

The takeaway is not that Simmental should chase maximum carcass weight. Extremes rarely serve the cattle industry well.

The opportunity is to create more carcass weight efficiently while balancing the other traits that drive profitability — exactly what \$API and \$TI are designed to do.

Why Not Stop at Weaning? If most cow-calf producers sell calves at or near weaning, why doesn't ASA simply build a maternal index that maximizes profitability at that point? Because the cattle industry only works when the next owner still wants to buy your calves.

If cattle underperform for backgrounders, feedyards, or packers, eventually those buyers discount them — or buy something else. That loss in confidence ultimately flows back upstream to both the cow-calf and seedstock producer.

That is why \$API considers profitability across the production chain. SimGenetics needs to create value for the cow-calf producer, but they also need to work for the next owner.

\$API can reward value beyond weaning without letting mature

cow size get out of bounds, and the fixed land base is what makes that possible.

The Fixed Land Base Keeps Us Honest — \$API uses a fixed land base. In other words, the model assumes the amount of forage available does not increase just because cows get bigger. As mature cow size increases, carrying capacity declines, meaning fewer cows can be maintained on the same acres.

Because mature cow weight directly drives maintenance costs, the updated model creates a natural economic check against inflating cow size just to add carcass weight.

This is where the updated \$API excels. It challenges us to keep cows efficient, fertile, and well adapted to their environment while producing calves that generate profit after leaving the ranch.

Finding that balance is the paradox facing the industry today — and exactly the kind of challenge SimGenetics should embrace.

There will be multiple ways to create a high \$API animal. Some will generate value through Stayability and lower cow cost; others through growth and carcass merit. The goal is not one visual mold. The goal is profit.

The better question is not, "What should high \$API cattle look like?" but, "How do these cattle make money?"

Our responsibility is not to preserve yesterday's rankings. It is to build cattle that create value for tomorrow's beef industry.

This information is taken from a series of articles found on www.simmental.org



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5177N ASA 4613969 PB SM
RFS ROLL CALL x GIBBS 3400L SM STAR 0532X

CE	WW	YW	STAY	MARB	RE	SAPI	STI
17	90	143	19	0.48	0.84	174	99



5250N ASA 4613460 SIMANGUS
CCR PRIMAL 8036K x GIBBS 3292L ALU 6468D

CE	WW	YW	STAY	MARB	RE	SAPI	STI
10	95	144	22	0.58	0.71	159	95



5N15 ASA 4650306 SIMANGUS
BASIN KEYSTONE 2021 x WS MISS ALL DAKOTA B208

CE	WW	YW	STAY	MARB	RE	SAPI	STI
9	98	163	17	0.95	0.95	172	106



5194N ASA 4613503 PB SM
GIBBS PROSPERITY 3125L x GIBBS 2236K LOUISE Y534

CE	WW	YW	STAY	MARB	RE	SAPI	STI
11	84	133	22	0.37	0.90	161	91



5324N ASA 4613462 SIMANGUS
EGL CCR RAWHIDE 137J x GIBBS 3228L MABELLE 7004E

CE	WW	YW	STAY	MARB	RE	SAPI	STI
18	95	144	19	0.96	0.06	192	109



5103N ASA 4613501 PB SM
LCDR RESERVE 210J x GIBBS 2140K JILL Y509

CE	WW	YW	STAY	MARB	RE	SAPI	STI
13	102	160	20	0.31	1.34	166	101



5400N ASA 4613926 SIMANGUS
GIBBS HIGHWAYMAN 3130L x GIBBS 9118G ERICA 5084C

CE	WW	YW	STAY	MARB	RE	SAPI	STI
14	121	190	18	0.83	1.07	184	120



5N26 ASA 4650317 PB SM
TRIF BREAKAWAY 206K x BGIBBS 2392K HANOI CLRS0110H

CE	WW	YW	STAY	MARB	RE	SAPI	STI
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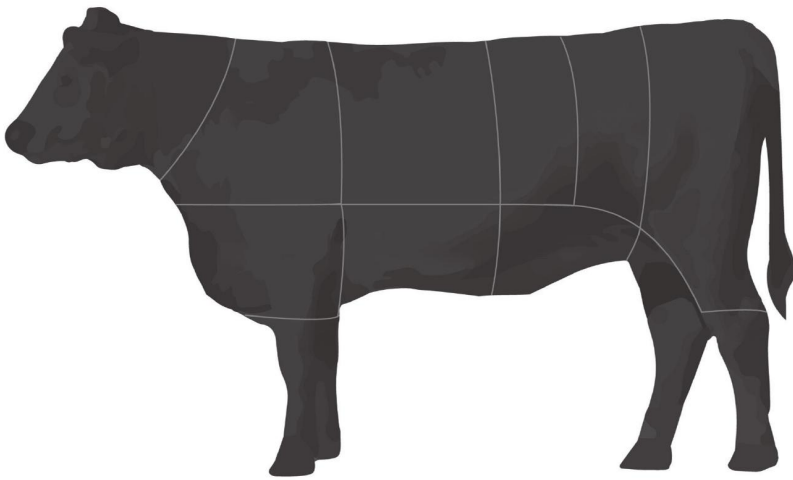
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S.C. CHAROLAIS NEWS

By **GEORGEANNE WEBB**, S.C. Charolais Association

I am writing this article to email on my cellphone. The reason being that Helene's Yankee cousin paid a visit last weekend, arriving from the North. Helene came here from the South. There's not as much damage, but a lot of roads are still impassable because of the number of trees down. We are landlocked and have no power, internet, or landline. Thank goodness we have a Generac. Again, we have lots of fences down, but no one can get out and take a road trip. I talked to a cattleman friend in North Carolina, and he lost the roof to his barn. We don't have anything that bad, thank goodness.

I have attached a picture of our new heifer. She was born on August 25, so you know her name is Dolly. I think Dolly would be proud, and I think my Dolly is an outstanding tribute to a wonderful person.

Just to let you folks in North Carolina know, I am looking for volunteers to spotlight their farms for the January issue of *The Carolina Cattle Connection*. I will be calling and approaching folks at the Appalachian Classic sale in Tennessee. If you would like to volunteer, call me.



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I have tried the “Generic Marshall” from my local co-op. In short, it did not come close to production or have the carrying capacity like WAX Marshall... it looked more like Gulf... it did not have the vigor and fast recovery like WAX Marshall.

Every year is different and full of unexpected surprises, but from all my years with WAX Marshall, I feel confident in the outcome.

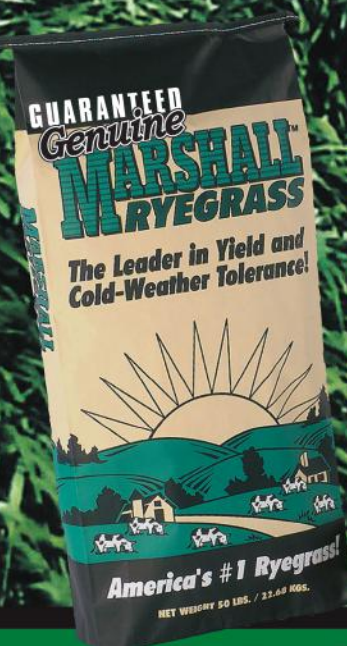
The “Generic” just did not produce. Planting 700 acres of ryegrass, I do not need any surprises for myself or my cattle.

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Bud Glasscock

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Pioneer Launches ‘Hats Off to Farmers’ Collaboration With Multiplatinum Country Music Star Chris Janson. Proceeds

Will Benefit the Deep Roots Mental Wellness Program From Rural Minds.

Pioneer, the flagship seed brand of Corteva Agriscience, is putting its support for farmers into action through a new collaboration with multi-platinum country music star Chris Janson to champion mental health in rural communities. Together, Pioneer and Janson aim to raise awareness of the mental health challenges facing farmers while raising funds through special edition, co-branded hats benefiting the Deep Roots Mental Wellness Program from Rural Minds, a national nonprofit focused on improving mental health outcomes in rural America.

This partnership underscores Pioneer’s long standing dedication to the agriculture community, supporting farmers both in their work and in overcoming the challenges they face beyond the field. By collaborating with Janson and Rural Minds, Pioneer aims to foster more open conversations about mental health in farming communities and take meaningful steps to offer vital resources to those who feed and fuel America. As it wraps up its 100th anniversary celebrations, Pioneer also has committed \$100,000 to Rural Minds to provide farmers with a program to help build mental resiliency so they can thrive as they manage new challenges in an ever changing agricultural landscape.

“Farmers understand better than anyone that success requires resilience, adaptability, and a long term perspective,” said Liz Knutson, Pioneer Agency Marketing Leader. “The Pioneer brand has stood alongside farmers for a century, and we are committed to helping the next generation develop strong roots so they can continue to grow and flourish through whatever seasons lie ahead.”

Pioneer has partnered with Janson because of his deep affinity for farmers and America’s rural communities and his connection to the Pioneer brand. Janson grew up in a rural farming community and has a personal connection to agriculture and the Pioneer brand. A gold and multi-platinum awarded artist whose songs have amassed billions of streams on listening platforms, Janson has leveraged his success to support philanthropic causes that benefit rural America — especially as an advocate for mental health.

“Pioneer is a brand that I have recognized since I was a child. This is a great way to reach into a community that both Pioneer and I are passionate about,” Janson said. “I’ve been thanking farmers my whole life because I grew up around them and respect them. They are the heartbeat of America. I’m so proud to be part of this collaboration to support our rural communities.”

In addition to the hat collaboration, Pioneer and Janson will raise money for Rural Minds by auctioning a branded guitar autographed and played by Janson during his fall and winter tour. The auction will take place next spring.

All funds raised from the Hats Off to Farmers collaboration will

benefit the Deep Roots Mental Wellness Program from Rural Minds, which will provide tools to help farmers develop mental resilience and recognize the signs of mental distress, with guidance on where to access resources for help when it is needed.

Rural Minds is the only national 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization focused on improving mental health outcomes of the 46 million people who live and work in rural America. Founded in 2021 by Jeff Winton, a dairy farmer from western New York, the organization’s vision is to remove the suffering, silence, and stigma around mental illness in rural America.

“For the last 100 years, Pioneer has provided seed products that have helped farmers prosper and evolve into the central source of the global food supply,” Winton said. “We are honored to partner with Pioneer, as it enters its second century of operation, to help young farmers and their families develop the mental resilience skills they will need to weather the volatility inherent in the business of farming and to maintain the quality of life that is such a special part of farm family life.

Support the Hats Off to Farmers collaboration by purchasing a special edition hat at pioneerchrisjansonhats2026.itemorder.com/shop/home/. To learn more about how Rural Minds is helping farmers build mental resilience, visit ruralminds.org/DeepRoots. To find upcoming Janson tour dates near you, visit chrisjanson.com. Follow Pioneer, Chris Janson, and Rural Minds on social channels for real time updates and to learn more about the program.

About Pioneer. *Pioneer is the world’s leading developer and supplier of advanced plant genetics, providing high quality seeds to farmers in more than 70 countries. Pioneer provides agronomic support and services to help increase farmer productivity and profitability and strives to develop sustainable agricultural systems for people everywhere.*

About Corteva Agriscience. *Corteva, Inc. is a global pure play agriculture company that combines industry leading innovation, high touch customer engagement, and operational execution to profitably deliver solutions for the world’s most pressing agriculture challenges. Corteva generates advantaged market preference through its unique distribution strategy, together with its balanced and globally diverse mix of seed, crop protection, and digital products and services. With some of the most recognized brands in agriculture and a technology pipeline well positioned to drive growth, the company is committed to maximizing productivity for farmers while working with stakeholders throughout the food system as it fulfills its promise to enrich the lives of those who produce and those who consume, ensuring progress for generations to come. More information can be found at www.corteva.com.*



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Management Strategies to Improve Stocker Productivity and Profitability

By DR. BENJAMIN RAJO & DR. CARRIE PICKWORTH, *N.C. State University*

The U.S. beef industry has undergone significant changes since the beginning of this decade, with several sectors of the industry facing different challenges and opportunities. The national cattle inventory has been slowly but steadily declining, reaching its lowest level since 1961, according to the USDA report published earlier this year. This decline is partially influenced by increased farmland loss across several regions of the country, which has also affected forage, roughage, and grain production, consequently increasing feed costs. Additionally, the varying levels of drought experienced across the country since last year have impacted not only forage production and feed costs but also important management decisions like culling and herd rebuilding. Conversely, consumer demand for beef products has remained strong during this period and, combined with the limited cattle supply, has driven cattle prices to record highs. The combination of these factors highlights the need to identify strategies that can increase cattle productivity

while using similar or fewer resources, ultimately improving the efficiency and profitability of beef operations.

In the beef production chain, stocker enterprises play a significant role by receiving weaned calves from cow-calf operations and preparing them for their transition to feedlots. In North Carolina and other Southeastern states, stocker operations are particularly relevant because most cow-calf farms manage small herds and would face multiple challenges marketing their weaned calves directly to feedlots. Instead, stocker operators commingle these small groups of calves into larger, more uniform groups that can be managed and marketed more efficiently. Under the current cattle market, these improvements also translate into higher sale prices and greater revenue for stocker operations.

Maximizing cattle performance and productivity in this region requires management practices that address its unique environmental conditions. Warm temperatures and high humidity throughout much of the year promote forage growth but also increase the risk of heat stress in grazing cattle. In addition, many pastures are composed primarily of either warm season grasses, which are generally low in protein content, or endophyte infected tall fescue, which causes fescue toxicosis and reduces performance in grazing livestock. Adopting management strategies that minimize the effects of these environmental constraints can improve stocker growth, efficiency, and overall productivity.

Among the available strategies, incorporating protein supplementation through byproducts or commercial feeds can increase the availability of nutrients needed to support cattle growth and performance. Crop residues and feed byproducts can often be sourced locally at a relatively low cost. However, producers should consider their availability, storage requirements, and variability in nutritional quality to avoid unexpected outcomes. Alternatively, commercial feeds are typically more expensive but provide a consistent supply of highly digestible nutrients. In addition, some commercial feeds include vitamin and mineral packages that further enhance the nutritional program.

Another strategy to consider is the use of growth promoting implants. Commercially used in cattle since the 1950s, these implants are administered as small pellets placed under the skin of the animal's ear. They slowly release low concentrations of hormones, such as estrogens or androgens, which enhance growth by complementing the effects of naturally occurring hormones. As a result, cattle can reach their target weight in less time while consuming less feed. Due to misinformation, the use of growth implants is often viewed negatively by some consumers and regulators. However, extensive research has demonstrated that growth promoting implants are safe for cattle and that beef from implanted cattle is safe for human consumption. Additionally, implant use can reduce the cost of beef



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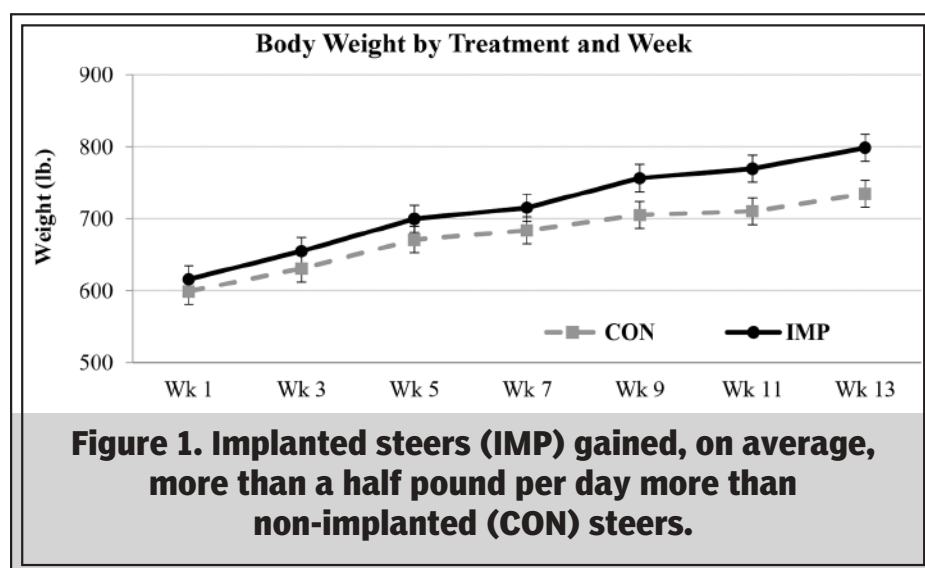
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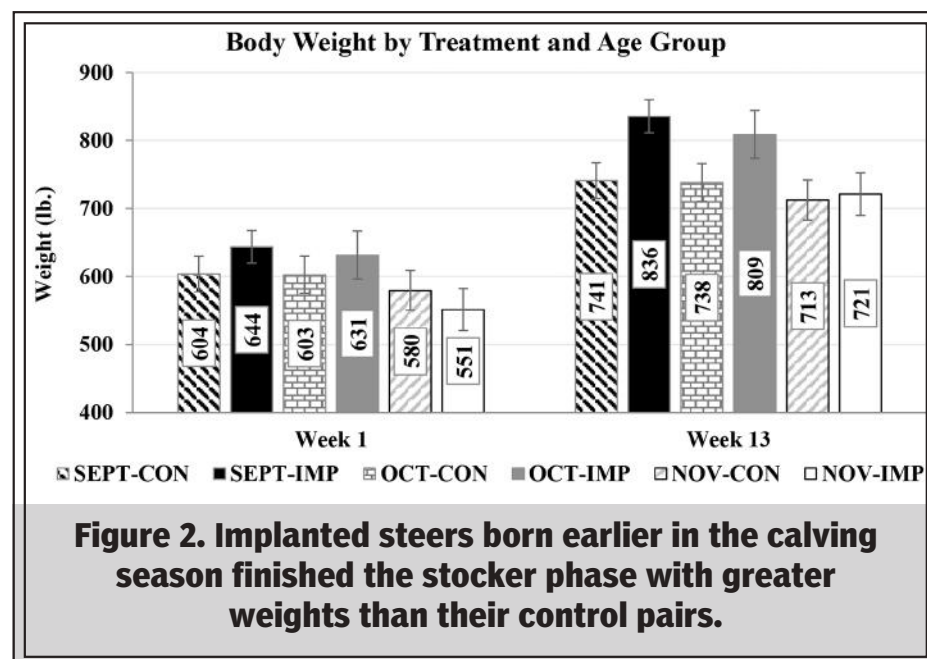
production through a 20 percent increase in weight gain and 15 percent enhancement in feed efficiency.

Recent research conducted by N.C. State University supports the use of protein supplementation and growth promoting implants to improve stocker productivity. At the Mountain Research Station in Waynesville, N.C., purebred Angus steers were divided into two groups: treatment steers received a growth promoting implant — Revalor-G, Merck Animal Health — while control steers remained non-implanted. All steers rotationally grazed endophyte infected — Kentucky-31 tall fescue — pastures and were supplemented using a 16% protein pelleted feed at 1 percent of body weight per head per day throughout an 84 day period, from mid-August to mid-November. The overall implant cost was \$3.25/head. Results showed that implanted steers gained, on average, 0.56 lbs/day more, resulting in an additional 47 lbs of total weight gain over the 84 day stocker phase. To provide an economic perspective, using an average market price of \$275.00/cwt, the additional gain from the implant would translate to a return of \$126.00/head after accounting for implant cost, as seen in Figure 1. Moreover, these differences also impacted the feed cost per pound of gain. Over the 84 day period, the cost of gain for the non-implanted steers was \$63.30/head, whereas the cost of gain for the implanted steers was \$48.90/head, representing savings of \$14.40/head.



Another benefit of using growth promoting implants was the increased value of steers born earlier in the calving season, as well as improved growth performance of steers born later in the season. After grouping steers by birth month — September, October, or November — within each treatment, results show that implanted steers born earlier in the calving season finished the stocker phase weighing, on average, 82 lbs more than their control pairs, which would translate to an additional \$225.50/head at an average market price of \$275.00/cwt. Additionally, implanted steers born later in the calving season were able to finish the stocker phase at weights similar to those of the other non-implanted steers, as seen in Figure 2.

These results demonstrate that combining protein supplementation with growth promoting implants can significantly improve the performance and productivity of steers grazing endophyte infected pastures. The findings also highlight how management decisions made at the cow-calf level can influence cattle



performance throughout the production chain. Selecting females that consistently calve earlier in the calving season increases the likelihood of producing heavier calves at weaning, which can be marketed at a higher value and continue to outperform their later born counterparts during the stocker phase. Together, these management strategies provide producers with practical opportunities to improve productivity and capture greater value in today's cattle market.

As cattle producers continue to navigate high input costs, limited cattle inventories, and record market prices, improving production efficiency remains one of the best opportunities to increase profitability. Management practices such as strategic protein supplementation and the use of growth promoting implants provide practical, research based tools that help cattle convert available resources into additional weight gain more efficiently. Additionally, these strategies can generate substantial economic returns while improving stocker performance under Southeastern grazing conditions. Although every operation differs in its available resources and management goals, producers should evaluate these practices within their own production systems to determine their potential benefits. Small improvements in animal performance can translate into significant economic returns, especially in today's cattle market, making informed management decisions more valuable than ever.

The authors gratefully acknowledge the N.C. Cattlemen's Association for its generous financial support of this research project.



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LIMOUSIN

North American Limousin Foundation

UPDATE

NALF August Board Meeting Update. NALF held its summer board meeting in Lincoln, Neb., on August 25–26 to close out the 2026 fiscal year, approve the 2026–2027 operating budget, review committee recommendations, and discuss key updates in finance, breed improvement, commercial marketing, technology, membership, and shows.

“President Joey Freund called the meeting to order, and the board also toured the Neogen lab in Lincoln to discuss current and potential future DNA testing options with NALF’s long standing partner, Neogen Corporation.

Neogen hosted a casual dinner at the Nebraska Cattlemen’s Association office, where Executive Vice President Laura Field updated NALF directors on Nebraska Cattlemen’s current issues and initiatives serving cow-calf and feedyard members as the industry approaches 2027.

Finance and Operations – NALF financials were projected to close the 2026 fiscal year with a profit. Steady registrations, increased transfers, and continued strong DNA testing were viewed as positive indicators given commercial cattle market conditions through 2025–2026.

Registration levels remained steady despite last year’s rate increase for both LIMS and non-LIMS registrations. This strength also reflected one of the strongest bull sale seasons in NALF history, as the industry increasingly looks to Limousin genetics and commercial crossbreeding programs to improve red meat yield value in feeder cattle.

Breed Improvement and Research – The Breed Improvement Committee is exploring opportunities to gather additional Bovine Congestive Heart Failure testing results. NALF currently offers the test through Neogen, and some breeders are using it; given the higher incidence of BCHF in the commercial cattle industry, the board is considering how to test the current active cattle population with existing 100K genomic results to better understand how the Limousin population compares with other breeds.

The board reviewed Vision Committee updates and progress on the Red Meat Yield phenotyping study being conducted by Texas Tech University, to which NALF has made a two year financial commitment. The current calf crop at USMARC will provide the first group of cattle for testing this year and is expected to be weaned in October 2026; next year’s USMARC calf crop will provide the second group from the 11 breeds participating in the analysis.

Scholarships and Commercial Marketing – NALF will launch a new annual NALF Hall of Fame scholarship in 2027, awarding \$1,000 in the names of past Hall of Fame inductees. Bret Begert moved to approve the scholarship, Casey Fanta seconded

the motion, and the board approved it unanimously; NALJA will continue offering its three annual Awards of Excellence scholarships as well as the GOI scholarships.

The Commercial Marketing Committee approved a 2027 annual budget of \$41,500 for DV Auction, Working Ranch Magazine, Cattle-Fax, Superior Livestock, Live Ag, Progressive Cattlemen, Showtimes magazine, and digital advertising through social media platforms, including Facebook. Curt Wieczorek moved to approve the budget, Kim Getz seconded the motion, and the board approved it unanimously.

Technology, Membership, and Shows – NALF staff reviewed and demonstrated progress on the updated 701X herdbook site, which is expected to replace the legacy DigitalBeef herdbook software in early 2027. Alison Jones demonstrated the new platform and highlighted features the system will offer NALF members.

The Membership Committee focused on updates and planning for upcoming livestock shows and events, including entries, move-in dates, MOE and junior show dates, and judges for the American Royal, NAILE, Cattlemen’s Congress, NWSS, and FWSS. The American Royal show date has moved to October 24 during the second week with Angus, and NALF is seeking a corporate sponsor for the GOI Auction meal, which typically costs \$10,000–\$12,000.

For NWSS, the Junior/MOE show will be held on January 10. It will be an active day that includes the Junior/MOE Show, Annual Meeting, and Legacy Sale that evening at the Chop House.

The Show Committee reviewed upcoming show schedules and rule changes for the new season. Tatum presented new division changes for several national shows, including Cattlemen’s Congress, NWSS, American Royal, and NAILE; West Virginia will host the Southeastern Summer Classic and junior regional show for a fourth year, with dates moving to May 21–23.

The NALJA Committee reviewed the 2026 Junior Nationals in Ohio and exhibitor survey feedback to identify potential improvements for the 2027 event in Grand Island, Nebraska. The fall junior board meeting will be held in Amarillo, Texas, October 8–10, and the spring junior board meeting will be held in conjunction with the Summit IGS Youth Leadership Conference in Oklahoma City, Okla., April 15–18.

Budget Approval – Finance Chairman Mark Haden presented the 2026–2027 fiscal year budget to the full NALF board. Curt Wieczorek moved to approve the budget, Rob Brawner seconded the motion, and the full board approved it unanimously.

About the North American Limousin Foundation. The North American Limousin Foundation, headquartered in Englewood, Colo., provides programs and services, including the documentation of more than 25,000 head of cattle annually, for approximately 4,000 members and their commercial customers. The Limousin breed and Lim-Flex hybrid offer industry leading growth and efficiency while being an ideal complement to British breeds. For more information about NALF, please visit www.nalf.org.

Two Inducted in the N.C. Mountain State Fair Livestock Hall of Fame

Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler inducted two longtime N.C. Mountain State Fair employees into the N.C. Mountain State Fair Livestock Hall of Fame.

Mark Mills of Peachland and Cameron Greene of Fletcher were inducted for their decades of support to the fair and the livestock industry in Western North Carolina.

“The N.C. Mountain State Fair Livestock Hall of Fame is a prestigious group of folks who have given so much of their time and energy to support the Mountain State Fair livestock shows. Both Cameron Greene and Mark Mills are deserving of this honor,” said Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler. “Both men have gone above and beyond the duties of what was required in their jobs. Their work reflected a true dedication to livestock programs at the fair. While much of their work was behind the scenes, countless youth and adult participants have benefited from the results of their efforts.”

Mark Mills

Mark Mills has been a fixture at the N.C. Mountain State Fair since 1999. That year, he was responsible for checking in livestock coming to the fair. In 2000, he began his role as assistant superintendent of livestock shows. In this role, he assists with everything from class setup, weigh-ins, show setup, ribbons, and more.

“A lot of what Mark does is behind-the-scenes work,” said Troxler. “But it is this work that ensures the livestock shows at the Mountain State Fair run smoothly. These shows are successful in large part because of his dedication and hard work. Giving youth great memories in the show ring leaves a lasting impact. The lessons they learn showing animals not only teach them about our state’s No. 1 industry but can also help them be successful with any future career path they choose.”

Mills and his wife, Melissa, were both raised on cattle farms. They live in Peachland and have two sons, Clint and Mason. They also farm and have 150 cows and around 100 sheep.

Cameron Greene

Cameron Greene served as the assistant manager of the WNC Ag Center for 30 years, retiring this past February. When Greene first started, there was a single livestock arena. Now, the Ag Center has grown into one of the largest event venues in Western North Carolina.

“For nearly 30 years, Cameron was a big part of the growth of the Ag Center,” said Troxler, “and he dedicated himself to making it a great place to work, visit, and host events. He’s been a big part of maintaining standards and making improvements whenever and wherever possible.”

Greene put in many 14–16 hour days going above and beyond the normal tasks of his job to ensure the fair was operating well and that people had what they needed. “Cameron has a passion for service and for the Mountain State Fair. In his three decades of service, his work made a difference for our fair attendees and our livestock exhibitors,” said Troxler.

Greene’s hometown is Fletcher. He’s the son of David and Millie Greene. He and his wife Desiree have three children, Devan, Dawson, and Caden.



West End Precast

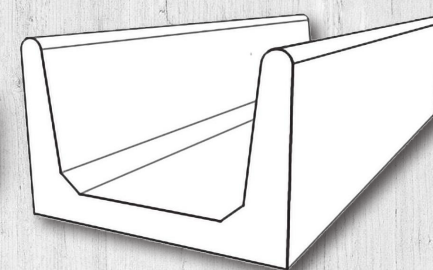
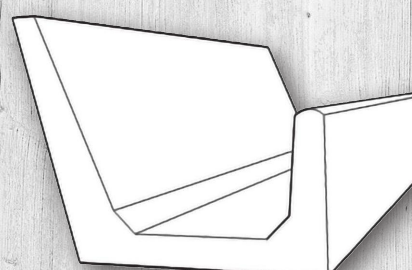
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What Virtual Fencing System Makes Sense for You?

By **MARISSA EEKHOFF, YIJIE XIONG, MITCH STEPHENSON, MARY DREWNOSKI,**
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Virtual fencing systems can provide greater flexibility, reduce labor associated with interior fencing, and create new opportunities for grazing management. However, the systems differ in how they communicate with collars, the pasture scale they can accommodate, battery or solar power requirements, additional features, and pricing.

The right choice depends on where cattle will be grazing, local network coverage, how frequently cattle will be moved, herd size, and how the producer intends to use the technology. Virtual fencing also should not be treated as a replacement for a secure perimeter fence and sound grazing management. The University of Arizona has a virtual fencing vendor comparison table that can help you visualize some of the differences among systems at a glance.

Below, we examine several of these considerations in greater detail.

Which communication method fits your grazing operation?

Virtual fencing systems transmit boundary updates and collar information through one of three primary communication methods — a locally installed base station, a cellular network, or satellite communication. The best option depends on the terrain, available cellular connectivity, and whether cattle remain on one contiguous property or are moved among several locations.

Base station systems may be well suited to contiguous grazing areas. Virtual fencing systems with locally installed base stations utilize Internet of Things (IoT) networks to communicate with the collars. Basically, radio signals that work like a large scale walkie talkies scenario. Base station communication is offered through eShepherd and Vence. A properly located base station can provide dependable communication over approximately 2,000 to 10,000 acres, with coverage depending on terrain, tower placement, and other obstructions such as hills and trees. Producers grazing noncontiguous properties or in rough terrain may need more than one base station at each location.

Cellular systems offer greater flexibility. Because they do not require a base station to be installed on each property, collars can be moved among pastures or locations with less additional infrastructure. This may be especially useful for producers grazing leased land, crop residue, annual forages, or other noncontiguous fields. The systems using cellular networks include eShepherd, Monil, and NoFence.

Collar connectivity depends on a different bandwidth than our cellphones, allowing collars to have service in areas where our cellphones may not. Cellular connectivity allows the collar to use a different bandwidth from multiple carriers, switching automatically when one becomes less available. Cellular systems work with all major providers such as AT&T, T-Mobile, Verizon, and U.S. Cellular. The best network provider is automatically managed by the virtual fence system and requires no additional action on the user

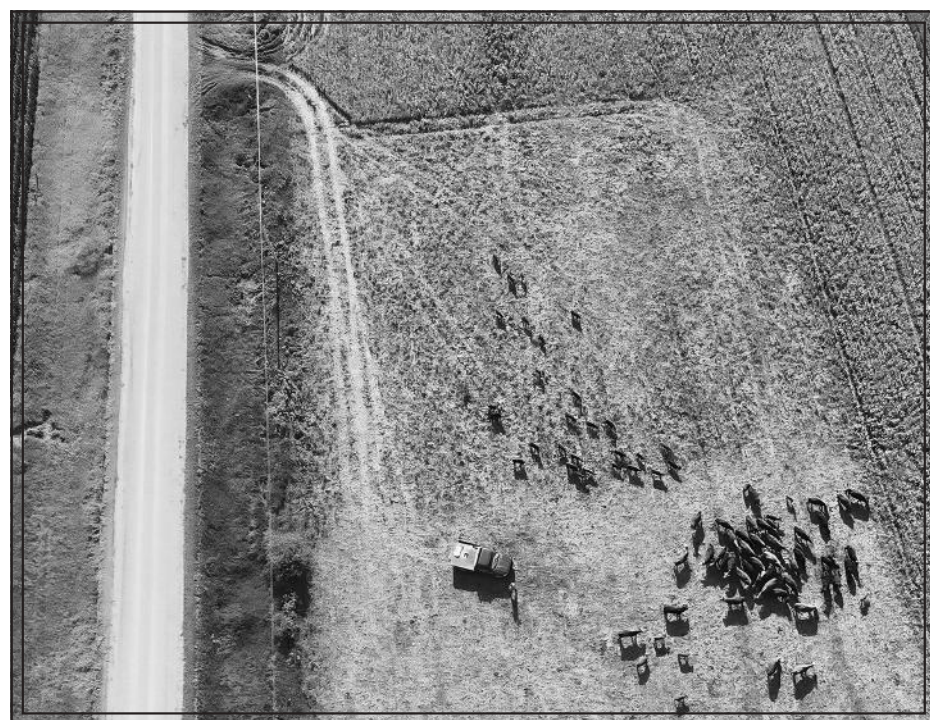
side. In areas where cellular reception is questionable or spotty, new boundaries, shifts/moves, and other updates may be delayed until the collar reconnects. However, once a boundary has been configured and communicated, the collar can continue containing (for a set duration) cattle during a temporary loss of communication.

Satellite communication offers many of the mobility advantages of cellular systems, with the added benefit of working in areas with little or no cellular coverage. Halter is currently the only system offering an exclusively satellite option. NoFence has released a pre-order for a new collar system that has back-up satellite communication, though collars themselves will not be available until Spring 2027.

Does the system fit your grazing scale? Virtual fencing systems also differ in the size of the grazing areas they can create. Producers interested in intensive grazing management should consider the minimum size of a virtual pasture or allocation. NoFence, eShepherd, Monil, and Halter can create allocations of approximately one-half acre or less, allowing producers to make relatively small and frequent grazing moves. Vence is designed primarily for more extensive grazing systems and has a stated minimum pasture size of 200 acres.

Maximum acreage may also matter for large operations. NoFence lists a maximum of 25,000 acres, while the other systems do not state a maximum acreage. However, that does not necessarily mean their coverage is unlimited. For systems that depend on base stations, the practical area covered will depend on terrain and the number and placement of base stations. Individual systems may also have limitations related to boundary length or map design rather than total acres. For example, eShepherd limits each virtual fence segment to 25 miles.

What maintenance will the collars require? Most systems



rely on a battery that is solar powered and do not require additional charging while on the animal. Solar powered collars are generally designed to maintain their charge while on cattle under open sky conditions. Extended shade, such as heavy tree cover, may create a need for supplemental charging. Currently, Monil and NoFence are the only companies that have chargers available for their collars, though they are not normally required.

Producers using solar powered systems should allow time for collars to charge before placing them on cattle. Depending on their charge when delivered, collars may need to sit in direct sunlight for approximately three to seven days.

The Vence system is unique and does not rely on a solar powered battery but rather a lithium ion battery that typically needs to be replaced in each collar every three months to one year. The frequency of replacement depends on the cattle's distance to and the amount of interactions with the virtual boundaries. Thus, the smaller the pasture, the greater frequency of replacement, adding labor because cattle must be handled to replace batteries.

What else can the system tell you? The information collected by virtual fencing collars can be one of the technology's greatest benefits. Many producers find real time cattle locations useful because they can provide peace of mind and make it easier to locate animals for health checks.

Many systems provide users with location maps or heat maps, allowing the user to see where cattle spend most of their time. This can allow users to modify their allocations to reduce over grazing and encourage cattle to use areas of the pasture they are not grazing as heavily. Halter offers two plans, BeefBase and BeefPro, with some additional features within Halter, including heat maps, requiring the BeefPro plan.

Additionally, most systems provide animal alerts. Some systems generate alerts when an animal has not moved for a specified period. An inactivity alert may indicate a lost collar, an animal that needs attention, or another issue that should be checked. These alerts can help producers prioritize animal checks, but they do not diagnose illness or confirm the cause of reduced activity. Alerts are also provided when animals have escaped the boundary, if/when they have returned within the boundary, or collars have a low battery level.

Companies continue to develop additional monitoring capabilities, including potential estrus and calving alerts. Though these are still under development.

What is the pricing model that best suits me? Virtual fencing companies generally offer collars through one of two models — purchasing the collars outright or leasing them. Both models typically include ongoing subscription fees for software, connectivity, or data services. There are pros and cons to each pricing model.

Companies offering collars for purchase include eShepherd, Monil, and NoFence. Purchasing gives the producer ownership of the collars and avoids multiyear collar lease agreements, although an ongoing subscription is still required. Purchasing does allow second-hand sale opportunities if the need arises.

The purchase price of collars can vary depending upon the number of collars that you are purchasing. For example, eShepherd and NoFence have a lower purchase price if you buy a certain

number of collars. However, Monil has a flat collar purchase price with subscription fees differing depending upon the number of collars purchased. NoFence allows for the upfront purchase of collars, as well as a lease-to-own option if you purchase 100 or more collars. An additional consideration if you own or manage a smaller herd, is the companies who would be willing to work with you. The companies which use a purchase model (eShepherd, Monil, and NoFence) have purchase minimums at or below six collars.

Companies where collars are strictly available for lease include Vence and Halter. With collars on lease, the company may assume responsibility for maintenance and replacement costs. But leasing collars generally requires a contract with a time commitment and a specific minimum of collars — usually 100. With Vence, where base stations are required, the producer is responsible for purchasing the base station outright. However, the collars remain on lease.

Regardless of pricing model, each company has a required, varying subscription fee that can be paid monthly or annually. Subscription fees are different across companies and different depending on the number of collars that you require a subscription for. Some companies, like NoFence, offers the first year of subscription fees for free, but have more expensive collar prices.

Given these differences in pricing models, we have put together a Virtual Fence Cost Estimator Tool to allow you to evaluate what the costs may look like for your herd. Because products, pricing, and service plans continue to change, producers should confirm current specifications with the company before making a purchase or signing a lease.

How easy is the system to use, and what support is available? The program interface and level of customer support can strongly influence how useful a virtual fencing system is in day-to-day management. Some systems allow producers to create and modify boundaries from a cellphone, while others rely primarily on a computer; some offer both options. Producers should consider where and how they expect to make pasture moves, especially if boundaries may need to be changed while they are away from the office.

Before selecting a system, ask a company representative to demonstrate common tasks such as creating a new pasture, moving a boundary, locating cattle, and reviewing alerts. Producers should also ask what training is provided, how customer service is accessed, and how quickly help is typically available. A system may have the right technical capabilities, but it also needs to be convenient to use and supported when problems arise.

Final thoughts — Choosing a virtual fencing system is more than finding the lowest cost option. Begin by identifying which communication method will work where your cattle graze, then consider whether the system fits your grazing scale and herd size, the maintenance it will require, the information it can provide, and how easily you can use it. Ultimately, the best system is the one that fits your operation, supports the way you want to manage cattle, and provides dependable help when you need it. Because products and services continue to evolve, visit with company representatives and confirm current capabilities before making a final decision.

Photo by Marissa Eekhoff

Where's the (Local) Beef?

By D'LYN FORD, N.C. State University

Business has been brisk recently at R&B Rhyne Farms in Angier, N.C., where Rex and Beth Rhyne produce pasture raised beef, pork, and chicken. More North Carolina shoppers have been seeking farmers like the Rhynes to provide local sources of meat since August 21, when the U.S. announced plans to import tariff free beef in an attempt to lower grocery store prices.

“We have seen a 30 percent increase in inquiries, store visits and sales the last month,” Beth Rhyne reports. “The greatest request has been for locally sourced beef. Our bulk beef inquiries and sales have gone up significantly. Customers want to know exactly where their meat comes from.”

The Rhynes, like many other producers of pasture raised meat and poultry in North Carolina, sell their products in bulk on MeatSuite.com, a platform managed by N.C. Choices, that connects shoppers with local farmers, using the tagline, “Find your farmer. Fill your freezer.” Whether it’s 10 pounds of ground beef, a selection of meat for the grill, or a whole animal, options are plentiful.

For meal planning, a new, built-in tool at the top of the screen shows shoppers how many servings a bulk purchase will provide for a family, along with the cost per meal, simplifying the process for those unfamiliar with bulk buying.

“With our economy, inflation and various other things happening in the marketplace, our local food is somewhat insulated from those

market price changes,” says N.C. State University’s Sarah Blacklin, program director for N.C. Choices. “So the local meat on MeatSuite can actually be cost competitive, or even cheaper in some cases, compared to what you would buy from the grocery store. That’s attractive right now, not only for the stability of it, but the cost competitiveness.”

Feeding the Demand – MeatSuite continues to grow, with more than 60,000 shoppers annually and a spike in online traffic since late August. The platform is administered by N.C. Choices, an initiative of N.C. Cooperative Extension and the Center for Environmental Farming Systems at N.C. State University that promotes sustainable local, niche, and pasture based meat supply chains in North Carolina.

Over 350 farms across the state use the MeatSuite platform to sell their products in bulk, representing 81 of North Carolina’s 100 counties.

Though the average beef herd is about 35 animals, farms vary greatly across North Carolina, says Lee Menius, technical program specialist with NC Choices.

“A really nice thing about Meat Suite is when you look at North Carolina and our diversity of farms, we’ve got a lot of big farms; we’ve got a tremendous amount of small pockets of farmland here, everything from the hobby person who raises a couple of cows or sheep or a handful of chickens every year to people who have a herd



Farmers in all 100 North Carolina counties raise beef cattle.



Whether they're looking for 10 pounds of ground beef, a selection of meat for the grill, or a whole animal, North Carolina shoppers can find options on MeatSuite.com, which connects them with local farmers.

of several hundred cows. And we have all of those represented across MeatSuite.

Meating Needs – MeatSuite, which originated at Cornell University in New York in 2012, was launched and expanded in North Carolina in April 2020 at the beginning of the pandemic. Since then, training for producers, technical support, and site improvements have made it easier for farmers to use.

“Farmers need options because no two operations are the same,” says Milo Lewis, executive director of the N.C. Cattlemen’s Association. “Traditional livestock markets remain critically important to our industry, but direct-to-consumer marketing can provide another opportunity to producers who want to diversify how they sell their cattle to catch more value from the animals that they raise. And MeatSuite provides the platform to connect those wanting to sell directly to the consumer.”

Aside from the bulk buying directory that shoppers see, MeatSuite also offers farmer facing tools accessible through a login. These help producers with marketing, pricing, building product bundles, and even promotions such as freezer giveaways for MeatSuite shoppers. “We have a lot of farms signed up, but we’ve got plenty of room for more,” Menius says.

Lewis, who earned her bachelor’s degree in agricultural science from N.C. State University, notes that N.C. Choices used the MeatSuite platform as a model for its online N.C. Hay Finder tool, developed to serve livestock producers’ needs during the drought. In 2025, N.C. Choices and N.C. State Extension launched Hay Finder to connect farmers who needed hay with farmers who had hay to sell.

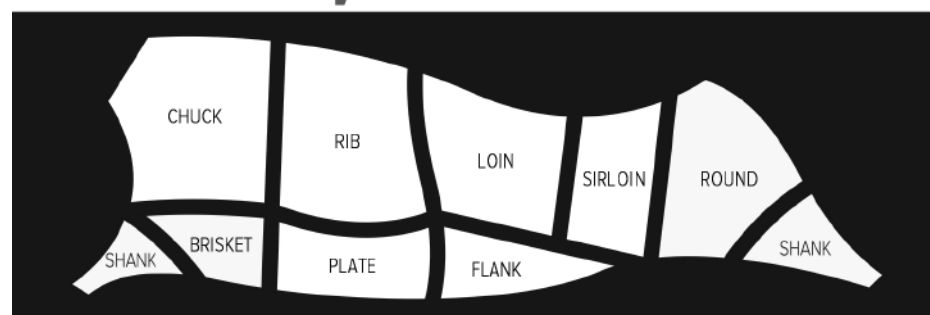
“It shows how Extension recognizes producer needs, and they adapt and build frameworks to support it,” Lewis says. “That’s lasting.”

Cattle in North Carolina:

- North Carolina had about 690,000 total head of cattle in January 2026. About half — 350,000 head — were beef cattle.
- Beef cattle are raised in all 100 counties in North Carolina.
- Chatham, Randolph, Wilkes, and Duplin counties are top beef producing areas.

• Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Statistics Service

Want to buy beef from a farmer?



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List Your Farm Online for FREE



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Visit the site and click
“sign up” to add your farm.

Sign up

MEATSUITE is an online directory of farms selling meat in bulk. The site is promoted in counties across NC and receives thousands of page views per month!

For more information about Meat Suite, contact
Lee Menius at lamenius@ncsu.edu



United States Department of Agriculture
National Institute of Food and Agriculture

The logo for Animal Ag Alliance News. It features a large, stylized black letter 'A' on the left. A diagonal line cuts through the 'A' from the bottom left towards the top right. To the right of the 'A' is the word 'NEWS' in a bold, black, sans-serif font. Below the 'A' and 'NEWS' is the text 'Animal Ag Alliance' in a smaller, black, sans-serif font, arranged in two lines: 'Animal Ag' on the top line and 'Alliance' on the bottom line.

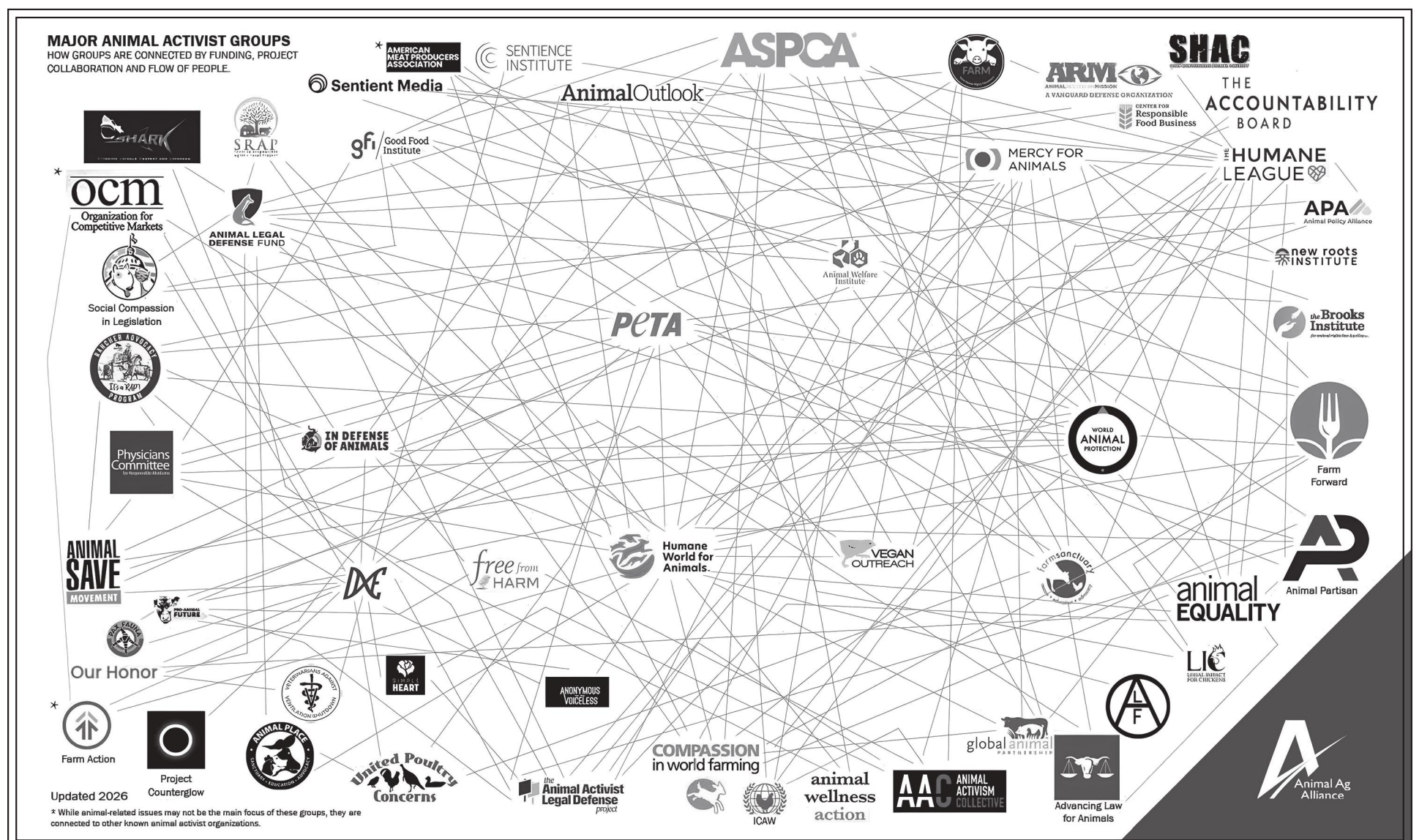
Animal activist funding surpasses \$1 billion as groups increase coordination. Updated reports reveal growing financial resources, strategic networks, and increased policy activity targeting animal agriculture. The Animal Agriculture Alliance has updated two flagship reports highlighting the funding, connections, and key players within the animal rights activist movement in the United States. This year's findings show continued growth in financial resources, increased coordination around federal policy, and ongoing extremist activity targeting the food supply chain.

The updated Major Animal Activist Groups Web includes the most active and/or extreme groups involved with or connected to animal rights and highlights the strategic, interconnected nature of the animal rights activist movement.

According to publicly filed financial records, the organizations highlighted on the web collectively bring in more than \$1.07 billion in annual revenue, much of which is used for anti-animal agriculture campaigns — a significant increase from \$865 million reported by the Alliance last year.

New additions to the web this year include the American Meat Producers Association and the International Council for Animal Welfare. Both organizations are heavily connected to well known animal activist groups through current and former staff. The American Meat Producers Association (AMPA), recently founded in 2025 with a focus on policy, has been a main driver in opposition to language in the 2026 Farm Bill draft supporting modern pork production. Leadership at AMPA has close ties to Humane World for Animals, formerly the Humane Society of the United States, while International Council for Animal Welfare (ICAW) staff have previous connections to organizations including The Humane League and Mercy For Animals. Another newly formed group, ICAW, is focused on “grassroots activism” and has been working to mobilize local animal rights groups to engage in protests targeting restaurants and retailers across the country and internationally on topics including fur, foie gras, and cage free eggs.

These connections are important to understand. While animal rights activist groups may differ in their public facing messages, tactics, and areas of focus, many are connected through staff, funding, coalitions, and campaigns and ultimately share the collective goal of eliminating animal agriculture and consumer



choice,” said Hannah Thompson-Weeman, president and CEO, Animal Agriculture Alliance.

New this year, the Alliance also developed a legislative focused breakdown of the web in response to increasingly coordinated efforts to influence the 2026 Farm Bill, particularly language related to California’s Proposition 12 and similar state level legislation. This report helps illustrate the connections among animal rights activist groups engaging in legislative issues, highlighting that several completely new groups or those that typically don’t engage in policy have entered this space since the drafting of the last Farm Bill.

The new report provides important context for legislators, policymakers, and the greater animal agriculture community as they encounter organizations that oppose animal agriculture, seeking to influence policies impacting farmers, ranchers, and the broader food system. More detailed versions of both webs are available exclusively to Alliance members.

Beyond legislative efforts, animal rights extremist activity continues to pose physical security risks to those involved in raising animals and producing food. The updated Radical Vegan Activism report details tactics used by animal rights extremists throughout 2025, including:

- 41 incidents of vandalism
- 36 cases of animal theft and/or release
- 23 trespasses

The latest data also shows that nearly one in four animal rights extremist attacks target farmers and food workers.

“This year’s findings show that the animal rights movement

continues to be well funded and highly connected, using a range of tactics that can threaten the safety and security of the entire food supply chain,” said Abby Kornegay, director of issues and engagement at the Animal Agriculture Alliance. “Understanding the organizations, individuals, and funding behind groups that oppose the consumption of animal protein is critical to protecting animal agriculture. It is an integral part of the Alliance’s work to keep the animal agriculture community informed and prepared.”

For more information about the Alliance’s work to monitor animal rights extremism, or to view the reports, visit animalagalliance.org/initiatives/monitoring-activism.

To learn more about proactive security measures to protect against potential threats, visit animalagalliance.org/initiatives/farm-security/.

About the Animal Agriculture Alliance. *The Alliance safeguards the future of animal agriculture and its value to society by bridging the communication gap between the farm and food communities. We connect key food industry stakeholders to arm them with responses to emerging issues. We engage food chain influencers and promote consumer choice by helping them better understand modern animal agriculture. We protect by exposing those who threaten our nation’s food security with damaging misinformation. For more information, visit www.animalagalliance.org.*



Where Agriculture and Communication Meet

By JESSICA WILLIAMS, N.C. State University

Agriculture has always been about more than crops and livestock. At its core, it is about people, relationships, and creating opportunities to make a difference. Those values shaped Lauren Hoesli long before she stepped onto N.C. State University’s campus, growing through years of involvement in 4-H and FFA and countless experiences alongside her father, a former agriculture teacher who later became an Extension agent. Those early lessons inspired a passion for agriculture and service that continues to guide her today.

Now a double major in communication and agricultural science, Hoesli has built a college experience around combining her love for storytelling with her commitment to the agricultural community. Expected to graduate in May 2027, she has embraced opportunities inside and outside the classroom that have helped her discover where her interests and talents intersect.

Growing up, Hoesli was immersed in agriculture. Whether attending educational events with her father or participating in youth leadership organizations, she was surrounded by people who believed in the power of education, service, and community. Those experiences introduced her to the many career opportunities within agriculture, but it was her time serving as an FFA officer that helped define her future.

As she worked alongside fellow students and gave back to the agricultural community, she realized her greatest passion wasn’t just agriculture itself — it was connecting with people and sharing their stories.

“Agriculture offers endless opportunities, but what truly drew me in were the personal stories, the relationships, and the chance to make a positive impact in the lives of others,” Hoesli said.

When Hoesli arrived at N.C. State University, she knew the it offered countless opportunities to explore those interests, even though there wasn’t a traditional agricultural communications degree program. Instead of viewing the absence of a dedicated program as a setback, she embraced the opportunity to chart her own academic path.

By pursuing majors in communication and agricultural science, she combined agricultural technical knowledge with the communication skills needed to engage diverse audiences. Through coursework, leadership opportunities, and hands-on experiences, she discovered the professional paths that energized her.

Along the way, she says N.C. State University has challenged her to become more adaptable, resilient, and confident. Two faculty mentors have played especially meaningful roles in that journey. Katie Sanders helped nurture Hoesli’s passion for communication while mentoring her through the Agricultural Communicators Program. As president of the program, Hoesli worked closely with Sanders to support current students while helping strengthen the organization’s future. Through several communication courses, she also gained valuable professional skills that reinforced her interest in agricultural communications.



Another influential mentor has been Mary Kate Morgan Lanier, who became an important source of guidance even before Hoesli officially added agricultural science as her second major. Lanier took the time to help her map out an academic plan that aligned with her goals and has remained a trusted advisor throughout her college experience. The encouragement and mentorship she received from both faculty members helped give her the confidence to pursue opportunities that stretched beyond the classroom.

That mindset is reflected in Hoesli’s involvement across campus. She completed the Agricultural Communicators Program during her sophomore year and continues to stay active as a member of NCSU Young Farmers and Ranchers. She also serves as an Agricultural and Human Sciences Ambassador and is a Thomas Jefferson Scholar,



Lauren and NCSU YF&R officers at an Oregon conference.

experiences that have strengthened her leadership skills while allowing her to represent the college and department.

Since Spring 2026, Hoesli has also served as the Agricultural and Human Sciences student communication assistant. In the role, she works alongside the department's public communication specialist to tell the stories of students, faculty, and programs across the department. Her responsibilities include writing feature stories, creating social media content and videos, designing promotional materials, and supporting communication efforts for departmental events.

The position has allowed her to apply what she's learned in the classroom while gaining practical experience in strategic communications. More importantly, it has reinforced her passion for helping others share their stories and highlighting the impact of agricultural and human sciences across North Carolina.

Hoesli has also spent the past three years working as a program assistant with the North Carolina 4-H office, supporting the Awards and Incentives Program. Her work focuses on coordinating logistics for youth competitions and recognition events throughout the year, ensuring each program provides a positive experience for

participants and their families.

Although much of the work happens behind the scenes, she has come to appreciate the significance of every detail. Watching a young 4-H member receive their first award reminded her that even the smallest tasks contribute to experiences that can inspire confidence and shape a young person's future.

"Knowing that I help make those moments possible is incredibly rewarding," Hoesli said.

As a former 4-H member herself, the opportunity has become much more than a student job. It has allowed her to give back to an organization that played a significant role in her own development while helping her discover new professional interests.

Outside of academics and work, Hoesli finds inspiration close to home. She credits her older sister, Gracean, for showing her the importance of balancing hard work, compassion, and service. Watching Gracean excel as a student at N.C. State University and now inspire young people as an agriculture teacher has motivated Hoesli to pursue her own goals with the same level of dedication and purpose.

Looking toward the future, Hoesli is excited by the possibilities that lie ahead. While she doesn't have every step mapped out, she hopes to build a career in event operations, either with a nonprofit agricultural organization or within the western sports and entertainment industry. She also hopes to continue traveling across the U.S. and internationally, learning from new communities and cultures along the way.

No matter where her career takes her, one goal remains unchanged. "I want to continue supporting the agriculture industry however I can, whether that's through my career, volunteering, or simply being an advocate and friend to the agricultural community," Hoesli said.

Whether she's coordinating youth events, creating stories that celebrate the work of others, or preparing for the next chapter of her career, Hoesli continues to demonstrate that meaningful leadership begins with serving others. Through every experience at N.C. State University, she has built a foundation rooted in communication, service, and a lifelong commitment to agriculture — one that will continue to shape both her career and the communities she serves.

Lauren Hoesli is a very deserving, multi-year recipient of the N.C. Cattlemen's Foundation Scholarship.



Lauren and fellow North Carolina 4-H program assistants.



In Loving Memory...

Charles Edward Smith, Sr.

August 28, 1938 – September 13, 2026

It is with deep sadness and profound love that the family of Charles Edward Smith, Sr., age 88, announces his peaceful passing on September 13 at his residence in Wadley, Georgia.

Charles was born on August 28, 1938, in Wadley to the late William Patrick Smith and Coralie Stevens Smith. A devoted husband, father, grandfather, great grandfather, brother, and friend, he lived a life defined by kindness, integrity, and unwavering dedication to his family and community.



Charles graduated from Wadley High School in 1957 and later served honorably in the U.S. National Guard. Following his military service, he built a successful career breeding Polled Hereford and Angus cattle, known as CES Herefords and Angus where he was respected for his leadership, wisdom, and commitment to helping others. He was inducted into the Georgia Hereford Hall of Fame in 2021. To those who knew him best, however, his greatest accomplishment was his role as a loving family man.

Throughout his life, he was deeply committed to agriculture, education, and community service. He proudly served on the Georgia Hereford Association Board of Directors from 1991 to 1993 and was elected President of the Association for the 1992–1993 term. His dedication to youth and education was evident as a founding member of Thomas Jefferson Academy, helping establish an institution that continues to impact generations of students, including his children, grandchildren, and now great grandchildren. In recognition of his family’s enduring agricultural legacy and stewardship of the land, his farm was designated a Georgia Centennial Farm in 2017, an honor celebrating more than a century

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A lifelong farmer and dedicated steward of the land, he earned widespread respect for his commitment to agriculture and his pursuit of excellence. Throughout his career, he received countless honors for outstanding cotton, corn, and peanut production. He has been involved in ownership of several agribusinesses over the years, including Producers Peanut, Premium Peanut, and Farmers Gin and Storage.

Charles found joy in the simple pleasures of life. He enjoyed fishing, farming, and cheering on his grandchildren and great grandchildren at their activities — especially basketball, his favorite. Sharing stories at the red barn or on the back porch with family and friends were his best moments. Charles traveled many miles across the country with the grandchildren to Jr. National Hereford Expos, exhibiting cattle. His gentle spirit, warm smile, and willingness to help anyone in need left a lasting impression on all who knew him. A lifelong farmer and dedicated steward of the land, he earned widespread respect for his commitment to agriculture and his pursuit of excellence. Throughout his career, he received countless honors for outstanding cotton, corn, and peanut production. Among the recognitions he cherished most were his repeated induction into the prestigious 200 Bushel Corn Club and his multiple awards as a member of the Money Maker Peanut Club. His leadership and dedication to conservation were further recognized when he was named Soil Conservationist of the Year. In addition, his lasting contributions to Georgia’s cattle industry were honored with the distinguished title of Georgia Purebred Cattleman of the Year.

He is survived by his wife of 19 years, Judith Bettilu Morris Smith; his children, Lynne (Chris) Oglesby and Charles (Melinda)

Edward Smith, Jr.; three stepchildren, Darryl Morris, Dwayne (Sherri) Morris, and Michele Brassell; his cherished grandchildren, Jennifer (Kyle) Gillooly, Adam (Lyndsey) Oglesby, Brittney Smith, Betsy Brown, Tom (Kelly) Oglesby, Kristen (Jon) Black, Dr. Charlotte (Carson) Hand, and Charles “Tripp” Edward Smith III; great grandchildren, Grant Gillooly, Diana Kate Gillooly, McKenna Oglesby, Blakely Oglesby, Marlow Oglesby, Maddux Black, Ellena Black, and Baby Hand coming next year (which he was most excited for); his brother Wynder Smith; and numerous nieces, nephews, extended family members, and dear friends.

In addition to his parents, Charles was preceded in death by his loving wife of 48 years, Diane Cobb Smith; sister Patricia Smith Edwards; and a great granddaughter, Lucy Sue Oglesby.

Although Charles will be deeply missed, his legacy of faith, love, generosity, and compassion will live in the hearts of all who knew him.

“Well done, good and faithful servant.” Matthew 25:23

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	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
Canton	453	352	869	882	754	848	719	720				
Chadbourn	377	199	512	256	253	260	437	397				
Mid-Atlantic Cattle Sales	2,547	2,371	2,005	3,744	1,858	1,509	2,688	3,875				
North Wilkesboro	368	632	1,268	963	1,075	779	690	880				
Norwood	2,462	2,091	2,542	4,176	3,005	1,917	2,335	1,978				
Shelby	1,406	1,311	2,205	1,886	1,790	1,348	1,523	1,339				
Siler City	2,675	2,480	3,758	2,680	3,722	3,284	2,123	2,080				
Smithfield	1,183	1,292	1,709	2,025	1,253	1,024	1,024	1,039				
Turnersburg	2,956	2,709	5,652	4,194	3,146	3,415	1,975	3,031				
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- Access to valuable resources and opportunities
- A stronger, united cattle industry

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Alexander	7	Currituck	0	Jones	1	Richmond	2
Alleghany	2	Dare	0	Lee	3	Robeson	22
Anson	4	Davidson	1	Lenoir	0	Rockingham	4
Ashe	4	Davie	0	Lincoln	5	Rowan	6
Avery	0	Duplin	5	McDowell	5	Rutherford	20
Beaufort	2	Durham	0	Macon	6	Sampson	5
Bertie	0	Edgecombe	1	Martin	1	Scotland	0
Bladen	3	Forsyth	1	Madison	0	Stanly	1
Brunswick	0	Franklin	5	Mecklenburg	0	Stokes	3
Buncombe	29	Gaston	0	Mitchell	1	Surry	3
Burke	13	Gates	0	Montgomery	4	Swain	0
Cabarrus	1	Graham	0	Moore	3	Transylvania	2
Caldwell	3	Granville	12	Nash	7	Tyrrell	0
Camden	0	Greene	0	New Hanover	0	Union	3
Carteret	0	Guilford	23	Northampton	0	Vance	2
Caswell	2	Halifax	2	Onslow	0	Wake	11
Catawba	10	Harnett	1	Orange	4	Warren	2
Chatham	6	Haywood	20	Pamlico	2	Washington	0
Cherokee	0	Henderson	8	Pasquotank	0	Watauga	2
Chowan	0	Hertford	0	Pender	1	Wayne	3
Clay	0	Hoke	2	Perquimans	0	Wilkes	8
Cleveland	5	Hyde	0	Person	0	Wilson	11
Columbus	1	Iredell	6	Pitt	1	Yadkin	5
Craven	2	Jackson	3	Polk	1	Yancey	1

Grand Total 359

New NCCA Members for 2026

During the Membership Committee meeting at the 2007 N.C. Cattle Conference, members decided to list the name and county of residence of **NEW** NCCA members in *The Carolina Cattle Connection*. A new member is someone who has never been a member or has rejoined after a brief break in their membership.

Chatham County

Ennis Loflin
Brad White

Franklin County

Abigail Blankenship – For Generations Simmentals

Montgomery County

Steven Bruner – Rockhaven Farm

Moore County

Alexander Beck – Rancher Beck Farms

Randolph County

Jimmy Hiatt – Blackhawk Creek Farm

Rockingham County

Abby Weisberg

Sampson County

Eben Best

Stokes County

Abby Corriher

Wake County

Summer Lanier – N.C. Poultry Federation
Katie Williams – NCDA&CS

Yadkin County

Betina Gonzalez

NCCA INTERN CORNER

By ALEX BERDECIA

Howdy! My name is Alex Berdecia. I am an N.C. State University student majoring in Agribusiness Management with a minor in Agricultural Entrepreneurship, set to graduate this December. Until then, I am excited to step into the role as one of the N.C. Cattlemen’s Association interns this fall. I just wanted to introduce myself and let you know a bit about me and where my love of agriculture comes from!

Since I was five years old, I have followed at my granddaddy’s heels for everything he does. Tractor driving, carpentry, metalworking, contracting, an evening stroll – you name it! During my time with him, I learned the importance of community, hard work, and above all, faith. Those same values followed me into Scouting, where I eventually earned the rank of Eagle Scout. Between the two, I learned that there is always something new to learn, another way to serve your community, and another skill worth picking up along the way.

My involvement in agriculture grew during high school through FFA, where I showed livestock and competed in Parliamentary Procedure. Since then, I have continued gaining hands-on experience working on local farms with crops, livestock, equipment, and customers.

What interests me most about the cattle industry is how many

different pieces come together to get beef from the pasture to the consumer. The cattle industry truly is the perfect game of Tetris! As I graduate this fall, I hope to build a career in agriculture working directly with farmers and producers while eventually pursuing entrepreneurial opportunities of my own!

My favorite part of the N.C. Cattlemen’s Association is having the opportunity to learn directly from producers and industry professionals, make connections, and walk away knowing something I didn’t know before! Along with that, if there’s anything I’ve learned about the ag industry as a whole, it’s that it’s not just what you know – it’s who you know. I am so excited to learn from and get to know y’all this fall!





HOBBY FARM DESIGNATION FOR LIVESTOCK OPERATIONS INCORRECT IRS CLASSIFICATION HAS SIGNIFICANT FINANCIAL IMPACT

WHAT IS HOBBY LOSS?

Nearly 69% of U.S. cattle herds are less than 50 head and many operators rely on off farm income, but the distinction between business and hobby operation is a serious point of scrutiny. If the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) classifies an operation as a hobby, the producer loses the ability to deduct any expenses but is still required to report all income. A farm labeled as a hobby has taxes calculated on gross receipts instead of net income, which can leave more taxes owed than the cash profit of the operation.

As of 2026, hobby expense deductions have been permanently suspended.

PROFIT-YEAR PRESUMPTION AS STARTING POINT

The long-standing guideline that a farm showing profit in **3 of 5 years** (or 2 of 7 for horse operations) generally receives benefit of the doubt as a business from the IRS.

- **BURDEN SHIFT:** Meeting guideline puts responsibility on the IRS to argue activity is not a business.
- **CURRENT CHALLENGE:** With rising input costs, some operations may not meet the presumption and will need to show profit motive.
- **AUDIT FOCUS:** Examiners look for evidence of **active, ongoing management**, not just basic record keeping.

PREPARATION MATTERS

These rules touch almost every operation, and even well-run farms can face questions. Documenting throughout the year puts producers in a stronger position, making it easier to show how each activity is managed.

BURDEN OF PROOF SHIFTED TO FARMS

If a farm does not meet the 3 of 5 year profit guideline, the IRS uses a nine factor review to determine if the operation is truly run for profit. Producers do not need to meet all nine, but the more factors shown, the stronger the operation's case.

NINE FACTOR CHECKLIST

The following checklist reflects what auditors use to separate a business from a hobby activity under the One Big Beautiful Bill Act's permanent deduction limits.

If the IRS finds an operation fails the nine-factor review, the appeals process offers an opportunity for reconsideration.

- **MANNER OF OPERATION:** Often the most heavily weighted factor. Auditors look for business-like practices such as a separate business account, organized books, a written plan, financial reviews, and documented adjustments to improve efficiency or reduce losses.
- **EXPERTISE OF THE TAXPAYER OR ADVISORS:** Considers whether operator has knowledge or training needed to run the farm profitably and whether they seek and follow professional advice, especially showing how that guidance influenced operations.
- **TIME AND EFFORT:** Evaluates whether operator devotes meaningful, hands-on time to the farm or hires qualified help, supported by records that show how work hours were spent.
- **ASSET APPRECIATION:** Looks at whether land, livestock genetics, or other assets are expected to gain value due to operator's efforts and whether those assets are part of the same activity being evaluated.
- **PAST SUCCESS:** Shows history of improving or successfully running other ventures, strengthening the argument the operator can turn activity toward profit.
- **INCOME AND LOSS HISTORY:** Reviews pattern of profits and losses, including long-term plans, budgets, or herd-building strategies explaining early-stage losses and showing path towards profitability.
- **SIZE OF PROFITS OR LOSSES:** Considers whether the operator responds to losses by making operational changes and whether occasional profits are meaningful relative to the scale of the activity.
- **FINANCIAL STATUS:** If operator has substantial off-farm income alongside large-farm losses, auditors may scrutinize whether the activity is being used to offset other earnings.
- **PERSONAL ENJOYMENT:** Assesses if activity is primarily recreational, including documentation of hours completing routine or unpleasant work that supports the business rather than lifestyle-driven tasks.

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NCBA President's Report

A Plan Makes All the Difference

By GENE COPENHAVER, *National Cattlemen's Beef Association*



One of the best things we can do as a service to the cattle industry is to ensure the next generation can carry it forward. While succession planning is often one of the most difficult conversations farm and ranch families face, it is also one of the most important. These discussions can be especially challenging for families whose roots run deep on the same land and livestock across generations.

I understand. I'm the fifth generation on my family's cattle farm in Virginia. Without those difficult conversations, I could not have raised my children on the farm and watched my grandchildren enjoy this lifestyle as well. I've been through transition planning with my own children, so I know it is uncomfortable. My son, Will, helps me manage the farm and make business decisions. He will be able to seamlessly take over one day — along with his siblings if they want to return to the operation — because we have already begun the transition process.

I had a long career as an ag lender, and I did financing for a lot of legacy farms. I saw my share of families who never shared the books with the incoming generation of owners. Those operations were faced with preventable challenges when the primary manager passed away, and the loss was compounded by the burden the operation became.

I saw plenty who did it right, too. Those were the people who met with their financial advisors and legal consultants to build frameworks to transition the operation into new hands. They also shared their institutional knowledge with their kids and grandkids to instill confidence in them as they take over the farm. Passing along wisdom, both failures and successes, is just as valuable as passing on land and cattle. We owe it to our loved ones to give them the tools to succeed as cattlemen and women.

Multi-generational operations are vital to our industry, but we also need to assist first generation farmers and ranchers. In my career, I helped many eager and talented beginning producers access the capital they needed to start an operation. Meanwhile, there are plenty of producers looking to retire who have a lifetime of knowledge to share. We can create pathways for young producers by connecting these generations through mentorship and transition opportunities. Sometimes, succession planning happens outside the family to give passionate young cattlemen and women a chance to succeed.

Every operation is unique, but I have learned that having a plan makes all the difference. That's why NCBA is focused on giving producers practical tools to get started. This summer, NCBA

launched an online learning module that guides families through the steps of transition and helps them tailor a plan to their operation and goals. It is accompanied by a workbook producers can use to assess where they are and develop a plan that is adaptable as the operation evolves.

This resource is one of the ways NCBA is supporting the next generation of cattle producers and industry leaders. NCBA is providing producers with resources, tools, and expert insight so we can complete the transition process confidently and before a crisis. Without preparation, we risk losing a lifetime of hard work and leaving our loved ones with a burden.

The cattle business is built on strong people and communities, and it's our responsibility to make sure the next generations carry that forward. Our industry needs young cattlemen and women who are equipped to become owners, managers, and leaders.

The future of our industry depends on successful family transition. With 95 percent of U.S. farms and ranches remaining family owned, agriculture depends on empowering young producers to continue their family legacies. Using tools like NCBA's new online module and workbook, we can secure business continuity and reduce stress for our families. Our operations are going to undergo a transition at some point, whether we are ready for it or not, so let's be proactive and implement structured plans.

I encourage you to complete the module on [NCBA.org](https://www.ncba.org), even if you have already started transitioning the farm or ranch. Use the workbook to evaluate your succession plan or as the foundation to create one. I know these conversations can be difficult, but the best gift we can give our children is a clear path forward.



The **only thing** standing between your operation and **this future** is NCBA.



Our industry is under threat and we need cattle producers to **band together**. To keep our farms and ranches successful, **we need your help**. Help secure the future of our industry by recruiting your friends, family and neighbors to **join our fight**. Recruit new members and be rewarded for your support with special gifts and prize drawings!



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join us today!

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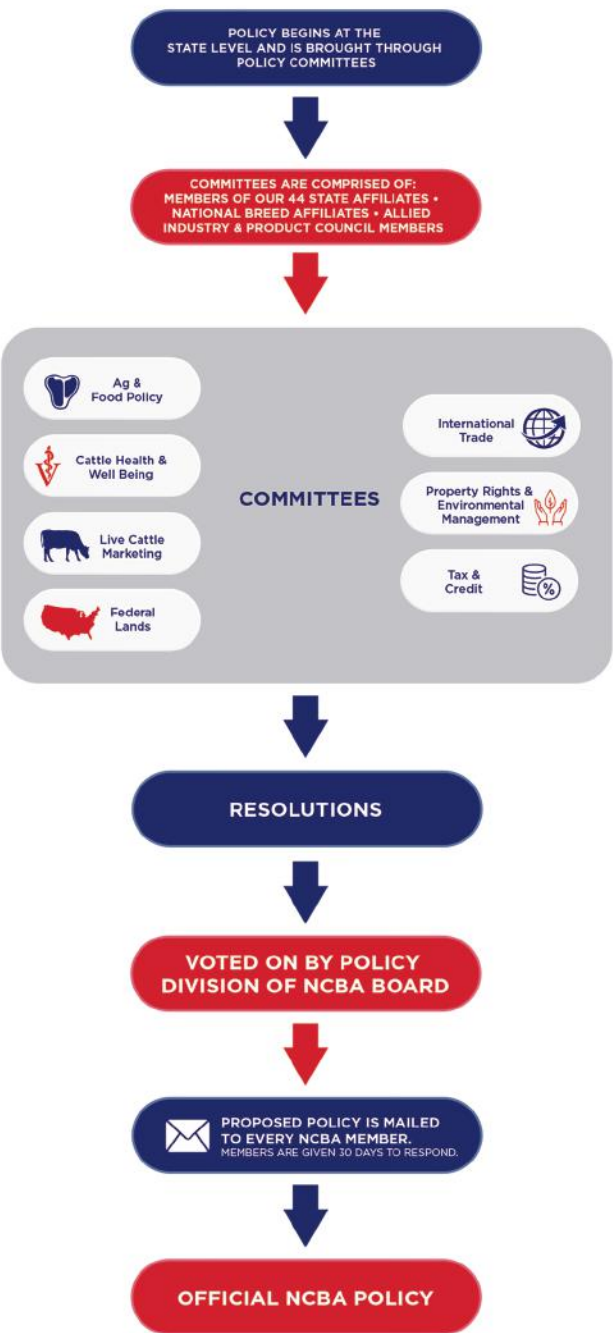
866.233.3872

Join NCBA and stand with fellow cattlemen and women, creating a powerful network that advances the interests of the cattle industry. Together, we strengthen our rural communities and our industry, preserving a heritage that is the backbone of America and your family's legacy.



National Cattlemen's
Beef Association

HOW NCBA DRAFTS POLICY



The National Cattlemen's Beef Association serves your interests through defending your operation and property from government overreach, protecting the legacy of your farm/ranch with tax relief, expanding trade opportunities that add value to your cattle, and protecting the beef industry from attacks by animal rights activists.

NCBA's policy process begins and ends with individual members. As a grassroots driven organization, individual producers set the course for NCBA's advocacy work in Washington, D.C. by submitting policy resolutions on the local and state levels. NCBA's state affiliate associations then present their proposed resolutions at our annual national meetings. From there, passed resolutions are collected on a ballot and mailed to every NCBA member where they have the choice to vote for or against all proposed policies. Once approved, passed resolutions then become official NCBA policy.

Our grassroots policy process ensures that cattle producers of all sizes and in every region are well represented in the halls of Congress, the White House, and federal agencies.

AS AN NCBA MEMBER, WE SERVE YOUR INTERESTS BY:

- Promoting the policy of cattlemen in our Nation's Capital.
- Defending your personal liberties and private property rights against government overreach.
- Protecting the legacy of your farm or ranch by advocating for tax relief.
- Adding value to your cattle by expanding trade opportunities.
- Delivering new and innovative education opportunities to help you improve the management of your farm and ranch.
- Protecting the beef community from attacks by animal rights activists.

JOIN TODAY!



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BUSINESS/RANCH NAME

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OFFICE PHONE

EMAIL

RECRUITED BY

NCBA PRODUCER

COW-CALF PRODUCER

- HERD SIZE
- | | |
|------------------------------------|---------|
| ☐ 1-100 | \$160 |
| ☐ 101-250 | \$320 |
| ☐ 251-500 | \$480 |
| ☐ 501-750 | \$693 |
| ☐ 751-1000 | \$960 |
| ☐ 1001-1250 | \$1,227 |
| ☐ 1251-1500 | \$1,493 |
| ☐ 1501-1750 | \$1,760 |
| ☐ 1751-2000 | \$2,027 |
| ☐ 2001+ | |

\$2,027 + \$0.4053/head =

STOCKER/FEEDER

☐ \$160 + \$0.4053/head =

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

NON-CATTLE OWNERS, NON-VOTING

- | | |
|--|-------|
| ☐ Individual | \$160 |
| ☐ Business | \$213 |
| ☐ Student (24 or younger) | \$53 |

TOTAL AMOUNT PAID

PAYMENT METHOD

☐ Check ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard ☐ American Express

Card #

EXP

CVC

Signature



Checks payable to National Cattlemen's Beef Association



National Cattlemen's
Beef Association

2026 NCBA POLICY PRIORITIES

NCBA's policy focus for 2026 is to defend the free market, promote free trade, and reduce regulatory burdens to preserve opportunities for producer profitability and strong beef demand. There will be an increased focus on elevating and defending the voices of real cattle producers and grassroots membership driven policies.

- Continue to press the administration to roll back harmful regulations to keep working lands working.
- Enhance and strengthen U.S. mitigation measures against the incursion of New World Screwworm.
- Protect the U.S. cattle herd from foreign animal diseases and pests through heightened awareness and preparedness actions.
- Expand market access for U.S. beef exports and hold trade partners accountable to ensure equivalent animal health and food safety standards for imported beef.
- Promote science-based nutrition policies and sound, fact-based information for consumers.
- Push for further hours-of-service flexibility, increased truck weights, and continue delaying ELD requirements for livestock haulers.
- Safeguard the U.S. cattle and beef supply chain by working with the administration to ensure there is a strong workforce to limit processing disruptions for producers.

NATIONAL CATTLEMEN'S BEEF ASSOCIATION

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NCBA Opposes Any Effort That Weakens Food Safety. NCBA strongly supports increasing competition in the cattle markets and creating more opportunities for small and regional beef processors. We also support eliminating unnecessary regulations that make it harder for those businesses to compete. However, weakening federal meat inspection and food safety standards, as President Trump has suggested, is not the answer.

For generations, cattle producers have invested in building consumer confidence in American beef and creating the gold standard of food safety systems. Putting that trust at risk in pursuit of a short term political solution would be a serious mistake. Beef sold to American consumers should continue to meet rigorous, science based food safety and inspection standards, regardless of the size of the processor.

Recently, cattle producers have faced government intervention aimed at increasing foreign beef imports at prices below current levels. Now we are faced with another proposal aimed at changing how beef is processed. Constant government interference creates uncertainty for producers making long-term decisions about their businesses and the future of the cattle herd.

If the Administration wants to help cattle producers, it should focus on reducing legitimate regulatory burdens, lowering fuel and fertilizer prices, protecting the U.S. cattle herd from foreign animal disease, and expanding opportunities for mid-size and regional cattle processors.

America’s farmers and ranchers know how to produce safe, high quality beef. American consumers trust the beef we produce. Washington needs to stop trying to manage the cattle business and let the market work.

NCBA Responds to Stand Up Program Announcement. Secretary Brooke Rollins recently announced the creation of the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Stand Up Program during the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture’s (NASDA) Annual Meeting. Secretary Rollins shared that the program would provide up to \$50 million to help states join or expand federal-state meat inspection programs through the Cooperative Interstate Shipping Program (CIS).

Currently, 30 states participate under the Meat and Poultry Inspection Program (MPI), but only 11 of the 30 eligible states participate in the CIS program. High regulatory and compliance costs have been barriers for further state participation. Additionally, persistent labor challenges in the processing sector continue to create challenges and uncertainty around efforts to diversify

processing options for producers around the country. While the announcement includes funding, structural changes need to happen within the program to help support additional states’ participation.

While additional resources are certainly welcome and needed, farmers and ranchers need USDA to make progress on the real and persistent hurdles state meat inspection programs face. NCBA looks forward to further details on this new effort in the days to come.

About the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association. NCBA has represented America’s cattle producers since 1898, preserving the heritage and strength of the industry through education and public policy. As the largest association of cattle producers, NCBA works to create new markets and increase demand for beef. Efforts are made possible through membership contributions. To join, contact NCBA at 866-BEEF-USA or membership@beef.org.

N.C. Cattle Receipts, Trends, and Prices for the Month of AUGUST 2026			
Cattle Receipts: 17,904 • Previous Month: 10,826 Feeder supply - 28% steers • 39% heifers • 33% bulls			
SLAUGHTER CLASSES			
	Avg. Wt.	Price	
Cows - % Lean			
Breaker	1,525	\$158.83	
Boner	1,275	\$164.79	
Lean	1,096	\$148.01	
Bulls - Yield Grade 1-2	1,609	\$194.70	
FEEDER CLASSES			
FEEDER STEERS (Medium and Large 1-2)			
Wt. Range	Avg. Wt.	CWT	Avg. Price
400-450	422	421.49	\$1,778.69
450-500	476	407.50	\$1,939.70
500-550	523	380.37	\$1,989.34
550-600	575	371.42	\$2,135.67
600-650	622	355.76	\$2,212.83
650-700	673	339.54	\$2,285.10
FEEDER BULLS (Medium and Large 1-2)			
Wt. Range	Avg. Wt.	CWT	Avg. Price
400-450	423	406.36	\$1,718.90
450-500	472	381.17	\$1,799.12
500-550	521	359.42	\$1,872.58
550-600	571	345.40	\$1,972.23
600-650	620	318.70	\$1,975.94
650-700	670	299.96	\$2,009.73
FEEDER HEIFERS (Medium and Large 1-2)			
Wt. Range	Avg. Wt.	CWT	Avg. Price
400-450	425	377.60	\$1,604.80
450-500	477	363.24	\$1,732.65
500-550	523	342.13	\$1,789.34
550-600	572	342.13	\$1,909.16
600-650	628	321.30	\$2,017.76
650-700	669	295.78	\$1,978.77
Source: N.C. Department of Agriculture - USDA Market News Service Raleigh, N.C. - 919-707-3156			

A Message from the CEO

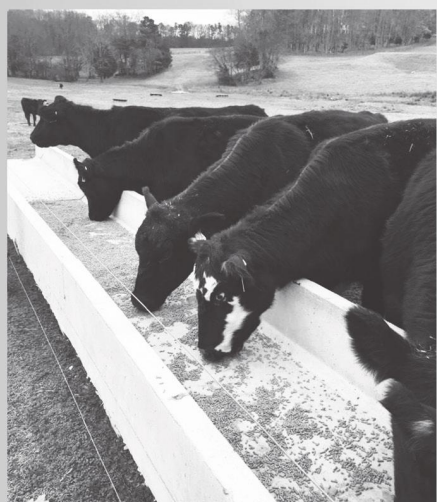
Fate of the Farm Bill

By COLIN WOODALL, *National Cattlemen's Beef Association*



Earlier this year, House Agriculture Committee Chairman G.T. Thompson defied the odds and delivered a Farm Bill to take care of all the remaining agriculture policy issues not included in the One Big Beautiful Bill. It was a Herculean task, but he pulled it off. More importantly, it was a bill that we vigorously supported because it was good policy that didn't include any provisions that would have negatively impacted your

operation. House passage put tremendous pressure on Senate Ag Committee Chairman John Boozman to take action. Just last month, that is what the Chairman tried to do, but the Senate's version failed to pass out of the committee, and all of us in agriculture are wondering what the pathway forward is for federal Just last month, that is what the Chairman tried to do, but the Senate's version failed to pass out



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of the committee, and all of us in agriculture are wondering what the pathway forward is for federal ag policy that should have been addressed three years ago. American agriculture needs the certainty provided by timely passage of a multi-year Farm Bill.

Hundreds of amendments were filed by Senators on the Ag Committee, but I would like to talk about two of them. The first was an amendment from Republican Senator Chuck Grassley from Iowa that would create a meat and poultry special investigator at USDA. This individual would be tasked with identifying violations of the Packers and Stockyards Act and working with the Department of Justice to prosecute those cases. On the surface, the concept sounds great. Why wouldn't we want to see enforcement of the Packers and Stockyards Act?

Senator Grassley has tried to include his special investigator multiple times over the past decades. The main reason it has yet to be included is because it's another layer of bureaucratic red tape. The Packers and Stockyards Division at USDA already has the authority to do everything Senator Grassley wants his special investigator to do. Rather than wasting time on a new position, Congress should focus on fully staffing the Packers and Stockyards Division and giving them the resources to enforce the Packers and Stockyards Act. They don't need a special investigator to do that. They just need people in positions that already exist. NCBA supports enforcement, but that can't happen if you aren't fully staffed, and the Packers and Stockyards Division is not fully staffed. We'd rather have a multitude of enforcement actions being done rather than just what one special investigator can cover. Senator Grassley talked about his amendment but ultimately did not bring it up for a vote. We will have to watch what he does if this Farm Bill makes it to the Senate floor.

The second amendment I want you to think about is the one from Republican Majority Leader John Thune of South Dakota, which brings back mandatory country-of-origin labeling (MCOOL). This is an old and divisive issue within the cattle business, and it always gets thrown around as a panacea for all the ills impacting us as producers. Many forget that MCOOL was law for six years, from 2009 to 2015, and studies done by USDA, land grant university economists, and other analysts all concluded that the consumer didn't pay attention to it and did not use MCOOL to make purchasing decisions.

The proponents of MCOOL claim that well over 80 percent of consumers want to know where their meat comes from. If I stood at the front door of a grocery store and asked consumers if they'd like to know, I have no doubt I'd get an overwhelming positive reaction, but you can't stop there. You must follow them to the meat case, where you discover price and the color and presentation of our beef lead the consumer's decision making. Consumer trends continue to be analyzed, and origin labeling remains at the bottom of their list. So, if the consumer wasn't using it when it was law, why are we revisiting it?

The original MCOOL and Senator Thune's amendment were never about the consumer. If this was about the consumer needing to know where their beef comes from, then why was beef served in restaurants, hotels, and foodservice exempted from MCOOL? Are you seriously telling me the consumer only has a right to know where their beef comes from if they buy it at the grocery store? Historically, half of the beef consumed falls into this restaurant and foodservice category. In addition, processed beef was exempt, too. To better illustrate

this, think of the two tenderloins that come from each animal. Take one of those, vacuum seal it, and put it in the grocery meat case where it would have been labeled. Take the other one, but simply add a marinade or rub, and it was exempt from being labeled. Two tenderloins from the same animal, and one would need a label and the other wouldn't. Nope, I'm not buying that this is about the consumer.

Senator Thune's amendment only covers beef, yet beef and pork were covered under the original MCOOL law. Again, a clear sign this is a political move rather than watching out for the consumer. Rather than spend time on a program that didn't work and was finally repealed by Congress, Congress should support USDA's voluntary Product of the USA (POTUS) label because it allows for real marketing to take place. The voluntary POTUS label fixed one of the biggest issues that drove MCOOL by eliminating the loophole that allowed foreign product processed in a USDA inspected plant to carry a U.S. label. That can't happen anymore. It also allows flexibility to use red, white, and blue labels with stars and stripes to actually market to the consumer. All you got with government controlled MCOOL was one line on the label in small black and white type.

As you are reading this, Congress is back from their August recess and hopefully will have a plan on how they will either finish the Farm Bill or once again extend the old 2018 bill. Chairman Thompson and the House of Representatives delivered a bill we can support. We hope the Senate will follow the House's lead and do the same.

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USDA Announces Harvest to Hallways Initiative to Invest in Child Nutrition Programs. Secretary Rollins and Secretary Kennedy Jointly Unveil New Investments to Bring More Nutrient Dense, Local Food into Schools and Give Cafeterias the Tools to Serve Healthier Meals. U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Brooke L. Rollins and Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. recently announced sweeping new efforts to strengthen school meals by connecting more American farmers with local schools, investing in school kitchen infrastructure, and giving states and school districts new tools to serve healthier, more nutrient dense meals to America's children.

Secretary Kennedy joined Secretary Rollins at USDA, alongside farmers, students, school nutrition leaders, athletes, chefs, and parents, to announce the next phase of the Trump Administration's work to Make America Healthy Again.

"If we want to Make America Healthy Again, we have to start with our children, and that means improving what we put on their lunch trays every single day," said Secretary Rollins. "Harvest to Hallways is about bringing more American agriculture into the school cafeteria. We are connecting schools with the farmers and ranchers in their own communities, investing in the kitchens and equipment school nutrition professionals need to prepare real food, and cutting through barriers that have made it too difficult to serve healthy, American grown food. When we strengthen the connection between the farm and the lunchroom, everybody wins — our children eat better, our farmers gain new markets, and our communities grow stronger."

"Every school meal should make a child healthier," said Robert F. Kennedy Jr. "Under President Trump's leadership, we are putting the updated Dietary Guidelines into action by bringing real, nutrient dense food back to school cafeterias and giving schools the tools to serve it affordably. Together with Secretary Rollins, we are building a school food system that supports American farmers and raises healthier American children."

Harvest to Hallways includes up to \$70 million in investments

USDA

NEWS

in school cafeteria infrastructure, an effort to expand schools' use of local food procurement options, and up to \$25 million in additional Farm to School Grants for Fiscal Year 2026.

Harvest to Hallways – The initiative includes several actions to improve school meals and strengthen the connection between American agriculture and America's children:

- **Expanding Local Procurement** – USDA will launch a major education and outreach campaign around the "Local Option" School Procurement Program, an existing procurement pathway that can allow schools to be reimbursed for purchases of locally produced foods. The Local Option has already been used in Union County, Kentucky, where school districts purchased locally produced beef. USDA will provide dedicated outreach and webinars to help more schools take advantage of the option.

- **Investing in School Kitchens** – USDA will make a new \$50 million investment in school cafeteria infrastructure to help qualifying schools purchase equipment such as cold storage and stoves, improve food safety, and establish, maintain, or expand



School Breakfast Programs. The investment builds on recently announced National School Lunch Program Equipment Assistance Grants totaling \$20 million. Secretaries Rollins and Kennedy will also work to encourage public-private partnerships to complement USDA's investment.

- *Bringing More Local Food to Schools* – USDA is announcing up to \$25 million in new, additional Patrick Leahy Farm to School Grants for FY 2026. These investments help schools incorporate locally produced foods into child nutrition programs while creating new market opportunities for American farmers and ranchers. Previous projects include the Pennsylvania Beef Council's work with 175 local schools to bring locally raised beef to nearly 300,000 students.

- *Accelerating Healthier Meals* – USDA and HHS will encourage greater state adoption of the Pledge for Healthier School Meals, which encourages updated nutrition practices aligned with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2025–2030 that can be implemented immediately.

- *Investing in School Meal Nutrition Research* – HHS will invest \$30 million in research to identify practical, cost effective ways to improve the nutritional quality of school meals and help schools put healthier meals on students' trays.

Together, these actions advance the Make America Healthy Again agenda by improving the food served to America's children, strengthening school kitchens, and creating stronger connections between American farmers and the communities they feed. Learn more about the new Harvest to Hallways initiative at www.usda.gov/harvest-to-hallways.

Secretary Rollins Announces Ranchers First Initiatives to Rebuild the Great American Beef Herd. New actions build on USDA's 2026 Plan to Fortify the American Beef Industry. Secretary Rollins recently announced the Ranchers First Initiative, a sweeping package of actions to continue rebuilding the Great American Beef Herd and put America's ranchers back at the center of our nation's food supply.

American ranchers embody the independent spirit that drove the founding of America, 250 years ago. For more than two centuries, their independence, resiliency, and committed stewardship have provided American consumers with the safest and highest quality beef and lamb in the world, and they remain foundational to America's national security and to the strength and vitality of rural communities. Yet today the nation's cattle herd sits at a 75 year low, with ranchers forced out of business by burdensome regulations and an outright war on beef waged at the altar of Green New Deal climate extremism.

"Until President Trump took office, America's ranchers were treated as a problem with policy geared toward their eventual extinction. The consequences were devastating: a war on beef, a cattle herd at a 75 year low, and the loss of tens of thousands of family operations," said Secretary Rollins. "President Trump promised to put the American ranchers first, and the Ranchers First Initiative delivers on that promise. We are investing real dollars to rebuild the Great American Beef Herd, giving producers the risk management tools they need, cutting the red tape that has squeezed

small and independent operators, and demanding transparency in a marketplace that has been consolidated and foreign owned for far too long. President Trump will make certain the men and women who raise our cattle can hand their operations to the next generation and that American families can put safe, high quality, American raised beef on the table."

Ranchers First Initiative Actions

New Tools to Support Heifer Retention – USDA is going to secure tomorrow's herd through the new Beef Retention and National Development (BRAND) endorsement for Livestock Risk Protection (LRP). The BRAND endorsement will allow producers to insure the economic value of retaining a heifer for breeding over a two year period. The endorsement would establish a protected value based on the expected slaughter value of the heifer at the time of enrollment. If, at any time during the endorsement period, the heifer's projected or realized slaughter value exceeds the economic value of retaining her as breeding stock, the policy would provide for the difference.

ECP and Grassland CRP Maximization – USDA will allow producers to use the Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) on Grassland Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acres to speed recovery after wildfires and other natural disasters. This flexibility is a direct investment in rebuilding the Great American Beef Herd by providing ranchers the ability to rebuild critical infrastructure quickly and minimize long term losses from disaster events.

Continuing to Revitalize American Local Processing – Following up on the successful Strengthening Processing for U.S. Ranchers (SPUR) program to support small and regional beef slaughter facilities, USDA is creating a SPUR Guaranteed Loan Program to help support regional processing, including establishing processor co-ops, expanding small business footprints, and increasing the variety of animal proteins being processed.

USDA will also establish a Regional Processor Continuity Effort designed to strengthen regional processing capacity and improve business resilience across the agricultural supply chain. With recent processing closure announcements, nearly 20 percent of beef processing capacity will be available as the herd grows. This is a tremendous opportunity to shift this capacity toward American owned independent small, mid-size, and new co-ops and keep our critical meat supply out of the hands of foreign control.

Prioritizing American Beef in Federal Spending – USDA will prioritize federal procurement of locally processed American beef by encouraging purchasing across federal and state institutions – including prisons, hospitals, and related facilities. By strengthening locally processed domestic sourcing requirements, USDA aims to bolster demand for American raised beef, support U.S. ranchers, and reinforce integrity and transparency within federal food purchasing programs. This builds on the recent Harvest to Hallways announcement advancing healthy food for schools and will allow USDA to work with not just Health and Human Services but also the Department of Justice, Veterans Affairs, and the Department of War in what food they purchase.

USDA News continued from the previous page

Supporting New Farmers and Ranchers – Under the Working Families Tax Cuts, USDA was able to expand support for beginning farmers and ranchers for the first decade of operations and increase premium assistance during that entire time frame. New ranchers can also access specialized Farm Service Agency (FSA) loans to buy land, livestock, and equipment; receive free conservation and grazing management support through NRCS; gain risk management protection through livestock insurance programs; and connect with state coordinators.

To help build on these programs, USDA will be establishing an initiative focused on Beginning and Veteran Farmers and Ranchers

Affairs. USDA will also be working with the Department of War and the Department of Veterans Affairs to leverage programs like the Department of War’s (DOW) SkillBridge program to recruit servicemembers departing military service into ranching and farming careers. .

Secretary Rollins Unveils Plan to Modernize Agricultural Data Collection and Put Farmers First. Secretary Rollins recently announced the USDA Data Modernization Plan to put Farmers First, reduce unnecessary burdens on producers, and improve the timeliness, accuracy, and usefulness of the agricultural data that informs decisions across American agriculture.

Since USDA was established in 1862, collecting and sharing reliable agricultural information has been central to its mission. Today, USDA data informs crop and livestock estimates, risk management tools, disaster assistance, and critical business decisions made by farmers, ranchers, agribusinesses, researchers, and policymakers.

“America’s farmers and ranchers are the backbone of our food and agricultural system, and USDA should respect their time while delivering the reliable information they need,” said Secretary Rollins. “This plan puts Farmers First by cutting burdensome red tape, using modern tools, and ensuring producers have a stronger voice in how USDA collects and reports agricultural data. Under President Trump’s leadership, USDA is bringing agricultural data collection into the 21st century while protecting the privacy and trust of the people we serve.”

In February 2026, Secretary Rollins issued a Request for Information seeking feedback on the opportunities, challenges, and emerging areas in USDA data. Additionally, Secretary Rollins and USDA leadership held a series of data modernization listening

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sessions at state fairs and farm shows across the country throughout August to hear directly from hundreds of producers and agricultural stakeholders. That feedback helped shape the USDA Data Modernization Plan and its four pillars:

Modernize the Data Reporting Experience – USDA will expand use of administrative data, improve mobile access to surveys, explore opportunities to use prefilled information where appropriate, and strengthen coordination across the Department. These changes will reduce duplicative requests and limit the amount of time producers spend reporting information.

Enhance Acreage and Yield Estimation – USDA will conduct a pilot to evaluate the use of improved satellite imagery, geospatial tools, crop models, and other emerging technologies combined with essential producer reported information to enhance acreage and yield estimations. USDA will also assess the use of optional field inputs to enhance and ground truth yield estimates and continue advancing yield research through collaboration with agricultural partners and land grant universities.

Integrate Data and Technology Platforms – USDA will modernize its technology infrastructure, expand secure data sharing capabilities, and evaluate the responsible use of tools such as artificial intelligence and machine learning. Better integrated systems will improve efficiency, reduce duplication, and allow USDA to produce more timely and useful information.

Expand Trust and Transparency with Producers – USDA will protect producer privacy, clearly explain why information is requested and how it is used, and create additional opportunities for producers to provide feedback. USDA will also improve communication surrounding reports, methodologies, response rates, and data limitations.

“While American agriculture and USDA look vastly different than they did in 1862, the need for timely, accurate, and useful agricultural statistics remains constant,” said Kip Tom, Special Advisor for Data Modernization. “This plan brings USDA agencies together, breaks down outdated information silos, and applies

modern technology to provide producers and rural communities with better service. By improving how information is collected and shared, we can respond more quickly to challenges facing American agriculture.”

The USDA Data Modernization Plan builds on technological advancements already underway across USDA, including satellite based crop monitoring, geospatial analysis, cloud based platforms, improved online reporting tools, and more coordinated use of existing administrative data. The Department will also continue working with partners to evaluate new methods and strengthen the scientific foundation of its agricultural statistics.

“USDA’s agricultural statistics are only as strong as the trust and voluntary participation of America’s producers,” said Dr. Scott Hutchins, Under Secretary for Research, Education, and Economics. “By combining producer knowledge with sound science and modern technology, USDA can reduce the reporting burden while improving the quality of the information farmers and policymakers rely on. This plan will help ensure American agriculture remains productive and resilient for generations to come.”

USDA will begin implementing actions under the plan immediately and will continue engaging farmers, ranchers, and agricultural stakeholders throughout the process. The Department will evaluate new approaches carefully, protect privacy and confidentiality, and publish clear methodologies and supporting information to maintain the integrity of USDA’s agricultural statistics.

USDA NASS Modernizes Data Visualization with Launch of AgInsights. *New data tool brings modern, streamlined data access to producers nationwide.* The USDA’s National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) recently launched AgInsights, a new data dissemination tool that will serve as a key component of NASS’s ongoing modernization strategy.

Designed to enhance currently used data products and services, the AgInsights application offers streamlined information dissemination, increased operational efficiency, and a more dynamic, interactive experience so producers have easier navigation and access to the latest agricultural data.

NASS recognizes that producers, whether large or small, established or emerging, need timely, actionable information to make informed decisions. AgInsights will bridge the digital divide, ensuring equitable access to critical data for all producers, including those who have historically faced barriers to information.

“AgInsights is an important step forward in how producers interact with agricultural statistics. By streamlining information delivery and integrating advanced technologies, we’re making it easier for producers to access, analyze, and apply the latest data to their operations,” said NASS Administrator Joseph L. Parsons.

NASS asked an initial group of agricultural data users to test the application and provide feedback. Their recommendations informed the development of the product to help meet industry expectations across commodity sectors. Key features include:

Interactive and Comprehensive Data Views – AgInsights



USDA News *continued from the previous page*

integrates tabular data, charts, and maps into a single web based interface, providing a comprehensive and interactive way to explore data, which was previously spread across different formats. Users can access comprehensive tabular data views similar to traditional PDF reports but with added interactivity, making it easier to analyze and compare data.

Modernization and Future Proofing – The new tool is built using modern technologies, aligning with other NASS applications and ensuring long term support and updates.

Improved User Experience – AgInsights focuses on effective, efficient, and user friendly intuitive interaction, with enhanced visualizations that help users interpret and digest data more easily. It also offers interactive features that allow users to sort, filter, and explore data dynamically, enhancing the overall user experience.

Producer Centric Features – The tool offers intuitive sorting, filtering, and interactive visualizations, making complex data easy to interpret and apply to real world challenges. Producers can also access analytics tailored to their operation type, supporting more informed decision making. It is also optimized for mobile devices.

Reduced Maintenance Complexity – Designed to be as automated as possible, this modern product is designed to deliver visualizations and data with minimal ongoing support, providing the opportunity to sunset old applications that were cost prohibitive and unsupported while reducing the labor intensive efforts required for each report.

Support for Power Users and General Users – AgInsights leverages NASS's Quick Stats database, which is already popular among many users, while also providing a graphical user interface for those who prefer a more visual approach. It includes enhanced visualizations such as choropleth maps and time series charts, which update interactively with each report, helping users to better interpret and understand the data.

Information about all NASS surveys and reports is available online at nass.usda.gov.

USDA Announces New American Biofuels Trade Outlook, Building on Record 2025 Exports. American Farmers Shipped a Record 2.2 Billion Gallons of Ethanol Worldwide in 2025. USDA recently released the American Biofuels Trade Outlook, a plan that builds upon 2025's record U.S. ethanol export performance, removes restrictions on American biofuels, and secures new market opportunities for U.S. farmers.

"2025 marks the strongest year for ethanol exports in the history of the U.S., supporting our great American farmers. This record setting 2.2 billion gallons of U.S. ethanol shipped across the world this past year, representing \$4.7 billion, is not by accident; it reflects the hard work of America's farmers and the powerful leadership of President Trump," said Secretary Rollins. "This milestone demonstrates how American innovation and rural investment can deliver prosperity for consumers and producers at home and around the globe. American farmers are fueling the future, and the American Biofuel Trade Outlook outlines the USDA's exact plan to

ensure that success continues and America's producers continue to prosper."

"America's farmers are competing and winning on the world stage, and our homegrown biofuels are no exception," said Under Secretary Luke Lindberg. "President Trump and the USDA are focused on increasing ethanol blending around the world and making sure U.S. farmers win with every new trade deal. This milestone proves our strategy has been working, and the release of the American Biofuels Trade Outlook will make sure our success continues."

USDA Ends Mandatory Farmer Funding of ESG Commitments in Dairy Checkoff. *American dairy producers no longer subject to Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) overregulation.* Secretary Rollins recently reaffirmed the Administration's commitment to American farmers, announcing USDA's decisive action to end dairy checkoff funding for ESG overregulation. This action aligns research and promotion activities with the Department's priorities and the original mission of the checkoffs. USDA remains committed to ensuring that every dollar collected from American producers serves American agriculture for the better.

"American dairy producers, cattle ranchers, and farmers pay checkoff assessments so those dollars can build demand for their products — not bankroll radical climate agendas that raise costs and constrain production," said Secretary Rollins. "This action returns the Dairy Checkoff and all research and promotion programs to their core mission — expanding markets and supporting the hardworking men and women who feed this country. We will not allow producer dollars to underwrite mandates that put American agriculture at a disadvantage."

Background – Under the Dairy Production Stabilization Act, checkoff funds are authorized for promotion, research, and nutrition education that strengthen markets for U.S. dairy. The Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy, established through the checkoff, has pursued extensive ESG initiatives, including greenhouse gas and net zero targets. USDA's action ends checkoff support for those ESG related projects while allowing necessary administrative functions that do not advance such agendas. This action also directs the Agricultural Marketing Service to ensure no research and promotion funds in other commodity checkoffs advance ESG mandates. American producers substantially fund these checkoff programs through mandatory assessments. Those funds must serve their statutory purpose of strengthening markets for agriculture — not advance misguided external ESG agendas that can raise costs or potentially constrain production.

While USDA is taking swift action to bar the Dairy Checkoff from spending farmer paid dollars on the radical ESG ideology, when focused on its core mission, the Dairy Checkoff is largely a success. Independent economists at Texas A&M have found that Checkoff investments increased the demand for promoted dairy products and dairy exports, and the gains in profit at the producer level from promotion were larger than the costs of the program. The aggregate all dairy return-on-investment (ROI) is \$5.93 for each dollar spent

on activities. Dairy product specific ROI's are \$4.16 for fluid milk, \$2.67 for cheese, \$24.85 for butter, and \$12.82 for exports. Similar ROI studies are conducted for all research and promotion boards and have shown returns, for example — beef — \$13.41; cotton — \$6.40; and softwood lumber — \$33.54.

USDA Invests in America's Beef and Ag Producers with Funding for Value Added Agriculture. Secretary Rollins recently announced the awarding of over \$26 million to farmers and agricultural producers across the country through the USDA Value Added Producer Grant (VAPG) Program. Entities can use these grant funds to develop value added agricultural products, conduct market research, and implement business and marketing strategies.

“The Trump Administration is focused on putting our ranchers and farmers first. These grants represent another investment in the Great American Cattle Herd as we fortify the American beef industry,” said Secretary Rollins. “By supporting our ranchers and agricultural producers as they develop new products and increase the value of what they grow and raise, we’re helping to create new revenue opportunities to grow the herd and create long term economic resilience in rural communities across this nation.”

“USDA Rural Development partners with people in rural America so they have the tools they need to build stronger businesses and create jobs for people in their communities,” said Under Secretary for Rural Development Glen Smith. “This program helps our producers eliminate the middleman, create homegrown products from the crops and animals they grow, and put more money in their pockets and their local communities. It’s a win all around, and we’re glad to be a part of it.”

USDA Rural Development is investing \$26.5 million in 194 agricultural projects across the country, with \$11.6 million going to 80 beef producer projects, including:

- Light Hill Meats in Colombia, Tenn., will use a \$199,309 grant for processing, marketing, sales, and distribution as the company expands its grain finished, hormone free beef products to new customers.

- Family Farm Direct in Waynesboro, Penn., will use a \$145,838 grant for supplies, distribution, and processing and manufacturing expenses related to transforming its Angus beef into dry aged primal pet and beef jerky. The project is anticipated to increase the company’s customer base by almost 31,000 people and increase revenue by approximately \$165,000.

- Blair Carney Farms has been awarded \$48,000, which will fund marketing and processing activities for the family owned and operated company in Adair County, Iowa. This project will help the company expand its market for multiple Black Angus beef food products.

Applications for the Value Added Producer Grant program are typically accepted for processing from agricultural producers between January and May, depending on when program funding is allocated.

USDA Rural Development invests in rural America with programs to promote rural prosperity. These programs expand access to high speed internet, electricity, and infrastructure and support economic growth, healthcare, education, housing, and

other community essentials. Discover more investment details and historical data in the Rural Data Gateway and learn more about the agency at www.rd.usda.gov.

About the U.S. Department of Agriculture. USDA is made up of 29 agencies and offices with nearly 100,000 employees who serve the American people at more than 4,500 locations across the country and abroad. We provide leadership on food, agriculture, natural resources, rural development, nutrition, and related issues based on public policy, the best available science, and effective management.

We have a vision to provide economic opportunity through innovation, helping rural America to thrive; to promote agriculture production that better nourishes Americans while also helping feed others throughout the world; and to preserve our Nation’s natural resources through conservation, restored forests, improved watersheds, and healthy private working lands.

Our strategic goals serve as a roadmap for the Department to help ensure we achieve our mission and implement our vision.

When President Lincoln established the United States Department of Agriculture, he called it the “People’s Department.” At USDA we are working tirelessly to be a model department that serves all people of our great Nation. For more information, visit www.usda.gov.

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John Deere Introduces JD, the AI Assistant That Helps Farmers Put Their Data to Work. *JD helps farmers turn years of field, machine, and operational data into practical insights while keeping farmers in control at every step.* For more than a decade, John Deere Operations Center has helped farmers connect their field, machine, and operational data in a centralized platform. And now it's being taken to the next level with JD, the artificial intelligence (AI) assistant built into Operations Center that gives farmers an entirely new way to put their data to work — by simply asking it a question. As AI makes farm data more useful and valuable, John Deere is also highlighting its Farmer Data Commitment reinforcing that farmers' data belongs to them, it remains under their control, and it should create value for their operation.

A New Way to Put Farm Data to Work – JD enables farmers to have a conversation with the vast amount of field, machine, and operational data they generate, creating the opportunity to improve yields, drive savings, and strengthen farm profitability through AI. Instead of searching across multiple dashboards or reports, farmers can ask questions such as:

- How did my fuel use during tillage this year compare with the last three years? — helping identify best practices and resulting in fuel savings.
- How did singulation compare across my fields, and what impact did it have on yield? — enabling a better understanding of how equipment settings can impact yield.
- Which sprayer operator is covering the most acres per hour? — resulting in understanding operational efficiencies.
- When is the optimal time to harvest based on historical trends? — enabling better planning and management of labor.
- With JD, farmers can surface the right information quickly and receive practical responses grounded in their own data. The result is a simpler way to make sense of complex operational information and act with more confidence.

“Farmers have more data available to them than ever before, but the value comes from their ability to use it in the moments that matter,” said Jahmy Hindman, Chief Technology Officer at John Deere. “JD changes the experience from navigating through a sea of data to simply asking it a question. It puts advanced data analysis within reach by enabling farmers to receive answers tailored to their farm and their needs in a matter of seconds.”

Your Farm. Your Data. Your Call. As tools like JD make farm data more useful, John Deere believes that farmers should remain in control of their data, understand how it is used, and receive clear value from it. The Farmer Data Commitment outlines ten principles behind that approach:

1. You control your farm data.
2. John Deere does not sell your farm data.
3. John Deere uses your farm data only as described in its agreements and policies and will communicate changes clearly before they take effect.
4. John Deere will require dealers and connected partners to maintain transparent data practices.
5. John Deere uses your farm data and aggregated, anonymized data to deliver measurable value to you through improved machine



JOHN DEERE

NEWS

performance and decision making insights.

6. You can choose which third parties to share, and not share, your farm data with.

7. You have the freedom to turn off the flow of your farm data to third parties at any time.

8. John Deere does not use your farm data for agriculture commodity trading or speculation.

9. You should receive clear value from your farm data.

10. John Deere will continue to listen to farmers, strengthen its data practices, and develop new solutions that help you receive value from your farm data.

“Farmers receive value from their data when they can use it to make better decisions, and we believe that value should come with control, transparency, and choice,” said Deanna Kovar, President, Worldwide Ag & Turf Division — Production and Precision Ag, Americas and Australia at John Deere. “Our view is simple: farmers should control their data, clearly understand how it is used, and benefit from the insights it can create. JD and the Farmer Data Commitment are part of the same vision for helping farmers put their data to work on their terms.”

John Deere is opening a limited Early Access Program for select U.S. agricultural customers, allowing eligible participants to express interest in participation. The AI assistant will become more broadly available later this year through Operations Center on web, mobile, and, eventually, via in-cab display interface.

As JD evolves, John Deere plans to introduce capabilities tailored to customers across turf, construction, roadbuilding, and forestry, extending its value across the company's broader customer base.

For more information on JD and the Farmer Data Commitment, visit [Deere.com/YourData](https://www.deere.com/YourData).

John Deere Introduces Hands Free Baling Solution to Improve Productivity and Reduce Operator Workload.

Automation technology creates an easier operator experience, helping farmers and ranchers bale more efficiently regardless of who is in the driver's seat. John Deere recently announced the addition of Hands Free Baling to its baling solutions. This integrated automation system is designed to make baling cornstalks and straw easier and more consistent while also helping farmers and ranchers feel more confident that the job will get done quickly and correctly, no matter who is operating the baler.

“The hands free baling technology combines John Deere's legacy guidance feature, AutoTrac, with our innovative Weave Automation round baler feature, creating a solution that was built shoulder-to-shoulder with our customers. It makes a repetitive baling job easier and more efficient,” said Kaylene Ballesteros, marketing manager for

hay and forage equipment at John Deere. “By automating the baling process, we’re helping operators simplify their job and reduce the opportunity for error.”

Designed with simplicity in mind, Hands Free Baling is one seamless solution that gives farmers and ranchers confidence that the job will be completed efficiently and consistently with minimal manual input, regardless of who is in the cab. This frees operators to focus on other priorities across their operations.

Making Baling Easier for Every Operator – Scoped specifically for cornstalks and straw baling, Hands Free Baling combines multiple John Deere technologies into one coordinated system, including AutoTrac guidance, AutoTrac Turn Automation, gate automation, speed automation, and weave automation on a John Deere 1 Series Round Baler.

Together, these technologies allow the tractor and baler to work seamlessly together to:

- Automatically follow windrows using guidance from the previous combine passes
- Weave the baler for consistent, square shouldered bale formation
- Get consistent bales with less effort with speed and gate automation managing tractor speed and controlling the gate by stopping, wrapping, and ejecting the bale at the right time
- Execute efficient, repeatable turns on headlands.

This level of integration significantly reduces the need for manual input, transforming the baling process into a more streamlined and consistent operation.

More Output With Less Effort – During tight harvest windows, every pass matters. Hands Free Baling is designed to help farmers and ranchers stay productive longer. Internal testing against manual baling shows the coordinated solution can deliver:

- Up to 8.4 percent more productivity, measured in bales per hour;
- Up to 4.4 percent improved fuel efficiency, measured in tons per gallon; and
- Up to 76 percent reduction in operator activity, including steering and control inputs.¹

“These gains make long days in the field more manageable,” Ballesteros says. “When you can produce more bales per hour while using less fuel and requiring fewer inputs from the operator, you get the freedom to focus on what is most important to you, whether that’s making all your bales or putting a less experienced operator in the seat while you spend time tackling other priorities.”

Extending the Value of Precision Solutions – Baling hands free extends the value of existing precision ag solutions by connecting baling with the rest of their operation.

By utilizing guidance lines created during earlier corn or wheat passes, the system creates a more connected workflow across the field, from crop production to harvest, while helping improve return on investment in precision technology.

This integrated approach also supports better documentation and data visibility through the John Deere Operations Center, to help farmers and ranchers make more informed decisions about their operation.

Built on John Deere’s Automation Leadership – Hands Free Baling builds on John Deere’s commitment to advancing automation

in agriculture and supports the company’s broader vision of helping farmers do more with less.

The solution is available on select John Deere 1 Series Round Balers with 6R, 7R, and 8R Tractors equipped with the required precision ag technologies, including Weave Automation.

“Hands Free Baling highlights how our gate and speed automation that launched over ten years ago, continues to build on itself, unlocking more and more value,” Ballesteros says. “We’re continuing to find new ways to help farmers and ranchers improve their efficiency, reduce workload, and get the most out of every pass in the field with the investments they might already have in their fleet.”

To learn more about Hands Free Baling, visit JohnDeere.com or contact your local John Deere dealer.

Reference

¹Based on a 2025 internal John Deere study, utilizing a 6R 175 and 561R Round Baler comparing results of baling cornstalks in central Iowa with automation (Gate, Speed, and Weave Automation and AutoTrac, AutoTrac Turn Automation) vs. manually (all automation disabled).

About John Deere. It doesn’t matter if you’ve never driven a tractor, mowed a lawn, or operated a dozer. With John Deere’s role in helping produce food, fiber, fuel, and infrastructure, we work for every single person on the planet. It all started nearly 200 years ago with a steel plow. Today, John Deere drives innovation in agriculture, construction, forestry, turf, power systems, and more. For more information on Deere & Company, visit us at www.deere.com.



Alltech and EnviroLogix partner to integrate mycotoxin testing results within Alltech RAPIREAD. Alltech, a global leader in animal health and nutrition, and EnviroLogix are pleased to announce a partnership that will enable EnviroLogix mycotoxin results to be available directly within the Alltech RAPIREAD mycotoxin testing program, simplifying mycotoxin management for customers using EnviroLogix testing technology.

The integration provides a seamless connection between the EnviroLogix QuickScan system and RAPIREAD, with test results automatically transferred into the RAPIREAD platform — no separate RAPIREAD app or data sync tool required. Customers can test using their familiar EnviroLogix workflow and access results alongside RAPIREAD risk analysis tools in one connected platform, making it easier to interpret mycotoxin results in the context of feed quality, animal health, and nutritional decision making.

Mycotoxin testing is most valuable when results are easy to access, interpret, and apply. By bringing diagnostic results, historical data, expert interpretation, and consistent reporting into one platform through this integration, the Alltech Services Portal helps the feed and livestock industry move beyond individual test results to better understand trends over time. This connected view supports more informed feed quality control and nutritional decisions, helping to identify risks earlier, communicate results more consistently, and take action with greater confidence.

“Alltech RAPIREAD helps feed mills, veterinarians, nutritionists, and integrators better understand mycotoxin risk and act with greater confidence,” said Dr. Alexandra Weaver, global technical support for Alltech. “The collaboration between Alltech and EnviroLogix completes the journey from mycotoxin test result to informed decision.”

“We know our customers need reliable testing information, but they also need to be able to use that information quickly and effectively.



Alltech has built a strong platform in RAPIREAD for understanding mycotoxin risk, and connecting both TotalTox and TotalHub with RAPIREAD gives feed operations a more complete picture in one connected workflow,” said Scott Menke, president of EnviroLogix. “It makes it easier to turn mycotoxin test results into practical decisions that support feed quality and animal health every day.”

This collaboration is beneficial to feed and livestock customers by connecting testing and interpretation of data, allowing for faster action. Alltech RAPIREAD supports rapid mycotoxin risk analysis and reporting, while EnviroLogix provides rapid mycotoxin testing technologies and data management workflows. Together, this partnership creates a simpler workflow for EnviroLogix users with fewer manual steps between test result and interpretation; single platform visibility for results and risk analysis; stronger support for feed mills, quality control teams, veterinarians, nutritionists, and integrators; partner led credibility through EnviroLogix and Alltech expertise; and stronger customer conversations around mycotoxin management and feed quality.

For more information, visit alltech.com/our-services/alltech-rapiread and www.envirolgix.com.

About Alltech. Founded in 1980 by Irish entrepreneur and scientist Dr. Pearse Lyons, Alltech delivers smarter, more sustainable solutions for agriculture. Our diverse portfolio of products and services improves the health and performance of animals and plants, resulting in better nutrition for all and a decreased environmental impact.

We are a global leader in the agriculture industry. Our team produces specialty ingredients, premix, supplements, feed and biologicals, backed by science and an unparalleled platform of services.

Strengthened by more than 40 years of scientific research, we carry forward a legacy of innovation and a unique culture that views challenges through an entrepreneurial lens. As a private, family owned company, we adapt quickly to our customers’ needs and focus on advanced innovation.

We believe agriculture has the greatest potential to shape the future of our planet. Our more than 5,000 talented team members worldwide share our purpose of Working Together for a Planet of Plenty. Together, we can provide nutrition for all, revitalize local economies and replenish the planet’s natural resources.

Headquartered just outside of Lexington, Ken., Alltech serves customers in more than 140 countries, has five bioscience centers, and operates more than 75 manufacturing facilities across the globe. For more information, visit alltech.com.



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FDA Issues Emergency Use Authorization for Generic Drug to Prevent New World Screwworm in Cattle. FDA's 14th Emergency Use Authorization against NWS. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration recently issued an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) for Bimectin (ivermectin) injection for the prevention of New World screwworm (NWS) infestations (myiasis) in cattle when administered within 24 hours of birth, at the time of castration, or at the appearance of a wound — advancing the Trump Administration's goal of safeguarding American agriculture from NWS. Bimectin injection is not authorized for use in lactating dairy cows or in calves that will be processed for veal.

"This authorization reflects the FDA's commitment to expanding generic drug options against New World screwworm," said Timothy Schell, Ph.D., director of the FDA's Center for Veterinary Medicine.

ensuring producers aren't dependent on a single manufacturer or product to protect their herds."

To maintain the continued safety of the food supply and avoid drug residues, it is critical that cattle producers carefully follow the 35 day slaughter withdrawal time and not administer this drug in lactating dairy cows and calves that will be processed for veal.

Based on the totality of the scientific evidence available, the FDA has concluded it is reasonable to believe that Bimectin injection may be effective for the prevention of NWS myiasis in certain cattle when used as authorized and the known and potential benefits of the product outweigh its known and potential risks.

Bimectin injection is a generic version of Ivomec, which was authorized in February 2026 for the prevention of NWS myiasis in cattle. The FDA previously approved the Bimectin injection for the treatment and control of various parasites in cattle. This EUA is only for the Bimectin injection and does not authorize other dosage forms of Bimectin.

Bimectin injection is available over the counter without a prescription. Cattle producers are responsible for using Bimectin injection in accordance with the product labeling and fact sheet.

This EUA will be effective until it is revoked or the HHS Secretary terminates the declaration that the potential public health emergency presented by NWS justifies the emergency use authorization of animal drugs for NWS.

Bimectin injection is sponsored by Bimeda Animal Health Ltd. based in Ireland.

About the Food & Drug Administration. FDA is responsible for protecting public health by ensuring the safety, efficacy, and security of human and veterinary drugs, biological products, and medical devices, and by ensuring the safety of our nation's food supply, cosmetics, and products that emit radiation.

FDA is responsible for advancing public health by helping to speed innovations that make medical products more effective,

safer, and more affordable, and by helping the public get the accurate, science based information they need to use medical products and foods to maintain and improve their health.

FDA also plays a significant role in the nation's counterterrorism capability. FDA fulfills this responsibility by ensuring the security of the food supply and by fostering the development of medical products to respond to deliberate and naturally emerging public health threats.

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Four Proactive Ways to Defend Against New World Screwworm.

Practical prevention steps can help protect cattle and limit potential spread. New World screwworm (NWS) may seem like a concern only for areas where the pest has already been detected. But with today's cattle movement, preparedness is critical regardless of location.

U.S. cattle producers have an important role in slowing the spread of NWS and protecting their operation. Building a proactive preparedness plan can help strengthen biosecurity, reduce risk, and support animal health. Consider these four steps when preparing your operation.

1. Know the risk – Unlike many common blowflies that feed on dead tissue, NWS larvae feed on living tissue. Female flies are attracted to fresh wounds, where they lay eggs that hatch within hours. As larvae burrow into the wound, they create additional tissue damage that attracts more flies and allows infestations to progress quickly.

“Wounds are what these flies are looking for,” explained Jody Wade, DVM, Boehringer Ingelheim. “Any type of wound can become infected, so we need to be very proactive about checking cattle on a routine basis.”

Newborn calves are among the most vulnerable animals because flies are highly attracted to the fresh umbilical cord after birth. Cattle also need close attention after routine procedures such as castration or dehorning. NWS infestations can cause rapidly expanding wounds, inflammation, and pain. Early identification and intervention are important for minimizing discomfort and supporting overall cattle health.¹

2. Prioritize biosecurity – A strong biosecurity plan is one of the first lines of defense against New World screwworm. Proper quarantine and observation protocols for new animals are critical steps in identifying and stopping possible infections before they spread.

“I look at biosecurity as a two way street,” said Dr. Wade. “We need to be vigilant when bringing animals into an operation, but if New World screwworm is identified in your area, biosecurity also plays a huge role in preventing it from moving somewhere else.”

Training employees with clear animal observation guidelines and response protocols can help identify concerns earlier and ensure a timely response. Familiarize employees with USDA identification resources so they know what to look for if NWS becomes a concern. Adult New World screwworm flies have orange eyes, a yellow orange face, and a metallic blue green body with three dark stripes down the back.²

“While they are a similar size to a regular housefly, it is possible to pick out a New World screwworm fly,” added Dr. Wade. “The USDA’s website, screwworm.gov, has great educational materials on NWS prevention and identification along with updates on new outbreaks.”

If you suspect NWS on your operation, contact your herd veterinarian immediately. They play a critical role in identifying suspected cases, coordinating with animal health officials, and helping protect your operation and the cattle industry through prompt reporting.

“It’s going to be a team effort in managing and eradicating NWS,” said Dr. Wade. “Reporting cases and open communication will be key in stopping NWS from spreading to new areas.”

3. Evaluate your deworming program – A comprehensive parasite control program is another important component of an overall NWS preparedness strategy. When appropriate, products

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such as IVOMEC 1% (ivermectin injection), currently authorized under Emergency Use Authorization for NWS prevention, can provide another layer of support.

“When you talk to parasitologists in areas where New World screwworm is endemic, they’ll tell you prevention makes all the difference,” said Dr. Wade. “Prevention protocols, along with proper wound care, have been extremely valuable in reducing infections.”

Just like other deworming practices, it’s important to keep your geography in mind. The NWS fly may struggle in cold Midwest winters, but there are areas of the U.S. where it can flourish year round in warmer areas such as Florida and southern Texas.

“NWS has been in the U.S. before, and we’ve fortunately eradicated it through prevention methods and sterilization of male flies,” Dr. Wade said.

As you prepare for NWS, it’s crucial to keep sustainable deworming practices and judicious use of parasiticides a priority. Sit down with your veterinarian to evaluate the best way to use approved parasiticides and work together to build a strong NWS action plan that best fits the needs and risks of your operation.

4. Stay vigilant; don’t panic – Dr. Wade emphasized the importance of maintaining open communication with your veterinarian and promptly reporting suspected cases to support long term NWS control and eradication.

“The most important reminder I can give producers is to stay vigilant and don’t panic,” concluded Dr. Wade. “If we stay proactive, follow our prevention protocols, and work together, we have a good opportunity to push this parasite back out of the U.S. again.”

For additional information on New World screwworm prevention, visit screwworm.gov or Ivomec.com.

S.C. Cattle Receipts, Trends, and Prices for the Month of AUGUST 2026

Cattle Receipts: 7,832 • Previous Month: 7,709
Feeder supply - 30% steers • 37% heifers • 33% bulls

SLAUGHTER CLASSES			
	Avg. Wt.	Price	
Cows - % Lean			
Breaker	1,435	\$171.30	
Boner	1,177	\$171.82	
Lean	1,050	\$155.01	
Bulls - Yield Grade 1-2	1,589	\$205.91	

FEEDER CLASSES			
FEEDER STEERS (Medium and Large 1-2)			
Wt. Range	Avg. Wt.	CWT	Avg. Price
400-450	425	407.20	\$1,730.60
450-500	472	402.33	\$1,899.00
500-550	523	367.97	\$1,924.28
550-600	566	356.53	\$2,017.96
600-650	621	333.30	\$2,069.79
650-700	672	325.72	\$2,188.84

FEEDER BULLS (Medium and Large 1-2)			
Wt. Range	Avg. Wt.	CWT	Avg. Price
400-450	421	458.98	\$1,721.81
450-500	467	398.24	\$1,859.78
500-550	519	367.79	\$1,908.83
550-600	565	346.46	\$1,957.50
600-650	618	313.28	\$1,936.07
650-700	663	312.03	\$2,068.76

FEEDER HEIFERS (Medium and Large 1-2)			
Wt. Range	Avg. Wt.	CWT	Avg. Price
400-450	419	374.34	\$1,568.48
450-500	473	364.13	\$1,722.33
500-550	520	329.79	\$1,714.91
550-600	562	327.11	\$1,838.36
600-650	622	316.34	\$1,967.63
650-700	665	301.09	\$2,022.25

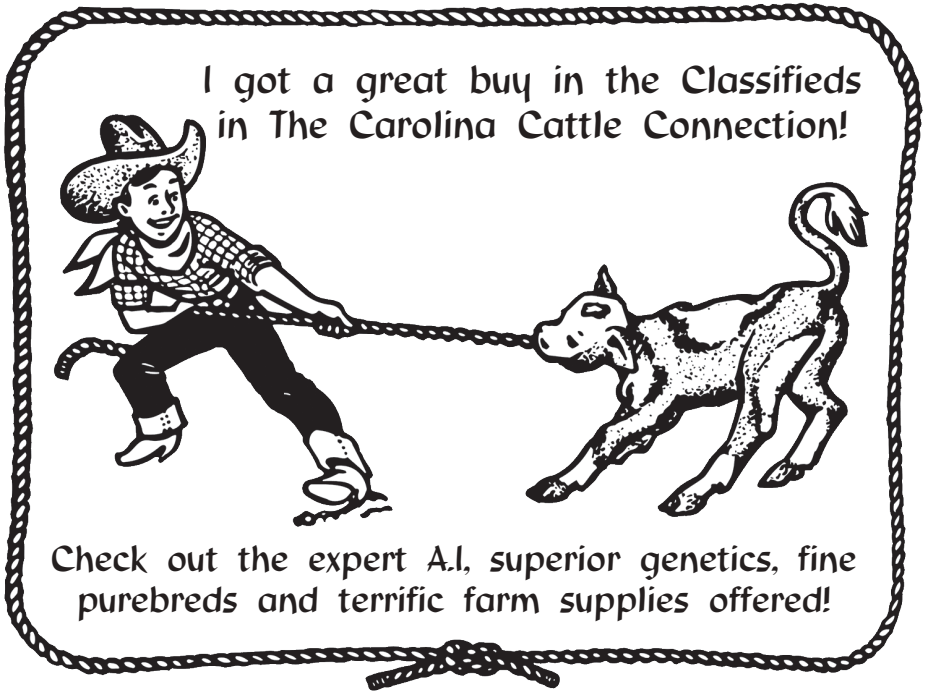
*Source: S.C. Department of Agriculture - USDA Market News Service
Columbia, S.C. - 803-737-4491*

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About Boehringer Ingelheim. Boehringer Ingelheim provides innovation for preventing and treating diseases in animals. The company offers a wide range of vaccines, parasite control products, and medicines for pets, horses, and livestock to veterinarians, animal owners, farmers, and governments. As a leader in animal health, Boehringer Ingelheim values that the health of humans and animals is deeply connected and strives to make a difference for people, animals, and society. Learn more at www.bi-animalhealth.com.



The CEO's Corner



With Canada, Beef, and Ag Labor, August was Not a “Recess”

By GREGG DOUD, *National Milk Producers Federation*

The term “August recess,” used to describe the traditional slow period when lawmakers and federal workers alike escaped Washington’s heat and humidity, was a misnomer this year. From critical trade negotiations with Canada to a frustrating development on beef tariffs to the ongoing effort to make ag labor reform real, August has been one of the year’s busiest months for the dairy industry in Washington. (And that’s without even mentioning the Senate version of the farm bill, which is in temporary limbo after a failed committee vote.)

We’ve been keeping up with every development, speaking out and acting as needed on behalf of our members. Here’s a rundown of key issues and how we’ve stood on them.

On Canada. With USMCA talks with Canada broken down and the potential for retaliatory tariffs in both directions hanging over both economies, including several dairy products, the U.S.-Canada trade relationship is at an impasse, at least for the moment. This may be surprising to many who don’t closely follow the traditionally friendly relationship — but in dairy, this showdown has been decades in the making.

Under the USMCA trade agreement negotiated during the first Trump term, Canada committed to providing meaningful additional duty free access for U.S. dairy exports through a series of tariff rate quotas (TRQs). Canada’s administration of those TRQs has repeatedly resulted in chronic under-use, reducing the benefit for American dairy farmers. Canada also continues to exploit loopholes

to sidestep USMCA on dairy protein exports.

NMPF and our partners at the U.S. Dairy Export Council have long urged the White House to make fixing this a priority. The Trump team has consistently called out Canada’s disregard for its USMCA commitments on dairy market access. Canada needs to stop looking for workarounds and instead sit down in good faith to resolve these long standing dairy issues. Canada’s retaliation against U.S. goods is disappointing, but all it’s doing is forcing the U.S.’s hand. A cool down would be welcome but must include a dairy market access fix. The objective should be for both our countries to prevent increased friction and build on the progress made through weeks of negotiations.

While we consistently offer our expertise and assistance to support the Administration on improving U.S.-Canadian dairy trade, we also believe it is important to explain the unintended consequences of federal intervention in agricultural commodity markets, such as this recent decision to eliminate the tariff on imported beef.

Cull cow and calf sales have become a key economic driver for U.S. dairy farmers, equating to roughly 20 percent of annual dairy farm income, and more than 20 percent of the U.S. beef production is now being supplied by dairy farms. Current beef prices have helped push dairy cow numbers to the highest point in the U.S. since 1992; meanwhile, U.S. milk production is up 2.7 percent versus last year. Both trends help keep beef and dairy products affordable for consumers; dairy is stepping up to contribute to solving the consumer challenge of higher beef prices.

Rewarding imports sends the wrong message to U.S. dairy farmers and manufacturers who are investing billions of dollars to grow the domestic supply of beef and dairy products. The decision to remove duties on imports of 300,000 metric tons of beef over the next 90 days will have a short term, muted price impact for consumers. But the effects on both dairy and beef producers could be felt for some time by delaying the necessary economic signal sent to U.S. producers to increase beef production.

While all that has been going on, we’ve continued our efforts to see the Securing Agriculture’s Workforce Act, landmark ag labor legislation, become law. The election year calendar makes passage in 2026 a challenge, but we’re doing our best to ensure that when the political moment for real reform arrives, Congress knows that change is needed and that a powerful coalition won’t settle for anything less than progress.

Since the June 30 introduction of the bill, which would finally grant dairy farms meaningful access to the H-2A visa program and make that program more workable, we have:

- Coordinated more than 100 Capitol Hill meetings with lawmakers to advocate for SAWA’s passage as part of our state association’s summit.
- Sent a letter along with eight of our member cooperatives and nearly all state dairy associations among the more than 450 agriculture groups, businesses, and associations that collectively urged SAWA passage on Aug. 10.
- Joined Western Growers in hosting acting Labor Secretary Keith Sonderling in New Mexico to discuss the ag labor crisis. The

August 14 visit included a tour to DFA member John DeRuyter's dairy outside of Las Cruces. Sonderling will be a critical voice in getting the Trump administration's support in securing H-2A reforms.

- Been active on social media in showing the need for the bill and making folks aware of how important this legislation is. That social media campaign will be expanded in September as it complements a broader, agriculture wide effort to show support for Thompson and other leaders for positive change.

- And finally, our Advocacy Alert is drawing both dairy farmers and their allies into the debate.

With each passing year, the idea that Washington slows down in August is increasingly a relic of a bygone era. The world is too connected, the conflicts too intense, and the needs too real and urgent to pause. And if Washington doesn't, we don't either. These have been just a few of the ways we've served our members during the "recess." And a challenging fall awaits.

NovoFly Screwworm Strain Readied for Active Duty

American scientific ingenuity in the form of sterile fly releases helped eliminate New World screwworm from the country in the 1960s. Now, ARS researchers are combining that ingenuity with next generation tools to counter new resurgences of the pest threatening livestock and wildlife in New Mexico and Texas.

"Releasing sterile screwworm flies is a proven, decades old approach to eliminating populations of this pest and preventing the harm it inflicts — physically to livestock animals and wildlife and financially to the producers who raise livestock for our milk, meat, hide, and other products," said Kim Lohmeyer, Director of ARS's Knippling-Bushland U.S. Livestock Insects Research Laboratory in Kerrville, Texas. "Advances in genetics have now given us better tools to understand the screwworm's population dynamics and leverage that knowledge for improved control methods, including sterile fly releases."

The latest example is NovoFly, an all male strain of screwworm developed by Lohmeyer's team and university collaborators. With full regulatory approval of NovoFly, critical resources can be redirected towards producing only males, essentially doubling the number available for SIT releases to eradicate established populations of the pest or isolate outbreaks of it.

Central to screwworm eradication is the Sterile Insect Technique (SIT). SIT is a biologically based approach to pest control that originated with the pioneering studies of ARS entomologists Edward F. Knippling and Raymond C. Bushland. That research began in the mid-1930s and continues today at the Kerrville lab, which was posthumously named after these two entomologists.

In January 2026, USDA Secretary Brooke Rollins and Deputy Secretary Stephen Vaden highlighted SIT as part of a New World Screwworm Grand Challenge to counter recent U.S. incursions of the pest up through Central America.

The SIT calls for releasing sterilized male flies near infestation areas where they can mate with wild female flies. The resulting eggs fail to hatch into flesh eating larvae, which typically burrow into wounds or mucus lined openings of livestock animals such as cattle — but also wildlife and, less often, pets and people. Without larval offspring, the screwworm population eventually collapses, sparing animals further harm and reducing producers' costs for insecticides, veterinary services, and medications.

Despite SIT's success in eradicating America's indigenous screwworm population by 1966 (and eliminating subsequent resurgences of it), researchers saw room for improvement. "A sterile male can prevent a lot of wild females from reproducing, but a sterile female fly that mates only once doesn't help with SIT," explained Alex Arp, an ARS Research Geneticist who co-developed the all male NovoFly strain. While only sterile males are desirable, until now there has been no good way to separate them from females prior to SIT release, he added.

Producing only male flies would increase production efficiency by doubling the number of male larvae that can be reared and male pupae that can be sterilized without major changes to production facilities. Without sterile females being released, sterile males have increased opportunities to mate with wild females, resulting in a more effective, efficient SIT program.

Toward that goal, Arp and collaborators engineered Novofly with a genetic "switch" that kills female larvae during early rearing stages but doesn't function in males. This allows for a doubling in the number of males that can be brought to maturity for release using the same amount of artificial diet and equipment.

NovoFly is currently undergoing regulatory approval before the Environmental Protection Agency. Once approved, NovoFly will be mobilized for "active duty" at designated screwworm rearing facilities. USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service coordinates SIT efforts in the U.S., Mexico, and Central America.

"The research that went into creating NovoFly will provide the basis for the Grand Challenge project led by Max Scott of N.C. State University together with Arp and many other collaborators," Lohmeyer added — an effort that will set the stage for the next generation of this screwworm strain.



NMPF

NATIONAL MILK PRODUCERS FEDERATION

NEWS

USDEC, NMPF Thank Administration for Maintaining Pressure on Canada to Resolve USMCA Dairy Concerns. The National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF) and U.S. Dairy Export Council (USDEC) expressed their strong appreciation to the Trump Administration for its continued focus on using all available trade tools to resolve outstanding U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) dairy market access issues with Canada. With a 50 percent tariff on certain Canadian imports taking effect recently, the organizations urged Canada to return to the negotiating table and prevent further escalation.

“We appreciate the Administration’s persistence in standing up for American dairy producers and exporters who have waited far too long for Canada to live up to its promises,” said Krysta Harden, president and CEO of USDEC. “Canada has had plenty of chances to fix its unfair market access practices and close the loopholes it’s used to dodge its dairy commitments under USMCA. This action makes clear that patience has run out. We look forward to continuing to work with the Administration until Canada resolves these issues and America’s dairy farmers and exporters see the full benefits USMCA promised.”

“This action sends an unmistakable message that Canada’s ongoing disregard for its USMCA dairy commitments carries real consequences,” said Gregg Doud, president and CEO of NMPF. “It’s time for Canada to stop looking for workarounds and instead sit down in good faith to resolve these outstanding USMCA dairy implementation issues. Canadian retaliation would only serve to force the U.S.’s hand in escalating its leverage. The objective should be for both our countries to prevent increased friction and build on the progress made through weeks of negotiations.”

Under USMCA, Canada committed to providing meaningful additional duty free access for U.S. dairy exports through a series of tariff rate quotas (TRQs). Canada’s administration of those TRQs has repeatedly resulted in chronic underfill. In addition, Canada has continued to exploit loopholes to sidestep USMCA disciplines on dairy protein exports. NMPF and USDEC have consistently urged the Administration to prioritize resolution of both issues as part of the ongoing USMCA Joint Review and continue to call on Canada to come to the table and negotiate in good faith.

NMPF Statement on Plan to Increase Beef Imports. NMPF is concerned by the Trump Administration’s decision to increase imports of foreign raised beef, which will have unintended consequences for U.S. cattle and dairy producers alike. Cull cow and calf sales are a key economic driver for U.S. dairy farmers and equate to 20 percent of annual dairy farm income, and greater than

20 percent of the U.S. beef production is now being supplied by dairy farms. Current beef prices are an important reason why we have the most dairy cows in the U.S. since 1992; meanwhile, U.S. milk production is up 2.7 percent versus last year. Both trends help keep beef and dairy products affordable for consumers; dairy is stepping up to solve the consumer challenge of higher beef prices.

Policy created disruption threatens the billions of dollars invested by U.S. dairy farmers and manufacturers to grow supply of beef and dairy products. For the second time this year, the federal government has significantly intervened in the U.S. beef market, this time to remove duties on imports of 300,000 mt of beef over the next 90 days. This will have a short term, muted economic impact for consumers, but the effects on both dairy and beef producers could be felt for some time. This decision risks a reduction in the price dairy farmers receive for their cull cows and higher profits for foreign beef exporters, all for a potentially nominal decrease in the

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Again, removing the tariff isn't likely to lower consumer prices, as the price of this imported product is already well below that of the comparable domestically produced product derived from U.S. cull dairy and beef cows, but it will certainly improve the profit margin for the exporter. The more consequential impact will be a delay in the necessary economic signal sent to U.S. beef producers to increase production, which may reduce domestic supplies in the longer term.

U.S. dairy farmers' appreciation for the strength that beef prices have provided to their operations cannot be overstated, as milk prices continue to be low by historical standards. That appreciation extends to U.S. consumers who are increasingly demanding not only our exceptional dairy products but also the beef we produce. That's the choice U.S. consumers are making, as it should be.

Herd Growth, Protein Demand Drive Milk Gains. U.S. milk production rose 3.0 percent on a liquid basis in June as producers added 52,000 head to the milking herd and responded to signals for more dairy proteins.

Circana data shows that cottage cheese sales so far this year have risen 11 percent, yogurt sales have increased 6.5 percent, and ultrafiltered milk sales are up 8.3 percent, as consumers reach for high protein dairy products at retail. Skim ingredients are in demand at the Chicago Mercantile Exchange as well. Nonfat dry milk prices rebounded in August as competition for skim solids continued and dry whey prices remained firm. Butter demand remains healthy both at home and abroad, although ample production is limiting price upside. Domestic demand for cheese has ebbed as consumers visit quick service restaurants less frequently, but record export volumes have prevented CME Cheddar and Class III prices from easing further.

U.S. milk production seems to have been unbothered by summer heatwaves, aside from a few regions where milk per cow yields dipped.

Looking ahead, NMPF analysts anticipate growth to continue as producers push for higher protein components and the beef market incentivizes producers to retain heifers for longer. However, feed prices are forecast to rise as drought limits corn yields and low stocks keep futures elevated. Analysts don't expect rising feed costs to be accompanied by an increase in the All Milk Price; that suggests

that DMC margins could fall below the \$9.50/cwt maximum payment threshold from August through the end of this year.

Long Time Dairy Advocate Jaime Castaneda Announces Retirement Plans. NMPF Executive Vice President Jaime Castaneda, one of the U.S. dairy industry's longest serving and most influential trade policy leaders, recently announced his plans to retire from the organization in December 2026 after more than 27 years of service with NMPF and USDEC.

Castaneda has led international policy efforts for the organizations since joining NMPF and USDEC in 1999, helping transform the U.S. dairy industry into a globally competitive, export oriented sector while advancing policies that protect and strengthen America's dairy farmers and manufacturers. In addition, Castaneda played a leadership role for NMPF government relations over the years, leading the construction of today's policies.

Over the course of his career, Castaneda played a central role in negotiating and advancing many of the bilateral and regional trade agreements that have benefited U.S. dairy producers and exporters. Under his leadership, the industry achieved trade surpluses in dairy products across every major trade agreement while preserving the interests of American dairy farmers.

"Serving America's dairy farmers and this great industry has been the honor of a lifetime," Castaneda said. "I am deeply grateful to the leadership of NMPF and USDEC, to our members, and to the countless colleagues, partners, and friends I have worked with over the years. Together, we helped build a globally competitive U.S. dairy industry that today is respected around the world."

"Jaime's impact on U.S. dairy trade policy and global engagement is simply extraordinary," Harden said. "His vision, relationships, and strategic leadership helped position U.S. dairy as a trusted supplier and partner around the world. We are extremely grateful to Jaime for all that he has accomplished and appreciate that he will continue supporting the U.S. dairy industry's trade policy goals through collaboration with our staff."

NMPF News continued on the next page

2026 South Carolina Sale Barn Cattle Receipts												
	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
Darlington	791	895	773	1,430	749	767	722	632				
Laurens	698	730	858	920	532	667	803	534				
Orangeburg	695	588	567	704	812	431	693	935				
Saluda Livestock Market	2,530	2,481	2,424	3,111	2,484	2,570	3,352	2,770				
Saluda Stockyards	513	352	765	691	506	425	677	666				
Williamston	1,324	1,446	1,745	1,790	823	1,496	1,462	1,141				

NMPF News continued from the previous page

Gregg Doud praised Castaneda’s decades of service and lasting contributions to the industry.

“The nation’s dairy farmers and dairy industry are indebted to Jaime for his years of dedication, leadership, and unwavering commitment,” Doud said. “Replacing Jaime’s expertise, institutional knowledge, and influence will be a tall order, but we are extremely fortunate to have Shawna Morris leading our trade policy efforts moving forward.”

Castaneda will continue serving as executive director of the Consortium for Common Food Names (CCFN), where he has led international efforts to protect the use of common food and beverage terms against restrictive geographical indication policies.

He also plans to continue supporting the dairy industry following his retirement from NMPF by remaining engaged with USDEC, as well as other food and agricultural organizations and companies, while spending more time with family and hiking in the mountains.

Before joining NMPF-USDEC, Castaneda served at the U.S. Department of Agriculture and held numerous roles across food and agriculture organizations and companies. His career in food and agricultural policy spans nearly five decades.

In 2022, Castaneda was elected by his peers to chair the Agricultural Technical Advisory Committee for Trade in Animals and Animal Products, a senior advisory body that provides cleared advisor guidance to the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative on trade negotiations, implementation, and policy.

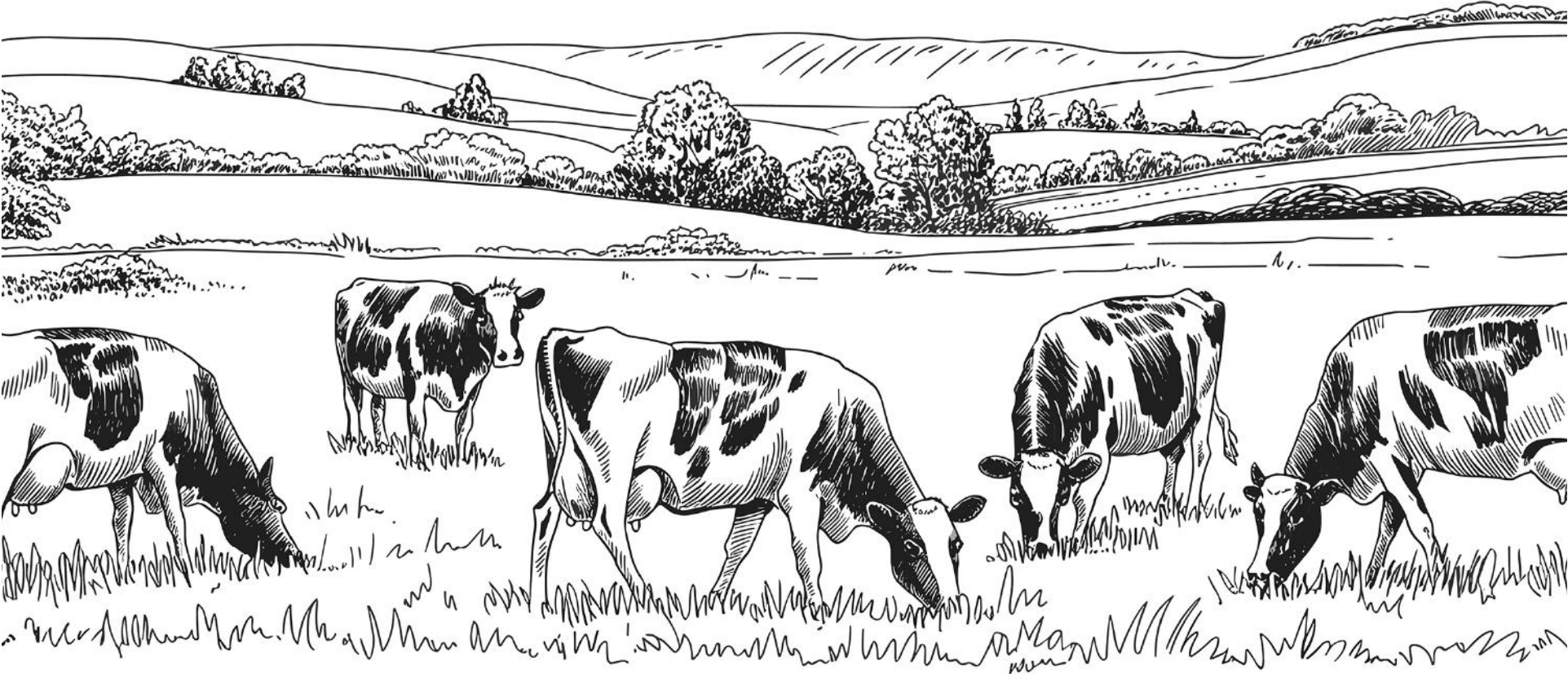
Among his many accomplishments, Castaneda helped lead

the dairy industry’s “Foundation for the Future” initiative, which modernized U.S. dairy pricing policy to improve competitiveness in global markets and served as the basis for today’s Dairy Margin Coverage Program.

Dairy Pushes Against EU Regulation Overreach. NMPF and USDEC recently filed comments with the European Union urging it to ensure that its Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive does not impose new burdens on how U.S. dairy farmers and companies operate. The organizations submitted the comments in response to an EU call for public input as it develops its implementation guidance materials for the directive.

The directive, first published in the EU Official Journal in July 2024 and most recently updated last December, requires companies operating in the European Union to undertake steps to monitor and address risks related to environmental and labor practices throughout their supply chain. As drafted, this could result in companies pushing requests for data, audits, and other due diligence demands onto upstream dairy suppliers. An overly aggressive approach to implementation could mean additional demands on individual dairy farmers, even when those farmers do not directly supply an EU buyer or when their milk is used for products sold outside Europe.

NMPF and USDEC argued in their comments that the European Union should not be able to impose its sustainability standards on U.S. farms operating under U.S. law and called for the requirements to be limited to direct suppliers while exempting small and medium-sized businesses such as farms from these types of invasive information requests.



“It is entirely inappropriate for the EU to seek to effectively dictate global environmental and labor sustainability parameters, regardless of where the production is taking place and the relevant laws within that jurisdiction. We believe that the EU should make further revisions to the CSDDD in order to address these concerns and focus the scope of its regulatory measures on production practices occurring within its own border,” the comments said.

“For the purposes of satisfying EU CSDDD requirements, any data requests by in-scope EU companies should be limited to companies that are directly supplying them and should omit small and medium size enterprises (SMEs),” NMPF and USDEC continued.

The groups also urged the European Union to recognize the United States as a lower-risk jurisdiction, rely primarily on official government records when assessing risks, and use compliance with U.S. law as the appropriate benchmark for U.S. operations. Collectively, these measures would reduce the risk of EU companies requiring extensive data from U.S. processors and farmers.

NMPF also is pressing the U.S. government to address these concerns in ongoing trade negotiations with the European Union and is supporting the Stop EU Overreach Act, introduced in July by Representatives Craig Goldman, R-Texas, Jodey Arrington, R-Texas, and Greg Steube, R-Florida.

The legislation would direct the U.S. Trade Representative to initiate a Section 301 investigation into EU sustainability measures with extraterritorial reach, including the due diligence directive, and consider appropriate use of trade tools to ensure U.S. dairy farmers are not forced to comply with overreaching EU policies. USTR comments submitted to the European Union on the directive reflected many NMPF arguments.

FARM Bridges Best Practices, On-Farm Solutions. The National Dairy Farmers Assuring Responsible Management (FARM) Program focused its evaluator network on industry insights, knowledge sharing, and on-farm preparedness at its 2026 Evaluator Conference, held in Boise, Idaho.

CoBank’s lead dairy economist, Corey Geiger, set the tone on day one with an outlook on the state of the dairy industry. Geiger provided a comprehensive overview of the current trends and future opportunities of the U.S. dairy industry, including production, consumption, exports, genetics, and market dynamics.

Attendees also heard from subject matter experts on the latest science supporting industry research, such as the Ruminant Farm System (RuFaS) model, in addition to using artificial intelligence to support animal welfare monitoring.

Day Two included a panel session, “Managing Customer Expectations,” with Kayla Rink, manager of dairy science and farm practices at Dairy Farmers of America; Kevin Fath, manager of farm relations and procurement for Lactalis USA; and Mike Machado, senior manager of milk procurement, farm practices & dairy sustainability for Glanbia Nutritionals. The panel was moderated by the Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy’s Chase DeCoite. Speakers discussed how evaluators can use the FARM Program to navigate customer relations and expectations for their organizations. Attendees also trained in how to encourage producers to foster relationships with their workforce to promote dairy stockmanship.

Beginning in 2016, the conference connects program evaluators with industry experts to share current science and best management practices related to FARM Program pillars. Evaluators are individuals trained and certified to conduct second party animal care, environmental stewardship, and workforce development evaluations on behalf of FARM cooperative and processor participants. Evaluators collaborate with dairy producers to identify strengths and outline areas for improvement in all program areas.

The FARM Program is grateful for the sponsors that made this year’s event possible. To learn more about this year’s conference and sponsors, visit the conference webpage.

NMPF Advances Dairy Priorities in Taiwan. NMPF trade policy staff recently traveled to Taiwan as part of an industry delegation that included leadership from the USDEC and the California Milk Advisory Board to build upon the gains secured in the U.S.-Taiwan Agreement on Reciprocal Trade and support a new school milk initiative.

NMPF worked to secure a series of market opening opportunities in the February trade deal with Taiwan that still needs implementation, including the complete elimination of tariffs on U.S. dairy products that currently range as high as 15 percent. The agreement also includes commitments aimed at preventing nontariff barriers to U.S. dairy trade and explicit protections for the continued use of common cheese names such as “feta” and “parmesan.”

NMPF met with Taiwanese legislators and representatives from the Ministry of Agriculture, in addition to dairy importers, to underscore the importance of ensuring those commitments were fully reflected as Taiwan moves toward implementing the agreement.

NMPF News continued on the next page

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NMPF News *continued from the previous page*

The visiting organizations also committed to working with the Dairy Association of Taiwan to support the Taiwanese government's new initiative to integrate milk into school meal programs and expand dairy's role in child nutrition. The commitment is built on the organizations' existing engagement in Taiwan and their shared interest in strengthening dairy consumption, nutrition education, and opportunities for U.S. dairy.

Dairy Leaders Prepare for Joint Annual Meeting. Nearly 900 dairy leaders from the NMPF, National Dairy Promotion and Research Board, and United Dairy Industry Association are expected to gather in Florida for the Joint Annual Meeting. Themed "U.S. Dairy: Committed. Resilient. Ready," the event kicks off with NMPF Young Cooperators programming on October 18 at the Gaylord Palms Resort & Convention Center.

Governance business anchors the front end of the week. The NMPF Board of Directors and Delegates convene October 19 to discuss policy priorities, including agriculture labor reform, dairy nutrition, and Federal Milk Marketing Orders. NMPF will also elect its 2027 Board of Directors, Officers, and Executive Committee. After a full day of business, attendees will gather at the "Welcome to Florida Reception."

Joint programming begins on October 20 with leadership remarks from DMI's Marilyn Hershey and Barb O'Brien, followed by NMPF's Brian Rexing and Gregg Doud. Two rounds of breakout sessions follow, with NMPF led tracks on agricultural labor and the FARM Program running alongside DMI's innovation and reputation breakouts and a sponsored session by Elanco.

Afternoon programming includes two panel discussions — "The Future of Dairy Exports" and "Margins, Markets & Milk Prices:

The Year Ahead." The day wraps up with the Cheese Reception, highlighting 3,000 pounds of cheese from NMPF member cooperatives.

The last day of programming brings keynote speaker David Wasserman of the Cook Political Report to break down the competitive races most likely to determine control of Congress — examining shifting district demographics, candidate recruitment, and the national political environment. The event concludes with a panel discussion among leadership from dairy's policy and promotion organizations..

U.S. Dairy Companies, Cooperatives, and Farmer Organizations Urge Congress to Reject S. 5026. NMPF and IDFA joined by 76 dairy companies, cooperatives, and state and regional producer organizations representing the full spectrum of the U.S. dairy industry, today urged congressional leaders to reject S. 5026, the Childhood Diabetes Reduction Act of 2026, warning that the legislation could confuse consumers about the health and nutritional benefits of dairy foods and negatively affect dairy farmers, manufacturers, and businesses throughout the dairy supply chain.

S.5026 would establish a broad definition of "ultra-processed foods" and require front-of-package warning labels on products captured by that definition indicating their consumption may be linked to childhood obesity and diabetes. Under the legislation, those warning labels could appear on a wide range of nutrient-dense dairy foods, including whole milk, cheese, most yogurts, and other cultured dairy products.

In a letter sent recently to Senate Majority Leader John Thune, Senate Minority Leader Charles Schumer, House Speaker Mike Johnson, and House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries, the dairy industry expressed shared support for efforts to improve the health of Americans and reduce chronic diet related disease, while cautioning that nutrition policy must be grounded in sound science and provide clear, consistent information to consumers.

"Nutrition policy should help Americans make better informed choices, not create confusion by placing sweeping warning labels on foods that are an important part of healthy dietary patterns," said Michael Dykes, D.V.M., president and CEO of IDFA. "S. 5026 relies on overly broad definitions of 'ultra-processed foods' and 'nutrients of concern' that fail to account for the nutritional value of individual foods or their role in the overall diet. Congress should reject this approach and ensure federal nutrition policy remains grounded in sound science and provides consumers with clear, meaningful information."

"Whole milk, cheese, and yogurt are staples of a healthy diet, not foods that should carry a warning label," said Gregg Doud "Dairy farmers work hard every day to put nutrient-dense food on America's tables. S. 5026 gets the science wrong, lumping wholesome dairy foods in with products that have nothing in common with them nutritionally. That's not informing consumers; it's misleading them about foods nutrition experts say Americans need more of, not less. Congress should reject this bill and work



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AND your state
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association!**

toward nutrition policy that actually reflects the evidence.”

Dairy foods provide 13 essential vitamins and minerals and remain a core food group in the 2025–2030 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Yet most Americans do not consume enough dairy to meet recommended intake levels, including a significant majority of school aged children.

The signatories to the letter span the U.S. dairy supply chain, including dairy cooperatives, processors, and state and regional producer organizations. The U.S. dairy industry supports more than three million American jobs, contributes \$779 billion to the U.S. economy, and sustains communities across rural America.

“The dairy industry is united in opposition to S. 5026,” the organizations wrote. “We respectfully urge congressional leaders to carefully consider the negative consequences this legislation could have for American consumers, dairy farmers and businesses, and the rural communities where dairy foods are produced and manufactured.”

A lua Joins NMPF as Associate Member. NMPF welcomes ALULA as its newest associate member.

Operating under Transylvania Vocational Services (TVS) and as an AbilityOne federal contractor for more than two decades, ALULA, which is based in Brevard, N.C., combines purpose powered programs with food manufacturing to uplift people, businesses, and communities. ALULA’s Mountain Maid brand is the exclusive supplier of Instant Nonfat Dry Milk (INDM) to food banks nationwide, helping provide nutritious, shelf stable dairy to communities across the country while supporting domestic commodity procurement and manufacturing jobs.

ALULA also partners with USDA and the State Department on SuperCereal Plus, a fortified cereal supporting malnourished children ages 6–24 months globally, and produces pancake mixes and other baking mixes for U.S. troops.

NMPF looks forward to ALULA’s involvement in advancing shared priorities around dairy nutrition, food security, and market access.

About the National Milk Producer’s Federation. NMPF was organized in 1916 to provide a forum for dairy producers and the cooperatives they own to participate in public policy discussions. NMPF advocates policies to Congress, U.S. and foreign government agencies, industry organizations, the news media, and the public.

We use our unique resources to harness the ever changing climate in the politics and marketing of milk and dairy products from farm to table to promote the economic well being of dairy producers and their cooperatives through coordinated industry efforts.

NMPF addresses policies concerning milk pricing, domestic and international market development, agriculture credit and taxation, environmental issues, food safety and health, animal welfare, product standards and labeling, and research and biotechnology.

Our mission is to foster an economic and political climate in which dairy producers and the cooperatives they own can thrive and prosper. Achieving such success assures consumers of adequate supplies of wholesome and nutritious dairy products at affordable prices.

This helps improve the bottom line of the associate members who provide services to dairy producers and cooperatives that they represent. For more information, visit www.nmpf.org.



THE BEEF CHECKOFF

Now Working Twice as Hard for YOU
—Nationally and at Home

Have You Sold Cattle on the Farm?

If so, be sure to send in your checkoff investment.

- It’s the LAW to pay the National \$1.00 Checkoff per head on all cattle sold.
- It’s a wise investment to contribute to the North Carolina Cattle Industry \$1.00 Assessment per head on all cattle sold.

The National (\$1.00) Checkoff and the State (\$1.00) Assessment provides funds needed to help promote beef and the cattle industry.
The Beef Checkoff program is run by producers like you and has played a vital role in increasing the demand for beef.
The North Carolina Cattle Industry Assessment will support youth activities, promotion, issues management, research, and education.

National Beef Checkoff/North Carolina Cattle Industry Assessment
PRIVATE TREATY SALES CHECKOFF/ASSESSMENT INVESTMENT FORM

Both the seller and the buyer have the responsibility to have the \$1 per head assessment for the National Beef Checkoff and the \$1 per head assessment for the North Carolina Cattle Industry Assessment collected and remitted to the N. C. Cattlemen’s Beef Council. This form is designed for the seller to use in private treaty sales of North Carolina cattle.

Date of Sale

Seller’s Name

Address

CityStateZip

Seller’s Signature

Buyer’s Name

Address

CityStateZip

Buyer’s Signature

National Beef Checkoff

Total Number of Cattle Sold x \$1.00/head = \$

North Carolina Cattle Industry Assessment

Total Number of Cattle Sold x \$1.00/head = \$

Total Amount Remitted \$

Person remitting assessment ☐ Seller ☐ Buyer

Send Form and Remittance to: N.C. Cattlemen’s Beef Council
P.O. Box 1207
Cary, NC 27512

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Check No.:

Postmark Date:

BEEF

Beef Promotion and Research Program

PRIVATE TREATY SALES CHECKOFF INVESTMENT FORM

Information is required by (7 CFR 1260.201). Failure to report can result in a fine.

Information is held confidential (7 CFR 1260.203).

Today's Date: _____

Seller's Name: _____

Buyer's Name: _____

Address: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Seller's Signature: _____

Buyer's Signature: _____

Both the seller & the buyer are responsible for making sure that the \$1.50 per head assessment is collected and remitted to the Beef Promotion & Research Board.

Total Number of Cattle Sold: _____ x \$1.50 Per Head = \$ _____

Date of Sale: _____

Person remitting assessment form:

Seller

☐

Buyer

☐

* State of Origin of Cattle: _____

* If cattle purchased came from another state within the last 30 days, indicate from which state the cattle were purchased.

Send Report and Remittance to:
SOUTH CAROLINA BEEF COUNCIL
P.O. Box 11280
Columbia, SC 29211

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0581-0093. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 1.8 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information.

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To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call 202-720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



Beef Promotion Operating Committee Approves Fiscal Year 2027 Checkoff Plan of Work. The Cattlemen's Beef Board (CBB) will invest approximately \$39.5 million into programs of beef promotion, research, consumer information, industry information, foreign marketing, and producer communications during fiscal 2027, subject to USDA approval.

In action at the end of its September 2–3 meeting in Denver, Colo., the Beef Promotion Operating Committee (BPOC) approved Checkoff funding for a total of 12 "Authorization Requests" — or grant proposals — for the fiscal year beginning October 1. The committee, which includes 10 producers and importers from the Cattlemen's Beef Board and 10 producers from the Federation of State Beef Councils, also recommended full Cattlemen's Beef Board approval of a budget amendment to reflect the split of funding between budget categories affected by their decisions.

Nine contractors and four subcontractors brought 13 Authorization Requests worth approximately \$49.6 million to the BPOC this week, approximately \$10.1 million more than the funds available from the CBB budget.

"Each year, our contractors bring forward strong ideas for reaching consumers, strengthening demand for beef, and addressing the issues that matter to our industry," said Cheryl DeVuyst, chair of the Cattlemen's Beef Board and the Beef Promotion Operating Committee. "With limited Checkoff dollars available, our responsibility is to carefully evaluate those opportunities and invest in the programs we believe can deliver the greatest value for beef producers."

"I'm proud of the thoughtful work this committee put into reviewing the Authorization Requests and making some difficult funding decisions. We had productive discussions about where Checkoff dollars can make the greatest impact, and ultimately, we came together around a budget that supports important work in research, promotion, foreign marketing, industry and consumer information, and producer communications. I appreciate the time and commitment of our committee members and contractors, and I'm looking forward to seeing this work come to life in FY27."

In the end, the BPOC approved proposals from eight national beef organizations for funding through the FY27 Cattlemen's Beef Board budget, as follows:

- American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture — \$750,000
- Cattlemen's Beef Board — \$2,000,000
- Meat Foundation — \$750,000

- Meat Import Council of America/Northeast Beef Promotion Initiative — \$1,000,000

- Meat Institute/New York Beef Council — \$270,000

- National Cattlemen's Beef Association — \$26,050,000

- U.S. Cattlemen's Association/Duke University/University of Florida — \$598,000

- U.S. Meat Export Federation — \$8,100,000

Broken out by budget component — as outlined by the Beef Promotion and Research Act of 1985 — the FY27 Plan of Work for the Cattlemen's Beef Promotion and Research Board budget includes:

- \$9,270,000 for promotion programs, including beef and veal campaigns focusing on beef's nutritional value, eating experience, convenience, and production.

- \$9,598,000 for research programs focusing on pre- and post-harvest beef safety, scientific affairs, nutrition, sustainability, product quality, culinary technical expertise, and consumer perceptions.

- \$7,850,000 for consumer information programs, including Northeast influencer outreach and public relations initiatives; national consumer public relations, including nutrition-influencer relations and work with primary- and secondary-school curriculum directors nationwide to get accurate information about the beef industry into classrooms of today's youth. Additional initiatives include outreach and engagement with food, culinary, nutrition, and health thought leaders; media and public relations efforts; and supply chain engagement.

- \$2,700,000 for industry information programs, including dissemination of accurate information about the beef industry to counter misinformation from other groups, as well as funding for Checkoff participation in the annual national industrywide symposium about antibiotic use. Additional efforts in this program area include beef advocacy training and issues/crisis management and response.

- \$8,100,000 for foreign marketing and education, focusing on 13 regions, representing more than 90 countries around the world.

- \$2,000,000 for producer communications, which includes investor outreach using national communications and direct communications to producers and importers about Checkoff results. Elements of this program include ongoing producer listening and analysis, industry collaboration and outreach, and continued development of a publishing strategy and platform and a state beef council content hub.

BEEF.
IT'S WHAT'S FOR DINNER.®

The full fiscal 2027 Cattlemen's Beef Board budget is approximately \$43.9 million. Separate from the Authorization Requests, other expenses funded include \$332,000 for program evaluation, \$833,000 for program development, \$214,000 for Checkoff education resources, \$540,000 for USDA oversight, \$230,000 for state services, \$200,000 for supporting services and litigation, and approximately \$2.0 million for CBB administration. The fiscal 2027 program budget represents an increase of 3.4 percent, or \$1.5 million, from the \$42.4 million FY26 budget.

For more information about the Beef Checkoff and its programs, including promotion, research, foreign marketing, industry information, consumer information, and safety, contact the Cattlemen's Beef Board at 303-220-9890 or visit DrivingDemandForBeef.com.

About the Beef Checkoff. The Beef Checkoff Program was established as part of the 1985 Farm Bill. The checkoff assesses \$1 per head on the sale of live domestic and imported cattle, in addition to a comparable assessment on imported beef and beef products. States may retain up to 50¢ on the dollar and forward the other 50¢ per head to the Cattlemen's Beef Promotion and Research Board, which administers the national checkoff program, subject to USDA approval.

About NCBA, a Contractor to the Beef Checkoff. The National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) is a contractor to the Beef Checkoff Program. The Beef Checkoff Program is administered by the Cattlemen's Beef Board, with oversight provided by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.



Handheld Beef Pasties

Total Time — 40 minutes

- 1 pound ground beef (90% lean or leaner)
- 1/2 cup shredded carrots
- 1/2 cup shredded Yukon Gold potatoes
- 1/2 cup shredded onion
- 1/2 cup shredded turnip
- 1 tablespoon tomato paste
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 1 package (17.3 ounces) frozen puff pastry (2 sheets), thawed
- 1 large egg, beaten
- 1 cup beef gravy

Preheat oven to 425°F. Combine ground beef, carrots, potatoes, onion, turnip, tomato paste, salt, and pepper in a large bowl, mixing lightly but thoroughly.

Unfold puff pastry onto a lightly floured cutting board; roll into a 12 × 9 inch rectangle. Cut each sheet into four circles (about 6 inches) in diameter.

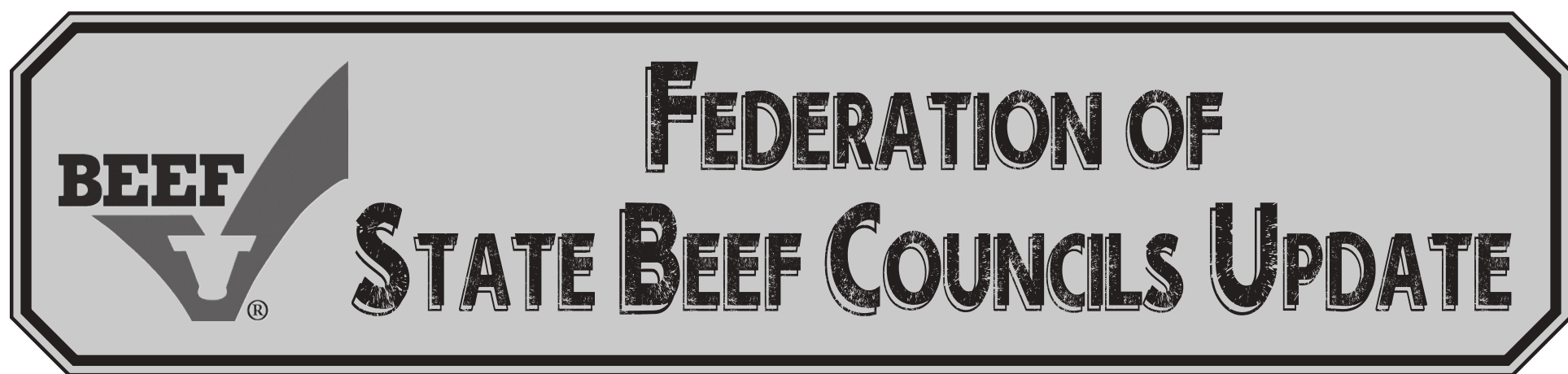
Add 1/2 cup filling evenly into the middle of pastry circles. Moisten the edge of the dough with egg; fold the pastry over the filling. Press the edges of the pastry with fingers or crimp with a fork to seal. Cut three slits in the top of each pastry to vent — brush with the remaining egg.

Place pasties on a parchment lined, shallow rimmed baking sheet. Bake in a 425°F oven for 20–25 minutes or until an instant read thermometer inserted into centers registers 160°F and crust is golden brown.

Let stand 5 minutes before serving. Serve with gravy.

Makes 4 servings.





FEDERATION OF STATE BEEF COUNCILS UPDATE

Beef Research Provides Foundation for Checkoff Programs. The National Cattlemen's Beef Association is a proud contractor to the Beef Checkoff. The work NCBA conducts on behalf of U.S. farming and ranching families is focused on the areas of consumer information, promotion, research, and industry information. The Research Authorization Request (AR) leverages beef research experts to strengthen understanding, support informed decision making, and engage key audiences across academia, industry, health, and consumer spaces. The five programs from research are highlighted here.

The Beef Safety program advances research focused on cattle borne pathogens, antimicrobial resistance, and production practices that may influence food safety outcomes. The program identifies pre-harvest strategies that reduce safety risks, support science based improvements, and reinforce confidence in beef. Activations include peer reviewed publications, such as the first publication on pre-harvest foreign material detection in beef. Other examples include research insights shared at scientific conferences and events and the annual Beef Industry Safety Summit, which convenes food safety leaders and scientists to review emerging research, explore advancements in monitoring and testing, and collaborate on solutions that benefit the entire industry.

State Beef Council Extension – In 2026, state collaborations include co-funding two research projects around Salmonella detection and mitigation strategies — research that is critical for improving industry standards and keeping beef safe for all of our consumers.

The Human Nutrition program advances research that deepens understanding of beef's role in a balanced, healthful diet and provides the scientific foundation for industry nutrition education and communication. Initiatives include peer-reviewed publications, scientific presentations, and targeted outreach to academics, health professionals, and consumers. For example, 13 publications were published in a variety of high impact journals in 2026, and at the American Society of Nutrition annual meeting, research projects will be presented for experts in the field to gain insights into innovative beef nutrition research.

State Beef Council Extension – In 2026, state activations include seven engagements with SBCs focused on research insights and beef messaging review, alongside eight contracted research projects examining beef intake and its effects on gut, cardiovascular, muscle, and reproductive health. These research initiatives also serve as foundational content for complementary programs, including medical and health professional toolkits provided to SBCs, reaching nearly 5,000 medical professionals and more than 500,000 consumers.

The Product Quality program encompasses research on beef

quality, including muscle characteristics, carcass traits, tenderness, and yield, as well as flavor, palatability, and the application of emerging technologies. In the past year, this work has been amplified through more than 15 placements across trade media, presentations, podcasts, and video content. Additional visibility of a variety of funded research includes 27 accepted presentations at the annual American Meat Science Association (AMSA) Reciprocal Meat Conference (RMC) — a premier forum that convenes more than 900 scientists, educators, industry leaders, and students to share research and inform the future direction of the meat industry.

State Beef Council Extension – In 2026 at the AMSA RMC, state activations included 16 co-funded research abstracts presented, focusing on critical quality dimensions such as freezing and thawing, shelf life optimization, red meat yield, and other key product attributes.

The Beef Sustainability program is grounded in a commitment to responsibly produce beef for consumers. This research program evaluates sustainability through a comprehensive framework that balances environmental stewardship, economic viability, and social responsibility across the beef value chain. In 2026, activations include advancing industry understanding of the unintended consequences associated with increasing cattle size and convening experts through the Welfare Working Group, which is focused on flagship research addressing today's most pressing animal welfare issues.

State Beef Council Extension – In 2026, state activations include a pertinent research project focused on assessing processing plant infrastructure in response to rising cattle sizes. Additional engagement includes a keynote presentation on water resilience at the Reciprocal Meat Conference, featuring speakers from multiple beef supply chain partners.

The Market Research program delivers critical insights and perspectives across the broader food landscape, with a focused emphasis on beef. In 2026, a key activation is the launch of the monthly Beef Marketplace Updates on BeefResearch.org, which provides timely retail snapshots and analysis of beef's performance in the marketplace designed to inform both producers and stakeholders, reinforcing the value and strength of beef as a leading protein choice.

State Beef Council Extension – Market Research maintains a strong partnership with SBCs through the State Dashboard initiative, which currently spans 43 states. These dashboards deliver localized insights into beef demand, profitability, and consumer behavior, enabling SBCs to tailor marketing and branding strategies to their specific regions.

Trending in Food & Media

NEWS AND NOTES



Customer visits to Taco Bell dropped by nearly 19% on July 17 following a parasite outbreak possibly linked to one of the chain's lettuce suppliers. Other restaurant chains also reported fewer customers in July.^{1,2}



The cost of food, summer cookouts and other inflation issues remain in the media spotlight, but news mentions of beef prices fell by 26% in July compared to June.¹



Datassential reported 61% of consumers want more global foods and the fastest growing cuisine types at U.S. restaurants are from Africa, India and South Korea.³

BURGERS IN THE HEADLINES



From April through June, news outlets mentioned beef burgers more than 4,000 times, a 616% increase over the previous three months. Articles focused on beef preparation and grilling advice.¹



Food & Wine talked to several celebrity chefs about why a burger split into equal portions should be considered as an appetizer for groups dining at one of their luxury steakhouses.⁴



More than 500 news outlets since June discussed a Stanford University research project using artificial intelligence to optimize burgers for flavor and nutrition.^{1,5}

FROM THE ISSUES MANAGEMENT & PUBLIC RELATIONS TEAM



460 news outlets picked up the team's Stars, Stripes and Sizzling Burgers release with recipe ideas for the 4th of July. The release had the potential to reach consumers more than 136 million times.^{1,6}



Yahoo! Life, BuzzFeed, Tasting Table, Chowhound, and Eat This, Not That! recently included advice from *Beef. It's What's For Dinner*. Executive Chef Dagan Lynn.¹



Erica Roby made an appearance on NBC's TODAY to show how Ground Beef can be turned into walking tacos for an easy on-the-go meal.⁷

ARMS #072826-13

1. National Cattlemen's Beef Association. (2026). *Traditional and social media listening dashboards*. Retrieved from Meltwater: www.meltwater.com
2. Yahoo! Finance, <https://finance.yahoo.com/healthcare/articles/taco-bell-visits-drop-19-180712527.html>
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5. Stanford University, <https://news.stanford.edu/stories/2026/06/ai-engineering-burger-design-health-environment>
6. The Associated Press, <https://apnews.com/press-release/pr-newswire/press-release-7509fba6a9563ff81f-b42e3703536892>
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the Beef Checkoff



BEEF CUTS

AND RECOMMENDED COOKING METHODS

CHUCK		RIB	LOIN	SIRLOIN	ROUND	INGREDIENT CUTS	
Arm Chuck Roast 	Cross Rib Chuck Roast 	Prime Rib Roast 	Porterhouse Steak 	Top Sirloin Steak LEAN	Top Round* LEAN	Kabobs* 	
Arm Chuck Steak 	Shoulder Roast LEAN	Ribeye Steak, Bone-In 	T-Bone Steak 	Top Sirloin Petite Roast LEAN	Top Round Steak* LEAN	Stew Meat 	
Blade Chuck Roast 	Shoulder Steak* LEAN	Back Ribs 	Strip Steak, Bone-In LEAN	Top Sirloin Filet LEAN	Bottom Round Roast LEAN	Strips 	
Blade Chuck Steak* 	Ranch Steak LEAN	Ribeye Roast, Boneless 	Strip Steak, Boneless LEAN	Coulotte Roast 	Bottom Round Steak* LEAN	Cubed Steak 	
7-Bone Chuck Roast 	Flat Iron Steak 	Ribeye Steak, Boneless 	Strip Petite Roast LEAN	Coulotte Steak LEAN	Bottom Round Rump Roast LEAN	Ground Beef and Ground Beef Patties 	
Chuck Center Roast 	Top Blade Steak 	Ribeye Cap Steak 	Strip Filet LEAN	Tri-Tip Roast LEAN	Eye of Round Roast LEAN	Shank Cross-Cut LEAN	
Denver Steak 	Shoulder Petite Tender LEAN	Ribeye Petite Roast LEAN	Tenderloin Roast LEAN	Tri-Tip Steak LEAN	Eye of Round Steak* LEAN	Tenderloin Tips 	
Chuck Eye Roast LEAN	Shoulder Petite Tender Medallions LEAN	Ribeye Filet LEAN	Tenderloin Steak (Filet Mignon) LEAN	Petite Sirloin Steak 	BRISKET		Inside Skirt* LEAN
Chuck Eye Steak 	Short Ribs, Bone-In 	KEY TO RECOMMENDED COOKING METHODS		Sirloin Bavette Steak 	Brisket Flat LEAN	PLATE & FLANK	
Country-Style Ribs 			 Grilling Oven Roasting Stewing Skillet-to-Oven Stir-Fry Broiling Skillet Cooking Pressure Cooking Indirect Grilling Smoking		Brisket Point 	Flank Steak* LEAN	
		These cuts meet the government guidelines for lean, based on cooked servings, visible fat trimmed.		Short Ribs, Bone-In* 			
© 2021 Cattlemen's Beef Board and National Cattlemen's Beef Association ARMSE		*Marinate before cooking for best results		A cut of cooked fresh meat is considered "lean" when it contains less than 10 grams of total fat, 4.5 grams or less of saturated fat and less than 95 mg of cholesterol per 100 grams (3 1/2 oz) and per RACC (Reference Amount Customarily Consumed), which is 85 grams (3 oz).			

CATTLEMEN'S



UPDATE

Why Cattle Producers Should Care About What Happens Between the Ranch and the Consumer

By MELISSA DANIELS, *Cattlemen's Beef Board*

My life has always revolved around cattle. My late father was a large animal veterinarian, and he bought Cow Track Ranch in California's Nicasio Valley in 1986. Now, I'm a second generation rancher, raising Angus beef, some of which we sell directly to the guests at our on-site Airbnb. We want people who stay with us to experience what ranch life is all about, including where their food comes from.

Selling direct to consumers has changed the way I think about marketing beef. I've learned customers are looking for more than just a cut of meat. I quickly discovered that a beef sale with a handshake goes far and that selling beef is often less about convincing someone to eat more meat and more about building trust through transparency and education.

Becoming a member of the Cattlemen's Beef Board and serving on the Beef Checkoff's Promotion Committee has shown me the same basic principle holds true on a much larger scale. Before, I naturally thought about beef primarily through the producer lens — genetics, animal care, quality, sustainability, and everything involved in raising cattle.

Now, I'm more aware of everything that happens between the ranch and the consumer and about the business decisions restaurants and retailers must make. Before they put more beef on the menu or new cuts in the meat case, they're weighing price, supply, margins, consumer preferences, menu trends, and what will ultimately drive a purchase.

Those decisions should matter to cattle producers because they determine whether beef is even presented as an option. We can raise an exceptional product, but if beef isn't featured on the menu or in the meat case, we lose an opportunity to connect with consumers.

That's why the Beef Checkoff funds the Channel Marketing program at the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA). The Channel Marketing team works directly with not only restaurants and retailers but also distributors, manufacturers, and even e-commerce platforms. We're talking names like Walmart, Sysco, Costco, McDonald's, and others. Together, these businesses help determine the beef products consumers ultimately see and have the opportunity to choose.

Channel Marketing uses market research, beef expertise, and marketing resources to help partners better understand, market, and sell beef, keeping it visible in the marketplace.

Sometimes the Checkoff's work involves solving a business problem — beef costs are high, so what other cuts or applications could work? Sometimes it's creating new opportunities — what new beef menu items could appeal to this restaurant's customers?

Recently, a burger chain wanted to expand its offerings and introduce new, high quality menu items. They weren't sure what to offer and how to make it fit with their current menu. The Channel Marketing team developed six new menu concepts during an on-site culinary ideation session, drawing on emerging trends, consumer preferences, and relevant cuts that made sense for the chain.

These partnerships go beyond simply "promoting beef." They're about understanding a partner's business, customers, and challenges and finding beef solutions that make sense.

That can mean helping a partner overcome a barrier that could otherwise result in fewer beef offerings. When one foodservice partner faced higher beef costs, the Channel Marketing team helped identify alternative cuts that could work in existing dishes while addressing cost concerns.

Right now, that kind of problem solving is especially important. When prices are high, beef must earn its place in the meat case and on the menu. Businesses are under pressure to maintain margins while still giving their customers the products and experiences they want. That's where beef's versatility can be especially valuable, giving restaurants, retailers, and consumers more options beyond the most familiar cuts.

Personally, I've really come to enjoy marketing unfamiliar cuts to our ranch guests, encouraging them to think creatively and step outside the norm in their own kitchens. Whether it's a producer like me selling direct to a consumer or the Beef Checkoff working with restaurants and retailers nationwide, introducing lesser known cuts and demonstrating beef's versatility is a great way to showcase its value.

I think my fellow cattle producers might be surprised at just how much work goes into connecting beef with the decision makers at the diner down the street or the grocery store in the next town. The Beef Checkoff isn't just marketing beef to consumers. Through efforts like Channel Marketing, it's also working with the businesses that determine if and how beef shows up in front of them.

As producers, our job starts with raising great beef. But creating demand also requires making sure consumers continue having compelling opportunities to choose it.

The Beef Industry’s Commitment to Animal Health and Welfare

Grounded in science, research and responsible cattle care

Beef farmers and ranchers take pride in providing **safe, high-quality beef** while prioritizing **animal health and welfare**. Industry-funded research identifies the most effective **animal care practices**, and farmers and ranchers put those practices **into action every day**.¹



BEEF FARMERS AND RANCHERS¹

- Implement Beef Quality Assurance care practices to support strong animal welfare
- Provide daily, responsible cattle handling and management
- Apply proven techniques informed by research and industry standards



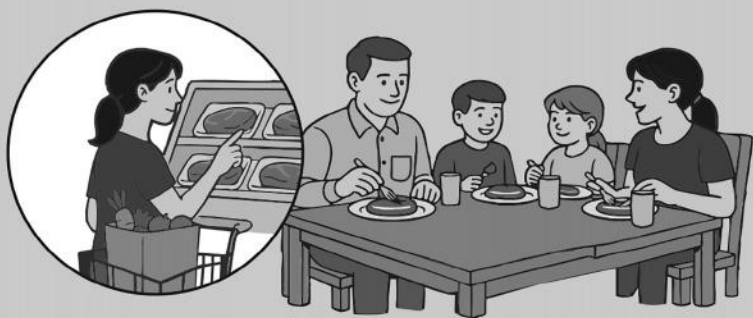
INDUSTRY-FUNDED RESEARCH

- Identifies proven animal welfare practices
- Provides science-backed insights that guide responsible cattle care
- Helps develop new cattle care tools, technologies and best-practice guidelines

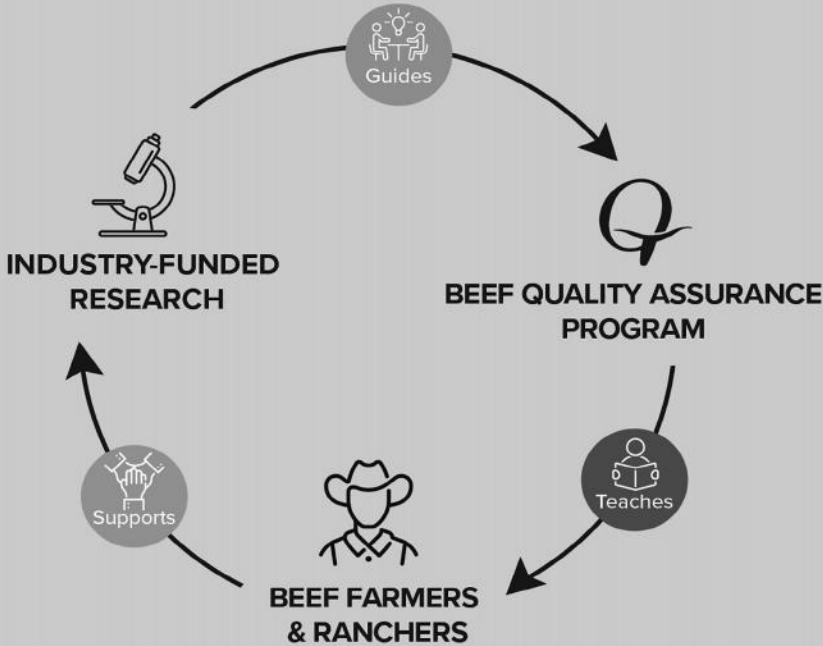


BEEF QUALITY ASSURANCE PROGRAM²

- Voluntary certification program established in the 1980s
- Provides consistent, research-supported animal welfare standards and practices
- Combines proven cattle care techniques with scientific research
- Over 85% of U.S. beef comes from Beef Quality Assurance-certified producers



The beef that farmers and ranchers raise and sell to restaurants and supermarkets is the same beef they feed their own families, so it’s no surprise that sound animal care and welfare techniques are at the heart of how farmers and ranchers raise beef. For more information on beef farmers’ and ranchers’ commitment to animal care and welfare, visit [BeefItsWhatsForDinner.com](https://www.beefitsWhatsForDinner.com)



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1. Beef Research. 2025. <https://www.beefresearch.org/>
2. Beef Quality Assurance. 2025. <https://www.bqa.org/>



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Advertisers Index

18 th Annual EBS Farms Select Bull & Female Sale	61	Locust Level Farms Bull & Female Sale	51
2026 S.C. Cattlemen's Regional Beef Cattle Field Days – SAVE THE DATES! ...	110	Mid-Atlantic Cattle Sales – Stockyard Schedules	59
25 th Annual E.B. & Shane Harris Influence Female & Bull Sale	24	N.C. Angus Association Directory	45
32 nd Annual Hokie Harvest Sale	113	N.C. Beef Cattle Improvement Program Performance Bull Test Sales – SAVE THE DATES!	106
4 th Annual Lorson Angus Sale	52	N.C. Cattlemen's Association Membership Application	89
4K Farms/Tarheel Angus	134	N.C. Cattlemen's Association Membership Benefits Program	88
51 st Annual Union County Performance Tested Bull Sale	101	N.C. Department of Agriculture – Got to be NC	66
7 th Annual Barnett Angus Ranch Production Sale	48	N.C. Hay Finder	121
Alligare Range & Pasture	23	N.C. Hereford Association Directory	86
American Angus Association	38	N.C. Meat Suite	79
American Gelbvieh Association	134	N.C. Simmental Association	56
Apple Brandy Prime Cuts	114	National Beef Checkoff/ North Carolina Cattle Industry Assessment	124
Back Creek Angus	134	National Cattlemen's Beef Association Membership Application	96
Biltmore Livestock Fall Embryo Sale	40	National Cattlemen's Beef Association 2026 Policy Priorities	98
Black Crest Cattle Farm	134	National Cattlemen's Beef Association Recruitment	95
Black Grove Angus	134	Nitrate Risks in Forages Webinar	53
Brubaker Family Angus	134	Pasture Management & N.C. Cattlemen's Association “Mile of Fence” Membership Program	90
Brushy Mountain Genetics Angus & Horned Hereford Bull & Female Sale	84	Pearson Livestock Equipment	21
Bull Hill Ranch	134	Pecan Realty – Colby Hammonds	134
C-Cross Cattle Company – BULLS FOR SALE ON FARM	72	Premier Select Sires	35
Carolinas Animal Health	134	Quail Ridge Farms	134
Casey Green Cattle Company Annual Angus Bull & Female Production Sale	37	Rusty Thomson & Family Cattle Fencing and Equipment	104
Childers Concrete Company, Inc.	100	South Carolina Private Treaty Checkoff Investment Form	125
Conquest Insurance Agency, Inc. – Cody Waters	112	Southern Partners in Performance 4 th Annual Hereford Bull & Commercial Female Sale	87
Clemson Livestock & Forage Foundations Online Course	34	Southern Synergy Fall Harvest Angus Female Sale	41
Craven Angus Farm 9 th Annual Bull & Female Sale	134	The 909 Ranch Fall Production Sale	50
Double J Farms LLC	134	The Barn Loft – Purina Wind & Rain Minerals	68
Easy Way Cattle Care	63	The Carolina Cattle Connection 2026 Spotlight Schedule	29
First Choice Insurance Partners – Donna Byrum	6	The Carolina Cattle Connection Advertising Rates & Sizes	111
Fred Smith Company Ranch	134	The Josey Agency Insurance	134
Gibbs Farms 21 st Annual Bull & Replacement Female Sale	65	The Wax Company – Genuine Marshall Ryegrass	69
Ginger Hill Angus Annual Production Sale	49	The Wax Company – Nelson Tetraploid Annual Ryegrass	4
Hancock Angus & McMahan Farm Annual Registered Angus Bull Sale	43	TJB Gelbvieh & Balancer Bull Sale XV	70
Henry Repeating Arms – American Cattlemen Tribute	7	Upcoming Cattle Sales in the Carolinas	133
Howard Brothers Farms	134	Uwharrie Ridge Farms Production Sale	42
Hunt's H+ Brangus	134	Vandemark Angus Fall Bull Sale	46
JMAR Genetics “Quality Over Quantity” Charolais Bull & Heifer Sale	67	West End Precast – Feed Bunks	75
Joseph “Crockett” Wilson – Beef Consultant	134	West End Precast – Feed Bunks & Troughs	19
Knoll Crest Farm Total Performance Bull Sale	3	Whitehall Beefmasters	134
Langdon Red Angus & Simmental	134	Whitestone Farm Brand of Quality Angus Female Sale	39
		Wilders Wagyu	134
		Wilders Wagyu StayWild '26 Fullblood Production Sale	8
		Yon Family Farms Maternal Roots Female & Bull Sale	47

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Upcoming Events

ANGUS

- Oct. 17 — Fred Smith Company Ranch Extra Effort Sale, Clayton, N.C.
 Oct. 17 — Whitestone Farm Brand of Quality Angus Female Sale, Aldie, Va.
 Oct. 24 — Southern Synergy Fall Harvest Angus Female Sale, Wadley, Ga.
 Oct. 30 — 32nd Annual Hokie Harvest Sale, Blacksburg, Va.
 Oct. 30 — Yon Family Farms Maternal Roots Fall Female Sale, Ridge Spring, S.C.
 Oct. 31 — 4th Annual Lorson Angus Sale, Harrisonburg, Va.
 Oct. 31 — Yon Family Farms Maternal Roots Fall Bull Sale, Ridge Spring, S.C.
 Nov. 7 — 7th Annual Barnett Angus Ranch Production Sale, Washington, Ga.
 Nov. 7 — Craven Angus Farm 9th Annual Bull & Female Sale, Seagrove, N.C.
 Nov. 7 — TJB Gelbvieh & Balancer Bull Sale XV, Chickamauga, Ga.
 Nov. 14 — Casey Green Cattle Company
 Annual Angus Bull & Female Production Sale, Bishop Ga.
 Nov. 14 — 25th Annual E.B. & Shane Harris Influence Female & Bull Sale,
 Oxford, N.C.
 Nov. 14 — Gibbs Farms 21st Annul Bull & Replacement Female Sale,
 Ranburne, Ala.
 Nov. 14 — Ginger Hill Angus Annual Production Sale, Washington, Va.
 Nov. 14 — Hancock Angus & McMahan Farm
 Annual Registered Angus Bull Sale, Mocksville, N.C.
 Nov. 14 — Locust Level Farms Bull & Female Sale, Vernon Hill, Va.
 Nov. 17 — Biltmore Livestock Fall Embryo Sale
 Nov. 21 — Southeast Bull Expo & Sale, Asheboro, N.C.
 Nov. 28 — The 909 Ranch Fall Production Sale, Statesville, N.C.
 Dec. 4 — Knoll Crest Farm Total Performance Bull Sale, Red House, Va.
 Dec. 5 — 51st Annual Union County Performance Tested Bull Sale, Monroe, N.C.
 Dec. 5 — Uwharrie Ridge Farms Production Sale, Denton, N.C.
 Dec. 12 — Brushy Mountain Genetics Angus & Horned Hereford
 Bull & Female Sale, Taylorsville, N.C.

BRANGUS

- Oct. 30 — Yon Family Farms Maternal Roots Fall Female Sale, Ridge Spring, S.C.
 Oct. 31 — Yon Family Farms Maternal Roots Fall Bull Sale, Ridge Spring, S.C.

CHAROLAIS

- Oct. 3 — Appalachian Classic Sale, Knoxville, Tenn.
 Oct. 22 — JMAR Genetics “Quality Over Quantity” Charolais Bull & Heifer Sale,
[via SaleRing.live](http://SaleRing.live)
 Oct. 30 — 32nd Annual Hokie Harvest Sale, Blacksburg, Va.
 Oct. 31 — Red Hill Farms Bulls and Females of Fall XII, Lafayette, Tenn.

GELBIEH

- Nov. 7 — TJB Gelbvieh & Balancer Bull Sale XV, Chickamauga, Ga.
 Dec. 4 — Knoll Crest Farm Total Performance Bull Sale, Red House, Va.
 Dec. 5 — 51st Annual Union County Performance Tested Bull Sale, Monroe, N.C.

HEREFORD

- Oct. 17 — White Hawk Ranch Fall Bull & Female Sale, Buchanan, Ga.
 Nov. 28 — Southern Partners in Performance
 4th Annual Hereford Bull & Commercial Female Sale, Union Grove, N.C.
 Dec. 4 — Knoll Crest Farm Total Performance Bull Sale, Red House, Va.
 Dec. 12 — Brushy Mountain Genetics Angus & Horned Hereford
 Bull & Female Sale, Taylorsville, N.C.

RED ANGUS

- Oct. 31 — Red Hill Farms Bulls and Females of Fall XII, Lafayette, Tenn.
 Nov. 14 — 25th Annual E.B. & Shane Harris Influence Female & Bull Sale,
 Oxford, N.C.

SANTA GERTRUDIS

- Nov. 14 — 25th Annual E.B. & Shane Harris Influence Female & Bull Sale,
 Oxford, N.C.

SIMMENTAL

- Oct. 17 — Fred Smith Company Ranch Extra Effort Sale, Clayton, N.C.
 Oct. 30 — 32nd Annual Hokie Harvest Sale, Blacksburg, Va.
 Oct. 30 — Yon Family Farms Maternal Roots Fall Female Sale, Ridge Spring, S.C.
 Oct. 31 — Red Hill Farms Bulls and Females of Fall XII, Lafayette, Tenn.
 Oct. 31 — Yon Family Farms Maternal Roots Fall Bull Sale, Ridge Spring, S.C.
 Nov. 14 — 25th Annual E.B. & Shane Harris Influence Female & Bull Sale,
 Oxford, N.C.
 Nov. 14 — Gibbs Farms 21st Annul Bull & Replacement Female Sale,
 Ranburne, Ala.
 Dec. 5 — 51st Annual Union County Performance Tested Bull Sale, Monroe, N.C.

WAGYU

- Nov. 7 — Wilders Wagyu StayWILD ‘26 Fullblood Production Sale, Turkey, N.C.

OTHER EVENTS

- Oct. 1 — N.C. State University Forage & Livestock Webinar – Session 4
 Oct. 1 — Adding Value to Your Calf Crop Field Day, Gaffney, S.C.
 Oct. 7 — Northeastern Cattle Reproduction School, Louisburg, N.C.
 Oct. 10 — Fall Special Cow & Heifer Sale, Monroe, N.C.
 Oct. 13 — Navigating Nitrate Risks in Forages for Beef Cattle
 & Other Pasture Based Livestock Webinar
 Oct. 15–25 — N.C. State Fair, Raleigh, N.C.
 Oct. 15–25 — S.C. State Fair, Columbia, S.C.
 Nov. 10 — SCCA Regional Beef Cattle Field Day, Laurens County, S.C.
 Nov. 11 — SCCA Regional Beef Cattle Field Day, Darlington County, S.C.
 Nov. 12 — SCCA Regional Beef Cattle Field Day, Calhoun County, S.C.
 Nov. 12 — Value Added Graded Feeder Cattle Sale, Norwood, N.C.
 Dec. 5 — N.C. BCIP Waynesville Bull Test Sale, Canton, N.C.
 Dec. 12 — N.C. BCIP Butner Bull Test Sale, Oxford, N.C.

LIVESTOCK MARKET SALES

- Oct. 5 — Harward Brothers Livestock Market Weekly Sale, Turnersburg, N.C.
 Oct. 5 — Saluda Livestock Exchange Weekly Sale, Saluda, S.C.
 Oct. 6 — Mid-Atlantic Cattle Sales Video Auction, via macsvideo.com
 Oct. 7 — Northeast Georgia Livestock/Saluda Livestock Exchange/
 Turner County Stockyard Video Auction, via negalivestock.com
 Oct. 7 — Stanly County Livestock Market Weekly Sale, Norwood, N.C.
 Oct. 12 — Harward Brothers Livestock Market Weekly Sale, Turnersburg, N.C.
 Oct. 12 — Saluda Livestock Exchange Weekly Sale, Saluda, S.C.
 Oct. 14 — Northeast Georgia Livestock/Saluda Livestock Exchange/
 Turner County Stockyard Video Auction, via negalivestock.com
 Oct. 14 — Stanly County Livestock Market Weekly Sale, Norwood, N.C.
 Oct. 19 — Harward Brothers Livestock Market Weekly Sale, Turnersburg, N.C.
 Oct. 19 — Saluda Livestock Exchange Weekly Sale, Saluda, S.C.
 Oct. 20 — Mid-Atlantic Cattle Sales Video Auction, via macsvideo.com
 Oct. 21 — Northeast Georgia Livestock/Saluda Livestock Exchange/
 Turner County Stockyard Video Auction, via negalivestock.com
 Oct. 21 — Stanly County Livestock Market Weekly Sale, Norwood, N.C.
 Oct. 26 — Harward Brothers Livestock Market Weekly Sale, Turnersburg, N.C.
 Oct. 26 — Saluda Livestock Exchange Weekly Sale, Saluda, S.C.
 Oct. 28 — Northeast Georgia Livestock/Saluda Livestock Exchange/
 Turner County Stockyard Video Auction, via negalivestock.com
 Oct. 28 — Stanly County Livestock Market Weekly Sale, Norwood, N.C.



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